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CENTRES FOR URBAN RESOURCES,
REUSE AND REMANUFACTURE

Riga Circular Economy Centre

Riga/ Latvia

A free-access wood workshop and a versatile community space for promotion of the circular economy

1. Objectives of the URC

The Riga Circular Economy Centre is designed to inspire and empower citizens to embrace sustainable practices:

- Providing citizens with the opportunity to repair their items and acquire new skills,
- Ensuring public education and participation in the field of circular economy,
- Promoting the development and implementation of circular economy solutions,
- Facilitating networking and promoting good [circular] practices in the business sector.

2. Services provided by the URC

The services provided by the Riga Circular Economy Centre can be categorized into 2 groups based on the type of its premises:

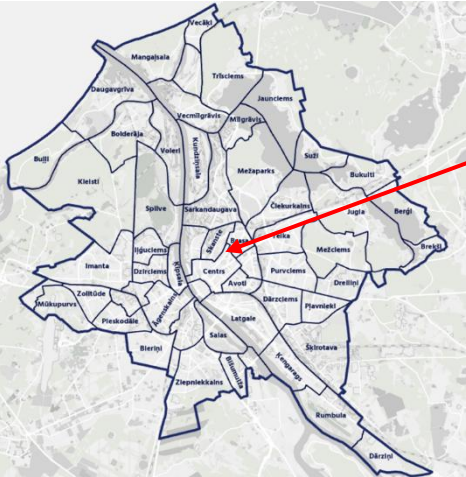


1. **A free-access maker space**, a fully equipped wood workshop where anyone can repair, refurbish, or create furniture and other projects. With the guidance of a skilled master, citizens can bring their ideas to life, whether it's upcycling or crafting something entirely new.
2. **A versatile community space** for hosting master classes, seminars, exhibitions, and networking events. This room fosters collaboration, learning, and the exchange of ideas.

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The Riga Circular Economy Centre offers a diverse range of activities for students and citizens, all aimed at normalizing circular economy practices. Through hands-on projects and educational events, the centre showcases the many possibilities and positive impacts of the circular economy, providing an inclusive space for creativity, non-formal learning, and community connection.

3. Operational model

	Description
Ownership	Riga Circular Economy Centre is owned by the Riga Municipal Agency "Riga Energy Agency" (REA) and managed by its Circular Economy Department. REA is a structural unit of the Riga Municipality.
Team	There are 3 persons (1,5 FTE) foreseen in the team of the Riga Circular Economy centre: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Circular economy expert working in the Community space (0,7 FTE) – in-house staff during and after the course of the CURE+ project.

	<p>2. Circular economy and woodwork specialist (0,5 FTE) – in-house staff during the CURE+ project. Outsourced service after the CURE+ project.</p> <p>3. Manager of the Centre (Manager of the Circular Economy Department of REA) (0,3 FTE) – in-house staff during and after the course of the CURE+ project.</p>
<p>Location</p>	<p>Krišjāņa Valdemāra 145, k-1, Rīga</p> <p><u>Strengths:</u> The centre is located on a busy street with a lot of car traffic, in the distant part of the city centre that borders two residential neighbourhoods. It is also close to public transport. The building has spacious windows that can be used for advertising URC and its services and events.</p>    <p><u>Downsides:</u> There are no similar businesses nearby with whom could create synergies. There is a small pedestrian flow. Additionally, there is no parking space for URC visitors; however, there is parking options on the streets nearby.</p> <p>Premises are situated on the ground floor of a renovated multi-apartment building, ensuring heating, ventilation, electricity, and water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 m² community space • 30 m² wood workshop • 2 toilets • Additional premises are available for further development of the centre (the total space of the Centre is 180 m²) • No outdoor space
<p>Material flow</p>	<p>No material flow</p>



