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CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABILITY: THE CASE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract

This research paper investigates the intricate relationship between the circular economy and sustainability within European Union. It emphasizes the circular economy as an economic model aimed at waste minimization and resource optimization through strategies like sustainable design, maintenance, repair, reuse, remanufacturing, refurbishing, and recycling. Based on literature review the paper focuses on conceptual overlap and distinctions between the circular economy and sustainability - literature review synthesizes findings from recent scientific studies to provide an overview of the principles, strategies, and implications of the circular economy within the concept of sustainable development. Focusing on the EU's shift from linear production and consumption to a sustainable, circular model, the paper underscores the importance of this transition in achieving EU's sustainability goals and minimizing environmental impacts. The research employed Eurostat indicators to provide a comprehensive understanding of renewable energy usage and resource productivity, which are crucial for policy-making and resource allocation. By evaluating these indicators, the paper offers insights into the progress and efficacy of sustainability and economic growth initiatives in the EU. Empirical analysis based on comparison shows significant increases in resource productivity across EU Member States since 2000, revealing substantial variances influenced by natural resource availability and economic composition.

Key words: circular economy, European Union, reuse, sustainability, sustainable development

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