

Master's thesis – Master Sustainable Business and Innovation

The strategies through which social enterprises foster a socially just circular economy: a comparative case study

Elke Burghoorn (5658063)
Supervisor: Thomas J.F. Bauwens
Second reader: Jesse Hofman
Word count: 25223
Date: 24-11-2022
Utrecht University

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank all the interviewees from the participating social enterprises that I analysed in this research: About Blanks, Ateliere Fara Frontiere, Baterkaren, Bees, BinFree, Commown, Ecowings, Mercato Circolare, Po-Dzielnia, Repack, Reware and Staramaki. Moreover, I would like to express my gratitude to the expert interviewees who participated in my research, providing insights regarding the theoretical framework related to the circular economy and the potential role of social enterprises. I would like to thank all the interviewees for their time and valuable insights. The interviews truly inspired me. During these times, it can be hard to stay optimistic, however, the interviews and research process provided me with new hope for positive change.

Second, I would like to express my gratitude to my first supervisor Thomas Bauwens for guiding me throughout the research process and providing me with your expertise and conceptual suggestions. In addition, I would like to thank my second supervisor Jesse Hofman for his time and valuable feedback on my research proposal.

Third, I would like to express my gratitude to my peers Daantje Berghuis and Yana Mechielsen, for all the valuable feedback. Our collaboration made writing the thesis a gratifying experience. Moreover, I would like to thank my family and friends for guiding and supporting me throughout this time.

Abstract

A paradigm shift towards the circular economy (CE) is proposed by academics to foster a sustainable future. However, in the current CE concept, the social dimension of sustainability is marginally considered. Here, circular social enterprises (SEs) can play a role in integrating the social dimension in the CE concept to foster a socially just CE, as they prioritise their social objectives. Therefore, this research examined the strategies through which circular SEs can foster a socially just CE. In particular, this research used an environmental justice perspective (including procedural, recognitional and distributive justice) to identify the social issues and injustices in the CE. Moreover, the research looked into the differences in the employed strategies between three SE types, the entrepreneurial non-profit, social cooperative and the social business, as the features that address the social issues manifest differently in these SEs. A comparative case study was therefore employed, analysing twelve SEs based on 24 interviews and 56 archival data sources.

The results emphasise that the circular SEs can address all three dimensions of environmental justice holistically through five of their main features. First, the circular SEs utilise their economic surplus for environmental and social impact, reconceptualising surplus (distributive justice). Moreover, the economic surplus can be reinvested by the circular SEs in potential environmental injustices in the CE, fostering a socially just CE. Moreover, the circular SEs embody behavioural, financial, educational and technological accessibility through four different strategies (addressing distributive justice), namely: explicitly integrating accessibility in their social mission, providing (circular) capabilities to socially excluded groups, adopting technological accessibility in their business model and including access to CE information. Especially the entrepreneurial non-profits were found to include access to CE information through their adaptive and accessible approach to CE education. Furthermore, the democratisation of decision-making processes and the actualisation of good working conditions are strategies identified concerning the participatory governance of the circular SEs (procedural justice). The social cooperative adopts the democratization of decision-making processes most effectively due to their decision-making structures. Furthermore, the circular SEs aim to empower socially excluded groups and realise an inclusive environment to increase social inclusion in the CE, addressing recognitional justice. Lastly, the circular SEs socially embed their SE in the local community through increasing community engagement to address recognitional justice. The strategies identified by the results provide relevant insights for CE literature and practitioners aiming for a socially just CE.

Keywords: Circular Economy, Circular Social Enterprises, Environmental Justice, Participatory Governance, Social Inclusion, Accessibility, Social Embeddedness

Table of contents

1. Introduction	6
2. Theory	9
2.1 The Circular Economy	9
2.2. Social dimensions of the circular economy	10
2.2.1. Procedural justice	11
2.2.2 Recognitional justice	11
2.2.3. Distributive justice	12
2.3 Social enterprises	13
2.3.1 The definition and main features of social enterprises	13
2.3.2 The strategies through which SEs can foster a socially just CE	13
2.3.3 The different types of social enterprises	15
2.4 Conceptual framework	17
3. Methodology	18
3.1. Research design	18
3.2. Case selection	18
3.3. Data collection	19
3.3. Data analysis	22
3.3.1. Abductive data analysis approach	22
3.3.2. Analysis of expert & case interviews, and the archival data	22
3.4. Ethics issues data collection, data handling and data storage	23
3.5. Data structure	25
4. Results	27
4.1. Reconceptualisation of surplus	27
4.2. The embodiment of an accessible CE	30
4.3. Participatory governance	37
4.4. Drive for social inclusion	41
4.5. Social embeddedness	45
5. Discussion	47
5.1. Notable results of the research	47
5.1.1. The holistic and non-capitalist approach of the circular SEs	47
5.1.2 Circular SEs as catalysers for an accessible CE	48
5.1.3. The role of the participatory governance of SEs in the CE	50
5.1.4. The drive for social, circular inclusion of circular SEs	51

5.1.5. Social embeddedness of circular SEs	52
5.1.6. Differences between the types of SEs	52
5.2. Research limitations and suggestions for future research	54
Conclusion	56
References	59
Appendix A. Explanation of CBM innovations	72
Appendix B. The definitions of the main features of the SE	74
Appendix C. The cases and their social missions	76
Appendix D. Interview guide expert interviews	78
Appendix E. Interview guide case study: upstream actor	81
Appendix F. Interview guide case study: downstream actor	83
Appendix G. Archival data overview	85
Appendix H. The consent form	93

1. Introduction

The current linear economic model contributes to multiple environmental and social issues such as resource degradation, climate change, social inequalities and poverty, which reveals the need for a paradigm shift towards another economic system for a sustainable future (Andrews, 2015; Esposito et al., 2018; Nandi et al., 2021; Schröder et al., 2020). In response to this need, many academics, policy-makers, and businesses have proposed the circular economy (CE) (Kirchherr et al., 2017; Yuan et al., 2006). The CE serves as an economic model that replaces the current take-make-waste system by reducing, reusing, recycling and recovering materials in production and consumption processes (Kirchherr et al., 2017; Nandi et al., 2020). The CE aims to benefit all three sustainability dimensions, namely environment, economy and society (Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020).

Despite this aim, the social pillar of sustainability has been marginally considered while operationalising the CE (Moreau et al., 2017; Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020). The CE currently operates within the current economic forces of competitiveness, and mainly focuses on economic solutions to achieve environmental benefits (Moreau et al., 2017; Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020). In specific, linearity and capitalist values are deeply rooted in economic structures (Jaeger-Erben, 2019; Jaeger-Erben et al., 2021). Therefore, applying a circular business model or circularity to the current economic structures can lead to the same social issues as in the linear economy (Jaeger-Erben, 2019). Multiple authors have criticised the CE concept for the lack of integration of the social pillar of sustainability (Kirchherr et al., 2017; Mies & Gold, 2021; Moreau et al., 2017).

Although the social dimension of the CE has recently received more attention from academics (Kirchherr et al., 2017; Moreau et al., 2017; Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020), it has mostly been researched quantitatively (e.g. the number of jobs creations), while qualitative social impacts have been overlooked (Llorente-González & Vence, 2020; Wijkman & Skånberg, 2015). In particular, social and political-economic issues that need qualitative, in-depth research, such as inequality and poverty, gender issues, working conditions, inequality and poverty are rarely touched upon in the CE framework (Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020; Schröder et al., 2020). Some studies focus on mapping the social dimension (e.g. Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020; Schroeder et al., 2019), or link the CE to other alternative economies such as the social and solidarity economy to integrate the social dimension within the CE framework (Sahakian, 2015). Moreover, a new concept has arisen in academic literature, namely circular society. The circular society goes beyond environmental impact and economic growth and aims to include the social dimension as well by involving the participation of all societal actors (Jaeger-Erben, 2019). However, studies on the circular society remain generic and do not provide specific strategies through which the social dimension can be actively addressed within the CE. Therefore, in-depth qualitative research is needed to address such strategies to foster a socially just transition to the CE.

Here, so-called social enterprises (SEs) incorporating a circular business model (CBM) can facilitate the integration of the lacking social issues in the CE concept. SEs prioritise their social dimension, and balance all three dimensions of sustainability equally (Mair & Marti, 2006; Soufani et al., 2018). In particular, SEs are not-for-profit organisations that provide products/services relevant to their social aim (Defourny & Nyssens, 2008). SEs do not aim for profit maximisation and therefore potentially adopt a non-capitalistic approach (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). The transformation of capitalistic values is mentioned by Jaeger-Erben et al. (2021) as necessary to effectively integrate the social dimension in the CE. SEs adopting a CBM (also referred to as circular SEs) can thus have an exemplary role in addressing the social dimension in the CE, fostering a socially just CE. For example,

one social issue relates to the accessibility of products/services (Schröder et al., 2020). SEs can integrate this issue into their social aim and thus prioritise accessibility rather than economic profit, e.g. through lowering prices (Campbell & Sacchetti, 2014). Moreover, SEs can have a discursive power, relating to their potential to influence their institutional environment and public policies (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). For instance, SEs were pioneers in work integration practices, and have shaped the development of new legal frameworks (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). SEs can thus be pioneers in adopting a CBM (implementing CE principles) and integrating the social pillar in the CE, shaping the institutional environment and public policies.

In previous research three main types of SEs were identified; the entrepreneurial non-profit, the social cooperative and the social business (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017). Each type can contribute to social issues in different ways since the main features of the SEs can manifest differently per SE type (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017). An example of such a feature is their participatory nature, meaning that all stakeholders, including users and consumers, are involved in the governance of the SE (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). The social cooperative is specifically known for the implementation of democratic governance and can differ from the other SE types in strategies related to this feature (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017). The social cooperative can therefore potentially address social issues related to decision-making processes more effectively.

This research identifies two research gaps. First, while some research has been done regarding the (potential) role of SEs implementing a CBM in advancing social dimensions of the CE (Goodwin Brown et al., 2020; Prasad & Manimala, 2018; Soufani et al., 2018.), the convergence of the CE and SEs remains underexplored (Soufani et al., 2018). In particular, the specific strategies SEs use to foster a socially just CE are under-addressed in academic literature, and research is often limited to overall characteristics/strategies such as the use of non-formal education methods or work integration (Goodwin Brown et al., 2020). One exception is the research of Lekan et al. (2021) which focuses on how SEs contribute to local CE development. However, this research focused on one specific case and calls for future research in different spatial contexts related to local development (Lekan et al., 2021). Other literature on the convergence of CE and SEs mainly relates to SEs' implementation of the CE principles (Adelekan, 2021; Stratan, 2017), but does not focus on SEs fostering a socially just CE. The second research gap identified is the potential differences between the three SE types in the employed strategies to foster a socially just CE. Except for one study which focused on SEs and cooperatives (Goodwin Brown et al., 2020), differences between the types of SEs identified by Defourny and Nyssens (2017) have not been thoroughly evaluated specifically in the CE context.

This research aims to bridge these research gaps by examining the specific strategies SEs implementing a CBM pursue to foster a socially just CE, according to the different types of SEs. Therefore, the following research questions are addressed:

RQ 1: What are the strategies through which social enterprises foster and can foster (a transition towards) a socially just circular economy?

RQ2: Are there any differences in the employed strategies across different models of SEs and, if so, what are these differences and why?

From a scientific point of view, this research contributes to scientific literature by adopting an in-depth qualitative research approach to address the qualitative social impacts that are currently overlooked in CE research (Llorente-González & Vence, 2020; Wijkman & Skånberg, 2015). In

particular, it provides new insights into the strategies through which SEs address the overlooked social issues within the CE framework. Moreover, the research adds to the scientific literature by identifying the potential differences between the SE types in the employed strategies through a comparative case study design. Lastly, the research considers multiple contexts within the geographic scope, the European Union (EU), to increase the generalisability of the results in the EU context.

From a societal point of view, this research contributes to achieving (a transition to) a socially just CE, by enforcing and strengthening the integration of all three pillars of the sustainability paradigm in the CE. It provides insights into how different SEs implementing a CBM can address social issues, guiding SEs to strengthen their social role within the CE. Additionally, the strategies can serve as guidelines for for-profit companies that wish to contribute to the socially just transition to the CE.

The thesis is structured as follows. First, a socially just CE and the social issues are conceptualised, and the SEs features, types of SEs and possible strategies are explained. Thereafter, the methodology is explained, elaborating on the comparative case study design. Subsequently, the results are presented. Afterwards, the empirical findings are critically discussed and compared to existing literature, and the research limitations are pointed out. Finally, the conclusion and practical recommendations are provided.

2. Theory

2.1 The Circular Economy

This section first discusses the background and definition of the CE concept. In particular, CBM innovations and CBM strategies are explained, which are used to identify circular SEs. The CE was developed in the 1990s as a response to economic growth and its consequences on resource scarcity (Winans et al., 2017). The CE concept has evolved throughout the years and many scholars have defined the CE. However, consensus about the CE concept has yet to be reached (Kirchherr et al., 2017; Reike et al., 2018). This research will use the definition of Kirchherr et al. (2017) since it provides a broad definition based on an analysis of 117 definitions. Kirchherr et al. (2017) define the CE concept as:

“... an economic system that replaces the ‘end-of-life’ concept with reducing, alternatively reusing, recycling and recovering materials in production/distribution and consumption processes. It operates at the micro level (products, companies, consumers), meso level (eco-industrial parks) and macro level (city, region, nation and beyond), with the aim to accomplish sustainable development, thus simultaneously creating environmental quality, economic prosperity and social equity, to the benefit of current and future generations.” (Kirchherr et al., 2017, p. 229)

Organisations operating in the CE create, deliver and capture value through their CBM (Antikainen & Valkokari, 2016). A CBM is implemented through both CBM strategies and CBM innovations (Henry et al., 2020). CBM strategies are also known as R-imperatives (Henry et al., 2020; Reike et al., 2018), which can be adopted by organisations to increase circularity in their entity (e.g. reuse or recycle). While research has shown the diversification of the R-imperatives, this research follows the 4Rs framework according to the definition of Kirchherr et al. (2017); reduce, reuse, recycle and recover. The 4Rs framework is also adopted in EU policies, and therefore fits the geographical scope of this research (Kirchherr et al., 2017). The research of Henry et al. (2020) explains that CBM strategies can be adopted through CBM innovations, following upstream, downstream and full business model innovation. Upstream circular companies embrace circular innovations internally, focusing on their suppliers, by establishing circularity standards within the company and/or industrial symbiosis (input-oriented or output-oriented)(Henry et al., 2020). Downstream circular companies innovate in consumer interfaces and revenue models, through product-service systems, either use-phase or result/performance-oriented, and/or active consumer involvement (Henry et al., 2020). Active consumer involvement is achieved through repair, return, reuse, collaborative consumption and/or consumer engagement (Henry et al., 2020). Finally, full business model innovation combines both upstream and downstream CBM innovations, through core technology or enabling technology (Henry et al., 2020). The innovation types within core technology are source material, product design and key process, and for enabling technology the innovation types consist of sharing platforms, trading platforms and/or asset tracking (Henry et al., 2020). All the CBM innovations are summarized and explained in Appendix A.

2.2. Social dimensions of the circular economy

This section first discusses the status quo in research regarding the social dimension in CE literature. Whereafter, it examines the social issues regarding the CE, distributed amongst procedural justice, recognitional justice and distributive justice.

Currently, the CE concept is focusing on economic growth and environmental impacts (Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020), and not on the social dimension of sustainability. Most research regarding the social dimension of the CE relates to the product or company level or job creation. For example, people are regarded merely as consumers or users, not including the social context (Schröder et al., 2020). Some authors have attempted to integrate the social sustainability pillar into the CE concept by combining the CE with the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) or placing it in the human sphere (Moreau et al., 2017; Sahakian, 2015). Other scholars have proposed to replace the CE concept with the Circular Society (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2021; Leipold et al., 2021). In all these approaches, people are emphasised rather than economic profit, lowering the focus on the economic dimension and integrating the social dimension (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2021; Leipold et al., 2021; Moreau et al., 2017; Sahakian, 2015). These studies are, however, generic and do not look into the specific strategies through which the social dimension can be integrated. There is no appropriate CE framework yet which considers all the under-addressed social issues into-depth (Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020). Schröder et al. (2020) mapped these underexplored and under-addressed social issues, namely 1) poverty & accessibility, 2) health & well-being, 3) gender issues, 4) education, skills & working conditions, 5) issues of social inequality and 6) CE cooperation for developing countries.¹ Moreover, literature reviews from Padilla-Rivera et al. (2020) and Mies and Gold (2021) mapped social issues mentioned in CE literature. These studies assist the conceptualization of these social issues of the CE in sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3.

The roots of these social issues mentioned above need to be tackled in the CE concept. A way to address the roots of the issues is by using a critical perspective to analyse the injustices in social groups in the CE concept to detect and improve what is necessary (Amorim de Oliveira, 2021). Here, environmental justice excels, as it can identify social injustices in environmental practices, and identify overlooked groups (Amorim de Oliveira, 2021). Therefore, this study employs the environmental justice perspective to identify and improve the social gaps in the CE concept.

While the discourse of environmental justice has expanded, this thesis uses the conceptualization of Schlosberg (2004). Previous definitions mostly relate to distributive justice and procedural justice, but Schlosberg (2004) provides a broader conceptualisation by also identifying recognitional justice. Recognitional justice refers to: “...the ability to participate in and benefit from environmental governance without being required to assimilate to dominant cultural norms” (Schlosberg, 2004, as cited in Suiseeya & Kimberly, 2016, p. 3). Procedural justice concerns: “... the ability of all individuals impacted by a decision to meaningfully participate in the decision-making process” (Schlosberg, 2004, as cited in Suiseeya & Kimberly, 2016, p. 3). Finally, distributive justice relates to “unequitable distribution of costs and benefits, harms and goods related to environmental governance” (Schlosberg, 2004, as cited in Suiseeya & Kimberly, 2016, p. 3). These principles are interrelated, e.g. distributive justice outcomes can diminish when there is procedural injustice (Suiseeya & Kimberly, 2016). In the following sections, the social issues derived from literature are embedded in these three types of justice.

¹ The last social issue mentioned is not included, as it does not fit within the scope of this research.

2.2.1. Procedural justice

Research has shown that specifically participatory and democratic governance in the CE can develop functional benefits and promote a wider understanding of societal issues (Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020). In particular, it facilitates a way through which people in a society can express their opinions and root for better decisions (Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020). Participatory governance can therefore increase the ability of people to address social issues, e.g. in business-related contexts. Nevertheless, in current CE practices, little attention goes to the ability to participate in decision-making processes. For example, a discourse analysis by Friant et al. (2020) revealed that participatory governance is often not mentioned in European government policies, CE development plans in cities, international organizations (e.g. OECD) and business consultancies. This reveals the need to build a common perspective and include participatory and democratic governance in the CE concept (Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020)

One of the social issues that is not effectively addressed in the CE, is the working conditions in CE practices (Corvellec et al., 2022; Schröder et al., 2020). According to Mies and Gold (2021), working conditions in the CE depend on three factors: 1) a decent work infrastructure and equipment, 2) provision of education and 3) training and assurance of workers' health and safety. Moreover, according to Mair et al. (2019), working conditions also include the provision of fair living wages for employees.

Concerns about working conditions in the CE in current research are often related to health and safety, especially to toxicological hazards (Héry & Malenfer, 2020). In particular, working conditions in the CE are context-specific and are highly dependent on the workers' activities, e.g. the working conditions in recycling facilities can vary from the working conditions of reuse activities (Schröder et al., 2020). The potential risks of CE activities can be particularly high in recycling activities (Héry, & Malenfer, 2020). Recycling practices include high exposure to toxins and toxic metals that are hazardous to human health. In informal recycling facilities, workers are especially highly exposed to these toxins due to the lack of proper protective equipment (Bakhiyi et al., 2018). The latter overlaps with distributive justice as it also relates to the unequal distribution of harm. In summary, the working conditions in the CE can be hazardous and need to be addressed to foster a socially just CE. Participatory governance can play a role in managing these working conditions.

2.2.2 Recognitional justice

Recognitional justice refers to the ability to participate for everyone without having to conform to cultural dominant roles (Schlosberg, 2004), e.g. gender minorities, ethnic minorities, youth, elderly, people with a disability, or other marginalised groups. In current academic literature, the involvement of all marginalised groups in the CE is partly addressed through social inclusion or by addressing an inclusive economy (Mies & Gold, 2021; Moreau et al., 2017). Nevertheless, not everyone can participate in the CE without having to assimilate to dominant cultural norms. Specifically, in CE literature, recognitional injustices in both the lack of incorporation of gender perspectives and the involvement of ethnic minorities came forward (Mies & Gold, 2021; Pla-Julián & Guevara, 2019; Schroeder et al., 2019; Schröder et al., 2020). The following section, therefore, zooms in on gender and ethnic minorities to point out recognitional injustices in the CE frameworks more into-depth.

Schroeder et al. (2019) show that gender equality has no direct link with CE practices. Women are often neglected in these practises, e.g. by the lack of sanitation facilities in factories and not addressing gender pay gaps (Bebasari, 2019; Schröder et al., 2020). Increasing women's participation

and promoting gender equality can lead to new market niches and possible business opportunities for a better future for everyone (Pla-Julián & Guevara, 2019), and the gender gap in the CE can prevent the CE from adopting opportunities that generate shared value.

Moreover, while some attention has gone to the involvement of ethnic minorities at the macro level (Boeri et al., 2019; Izdebska & Knieling, 2020), the involvement of ethnic minorities is not mentioned as a social issue in literature reviews assessing the social dimension of the CE (Mies & Gold, 2021; Schröder et al., 2020). Thus, little attention in CE frameworks has gone to the ability to participate for minorities. CE initiatives however do have the potential to create an open space for empowerment and active involvement (Bebasari, 2019), and tackle recognitional injustices.

2.2.3. Distributive justice

While intergenerationally seen, the CE can increase distributive justice, as it saves natural resources for future generations through resource efficiency (Geisendorf & Pietrulla, 2018), distributive injustices in the CE are revealed in academic literature. These injustices manifest in the inaccessibility of both circular services and products, and the distribution of harms and benefits between the global north and south (Capgemini Research Institute, 2021; Ciliberto et al., 2021; Schröder et al., 2020).

CE practices can have the potential to increase the accessibility of circular products and services by lowering ownership (Atstaja et al., 2022; Hu et al., 2019), for example through servitisation or collaborative consumption (Henry et al., 2020). However, forms of inaccessibility in the CE manifest in behavioural accessibility, financial accessibility and technological accessibility. First, a lack of knowledge can for example influence the participation of consumers (Camacho-Otero et al., 2018), revealing possible behavioural inaccessibility due to knowledge barriers. Moreover, financial access to repair services or stores for used/refurbished products is revealed as a barrier to participation in the CE due to the higher prices of e.g. repair (Capgemini Research Institute, 2021), especially affecting marginalised groups with low income. Lastly, digitalisation is an important factor in the CE as many circular services require access to a digital platform, e.g. access-based platforms such as car-sharing (refuse) or resell platforms (reuse) (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Bigerna et al., 2021). In particular, digitization can accelerate and improve the implementation of CE and servitisation, especially related to CBM innovation category product service systems (Grahna, 2022; Ng, 2022). However, the current digital divide, meaning that marginalised groups can have less or no access to the internet or digital devices (Esteban-Navarro et al., 2020), influences the accessibility of these services. In addition, the CE is susceptible to increasing the digital divide, since businesses operationalizing the CE need to invest in the necessary digital infrastructure that allows the reconfiguration of the value chain (Ciliberto et al., 2021).

Finally, localization and localising resource flows are indicated by research to increase sustainability and enhance the CE impacts (Williams, 2019). Localization can however lead to negative externalities in the global south e.g. regarding job creation (Repp et al., 2021; Schröder et al., 2020). The study from Llorente-González and Vence (2020) emphasised that the CE is in general labour-intensive, however, there are differences between the various sectors. For example, reuse and repair activities in the EU are more labour-intensive and low-capital intensive, whilst waste collection and recycling are more capital-intensive. Therefore, more job opportunities arise at e.g. reuse and repair activities in comparison to waste collection and recycling activities. The CE can thus also lead to job losses, for example in capital-intensive manufacturing sectors that will be replaced by automation and circular supply chains (Schröder et al., 2020). These are likely to impact SMEs in low- and middle-

income countries (Schröder et al., 2020). Thus, while the CE leads to job creation in the EU, it can lead to job losses in emerging countries (Repp et al., 2021). Moreover, particularly in the Global South, there are informal economies that affect e.g. poorer working conditions in CE practices (Bakhiyi et al., 2018).

2.3 Social enterprises

This section first provides the definition and main features of SEs. Moreover, it touches upon the possible strategies through which SEs can foster a socially just CE. After, the different types of SEs and their potential to address these strategies are discussed.

2.3.1 The definition and main features of social enterprises

The definition of SEs is context-specific (Defourny & Nyssens, 2008), emphasising the need for a definition that fits the scope of this research. Therefore, this research uses the SE definition of EMES European research network, as it provides a clear typology of the social enterprise and its main features in Europe (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). Defourny and Nyssens (2008) summarise the definition of social enterprises as follows:

"Social enterprises are not-for-profit private organisations providing goods or services directly related to their explicit aim to benefit the community. They rely on collective dynamics involving various types of stakeholders in their governing bodies, they place a high value on their autonomy and they bear economic risks linked to their activity". (Defourny & Nyssens, 2008, p.5)

The EMES approach defines several main features of the social enterprise, divided into the following three sub-dimensions: economic and entrepreneurial dimensions, social dimensions and the participatory governance of the SE (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). The economic and entrepreneurial dimensions consist of the continued activity of producing goods or selling services, the significant level of economic risk and the minimum amount of paid work (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). The social dimensions relate to the explicit aim to benefit the community, the initiative is initiated by a group of citizens or civil society organisations and limited profit distribution (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). The participatory governance of the SE involves a high degree of autonomy, the decision-making power not based on capital ownership and the participatory nature of the social enterprise (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). The definitions of these features are explained in Appendix B.

