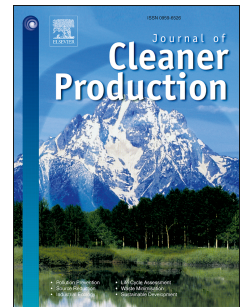


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Public awareness of circular economy in southern Poland: Case of the Malopolska region

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Uzupełnienia dr Smol – czerwony kolor**Public awareness of circular economy in southern Poland: case of the Malopolska Region****Marzena Smol^{1*}, Anna Avdiushchenko², Joanna Kulczycka², Agnieszka Nowaczek¹**¹ Mineral and Energy Economy Research Institute, Polish Academy of Sciences, Cracow, Poland² AGH University of Science and Technology, Cracow, Poland

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Abstract

In the transition to the circular economy (CE) model in Europe, increasing public awareness is one of the major driving forces. This paper presents the results of an evaluation of public awareness and attitudes about CE in the Malopolska region of southern Poland. The data used in this study was collected by random distribution of questionnaires in the Malopolska region and interviews with 430 respondents. Malopolska was chosen for research because the region has significant economic and social potential, but features serious environmental problems – primarily air pollution. As environmental protection has become an important aspect for regional and local policy, the CE concept has already begun to be promoted. The questionnaires distributed to residents were divided into three areas: (1) knowledge and attitudes about CE, (2) CE-related behaviour, and (3) future development of CE in the region. The results show that the CE concept was well recognized mainly by the younger generation, which is more familiar with CE-related behaviours like waste segregation and buying recycled and remanufactured goods. The findings additionally indicate that sharing and collaborative economy practices are becoming popular among residents due to the belief that such services create more economic, environmental, and social benefits for users. People's awareness of the CE concept also has a positive correlation with their educational level, such individuals believing that the CE model could, in the future, be implemented in the region. However, this requires time and additional economic and educational resources.

Key words

circular economy (CE), public awareness, public attitudes, region, questionnaire

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