

Circular Economy Barriers for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises: A Literature Review

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Abstract

SMEs are known to have less resources than large companies. Still, they are more flexible and adapt faster. Relying on the definition used by the EU, SMEs represent 99% of all EU companies. Also, in other parts of the world, their economic role is significant. The paradigm shift from linear economy to the circular economy concept, influences the business behavior of SMEs. Some SMEs have dived in and demonstrate a pro-active circular economy behavior. However, this behavior brings not only benefits. Barriers need to be overcome. Other SMEs are in a waiting position. Both types of SMEs mention reasons that prevent them to focus on a circular economy behavior. This study focusses on providing an overview of the main barriers and benefits cited in studies from 2015 till today. The goal is to generate a discussion that eventually may lead to lowering the barriers and increasing the implementation of circular economy behavior and processes in SMEs.