TransScale Final Conference

Scaling Up, Out and Deep: From Circular Initiatives to Mainstream Urban Practices

Friday, 6 November 2026 | 09:30–14:30 (EET, Riga time)

Venue: University of Latvia, House of Nature (Dabas māja), Jelgavas iela 1, Room 702, Riga, Latvia

Format: Public hybrid conference | In person and online

Language: English

About the conference

Across Europe, cities, communities and businesses are developing innovative approaches to repair, reuse and sharing. Yet many promising circular initiatives remain small-scale or struggle to become part of everyday life.

How can these initiatives reach more people, become embedded in policies and institutions, and transform everyday consumption practices? And does scaling necessarily lead to greater environmental and social benefits?

The TransScale Final Conference brings together researchers, policymakers, municipalities, businesses and civil society organisations from across Europe to explore how circular initiatives can scale **out, up and deep**, and what is needed to make circular practices mainstream.

Conference programme

09:30–10:00 | Registration, coffee and networking

Welcome coffee for participants attending in person. Online access opens at approximately 09:50.

10:00–10:15 | Welcome and opening

- Guntars Kitenbergs, Vice-Rector for Research, University of Latvia
- Jānis Brizga, University of Latvia, TransScale project

Interactive opening question: *What is the biggest barrier preventing repair, reuse and sharing from becoming mainstream?*

10:15–10:35 | Scaling Up, Out and Deep: What Have We Learned from TransScale?

Jens Dorland, Aalborg University, Denmark

Presentation of the main findings from the TransScale project, drawing on research and experiences from Denmark, Latvia, Norway and Poland.

Key themes include different pathways of scaling, the relationship between infrastructure and everyday practices, and the conditions that enable circular initiatives to deliver lasting sustainability benefits.

10:35–11:15 | Panel 1: From Enthusiasts to Everyday Users

Moderator: Jānis Brizga, University of Latvia

Many circular initiatives attract committed users, but how can they move beyond early adopters and become part of everyday routines?

The discussion will explore:

- What motivates people to participate in repair, reuse and sharing?
- What prevents broader participation, and what encourages repeated use?
- How do convenience, affordability, accessibility and social norms influence adoption?
- How can circular initiatives reach new groups and communities?

Perspectives from community repair initiatives, circular economy businesses, municipalities and researchers.

11:15–11:45 | Coffee break and networking

11:45–12:30 | Panel 2: Who Enables Scaling?

Moderator: Michael, Aalborg University, Denmark

Scaling circular initiatives requires supportive institutions, infrastructure, financing and collaboration.

The discussion will address:

- Which policies and governance arrangements can accelerate scaling?
- How can municipalities support circular initiatives beyond pilot projects?
- What infrastructure, financing and partnerships are needed?
- How can public authorities, businesses, researchers and civil society work together?

Perspectives from municipalities, policymakers, circular economy practitioners and European research projects, including CORPUS.

Interactive audience question: *If your city could implement one measure to accelerate repair, reuse and sharing, what should it be?*

12:30–13:00 | Panel 3: Does Bigger Mean Better? Assessing the Sustainability Impacts of Scaling

Moderator: Lina Ingeborgrud, NIFU, Norway

Expanding circular initiatives is often seen as a success. But does reaching more users or establishing more exchange points necessarily deliver greater sustainability benefits?

A short introduction to TransScale's environmental impact assessment findings will be followed by a discussion addressing:

- How can the environmental and social benefits of circular initiatives be measured?
- To what extent does reuse replace the purchase of new products?
- What role do rebound effects and unintended consequences play?
- How can cities and organisations monitor meaningful sustainability outcomes?

Contributions from researchers and practitioners working on environmental assessment, rebound effects, economic impacts and circular economy monitoring.

13:00–13:20 | From Evidence to Action: Making Circular Practices Mainstream

Moderator: Mariusz Baranowski, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland

An interactive concluding discussion bringing together insights from the three panels.

Central question:

If we want repair, reuse and sharing to become normal parts of European urban life by 2035, what are the three most important changes we need?

The discussion will identify priorities for:

- **Scaling out:** Reaching more people, places and communities.
- **Scaling up:** Transforming policies, institutions and governance arrangements.
- **Scaling deep:** Changing everyday practices, values and social norms.

13:20–13:30 | Closing Reflections: Five Messages from TransScale

Jānis Brizga and Michael, TransScale consortium

Five key lessons for the future of circular economy initiatives:

1. Scaling is a profile, not a ladder.
2. Infrastructure alone does not scale practices.
3. Enabling conditions matter.
4. Different initiatives require different scaling trajectories.
5. Scaling must be assessed by its sustainability impacts, not simply growth.

13:30–14:30 | Networking lunch

Informal discussions and opportunities to develop new partnerships across European cities, research institutions, businesses and civil society organisations.