4. Budget

Implementation (until March 2025)	CURE+ funding (EUR)	Municipality's budget (EUR)	Other
Refurbishment of the premises	-	9 200	-
Furnishing the community space	27 000	-	-
Setting up the wood workshop	12 000	-	-
Operation (from April 2025)	CURE+ funding (EUR)	Municipality's budget (EUR)	Other
Yearly budget	-	85 000	New EU projects

5. KPIs and impact assessment of the URC

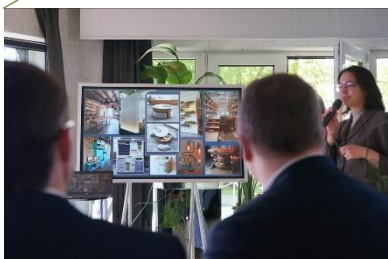
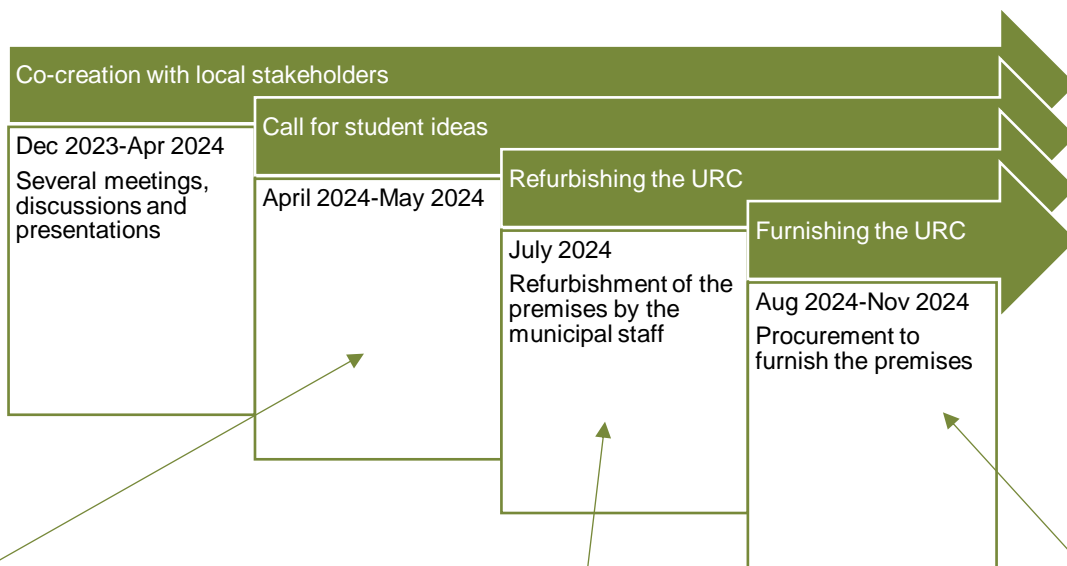
Riga Circular Economy Centre is a pilot project in Latvia, to be opened in November 2024. KPIs are based on experience of similar URCs and will be adjusted based on actual performance after the first year of operations. At the start of operations (during the first year), KPIs concentrate on outcome rather than impact assessment.