2.3.2 The strategies through which SEs can foster a socially just CE

Pansera et al. (2021) highlight the potential of bottom-up practices to enhance a socially just transition to the CE by reshaping CE discourse. An example of these bottom-up practices can be SEs, which can have a discursive power to influence policies and institutions (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). Moreover, SEs specific social aim to benefit the community can address the current environmental injustices in the CE concept. SEs can therefore be a starting point for a socially just transition towards the CE for local communities, with the potential to influence policies and institutions.

Social enterprises can address procedural, recognitional and distributive justice through some of their main features, including their not-for-profit mission, the participatory nature of the SEs and

their social and territorial embeddedness, shown in Table 1. These strategies are derived from SE literature and guide the identification of the strategies used by circular SEs.

The not-for-profit mission, relating to all the social and non-economic objectives of the SEs, allow SEs to act upon a certain social aim. The main activity of SEs closely relates to this social aim, meaning SEs can insist on social change through their business model. For example, the SEs can increase accessibility to (circular) products or services (distributive justice)(Campbell & Sacchetti, 2014; Ciambotti, 2020). The SEs can also aim for social inclusion, increasing the ability to participate for people regardless of having to conform to prevailing cultural norms (recognitional justice)(Kilpatrick et al., 2021). The latter can, for example, be addressed by the SEs through work integration, providing job opportunities to marginalised groups (O'Shaughnessy & O'Hara, 2016). Moreover, the not-for-profit feature of SEs allows for reinvestment of their economic surplus in their social mission. Gui (1991) argues that the economic surplus of the SEs is reinvested in a manner through which a beneficiary group receives the benefits, and a dominant group has the decision power to decide who receives the benefits. These benefits of the circular SEs can for example relate to lowering prices for consumers to improve financial accessibility of the CE (distributive justice)(Borzaga & Tortia, 2009). Finally, Nicolás and Rubio (2016) argue that women value the not-for-profit mission more compared to men. The gender gap in SEs is smaller compared to commercial enterprises, especially in developing countries (Nicolás & Rubio, 2016). Therefore, the not-for-profit mission can potentially attract gender minorities (Hechavarria et al., 2012; Urbano et al., 2014), increasing the ability to participate for genders that do not assimilate to dominant cultural norms (recognitional justice).

The participatory governance of SEs means that all stakeholders are involved in the governance of the organisation, including users or consumers (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). Participation, especially in decision-making processes, can promote the representation of minorities, increase empowerment and potentially reduce inequalities (recognitional justice)(Del Gesso & Romagnoli, 2020; Finlayson & Roy, 2019). Next to empowerment, the involvement of all stakeholders in the governance of SEs allows everyone affected by the decision to use their voice and shape rules and norms. This can avoid social issues such as lacking working conditions (procedural justice)(Dupret & Eschweiler, 2022).

SEs are territorial and socially embedded, and have strong linkages with the local community (Chen, 2018). SEs can therefore act upon issues closely related to their community and increase community engagement (Verver et al., 2021). Community engagement can result in addressing several social issues, for example influencing the health behaviours of disadvantaged groups (distributive justice)(O'Mara-Eves et al., 2013), or empowering marginalised groups to participate in the circular SE (recognitional justice)(Siegner et al., 2019). The social embeddedness of SEs can also enhance social networks in their community, increasing social connectedness and eventually well-being (Gordon et al., 2018; Henderson et al., 2020). This can enhance the ability of marginalised groups to participate in the circular SEs.

Table 1.

SE features related to their possible sub-strategies through which they can address the three types of justice.

SE features	Strategies	Type of justice	Supporting literature
Not-for-profit mission	Business model related to their social aim, e.g. by increasing accessibility to all.	Distributive justice Recognitional justice	Campbell & Sacchetti, 2014; Ciambotti, 2020; Kilpatrick et al., 2021; Meltzer et al., 2018; Mckinnon et al., 2020
	Attraction gender minorities by their social mission	Recognitional justice	Nicolás & Rubio, 2016; Urbano et al., 2014; Hechavarria et al., 2012; Mckay et al., 2011
Participatory nature	Participation resulting in empowerment	Recognitional justice	Del Gesso & Romagnoli, 2020; Finlayson & Roy, 2019; Haugh & Talwar, 2016; Pareja-Cano et al., 2020
	Ability for everyone to shape rules and norms	Procedural justice	Dupret & Eschweiler, 2022; Hulgård et al., 2017; Sdrali et al., 2016
Territorial and social embeddedness	Community engagement	Recognitional justice Distributive justice	O'Mara-Eves et al., 2013; Satar, 2019; Siegner et al., 2019; Verver et al., 2021
	Increasing social networks	Recognitional justice	Chui et al., 2019; Gordon et al., 2018; Henderson et al., 2020; Barraket, 2013

2.3.3 The different types of social enterprises

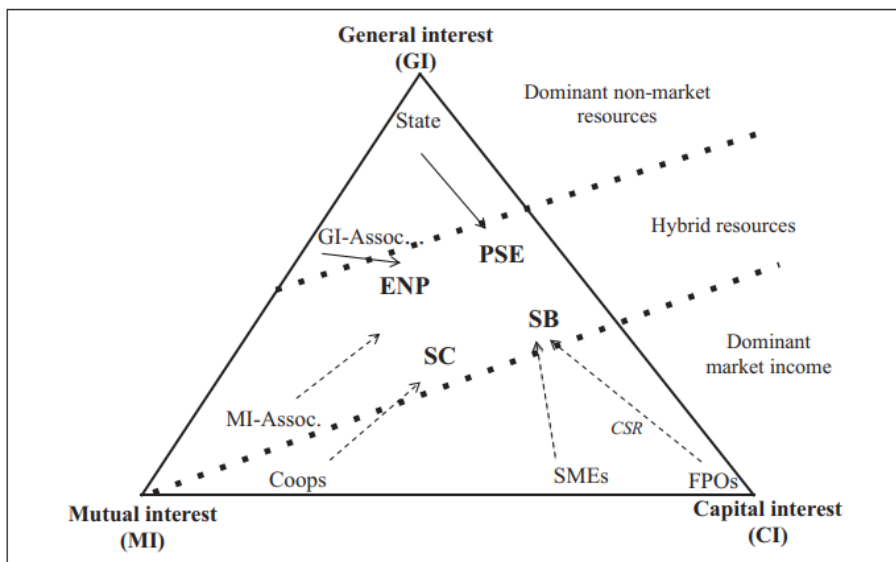
Following the EMES definition of social enterprises, Defourny and Nyssens (2017) mapped the different types of social enterprises, namely the entrepreneurial non-profit, the social cooperative, the social business and the public sector social enterprise.² Compared to other typologies, their typology is rooted in theoretical grounds and generalizable to multiple contexts and countries (Defourny et al., 2021).

SEs operate between three principles of interest; general interest (GI), mutual interest (MI) and capital interest (CI), shown in figure 1. The entrepreneurial non-profit includes all non-profit organisations that have any type of income through activities related to their social mission and act more towards GI (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017; Defourny et al., 2021). The social cooperative differs from traditional cooperatives as they pursue the interests of their members and the community's interests and thus combine both GI and MI (Defourny et al., 2021). The social cooperative is

² The last SE type represents a new phenomenon in Israel (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017) and does not operate in the scope of this research; this SE type is therefore not included in this research. Moreover, no empirical evidence has been found that his model is represent in all contexts (Defourny et al., 2021).

characterised by the aim of implementing democratic governance (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017), and actively pursuing the one-member, one-vote feature shown in Appendix B. There are different types of social cooperatives; producer cooperatives, consumer cooperatives and multi-stakeholder cooperatives (Spear, 2000).³ Lastly, the social business balances the economic and social dimensions (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017). This type is rooted in business models driven by shareholders (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017), and relies more on CI compared to the other SE types (Defourny et al., 2021). This can raise the question of whether the social/environmental dimensions are the main aim of the activities or if these are used for the shareholders' interest (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017). The social business risks mission drift where economic activities are, in the end, considered more important than their social mission (Doherty et al., 2014). Mission drift can affect the legitimacy of the SE for stakeholders (Dart, 2004).

Figure 1.
The three principles of interest and the different types of SEs.



Note: Adopted from "Mapping social enterprise models: some evidence from the "ICSEM" project." By J. Defourny & M. Nyssens, 2017, *Social Enterprise Journal*, p. 7 (<https://doi.org/10.1108/SEJ-09-2017-0049>). Copyright 2017 by Emerald Publishing Limited

The three types of SEs potentially alter in the employed strategies through which they address the three types of justice, due to the different manifestations of the SE features. For example, the social business risks mission drift, since they operate more towards CI and risk operating more towards the interest of their shareholder instead of their stakeholder (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017), which could result in addressing their social aim less effectively. This can also influence the participatory governance as the social business type possibly takes shareholders more into account than other stakeholders (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017). Social cooperatives however specifically aim for democratic governance (Defourny et al., 2021), increasing the potential to address the strategies related to the participatory nature of SEs. Moreover, due to economic pressure, some social cooperatives have limited profit distribution, also possibly risking mission drift (Defourny & Nyssens, 2013). Finally, the

³ The different type of cooperatives are run by different actors, for example consumer cooperatives are run by consumers, producer cooperatives are run by producers and multi-stakeholder cooperatives are run by different stakeholders (Spear, 2000).

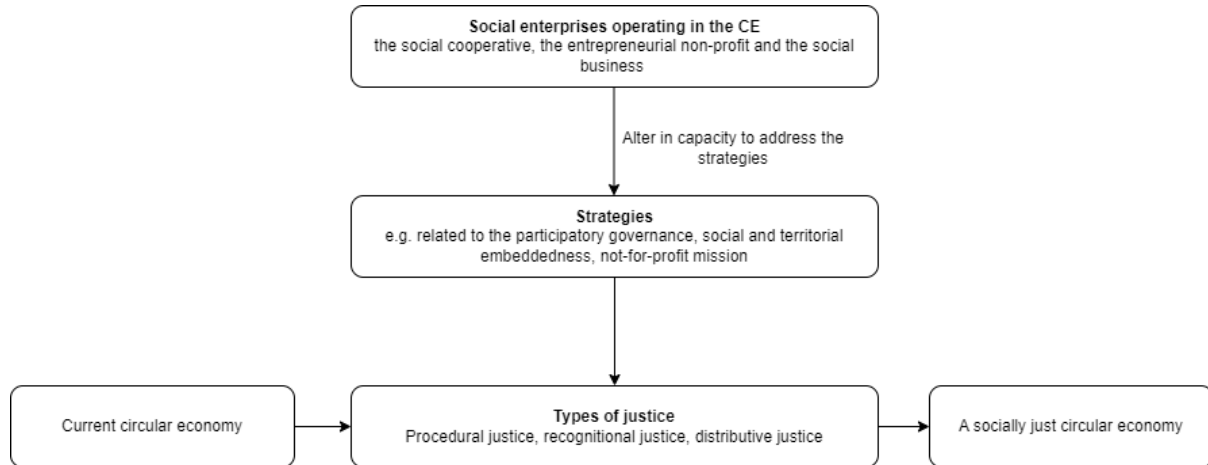
entrepreneurial non-profit operates mostly to the general interest, and can therefore possibly address a broader public compared to the other two types (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017).

2.4 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is shown in figure 2. It illustrates how the concepts identified in the theoretical framework relate to answering the research questions.

Figure 2.

The conceptual framework



3. Methodology

This section first describes the research design. Subsequently, it discusses the data collection and sampling process. Hereafter, the data analysis process is explained. Finally, ethics concerning data collection, data handling and data storage are discussed.

3.1. Research design

This research aimed to identify the strategies through which SEs foster a socially just CE and the possible differences in the employed strategies between the three SE types, with a focus on theory building and generation. Because of the exploring nature of this aim, a qualitative research design seems to be the most fitting as it enables the identification of concepts and relationships (Bryman, 2016). Specifically, this research used an abductive research approach. An abductive research approach allowed to retrieve both new insights through inductive approaches, but also to validate the theoretical framework. In particular, the researcher starts with incomplete observation, aiming to retrieve new insights and solve the ‘theoretical puzzle’ (Kennedy & Thornberg, 2018).

In particular, a comparative case study was conducted following the approach of Eisenhardt, as this design is known to improve theory building (Eisenhardt, 1989). Case studies “*emphasise the rich real-world context in which the phenomenon occurs*” (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 25). The approach can help in understanding causality and gives the opportunity to research causal mechanisms in different contexts (Bryman, 2016). In this thesis, a comparative case study allowed for retrieving in-depth insights into the strategies through which SEs foster a socially just CE by comparing three different types of SEs. Moreover, the Eisenhardt approach emphasises overlapping data collection and data analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989), which is fitting with the abductive research design.

3.2. Case selection

The case organisations were selected according to the Eisenhardt approach, where careful case selection is emphasised; cases have to be chosen where the phenomenon is likely to occur (Eisenhardt, 2021). Moreover, the case designs should have similarities and differences, which is likely to improve theory building and increase generalizability as well as external validity (Eisenhardt, 2021). Careful case selection through similarities and differences also mitigates alternative explanations, increasing the generalizability of the findings (Eisenhardt, 2021). SEs were selected based on the following criteria:

1. The SE operates in the CE (employs CBM strategies and innovations)
2. The SE can be classified as one of the three different types of SEs
3. The SE complies with the features of SEs (section 2.3.1)
4. The SE operates in the European Union
5. Willingness to do an interview
6. Availability of data

To ensure the similarities and differences between the SEs, 24 cases were initially selected based on different CBM innovations, different types of SEs and different countries (criteria 1, 2, 4). In the Eisenhardt approach, a number of cases between four and ten is common (Eisenhardt, 2021), however, the number of cases is not inherent to the Eisenhardt approach (Eisenhardt, 1989). Therefore, this research selected a total of twelve cases based on criteria five and six (four per type of

SE) to include multiple emblematic examples per SE type operating in the EU, increasing external validity. The selected cases and a description of the different criteria are shown in Table 2. The different SEs and their social missions are explained in further detail in Appendix C.

Table 2.

The selected cases according to the sample criteria.

Case	Type of SE	CBM strategy	CBM innovation category	Country
Staramaki	Social cooperative	Reduce	Industrial symbiosis, core technology	Greece
Reware	Social cooperative	Reuse/recycle	Industrial symbiosis	Italy
Bees	Social cooperative	Reduce	Core technology	Belgium
Commown	Social cooperative	Reuse	Product Service System	Germany/France
About Blank	Social business	Reuse	Industrial symbiosis	Netherlands
Ecowings	Social business	Recycle	Industrial symbiosis, core technology	Netherlands
Repack	Social business	Reuse	Active consumer involvement	Finland
Mercato Circolare	Social business	Reduce	Active consumer involvement	Italy
Ateliere Fara Frontiere	Entrepreneurial non-profit	Recycle	Industrial symbiosis	Romania
Po-dzielnia	Entrepreneurial non-profit	Reuse	Active consumer involvement	Poland
BinFree	Entrepreneurial non-profit	Reduce	Active consumer involvement	Estonia
Baterkaren	Entrepreneurial non-profit	Reuse	Active consumer involvement	Slovakia

3.3. Data collection

This study increased the reliability and validity of the research by using a variety of data sources, including interviews and archival data, to achieve data triangulation (Eisenhardt, 1989). In-depth semi-structured interviews were collected with experts and case organisations. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to keep an open mind, and the interviewees to comment freely on their experiences and insights (Bryman, 2016). This gave the opportunity for concepts and theories to develop from the data, making it appropriate for theory creation (Bryman, 2016). Moreover, the semi-structured interviews allowed for the comparison of the data retrieved.

Figure 3 depicts the two research phases: the expert interviews and the comparative case study. First, four expert interviews were conducted to strengthen and test the theoretical framework and increase internal validity. Additionally, expert interviews are particularly useful for gathering data in the beginning phase of the research as they provide time-effective data-gathering (Bogner et al., 2009). The interview guide for expert interviews is shown in Appendix D. In this research, an expert is seen as a person who “... has technical, process and interpretative knowledge that refers to a specific field

of action, by virtue of the fact that the expert acts in a relevant way" (Bogner et al., 2009, p. 54). The experts were selected through purposeful sampling based on the following criteria:

1. Experts have expertise both related to SEs and the CE
2. Experts are either academics or practitioners possessing a high level of knowledge
3. Willingness to do an interview

Afterwards, twenty interviews were conducted from twelve different case organisations to retrieve in-depth insights into the strategies through which the three types of SEs contribute to the three dimensions of justice. The interviews served as the primary source of data as these allowed for in-depth insights. All 24 selected respondents are shown in Table 3 (also including the respondents of the expert interviews). Interview one to twenty were conducted by the current researcher, interview 21 to 24 were conducted by researcher Yana Mechielsen. In all cases, either the founder of the SE and/or an employee, volunteer or participant of the SE were interviewed to retrieve both bottom-up and top-down insights. In total, 1087 minutes and 14 seconds of interviews were conducted, with an average of 45 minutes and 29 seconds per interview. Mostly two interviews per case were conducted; however, on occasion, one interview per case was conducted due to resource limitations.

The interview guides were designed to address to examine all three dimensions of justice, and the social issues derived from prior literature, shown in Appendices E and F. Questions related to procedural justice, therefore, related to the decision-making processes and the working conditions of the circular SEs. Questions about recognitional justice related to the ability to participate for gender minorities, ethnic minorities, youth, and people with a disability. The participation of other marginalised groups was examined as well, dependent on the case. Lastly, the strategies through which the circular SEs can address distributive justice were examined through questions related to accessibility and the possible distribution of harms of the circular SEs. Preliminary desk research (archival data) allowed to alter the interview guides per case. If the archival data gave in-depth insights related to certain questions (e.g. related to the CBM of the SE), these questions were removed from the interview guides. Moreover, in some cases, the preliminary desk research revealed the potential for interesting follow-up questions, for example, related to the accessibility of the CE, included in the interview guide accordingly. Moreover, the interview questions were formulated in an understandable manner, and theoretical terms such as the different dimensions of justice were avoided.

Besides the preliminary desk research, the archival data was collected and analysed to retrieve complementary insights, especially for the cases where one interview was conducted. The archival data were therefore used in a supplementary manner to the interview data to increase the reliability of the data collection. The archival data analysed contained 56 data sources, consisting of different types of documents: social reports, websites, annual reports, news articles, videos and social media, summarized in table 4. An overview of the documents is shown in Appendix G. Social media posts were analysed up to 50 posts (Facebook) and 100 posts (Instagram).⁴ Moreover, archival data consisted of several languages due to the geographical scope of the research; namely Dutch, English, German, French, Slovakian, Polish, Italian and Romanian. The researcher has a sufficient level of Dutch, English and German and was able to read and interpret the data sources in these languages. Data sources in other languages were translated by the automatic translation feature of Google.

⁴ Except if the social media channel had less than 100 posts.

Table 3.*The selected respondents, their role and organisation/social enterprise*

Respondent	Type of actor	Organisation
R1	Expert, academic	Utrecht University
R2	Expert, practitioner	Phillips
R3	Expert, academic	TU Berlin
R4	Expert, practitioner	HERWIN collective
R5	Founder	BinFree
R6	Participant minimalist training	BinFree
R7	Participant recycling service	BinFree
R8	Founder (Netherlands)	Ecowings
R9	Founder (India)	Ecowings
R10	Head of operations (member)	Staramaki
R11	Quality manager (member)	Staramaki
R12	Co-founder	Reware
R13	Founder	Baterkaren
R14	Employee	Ateliere Fara Frontiere
R15	Employee (Program leader Educlick)	Ateliere Fara Frontiere
R16	Founder	Po-Dzielnia
R17	Volunteer	Po-Dzielnia
R18	Founder	Mercato Circolare
R19	Co-founder	About Blank
R20	Employee	Repack
R21	Founder	Commown
R22	Member (consumer)	Commown
R23	Board member	Bees
R24	Purchaser, shop manager	Bees

Table 4.*A summary of the data collection*

Data source	Quantity
Interviews	
Expert interviews	158 minutes and 4 seconds
Case interviews	929 minutes and 10 seconds
Archival data	
Websites	22
Articles	13
Social media channels	12
Booklet	1
Video	47 seconds
(Annual/social) reports	6
Press release	1

3.3. Data analysis

3.3.1. Abductive data analysis approach

The data were analysed according to the three main ideas of abductive research: 1) revisiting the phenomenon 2) defamiliarization 3) alternative casing (Tavory & Timmermans, 2012). Revisiting the phenomenon allowed the researcher to go back to the same observation at any point in the research process (Tavory & Timmermans, 2012). Furthermore, defamiliarization allowed the researcher to revisit the data and not only the phenomenon, allowing to retrieve insights that were first overlooked (Tavory & Timmermans, 2012). Finally, alternative casing relates to finding as many ways as possible to understand the data to highlight different aspects of the phenomenon. Eventually, this step led to a generalisation of the theory found (Tavory & Timmermans, 2012).

3.3.2. Analysis of expert & case interviews, and the archival data

The data analysis consisted of two steps, 1) the expert interviews and 2) case interviews and archival data as step two. The process is shown in figure 3. First, the expert interviews were transcribed, coded and analysed in Nvivo. These interviews were coded accordingly to open coding, using an inductive approach (Gioia et al., 2013), and identified concepts and themes related to possible strategies of SEs and social issues in the CE. A total of 71 open codes were initially created. The obtained insights were compared to the theoretical framework and interview guides, which were adjusted accordingly. The main insights of the expert interviews in the theoretical framework related to the CE issues being similar to the linear economy, working conditions and recognitional justice. Other insights concern the discursive power of SEs, the differences between social cooperatives compared to the other types of SEs and the responsibility and participatory governance in SEs.

The second step included transcribing and coding the case interviews (in NVivo). Moreover, the complementary insights of archival data were summarized and included in NVivo. However, due to time constraints, these insights were not included in the coding process. The case interviews were coded according to open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Open coding was used to identify concepts and themes that could be used for categorization. In total, 430 open codes were created, from which 25 first-order concepts emerged. After, axial coding further refined and categorised these themes, which resulted in ten second-order concepts. Finally, selective coding allowed the researcher to select and integrate these categories to retrieve meaningful insights, resulting in five aggregate dimensions (Williams & Moser, 2019). In particular, open coding allowed for insights in the strategies through which SEs address the social issues related to environmental justice described in the theoretical framework. Afterwards, axial coding revealed the overarching strategies of the SEs addressing the CE issues. Lastly, selective coding identified the features of the SEs that foster a socially just CE.

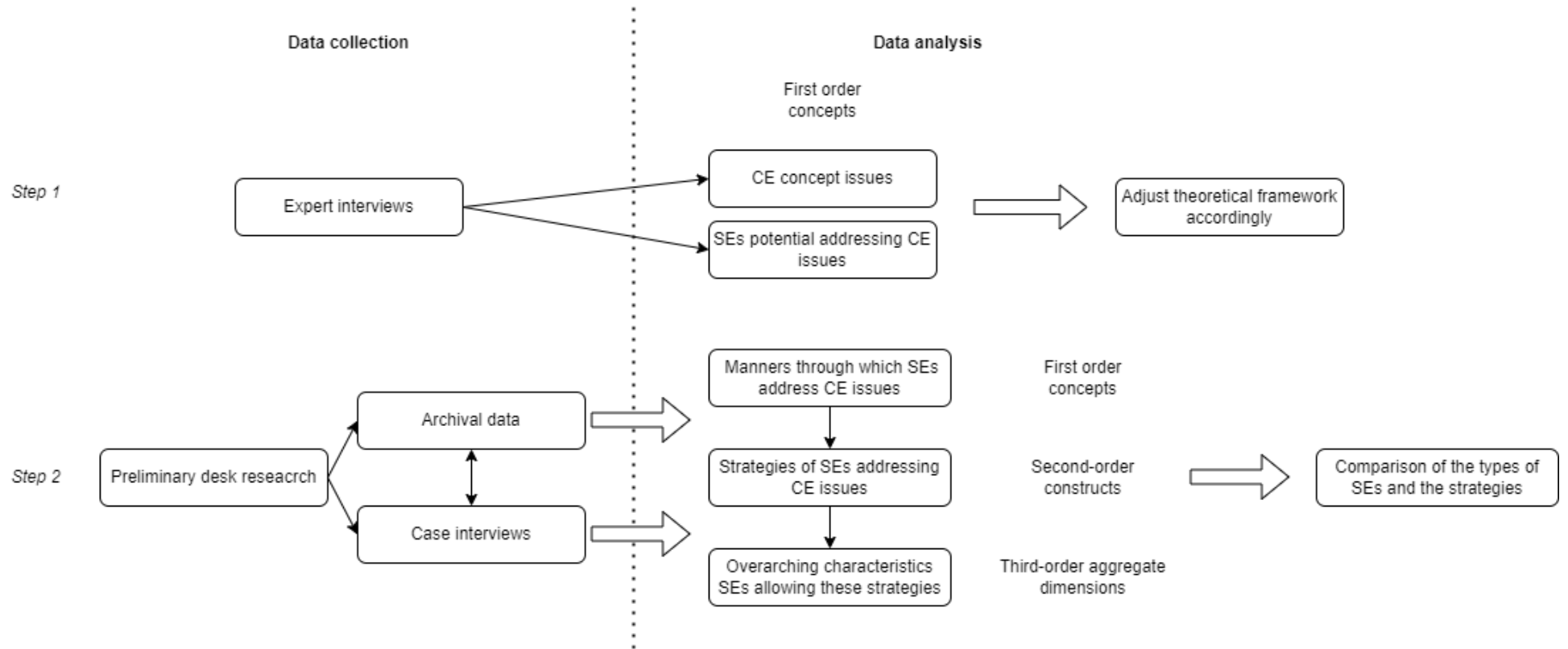
Finally, the cases were compared through the Eisenhardt approach to retrieve insights into the differences in the employed strategies across the three types of SEs. First, within-case analysis was conducted, which consisted of analysing the archival data and interviews. The within-case analysis allowed for familiarization with the data. Second, a cross-case pattern search was applied which allowed the researcher to look beyond initial impressions. This was done by selecting pairs, and listing their similarities and differences (Eisenhardt, 1989). Eventually, this allowed the shaping of theory, related to the different types of SEs and their strategies through which they can foster a socially just CE.

