



# Furniture for circular building 't Centrum

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## Introduction

In Belgium, Kamp C constructed the fully circular office building '[t Centrum](#). Kamp C is an autonomous agency of the province of Antwerp and an Interreg NSR ProCirc partner. The new office needed furniture, and obviously, Kamp C wanted this to be circular furniture to match the circular ambitions of the building itself. That's why they launched a pilot for the circular procurement of office furniture.

Kamp C discovered that the Flanders Agency for Facility Operations has a framework agreement with Nnof for the procurement of circular office furniture (which is [another pilot project](#), run by Circular Flanders). This framework agreement can be used by government agencies in Flanders without having to set up a separate procurement process. This is significant because not having to set up a separate procurement process saved Kamp C a lot of time and effort.

Kamp C and Nnof established a procedure to find out what Kamp C would need in its new office. They compared that list to what Nnof already had in stock. Indeed, in addition to its role as a

consultant, Nnof also has a stock of used and refurbished office furniture from previous projects, as well as a workshop where used furniture can be remanufactured or repaired (e.g. machines for scraping off worn top layers and relining).

As a result, Kamp C did not need to buy any new office furniture. Most of its previous office furniture was moved to 't Centrum, and Kamp C purchased several second-hand items from Nnof's stock.

## Procurement process

Kamp C, as a public procurer in this region, was able to benefit from the Flemish Agency for Facility Operations' [framework agreement](#), which had already laid the foundations for cooperation. After a preliminary meeting was held, a general offer was made, which was refined by mutual consent. Workshops with the end users were held in order to assess the needs, and finally the process was carried out and second-hand/refurbished office furniture was delivered.



## Results

### Reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>eq

According to the [calculations made by Nnof](#) (based on a tool developed by RDC environment), Kamp C saved 10,600 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> (equivalent to 75,260 km driven in a car with a combustion engine). Given that Kamp C did not use any new materials, it would be easy to conclude that it had saved 100% CO<sub>2</sub> minus a slight transport impact (most of it was moved across the street manually, while Nnof delivered some second-hand parts by truck). An assumption of 100% reduction would mean, however, that the baseline scenario would entail buying all new materials, which even in a business-as-usual scenario is not necessarily the case. Still, it is safe to conclude that Kamp C saved well over the Interreg NSR ProCirc target of 25% of CO<sub>2</sub> reduction with this pilot.

### Virgin materials

No calculations were made on virgin materials. But as no new materials were used – similar to the previous point – this will easily constitute a savings of 25% (ProCirc target) compared to the business-as-usual scenario. This is because the only actual virgin materials used would come from the limited amount of material needed to refurbish furniture and the logistics involved in this process.

### Waste reduction

No calculations were made regarding waste reduction. But as no new materials were used – similar to the previous point – this will easily constitute a savings of 25% (ProCirc target) compared to the business-as-usual scenario. This is because the only actual waste generated would come from refurbishing furniture and the logistics involved in this process.

## Lessons learned

- These types of framework agreements by the Flanders government are extremely convenient and considerably lower the threshold to engage in circular procurement.
- Obviously, it is important to involve everyone in the process, but it is difficult to get everyone on board when it comes to reusing old furniture, especially when people are expecting new (luxurious) office furniture that usually comes with a new building. Essentially, it requires a different mindset, but that takes time. However, most people's scepticism faded once they started to actually use and experience the building. It was not difficult for Kamp C to press ahead with this initiative because it dovetails perfectly with their mission as a centre for sustainability. Moreover, it meant saving on its budget. In other cases, it might be a good idea to manage the aforementioned expectations at an early stage and make the estimated impact of the decision tangible.