

THE MAGNO LONG-TERM VISION: FROM CONSUMERS TO CITIZENS

As the year comes to an end and we prepare to welcome the New Year, it's natural to reflect on where we've been and where we're going. 2025 showed us the weight of the challenges we face: mountains of packaging waste, floods of single-use plastics, and the slow pace of political decision-making. Yet it also revealed something powerful: consumers are not passive observers of this story—they are active authors of the future.

Across Europe and beyond, people are rethinking how they shop, eat, travel, and live. Schools are cutting down single-use items, communities are piloting reuse systems, and movements—from Greta Thunberg's school strikes to plastic-free challenges—have shown that individual acts, when multiplied, can shift entire systems. Informed, proactive consumers are proving that sustainability is not an abstract goal; it's a practice, carried out every day in homes, schools, and neighbourhoods.

The sustainable future we need is one where consumer power and citizen responsibility go hand in hand. It's a world where purchases reflect values, and where people understand that every choice—what we buy, what we refuse, how we dispose—has ripple effects far beyond our own households. But this vision also goes beyond shopping habits: it demands that consumers step into their role as citizens, holding businesses accountable and pressing governments for binding policies that make waste prevention and circular systems the norm.

Imagine a Europe where reusable packaging is mainstream, not a niche experiment; where waste services are transparent and accessible to all; where schools, businesses, and communities collaborate seamlessly; and where companies compete not on who can sell the most, but on who can innovate responsibly. That is the future informed, proactive consumers can help build.

A CALL TO ACTION FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

As we raise our glasses on New Year's Eve, let's commit to more than resolutions—we need actions that resonate beyond ourselves. Start by refusing unnecessary packaging, supporting companies that truly prioritize sustainability, and joining local or global movements that demand systemic change. Use the tools available: your purchasing power, your networks, your voice in public debates.

And remember, you are not alone. NGOs, community organisations, and EU-wide projects like MAGNO are building the infrastructure for a circular economy. By reaching out—for example, through the MAGNO hotdesk (hotdesk@magno—

project.eu)—consumers, schools, and businesses can access guidance and become part of a wider movement for change.

So as the clock strikes midnight, let's raise a collective toast: to a future where responsibility is shared, action is bold, and sustainability is no longer an option but the standard.

10 resolutions for 2026

To give shape to that vision, here are ten collective commitments we can carry into the new year:

1. Refuse what we don't need – Say no to unnecessary packaging, gifts, and products designed for waste.
2. Reduce excess – Buy less, choose durable goods, and value quality over quantity.
3. Redesign our habits – Support businesses and policies that make reuse and circularity easy and affordable.
4. Reuse wherever possible – Embrace refill systems, second-hand markets, and repair practices.
5. Recycle wisely – Treat recycling as the last step, not the first, and do it properly to avoid contamination.
6. Hold companies accountable – Reward genuine sustainability efforts and challenge greenwashing.
7. Engage in policy – Participate in petitions, consultations, and local initiatives to strengthen laws that reduce waste.
8. Educate and inspire – Share knowledge with schools, families, and communities to normalize sustainable living.
9. Connect globally, act locally – Join international movements while strengthening action in your own neighbourhood.
10. Support collaborative projects like MAGNO – Work with initiatives that bridge consumers, businesses, and policymakers to make circular systems real.

Stepping Into the Future

As we celebrate the festive season and welcome a new year, we also bring this awareness campaign to a close. Over the past months, we have explored challenges and opportunities around waste, packaging, and consumer action, always with the conviction that informed citizens can drive real change. Now, this body of work will be wrapped up and shared with consumer organisations, schools, community groups, and any institution that may find it useful as a resource for education, advocacy, or inspiration. It is both a conclusion and a beginning: a gift of knowledge to support those who continue the work of building a fairer, more sustainable future. From all of us, we wish you joyful festivities and a New Year filled with purpose, connection, and positive action.

This New Year, let's refuse to accept waste as inevitable. Let's reduce what we don't need, redesign systems for circularity, reuse whenever possible, and recycle only as a last resort. Let's transform sustainability from a buzzword into a way of living, working, and governing.

The future is not waiting for politicians or corporations to act—it is waiting for us. Together, as informed and proactive consumers, we can push Europe and the world toward a cleaner, fairer, more resilient tomorrow.