Throughout the process, the data was revisited according to the main ideas of abductive research, to examine the new insights retrieved and potentially discover new insights that were overlooked during the first analysis.

3.4. Ethics issues data collection, data handling and data storage

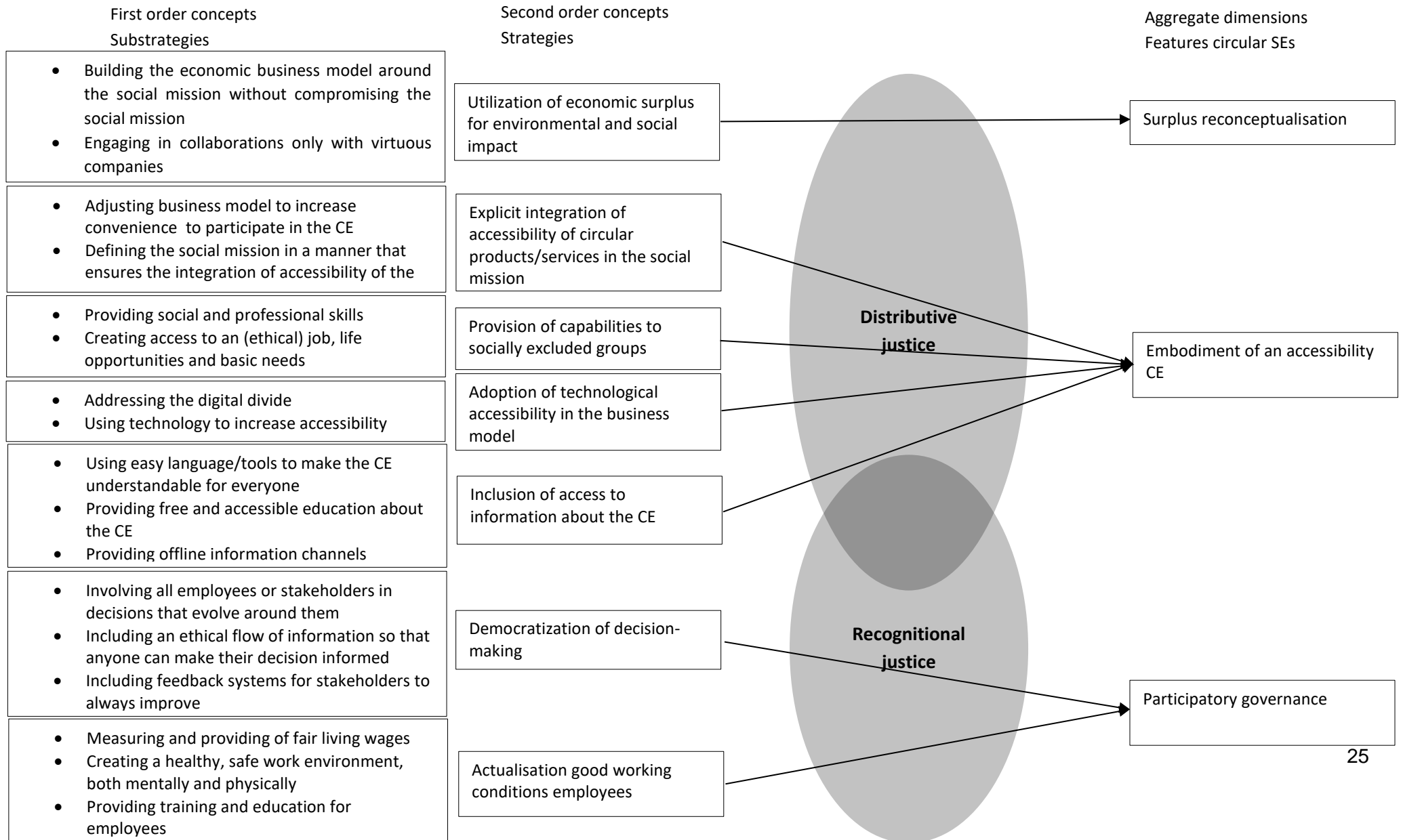
All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The interviewees were asked to sign a consent form before starting the interview (see Appendix H). If the interviewees were unable to sign the consent form, moral consent was asked before the start of the interview. The retrieved qualitative data was stored on Google Drive and NVivo, and deleted after the research. Moreover, to retain privacy all the interviewees, names were anonymised.

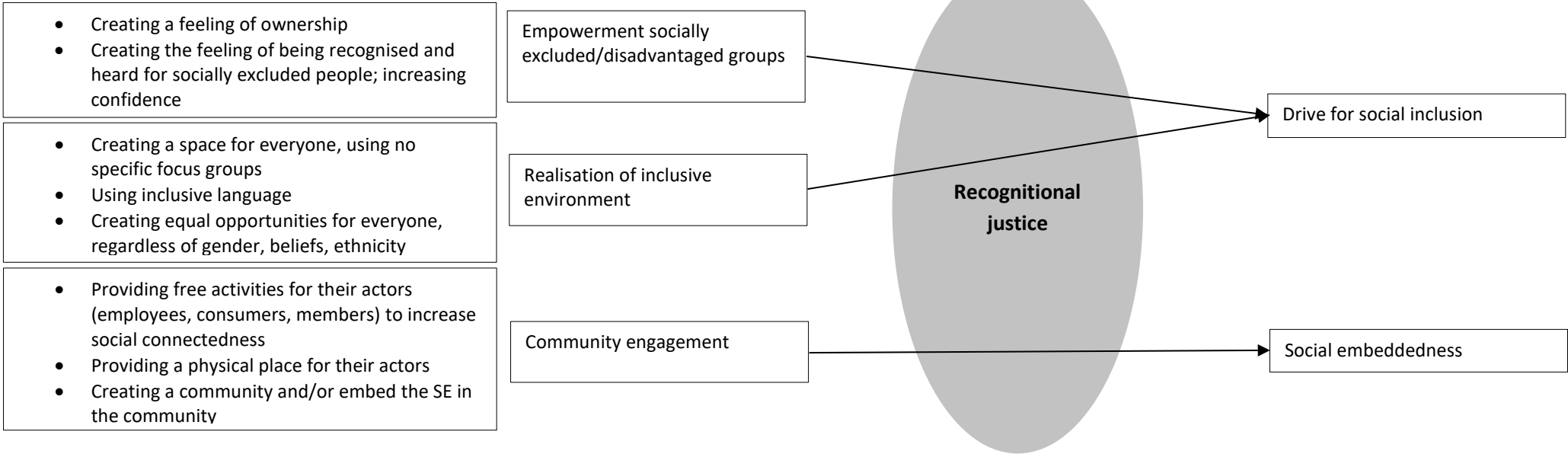
Figure 3.
Data collection and analysis process



3.5. Data structure

Figure 4. Data structure





4. Results

This section describes the strategies found of the SEs fostering a socially just circular economy according to the data structure shown in figure 4. Moreover, the differences between the three types of SEs are highlighted per strategy.

4.1. Reconceptualisation of surplus

The interviews and archival data revealed that SEs reconceptualise economic surplus to increase positive social and environmental impact. Hereby, the circular SEs moved away from the classic idea of surplus and prioritise their social and environmental impact. Correspondingly, the circular SEs aimed to improve the distribution of benefits of the CE for marginalised groups, addressing distributive justice.

Utilization of economic surplus for environmental and social impact The circular SEs integrated a new dimension to economic surplus, utilizing economic surplus for their environmental and social objectives. Several respondents viewed the balance of economic, social and environmental objectives as necessary (R8, R10, R13, R14, R16, R18, R21). Particularly, the environmental and social objectives of the circular SEs were seen as their responsibility and were an integral part of the social mission of the circular SEs. The respondents indicated that economic surplus is required to fulfil their social mission, emphasising the balance of all objectives (R8, R10, R13, R14, R16, R18, R21). Therefore, even though SEs are not-for-profit, the economic surplus was seen as indispensable: “... because of course, you need the profit, the more profit you get, and the more production you have, then the more people you can help, the more people you can hire.” (Interview 14). By utilizing economic surplus for the environmental and social good, SEs went beyond the current capitalistic economic structure where economic surplus is viewed as economic growth (R11, R19, R23):

[“It is also profit which is about something good for the environment and something good for the people, giving opportunities to the local community, giving opportunities to vulnerable groups of people. This is something that is way more important in a way.” (Interview 11)]

The manner through which the SEs utilized or planned to utilize their economic surplus is shown in Table 5. In some SEs, challenges occurred in utilizing their economic surplus as the SEs did not retrieve economic surplus yet or were at a break-even point. In these cases, the manner through which the SEs aimed to allocate their future surplus is included, if indicated in the interviews or archival data.

Table 5.*Who decides and who benefits from surplus, and how the surplus is allocated*

	Economic surplus	Who decides	Who benefits	In what form is/will be the surplus allocated
Commown	No economic surplus yet	Members (consumers, producers)	Consumers	Lower prices, and increase accessibility circular products
Bees	Yes (but aims to keep it low to ensure low prices)	Members (consumers)	Members (consumers)	Lower prices, and increase the accessibility of their products
Staramaki	Yes	Members (workers)	Members (Workers)	5% for the creation of the reserve, 35% to employees as productivity motivation, 60% to enterprise activities or creating employment opportunities (Staramaki profile, n.d.)
Reware	Yes	Members (Workers)	Members (Workers)	Creation of employment opportunities
Ecowings	Ecowings NL: No surplus yet	Founders	Workers	Provide benefits for employees; food packages, hire more employees
Mercato Circolare	Breakeven	Workers	Consumers	Increase accessibility circular service for marginalised groups
About Blank	Yes	Founder	Workers	Increase production and work for local, social production facility
Repack	No surplus yet (Repack, 2022)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
BinFree	Breakeven	Founder	Consumers	Increase awareness about the CE through improving the website and services; show connection between nature and people's well-being
Po-dzielnia	Yes	Founders	Workers	Organise team events, increase social connectedness workers
Ateliere Fara Frontiere	Yes	Workers	(Vulnerable) workers	Social benefits for vulnerable employees, providing external services such as social and professional counselling
Baterkaren	Yes (Baterkaren, 2021)	Unknown	Unknown	Reinvest in main mission: increasing accessibility of the CE for the general public (Baterkaren, 2021)

Note. Actors are partly based on literature from Gui (1991). Archival data sources: (Baterkaren, 2021; Repack, 2022; Staramaki profile, n.d.), Interviews (R5, R8, R10, R12, R14, R16, R18, R19; R21; R23)

Another way through which SEs utilized economic surplus for environmental and social impact was by building their economic business model around their social mission without compromising the social mission (R16). This is in line with the earned income school of thought, which is mostly rooted in the American non-profit sector, and in some European policies (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). Here, SEs are viewed as entities that trade for social goals. The interviews revealed that the circular SEs aim to find ways of building their economic business model around their social objectives, e.g. through consultancy or educational services (R5, R16, R18). For example, Mercato Circolare traded consultancy services for corporations and municipalities to offer education through their application to people for free (reaching their social objectives) (Mercato Circolare, 2020a), illustrated the following:

["There is no trade-off between the two objectives, the social one, or the environmental one and economic. Our mission is to spread our myth about a new wave concept of the economy of this society and environment and we do that through education and consulting. So if we sell training and consultancy, we get money, but also doing training and consulting, we reach our social mission to spread our myth. So they are very linked together." (Interview 18)]

Another example is the community reuse centre Baterkaren, an entrepreneurial non-profit that actively aimed to generate income when a new job request was received by the SE (R13). The SE built new streams of income around the new job request, offering a good working place: *"When there is somebody coming to me and telling me I want to work with you and I like the idea, and I do what I can to get the money"* (Interview 13). Moreover, Baterkaren adopted an adaptive approach by adjusting the job role according to the needs and personality of the person (also affecting good working conditions, section 4.3.). Nevertheless, the respondent Baterkaren expressed difficulties regarding financial sustainability and building these streams of income (R13). Other respondents of other SEs also mentioned these difficulties, often related to country-dependent social enterprise policies and subsidies (R10, R14). For example, the SEs in Greece and Romania expressed difficulties to thrive in their national context due to the lack of social enterprise policies and subsidies (R10, R14).

Lastly, social cooperative Commown specifically chose a product-service system for long-lasting products to maintain the environmental objectives and economic objectives (Commown, n.d.-b; R21). In particular, using design for durability can lead to the risk of lost revenue streams due to lower demand in the future (R21). Therefore, Commown used the opportunity to build a more fitting business model to maintain economic sustainability. Opting for a cooperative structure also helps to safeguard its environmental and social goals, since product-service systems in capitalist structures can potentially lead to consumer exploitation (Commown, n.d.-b).

Another way how SEs utilized their economic surplus for social and environmental surplus was by engaging in collaborations only with virtuous companies. The SEs chose their partners according to their social aim (R12, R20). In particular, one social cooperative and one social business were found to end negotiations with companies who possibly use the SEs services for green or social washing. For example, Reware, a social cooperative, is dependent on collaboration with other companies. Companies can donate computers that Reware refurbishes and sells, and 20% of the sale value goes to a non-profit organization of the company's choice for CSR purposes (European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform, n.d.-a). As such, Reware did not collaborate with companies who may use Reware's service for green or social washing: *"We tried as much as possible to avoid greenwashing or social washing, for example, we've been contacted by the [name company], and we decided to stop the negotiation with them because they have too many problems."* (Interview 12). Another respondent mentioned there is a trade-off of working with for example large companies in the fashion industry

that are known for harmful working conditions or other social issues (R20). The mission of Repack is to increase reusable packaging, mainly in the e-commerce industry, to encourage circularity in the business sector (Repack, n.d.). Therefore, Repack had a trade-off between collaborating with these large companies to increase circularity within these companies or not collaborating as these companies possibly harm the social good (thus not increasing circularity). Therefore, repack decided to cease the collaboration with companies who did not want to work accordingly to their service and risk greenwashing:

["For example, it happens sometimes that the company were not willing to do the work to make sure that like repack would work, like you know, the communication. And basically, it sounded to us that they just wanted to do greenwashing. It's something we don't want to go with, so we just tell them? Well, this is how it works. If you don't want it to work like that, that's it." (Interview 20)]

4.2. The embodiment of an accessible CE

As mentioned in the theoretical framework, the accessibility of the CE for marginalised groups is a social issue related to distributive justice due to possible e.g. financial inaccessibility, behavioural inaccessibility or technological inaccessibility of the CE. The circular SEs aimed to solve this social issue by actively embodying accessibility of the CE in their SE. In this way, the SEs addressed distributive justice in the CE and aimed for everyone to benefit equally from their circular practice and the CE.

Explicit integration of accessibility of circular products/services in the social mission. The explicit integration of accessibility of CE in the social mission can increase the accessibility of the CE for everyone. One way through which the circular SEs aimed to integrate accessibility into the social mission was by adjusting the business model to increase the convenience for people to participate in their circular practice. Increasing the convenience of the business model reduced barriers to participation and possible forms of behavioural inaccessibility (R6, R7, R16, R20). Moreover, convenience also increased motivation to participate for consumers in the circular practice in general (R6, R7, R17). For example, social business Repack aimed provides reusable packaging for e-commerce companies, which consumers can use and return using mailboxes (Repack, n.d.). Repack, therefore, increased convenience and physical accessibility as it did not require physical resources to participate, illustrated as the following:

["And at least this was a program we did like in Finland, and it really allowed people who live like, you know, like far in Lapland and just for like, places where you don't have a shop nearby or you don't have a car or it's just difficult to just go activate to the store, to participate in these circular programs." (Interview 20)]

Moreover, convenience to increase accessibility to the CE was provided by BinFree, an entrepreneurial non-profit, through the provision of a door-to-door recycling service for consumers. BinFree provided a service where consumers can hand in their recyclable bottles and bring them away. In return, consumers got information related to the CE and discounts to sustainable shops (BinFree, 2021). Hereby, BinFree increased convenience for consumers to participate and increased access to knowledge and financial accessibility (R5).

Another example of increasing convenience is entrepreneurial non-profit Po-dzielnia, which aimed to exclude all forms of bureaucracy for participation, e.g. not asking for IDs or other documents: *"And they don't have to register anywhere, right? They don't have to give their data, they don't have*

to show their ID. It's like open source. I mean, it's totally not engaging them in any formal way whatsoever." (interview 16). This also addressed recognitional justice as barriers to participation for vulnerable groups such as refugees are removed. Lastly, social cooperative Staramaki aims to reduce plastic waste by providing biodegradable straws (Staramaki, n.d.). They increased convenience for the consumer by offering a single-use circular product, not requiring the behavioural change needed from the consumer for reusable straws (R11).

Another way through which the circular SEs actively integrated accessibility into the social mission was by defining the social mission in a manner that ensures the integration of accessibility of the CE. Their social mission was thus specified to make the CE accessible to everyone. In specific, financial accessibility was often included in the social mission by offering free or affordable circular products or services to remove all financial barriers (R5, R7, R16, R17, R18, R20). For example, BEES, which is a social cooperative supermarket, increased financial accessibility to poorer, marginalised groups by asking less for membership fees (Bees Coop, n.d.-b). Moreover, they offered free membership and provided a wallet to use in the shop for about twenty unemployed people (R24). Moreover, Po-dzielnia offered a free sharing shop where consumers have access to free products, e.g. second-hand clothing (PO:DZIELNIA, 2021). In this way, they provided marginalised groups access to the circular strategy reuse. Another example is BinFree, which offered a free minimalist training, and increased financial access to information about circular strategy reduce and the CE in general (BinFree, 2021). Correspondingly, the SEs thus aimed to support social inclusion by not having to be wealthy to participate (also addressing recognitional justice): "... the important aspect is that they can use the fashion, second-hand fashion, completely for free, without having any excuses that being ecological means being wealthy, means you have to have lots of money to be eco-friendly." (Interview 16)

Moreover, some SEs specifically aimed to reinvest their economic surplus in increasing financial access to the CE (see Table 5). For example, social consumer cooperative BEES mentions on its website that they aim "... To build up a fair price policy: the most accessible price to all consumers while paying properly the producer for his work." (Bees Coop, n.d.-b). Correspondingly, Bees reinvested their surplus in lowering their prices; increasing financial accessibility for their consumers/members (R24). Another social consumer cooperative (Commown) that provides circular electronics (e.g. Fairphone) as a service (Commown, n.d.-b) also expressed the aim to lower their prices for their consumers/members for future economic surplus (R21). Currently, the prices of Commown can be perceived as high for low-income customer segments (Commown, n.d.-b).

Thus, not all SEs could provide free or affordable products or services. Especially some circular SEs selling a circular product were found to have higher prices (R8, R9, R10, R11, R12, R14, R19), thus not contributing to financial accessibility. These circular SEs had to compete with linear companies that provide similar, cheaper products, as circular production is often more expensive compared to linear production (R8, R9). Moreover, linear companies often do not include the costs of their negative externalities in the product (Lazăr, 2018), whilst circular SEs aimed to provide a true price. Respondents also indicate that SEs currently work in the current, linear and unequal market, where different, lower prices are expected (R10, R14); also highlighted by the expert interviews. The higher costs of circular production can result in financial inaccessibility: "But it's definitely a bit more, because to run that business, you need resources that are much more expensive. So maybe not all social category classes would have access them." (Interview 14).

Consequently, the interviews and archival data highlighted the existence of a trade-off for these circular SEs between different social and environmental objectives. Respondents mentioned that if they lowered the prices, the social objectives of the SE would suffer (R8, R9, R19). For example,

by having to distribute work to a country with lower wages at a production facility conflicting with the working conditions the SE aims for (R19), or providing a lower quality product decreasing the promise of a long-lasting design (R8). Therefore, circular SEs had to choose between, for instance, lower prices for consumers or fair living wages for employees.

The cooperative structure also increased accessibility when consumers were included as members, e.g. in multi-stakeholder or consumer cooperatives. A respondent from the multi-stakeholder social cooperative Commown, which provides a product service system, indicated how their horizontal governance structure increases accessibility (R21). When consumers would rent from a non-cooperative, they are more subject to potential price increases; risking to become exploited as consumers. Whilst, as a member of a cooperative, consumers had an equal say; increasing consumer power. Consumers as members of the cooperative could thus assert their rights to ensure that the prices of the service remained financially accessible.

Adoption of technological accessibility in the business model. Some respondents mentioned the use of technology as a strategy to increase technological accessibility to the CE (R5, R18). One way through which technology increased access to the CE was by providing an online application. For example, archival data emphasised that Mercato Circolare aims to disseminate the CE concept through its online application and activities to make the CE more accessible (European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform, n.d.-d). The application connects users and organisations incorporating CE principles and provides several services for both the users and organisations (Mercato Circolare, 2020b). For example, Mercato Circolare allows users to discover the CE, news related to the CE or buy products, thus increasing access to the CE through their business model (Mercato Circolare, 2020b). The use of technology was indicated by the circular SE to help to reach more people, also considering that the application is free of charge and easy to download and use (R18).

The use of technology could however limit accessibility for everyone due to the digital divide, and certain marginalised groups could have less access to technology. For example, one respondent of Mercato Circolare indicated the inaccessibility of the application for visually impaired people. To resolve this issue, as shown in table 5, a respondent of Mercato Circolare mentioned that they aim to reinvest their future economic surplus in the accessibility of its application for marginalised groups (e.g. for the inclusion of blind people) to increase access to CE information: *"The idea is to little by little have money to reinvest, for the application, to make it more accessible ... we need to go in that direction, and also offer more free projects to the community."* (Interview 18). Moreover, Mercato Circolare provided offline workshops to address the digital divide (Mercato Circolare, 2020b). Other respondents also indicated the use of offline channels to address the digital divide, explained further in the strategy *access to information about CE*.

Another way through which SEs adopted technological accessibility of the CE was by addressing the digital divide through the CBM of the SEs (R12, R14, R15, R20). For example, Ateliere Fara Frontiere with their workshop Educlick refurbished computers and donated these to schools in rural areas: *"And concerning the computers and laptops, we donate them to schools to the most vulnerable schools in Romania. This started with the pandemics actually we realised there was a big need for supplying such infrastructure to schools."* (Interview 15). In this way, they provided computers to people who cannot afford them normally. Additionally, the respondent mentioned they provide a small community discussion at the school to teach the children about the CE and its importance (R15). Social cooperative Reware also refurbished computers and resold these to address the digital divide (Reware, n.d.). Moreover, Reware spread free software to increase access to software (R12).

Provision of (circular) capabilities to socially excluded groups The circular SEs provided (circular) capabilities to socially excluded groups to create access to skills and knowledge in the CE. In this way, SEs assured accessibility and equal benefits from their circular practices and in some cases the CE in general.

One way through which the circular SEs aimed to provide (circular) capabilities to socially excluded groups is through the creation of access to circular jobs, life opportunities and basic needs, which is in line with SEs capabilities literature (Tanekenov et al., 2018; Weaver, 2020). Access to circular jobs, life opportunities and basic needs was provided in several ways, namely by job creation for marginalised groups, the provision of basic needs to vulnerable employees and the provision of basic needs to vulnerable consumers.

In particular, the interviews revealed that the SEs aimed to provide life opportunities through access to a job, and providing financial stability (R9). In some cases, job creation was integral to their social mission (R8, R9, R10, R11, R14, R15, R19). For example, Ateliere Fara Frontiere provides a two-year work integration program (Ateliere Fara Frontiere, 2022), illustrated in their social mission as the following: "... *the main mission of the organisation is to a social professional integration of vulnerable people. So it means we deal specifically with insertion services on the labour market, on the conventional labour market.*" (Interview 14). When the circular SEs themselves could not create circular jobs for vulnerable groups, they distributed their production to a social workplace to contribute indirectly to job creation for vulnerable groups (R19). For example, social business About Blank distributed their production to a social work facility, as mentioned on their website: "*About Blanks products are made in a social employment facility, where people with a disability or poor job prospects can get a job and through this participate in society. We want to make products that stimulate personal stories and development, also for our co-workers.*" (About Blanks, n.d.-b). The latter was also pursued by another social business; namely Repack (European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform, n.d.-c).

Furthermore, the respondents revealed that the circular SEs aim for systematic change by also providing basic needs such as food, social housing, and clothing for vulnerable groups (R8, R10, R13, R15); giving people the opportunity to build up their lives. Social business Ecowings for example provided food packages to their vulnerable employees from their economic surplus. Another example is the social cooperative Staramaki, which worked with the refugee community, and aimed to provide ethical labour, but also the rent for social housing in the future, explained the following:

["So Staramaki is one of these notions, we've started this with five people, one of them being from the refugee community, the main idea was to be able to create a product in an ethical way and an environmentally safe way that could have a share in the market that could create enough [] that its good itself, provide for the rent for the social housing. We are still of course at a very early stage, we did manage to provide labour, ethical labour for poor people." (Interview 10)]

Entrepreneurial non-profit Po-dzielnia also aimed to provide basic needs to its consumers. They achieved this through their CBM and social mission. In particular, Po-Dzielnia is a free shop that provides circular, reused products for free (PO:DZIELNIA, 2021). The volunteer of Po-dzielnia explained the provision of basic needs as the following: "*I noticed that there are a lot of poor people, people in need. It was winter. So there were a lot of men looking for warm clothes and textiles are always welcome, and, you know, warm blankets and stuff like that. And, of course, this is a place for them.*" (interview 17). If the circular SEs were not able to provide these basic needs themselves, the circular

SEs collaborated with NGOs to provide basic and aim for systematic change, especially in the case of the entrepreneurial non-profit type. For example, the SEs collaborated with NGOs by offering work to vulnerable groups that were referred to them by the NGOs while the NGOs provided the basic needs (R15).

