



CLOTH

CLuster Alliance fOr the Transition
to green and digital fasHion

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME: Insights from Webinar Series



Co-funded by the COSME programme
of the European Union



GLOSSARY

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 - [Webinar 1. Digital Communication Tools & Platforms. Benefits and challenges \(ICONIC\)](#)
 - [Webinar 2. Traceability and transparency. New European regulation \(MODACC\)](#)
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 - [Webinar 4. Horizon Europe funding opportunities for the sustainable and circular textile sector \(EA\)](#)
 - [Webinar 5. New Research about the transition towards a circular textile future \(LDC\)](#)

1. INTRODUCTION

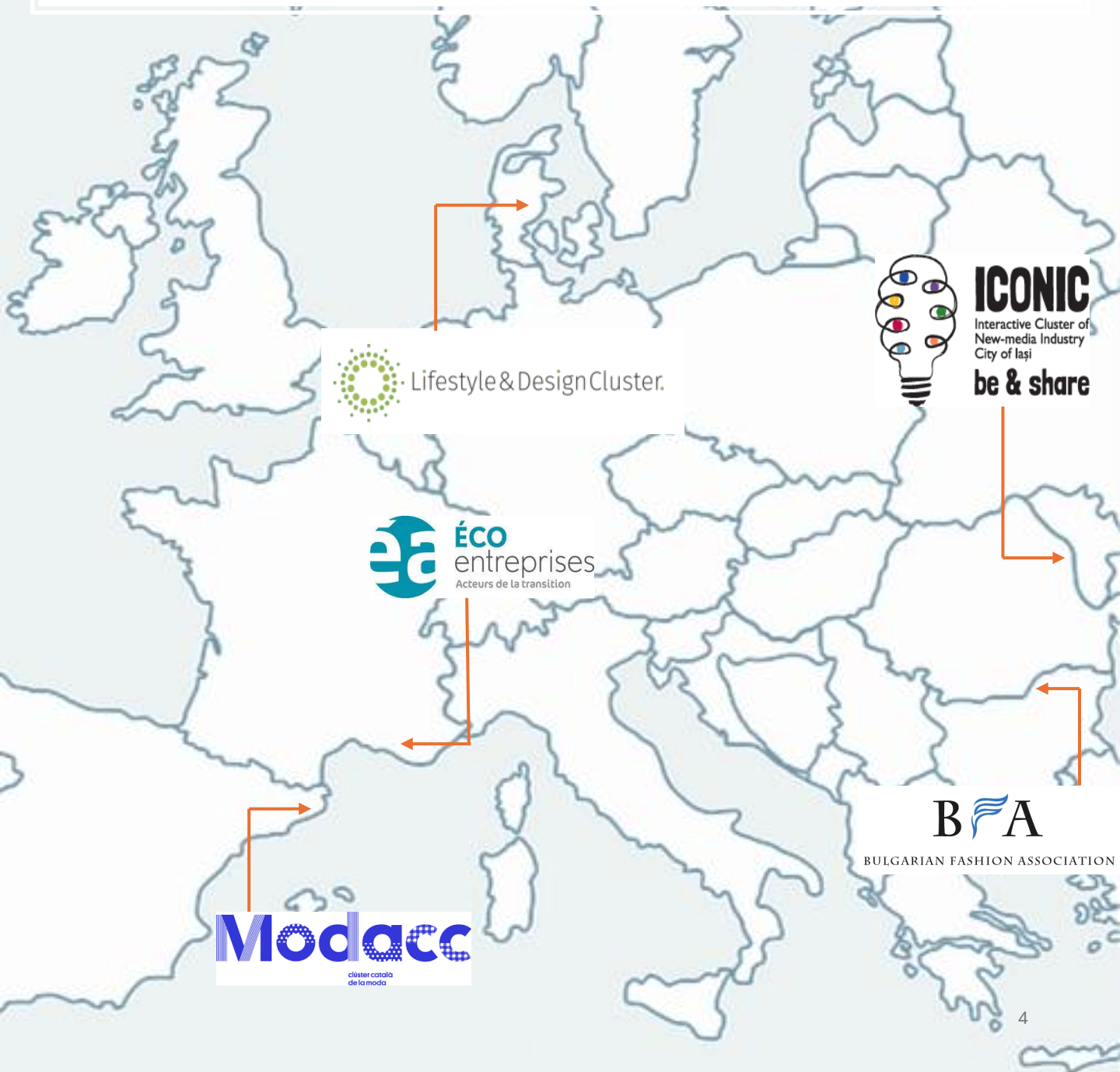
The CLOTH project - CLuster Alliance fOr the Transition to green and digital fasHion - aims to boost interregional cooperation through the creation of a cluster alliance within the Fashion sector that promotes the necessary conditions to create a favourable ecosystem of relevant stakeholders from a cross-sectorial perspective, that lead to a greener, smarter and more competitive and innovative European Fashion sector, creating new alliances, business and investment opportunities for the European SMES.

