

# Consume smarter, increase well-being

## GRAND CHALLENGES :

C5. Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials

C6. Europe in a Changing World – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies



## CHALLENGE

Today conspicuous consumption is the norm and goods are used and thrown away with a very short life cycle. There are good examples of responsible consumerism but only limited adoption on a larger scale. We want to support citizens to become more responsible consumers by making information about the product and services lifecycles more transparent and available than it is today. Behavioural economics shows that consumers do not always act rationally and increased information does not always mean more responsible decisions. Therefore the insights of behavioural economics and psychology (ie consumer behaviour patterns) should be used to inform market policies and regulations

for both consumers and producers. Innovative methods and actions are needed to enable policy makers, regulators, corporations and citizens to create a market place in which more responsible decisions are made easily. We expect these to (positively) affect work-life balance and personal well-being.

## SCOPE

To shift our long-term thinking, re-evaluate our consumption and shift the emphasis from material wealth to healthy wellbeing are all essential for the development of proper values which are necessary for sustaining our social, economic and natural environments.

To explore policy with explicit goals for conducting market and behaviour research in line with alternative economies (for example the service society, the sharing economy). Additional research can be directed to developing experiments with the contract terms, legal frameworks and consumer protection policies to explore and disseminate responsible consumption patterns.

To gain knowledge on more responsible handling of the resources and co-responsibility of corporations, public actors and citizens, with a focus on promoting the circular economy. Examples of this include subsidies for recycling and renewable energies, technologies and applications for supporting responsible consumption, legislation and incentives for long-life goods and products, and resource recovery.

To explore how to pilot experimental communities with legal frameworks and incentives that might promote good practices (i.e. through educational curricula, information campaigns).

## EXPECTED IMPACT

- Smarter consumption patterns and lifestyle changes impacting the use of resources (including time resources)
- The first step in co-creation of policy initiatives with the inclusion of citizens and public interest groups
- Input into new standards and regulations concerning sustainable products and services with responsibility of all the stakeholders to be accountable - companies and policies – and proper contract terms, legal framework & consumer protection
- Generation of new sustainable business models, products and services
- The development of robust legal and governance frameworks that support co-responsibility for the promotion of sustainable consumption patterns
- Greater movement towards a circular economy, with the preservation of resources and materials and higher quality of life
- Increased well-being, in terms of physical and psychological health, including new strategies for personal life management

Online  
consultation  
rating



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Research topic :

Consume smarter, increase well-being

#11.c

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## **Grand Challenges :**

**5:** Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw material

**6:** Europe in a changing world - inclusive, innovative and reflective societies

## **CHALLENGE**

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### **EXPECTED IMPACT**

Smarter consumption patterns and lifestyle changes impacting the use of resources (including time resources)

The first step in co-creation of policy initiatives with the inclusion of citizens and public interest groups

Input into new standards and regulations concerning sustainable products and services with responsibility of all the stakeholders to be accountable - companies policies – and proper contract terms, legal framework & consumer protection.

Generation of new sustainable business models, products and services

The development of robust legal and governance frameworks that support co-responsibility for the promotion of sustainable consumption patterns

Greater movement towards a circular economy, with the preservation of resources and materials and higher quality of life

Increased well-being, in terms of physical and psychological health, including new strategies for personal life management

**Online consultation rating:** average importance: 4.05/5

**Countries prioritizing this research area:** Austria, Denmark, Bulgaria, Hungary

### **CITIZENS' VISIONS**

[FR] Vision 2: Collective project

"Society in general will exit from overproduction and thus from overconsumption."

[CZE] Vision 1: Society without plastics

"In 2050, children will be educated at school as well as at home in ecological behaviour."

[FIN] Vision 1: VALUES – immateriality and minimalism

"Social value is not based on consumption. [...]Information belongs to all: data communications are a basic right and data/interfaces open to citizens. [...]Co-owning of products is commonplace."

[FIN] Vision 4: The future of responsible consumption

"Citizens no longer value throwaway culture, unethical production nor low quality. Hence children and citizens are educated in a long term to become responsible consumers. As a result, less waste is produced and it is more efficiently processed to energy, for instance. [...] Responsible consumption also boosts business and the economy as well as creates new businesses and jobs. Information on responsible consumption and innovations developed based on them could be a new Finnish export product. Responsible consumption comes forth especially in the cities of the future, where people live densely and in harmony with nature. Responsible consumption extends from choices in transport to choices in foodstuffs and commodities such as textiles and home electronics."

[DE] Vision 1: Sustainability implemented

"Economy serves the people, not people serving the economy

- Growth is not the main motivation/indicator for economic success (post-growth society)
- Orientation towards common good (community economy)
- Technological progress does not automatically result in more production, but the time obtained can also be used elsewhere (8 hour day may no longer be necessary)"

[BEL] Vision 5: Moving sustainably

"I'm a fair consumer: I know my coffee, tea, milk producer. "

[CHE] Vision 1: Conscious Consumption

"We know the impact of our actions. We are informed about the origin and the composition of what we consume." [WP2]