Another way through which SEs provided (circular) capabilities to vulnerable groups was by providing social and professional skills for their vulnerable employees (R8, R9, R14, R15), both addressing distributive and recognitional justice. The skills the vulnerable employees learned varied from social skills, such as how to interact in a work environment to professional skills such as how to upcycle waste to a bag. Gaining social and professional skills empowered the employees and could lead to integration into the conventional labour market. For example, Ateliere Fara Frontiere, an entrepreneurial non-profit and work integration social enterprise, states on its website to aim to achieve this through the two-year program: *"The social and professional independence program lasts two years, being divided into several stages, and at the end of this course our beneficiaries find support in securing a job on the conventional labour market or in social enterprises."* (Ateliere Fara Frontiere, 2022). Particularly, Ateliere Fara Frontiere aimed to reinvest their economic surplus to increase the social benefits for their employees (R14). Respondents mentioned several ways through which the employees learn social and professional skills. For example, interaction with clients and having potential conflict taught the employees how to deal with contact. Another example was the understanding of how the social interaction with other colleagues, team leaders, etc. should look like: *"...and to understand how does the relation with I don't know colleague looks like, how does the relationship with the boss and the team leader looks like"* (interview 15).

This is in line with capabilities literature regarding SEs; revealing the provision of social and professional skills through employment training (Weaver, 2020). However, the circular SEs provided circular skills as well (R9). In this way, the circular SEs provided the circular capabilities needed for vulnerable employees to participate in the CE and later on benefit from the CE. For example, the vulnerable employees of Ecowings learned how to upcycle old rubber tires to bags and other products (Ecowings, 2022). In this sense, circular craftsmanship is taught to the vulnerable employees, illustrated as the following:

["And then we started hiring women near around the rural areas. And we started giving them training you know, one by one, step by step, we were guiding them, we were giving training to you know, cut the rubber markings, understanding the right kind of dimensions, how to develop the patterns, how do you know, stick to different materials properly. So, how do you use the basic tools and technologies which we acquired." (Interview 9)]

Access to information about the CE. The interviews and archival data revealed that the circular SEs increased access to CE information (distributive justice). Besides addressing distributive justice, access to CE information also strengthened the ability of people to indirectly participate in decision-making processes as it allowed people to be more informed on the CE (procedural justice).

One way through which multiple entrepreneurial non-profits and one social business increased access to information was by providing free and accessible education about the CE to the general public (R5, R6, R7, R11, R13, R16, R17, R18). The circular SEs adopted an educational role, which is in line with academic literature acknowledging the educational services SEs may provide (Borzaga et al., 2014), which views the SEs as potential providers of education (Goodwin Brown et al., 2020). The circular SEs specifically aimed to empower consumers and raise awareness about conscious decisions, teaching the R-imperatives and how they apply to daily life (R5). For example, Po-dzielnia

writes on their website: *“Our mission is not only to extend the lifecycle of consumer goods and help those in need, but also to teach people to use what they already have instead of buying everything brand-new.”* By educating people on the CE and its importance, the circular SEs increased access to information about the CE. Moreover, the interviews revealed that the circular SEs provided free forms of education about the CE for their consumers to be financially accessible (R5, R6, R16, R18).

The respondents also specified using different forms of educational services to increase accessibility adjusted to the needs of people. The following forms of education were mentioned: theatre, community discussions, workshops, swap events, public lectures, take and bring markets and public lectures (R5, R7, R9, R13, R15, R16, R18). Entrepreneurial non-profits were especially observed to provide different types of educational services adjusted accordingly to the needs of people, embracing their differences. One example is the entrepreneurial non-profit and community reuse centre Baterkaren (Baterkaren, 2022), which specifically adopted an adaptive, accessible approach and provided a different range of services to provide accessible education for everyone (e.g. swap events, public lectures, etc.):

[“And we are also aware that people are different, anybody. It's okay, not to be perfect. So, that's why we have so many programs for many projects, and we have like a vast range of services, because we want to give as many people as many possibilities to start and to start new habits and why we are doing it like this.” (Interview 13)]

Moreover, social business Mercato Circolare, as mentioned before, aims for the dissemination of the CE concept, and provides theatre and workshops as forms of education for their consumers to attract the general public (Mercato Circolare, n.d.-b). Lastly, one social cooperative mentioned the educational role they uptake through their social media (R11), however, the social cooperatives were not found to provide other forms of educational services and thus access to free and accessible education.

Another way through which circular SEs provide access to CE was by using easy language/tools to make the CE understandable to the general public (R13, R18). For example, the entrepreneurial non-profit Baterkaren used easy, understandable terms instead of academic, difficult concepts: *“And in the meantime, we are talking about this problem, but we are trying to describe it in an understanding and not so alarmist way.”* (Interview 13). By not using alarming, difficult words, they aimed to engage more people in the conversation about the CE and climate change.

Next to easy language, other tools were used by the SEs to make the CE understandable such as infographics, or videos, increasing (online) access to information on the CE. Mercato Circolare specifically visualised concepts, or academic papers, to make the CE more accessible to the general public (R18). These infographics were also provided for free to increase financial accessibility. One respondent illustrated this as the following:

[“We decided to offer some new format a new video, we work a lot with infographic and graphic ... And we use a lot of graphs to spread in an easy way a difficult paper, a difficult concept. And we do that for free.” (Interview 18)]

Moreover, archival data revealed the usage of graphics or other visualizations to explain the CE and/or the circular mission of the SEs on the social media/websites of the SEs. The SEs and their use of infographics/visualisations on social media and/or on their website are shown in Table 6. Seven out of twelve SEs provided visuals or infographics to inform their followers about the CE, either related to the impact of their circular product or service or understanding of the CE itself. On the websites, six

out of twelve SEs provided visualizations of the CE and infographics. Only three SEs were found to not include infographics/visualisations on either their social media or their website.

Table 6.

All the SEs, the type of SE and whether they use infographics related to the CE, indicated with a dot.

	Type of SE	Use of infographics/visualisations on social media	Use of infographics/visualisations on websites
Commown	SC	•	
Bees	SC		
Staramaki	SC	•	•
Reware	SC		
Ecowings	SB		•
Mercato Circolare	SB	•	•
About Blank	SB		
Repack	SB	•	•
BinFree	ENP	•	•
Po-dzielnia	ENP		•
Ateliere Fara	ENP	•	•
Frontiere			
Baterkaren	ENP	•	

Note. The following abbreviations are used: SC (Social Cooperative), SB (Social Business) and ENP (Entrepreneurial Non-Profit). Insights retrieved from archival data: (About Blanks, n.d.-a; About Blanks, n.d.-b; Ateliere Fara Frontiere, 2022; Ateliere Fara Frontiere, n.d.; Baterkaren, 2022; Bees coop, n.d.-a; Bees coop, n.d.-b; BinFree, 2021; BinFree - recycling services; n.d. Commown, n.d.-a; Commown, n.d.-b; Ecowings, 2022; Ecowings, n.d.; Mercato Circolare, n.d.-a; Mercato Circolare, n.d.-b; PO:DZIELNIA, 2021; Po-dzielnia, n.d.; Repack, n.d.; Repack - the end of trash, n.d.; Reware, n.d.; Società Cooperative Reware, n.d.; Staramaki, n.d.; Staramaki SCE, n.d.; Udržateľne s Jankou, n.d.)

Another way through which SEs provided access to CE information was by providing offline information channels. The digital divide highlights that some vulnerable groups do not have or have less access to the internet (Esteban-Navarro et al., 2020). Therefore, these groups cannot access the online infographics or online information about the CE. Some circular SEs aimed to solve this issue by using offline information channels, also highlighted by the expert interviews (R2, R4, R13). For example, entrepreneurial non-profit Baterkaren illustrated the use of offline information channels the following: "We are like doing intentionally. It is maybe a weird example, but we are trying to think of it like now we were forced to change the system how we are providing this humanitarian aid and we use email, but we're also aware that not everyone has an email, so they also can come in." (Interview 13). Another indirect example of the provision of offline information channels related to the social embeddedness of the SE (section 4.5.). Reware refurbished computers in a physical production facility in Italy (Reware, n.d.). Here, their community could come by to ask technology-related questions:

[*"Because we know that our work is not only technical, but is also relational activities. Because, we have, for example, a lot of elderly here in Italy that have really weak knowledge of technology and they come in to ask to write a name or to check something on the web. And we do provide these kinds of services as a normal activity inside. So we are, of course, aware about accessibility to these kind of things that we consider as being naturally granted inside what we are doing. It's a part of it."*] (Interview 12)

4.3. Participatory governance

The participatory governance of SEs allowed the involvement of all employees, stakeholders or members to be involved in decisions that evolved around them, and the assurance of good working conditions within the SE (procedural justice). Employees, stakeholders or members were namely able to shape rules and norms and address possible issues related to working conditions.

Democratization of decision-making. The interviews and archival data emphasised how SEs democratize decision-making processes, which aligns with the participatory governance feature of SEs (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). In this way, the circular SEs strengthened the stakeholders' position in decision-making processes and enhance the participatory governance of SEs.

One way through which democratization of decision-making was achieved, was by involving all employees or stakeholders in decisions that evolve around them (R9, R11, R15, R16, R17, R19, R20, R21, R23, R24). Stakeholders in production facilities were, for example, included in the decisions related to production processes (R9, R19), for example in the case of social business About Blank. Respondents of Staramaki and Mercato Circolare even indicated the involvement of the common good and society as stakeholders in decision-making processes (R11, R18). Therefore, while making their decisions, they also considered the environment and society as stakeholders to take into consideration: *"All our decisions, our roles, we always make our decisions, taking into consideration the people, who are us, and the common good, the social, good, the environmental good, etc."* (Interview 11). These circular SEs thus showed their commitment to involving everyone affected by their decision, adopting a holistic worldview and aiming for systematic change.

The involvement in decision-making ideas also accelerated positive outcomes for the SE themselves, as it led to generating good ideas: *"And we also discovered that there are some good decisions which are like ideas, which are then generated by those people who are very close to how the free shop is, you know, working."* (Interview 16). In particular, these employees and volunteers were often more connected to the community and had therefore more knowledge of what the needs of the community were (section 4.5.) (R16).

Even though SEs thus involved employees and stakeholders in their decision-making processes, some respondents still indicated room for improvement. For instance, in one SE the structure to involve vulnerable employees of the work integration program in general meetings was once per two months, while the respondent indicated the involvement of their vulnerable employees could be more frequent (R15). Moreover, multiple respondents of entrepreneurial non-profits and social businesses mentioned the involvement of employees in daily decisions, but not in more significant decisions related to e.g. finance (R16). These were for example made by the co-founders (R16).

Contradictory, social cooperatives were found to make daily decisions with their core team, but involved most stakeholders in more important decisions (which stakeholders are dependent on the type of social cooperative), for example through assemblies (R11, R24). This is the case as

cooperatives include all their members in decision-making processes - each cooperative member has a say and a vote ("A 1st CO-OPERATIVE SUPERMARKET IN BRUSSELS," 2016). For example, Bees is a consumer cooperative, and therefore included all consumers in the more significant decisions: "We discuss big decisions like we have different levels of decisions. Some operational decisions can be discussed together just with employees ... And the bigger decisions have to be discussed in the general assembly." (Interview 24). Another example is social cooperative is Commown, which is a multi-stakeholder cooperative that thus involves multiple stakeholders in their more significant decisions (Commown, n.d.-b). Consumers could become members of the cooperative but did not necessarily have to be a member to participate in their circular practice. Therefore, the consumers who were not members did not necessarily have an active say in the decision-making processes. These empirical findings are in line with social cooperative literature revealing the aim for democratic governance (Defourny et al., 2021). Moreover, it emphasises the decision-making power of members without needing to have capital ownership (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). Lastly, Reware is a worker cooperative that adopted the cooperative structure from the 18th century; working on a consensus-built concept. Decisions were therefore only made if all members agree, explained the following:

["We work on the decision model based on the consensus process, which is which means not the majority, so no minority and majority votes. But we all discuss things and if we are not all together, we do not agree all, we do not take the decision." (Interview 12).]

Another way through which the circular SEs democratized decision-making processes was by including an ethical flow of information so that anyone could make their decision informed (R10, R11, R13, R21, R24). In this way, SEs aimed to include everyone in the decision and increase the ability to make the right decision: "... in our case, what we found out is that there must be an ethical flow of information. So in order for people to be able to get the right decisions, they must be properly informed." (Interview 10). Correspondingly SEs could contribute to access to ethical decision-making.

Specifically, in social cooperatives, the ethical flow of information was emphasised and several tools were used to achieve this (R10, R11, R21, R23, R24). For example, Staramaki highlighted having difficulties providing this ethical flow of information, as they were working with the refugee population. This resulted in Staramaki having to provide information in four different languages. Through a Facebook tool, the SE eventually managed to provide all information in different languages (R10, R11). Another example of a tool to provide an ethical flow of information, was the provision of a small presentation at every general assembly to inform all members by Bees, illustrated as the following:

["Even for the decisions we take in the general assembly, we present, we have a small presentation before. So they can understand why we do it, what it implies for them and the shop. And after that, we have time for clarifications, feedback time, questions before we vote. Everybody can be part of the decision and I think it gives the best outcomes for everybody. So I think it's really one of the best aspects of the cooperative organisation." (Interview 24)]

Not all social cooperatives interviewed managed to provide an ethical flow of information accessible in multiple languages. For example, one social cooperative only provided its general assembly in one language, resulting in some members being unable to participate (R22).

The social business and entrepreneurial non-profit were not observed to specifically provide this ethical flow of information, however, the respondents of these types of SEs did highlight the importance of transparency (R5, R13, R17, R20). For example, one respondent of an entrepreneurial

non-profit highlighted the aim for transparency of their financial situation to consumers and employees, to increase trust (R13). Transparency was however not mentioned related to decision-making processes by the social business type and entrepreneurial non-profit type.

Lastly, the circular SEs included feedback systems, both formal and non-formal, for stakeholders to democratise decision-making processes. Therefore, the SEs strived to constantly improve, for example in their social mission (R5, R8, R12, R15, R18, R20). The feedback of stakeholders also required flexibility of the SE (R5, R8). Sometimes, it was necessary to evolve quickly when stakeholders indicated that the business model was not aligning with their social mission, or that they were not satisfied with the social mission in general, revealing the dynamic capabilities of the SEs. By receiving feedback, SEs could adjust accordingly to enhance e.g. their social mission or CBM. For example, one respondent of Reware explained how they have non-formal involvement of NGOs. By collaborating with NGOs such as Greenpeace, they enhanced their environmental objectives (R12). Moreover, by receiving feedback from their stakeholders, BinFree aimed to create a mutual benefit (co-creation), explained the following: "*Regarding the recycling service, we have asked for quite a lot of feedback from the clients regarding the cost, logistics etc., as we were experimenting to find the most suitable solution for them and cost-effective for us*" (Interview 5).

The feedback systems of the circular SEs differed from having non-formal conversations with stakeholders, regular meetings or questionnaires. The latter was seen by one respondent as biased, as the stakeholders involved in these questionnaires were often close friends of theirs or the organisation, explained as follows:

["We are also in the process of building our annual social report, we also have a questionnaire we're collecting for us. But it's not done in the right way in my opinion, because it's not statistically representative. Usually, people that answer to this are friends of us or organisation we are working with in this moment and so on. So it's not done like how statistical collection data should be really done." Interview 12]

Lastly, the general assemblies of social cooperatives could also function as feedback systems for stakeholders. Here, members and stakeholders could more easily express concerns. Moreover, members had the power to vote for a change of leadership when the members were unsatisfied with the leaders (R21). This particularly encouraged democratic governance within social cooperatives as feedback from their members needed to be actively incorporated to avoid the risk of change of leadership.

Actualisation of good working conditions for employees The circular SEs ensured good working conditions for their employees (procedural justice). The interviews and archival data emphasised that SEs often view it as their responsibility to actualise good working conditions for their employees (R8, R20, R23). Some respondents also mentioned the laws imposed in their countries requesting these good working conditions (R13, R19).

The SEs actualised good working conditions for their employees by measuring and providing fair living wages (R9, R10, R12, R19). As mentioned in the theoretical framework, the provision of fair living wages is integral to good working conditions (Mair et al., 2019). The provision of fair living wages was established in several forms. For example, social business Ecowings provided fair living wages and measured the living wage for their employees accordingly to their skillsets:

["And the impact ... which is coming into their life, number one is the amount of money they are earning over the period from [SE name], because we give them a good wage, dependent upon their learning skills and their skill set." (Interview 9)]

Social cooperatives were found to have different strategies for measuring and providing fair living wages. For example, social cooperative Staramaki used the GINI index to measure and provide fair living wages, which measures the inequality in incomes, for example between two positions (R10). Staramaki also publishes its Gini index, which increases the transparency of the provision of fair living wages (Staramaki Profile, n.d.). Reware even provided equal, fair wages to all employees, considering no differences between skills, functions, etc. This also related to their social cooperative structure of the 18th century, explained the following: *"... each worker is a partner, we have no external workers, each biped is a worker, we have no volunteer or support people, we are the people doing the things, everybody is paid the same wage, whatever is the activity."* (Interview 12).

For some entrepreneurial non-profits, the provision of fair living wages was not applicable, as they were either working mostly with volunteers, not able to offer payment due to struggles with financial sustainability (R5, R16). Furthermore, two social businesses outsourced their production and therefore did not have sight on the provision of fair living wages (and other factors influencing working conditions) (R19, R20). The latter is, by About Blank, solved by outsourcing to local production sites (localisation)(R19). In this way, the SE was able to keep sight of the production site and control good working conditions and fair living wages. Another social business, Repack, however, did not localise production and therefore expressed difficulties with keeping an eye on good working conditions as their production site was located in Asia:

["But this is something we really want to bring back to Europe, because although we do trust our partner in Asia, it's still very hard to just trust. Like just trust people you actually never met. And because of course, like as you know, there has been like, well older, like controversies and stuff happening in China right now. It's really hard. Like, can we actually trust this partner or not? It's hard." (Interview 20)]

Another way through which SEs actualised good working conditions was by creating a healthy, safe work environment, both mentally and physically (R8, R11, R12, R13, R15, R19, R20), which is also a requirement for good working conditions found in the literature (Mies & Gold, 2021). The mentally and physically healthy environment was created by the SEs in several ways. For example, some respondents of social cooperatives and social businesses mentioned the importance of listening to the needs of the employees (R12, R13, R20, R24). For example, respondents from Reware and Repack mentioned that many employees are parents who need more free time (R12, R20). Therefore, these SEs adopted a flexible work approach providing the employees with their needs to create a mentally healthy work environment. Consequently, the respondent from Repack emphasised the importance of this flexible approach: *"... that actually work is not a fully different world. It's part of your life, and it's just should be a balance. It's really understood that we're human beings. We're not just work machines."* (Interview 12). Moreover, Reware mentioned that especially the cooperative model reinforces the good intangible benefits derived from the flexible approach, due to the existence of the horizontal hierarchy in the cooperative:

["I think that the cooperative model is really good, not only for the people inside the cooperative when it works, because here we have a lot of really good intangible benefits, like, there is no boss, there is no pressure. We have a kind of organization that is easily adaptable to our daily lives." (Interview 12)]

Next to their flexible approach, SEs also created the feeling of being part of a community for employees, further explained in section 4.5. This community feeling also enhanced the creation of a safe space, as it helped employees to seek support from other employees while dealing with certain issues, indicated by an employee of Staramaki: *“So, you know, we’re very happy and energized. Sometimes we feel a bit insecure, and so on. But being part of the community, being part of the group, it’s always something that helps to deal with those issues.”* (Interview 11).

Another example of how circular SEs created a safe and healthy environment was the provision of personal and professional counselling for all employees by the entrepreneurial non-profit Ateliere Fara Frontiere (R14, R15). By providing personal and professional counselling, employees were able to go with their issues to the councillor and receive help: *“Oh, yeah, they have a councillor available, let’s say 24/7 for them. that councillor especially has his or her office, near the place where they work”* (Interview 15). Furthermore, a safe work environment was created by Ecowings by providing decent and safe equipment. Ecowings produced a circular product through upcycling old rubber tires, and their production process was labour-intensive (R9). Therefore, they provided their employees with decent and safe equipment to create a physically safe environment; for example by providing mouth masks (R9).

Some SEs ensured the endurance of the creation of a healthy and safe environment by monitoring the health and well-being of the employees (R11, R19). For example, Staramaki monitored the air condition the employees work in, ensuring it was safe to work: *“And of course, the good conditions when it comes to [lighting] conditions and air conditions in environmental work should be the right ones, and everyone should be happy with what they’re doing. This is maybe also where we have the best efficiency.”* (Interview 11). This respondent also mentioned that Staramaki uses KPIs to monitor production and work safety (R11).

Lastly, the SEs provided training and education for employees to actualise good working conditions, also aligning with the good working conditions requirements retrieved from CE literature (Mies & Gold, 2021), This allowed employees to gain skills and knowledge in the CE, overlapping with the strategy *provision of (circular) capabilities to socially excluded groups* described in section 4.2. The provision of education and training was found in both the entrepreneurial non-profit and social business types. For example, Ateliere Fara Frontiere provided training to their employees to increase their ability to work with the materials and learn about circular production: *“Yes, basically, the training is, is on field here. They learn how to use different materials, they develop competences as well, like basic, competences...”* (interview 14). Ateliere Fara Frontiere also taught vulnerable employees 1) how to act in a workplace to gain professional skills (section 4.2.) (R14), 2) the repetitive tasks of the CE (R15), and 3) how to work with certain software (R15). Furthermore, Ecowings specifically provided training to employees related to handcraftsmanship skills, which enhanced safety at the production facility (R9).

4.4. Drive for social inclusion

The interviews and archival data revealed a drive for social inclusion of SEs. The SEs actively aimed to be socially inclusive, increasing the ability to participate regardless of having to assimilate to dominant, cultural norms (recognitional justice).

Empowerment of socially excluded groups. Circular SEs empowered socially excluded groups. In particular, the circular SEs aimed to strengthen socially excluded groups emotionally and personally

to increase their power to participate in circular practices and the CE in general. Through this, the circular SEs aimed to include everyone regardless of gender, belief, ethnicity, or disability (everyone who does not assimilate to the dominant cultural norm) in their circular practice.

The first way through which specifically social cooperatives empowered socially excluded groups was by creating a feeling of ownership. The social cooperatives provided a chance to be part of the social cooperatives, to 'own' the cooperative (R11). The social cooperatives provided the opportunity to become a member to e.g. consumers, producers or other stakeholders dependent on the type of cooperative. The members gained the power to participate actively by retrieving a share and say in decision-making processes (section 4.3.), increasing the feeling of ownership:

["And now, I have my own company. So a lot of different things. I think it's a great possibility. I mean, social economy has great capacity, to empower people, and to give opportunity to people to own their life, own their job and, you know, own their life, own themselves, in a way." (Interview 11)]

This feeling of ownership can thus empower members of the cooperative, which is in line with literature related to empowerment and cooperatives. In particular, consumer ownership in consumer cooperatives is highlighted as having a high potential for consumer empowerment (Talonon et al., 2016). It can however be questionable to what extent socially excluded groups were involved in the feeling of ownership in these social cooperatives, as respondents from the social cooperatives also mentioned the lack of knowledge amongst often socially excluded groups (R24). As a solution, bees hired someone designated to inclusivity and accessibility to their supermarket to resolve this knowledge gap (R24).

A second way through which all types of SEs empowered socially excluded groups is by increasing confidence and independency (R5, R8, R9, R16, R17). This feeling was created by the SEs in two ways, through their involvement in decision-making processes and by the provision of training and education. The involvement in decision-making processes created the feeling of being heard and a feeling of responsibility and gave the employees/volunteers from socially excluded groups the power to use their voice; increasing confidence. For example, at Po-dzielnia, they actively involved their volunteers from socially excluded groups in decision-making processes related to daily decisions, and allowed their volunteers to use their voice, creating the feeling of purpose, explained the following:

["And sometimes I see that some people, it's the first time for them that anyone listens to them. Like really. Sometimes they do feel insecure to speak out loud in a group of 20 people because they're not listened to by their families, for example, or by their employer. I think that gives them also the feeling of purpose." (Interview 16)]

Moreover, the interviews revealed how participating in a circular SE, through the provision of education and training, also increased confidence amongst employees coming from socially excluded groups (R8, R9, R19). In particular, through the provision of education and training, employees learned new skill sets and knowledge (section 4.2.), which led to the empowerment of these employees. For example, in the case of Ecowings, their employees are vulnerable women from the area around the production facility in India (Ecowings, 2022). The provision of circular capabilities and craftsmanship (section 4.2.) specifically led to increased confidence of these vulnerable women, explained the following:

["In terms of fences, and the amount of confidence she's gaining out of the entire activity of craftsmanship, learning new things, observing. It's next level of you know, incarnation, I would say. They are taking a new world, you know,

so they bring smiles on their faces and it makes them feel a lot of pleasure from inside that they have done something. Yeah, it's a joy of craftsmanship." (Interview 9)]

This also led to an increased feeling of independence of the employees (R8, R9, R14), increasing the possibility for work integration in the labour market. For example, Ateliere Fara Frontiere specifically aimed for increasing independence for their employees from socially excluded groups: *"And well, for them working in the sector allows them to become more autonomous and we integrate into the job market, in the social life."* (Interview 14). Moreover, increased independence led to the empowerment of vulnerable groups. For example, in the case of Ecowings, it empowered vulnerable women to become caretakers of their families, increasing financial security (Ecowings, 2022). Moreover, learning skill sets related to the CE increased independence, and prepared vulnerable employees for possible future, circular jobs: *"So, that journey made them self-dependent, making them a good learner, good observer, sharpening their observation getting the level of skill set, which is required to craft a product."* (Interview 9)

Realisation of an inclusive environment. The circular SEs realised an inclusive environment, revealing their drive for social inclusion. The inclusive environment manifested in the creation of an environment where everyone was able to participate, regardless of having to assimilate to dominant cultural norms, addressing recognitional justice.