The CLOTH project will promote the competitiveness, sustainability and resilience of the Fashion sector, addressing its environmental and social impacts in coherence with the European Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan. To achieve these objectives, the CLOTH project is integrated by a cross-sectorial partnership of 5 partners from 5 European countries (Spain, Bulgaria, Romania, Denmark and France) working on different value chains: Fashion and Textile, circular economy, creative industry and Digital.

This E-Book is addressed to all stakeholders involved in the textile value chain, containing the main content of the Capacity Building Programme (concretely, five webinars organized by the partners).

2. PROJECT PARTNERS

The CLOTH project is integrated by a cross-sectorial partnership of 5 partners from 5 European countries (Spain, Bulgaria, Romania, Denmark and France) that are working on different value chains: Fashion and Textile, circular economy, creative industry and Digital.





The **Catalan Fashion Cluster** is an association focused on improving the competitiveness of companies in the textile and fashion ecosystem in Catalonia, increasing its economic, social, and environmental value through the deployment of individual and collective initiatives.

It has over 150 associated companies representing 20.000 professionals and a turnover of 2,7M euros.



Iconic Cluster is a Romanian regional ecosystem of related industries and competences featuring a broad array of inter-industry interdependencies. Its mission is to build a community open to cooperation that helps shape Romania's socioeconomic future through innovation, increased competitiveness, and dynamicity on both national and global levels.

The cluster is formed by 40 private companies from IT, education, and other creative industries, as well as two universities, one technological park, and one municipality.



BULGARIAN FASHION ASSOCIATION

The **Bulgarian Fashion Association** is a cluster organisation that aims to support Bulgaria's fashion industry and integrate it into the European value chain through cluster partnerships with other European organisations.

It has 63 members which 57 are SMEs.



ÉA éco-entreprises represents around 155 actors, mainly SMEs working for circular economy in the French Region South. It is the regional delegation of the French national Cluster for Water. Its SMEs members are working at different levels of the circular economy approach, such are: water, waste, energy, biodiversity, sites, polluted soils.



The **Lifestyle & Design Cluster** is a national innovation cluster since 2008 under the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science. Its task is to promote sustainable growth and innovation in the furniture, lifestyle, and clothing industries and creative businesses.

The cluster has more than 220 dedicated companies.

3. WEBINARS

In the framework of the capacity building programme of the Cloth project, a total of 5 webinars have been organized, one webinar per partner, based on the following areas:

1. Digital Communication Tools & Platforms
2. Traceability and transparency. New European regulation
3. Effective practices for textile waste utilization
4. Horizon Europe fundings opportunities for the sustainable and circular textile sector
5. New Research about the transition towards a circular textile future



1. DIGITAL COMMUNICATION TOOLS & PLATFORMS. Benefits and Challenges

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ACTEURS DE LA CROISSANCE**Lifestyle & Design Cluster****ICONIC**
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for the
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Digital Communication Tools & Platforms

Benefits and challenges

 **Alexandru LĂZESCU - Webinar** **October 3rd, 2023**This project was funded
by the European Union's
COSME Programme

There are quite a significant number of **Digital Tools** to be used in management, in Marketing and Communication:

- Evernote, OneNote - writing and managing information, tasks integrated into a calendar, project management.
- DropBox, One Drive, Google Drive, Mega.
- Asana, Trello – project management (using Gantt diagrams or Kanban boards)
- WordPress, Squarespace, Wix – web design, content management, eCommerce
- HubSpot – marketing, sales, support and website management components (CRM, email marketing)
- Mailchimp – email marketing
- Slack is a messaging application that connects people in an organisation to act as one, making them more connected, flexible, and inclusive.

What does **Digital Transformation** mean?

Digital Transformation is the integration of digital technology – for example, systems, applications and specialised technologies – into all areas of a business.

This may involve changing or eliminating procedures currently used, experimenting with them, and adopting new ones.

