

RESEARCH REPORT

Mapping the Circularity Gap: Insights, Obstacles and Solutions from the Belgian Business Sector





Colophon

Title

Mapping the Circularity Gap: Insights,
Obstacles and Solutions from the Belgian Business Sector

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“Only 23% of organizations operate largely or fully in a circular way. That is too low, given the increasing pressure on resources and the fact that Earth Overshoot Day moves earlier each year. Talking about circularity is no longer enough. It’s time for action. Every organization can make a difference.”

Gijs Derks,
general director
Milgro





RESEARCH REPORT

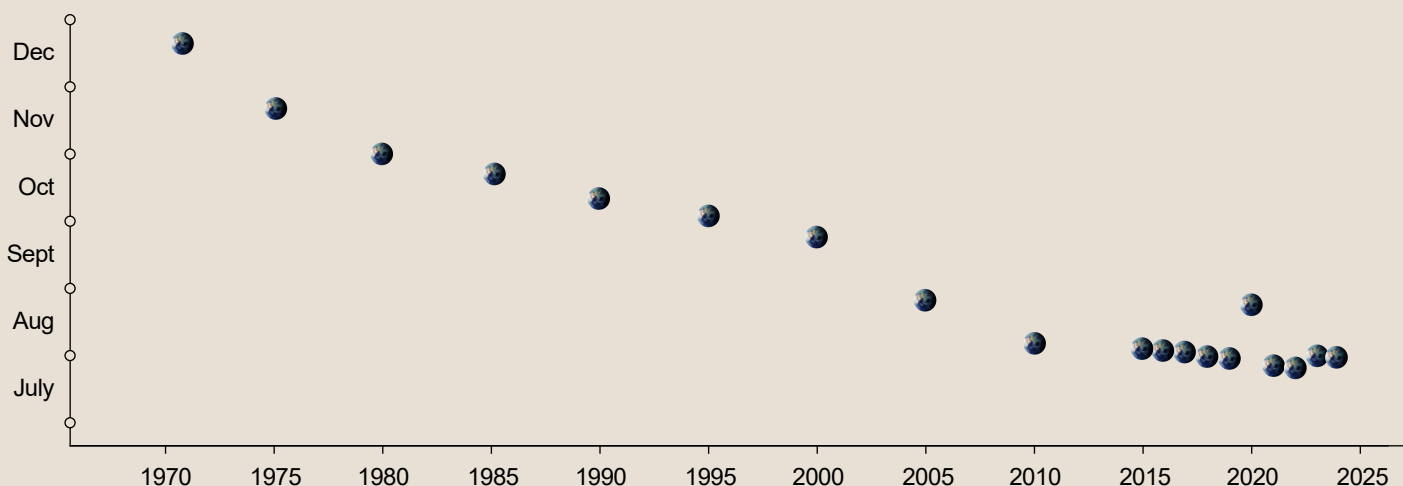
Mapping the Circularity Gap: Why This Report Is Needed Now

In 2025, the urgency to adopt circular practices is greater than ever. Globally, the pressure on resources is increasing due to economic growth, population growth, and climate change. Geopolitical tensions and the availability of raw materials are also impacting the playing field. Earth Overshoot Day — the date on which we

exhaust the planet's natural resources for the year — is moving earlier each year.



Earth Overshoot Day throughout the years





Circularity Gap

The Circularity Gap measures the difference between our current circular performance and the goal of a 100% circular economy. According to the Circularity Gap Report 2025, only 6.9% of the global economy is circular — a decline compared to previous years. This is despite growing attention to circular economy practices in recent years. In other words: while the conversation around circularity is gaining momentum, the gap itself continues to widen.

Milgro's ambition is a world without waste by 2040. Together with our partner network, we support organizations in managing their waste and residual streams more intelligently — in a sustainable and profitable way. We recognize the positive impact that businesses can have on the circular transition. This report serves as a compass: it maps out the challenges, highlights inspiring examples, and offers practical tips to help bridge the gap, step by step.

Key Findings

A selection of insights you'll discover further in this report:

- 90% of companies say they operate at least partly in a circular way, yet only 11% are fully circular. The sense of urgency is often lacking, which means circularity is not integrated into broader sustainability ambitions. Most organizations limit their efforts to isolated measures.
- At 20% of companies, circularity is not being measured at all. As a result, efforts lack focus and ambitions remain vague.
- About 36% of companies believe the government makes the transition to circularity more difficult rather than easier. Still, 60% consider legislation essential to make real progress.
- More than two in five (43%) say that financial incentives or subsidies would help them take circular steps.
- One in three companies (32%) wants to make significant progress in circularity within the next five years, but many lack a concrete plan or timeline.



Research Methodology

This report is based on a quantitative online survey conducted among decision-makers in the Netherlands and Belgium. The target group consisted of mid- and senior-level management professionals responsible for procurement, facility management, environment, or sustainability. The fieldwork was carried out by research agency Markteffect between March 25 and April 3, 2025. A total of 464 respondents participated in the study: 311 from the Netherlands and 153 from Belgium.

The results presented in this report focus exclusively on the Belgian respondents. All sectors of the Belgian business community are represented in the sample, providing a broad and representative picture of the current state of circularity within Belgian organizations.



1. How Far Have Companies Really Come? The State of Circularity in 2025

To chart a course toward circular growth, we first need a clear picture of where companies currently stand, where progress is stalling, and what drives them forward. This chapter outlines the current state of affairs — from the measures already being taken to the obstacles companies encounter, and from ambitions on paper to reality in practice.

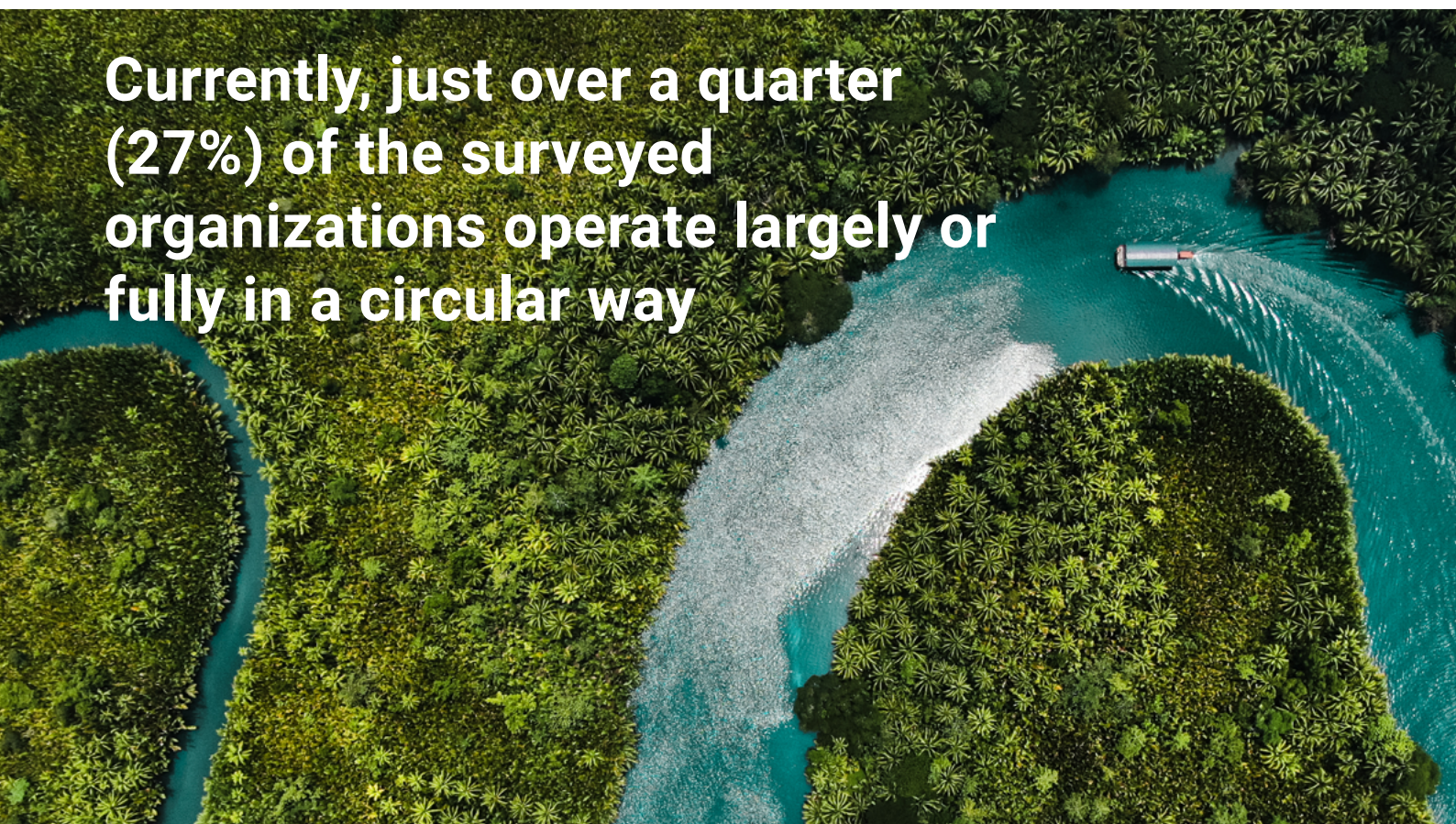
fully circular. In practice, this means that most organizations have initiated circular efforts, but these are often only partially integrated into their operations.