One way through which SEs realised an inclusive environment was by creating a space for everyone, using no focus group and not requiring people to conform to dominant cultural norms (R5, R8, R13, R15, R16, R17, R18, R20, R24). By using no focus groups, the SEs aimed to create a space for everyone as consumers/participants in their circular product/service. Baterkaren, for instance, specifically built their social enterprise around being an ecosystem for everyone: *"We are a social enterprise and we are trying to build something like an ecosystem where anybody can say anything for themselves. In the sense like we are not focused on one focus group."* (Interview 13). Baterkaren and BinFree viewed the use of no focus groups as important due to climate change affecting everyone (R5, R13). Therefore, these entrepreneurial non-profits aimed not to exclude people in their product/service, for example by including everyone in their educational services by ensuring financial accessibility and understandability of CE information (connected to section 4.2.). Lastly, for Mercato Circolare social inclusion was integral to their social mission: *"For our mission and vision, there are no exclusion or barriers of any kind"* (Interview 18). Therefore, everyone was able to participate in the circular services of Mercato Circolare.

However, respondents also mentioned difficulties pursuing this strategy. For example, the higher prices for some circular products, discussed in section 4.2., resulted in being less inclusive for marginalised groups. One of the social businesses especially selected a focus group that catered more to a middle/high-income customer segment (R19), and thus did not incorporate the sub-strategy of using no focus group. Another respondent of Mercato Circolare also revealed how they can create social exclusion, even though their aim is to create an inclusive space (R18). Here, Mercato Circolare revealed their dynamic capabilities to adjust quickly to overcome these forms of social exclusions: *"The idea, the intention is to not create the barrier and exclusion, but probably in some way we do it, we need to say excuse and try to go back there and try to develop new strategies to evolve."* (Interview 18). The latter is in line with literature related to dynamic capabilities and social enterprises (Ince & Hahn, 2020).

Another way through which SEs created an inclusive environment was by using inclusive language. In this manner, SEs embodied representation through language, e.g. by including all genders, or text for blind people. For example, entrepreneurial non-profit Batekaren specifically used inclusive language in their communication: *“And it's part of our communication, we try to be as much as inclusive and we use a language, not only like for gender, but also for people and such.”* (Interview 13). Moreover, in the case of entrepreneurial non-profit BinFree, inclusive language manifested in including text for visually impaired people to increase the ability to participate in the circular SE for this group, e.g. in online content: *“Because if you're blind, you cannot read the text in the picture. So I write it in the description. So there's no content lost...”* (Interview 5). Contradictory, Social business Mercato Circolare mentioned the lack of inclusive language for visually impaired people in their circular application. The social business was however aware of this issue and did aim to be inclusive for visually impaired people in the future when they have the financial resources to achieve this:

[“Actually, we would like to improve it because a friend of mine that is blind, she told me that there are some new applications that can fit also, can work for the blind people. Our application doesn't yet. So we are not really accessible for everyone. And I found that remark very interesting. And we need money to develop. But we would like to work in that direction.” (Interview 18)]

Another example of using inclusive language represented a country-specific context, namely Repack, as they operated in Finland. The Finnish language does not include gender (R20). It was thus not a specific strategy of the circular SE, nevertheless, the respondent of the Repack expressed the advantages of the exclusion of gender in the language during her application procedure. In fact, gender-exclusive language reinforced Repack's inclusive environment, as gender was not considered in the first place.

Lastly, Mercato Circolare aimed to use inclusive language by using theatre and art, which they viewed as a universal language: *“And it's a very universal language that can put everybody in the same, no difference anymore. It's just play and playing, we can all understand.”* (Interview 18). Specifically, the use of theatre and art increased inclusivity intergenerationally seen, as it made it easier for youth to participate in the circular practice.

The last way through which SEs aimed to create an inclusive environment was by creating opportunities for everyone, regardless of having to assimilate to dominant cultural norms (e.g. related to gender, beliefs, and ethnicity). For example, social cooperative Staramaki specifically created equal opportunities for men and women: *“We're also trying to reduce inequalities when it comes to work environment, so we're trying to give equal opportunities to men and women”* (Interview 11). Staramaki substantiates this aim by publishing a gender balance report where they show the representation of gender in their SE (Staramaki Profile, n.d.). Moreover, social business Ecowings operated in India, where there are differences and tensions between two beliefs, namely the Islam and Hinduism (R8). One respondent of Ecowings mentioned how they did not differentiate between these two groups and provided opportunities to individuals from both beliefs as employees (R8). Specifically, Ecowings provided opportunities to vulnerable women from rural areas (Ecowings, 2022). Another example related to the entrepreneurial non-profit Ateliere Fara Frontiere, which provided opportunities to *“... people who cumulate multiple difficulties in employment (long-term employment, disability, school abandonment, domestic violence, human trafficking, custodial sentences, deprivation of housing, etc.)”* (Voican, 2021). This reveals the diversity in employment difficulties for people Ateliere Fara

Frontiere aims to tackle. Particularly, Ateliere Fara Frontiere, as shown in Table 5, reinvested its economic surplus to create more opportunities as employees for these vulnerable groups.

One respondent of social cooperative Reware also mentioned difficulties pursuing this strategy. This SE specifically experienced difficulties finding people from other backgrounds, gender, beliefs etc., as they operated in the technology sector: “... *but it's really difficult to find people. People from minority also have less access to technology training.*” (Interview 12). Consequently, the respondent mentioned that Reware is aware of white male dominance in this sector and is actively looking for people who do not assimilate to that dominant, cultural norm.

Opportunities as consumers were also provided for people who did not assimilate to dominant cultural norms. The latter was achieved by providing free/affordable circular products and services through the business models of the SEs (section 4.2.). Consumers, therefore, did not have to be wealthy to be able to participate. An example was the entrepreneurial non-profit Po-dzielnia, which offered a free shop where everyone, regardless of e.g. poverty, can participate in the CE (PO:DZIELNIA, 2021).

Subsequently, creating opportunities and increasing the ability to participate as both consumer or employee for marginalised groups also increased the visibility of these groups, explained as the following: “*And we just ignore them because they're a minority, and they're not visible. So why not helping them to be more visible and actually distribute the wealth among them?*” (Interview 5).

4.5. Social embeddedness

The interviews and document analyses emphasised the social embeddedness of the circular SEs. Social embeddedness of the SEs increased community engagement, which is in line with prior SE literature (Verver et al., 2021). Through community engagement in the local community, SEs particularly eased the ability to participate regardless of having to assimilate to dominant cultural norms (recognitional justice).

Community engagement. Community engagement relates to improving the community feeling within the SE, and embedding the SE in the local community; increasing social networks in the community of the circular SE. By engaging the community the social embeddedness of the SEs could thus also increase.

The first way through which the circular SEs engaged their community was by providing free activities for their actors (employees, consumers, members), increasing social connectedness amongst their actors (R5, R13, R16, R17, R24). By providing these activities, the SEs increased the community feeling and social connectedness. In particular, the need for social connectedness could attract people who do not assimilate to dominant cultural norms to the circular SE, e.g. in Po-dzielnia, illustrated the following: “*Sometimes it's just you know, the social aspect, which is dominating like they are retired, and they feel lonely, because the children, they don't visit them.*” (Interview 16). Moreover, Bees provided free activities, e.g. visits to bakeries, to improve social networks and thus social connectedness amongst its members. Moreover, providing free activities allowed for participation without the need for financial resources (R24).

A second way through which SEs addressed community engagement was by providing a physical place for their employees, consumers and/or members, for example, entrepreneurial non-profit Baterkaren with their community centre (Baterkaren, 2021). The SEs provided a physical social space for their community to socialise. For example, the free shop of Po-dzielnia also functioned as a

place for social interaction, illustrated the following: *“They just want to come and talk about themselves, weather or whatever. So it's all about social interaction, regular social interaction for them for sure.”* (Interview 17). In particular, all circular SEs with a physical place had the potential to enrich the community feeling within their SE: *“They somehow feel like a part of this community, which is visiting us.”* (Interview 16). BinFree created an online, “physical” space where they provided a minimalist training (BinFree, 2021). In this online sphere, a community was built where people could freely share their personal stories (R7), also increasing social connectedness and the community feeling.

A third way through which circular SEs engaged their community was by embedding their SE in the local community (R5, R11, R13, R16, R23, R24). By embedding the SE in the local community, multiple respondents indicated to both benefit the community and benefit from the community. For example, in the case of Bees, local embeddedness increased the number of members from the local community participating in the circular SE (R23), leading to increasing social impact. Another example of an advantage of being embedded in the community is mentioned by Baterkaren, as the community helped Baterkaren survive during the pandemic and thus times of crisis (R13).

The SEs embedded their SE in the community in several manners. For example, Bees actively went to people in their local community and showed what the SE offers, explained as the following: *“You have to go to the people you have to speak with them, you have to offer things and become friends with them and then they will come and we just started this.”* (Interview 23). Bees specifically designated one person to accomplish this. Moreover, the entrepreneurial non-profit Po-dzielnia embedded the SE in the local community through their employees. These employees were often closer to the community and know the neighbourhood: *“You know, they know the neighbourhood, they know the people, they know the needs...”* (Interview 16). Correspondingly, being embedded in the local community increased the knowledge of the needs of the people, which led to increasing the social impact of the SE.

Moreover, one circular SE emerged as a response to the needs of the local community. This was the case for social cooperative Staramaki. The area Staramaki operated in an area with a rural depopulation issue, and Staramaki developed its business model as a response to this issue, creating economic opportunities in the region (European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform, n.d.-b). For example, Staramaki stimulated the local economy by paying local farmers for their agricultural by-product, the wheat stems, from which they produced sustainable straws.

5. Discussion

In this section, the notable results of the research are discussed. Here, insights into the employed strategies by the circular SEs to foster a socially just CE are highlighted. Afterwards, the differences between the different types of SE in the employed strategies are explained. Secondly, the limitations of the research and suggestions for future research are discussed.

5.1. Notable results of the research

This research identifies five overarching features of the circular SEs that can foster (the transition towards) a socially just CE. These five features are the surplus reconceptualisation, the embodiment of an accessible CE, participatory governance, the drive for social and circular inclusion and social embeddedness. The notable findings related to these features and the related strategies are discussed in the following sections

5.1.1. The holistic and non-capitalist approach of the circular SEs

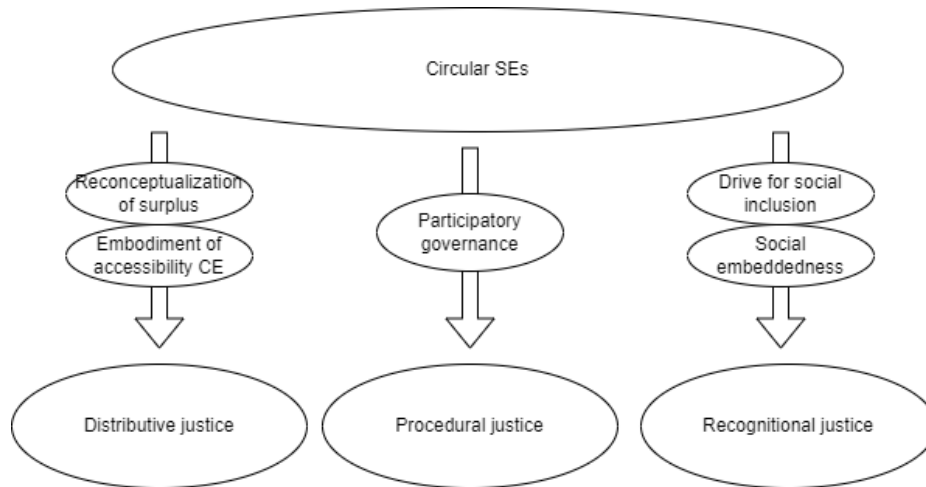
The empirical findings of this study reveal that the circular SEs take up a holistic approach and address all three dimensions of environmental justice simultaneously. In current research and CE frameworks, not all three dimensions of environmental justice are addressed (Capgemini Research Institute, 2021; Mies & Gold, 2021; Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020; Schroeder et al., 2019; Schröder et al., 2020). However, addressing all these dimensions is needed to foster a socially just (transition towards the) CE. This highlights the potential of the holistic approach of circular SEs to foster a socially just CE. The circular SEs adopt a holistic approach through the employed strategies manifesting in their main features, shown in figure 5. The holistic approach is an important finding for the transition towards a socially just CE as it particularly reveals the potential for the successful integration of all three dimensions of environmental justice in the CE concept. Moreover, it reveals an opportunity for other organisations/businesses to also foster a socially just CE. These organisations can move away from their current status quo and adopt the holistic approach of the circular SEs to foster a socially just CE. In particular, organisations can achieve this by adopting the features of the circular SEs found in the empirical findings (see figure 5). The latter reveals an avenue for future research, which could focus on the ability of other organisations to adopt these features in their current business structure to foster a socially just (transition towards the) CE.

Moreover, this thesis reveals that a socially just CE can exist in some sort of capitalistic structure, if the capitalistic values are reshaped in a manner that economic surplus does not equal economic growth at the expense of the environment and society, but is utilized to address environmental justice. The circular SEs move away from capitalist views on profit and address the need identified by Jaeger-Erben et al. (2021) to reshape capitalistic values for the CE to achieve the integration of the social dimension within the CE. In particular, the circular SEs adopt a non-capitalist approach through their reconceptualisation of economic surplus. The economic surplus of the circular SEs is not realised to pursue economic growth but is utilized to improve the manner through which the circular SEs address the three dimensions of environmental justice. The SEs can for example address potential distributive injustices by increasing access to CE information, or potential recognitional injustices by increasing social inclusion of their circular practice. Prior SE literature also highlights the utilization of economic surplus for the social mission of SEs (Borzaga & Tortia, 2009; Gui, 1991; Mair & Marti, 2006; Păunescu & Evans, 2018), and this research, therefore, complements SE

literature by highlighting the utilization of economic surplus of the circular SEs in environmental justice.

Figure 5.

The features of the circular SEs and which of the three dimensions of environmental justice they address.



5.1.2 Circular SEs as catalysers for an accessible CE

A notable finding relates to the embodiment of an accessible CE within the SEs. Accessibility of the CE is identified in the theoretical framework as a social issue related to distributive justice, and is therefore important to address to foster a socially just transition towards the CE. The circular SEs particularly reduce forms of inaccessibility related to finance, technology, behaviour and knowledge. There are four strategies through which the circular SEs embody an accessible CE: 1) inclusion of access to CE information, 2) explicit integration of accessibility of circular products/services in social mission, 3) adoption of technological accessibility in their business model and 4) provision of (circular) capabilities to socially excluded groups.

First, the circular SEs embody access to CE information to increase accessibility to the CE knowledge-wise. Knowledge barriers can affect the participation of different stakeholders in the CE (Camacho-Otero et al., 2018). The circular SEs can specifically adopt an educational role to address these knowledge barriers, which can increase access to the CE (distributive justice). For example, in line with prior work integration literature (Marhuenda, 2009), circular SEs can provide education related to the CE to their vulnerable employees. Moreover, the circular SEs can provide circular educational services for citizens, in line with prior SE literature (Borzaga et al., 2020; Evers & Laville, 2004).

This research complements prior literature by pointing out that circular SEs adopt an adaptive and accessible approach to CE education to increase access to CE information. For example, the SEs can provide a broad variety of educational services to be attentive to the needs of the people. This allows the circular SEs to address a broad public, improving the accessibility of the CE concept for the general public. Moreover, the circular SEs can adopt an accessible approach by simplifying the CE concept to improve the understandability of the CE for the general public, e.g. by using easy language. Besides addressing distributive justice, the adaptive and accessible approach to education can also address recognitional justice as it can promote social inclusion, allowing everyone to participate regardless of dominant cultural norms. This insight is relevant for the transition towards a socially just

CE as it reveals the potential of the adaptive and accessible approach to CE education to address multiple dimensions of environmental justice.

Second, the empirical findings highlight that the circular SEs adopt accessibility of the CE in their social mission to address distributive justice, which is in line with prior literature on SEs (Campbell & Sacchetti, 2014; Ciambotti, 2020). The circular SEs integrate either financial accessibility and/or behavioural accessibility in their social mission. Circular SEs can increase financial accessibility through the provision of free/affordable circular products or services. The CBM innovation type can thus play a role in achieving financial accessibility. CBM innovation types collaborative consumption and sharing platform, identified by Henry et al. (2020), can for example provide free/affordable circular products or services as it can accelerate shared ownership, possibly reducing product prices. Contradictory, for circular SEs incorporating the CBM innovation category core technology, providing a circular product, a trade-off between different social and/or environmental objectives can arise. For example, for some circular SEs, a trade-off exists between the provision of financial accessibility for consumers (distributive justice) or the provision of good working conditions for the employees (procedural justice). This reveals a relevant insight concerning the transition towards a socially just CE as it highlights the potential role of the adopted CBM innovation category of the circular SEs in the ability to address all dimensions of environmental justice holistically. Future research could therefore look into the effect of the adopted CBM innovation categories on a potential trade-off between the three dimensions of environmental justice.

Moreover, the empirical findings highlight the role of convenience in the CBM of the circular SEs to address behavioural accessibility and thus distributive justice. Particularly, the SEs aim to reduce behavioural barriers to participation, which is in line with CBM literature revealing the importance of accessibility and consumer acceptance and willingness to participate in the CE (Bocken et al., 2022; Borrello et al., 2020). Therefore, by increasing the convenience of the SE's CBM, the circular SEs can boost consumer acceptance and their willingness to participate in their circular practice. The reduction of behavioural barriers to participation can also increase the ability for people to participate regardless of having to assimilate to dominant cultural norms (recognitional justice). This reveals the potential of the adoption of convenience in the CBM by the circular SEs to address multiple dimensions of environmental justice.

Third, some circular SEs were found to adopt technology to provide a circular product/service accessible to a broad public, increasing technological accessibility (distributive justice). As mentioned in the theoretical framework (section 2.2.3.), digitalization can accelerate servitisation (Grahna, 2022; Ng, 2022), however, does also increase the risk for distributive injustices due to the digital divide (Esteban-Navarro et al., 2020). Therefore, some circular SEs adopted technology in their business model to tackle the digital divide by refurbishing digital products and redistributing these to marginalised groups. Moreover, some circular SEs used offline communication channels for vulnerable groups susceptible to the digital divide. This reveals the potential of the usage of circular strategies to address distributive injustices. In particular, it indicates the potential of the CE to serve as a solution to address environmental justice, if properly applied.

Fourth, the empirical findings reveal how circular SEs provide circular capabilities to marginalised groups to increase the accessibility of the CE, in line with prior literature emphasising the provision of capabilities by SEs to either employees or consumers (Tanekenov et al., 2018; Weaver, 2020). This research adds to prior literature by indicating the potential of circular SEs to especially provide circular capabilities to employees and consumers in two manners. First, the provision of a circular job to vulnerable employees results in empowering employees from marginalised groups

through education and training and gaining circular skills. In this manner, the employees are able to participate in circular SEs and have access to the CE; conceivably preparing them for a circular future. Second, capabilities such as basic needs are provided through the CBM's of the SEs, e.g. through CBM innovation type collaborative consumption. This CBM innovation namely allows to share assets within communities (Henry et al., 2020), and increases access to basic needs, highlighting the potential for organisations to use certain CBM innovation types to address environmental injustices. This is a relevant insight for the transition towards a socially just CE as it reveals the potential of the adopted CBM's to also address the provision of capabilities in the form of basic needs to people, addressing both distributive and recognitional justice.

5.1.3. The role of the participatory governance of SEs in the CE

A notable finding relates to the active pursuit of a participatory governance of the circular SEs, in line with prior SE literature (Borzaga et al., 2008; Defourny & Nyssens, 2012; Păunescu & Evans, 2018). Participatory governance is essential for the transition towards a socially just CE as it can facilitate a wider understanding of societal issues, particularly allowing the society to express their opinions and advocate for good decisions (Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020). The participatory governance of the circular SEs allows their stakeholders to participate in decisions that affect them.

Circular SEs particularly include both in-formal and formal involvement of stakeholders through feedback processes, in line with prior SE literature (Argyrou et al., 2017), to remain focused on both the social and ecological objectives. Moreover, circular SEs have the ability to take the environment and society into account as stakeholders. This highlights the holistic approach of the circular SEs, as procedural justice in the circular SEs also relates to the environment and society. This insight is particularly important for the transition towards a socially just CE as it demonstrates the potential for stakeholders to address environmental injustices within circular SEs. Moreover, it emphasises the role of participatory governance in the transition towards a socially just CE identified by Padilla-Rivera et al. (2020).

Participatory governance also relates to the provision of good working conditions for the employees of the circular SEs. In the current transition towards the CE the working conditions in CE practices are rarely addressed (Corvellec et al., 2022; Schröder et al., 2020), while both the CE and the SEs can provide labour-intensive work. The latter emphasises the need for good working conditions (Akingbola & Brunt, 2022; Goodwin Brown et al., 2020). The empirical findings reveal that the circular SEs mainly provide good working conditions by creating a healthy and safe work environment, providing training and education, the provision of decent equipment and providing fair living wages; which are identified in the theoretical framework as good working conditions indicators (Mair et al., 2019; Mies & Gold, 2021). For example, the circular SEs address these indicators by including measurement and control mechanisms to foster working conditions. Moreover, in the case of outsourced production, localisation of the production can be beneficial for circular SEs as it increases the ability to control the working conditions of the production facility. This specifically reveals that the localisation of production for organisations, besides the environmental benefits (Williams, 2019), can also benefit working conditions in CE practices due to possible control mechanisms.

Another striking finding relates to the working conditions is that the circular SEs specifically adopt a flexible role approach to ensure a good working environment, while Akingbola and Brunt (2022) highlight that the labour-intensive environment results in little flexibility for the employees. The research of Akingbola and Brunt (2022) relates to the social and solidarity economy (SSE) and also

includes other entities/organisations besides SEs in their definition. This research, therefore, complements the research of Akingbola and Brunt (2022) by revealing the differences between social enterprises and particularly other entities, related to working conditions in the CE. Future research could conduct a comparative case study to look into the differences between the different entities and their ability to address good working conditions in the CE.

5.1.4. The drive for social, circular inclusion of circular SEs

Another notable finding relates to the drive for social, circular inclusion of marginalised groups of the circular SEs. This is relevant for the transition towards a socially just CE as in current CE frameworks, social inclusion is partly addressed (Mies & Gold, 2021; Moreau et al., 2017), and does not include recognitional justice, e.g. for gender or ethnic minorities (Mies & Gold, 2021; Pla-Julián & Guevara, 2019; Schroeder et al., 2019; Schröder et al., 2020). The circular SEs can address recognitional justice through their drive for social, circular inclusion. This is in line with prior SE literature revealing the drive for social inclusion for SEs either in the context of vulnerable consumers (Wilton & Evans, 2016). or in the context of work integration of socially excluded groups (Buhariwala et al., 2015; Marhuenda, 2009; Vidal, 2005). The drive for social, circular inclusion is particularly important for the transition towards a socially just CE as it increases the ability for people to participate regardless of having to conform to dominant cultural norms (recognitional justice).

The circular SEs adopt an inclusive environment within their circular practice to address their drive for social, circular inclusion. This research complements prior literature by highlighting the manners through which the circular SEs adopt an inclusive environment. First, circular SEs use inclusive language and/or use no focus groups to ensure an inclusive environment. For example, the use of no focus groups can manifest in the provision of affordable/free circular products or services, increasing the ability for people to participate without having to be wealthy. However, in some circular SEs difficulties may arise for using no focus group. These circular SEs specifically provide circular products and may provide relatively products compared to linear companies. Therefore, these circular SEs can be less inclusive for low-income consumer segments and may have to include focus groups.

The application of the CE on a linear economic system can thus lead to difficulties in social inclusion and poses the need for either consumer behaviour change or support from e.g. governmental actors for successful implementation of a socially just CE. Future research may examine the ability of organisations adopting CBM's that provide circular products to be financially inclusive. In addition, it could explore the possible role governmental actors can play in fostering a socially just transition towards the CE.

Moreover, the circular SEs can empower socially excluded groups through participation in their circular practice to address the drive for social, circular inclusion. The empirical findings indicated the role of participation in decision-making processes to empower vulnerable employees, which is also highlighted in previous research (Del Gesso & Romagnoli, 2020; Finlayson & Roy, 2019; Haugh & Talwar, 2016; Pareja-Cano et al., 2020). Moreover, in line with prior literature (Pareja-Cano et al., 2020; Tanekenov et al., 2018), participation in the circular SEs for vulnerable employees can improve personal empowerment through increasing confidence and independence. This research specifically adds on prior literature by revealing the potential of participating in a circular practice to empower vulnerable groups. The circular SEs can provide circular skills and CE education to their vulnerable employees. This can prepare these employees for a circular, sustainable future and enhance their ability to participate in the CE.