The main benefits of the digital transformation of companies are:

1. Improve employee experiences and productivity
2. Decreased customer support incidents
3. Accelerate the introduction of new products into production
4. Shorten the time it takes to process support requests
5. Reduce management and maintenance costs of equipment used

Trends

Digitisation of businesses has continued to accelerate in recent years. All sectors and firms are increasingly equipping their staff with computer and internet access.

Digitisation is multidimensional and involves the use and application of a wide range of technologies for different purposes.

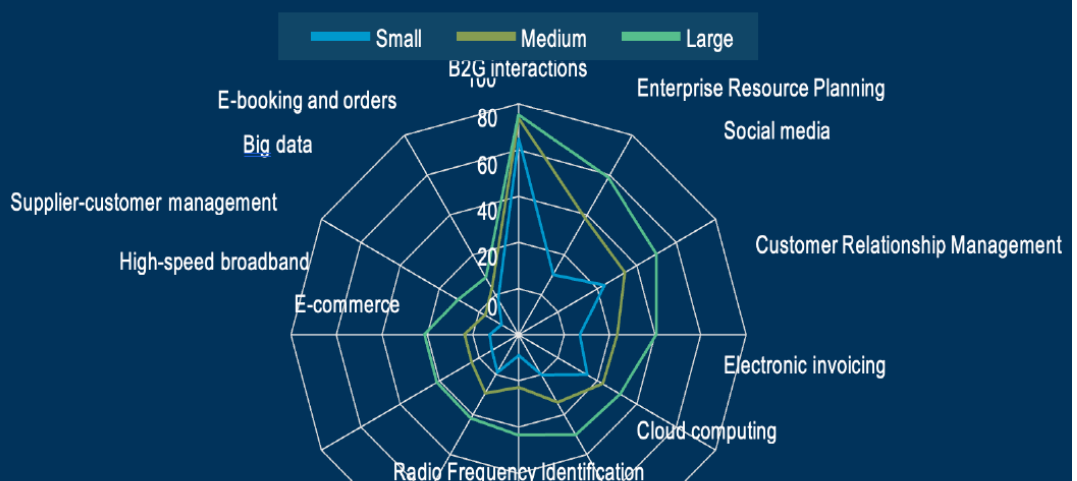
There are complementarities in digital diffusion: The adoption of technology A increases with the adoption of technology B. This complementarity increases as businesses grow in size and scale, which can contribute to further widening digital divides and exacerbate the risks for late adopters in contrast to the benefits of transformation for early adopters.

Potential benefits for SMEs

- Digitisation reduces transaction costs by providing better and faster access to information and better communication between staff, suppliers and networks.
- It helps SMEs integrate into global markets by reducing costs associated with transport and customs operations and significantly expanding the range of business services offered.
- It facilitated access to resources, including finance; training and recruitment channels, including government services.
- It also supports innovation through greater access to innovation opportunities, making it easier for businesses to access information that allows them to analyse the way they operate in new ways.


SME gaps in adoption are large in many areas

Diffusion rate, median OECD, based on country average percentages of enterprises using the technology over 2015-18



Note: Values represent the median of diffusion rates in countries for which data are available. Country diffusion rates are average rates calculated over the period 2015-18. This approach helps avoid distortions in time or in a single year, but may tend to underestimate the diffusion rates of technologies that are diffusing quicker. Data only cover enterprises with 10 or more employees. Small firms employ (10-49) person; medium-sized firms (50-249); and large firms 250 and more persons.

Source: OECD calculations based on (OECD, 2020[2]) OECD ICT Access and Usage by Businesses Database, www.oecd.org/sti/economy/ICT-Model-Survey-Usage-Businesses.pdf (accessed on 25 November 2020).



For many SMEs, the biggest challenge is the first step. Once an initial transition to digital technologies is made, there are strong complementarities in technologies that can lead to further adoption of other digital solutions.

The gap between SMEs and larger companies is more pronounced for more sophisticated technologies like Data Analytics, Big Data and IoT. Or where company size matters for implementation, such as ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning systems, like SAP).