The movement toward circularity is clearly underway, but for many, the transition to a fully circular business model is still in its early stages.

1.1 What's Already Happening? The First Steps Toward Circularity

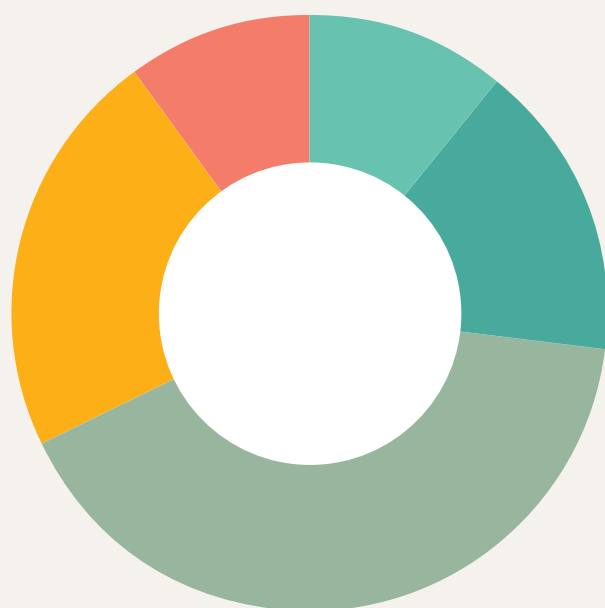
Although nearly all surveyed companies indicate they are working on circularity, only eleven percent can currently be considered

**Currently, just over a quarter
(27%) of the surveyed
organizations operate largely or
fully in a circular way**



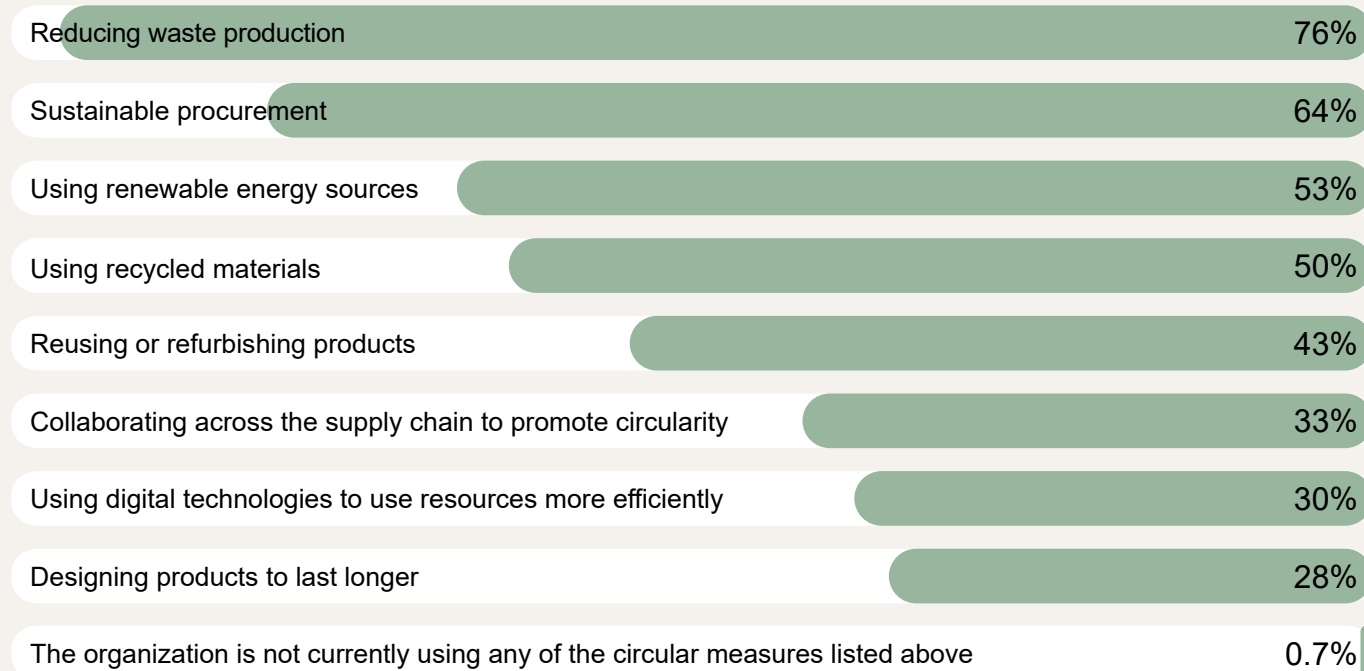


How circular is your company at this moment?



- Fully circular:** The company is fully circular and minimizes waste and resource consumption (11%)
- Largely circular:** Circular principles are strongly integrated into business operations (16%)
- Partly circular:** There are clear circular goals and multiple circular strategies are being applied (41%)
- Minimally circular:** Some circular measures are in place, but there is no formal policy (22%)
- Not circular:** There are currently no circular initiatives or strategies (10%)

Which circular measures is your organization currently implementing?



The numbers speak for themselves: companies are clearly willing to act, and many companies have already taken action. For example, 76 percent of organizations have taken steps to reduce their waste production. This is often a first, accessible step toward circularity. It provides a strong foundation for moving from isolated actions to a cohesive and integrated circular strategy.

The lack of KPIs makes it difficult to define circular objectives, measure progress, and ensure accountability



1.2 Measuring Is Knowing – But Are We Truly Taking Action?

Many companies are already taking circular measures, such as reducing waste, reusing products, or purchasing sustainably. But without insight into the results, circular business practices often remain abstract. Linking measures to clear KPIs makes impact measurable and manageable.

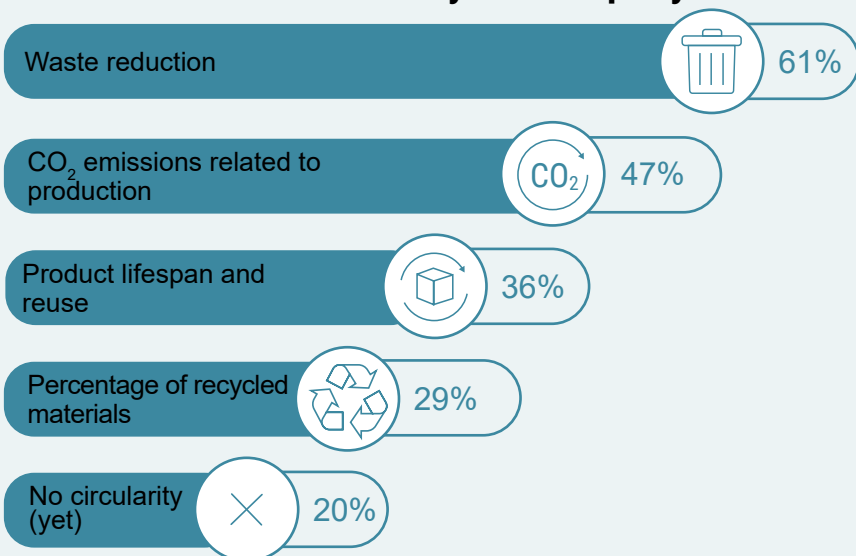
Nearly one in three companies (31%) say they lack insight into measurement methods and circular KPIs — something that could help them strengthen circularity within their organization. For example, 61 percent of companies measure waste reduction, which aligns well with the most commonly implemented measure: reducing waste. For those focusing on sustainable energy or procurement, CO₂ emissions are

a logical KPI. The reuse of products is also common and can be monitored through product lifespan or the number of reuse cycles. The use of recycled materials, in turn, can be linked to the proportion of recovered resources in the final product.

Notably, 20 percent of companies still do not use any circular KPIs. This presents a clear opportunity: choose at least one measure and start with a simple metric, such as the volume of residual waste or the number of circular suppliers. Only by measuring can you make impact visible — and make targeted adjustments.