5.1.5. Social embeddedness of circular SEs

A notable finding relates to the social embeddedness of the circular SEs through local community engagement. Social embeddedness SEs can increase the ability to participate in the circular practice regardless of having to assimilate to dominant cultural norms. The social embeddedness can thus be essential in the transition towards a socially just CE as it addresses recognitional justice. The social embeddedness of the circular SEs relates to the strong connections to their local community through community engagement, in line with prior SE literature (Chen, 2018). The circular SEs achieve this by increasing social connectedness amongst their stakeholders and enhancing social networks, which is also emphasized in prior SE literature (Barraket, 2013; Chui et al., 2019; Gordon et al., 2018; Henderson et al., 2020).

Moreover, social embeddedness can, in combination with the strategy *inclusion of access to information about the CE*, improve the widespread adoption of the CE concept by the general public as it increases the ability to participate for the local community. This emphasises the relation between recognitional justice and distributive justice. The CE can thus be less accessible if recognitional injustices occur and not everyone is included, which is in line with prior environmental justice literature (Suiseeya & Kimberly, 2016). This highlights the need to address all dimensions of environmental justice simultaneously to foster the transition towards a socially just CE.

Another notable finding relates to the responsiveness of the circular SEs to the needs and social issues of the local community through social embeddedness, in line with prior literature (Verver et al., 2021). The circular SEs explicitly respond to the needs of the community by incorporating a CBM, benefiting the local community and the environment. Furthermore, the circular SEs can respond to the need for economic opportunities in their local community, for example by using the residual by-product of other organisations through external collaboration and ensuring an economic trade, and/or by providing employment opportunities for the local community.

5.1.6. Differences between the types of SEs

This research complements the research by Defourny and Nyssens (2017), and looks into the differences across the three different types of SEs and the employed strategies to foster a transition to a socially just CE. The differences found between the three types are mostly related to the following circular SEs features: participatory governance, the embodiment of accessible CE and the drive for social, circular inclusion.

The first notable finding relates to the participatory governance of the circular SEs. All types of SEs share a common goal of participatory governance, however, differ in the way this is achieved. These differences relate to the strategy *democratization of decision-making processes*. Entrepreneurial non-profits and social businesses mostly involve stakeholders in daily decisions and not in more significant decisions (e.g. related to finance), whereas social cooperatives involve stakeholders mostly in important decisions and less in daily decisions. Social cooperatives involve their stakeholders in important decisions through their one-member, one-vote principle, emphasising their particular strive for the democratization of their decision-making processes highlighted by prior literature (Defourny & Nyssens, 2013; Defourny & Nyssens, 2017; Reyes & Harnecker, 2013). The type of stakeholders involved as members is dependent on the type of social cooperative, which can affect the number of stakeholders involved in the decision-making processes. Nevertheless, the stakeholders of social cooperatives, compared to the other types of SEs, are still more involved in significant

decisions. In addition, social cooperatives provide an ethical flow of information to increase the ability of their members to make their own, fair decisions. The social cooperatives thus specifically accelerate procedural justice through the provision of fair decision-making processes.

The second notable finding relates to the embodiment of an accessible CE and the strategy *explicit integration of accessibility of circular products/services within the social mission* of the different types of SEs. All social enterprises share the aim to embody an accessible CE. However, some differences are found in the manner through which the circular SE types address the embodiment of an accessible CE feature. The first difference found relates to specifically consumer/multi-stakeholder social cooperatives. A consumer cooperative providing a product-service system can increase the accessibility of the CE for consumers. The consumer- or multi-stakeholder cooperative structure namely allows consumers to become members, and have an active say in the decision-making processes. The consumers are therefore less subject to price fluctuations and price exploitation and increasing financial accessibility (distributive justice). Contradictory, the empirical findings also reveal that the social cooperative model can be less accessible due to knowledge barriers related to the cooperative structure. This reveals an opportunity for social cooperatives to increase the spread of knowledge related to social cooperatives to increase their accessibility. Second, the circular SEs built their economic business model around their social objectives, in line with the earned income school of thought (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012). Particularly the entrepreneurial non-profit and social business type can increase financial accessibility to the general public by trading services to corporations or municipalities to offer their circular, educational services to the people for free. This can be explained by the explicit educational role these two SE types can pursue, explained as part of the third notable finding.

The third notable finding relates to the embodiment of an accessible CE and the strategy *inclusion of access to information about the CE*. The empirical findings emphasise the common goal of mostly the entrepreneurial non-profit type and social business type to adopt an educational role to improve the spread of the CE concept among the general public. The social cooperative can also improve access to CE information, however, not specifically through providing educational services. The social business type increases accessibility to information about the CE by integrating access to CE education into their social mission. The entrepreneurial non-profit type adopts an educational role in general, particularly through the provision of a broad variety of educational services to embrace the differences of people and be accessible to everyone. The latter can be explained by the entrepreneurial non-profit type acting more toward the general interest (Defourny et al., 2021). The educational role can thus be inherent to this SE type. A notable finding relates to the CBM innovation category employed by the entrepreneurial non-profits and social businesses that actively take up an educational role, which is the category active consumer involvement. This CBM innovation category can namely specifically aim for knowledge sharing (Henry et al., 2020). Future research could therefore focus on the effect of CBM innovation categories on the educational role the circular SEs adopt.

The fourth notable finding concerns the distinctive drive for social inclusion, which relates both to strategies to empower vulnerable groups and to create an inclusive environment. On the one hand, empirical findings emphasise that all types of SEs share the aim to empower vulnerable groups. The social cooperatives differed from the other SE types since they also enhance the personal empowerment of their members by creating a feeling of ownership, in line with prior cooperative literature (Datta & Gailey, 2012; Talonen et al., 2016). The members are namely all owners of the social cooperative (Borzaga et al., 2014). The feeling of ownership can result in personal empowerment as the members can have their say in the decision-making processes, and have the

opportunity to own a SE. Social cooperatives can thus address recognitional justice in another manner than the other two types. On the other hand, it is still questionable to what extent social cooperatives can attract socially excluded groups due to knowledge barriers. Future research could therefore look into the ability of circular social cooperatives to address recognitional justice and the impact of knowledge barriers on socially excluded groups.

5.2. Research limitations and suggestions for future research

The following section outlines a few research limitations and suggestions for future research. The research limitations relate to methodological limitations in the case selection phase and the data analysis phase. Moreover, two theoretical limitations need to be considered when interpreting the findings.

First, this research aimed for external validity by assuring similarities and differences between the case selection; based on country, SE type, CBM strategy and CBM innovation category (section 3.2.). One methodological limitation relates to the geographic scope and the country sampling, as the Netherlands and Italy represent two cases and the other countries represent one case. Nevertheless, the research aimed to include multiple countries from West, North, South and East Europe to include similarities and differences in the European context. Moreover, the selected cases are emblematic examples and often differ in other important factors. The findings also revealed that the SEs differing in national contexts did not differ in the strategies through which they can foster a socially just transition towards the CE. The only difference found was that the SEs from Greece and Romania indicated difficulties to thrive in their economic context due to lacking social enterprise policies. Further research could therefore further investigate these social enterprise policies and their effect on the ability of circular social enterprises to pursue their environmental and social objectives.

Second, another limitation related to the case selection is the CBM innovation category in the case of entrepreneurial non-profits. Three out of four entrepreneurial non-profits include the CBM innovation category active consumer involvement. This can influence the outcomes of the comparative case study, specifically related to the educational role of the entrepreneurial non-profit type. The CBM innovation category namely requires the active involvement of the consumer, which can require behavioural change and a need for educational purposes for the SEs adopting this innovation category. A diversification of CBM innovation categories amongst the entrepreneurial non-profit was however limited due to data availability and willingness to participate. Moreover, most entrepreneurial non-profits found by the researcher were adopting the CBM innovation category active involvement, which could be explained by the entrepreneurial non-profit operating more towards the general interest and mutual interest of society (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017). The entrepreneurial non-profits can thus possibly focus more on consumer engagement and fostering knowledge related to the CE in general (Henry et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the research aimed to achieve external validity by diversifying the other sampling criteria in the case of the entrepreneurial non-profits, therefore differing in country and CBM strategy. To retrieve more knowledge on the influence of the CBM innovation category on the implemented strategies to foster a socially just (transition towards a) CE, future research can do a comparative case study related to the different CBM innovation categories and the implemented strategies. Moreover, future research can replicate this study while assuring differences in the CBM innovation categories within the entrepreneurial non-profits.

Third, a methodological limitation relates to the risk of subjective interpretation of the researcher during the data analysis phase. Due to resource constraints, one researcher interpreted the data collected, while investigator triangulation is emphasized in qualitative research (Weryński & Dolińska-Weryńska, 2015). The researcher's interpretation of the data can affect the formulation of the strategies found and the differences found between the three types of SEs through the comparative case study. Nevertheless, this research aimed to reduce the risk of subjective interpretation, and increase validity, through conducting expert interviews, the abductive research design and using the Gioia method. First, the expert interviews validated the theoretical framework and improved the interview guide for the case study to increase internal validity (Bogner et al., 2009). Moreover, the abductive research design allows revisiting and defamiliarizing the data collected and analysed to retrieve new insights that were first overlooked (Tavory & Timmermans, 2012), which reduces the risk of subjective data interpretation. Lastly, the Gioia method requires researchers to stay close to their data while conducting the analysis. This is enhanced through the open coding that allows for information-centric first-order constructs (Gioia et al., 2013). Moreover, these constructs and the emerging second-order concepts and third-order aggregate dimensions are shown in figure 4, in line with the method of Gioia et al. (2013), to increase transparency related to the data analysis and data interpretation.

Fourth, while this research aims to provide a holistic view of a socially just CE, a theoretical limitation relates to the possible exclusion of some social issues in this research. This is due to time and resource constraints, and the lack of a clearly defined socially just CE in academic literature. Including other social issues (distributed amongst the three dimensions of environmental justice) in the research can affect the ability of circular SEs to address all social issues. Nevertheless, the findings of this research still emphasise the holistic approach of the circular SEs in fostering a socially just CE. Future research should look into a socially just CE and further refine and define the socially just CE concept. For example, a stakeholder mapping tool can be used to look more into depth into the social issues of the CE. Future research can also look into other sustainability-related transitions to enhance the definition of a socially just CE, e.g. research related to environmental justice and the energy transition (Manjon et al., 2022; Outka, 2012). Lastly, due to the aim for a holistic lens on a socially just CE and time constraints, the results did not go into depth related to certain social issues, e.g. related to gender. Future research can therefore adopt a more specific approach and retrieve more insights related to the strategies pursued by the circular SEs through e.g. a gender lens.

Fifth, this research adopted a more localized approach, as SEs operate more on a local scale (Lin & Kim, 2017). The SEs have the potential for discursive power, and influence policies and political discourse (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012), touching upon a national/global level. However, this research remained focused on the strategies employed by the SEs to address the social issues in the CE and thus the three types of environmental justice, rather than the potential of the circular SEs to influence CE policies. Future research can therefore examine the discursive power of circular SEs and the potential of circular SEs to influence socially just CE policy-making.

Moreover, while a local approach can be a starting point for identifying strategies to foster a socially just CE, distributive injustices related to the global north and the global south are not addressed by the circular SEs. This research, therefore, identifies a research gap, as a socially just (transition towards the) CE also requires a global approach to address the environmental injustices between the global north and global south. Potentially, future research can look into the implementation of the CE concept and distributive justice in the global north and south, and the manner through which the social issues can be addressed in the CE on a more global level.

Conclusion

The CE is proposed as a sustainable solution for the current take-make-waste system by reducing, reusing, recycling and recovering materials in production and consumption processes (Kirchherr et al., 2017; Schröder, et al., 2020). However, while the social dimension needs to be integrated to foster a socially just transition to the CE (Moreau et al., 2017; Padilla-Rivera et al., 2020), the social dimension of sustainability is marginally considered in the CE. SEs can facilitate the integration of the social dimension in the CE, as they are entities that prioritise the social dimension, and have the potential to shape the institutional environment through their discursive power (Defourny & Nyssens, 2012; Mair & Marti, 2006; Soufani et al., 2018). Consequently, this research identified and addressed two research gaps. First, the strategies through which SEs can foster a socially just (transition towards the) CE remain underexplored. Second, the differences between the three types of SEs and the manner through which these address the social issues are not addressed. Therefore, this research aimed to address these research gaps by answering the following two research questions:

RQ1: What are the strategies through which SEs foster and can foster (a transition towards) a socially just circular economy?

RQ2: Are there any differences in the employed strategies across different models of SEs and, if so, why?

In order to answer these questions, this research studied twelve circular SEs in a comparative case study design. The employed strategies of the circular SEs to foster a socially just CE were examined and afterwards compared between the three types of SEs. The circular SEs have been found to address all three dimensions of environmental justice simultaneously by taking up a holistic approach, fostering a socially just CE. The strategies the SEs employ to address environmental justice relate to features that manifest in the SEs. First, distributive justice is addressed by the SEs through the following two features: *surplus reconceptualisation* and *embodiment of an accessible CE*. Second, procedural justice is addressed through the *participatory governance of the SEs*. Third, the SEs address recognitional justice through their *drive for social inclusion* and the *social embeddedness* of the SEs. The strategies that the circular SEs employ related to these features to foster a socially just CE are explained below.

This thesis first argues that circular SEs can take up a non-capitalistic approach to the CE through their surplus reconceptualisation. The circular SEs pursue the strategy utilization of economic surplus for environmental and social impact to address distributive justice. Moreover, the economic surplus of the circular SEs is often reinvested to address environmental justice. For example, the circular SEs can, for example, reinvest their economic surplus in the strategies related to the embodiment of an accessible CE (distributive justice) or the drive for social, circular inclusion (recognitional justice). In this sense, surplus reconceptualisation can enhance the creation of an accessible and inclusive CE. Nevertheless, in some cases, the circular SEs have not yet achieved economic surplus, which affects the feasibility of the reconceptualisation of surplus. These cases however demonstrated their aim to reinvest their future economic surplus in their social/environmental objectives.

Second, this thesis found that circular SEs embody an accessible CE, addressing distributive justice. The embodiment of accessibility specifically relates to the circular SEs ability to address financial access, behavioural access, technological access and educational access to the CE. The

strategies through which the SEs address accessibility of the CE, and thus distributive justice, are integrating accessibility CE into the social mission, providing circular capabilities to socially excluded groups, adopting technological accessibility and including access to CE information. The explicit integration of the accessibility of circular products and services into the social mission can increase financial accessibility and behavioural accessibility. In addition, the circular SEs take on an educational role to increase access to CE information to increase access to knowledge. Moreover, they adopt an adaptive and accessible approach to education. The circular SEs do so by adjusting the type of educational service to the needs of the people and using easy language. The CBM's of the circular SEs also have the potential to address distributive injustices, for example closing the digital divide or providing access to basic needs through the CBM innovation type collaborative consumption.

Third, the participatory governance of circular SEs addresses procedural justice, as it gives everyone affected by a decision the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. In particular, it enables stakeholders to shape the rules and norms of the SEs. One strategy through which the circular SEs address the participatory governance is the democratization of decision-making processes. The circular SEs often work with feedback systems that also allow stakeholders to address potential environmental injustices in the SEs. This could create a reinforcement system where an optimal environmentally just CE practice is emphasised. This thesis also argues that the circular SE pursue the strategy of implementing good working conditions for the employees of the circular SEs to address procedural justice. One way through which a healthy and safe work environment is achieved is the flexible approach of the SEs, as it enables the needs of employees to be met. Moreover, the circular SEs actively measure and provide good working conditions for their employees.

Fourth, this thesis argues that the circular SEs have a drive for social, circular inclusion feature that addresses recognitional justice. The circular SEs follow the strategies realisation of an inclusive environment and the empowerment of socially excluded groups to reach this drive for social inclusion. The creation of an inclusive environment allows people to participate, regardless of having to conform to prevailing cultural norms. The circular SEs can create an inclusive environment by not using a focus group for their circular product/service and by using inclusive language. Additionally, socially excluded groups are empowered through their participation in the circular SEs, as employees, consumers and/or members. The circular SEs can particularly empower employees/consumers by preparing them for a circular future and giving them a voice in decision-making processes - increasing confidence and independence. Therefore, procedural justice can also influence recognitional justice by increasing the ability to participate in decision-making processes.

Fifth, this thesis demonstrates that circular SEs pursue the strategy community engagement to increase the social embeddedness of their SE. This reduces barriers to participation for their local community in the circular SEs, addressing recognitional justice. The social embeddedness of the SEs can potentially increase the spread of the CE concept to the general public, addressing distributive justice. This research suggests that not only the local community can benefit from the circular SEs, but also the circular SEs can benefit from the community itself e.g. the survival during a crisis.

In order to answer RQ2, a comparative case study was conducted, and while all types of SEs share similar goals related to their features and pursue similar strategies, some differences were found in the manner through which the SE types approach the employed strategies. These differences manifest in the following features: participatory governance, the embodiment of an accessible CE and the drive for social, circular inclusion. First, the differences in the feature participatory governance relate to the extent of democratization of decision-making processes. This thesis argues that the social cooperative in particular has a high degree of decision-making power since its members can have a

say in the more important decisions. This can be explained by the specific aim for democratic governance of the social cooperatives. Nevertheless, the stakeholders involved in these decision-making processes can be limited to the type of social cooperative, e.g. producer cooperatives do not include consumers as members. This suggests that multi-stakeholder cooperatives primarily strive for procedural justice as they actively involve multiple stakeholders in their decision-making processes. In contrast, the entrepreneurial non-profit and social business type usually keep the important decisions internally, e.g. between the founders or the board of directors, and were found to pursue the democratization of decision-making processes less effectively compared to the social cooperative type.

This thesis also argues that the three different SEs differ in the embodiment of an accessible CE. Entrepreneurial non-profits were particularly found to take up an adaptive and accessible approach to CE education for the general public, adjusting the type of education to the diverse needs of the people and increasing educational access to the CE. This can be explained by the entrepreneurial non-profit type operating more towards the general interest compared to the other two SE types. The social business type can also adopt an educational role by specifically integrating this aim into the social mission. This type however does not take up the adaptive approach. Furthermore, the results suggest that the social cooperative structure that pursues a product service system can increase financial accessibility due to consumer power when consumers are included as members. This relates to the specific aim for democratic governance of the SEs. Knowledge barriers to the social cooperative structure, however, need to be considered related to the accessibility to the circular practice, as it can affect the ability to participate in the circular practice and therefore the distribution of circular benefits. This thesis, therefore, reveals the opportunity for social cooperatives to spread knowledge related to the social cooperative structure to increase the accessibility of their circular practice. Fourth, the empirical findings pointed out a difference in the drive for social inclusion, as the social cooperative purposefully empowers its members through the feeling of ownership, while the entrepreneurial non-profit and social business types do not pursue this strategy. The social cooperative namely provides ownership of the social cooperative to their members.

In conclusion, the thesis offers insights into the specific strategies through which the circular SEs can foster a socially just transition towards the CE, and the differences between the three types of SEs. This thesis emphasises the potential role of the SEs to serve as an example for other types of organisations by revealing strategies to address all dimensions of environmental justice that other organisations can adopt as well. Therefore, while a more global approach to a socially just CE still needs to be emphasised, local change can thus be a starting point for a socially just CE.

References

A 1st CO-OPERATIVE SUPERMARKET IN BRUSSELS. (2016, May). *Global Retail News*. <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5MWT-J2K1-JD2K-X1B5-00000-00&context=1516831>.

About Blanks [@aboutblanks]. (n.d.-a). Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 6, 2022 from <https://www.instagram.com/aboutblanks/>

About Blanks. (n.d.-b). *About Blanks | Notebooks made from old book covers*. Retrieved from <https://about-blanks.com/>

Adelekan, A. (2021). Circular Economy Strategies of Social Enterprises in Lagos: Summary of research findings with recommendations for policy makers and practitioners.

Akingbola, K., & Brunt, C. (2022). Working Conditions and Wages in the Social and Solidarity Economy. *Encyclopedia of the Social and Solidarity Economy*.

Amorim de Oliveira, Í. Environmental Justice and Circular Economy: Analyzing Justice for Waste Pickers in Upcoming Circular Economy in Fortaleza, Brazil. *Circular Economy and Sustainability* 1, 815–834 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43615-021-00045-w>

Andrews, D. (2015). The circular economy, design thinking and education for sustainability. *Local Economy*, 30(3), 305-315. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269094215578226>

Antikainen, M., & Valkokari, K. 2016. A Framework for Sustainable Circular Business Model Innovation. *Technology Innovation Management Review*, 6(7): 5-12. <http://doi.org/10.22215/timreview/1000>

Argyrou, A., Blomme, R. J., Lambooy, T., & Kievit, H. (2017). Unravelling the participation of stakeholders in the governance models of social enterprises in Greece. *Corporate Governance: the international journal of business in society*. 17(4): 661-677. DOI 10.1108/CG-08-2016-0164

Ateliere Fara Frontiere [@atelierefarafontiere]. (n.d). Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from <https://www.instagram.com/atelierefarafontiere/>

Ateliere Fara Frontiere. (2022, October 26). Retrieved from <https://www.atelierefarafontiere.ro/>

Atstaja, D., Koval, V., Grasis, J., Kalina, I., Kryshtal, H., & Mikhno, I. (2022). Sharing Model in Circular Economy towards Rational Use in Sustainable Production. *Energies*, 15(3), 939. <https://doi.org/10.3390/en15030939>

Bakhiyi, B., Gravel, S., Ceballos, D., Flynn, M. A., & Zayed, J. (2018). Has the question of e-waste opened a Pandora's box? An overview of unpredictable issues and challenges. *Environment international*, 110, 173-192. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2017.10.021>

Bardhi, F., & Eckhardt, G. M. (2012). Access-based consumption: The case of car sharing. *Journal of consumer research*, 39(4), 881-898. <https://doi.org/10.1086/666376>

Barraket, J. (2013). Fostering the wellbeing of immigrants and refugees? Evaluating the outcomes of work integration social enterprise. In *Social Enterprise* (pp. 118-135). Routledge.

Baterkaren. (2021). *Výročná správa registrovaného sociálneho podniku SVDM*. <https://baterkaren.sk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/vyroczna-sprava-rsp-svdm-2021.pdf>

Baterkaren. (2022, July 28). Retrieved from <https://baterkaren.sk/>

Bebasari, P. (2019). The role of women in upcycling initiatives in Jakarta, Indonesia: A case for the circular economy in a developing country. In *The Circular Economy and the Global South* (pp. 75-92). Routledge.

Bees Coop (n.d.-a) *Home* [Facebook page]. Facebook. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from <https://www.facebook.com/BEEScoop1030/>

Bees Coop. (n.d.-b). *Bees Coop Supermarket*. Retrieved, from <https://bees-coop.be/en/supermarket/values-and-projects/>

Bigerna, S., Micheli, S., & Polinori, P. (2021). New generation acceptability towards durability and reparability of products: Circular economy in the era of the 4th industrial revolution. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 165, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2020.120558>

BinFree - recycling services [@bin_free]. (n.d). Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/bin_free/

BinFree. (2021, August 13). <https://www.BinFree.ee/>

Bocken, N. M., Harsch, A., & Weissbrod, I. (2022). Circular business models for the fastmoving consumer goods industry: Desirability, feasibility, and viability. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, 30, 799-814. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.spc.2022.01.012>

Boeri, A., Gaspari, J., Gianfrate, V., Longo, D., & Boulanger, S. O. (2019). *Circular city: A methodological approach for sustainable districts and communities*. *WIT Transactions on the Built Environment*; WIT Press.

Bogner, A., Littig, B., & Menz, W. (2009). *Interviewing experts*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Borrello, M., Pascucci, S., Caracciolo, F., Lombardi, A., & Cembalo, L. (2020). Consumers are willing to participate in circular business models: A practice theory perspective to food provisioning. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 259, 121013. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.121013>

Borzaga, C., & Tortia, E. (2009). Social enterprises and local economic development. 195 – 228. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264055513-6-en>

Borzaga, C., Bodini, R., Carini, C., Depedri, S., Galera, G., & Salvatori, G. (2014). *Europe in transition: the role of social cooperatives and social enterprises*, 69. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2436456>

Borzaga, C., Galera, G., & Nogales, R. (2008). Social Enterprise: A new model for poverty reduction and employment generation. An examination of the concept and practice in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. *EMES European Research Network and UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and the CIS, Bratislava*.

Borzaga, C., Galera, G., Franchini, B., Chiomento, S., Nogales, R., & Carini, C. (2020). Social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe. *Comparative synthesis report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union*. Retrieved April, 30, 2020. DOI 10.2767/173023

Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods*. Oxford university press.

Buhariwala, P., Wilton, R., & Evans, J. (2015). Social enterprises as enabling workplaces for people with psychiatric disabilities. *Disability & Society*, 30(6), 865-879. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2015.1057318>

Camacho-Otero, J., Boks, C., & Pettersen, I. N. (2018). Consumption in the circular economy: A literature review. *Sustainability*, 10(8), 1-25. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su10082758>

Campbell, C. & Sacchetti, S., (2014). Creating space for communities: social enterprise and the bright side of social capital. *Journal of Entrepreneurial and Organizational Diversity*, 3(2), 32-48.

Capgemini Research Institute. (2021). *Circular economy for a sustainable future. How organizations can empower consumers and transition to a circular economy*. https://www.capgemini.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Circular-Economy_11112021_v10_web-2-1.pdf

Chen, H. (2018) Frontier Literature Review of Social Entrepreneurship Based on Knowledge Map. In *2nd International Conference on Innovations in Economic Management and Social Science*.