In general, the entry point for the digital transition for most SMEs is in general administration or marketing functions, where the digital gaps between SMEs and larger businesses in online interactions with the government, e-invoicing, use of social communication platforms and e-commerce are smaller.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Digital Transformation of companies is about systems, applications and specialized technologies such as Artificial Intelligence in all areas of a business, what benefits it can offer, but also about the challenges and risks.
- Digital Transformation allows companies to increase their competitive position, improve their reputation, improve customer experiences, improve operational efficiency, increase revenue, attract new customers and retain existing ones.
- SMEs are seriously lagging behind in terms of digitization compared to corporations; so, they need realistic solutions to address digitisation, starting from the current business model and detailed plan to implement.
- As companies of all types and sizes migrate to TD technologies and resources, they have the potential to increase their competitive position, enhance their reputation, improve customer experiences, improve operations efficiencies, increase revenues and attract new customers and retain existing ones.



2. TRACEABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY.

New European regulation



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ICONIC
Be & share

October 26rd, 2023 - Webinar

Traceability and transparency.

**New European regulation:
how textile and fashion companies
could manage the transparency and
traceability. B-corp as a best practice.**

Montse Bayen

Sustainability and Circular Economy
manager in the Catalan Fashion Cluster



This project was funded
by the European Union's
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Transparency and traceability have become essential factors in the textile and fashion industry due to growing consumer demand for more information about the products they buy, including details about the supply chain, sourcing and manufacturing processes.

The European Union has been taking steps to enforce regulations aimed at improving transparency and traceability in the textile and fashion industry.

The **timing for the new EU regulation** is the following:



New European Regulation

The European Textile Strategy

Goals

- All textile products marketed in the EU must be durable, repairable and recyclable, manufactured with recycled content, free of hazardous substances and produced with respect for social rights and the environment.
- Reuse and repair services available.
- Producers take responsibility for their products throughout the value chain.

Actions

- Design requirements so that products are durable and recyclable.
- Digital product passport with all the information. Labelling regulations: composition, impact, producing country.
- Do not accept greenwashing; true sustainability statements.
- End to excess production and consumption.
- Eliminate microplastics.
- Regulate the export of textile waste.
- Stop the destruction of unsold products.

Circular Economy Action Plan

The actions required by the Circular Economy Action Plan are:

- Establish eco-design requirements for textile products to make them more durable and easier to recycle.
- Introduce clearer information on textile products and a digital product passport.
- Combat greenwashing by ensuring the accuracy of companies' green claims.
- End excess production and consumption and discourage the destruction of unsold textiles.
- Harmonize EU rules on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for textiles.
- Address the unintentional release of microplastics from textile products.

European Waste Directive

Its main goal is the collection of household textiles, obligating the producers to:

- Design products that, throughout their life cycle, reduce their environmental impact and waste generation.
- Design products that contain recycled materials.
- Accept the return of products that can be reused.
- Provide information of the correct product information.
- Establish deposit systems that guarantee the return of products.
- Take full or partial responsibility for the organisation of waste management.
- Use materials from waste.
- Report on the economic impact due to their compliance with the extended liability obligations.

Eco-design Directive

The new Directive established a framework to improve the environmental sustainability of products and ensure free movement in the internal market by establishing eco-design requirements that products must meet before they are placed on the market or put into service. The ecological design requirements are related to:

- a) Durability and reliability of the products.
- b) Reusability of products.
- c) Upgradability, repairability, maintenance and reconditioning of the products.
- d) Presence of substances of concern in the products.
- e) Efficiency of the products in terms of energy and resources.
- f) Recycled content in products.
- g) Remanufacturing and recycling of products.
- h) Carbon footprint and environmental footprint of the products.
- i) Expected the generation of product waste.

B CORP as a best practice



B CORP is a global movement of people who use the power of business to create a positive impact on society. B Corp vision is that, one day, every company will compete to be the best for the world and that, as a result, our society will enjoy more universal and lasting prosperity.

What elements are essential to be a Bcorp company?

Social and environmental compliance	Legal commitment	Transparency
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Obtain a B Impact Assessment score of 80+ out of 200	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change their corporate governance structure to be accountable to all stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publish the company score in the Bcorp company directory

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Transparency and traceability have become essential factors in the textile and fashion industry due to growing consumer demand for more information about the products they buy, including details about the supply chain, sourcing and manufacturing processes.
- The European Union (EU) has been taking steps to enforce regulations aimed at improving transparency and traceability in the textile and fashion industry.
- Sustainability is an imperative, not a fad. Inevitably, we have to adapt to it.
- Sustainability implies a holistic view that considers the value shared by all interest groups (not just the environment).
- Sustainability is a vision and purpose of positive impact present in all business decisions, from the business model to daily operations.
- The B Corp standard is a business management tool that allows companies to know their starting point in sustainability and identify improvements to keep moving forward.