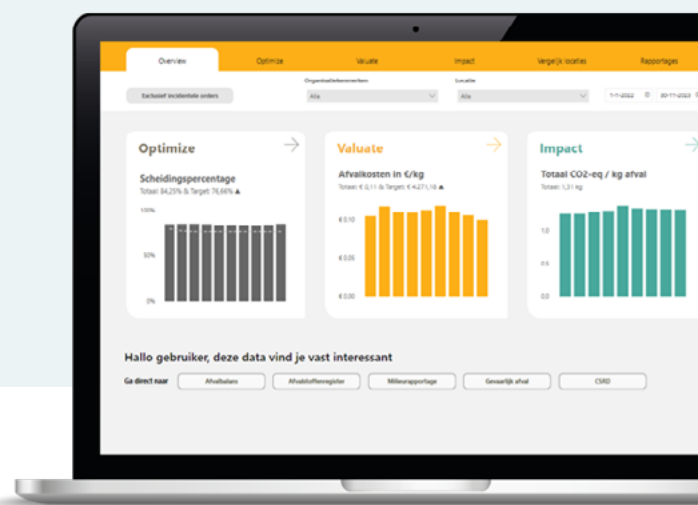
Which circular KPIs does your company monitor?



MILGRO'S TIP

You can't measure everything at once — but taking that first step is crucial. A good starting point is the set of topics from the double materiality assessment. This helps identify where your organization has the most impact and faces the greatest risk. It shows you where to focus your measurement efforts.

For example, if the double materiality assessment shows that the ESRS topic “Resource Use and Circular Economy” is material to your organization, it makes sense to formulate KPIs around, for instance, reducing the use of primary raw materials. This also aligns well with the requirements of the CSRD, in which double materiality forms the basis for determining which topics you need to report on.



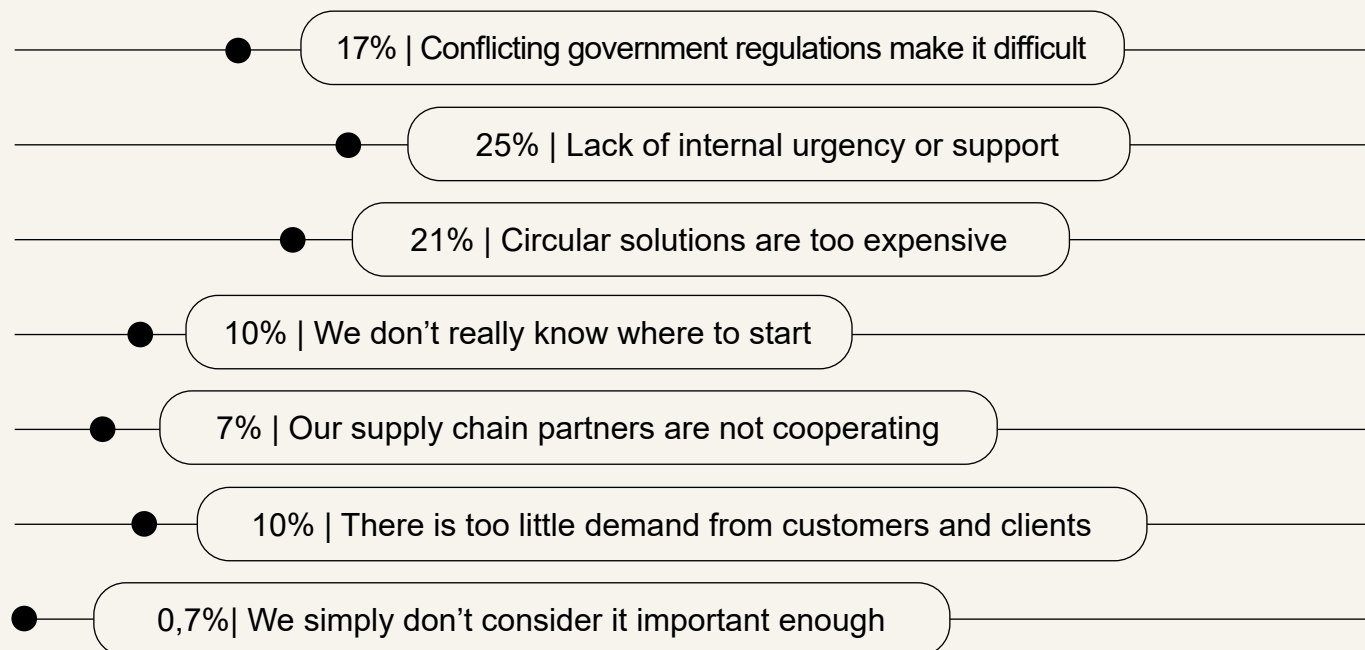
1.3 Between Intention and Action: What's Holding Companies Back

On the road to circularity, companies encounter various obstacles. The most frequently mentioned barrier is conflicting government regulations. One in five respondents (17%) indicate that such regulations hinder circular initiatives rather than support them — more on this in Chapter 2.

Another major challenge is the lack of internal urgency or support. Without broad buy-in across the organization, circularity often remains a side issue rather than a strategic priority.



What is the main reason your company is not yet (fully) circular?



The Employee of the Future Wants to Make an Impact

More and more young professionals are consciously choosing meaningful work. They don't just want to put in the hours or work for a paycheck — they're looking for impact. They want to contribute to social causes such as sustainability, inclusion, or circularity. For many, purpose increasingly outweighs salary.

These professionals are seeking employers who offer not just a career, but a chance to be part of something bigger. That makes investing in topics like circularity even more valuable: not only are you contributing to a better future, but you're also becoming more attractive to the workforce of tomorrow.





1.4 Circular Ambitions

Despite the challenges, Belgian companies have high ambitions. Over a third of surveyed organizations (38%) aim to make a significant portion of their operations circular within the next five years. A similar share (39%) is focused on substantially reducing waste and emissions. One in five (23%) aspires to have a fully circular business model by then.

MILGRO'S TIP

Don't wait for a complete roadmap. Set a goal to make 80% of your operations circular by 2027 and start working toward it step by step. Circularity isn't a destination — it's a movement.

This summer, Milgro will launch a practical step-by-step plan to help you get started in a structured way. Expect a hands-on toolkit with clear steps, useful tips, and inspiring examples to guide your journey toward circularity.



Where does your company see itself in terms of circularity within the next five years?

38%

We aim to make a significant portion of our operations circular

39%

We want to achieve a substantial reduction in waste and emissions

20%

We want to comply with circular regulations, but our ambitions go beyond that

23%

We want to begin the journey toward a fully circular business model

8%


Circularity will not play a major role in our operations



1.5 When Will We Be Fully Circular?

Governments also have circular ambitions — take, for example, the goal of achieving a fully waste-free circular economy in Flanders by 2050. That means there is work to be done for organizations. But how far along are they now? Many companies have clearly started moving toward a circular economy. Yet for most, full circularity still feels like a distant goal.

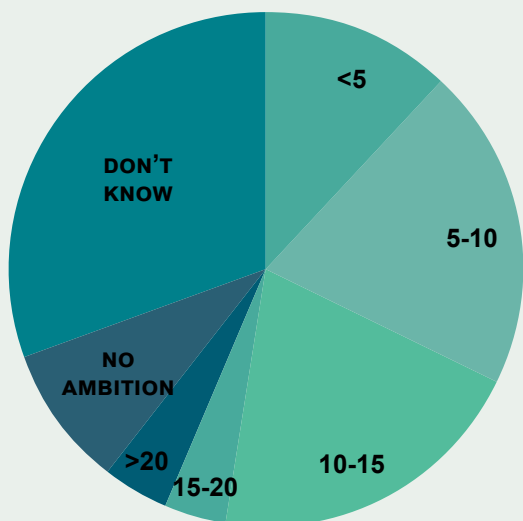
Businesses need clear guidelines, practical direction, and broader support — both internally and across the market. By providing targeted insights into both obstacles and opportunities, companies can be better supported in bridging the gap between ambition and reality.

An aerial photograph of a sailboat with a white hull and a small orange cabin, sailing on clear, turquoise water. The water's surface is textured with ripples and reflections, and the overall color palette is dominated by various shades of blue and green.