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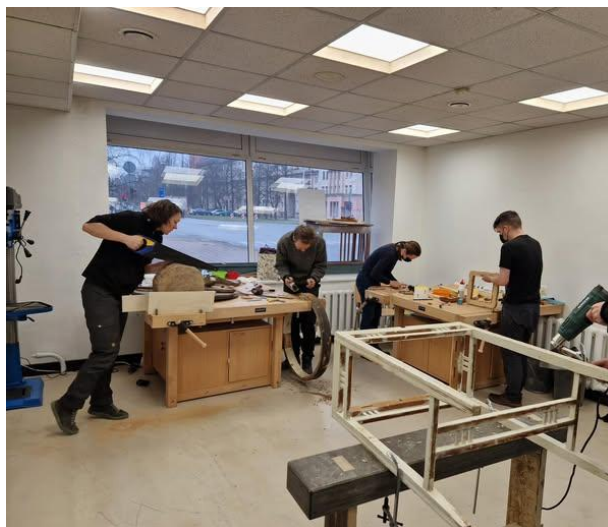
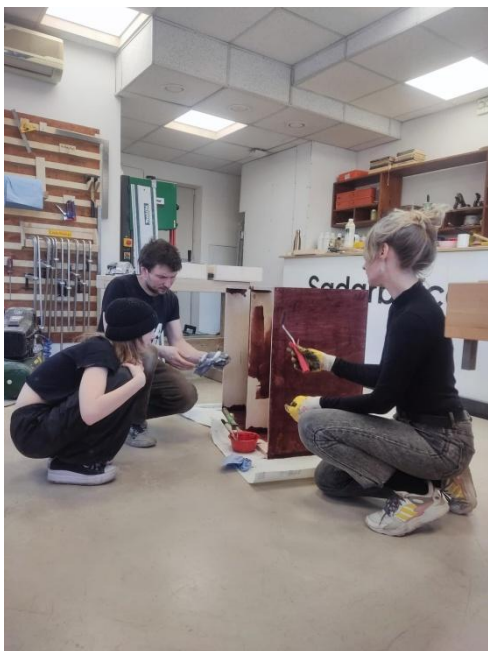
KPI	Sources of information	Results
Workshop visitors January-March 2025 2 days per week	Daily counting	65
Items repaired/ created January-March 2025 2 days per week	Daily counting	40
Events organized December 2024-March 2025	Staff reports	25
Number of participants (events) December 2024-March 2025	Staff reports	320



6. Implementation



Riga URC in action



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7. Visitors' testimonies

Workshop visitors

"Working here is better than therapy." /Dace/



“I was truly impressed by the carpenter’s expertise. The project we had in mind seemed almost impossible, but thanks to his skill and guidance, we brought it to life.” /Ilze/

*“Having access to this space and such a variety of tools is incredible. But what I value the most is the expert advice – it’s something I never realized could make such a huge difference.”
/Andris/*

Community space visitors

“This place inspires!” /Marija/

“What a unique place! You can feel the passion and dedication that went into creating it. Whether you want to learn, share, or connect, it’s the perfect spot.” /Jānis/

*“It was amazing to meet other like-minded people. We shared ideas and even exchanged contacts to collaborate in the future.”
/Anita/*

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8. Ensuring continuity

The **Riga Circular Economy Action Plan** is expected to be approved later this year, aiming to secure political support for the Urban Resource Centre (URC). If the pilot initiative proves successful, the Action Plan envisions the development of a network of URCs across Riga.

To ensure the long-term operation of the URC, a **Circular Economy Unit** has been established within the organizational structure of the Riga Energy Agency. The necessary funding for its activities has been allocated within the agency’s 2025 budget, and dedicated staff with long-term commitments have been appointed to manage and develop the URC.

The establishment phase of the URC included key activities such as an idea competition, an alternative working day, site selection, and the official opening of the centre. These events were widely publicized and well received by the public, fostering a positive perception of the URC, increasing awareness of its mission, and generating strong interest in its initiatives.

9. Lessons learnt and conclusions

Topic	Learning points
Objectives of the URC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must work a lot on the publicity to get the message across
Operational model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The operational model largely depends on municipal support, and thus – on setting CE as a political priority
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low yearly budget, however, not self-sustained, requires constant support of the city management
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dedicated person is needed to organise events, strengthen networking, ensure publicity, and develop content for the centre • Carpenter for the workshop can be employed internally or outsourced
Daily work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selected approach of allowing partners to organize events focused on the circular economy and sustainability fosters openness, diversity, and a sense of community. This approach enhances participation and ensures that the space is not dominated by a single perspective • Externally organised events require internal efforts related to cleaning and supervision • Noisy work at the workshop sometimes can disturb events at the community space
Tracking KPIs and impact assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current KPIs are easy to monitor • New indicators could be introduced to evaluate impact and performance quality of the URC

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10. Contact details

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