3. EFFECTIVE PRACTICES FOR TEXTILE WASTE UTILIZATION

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Innovation Cluster of
the South-East
be & share**Webinar - November 3rd, 2023**

Effective practices for textile waste utilization

**Nevena Davidova**

Chief operating officer, denkstatt Bulgaria

Ralitsa Petrova

ESG Consultant, denkstatt Bulgaria

Sustainable Fashion & Minimizing Textile Waste

A Vision, Strategy, and Goal of the Renowned
Global Designer Nevena Nikolova**Nevena Davidova**

Chief operating officer, denkstatt Bulgaria

Nevena NikolovaThis project was funded
by the European Union's
COSME Programme

Footprint of the textile sector in Europe

The textile sector is increasing its environmental footprint every year. Over the last two decades, almost every year has been a record year in terms of growth. The main reason is the growing demand driven by both economic and social factors.

Water
consumption**3rd place**

Land Use

3rd placeCarbon
emissions**5th place**Primary
resources**5th place**

What is the problem?

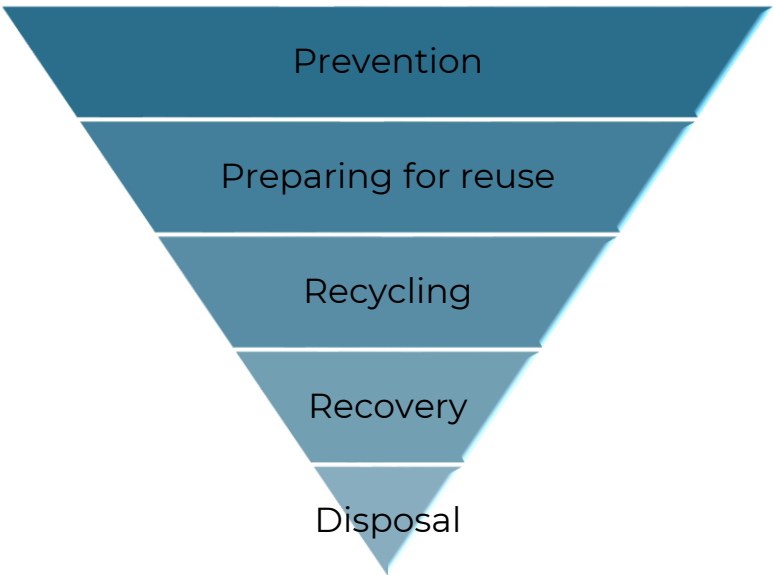
1. 82% of textile goods consumed in Europe are produced in countries outside Europe.
2. The growth of textile waste, which is due to the increasing consumption of garments, and the shorter shelf life and lower durability of products.
3. Clothes are increasingly perceived as fast-moving consumer goods and treated as consumables.

Measures and EU vision

The European Union addresses these problems with the EU Strategy on Sustainable and Circular Textiles, in which the vision is that:

- Fast Fashion is out of fashion
- All textile products placed on the EU are durable, repairable and recyclable.
- Profitable reuse and repair services are widely available.
- Producers take responsibility for their products along the value chain.

Europe’s sustainable approach to textiles and waste is guided by the **waste management hierarchy**:



Key measures	EU instruments/regulations
Set design requirements for textiles	The Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR)
Digital Product Passport (DPP)	
Extended Producer Responsibility for textiles	Waste Framework Directive
Separate textile collection	

Successful practices in Europe

Some European countries are already implementing different measures to address the issue of textile waste.

France

- A single textile waste association responsible for the extended producer responsibility system.
- Over 50 sorting centres of used textiles.
- Almost 40% collection rate of textile waste.