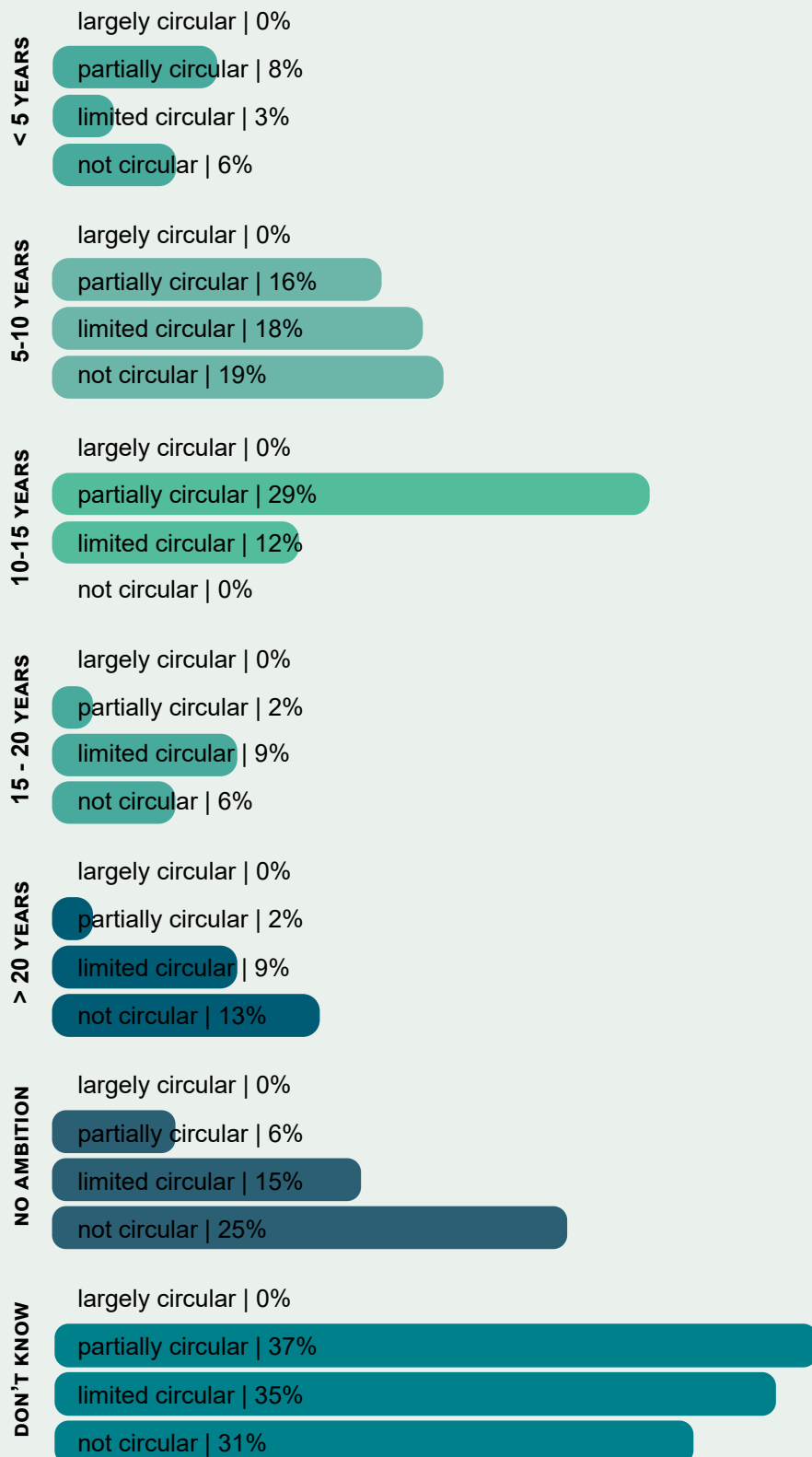
**One in five
organizations aims
to begin the journey
toward a fully
circular business
model within the
next five years**



By when does your company expect to be fully circular?



How circular is your company currently?





From the charts on the previous page, we can conclude that circularity is a long-term strategy for most companies. Even among organizations that are already partly circular, half (53%) say they still need between 0 and 15 years to become fully circular.

Another striking finding: among companies that are not currently circular, 53 percent see no reason to pursue circularity. This doesn't necessarily mean they consider circularity unimportant — rather, they may not see a direct benefit for their operations, find the concept too abstract or complex, or believe that circularity is not relevant to their sector.



MILGRO'S TIP

Stay ahead of legislation and set a course toward circularity. Companies that have yet to begin will not meet the EU's goal of a fully circular economy by 2050. Not starting is not an option — businesses risk being forced into action by future regulations.

Start today by defining your direction and setting concrete goals. Even if you need to adjust your course later, circularity begins with that first step. And that step needs to be taken now.

Circular Impact: The Right to Repair

Most companies are still in the early stages of circular business: taking isolated measures, searching for direction, and building internal support. But as circularity becomes more professionalized, a new playing field is emerging. Companies are increasingly confronted with external forces that directly influence their strategy and processes — including stricter reporting requirements, shifting customer expectations, and new legislation.

A current example is the European Directive (EU) 2024/1799 on the right to repair. This law aims to give consumers more options to repair products instead of replacing them. As a result, repair is not only becoming more appealing but is also being enforced as the preferred option by law.

The directive was published on July 10, 2024, and came into force on July 30, 2024. Member states, including Belgium, have until July 31, 2026 to incorporate the rules into national legislation. After that, these requirements will become mandatory for manufacturers and retailers.

For businesses, this marks an important shift: circular practices are no longer just a matter of choice — they are increasingly becoming a legal obligation. Design decisions, logistics, service, and aftersales all need to be better aligned with repair, reuse, and extended product life cycles.

In the next chapter, we'll take a closer look at these external influences. What role does the government play in the circular transition? And do companies experience policy as a support — or as an obstacle?



2. Government: **Barrier or Catalyst?**

Legislation plays a key role in the circular transition. On one hand, companies face barriers due to unclear or conflicting regulations. On the other hand, they also see the potential of supportive policies to accelerate real change. Well-designed and effective policies can help support companies at scale and bring the circular economy significantly closer.

2.1 The Impact of European Legislation

The influence of European policy developments on companies' strategic decisions is steadily increasing. The introduction of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) requires larger companies to report more transparently on their sustainability practices — including their circular initiatives. Other European initiatives, such as bans on single-use

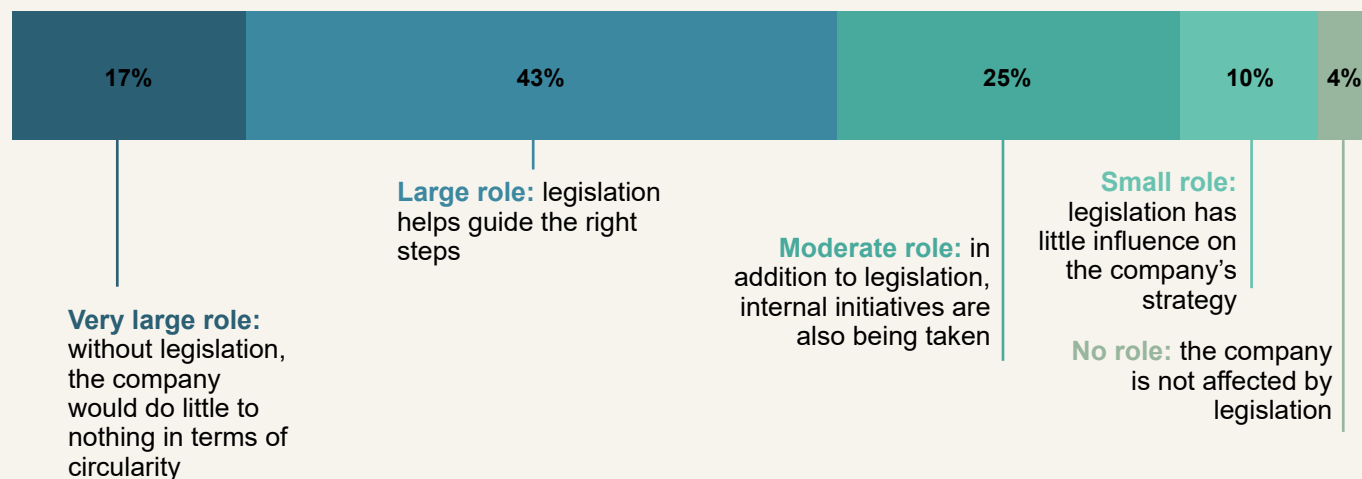
products (EU Single-Use Plastics Directive), broader ecodesign regulations (Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation), and recycling policies (such as the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation and the EU Waste Framework Directive), are also reshaping the business landscape.

These regulations encourage companies to structurally embed circular thinking into their strategies and day-to-day operations.

However, many companies struggle to correctly interpret and translate these European frameworks into their daily business practices. The call for support and clear guidance from governments is growing louder. At the same time, European regulation also increases pressure on the competitiveness of companies operating in an international context.