Chui, C. H. K., Shum, M. H., & Lum, T. Y. (2019). Work integration social enterprises as vessels of empowerment? Perspectives from employees. *Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work and Development*, 29(2), 133-148. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02185385.2018.1538899>

Ciambotti, G. (2020). Challenges and Constraints in Building Business Models to Fight Poverty. *No Poverty*, 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69625-6_114-1

Ciliberto, C., Szopik-Depczyńska, K., Tarczyńska-Łuniewska, M., Ruggieri, A., & Ioppolo, G. (2021). Enabling the Circular Economy transition: A sustainable lean manufacturing recipe for Industry 4.0. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 30(7), 3255-3272. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.2801>

Commown [@Commown]. (n.d.-a) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from <https://www.instagram.com/commown/>

Commown. (n.d.-b). *Commown · Startseite*. Retrieved from <https://commown.coop/de/>

Corvellec, H., Stowell, A. F., & Johansson, N. (2022). Critiques of the circular economy. *Journal of Industrial Ecology*, 26(2), 421-432. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jiec.13187>

Dart, R. (2004). The legitimacy of social enterprise. *Nonprofit management and leadership*, 14(4), 411-424. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nml.43>

Datta, P. B., & Gailey, R. (2012). Empowering women through social entrepreneurship: Case study of a women's cooperative in India. *Entrepreneurship theory and Practice*, 36(3), 569-587. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2012.00505.x>

Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (2008). Social enterprise in Europe: recent trends and developments. *Social enterprise journal*, 4(3), 202-228. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17508610810922703>

Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (2012). The EMES approach of social enterprise in a comparative perspective. In *Social enterprise and the third sector* (pp. 58-81). Routledge.

Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (2013). Social co-operatives: When social enterprises meet the co-operative tradition. *Journal of Entrepreneurial and organizational diversity*, 2(2), 11-33.

Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (2017). Mapping social enterprise models: some evidence from the "ICSEM" project. *Social Enterprise Journal*, 13(4), pp. 318-328. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SEJ-09-2017-0049>

Defourny, J., Nyssens, M., & Brolis, O. (2021). Testing social enterprise models across the world: Evidence from the "International Comparative Social Enterprise Models (ICSEM) project". *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 50(2), 420-440. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0899764020959470>

Del Gesso, C., & Romagnoli, L. (2020). Exploring Women's Representation at the Top of Leading Social Enterprises. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(3), 453-469. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v10-i3/7062>

Doherty, B., Haugh, H., & Lyon, F. (2014). Social enterprises as hybrid organizations: A review and research agenda. *International journal of management reviews*, 16(4), 417-436. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12028>

Dupret, K., & Eschweiler, J. (2022). How Do Participatory Governance and Reciprocity Impact Working Conditions in the SSE Organizations?—An Emotion Work Analysis. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2021.2020884>

Ecowings [@ecowings_nl]. (n.d.) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/ecowings_nl/

Ecowings. (2022, October 12). *Ecowings - durable in everyway*. Retrieved from <https://www.ecowings.nl/>

Educlick. (n.d.-b). Retrieved from <https://www.educlick.ro/>

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of management review*, 14(4), 532-550. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4308385>

Eisenhardt, K. M. (2021). What is the Eisenhardt Method, really?. *Strategic Organization*, 19(1), 147-160. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127020982866>

Eisenhardt, K. M., & Graebner, M. E. (2007). Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges. *Academy of management journal*, 50(1), 25-32. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2007.24160888>

Esposito, M., Tse, T., & Soufani, K. (2018). Introducing a circular economy: New thinking with new managerial and policy implications. *California Management Review*, 60(3), 5-19. <https://doi-org/10.1177/0008125618764691>

Esteban-Navarro, M. Á., García-Madurga, M. Á., Morte-Nadal, T., & Nogales-Bocio, A. I. (2020, December). The rural digital divide in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe—recommendations from a scoping review. *Informatics*, 7(4), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.3390/informatics7040054>

European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.-a). *PC4Change – Electronic refurbishing with the best of intentions | European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform*. Retrieved from <https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/pc4change-electronic-refurbishing-best-intentions>

European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.-b). *Staramaki – a straw made naturally from wheat | European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform*. Retrieved from <https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/staramaki-straw-made-naturally-wheat>

European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.-d). *Mercato Circolare - a smartphone app searching for circular economy products, services and events*. Retrieved from <https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/mercato-circolare-smartphone-app-searching-circular-economy-products-services-and-events>

European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.-c). *RePack's reusable and returnable packaging combines end-of-life guarantee with social economy*. Retrieved from <https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/repacks-reusable-and-returnable-packaging-combines-end-life-guarantee-social-economy>

Evers, A., & Laville, J. L. (2004). Social services by social enterprises: on the possible contributions of hybrid organizations and a civil society. *The third sector in Europe*, (237). Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. <https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.4337/9781843769774.00020>

Finlayson, E., & Roy, M. J. (2019). Empowering communities? Exploring roles in facilitated social enterprise. *Social Enterprise Journal*, 15(1). 76-93. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SEJ-04-2018-0035>

Friant, M. C., Vermeulen, W. J., & Salomone, R. (2020). A typology of circular economy discourses: Navigating the diverse visions of a contested paradigm. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 161, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2020.104917>

Geisendorf, S., & Pietrulla, F. (2018). The circular economy and circular economic concepts—a literature analysis and redefinition. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 60(5), 771-782. <https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.1002/tie.21924>

Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organizational research methods*, 16(1), 15-31. <https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.1177/1094428112452151>

Goodwin Brown, E., Schröder, A., Bachus, K., & Bozkurt, Ö. (2020). The social economy: a means for inclusive & decent work in the circular economy?. *The social economy: a means for inclusive & decent work in the circular economy?*, 1-19.

Gordon, K., Wilson, J., Tonner, A., & Shaw, E. (2018). How can social enterprises impact health and well-being?. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 24(3), 697- 713. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-01-2017-0022>

Grahna, S. (2022). Conceptual Integration of Digitalization and Servitisation as Means to Introduce the Circular Economy. 304-315. doi:10.3233/ATDE220149

Gui, B. (1991). The economic rationale for the “Third Sector”. *Annals of public and cooperative economics*, 62(4), 551-572. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8292.1991.tb01367.x>

Haugh, H. M., & Talwar, A. (2016). Linking social entrepreneurship and social change: The mediating role of empowerment. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 133(4), 643-658. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2449-4>

Hechavarria, D. M., Ingram, A., Justo, R., & Terjesen, S. (2012). Are women more likely to pursue social and environmental entrepreneurship?. In *Global Women's entrepreneurship research*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Henderson, F., Steiner, A., Mazzei, M., & Docherty, C. (2020). Social enterprises' impact on older people's health and wellbeing: exploring Scottish experiences. *Health Promotion International*, 35(5), 1074-1084. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/daz102>

Henry, M., Bauwens, T., Hekkert, M., & Kirchherr, J. (2020). A typology of circular start-ups: An Analysis of 128 circular business models. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 245, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.118528>

Héry, M., & Malenfer, M. (2020). Development of a circular economy and evolution of working conditions and occupational risks—a strategic foresight study. *European Journal of Futures Research*, 8(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40309-020-00168-7>

Hu, S., Henninger, C. E., Boardman, R., & Ryding, D. (2019). Challenging current fashion business models: Entrepreneurship through access-based consumption in the second-hand luxury garment sector within a circular economy. In *Sustainable Luxury* (pp. 39-54). Springer, Singapore.

Hulgård, E., Nielsen, E. N., & Juul-Olsen, M. (2017, July). Democratic Participation in Social Enterprise in a Danish Municipality. In *6th EMES international Research Conference on Social Enterprise*.

Ince, I., & Hahn, R. (2020). How dynamic capabilities facilitate the survivability of social enterprises: A qualitative analysis of sensing and seizing capacities. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 58(6), 1256-1290. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12487>

Izdebska, O., & Knieling, J. (2020). Citizen involvement in waste management and circular economy in cities: Key elements for planning and implementation. *European Spatial Research and Policy*, 27(2), 115-129. <https://doi.org/10.18778/1231-1952.27.2.08>

Jaeger-Erben, M. (2019, September). Circular society—from a self-destructive to a self-sustaining metabolism. In *PLATE Product Lifetimes and the Environment, Proceedings 3rd PLATE Conference, September 18-20 2019* (pp. 397-402). Universitaetsverlag der TU Berlin Berlin.

Jaeger-Erben, M., Jensen, C., Hofmann, F., & Zwiers, J. (2021). There is no sustainable circular economy without a circular society. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 168. DOI: 10.1016/j.resconrec.2021.105476.

Kennedy, B. L., & Thornberg, R. (2018). Deduction, induction, and abduction. In *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data collection* (pp 49-64). Sage publications

Kilpatrick, S., Farmer, J., Emery, S., & DeCotta, T. (2021). Social enterprises and regional cities: working together for mutual benefit. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 33(9-10), 741-757. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2021.1899293>

Kirchherr, J., Reike, D., & Hekkert, M. (2017). Conceptualizing the circular economy: An analysis of 114 definitions. *Resources, conservation and recycling*, 127, 221-232. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2017.09.005>

Lazăr, A. I. (2018). Economic efficiency vs. Positive and negative externalities. *Review of General Management*, 27(1), 112-118.

Leipold, S., Weldner, K., & Hohl, M. (2021). Do we need a 'circular society'? Competing narratives of the circular economy in the French food sector. *Ecological Economics*, 187, 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2021.107086>

Lekan, M., Jonas, A. E., & Deutz, P. (2021). Circularity as alterity? Untangling circuits of value in the social enterprise-led local development of the circular economy. *Economic Geography*, 97(3), 257-283. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00130095.2021.1931109>

Lin, U. & Kim, D., (2017). Social enterprise as a catalyst for sustainable local and regional development. *Sustainability*, 9(8), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su9081427>

Llorente-González, L. J., & Vence, X. (2020). How labour-intensive is the circular economy? A policy-orientated structural analysis of the repair, reuse and recycling activities in the European Union. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 162, 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2020.105033>

Mair, J., & Marti, I. (2006). Social entrepreneurship research: A source of explanation, prediction, and delight. *Journal of world business*, 41(1), 36-44. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2005.09.002>

Mair, S., Druckman, A., & Jackson, T. (2019). Higher wages for sustainable development? Employment and carbon effects of paying a living wage in global apparel supply chains. *Ecological Economics*, 159, 11-23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2019.01.007>

Manjon, M. J., Merino, A., & Cairns, I. (2022). Business as not usual: A systematic literature review of social entrepreneurship, social innovation, and energy poverty to accelerate the just energy transition. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 90, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2022.102624>

Marhuenda, F. (2009). Work integration in social enterprises: Employment for the sake of learning. In *Towards integration of work and learning* (pp. 77-91). Springer.

McKay, S., Phillimore, J., Teasdale, N., Teasdale, S. (2011). Exploring gender and social entrepreneurship: women's leadership, employment and participation in the third sector and social enterprises. *Voluntary Sector Review*, 2(1), 57-76

McKinnon, K., Kennedy, M., Barraket, J., & DeCotta, T. (2020). Is being in work good for wellbeing? Work integration social enterprises in regional Australia. *Australian Geographer*, 51(3), 361-375. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00049182.2020.1781322>

Meltzer, A., Kayess, R., & Bates, S. (2018). Perspectives of people with intellectual disability about open, sheltered and social enterprise employment: Implications for expanding employment choice through social enterprises. *Social Enterprise Journal*, 14(2), 225-244.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/SEJ-06-2017-0034>

Mercato Circolare [@mercato_circolare]. (n.d.-a) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 6, 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/mercato_circolare/

Mercato Circolare. (2020a). *Innovative startup with a social goal*.

Mercato Circolare. (2020b). *Innovative startup with a social goal*.

Mercato Circolare. (n.d.-b). *Mercato Circolare*. Retrieved from <https://www.mercatocircolare.it/en/home-eng/>

Mies, A., & Gold, S. (2021). Mapping the social dimension of the circular economy. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 321, 128960.

Moreau, V., Sahakian, M., Van Griethuysen, P., & Vuille, F. (2017). Coming full circle: why social and institutional dimensions matter for the circular economy. *Journal of Industrial Ecology*, 21(3), 497-506.
<https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.1111/jieec.12598>

Nandi, S., Hervani, A. A., & Helms, M. M. (2020). Circular economy business models—supply chain perspectives. *IEEE Engineering Management Review*, 48(2), 193-201.
DOI: [10.1109/EMR.2020.2991388](https://doi.org/10.1109/EMR.2020.2991388)

Nandi, S., Hervani, A. A., Helms, M. M., & Sarkis, J. (2021). Conceptualising Circular economy performance with non-traditional valuation methods: Lessons for a post-Pandemic recovery. *International Journal of Logistics Research and Applications*, 1-21.
DOI: [10.1080/13675567.2021.1974365](https://doi.org/10.1080/13675567.2021.1974365)

Ng, A. H. C. (2022, May). Conceptual Integration of Digitalization and Servitisation as Means to Introduce the Circular Economy. In *SPS2022: Proceedings of the 10th Swedish Production Symposium* (pp. 304). IOS Press.

Nicolás, C., & Rubio, A. (2016). Social enterprise: Gender gap and economic development. *European journal of management and business economics*, 25(2), 56-62.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.redeen.2015.11.001>

O'Shaughnessy, M., & O'Hara, P. (2016, December). Social enterprise in Ireland—Why work integration social enterprises (WISEs) dominate the discourse. In *Nonprofit Policy Forum*, 7(4), 461-485.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/npf-2016-0015>

O'Mara-Eves, A., Brunton, G., McDaid, G., Oliver, S., Kavanagh, J., Jamal, F., Matosevic, F., Harden, T. & Thomas, J. (2013). Community engagement to reduce inequalities in health: a systematic review, meta-analysis and economic analysis. *Public Health Research*, 1(4).

Outka, U. (2012). Environmental justice issues in sustainable development: Environmental justice in the renewable energy transition. *J. Envtl. & Sustainability L.*, 19(1), 62-121.

Padilla-Rivera, A., Russo-Garrido, S., & Merveille, N. (2020). Addressing the social aspects of a circular economy: a systematic literature review. *Sustainability*, 12(19), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12197912>

Pansera, M., Genovese, A., & Ripa, M. (2021). Politicising Circular Economy: what can we learn from Responsible Innovation?. *Journal of Responsible Innovation*, 8(3), 471-477. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23299460.2021.1923315>

Pareja-Cano, B., Valor, C., & Benito, A. (2020). How social enterprises nurture empowerment: a grounded theoretical model of social change. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 1-21. DOI: [10.1080/19420676.2020.1821753](https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2020.1821753)

Păunescu, C., & Evans, R. (2018). The role of social enterprises at European level. In *Doing Business in Europe* (pp. 235-254). Springer, Cham.

Pla-Julián, I., & Guevara, S. (2019). Is circular economy the key to transitioning towards sustainable development? Challenges from the perspective of care ethics. *Futures*, 105, 67-77. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2018.09.001>

PO:DZIELNIA. (2021, June 16). Retrieved from <https://podzielnia.pl/>

Po-Dzielnia [@podzielnia]. (n.d.) posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from <https://www.instagram.com/podzielnia/>

Prasad, A., & Manimala, M. J. (2018). Circular Social Innovation: A New Paradigm for India's Sustainable Development. In *Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Business Models* (pp. 141-160). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Reike, D., Vermeulen, W. J., & Witjes, S. (2018). The circular economy: new or refurbished as CE 3.0?—exploring controversies in the conceptualization of the circular economy through a focus on history and resource value retention options. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 135, 246-264. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2017.08.027>

Repack - the end of trash [@originalrepack]. (n.d.) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 6, 2022 from <https://www.instagram.com/originalrepack/>

Repack. (2022). *Sustainability Report*. <https://askelsustainabilitysolutions.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Report-Repack.pdf>

Repack. (n.d.). *Reusable packaging solutions for businesses | RePack*. Retrieved from <https://www.repack.com/>

Repp, L., Hekkert, M., & Kirchherr, J. (2021). Circular economy-induced global employment shifts in apparel value chains: Job reduction in apparel production activities, job growth in reuse and recycling activities. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 171, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2021.105621>

Reusable packaging company RePack announces its US launch. (2020, January 22). *Markets.Businessinsider.Com*. Retrieved September 27, 2022, from <https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/stocks/reusable-packaging-company-repack-announces-its-us-launch-1028835205>

Reware. (n.d.). *Computer ricondizionati e garantiti - Reware*. Reware: Computer Ricondizionati E Garantiti. Retrieved from <https://reware.it/>

Reyes, J. C., & Harnecker, C. P. (2013). An introduction to cooperatives. In *Cooperatives and Socialism* (pp. 25-45). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Sahakian, M. (2015). The social and solidarity economy: Why is it relevant to industrial ecology? *Taking Stock of Industrial Ecology*; Springer International Publishing: Cham, Switzerland, pp. 205–227.

Shahid Satar, M. (2019). Towards developing a comprehensive model for describing the phenomenon of community engagement in social enterprises, *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, 13(4), 472-488. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEC-03-2018-0024>

Schlosberg, D. (2004). Reconceiving environmental justice: global movements and political theories. *Environmental politics*, 13(3), 517-540. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0964401042000229025>

Schröder, P., Lemille, A., & Desmond, P. (2020). Making the circular economy work for human development. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 156, 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2020.104686>

Schroeder, P., Anggraeni, K., & Weber, U. (2019). The relevance of circular economy practices to the sustainable development goals. *Journal of Industrial Ecology*, 23(1), 77-95. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jiec.12732>

Sdrali, D., Goussia-Rizou, M., & Sarafi, V. (2016). Exploring the work environment in Greek social enterprises: A first overview. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, 28(4), 451-467. DOI: [10.1504/IJESB.2016.077577](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJESB.2016.077577)

Siegner, M., Panwar, R., & Kozak, R. (2019, July). Marginalized Communities and Social Enterprises: An Anatomy of Community Engagement in Hybrid Organizations. In *Proceedings of the International Association for Business and Society*, 30, 59-65. <https://doi.org/10.5840/iabsproc2019308>

Società Cooperative Reware (n.d.) Home [Facebook page]. Facebook. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from <https://www.facebook.com/rewareroma>

Soufani, K., Tse, T., Esposito, M., Dimitrou, G., & Kikiras, P. (2018). Bridging the circular economy and social enterprise: the Dutch Ministry of Defence and Biga Groep. *The European Business Review*, 63-68. <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.30124>

Spear, R. (2000). The Co-operative advantage. *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics*, 71(4), 507-523. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8292.00151>

Staramaki Profile. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://sites.google.com/staramaki.gr/2022staramakiprofile/home>

Staramaki SCE [@Staramaki]. (n.d.) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from <https://www.instagram.com/staramaki>

Staramaki. (n.d.). Retrieved <https://www.staramaki.gr/en>

Stratan, D. (2017). Success factors of sustainable social enterprises through circular economy perspective. *Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development*, 6(1), 17-23. DOI: 10.1515/vjbsd-2017-0003

Suiseeya, M., & Kimberly, R. (2016). Transforming justice in REDD+ through a politics of difference approach. *Forests*, 7(12), 300. <https://doi.org/10.3390/f7120300>

Talonen, A., Jussila, I., Saarijärvi, H., & Rintamäki, T. (2016). Consumer cooperatives: Uncovering the value potential of customer ownership. *AMS review*, 6(3), 142-156.

Tanekenov, A., Fitzpatrick, S., & Johnsen, S. (2018). Empowerment, capabilities and homelessness: The limitations of employment-focused social enterprises in addressing complex needs. *Housing, Theory and Society*, 35(1), 137-155. <https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.1080/14036096.2017.1290676>

Tavory, I. & Timmermans, S., (2012). Theory construction in qualitative research: From grounded theory to abductive analysis. *Sociological theory*, 30(3), 167-186. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275112457914>

Udržateľne s Jankou [@baterkaren_trnava]. (n.d.) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 6, 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/baterkaren_trnava/

Urbano, D., Jiménez, E. F., & i Noguera, M. N. (2014). Female social entrepreneurship and socio-cultural context: An international analysis. *Revista de Estudios Empresariales. Segunda época*, (2), 26-40.

Verver, M., Dahles, H., & Soeterbroek, I. (2021). Scaling for Social Enterprise Development: A Mixed Embeddedness Perspective on Two Dutch Non-Profit Organisations. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2021.1993967>

Vidal, I. (2005). Social enterprise and social inclusion: Social enterprises in the sphere of work integration. *Intl Journal of Public Administration*, 28(9-10), 807-825. <https://doi.org/10.1081/PAD-200067347>

Voican, M. (2021, December 15). Romania is awarded by European Economic and Social Committee for its involvement in climate action. *Agerpres*. <https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crd=00bb539c-2019-4758-bd71-d7865481ae1a&pdocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A649K-H9T1-JBTP-MOG7-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=473994&pdteaserkey=sr0&pditab=allpods&ecomp=zz2yk&earg=sr0&prid=bd4c30af-77b3-4720-9bdb-1613c8d3dee5>

Weaver, R. L. (2020). Social enterprise and the capability approach: Exploring how social enterprises are humanizing business. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, 32(5), 427-452. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10495142.2019.1589630>

Weryński, P., & Dolińska-Weryńska, D. (2015). The triangulation procedure in the research of civil activity and action research. *Zeszyty Naukowe. Organizacja i Zarządzanie/Politechnika Śląska*, 84, 231-245

Wijkman, A., & Skånberg, K. (2015). The circular economy and benefits for society. *Club of Rome*, 1-59.

Williams, J. (2019). Circular cities. *Urban Studies*, 56(13), 2746-2762. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098018806133>

Williams, M., & Moser, T. (2019). The art of coding and thematic exploration in qualitative research. *International Management Review*, 15(1), 45-55.

Wilton, R., & Evans, J. (2016). Social enterprises as spaces of encounter for mental health consumers. *Area*, 48(2), 236-243. <https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12259>

Winans, K., Kendall, A., & Deng, H. (2017). The history and current applications of the circular economy concept. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, 68, 825-833. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rser.2016.09.123>

Yuan, Z., Bi, J., & Moriguichi, Y. (2006). The circular economy: A new development strategy in China. *Journal of Industrial Ecology*, 10(1-2), 4-8. <http://doi.wiley.com/10.1162/108819806775545321>

Appendix A. Explanation of CBM innovations

Table 7.

CBM innovations and the explanation

	CBM innovation category	CBM innovation type	Explanation
Upstream	Industrial symbiosis	Input-oriented	Inter-organisational collaboration to create value from residual resource streams of external organisation
		Output-oriented	Inter-organisational collaboration to create value from residual resource streams of focal organisation
	Circularity standards/accreditation	Sourcing, manufacturing, transport/packaging	Establishing circularity standards with suppliers
Focal organisation	Core technology	Source material	Substitute materials with less resource-intensive alternatives (bio-based, more durable, biodegradable, recyclable)
		Product design	Increase durability, upgradability, energy-efficiency, interchangeability, etc.
		Key process	Production method/innovation enabling circularity
	Enabling technology	Sharing platform	Shared use/access/ownership
		Trading platform	Enable the exchange and resale of products and materials
		Asset tracking	Track products/components for adequate end-of-life/transparency on resource availability and origin
Downstream	PSS (Product service system)	Use phase oriented	Improve usage efficiency by renting, leasing, sharing, extended after-sales service
		Result/performance-oriented	Improve usage efficiency by subscription-based business models or pay-per-use
	Active consumer involvement	Return, repair, reuse	Include consumers in after-life/extending life-cycle of products;

		value recovery and take-back processes
	Collaborative consumption	Usage of shared assets within communities, potential of shared ownership
	Consumer engagement	Knowledge sharing to change customer preferences and/or diffuse distinct CE practices, materials or processes

Note. Adapted from “A typology of circular start-ups: An analysis of 128 circular business models” by M. Henry, T. Bauwens, M. Hekkert & J. Kirchherr, 2020, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 245, 1-19. Copyright 2019 by the Elsevier Ltd.

Appendix B. The definitions of the main features of the SE

Table 8.

A summary of SEs main features

Economic and entrepreneurial dimensions	Definition
<i>A continuous activity producing goods and/or selling services</i>	The main activity of the social enterprise is very closely related to the social mission of the enterprise. For example, if the goal is to provide jobs for marginalized groups who are lacking on the labour market, the social enterprises main activity is creating jobs for those specific groups.
<i>A significant level of economic risk</i>	In general, social enterprises can have a significant level of economic risk. The financial viability is dependent on obtaining adequate resources. These resources have a hybrid nature, and can come from e.g. trading activities or public subsidies.
<i>A minimum amount of paid work</i>	Social enterprises can have both voluntary and paid workers. The social enterprise needs to include a minimum degree of paid workers.
Social dimensions	
<i>A explicit aim to benefit the community</i>	The social enterprise explicitly aims to benefit the community, aiming to advocate social responsibility locally.
<i>An initiative launched by a group of citizens or civil society organizations</i>	The social enterprise is initiated by a group of citizens or civil society organizations. More specifically, it is initiated through a collective dynamic involving people with a shared need or aim. This dimension is contained over time.
<i>A limited profit distribution</i>	Social enterprises have to avoid a profit maximizing behaviour and are characterised by a limited- or non-distribution constraint. This is also re-enforced by European legal frameworks that limit the profit distribution for social enterprises.
Participatory governance	
<i>A high degree of autonomy</i>	The social enterprises are created by a group of people, and are governed by this group of

<i>A decision-making power is not based on capital ownership</i>	people. The SEs thus have a high level of autonomy, and are not governed by e.g. public authorities or other organizations.
<i>A participatory nature</i>	The decision making processes are not based on capital ownership of shareholders, but relate to the principle of “one member, one vote”.
	All stakeholders are involved in the governance of the organization. This means that users or customers have to be represented or have the opportunity to participate, various stakeholders influence decision-making processes, and the social enterprise has a participative management.