To what extent do government measures and regulations* play a role in your circular ambitions? *Consider, for example, the ban on single-use plastics, stricter waste separation rules, or the CSRD.



CSRD Requirement: A Time-Consuming Task

The introduction of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) significantly expands reporting obligations for companies. It's not just about reporting environmental data — companies must also demonstrate policies, set targets, and report on progress. This requires structured processes, reliable data, and internal coordination across departments. Under section E5, companies are required to report on their waste processes, including waste volumes, treatment methods, and the associated environmental impact. But it doesn't stop there. They must also provide insight into the risks and opportunities related

to waste, the policies and objectives they have in place, and the actions and resources they use to achieve those goals.

Collecting, organizing, and interpreting all this data is time-consuming and requires specialized knowledge. That's why it's essential to involve the right partners — ones who can not only deliver the required reports, but also contribute to policy development and provide support in achieving sustainability goals.

This eases the burden on sustainability managers while ensuring compliance with legislation — with meaningful insights that contribute to real progress in sustainability.

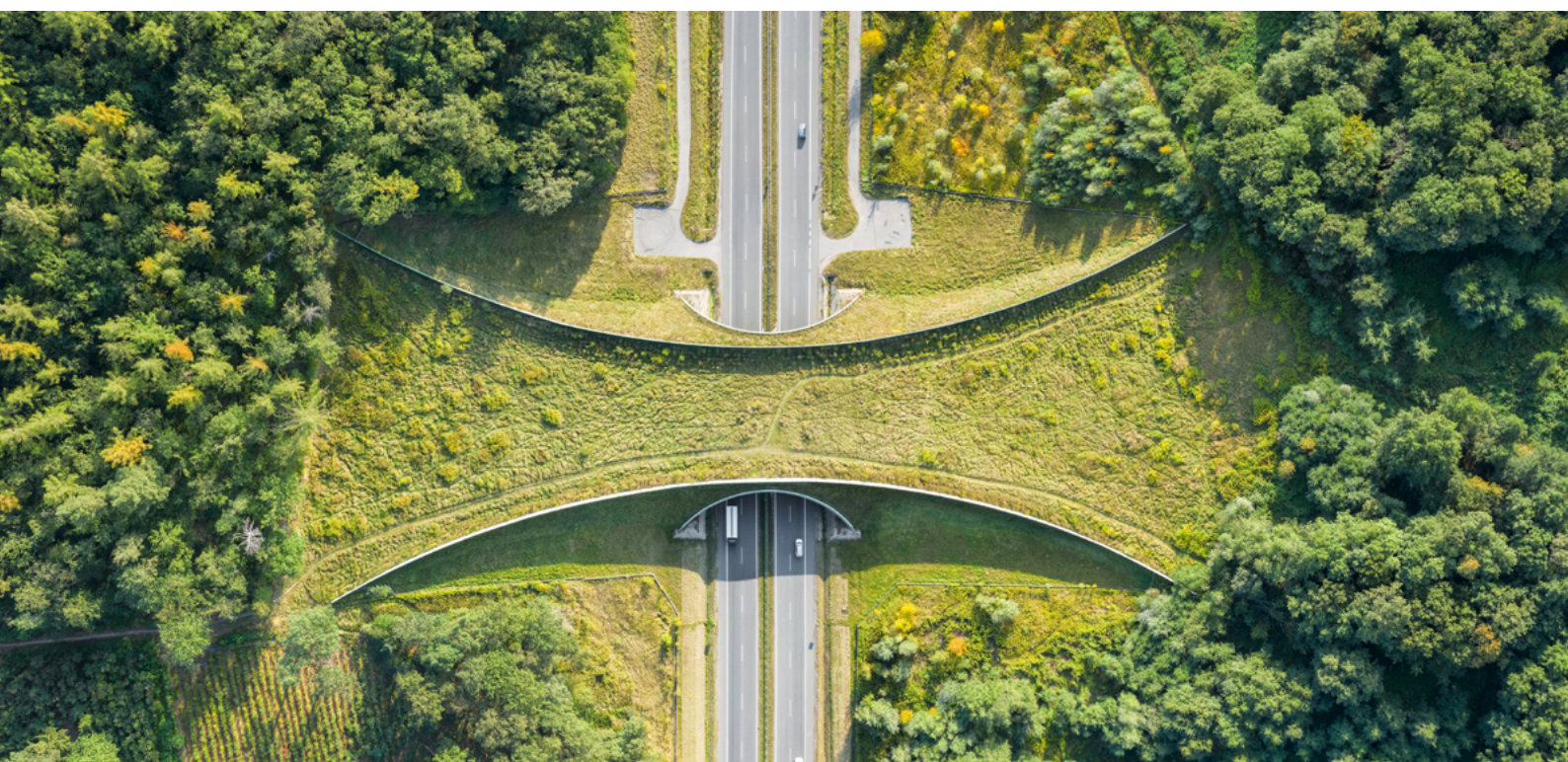
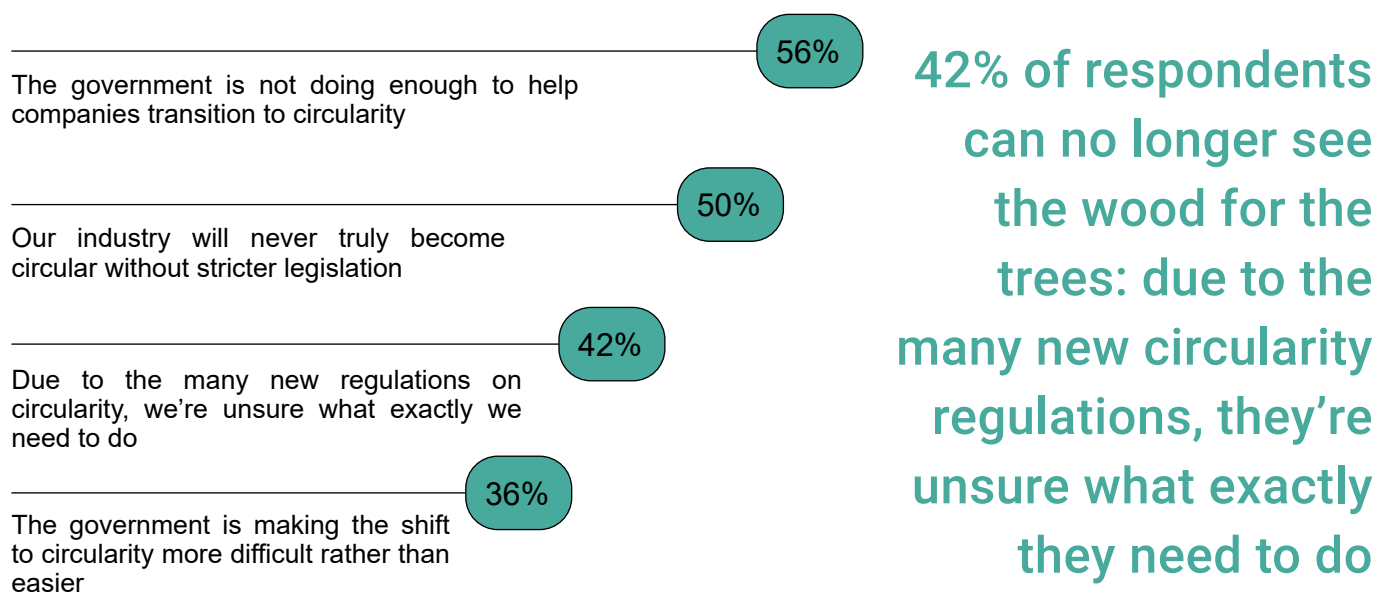


2.2 Perceived Barriers in Regulation

The government plays an important role in the circular transition. Businesses are looking for direction, clarity, and guidance. Coherent

legislation and targeted support from the government can help companies accelerate and improve their sustainability efforts. But how well is that working in practice?

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?





Belgium provides clear frameworks for companies, helping to stimulate circular entrepreneurship



Lessons from the Netherlands: A Look Across the Border

When it comes to circular legislation and waste management, Belgium leads the way in some areas. But there are also lessons to be learned from our northern neighbors. For example, Dutch Overshoot Day falls significantly later than Belgium's. In 2025, Earth Overshoot Day for the Netherlands was on May 5, while Belgium reached it as early as March 27. This difference reflects more efficient resource use and broader efforts in waste prevention and supply chain collaboration.

LAP3: Setting Direction in Waste Management

The Dutch National Waste Management Plan (LAP3) sets clear goals for waste prevention, reuse, and recycling. It distinguishes between

high- and low-value applications and encourages companies to look beyond waste separation — toward design and valorization of residual streams.

EPR: From Waste to Design

Through Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), producers remain responsible for their products even when they become waste. This promotes circular design, take-back schemes, and reuse. The Netherlands is one of the frontrunners in Europe with this approach.

Thanks to these instruments and practical experience, the Netherlands is gradually pushing back its Overshoot Day — a tangible example of the power of targeted policy and circular entrepreneurship.



“A circular economy requires clear rules of the game. The data show that there is a need for legislation, but that current laws are often unclear or contradictory. Companies don’t want to face constantly changing or conflicting regulations; they need clarity, predictability, and a supportive framework that rewards — rather than frustrates — investment in circularity.

The recently published Omnibus Package from the European Commission plays an important role in this context. It was introduced to ease and clarify the reporting burden, including under the CSRD. For many organizations, this means fewer obligations or even a postponement of reporting. But that also comes with a risk: circularity may slip down the agenda.

Clear and supportive policy frameworks remain essential to keep sustainability goals in focus. Because those who invest now in transparency and supply chain responsibility will reap the benefits in the future.”



Gijs Derks

general director Milgro



2.3 How the Government Can Become a True Partner in the Transition

What companies are asking for is not fewer rules, but clearer ones — consistent, forward-looking, and supportive. If the government has the courage to provide direction and create a transparent playing field, it can become a true driver of the circular economy in Belgium.

But what can the government do to give companies a circular push?

Financial incentives appear to be a decisive factor. In fact, 43 percent of surveyed companies indicate that subsidies or other forms of financial support would help them take

circular steps. By offering such incentives, the government can not only support businesses in their transition to a circular economy, but also help accelerate real, large-scale impact — without forcing companies into action, but by enabling and encouraging it.



3. Profitable Impact: How Circularity Pays Off

For companies, circularity is becoming less of an ideological choice and more of a rational, economic one. Organizations engaged in circularity are already seeing returns on their efforts — or at the very least, view it as a strategic investment in the future. It is becoming increasingly clear that sustainability and economic value are not opposites, but can actually reinforce each other.

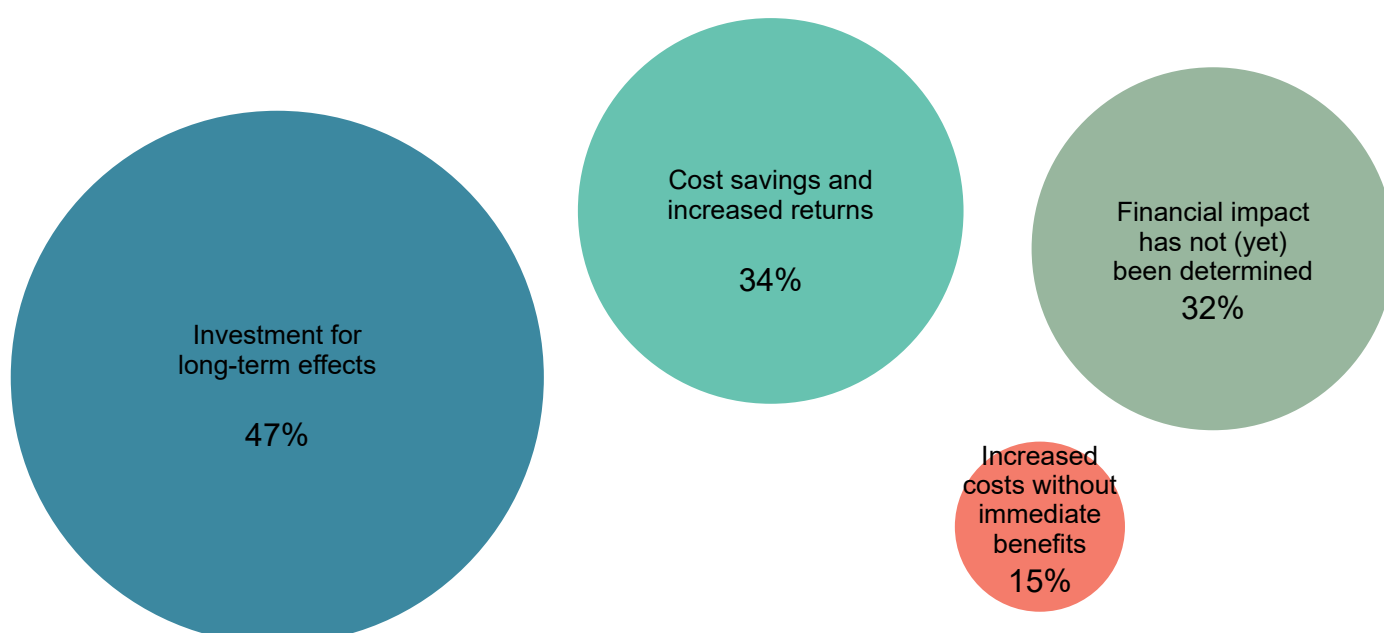
3.1 The Business Case for Circularity

The way companies perceive the financial impact of circularity varies widely. Nearly half of the surveyed businesses (47%) see circularity primarily as a long-term investment. On the other hand, a smaller group (15%) views it as a cost with no immediate benefits.

Strikingly, for more than a third of companies (32%), the financial impact of circularity has not yet been assessed at all. They simply don't know what circularity is costing or yielding for their organization.

By now, the idea that circular business models represent the future is no longer a matter of belief — it's one of necessity and economic logic. Think of models based on repair, reuse, take-back, shared use, or product-as-a-service (PaaS). These models not only help reduce environmental impact significantly, but also make companies less dependent on scarce raw materials and open up new revenue streams.

What is the financial impact of circularity on your business operations?





The Circularity Gap Report 2025 shows that we are still far from where we need to be globally. Only 6.9% of the world economy is currently circular. In fact, that percentage has decreased since 2018 — despite growing policy pressure and public awareness.

But the report also offers perspective: the circular economy has the potential to generate around \$4.5 trillion in additional global economic value by 2030. That estimate, from Accenture's Waste to Wealth report, is based on the principle that economic growth can be decoupled from resource consumption. Other platforms, such as the World Economic Forum and PACE, support this potential.

What does this mean for businesses? Those who invest in circular strategies now — from circular supply chain collaboration to product-as-a-service models or reverse logistics — not only contribute to the bigger picture, but also gain a head start in building robust, resilient, and profitable business models.

3.2 The Gains of Reducing Waste

When companies are asked what would drive them to engage in the circular transition, one reason clearly stands out: cost savings. No less than 61 percent of businesses cite this as their primary motivation. This share is significantly higher than the number of companies that pursue circularity mainly for environmental reasons or reputational benefits.



MILGRO'S TIP

Don't just map the financial benefits of circularity — include the softer advantages as well. Look beyond the numbers and factor in risk reduction, customer satisfaction, and employee engagement.



From By-Product to Valuable Resource

In the production of plant-based foods — such as soy and oat drinks — residual streams are generated, including soybean hulls and rejected beans. In nut processing too, such as in the production of peanut butter and peanut sauce, by-products like peanut dust and skins remain. These streams are often processed as biomass for digestion. While this may seem sustainable, it involves costs, produces CO₂ emissions, and puts pressure on the digestion market — even though these materials hold much more value.

The Shift: From Low-Value to High-Value Use

With knowledge of raw material properties, experience in the food chain, and collaboration with the right partners, these by-products

can be successfully upgraded. For example, as feed ingredients for the animal nutrition industry or as components in products like plant-based oils or breakfast foods.

Results

- Cost savings on disposal and processing
- CO₂ reduction through shorter chains and less digestion
- Less waste, more circular value
- New applications in both food and feed

Practical Tip:

Want to turn residual streams into animal feed? Make sure you obtain a GMP+ certification. This is a key requirement for safe and professional access to the animal feed chain.