Note. Summarised from “The EMES approach of social enterprise in a comparative perspective” by J. Defourny & M. Nyssens, 2012, *Social enterprise and the third sector*, 58-81. Copyright 2012 EMES European Research Network

Appendix C. The cases and their social missions

Table 9.

All the SE cases, the corresponding SE type and their social mission

Case	SE type	The social mission
Commown	Social cooperative	Commown offers electronics as a service. The cooperative only provides (socially) fair designed electronic devices (e.g. Fairphones). The non-profit nature of the cooperatives creates the opportunity to deliver these devices at low and accessible prices. Moreover, the cooperative aims to extend the lifetime of electronic devices and contribute to a more responsible and sustainable use of electronics.
BEES	Social cooperative	The cooperative BEES aims to provide low-cost access to high quality, people-and-environmental friendly food. Cooperative members participate in operational tasks. This generates opportunities for lower cost and improves social cohesion.
Staramaki	Social cooperative	Staramaki uses the by-product of agricultural activities in Kilkis to stimulate the local economy. In particular, Staramaki uses wheat stems to produce biodegradable straws. Moreover, they aim to create employment opportunities in the area and increase social cohesion.
Reware	Social cooperative	Reware collects computers from companies and refurbishes them. The refurbished computers are afterwards sold, and 20% of the income is donated to an NGO picked by the companies, beneficial for the CSR of the companies.
Ecowings	Social business	Ecowings produces bags from upcycled tire tubes in their production facility in India. They work together with vulnerable women from rural areas around the city Indore.
Mercato Circolare	Social business	Mercato Circolare provides an online application for both B2B and B2C, aiming to disseminate the CE concept to the general public. Moreover, they provide free workshops and theatre to the consumers and use theatre to educate about the CE. Mercato Circolare also provides consultancy services to businesses.
About Blank	Social business	About Blanks produce notebooks made from old book covers. Most of their production is done in a social production facility that provides employment to vulnerable, marginalised groups.
Repack	Social business	Repack offers a solution to waste from e.g. e-commerce packaging through their returnable and reusable packaging product. The product is delivered through a service and consumers have the option to choose for the Repack packaging.
BinFree	Entrepreneurial non-profit	BinFree offers several services; namely a recycling service, training/consulting services and online courses - however, BinFree recently quit the recycling services. All the services

Po-dzielnia	Entrepreneurial non-profit	provided are related to making the CE more accessible to the general public, both knowledge-wise and convenience-wise. Po-dzielnia is a free shop in Poland. Their social mission has several layers. First, Po-dzielnia aims to extend the life cycles of products. Second, Po-dzielnia provides free products, accessible to everyone. Lastly, Po-dzielnia aims to teach more about the CE and teach consumers why to reuse.
Ateliere Fara Frontiere	Entrepreneurial non-profit	Ateliere Fara Frontiere is a work integration social enterprise, aiming to integrate people with vulnerable groups into the labour market through a two-year program. Ateliere Fara Frontiere has three workshops, namely Educlick, Remesh and Bio&Co. Educlick refurbishes computers and donates them to schools in vulnerable areas. Remesh reuses advertising banners for new sustainable products. Lastly, Bio&Co is a bio farm, providing organic vegetables to their local community through a subscription model.
Baterkaren	Entrepreneurial non-profit	Baterkaren is a community reuse centre aiming to make sustainability (and the CE) accessible to the general public through a broad variety of activities, to prepare their community for possible climate adaptation due to climate impacts.

Appendix D. Interview guide expert interviews

Introduction

Thank you for making time for the interview. Before starting, I will quickly introduce myself and the thesis topic, and tell you more about the practicalities. I am a master student at Utrecht University and currently writing my master thesis. The thesis is about how social enterprises can foster a socially just circular economy. In particular, it aims to retrieve in-depth insights into the mechanisms through which social enterprises can address social issues in the CE. Since you have expertise in both social enterprises and the circular economy, I am curious about your insights on this topic.

The interview will take around 30-60 minutes. It will be anonymous and will be transcribed afterwards, which was elaborated on in the consent form. Could you again confirm your permission for recording the interview for internal use?

Introduction questions

1. Can you introduce yourself?
2. How do you relate to the circular economy and social enterprises?

Circular economy and the social pillar

3. Can the current CE concept be a significant sustainable solution?
Possible follow up questions:
 - Why do you think so?
4. How do you think the social pillar is integrated in the circular economy?
Possible follow up questions:
 - Why do you think this pillar is well-integrated? Or why not?
 - Is the integration of the social pillar extensive enough?
 - How can the social pillar be (even better) addressed?

The CE and justice

In this research, three types of justice are used; namely procedural justice, recognitional justice and distributive justice. These are defined as the following. Procedural justice relates to the ability of all affected by a decision to participate in decision making processes. Recognitional justice means the ability to participate in and benefit from environmental governance without being required to assimilate to dominant cultural norms. Dominant cultural norms relate to gender, ethnicity, etc. Finally, distributive justice relates to unequitable distribution of costs and benefits, harms and goods related to environmental governance. The following questions will be related to these three types of justice

5. How do you think procedural justice is addressed in the CE?
Possible follow up questions:
 - Can you elaborate more on the decision-making processes in the CE
 - Do you think everyone affected can participate in the decision making processes?
 - If no; why do you think so, and how can this be improved?
 - If yes: can you elaborate on how you think this is achieved precisely?
6. How do you think recognitional justice is addressed in the CE?
Possible follow up questions:
 - How do you think ethnic minorities are involved in CE practices?
 - How do you think gender issues are addressed in CE practices?

- How can recognitional justice be improved?
7. How do you think distributive justice is addressed in the CE?

Possible follow up questions:

- How do you think costs and benefits are currently distributed in the CE?
- How do you think harms and goods are currently distributed in the CE?

Circular economy and social enterprises

8. How can social enterprises operating in the CE play a role in integrating the social pillar?

Possible follow up questions:

- What features of SEs can help with this?
- How do you think citizens can benefit from SEs? Is this the same in CE practices?
- How can employees benefit from SEs?
- Is everyone always involved in decision making processes in the CE?
- How do the SEs involve everyone in decision making processes?
- Can everyone participate and benefit from SEs operating in the CE, including minorities?
- How do SEs ensure the participation of minorities?
- Do SEs equally distribute both costs and benefits, and harms and goods? And how do they do so?

Differences between social enterprises

In this research, three types of social enterprises were identified; namely the social cooperative, the social business and the entrepreneurial non-profit. The social cooperative model pursue the interests of their members and the community's interests. The entrepreneurial non-profit model includes all non-profit organisations who have any type of income through the activities related to their social mission. Lastly, the social business model balances the economic and social enterprises

9. Do you think there can be a difference between these three types of social enterprises in how they can foster procedural justice within the CE?

Possible follow up questions:

- Why do you think these differences exist?
- How do these differences manifest across the different types?
- How can social cooperatives address procedural justice?
- How can social businesses address procedural justice?
- How can entrepreneurial non-profits address procedural justice?

10. Do you think there can be a difference between these three types of social enterprises in how they can foster recognitional justice within the CE?

Possible follow up questions:

- Why do you think these differences exist?
- How do these differences manifest across the different types?
- How can social cooperatives address recognitional justice?
- How can social businesses address recognitional justice?
- How can entrepreneurial non-profits address recognitional justice?

11. Do you think there can be a difference between these three types of social enterprises in how they can foster distributive justice within the CE?

Possible follow up questions:

- Why do you think these differences exist?
- How do these differences manifest across the different types?
- How can social cooperatives address distributive justice?
- How can social businesses address distributive justice?
- How can entrepreneurial non-profits address distributive justice?

Closing questions

12. Is there anything you would want to add that has not yet been discussed?
13. Do you have any remaining questions?
14. Can I contact you if I need clarification?

Closing

Thank you again for your time and interesting insights. If you have any further questions or feedback, do not hesitate to get into contact by email.

Appendix E. Interview guide case study: upstream actor

Introduction

Thank you for making time for the interview. Before starting, I will quickly introduce myself and the thesis topic, and tell you more about the practicalities. I am a master student at Utrecht University and currently writing my master thesis. The thesis is about how social enterprises can foster a socially just circular economy. In particular, it aims to retrieve in-depth insights into the mechanisms through which social enterprises can address social issues in the CE. Since you started a social enterprise/have a high function in a social enterprise [adjust based on interviewee], I am curious about your insights on this topic.

The interview will take around 30-60 minutes. It will be anonymous and will be transcribed afterwards, which was elaborated on in the consent form. Could you again confirm your permission for recording the interview for internal use?

Introduction questions

1. Can you introduce yourself?
2. Can you tell me more about the social enterprise you initiated/where you work? [change dependent on the interviewee]
3. Why did you start this social enterprise?
4. What is your social mission?

Circular economy and the social pillar

5. Can the current CE concept be a significant sustainable solution?
Possible follow up questions:
 - Why do you think so?
6. How do you think the social pillar is integrated in the circular economy?
Possible follow up questions:
 - Why do you think this pillar is well-integrated? Or why not?
 - Is the integration of the social pillar extensive enough?
 - How can the social pillar be (even better) addressed?

The CE + social enterprises

7. What role does your social enterprise play in the CE?
Possible follow up questions
 - Which circular strategies does your SE use?

Social role in CE

8. What role does your social enterprise play in the socially seen in the CE?
Possible follow up questions:
 - How do you think citizens can benefit from your SE?
 - How can employees benefit from your SE?
9. How do you involve your stakeholders in decision making processes in the CE?
Possible follow up questions:
 - Who are your stakeholders?
 - What enables you to involve everyone in these decision making processes?
 - Who do you involve in these decision making processes?

10. How is profit distributed in your SE?
11. How do you balance your economic and social objectives?
Possible follow up questions:
 - How do you make sure your economic objectives do not become more important?
 - How do you ensure economic sustainability?
12. In what way do you ensure the possibility of participation?
Possible follow up questions:
 - Are ethnic minorities involved in your SE? If so: how do you involve these ethnic minorities?
 - How do you address gender issues?
 - How do you think people feel when they are participating in your SE?
 - How can people participate in your SE?
13. How do you distribute the costs and benefits of your SE?
Possible follow up questions:
 - What are the costs and benefits of your SE?
 - Do you think a person coming into contact with your SE can experience more costs/benefits compared to others? If yes: why?
14. How do you distribute the harms and goods of your SE?
Possible follow up questions:
 - Do you have any harm? If so, what are these harms?
 - Can these harms affect one person more than the other?

Closing questions

15. Is there anything you would want to add that has not yet been discussed?
16. Do you have any remaining questions?
17. Can I contact you if I need clarification?

Closing

Thank you again for your time and interesting insights. If you have any further questions or feedback, do not hesitate to get into contact by email.

Appendix F. Interview guide case study: downstream actor

Introduction

Thank you for making time for the interview. Before starting, I will quickly introduce myself and the thesis topic, and tell you more about the practicalities. I am a master student at Utrecht University and currently writing my master thesis. The thesis is about how social enterprises can foster a socially just circular economy. In particular, it aims to retrieve in-depth insights into the mechanisms through which social enterprises can address social issues in the CE. Since you work at a social enterprise operating in the circular economy,, I am curious about your insights on this topic.

The interview will take around 30-60 minutes. It will be anonymous and will be transcribed afterwards, which was elaborated on in the consent form. Could you again confirm your permission for recording the interview for internal use?

Introduction questions

1. Can you introduce yourself?
2. Can you tell me more about the social enterprise you work at?
3. Why did you join this social enterprise?
4. What is your role in the social enterprise?
5. What is the social mission of the social enterprise?

The CE + social enterprises

6. How do you feel about being involved in [name social enterprise]?
Possible follow up questions:
 - o How do you feel after joining [name social enterprise]?
 - o How do you experience current society?
 - o What were your feelings after joining the social enterprise?
 - o Do you feel heard?
 - o Can you take me through your process of finding the enterprise?
7. Do you feel involved in decision making processes?
Possible follow up questions
 - o Can you describe this feeling to me?
 - o Why do you feel involved?
 - o Why don't you feel involved?
 - o How does it feel to be involved?
8. How do you experience your participation in [name social enterprise]?
Possible follow up questions:
 - o Can you elaborate on how your participation influences your daily life?
 - o Can you take me through a normal day of work?
 - o Did your feelings change now that you participate in [name SE] compared to before you participated?
9. Do you think everyone can join the SE, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion or other factors that do not fit dominant cultural norms?
Possible follow up questions:
 - o How does this make you feel?
 - o Did you ever feel excluded at other work? If yes; can you take me through your

- experience?
 - Did you ever feel excluded in [name SE]?
 - i. If yes: can you take me through your experience?
 - ii. If no: can you explain to me how [name SE] ensures this?
 - Is this different in SEs compared to other working experiences? How was this different
- 10. How does [name SE] benefit you?
 - Possible follow up questions:
 - Do you feel equally as benefited as others involved in the SE?
 - Did you make new friends because of the SE? If yes: how does this feel for you?
- 11. Is it different to work in [name SE] compared to your other working experiences?
 - Possible follow up questions:
 - How is this different?
 - What do you like more about working here?
 - Are there other things that you miss from other working experiences?

Closing questions

- 18. Is there anything you would want to add that has not yet been discussed?
- 19. Do you have any remaining questions?
- 20. Can I contact you if I need clarification?

Closing

Thank you again for your time and interesting insights. If you have any further questions or feedback, do not hesitate to get into contact by email.

Appendix G. Archival data overview

Table. 10.

Archival data overview

#	Type of source	Source	Quantity
Reware			
1	Website	Reware. (n.d.). <i>Computer ricondizionati e garantiti - Reware</i> . Reware: Computer Ricondizionati E Garantiti. Retrieved from https://reware.it/	6 pages
2	Website	<i>Reware - l'informatica sostenibile</i> . (n.d.). Reware - L'informatica Sostenibile. Società Cooperativa - Impresa Sociale. Retrieved from https://coop.reware.it/	21 pages
3	Website page	European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.-a). <i>PC4Change – Electronic refurbishing with the best of intentions European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform</i> . Retrieved from https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/pc4change-electronic-refurbishing-best-intentions	1 page
4	Social report, 2019	Società Cooperativa Reware – Impresa Sociale. (2019). <i>BILANCIO SOCIALE DELLE ATTIVITÀ SVOLTE NELL'ANNO 2019</i> . https://coop.reware.it/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Bilancio_sociale_2019.pdf	27 pages
5	Press release	Terna. (n.d.). <i>TERNA DONATES COMPUTER ASSETS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROJECTS</i> [Press release]. https://www.terna.it/en/media/press-releases/detail/project-terna-reuse-reware	1 page
6	Online news article	Recommerce Group. (2021, May 17). <i>European refurbished high-tech players join forces in new business association: The European Refurbishment Association</i> . https://www.recommerce-group.com/european-refurbished-high-tech-players-join-forces-in-new-business-association-the-european-refurbishment-association-eurefas/	1 page
7	Social media channel: Facebook	<i>Società Cooperativa Reware</i> (n.d.) <i>Home</i> [Facebook page]. Facebook. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from https://www.facebook.com/rewareroma	Number of posts analysed: 50

Staramaki		
8	Website	<i>Staramaki</i> . (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.staramaki.gr/en 9 pages
9	Website page	European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.-b). <i>Staramaki – a straw made naturally from wheat</i> 1 page / <i>European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform</i> . Retrieved from https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/staramaki-straw-made-naturally-wheat
10	Online news article	Daily Press Review. (2019). <i>ΠΟΛΙΤΗΣ</i> . Retrieved from https://politis.com.cy/290344/article 1 page
11	Online report	<i>Staramaki Profile</i> . (n.d.). Retrieved from https://sites.google.com/staramaki.gr/2022staramakiprofile/home 1
12	Social media	<i>Staramaki SCE</i> [@Staramaki]. (n.d.) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from 61 posts channel; instagram https://www.instagram.com/staramaki
Commown		
13	Website	Commown. (n.d.-b). <i>Commown · Startseite</i> . Retrieved October 10, 2022, from https://commown.coop/de/ 10 pages
14	Online article	Clarke, C. (2021). <i>Faire Elektronikgeräte mieten statt kaufen – bei Commown: »Es liegt demnach im Interesse aller Verbraucher*innen, aus einem so schädlichen System auszubrechen.«</i> . NachhaltigeJobs. Retrieved from: https://www.nachhaltigejobs.de/commown/m?utm_content=buffera0a99 1 page
15	Social media	<i>Commown</i> [@Commown]. (n.d.-a) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from 91 posts channel: Instagram https://www.instagram.com/commown/
BEES		
16	Website	Bees Coop. (n.d.-b). <i>Bees Coop Supermarket</i> . Retrieved from https://bees-coop.be/en/supermarket/values-and-projects/ 7 pages
17	Website article	ADRESSEN. (2016, November 16). <i>Knack</i> . https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crd=616f0117-0387-4034-b1be-379ae7d73a18&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A5M5X-G871- 1 page

F07K-R066-00000-

00&pdcontentcomponentid=306780&pdteaserkey=sr1&pditab=allpods&ecomp=rz2yk&earg=sr1&prid=0ad15336-bd8d-46e2-9159-dfdc5a8cc0d3

18	Website article	A 1st CO-OPERATIVE SUPERMARKET IN BRUSSELS. (2016, May). <i>Global Retail News</i> . https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5MWT-J2K1-JD2K-X1B5-00000-00&context=1516831 .	
19	Social media channel: Facebook	<i>Bees Coop</i> (n.d.-a) <i>Home</i> [Facebook page]. Facebook. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from https://www.facebook.com/BEEScoop1030/	Number of posts analysed: 50
<hr/> About blanks <hr/>			
20	Website	About Blanks. (n.d.-b). <i>About Blanks Notebooks made from old book covers</i> . Retrieved from https://about-blanks.com/	10 pages
21	Website page	European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.-e). <i>About Blanks gives new life to old books European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform</i> . Retrieved from https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/about-blanks-gives-new-life-old-books	1 page
22	News article	Berg, E. V. D. (2018, November 23). De boeken van About: Blanks zijn een probaat alternatief voor de papierbak. <i>De Volkskrant</i> . https://www.volkskrant.nl/cultuur-media/de-boeken-van-about-blanks-zijn-een-probaat-alternatief-voor-de-papierbak~be20e3f5/?referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F	1 page
23	News article	Lindsen, C. (n.d.). <i>About Blanks in Algemeen Dagblad About Blanks</i> . Retrieved October 31, 2022, from https://about-blanks.com/nl/algemeendagblad/	1 page
24	Social media channel: Instagram	<i>About Blanks</i> [@aboutblanks]. (n.d.-a) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 6, 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/aboutblanks/	321 posts. Number of posts analysed: 100

Ecowings			
25	Website	Ecowings. (2022, October 12). <i>Ecowings - durable in everyway</i> . https://www.ecowings.nl/	25 pages
26	Online news article	Times of India. (2015, December 16). Discarded products become part of creative home decor - Times of India. <i>The Times of India</i> . https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/home-garden/discarded-products-become-part-of-creative-home-decor/articleshow/50201794.cms	1 page
27	Social media channel: Instagram	<i>Ecowings</i> [@ecowings_nl]. (n.d.) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/ecowings_nl/	264 posts. Number of posts analysed: 100
Mercato circolare			
28	Website	Mercato Circolare. (n.d.-b). <i>Mercato Circolare</i> . Retrieved from https://www.mercatocircolare.it/en/home-eng/	10 pages
29	Report	Mercato Circolare. (2020a). <i>Innovative startup with a social goal</i> .	13 pages
30	Report	Mercato Circolare. (2020b). <i>Innovative startup with a social goal</i> .	10 pages
31	Website page	European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.-d). <i>Mercato Circolare - a smartphone app searching for circular economy products, services and events</i> . Retrieved May 7, 2022, from https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/mercato-circolare-smartphone-app-searching-circular-economy-products-services-and-events	1 page
32	Social media channel: Instagram	<i>Mercato Circolare</i> [@mercato_circolare]. (n.d.-a) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 6, 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/mercato_circolare/	241 posts. Number of posts analysed: 100
Repack			

33	Website	Repack. (n.d.). <i>Reusable packaging solutions for businesses RePack</i> . Retrieved from https://www.repack.com/	35 pages
34	Annual report	Repack. (2022). <i>Sustainability Report</i> . https://askelsustainabilitysolutions.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Report-Repack.pdf	28 pages
35	Website page	European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.-c). <i>RePack's reusable and returnable packaging combines end-of-life guarantee with social economy</i> . Retrieved October 24, 2022, from https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/repacks-reusable-and-returnable-packaging-combines-end-life-guarantee-social-economy	1 page
36	Video	RePack. (2014, November 25). <i>RePack - Reusable Packaging</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arA_fGLh74g	47 seconds
37	Online news article	Reusable packaging company RePack announces its US launch. (2020, January 22). <i>Markets.Businessinsider.Com</i> . Retrieved September 27, 2022, from https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/stocks/reusable-packaging-company-repack-announces-its-us-launch-1028835205	1 page
38	Online article	Cernansky, R. (2019, July 2). Wasteful packaging is going out of fashion. <i>Vogue Business</i> . https://www.voguebusiness.com/technology/eco-friendly-reusable-packaging-sustainability	1 page
39	Social media channel: Instagram	<i>Repack - the end of trash</i> [@originalrepack]. (n.d.) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 6, 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/originalrepack/	966 posts. Number of posts analysed: 100
Po-dzielnia			
40	Website	<i>PO: DZIELNIA</i> . (2021, June 16). Retrieved from https://podzielnia.pl/	9 pages

41	Website page	European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.-f). <i>Po-Dzielnia: the Polish Sharing Economy Centre</i> . Retrieved October 31, 2022, from https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/podzielnia-polish-sharing-economy-centre	1 page
42	Social media channel: Instagram	<i>Po-Dzielnia</i> [@podzielnia]. (n.d.) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/podzielnia/	410 posts. Number of posts analysed: 100

Baterkaren

43	Website	<i>Baterkaren</i> . (2022, July 28). Retrieved from https://baterkaren.sk/	47 pages
44	Annual report	<i>Baterkaren</i> . (2021). <i>Výročná správa registrovaného sociálneho podniku SVDM</i> . https://baterkaren.sk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/vyrocna-sprava-rsp-svdm-2021.pdf	17 pages
45	Booklet	Protopapadaki, C., & Rakocevic, L. (2021). <i>CIRCULAR CITIES SOLUTION BOOKLET</i> . r Smart Cities Marketplace © European Union, 2021. https://smart-cities-marketplace.ec.europa.eu/insights/solutions/why-circular-cities	44 pages, 1 page analysed (p. 13)
46	Website page	European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.- g). <i>Community reuse center Baterkáren brings life to the circular economy principles</i> . Retrieved October 24, 2022, from https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/community-reuse-center-baterkaren-brings-life-circular-economy-principles	1 page
47	Social media channel: Instagram	<i>Udržateľne s Jankou</i> [@baterkaren_trnava]. (n.d.) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 6, 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/baterkaren_trnava/	767 posts. Number of posts analysed: 100

Ateliere Fara

Frontiere

48	Website ateliere fara frontiere	<i>Ateliere Fara Frontiere</i> . (2022, October 26). Retrieved from https://www.atelierefarafrafrontiere.ro/	20 pages
49	Website educlick	<i>Educlick</i> . (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.educlick.ro/	26 pages
50	Website page	European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. (n.d.-h). <i>educlick: a social and circular economy workshop from Romania</i> . Retrieved from https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/educlick-social-and-circular-economy-workshop-romania	1 page
51	Online news article	Voican, M. (2021, December 15). Romania is awarded by European Economic and Social Committee for its involvement in climate action. <i>Agerpres</i> . https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.library.uu.nl/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crd=00bb539c-2019-4758-bd71-d7865481ae1a&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A649K-H9T1-JBTP-M0G7-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=473994&pdteaserkey=sr0&pditab=allpods&ecomp=zz2yk&earg=sr0&prid=bd4c30af-77b3-4720-9bdb-1613c8d3dee5	1 page
52	Online news article	Agence France-Presse. (2013, February 13). Recycled computers offer hope to Romania's needy. <i>Gadgets 360</i> . https://www.gadgets360.com/laptops/news/recycled-computers-offer-hope-to-romania-s-needy-330405	1 page
53	Social media channel: Instagram	<i>Ateliere Fara Frontiere</i> [@atelierefarafrafrontiere]. (n.d.) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/atelierefarafrafrontiere/	375 posts. Number of posts analysed: 100
BinFree			
54	Website	<i>BinFree</i> . (2021, August 13). Retrieved from https://www.BinFree.ee/	10 pages

- 55 Online news article ERR News. (2020, September 18). "Clean Games" to take place around Linnahall on World Cleanup Day. 1 page
ERR. <https://news.err.ee/1136943/clean-games-to-take-place-around-linnahall-on-world-cleanup-day>
- 56 Social media *BinFree - recycling services* [@bin_free]. (n.d.) Posts [Instagram profile]. Instagram. Retrieved September 5, 66 posts
channel: Instagram 2022 from https://www.instagram.com/bin_free/

Appendix H. The consent form

INFORMED CONSENT FORM for participation in:

The role of social enterprises in fostering a socially just circular economy



**Utrecht
University**

To be completed by the participant:

I confirm that:

- I am satisfied with the received information about the research;
- I have been given opportunity to ask questions about the research and that any questions that have been risen have been answered satisfactorily;
- I had the opportunity to think carefully about participating in the study;
- I will give an honest answer to the questions asked.

I agree that:

- the data to be collected will be obtained and stored for scientific purposes;
- the collected, completely anonymous, research data can be shared and re-used by scientists to answer other research questions;
- video and/or audio recordings may also be used for scientific purposes. I understand that:
- I have the right to withdraw my consent to use the data;
- I have the right to see the research report afterwards.

Name of participant: _____

Signature: _____ Date, place: ___ / ___ / ____, _____