Supply Chain Collaboration: Reverse Logistics

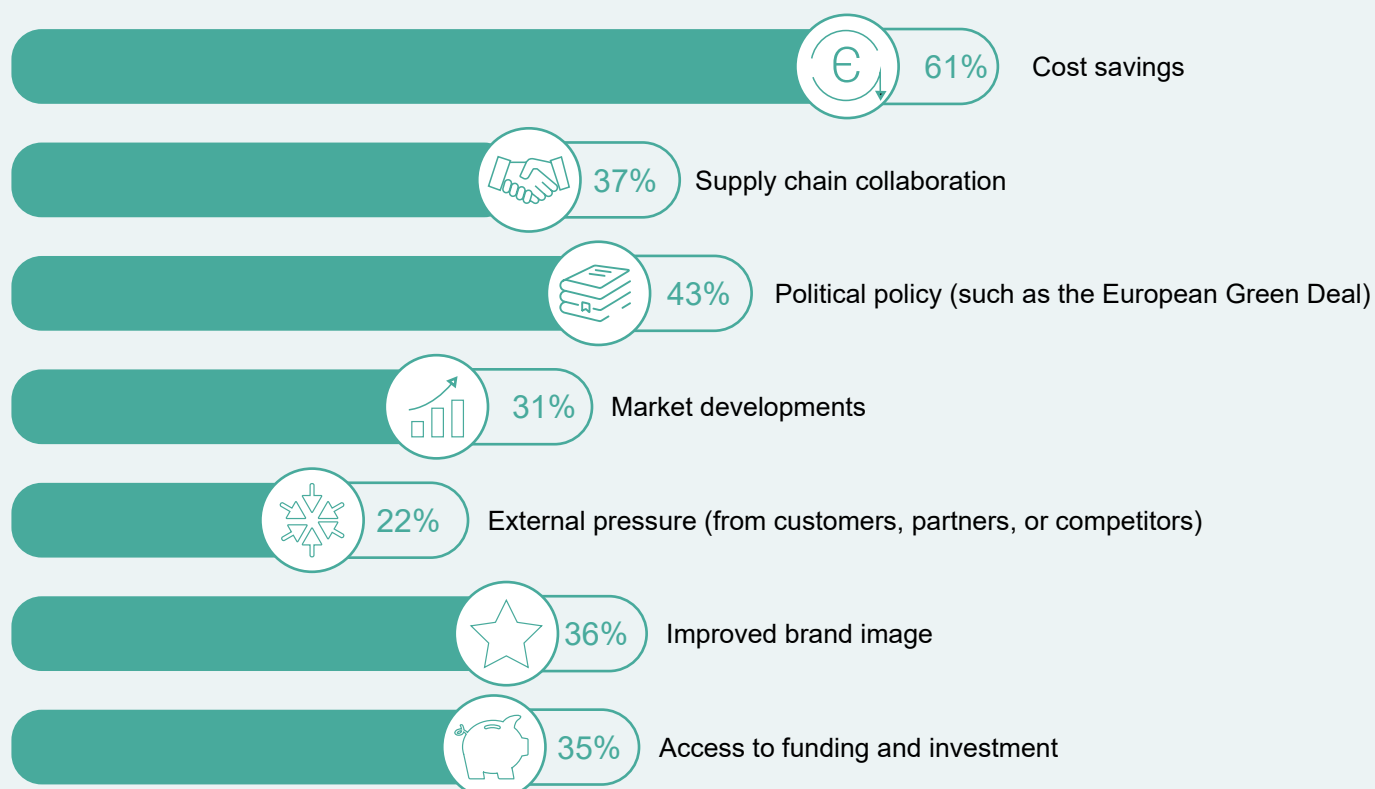
Picnic is known for its efficient delivery service, where groceries are delivered directly to customers' homes using compact electric vehicles. What initially seemed like a standard part of logistics — the empty return trip to the distribution center — turned out to be a missed opportunity. These “empty kilometers” consume energy, time, and capacity without adding any direct value.

Picnic decided to tackle this inefficiency by putting the return trip to good use. Customers can now hand return packages to the delivery driver, as well as recyclable materials

like empty bottles, batteries, and coffee capsules. This makes more sustainable use of the existing logistics network, adds extra customer value, and opens up a new revenue stream. Partnerships can be established with producers or recycling partners to manage return flows — further strengthening Picnic's business model.

The result: fewer empty kilometers, a more efficient and sustainable logistics process, added customer service, and a profitable enhancement to the business — a classic win-win-win.

Which of the following actions would motivate your company to start the circular transition?





Circularity is increasingly seen as a smart investment that can deliver economic benefits. While cost savings are often the initial trigger, companies that look further ahead recognize that circularity offers much more: greater control, increased efficiency, and stronger future resilience.

3.3 The Growing Sense of Urgency

The financial reality — and the need to act — is becoming increasingly clear to businesses. A full one-third of surveyed companies (33%)

expect that organizations that fail to invest a significant portion of their revenue in sustainability within the next 5 to 10 years will not survive.

This sentiment highlights that circularity is no longer viewed solely as a way to act responsibly, but as a strategic necessity in an evolving economy.



**One third of
respondents believe
that companies
that fail to invest
in sustainability in
the near future will
disappear**



Start with the low-hanging fruit

Less waste = lower costs. That's why Zero Waste is a great starting point. Here are four steps to get there:

Step 1: Separate waste at the source

Create a logical collection system with clear instructions and as few general waste bins as possible. Combine this with behavioral guidance through campaigns, workshops, or e-learnings to make waste separation second nature for employees.

Step 2: Choose high-quality processors

Select waste collectors that focus on reuse and recycling rather than incineration or landfill. This ensures waste is used as a resource, actively contributing to the circular economy and helping postpone Earth Overshoot Day.

Step 3: Prevent resource loss in the chain

Use an LCA (Life Cycle Assessment) and supply chain collaboration to identify where materials are lost. Adjust product design, procurement, and logistics accordingly. Choose suppliers that offer circular solutions, such as return flows and reusable packaging.

Step 4: Recognize the added value of #MoveTheDate

Zero Waste goes beyond waste reduction. It strengthens your brand, increases your appeal as an employer, and helps meet reporting obligations like the CSRD. In doing so, it creates profitable sustainability.





4. Resource Scarcity Demands Action

Resource scarcity refers to the shortage of natural materials needed for the production of goods, due to demand outpacing supply. This is no longer an abstract future scenario — it's an increasingly tangible and urgent reality. One in four Belgian companies is already feeling the direct impact of scarcity in their operations. In addition, a growing number of organizations foresee short-term challenges ahead.

This increases the need not only to think circular, but to act on it. Companies that invest in sustainable strategies now will not only strengthen their competitive position, but also protect themselves against the risks that resource scarcity brings.

Resource Scarcity: What's Causing It and What Can We Do?

According to the UN report *Bend the Trend*, global resource consumption is the main driver of the climate crisis. Without intervention, that consumption is projected to rise by 60 percent by 2060 — leading to environmental degradation, rising costs, and growing inequality between countries.

This growth is driven by factors such as population increase, inefficient production, overconsumption, and an economy in which resources are discarded after a single use instead of being preserved.



Still, there is hope: we can bend the trend by choosing circular solutions. That means designing smarter, encouraging reuse, preventing waste, and producing more efficiently. Businesses play a key role in this. Those who invest in circular thinking today help prevent scarcity, reduce costs, and build resilient supply chains. In short: doing more with less. And it all starts with insight into your material flows.

Want to learn more about the 'Bend the Trend' report?



4.1 What If We Really Run Out? Time to Prepare

Concerns about the availability of essential raw materials are rising rapidly. In fact, 43 percent of companies expect that the key materials needed for their core processes will run out in the near future if we continue at the current pace.

In addition, linear mining of certain resources is becoming increasingly difficult — not just due to geological limitations, but also because of ownership. That means resources may still exist, but we may simply not have access to them — and that scenario carries its own risks.

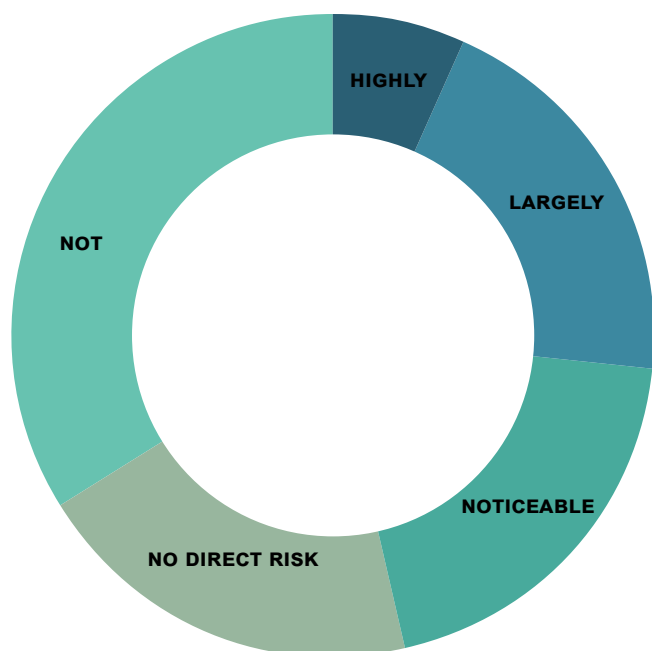
This outlook is putting pressure on companies to develop alternative strategies — for example, switching to material reuse, investing in recycling, or actively reducing dependence on specific raw materials.






4.2 Dependency on Scarce Resources

Forty-seven percent of Belgian companies are, to varying degrees, dependent on scarce resources — and recognize this as a risk to their operations. For seven percent of those companies, that dependency is so significant that their core activities would be nearly impossible without access to those materials. The growing expectation of shortages shows that circular business models are no longer optional — they are becoming a strategic necessity to ensure operational continuity.



How dependent is your company on scarce or hard-to-obtain raw materials?



-  We are **highly dependent**, and this poses a major risk to our continuity (7%)
-  We are **largely dependent**, and this affects our operations (20%)
-  We experience **noticeable dependency**; some raw materials are becoming harder to obtain, but we have not yet taken action (20%)
-  We are somewhat dependent, but this does **not pose a direct risk** (20%)
-  We are **not dependent** at all; we do not use scarce or hard-to-obtain raw materials (34%)

MILGRO'S TIP

Start by identifying your top 5 raw materials and create a risk profile for each one. Ask yourself three key questions: How scarce is the material? How replaceable is it? And how dependent are you on it? That's your starting point.



Such an analysis not only helps identify risks more clearly, but also reveals opportunities. For example, it may lead to decisions to keep certain materials in-house — a choice more and more organizations are making. By gaining greater control over your material flows, you reduce vulnerability to price

fluctuations and supply disruptions, improve product quality and traceability, and take concrete steps up the circularity ladder.

An aerial photograph of a two-lane asphalt road that winds through a dense, green forest. The road curves in a series of loops, with white dashed lines marking the lanes. A few small cars are visible on the road. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Half of all organizations say that the costs they incur to become circular will result in a higher price for the end customer

4.3 When Resources Become Scarce, Everyone Pays the Price

Nearly half of all companies (48%) expect that resource scarcity will lead to higher prices for products and services. Many organizations anticipate having to pass some of these cost increases on to their end customers.

This means that resource scarcity is not only a risk to business continuity, but also puts pressure on competitiveness and customer relationships.

Resource scarcity makes the need to adopt circular practices more urgent than ever. Companies that anticipate this shift not only create sustainable value but also build a solid foundation for future resilience and long-term success.

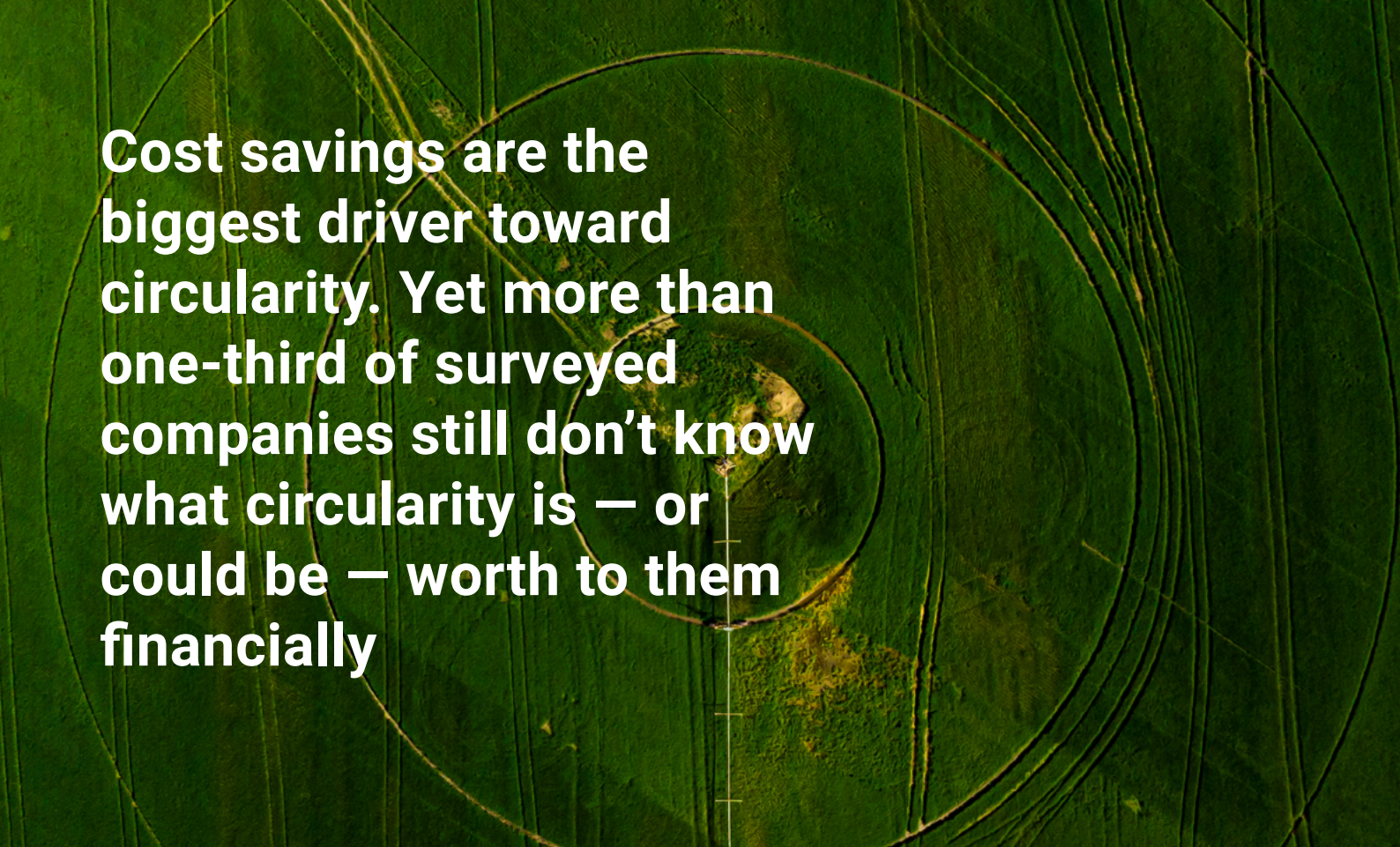
Circularity Doesn't Stop at Your Front Door

Resource scarcity is forcing companies to reassess their processes. To remain future-proof, organizations must not only manage materials more intelligently, but also embed circularity at every level — from strategy to operations, from KPIs to reporting. Circularity is becoming a guiding principle.

But circularity doesn't stop at your organization's boundaries. Companies that truly want to operate in a circular way must also take a critical look at their supply chain. How sustainable are the suppliers you work with?

Tools like EcoVadis help organizations gain insight into the sustainability performance of their suppliers. The platform assesses suppliers on themes such as environment, ethics, labor practices, and sustainable procurement. This enables organizations to evaluate and strengthen their entire supply chain.

In this way, circularity becomes not just an internal improvement process, but a shared responsibility across the whole chain. And that's exactly where the key lies to truly accelerating the resource transition.



Cost savings are the biggest driver toward circularity. Yet more than one-third of surveyed companies still don't know what circularity is — or could be — worth to them financially

5. From Ambition to Action: **Now Is the Time to Make a Difference**

The numbers are clear: Belgian businesses want to take steps toward circularity, but often struggle with the how. Companies are taking action — 90 percent are already taking circular measures. Yet one in five is not measuring the impact, and a clear direction is often lacking. Ambitions are high, but rarely concrete. Internal urgency, support, and guidance are key success factors. But without measurable goals, circularity often lacks commitment or follow-through. Focus and direction make the difference between isolated efforts and structural change.

At the same time, government regulation is viewed by many companies both as a barrier and as a catalyst. The call for clear, workable rules is growing louder. Transparent

frameworks help organizations set a circular course — and stick to it.

Cost savings are the primary motivation for circularity. Yet more than a third of businesses still don't know what circularity is — or could be — worth to them financially. And all this while the pressure is rising: resource scarcity is making materials more expensive and less available, directly impacting both cost and continuity.

This lack of insight is a missed opportunity — because circularity only pays off if you know where the value lies. Companies that look beyond cost alone are the ones building resilience and customer trust for the long term.

A green circle with a white checkmark inside, positioned above the text.

MILGRO'S TIP

Ready for the next step?

Haven't taken action yet? Now is the time to start.

Already on your way? Keep up the momentum.

The circular transition isn't a sprint — it's a continuous process. This report is not a conclusion, but an invitation: take your next step. Whether it's choosing one KPI, refining your targets, or rethinking your supply chain collaboration — every initiative counts.

Want more control over the Circularity Gap?

Discover how we can close the gap together. Visit our knowledge page for practical resources like webinars, blogs, and a step-by-step roadmap.