Nordic countries

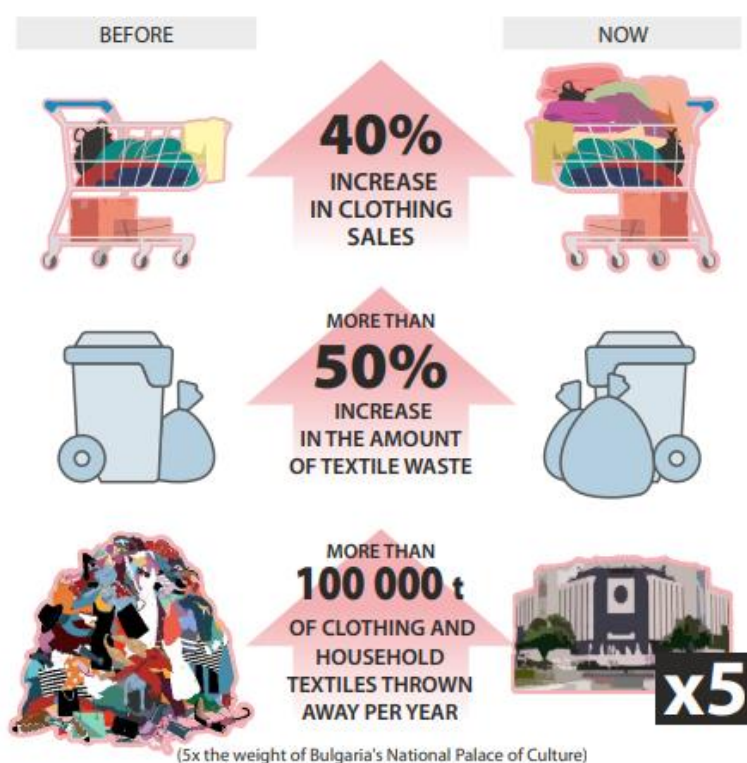
- A strategy to promote the production of more recyclable or reusable textile products.
- Target to reuse 50% of separately collected textiles
- Reuse and/or recycling target of 90% of separately collected textiles.

Netherlands

- EPR implemented in 2023.
- Targets for reuse and recycling.
- Reduced VAT on repair of textile products and footwear.

The situation in Bulgaria

For the last 10 years

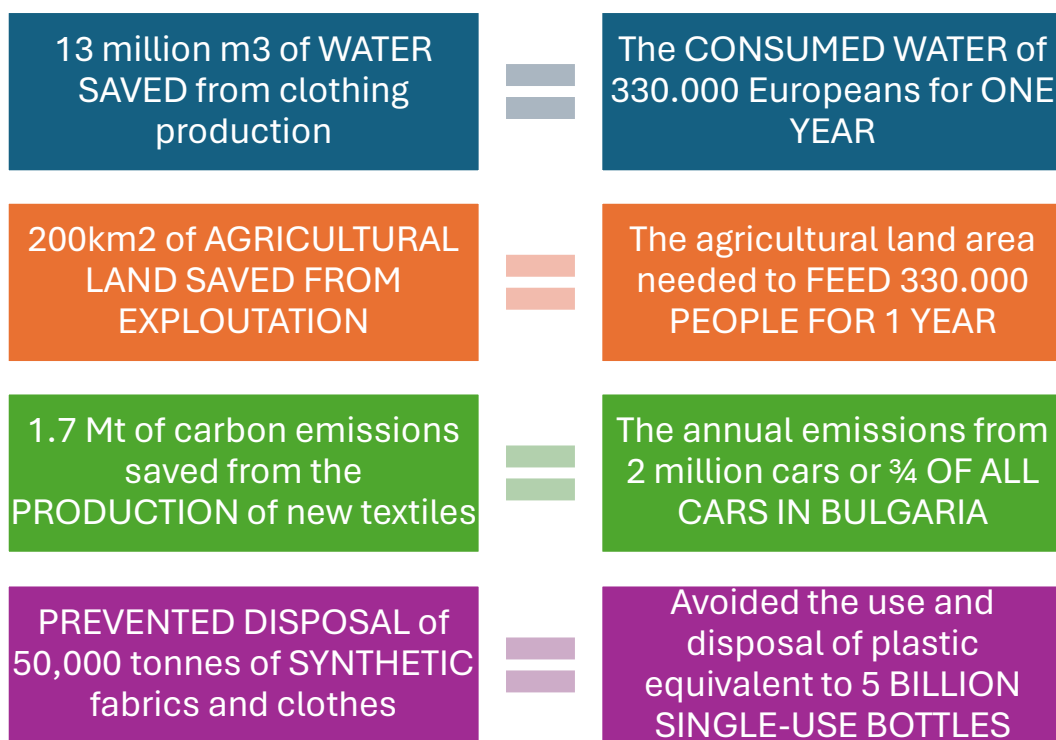


As a European country, Bulgaria is obliged to establish a separate textile collection system by 2025. Currently, this collection is made by private organizations, which are members of the Bulgarian Association of Circular Textiles (BACT).

BACT members process over 35,000 tons of textile waste, of which about 2,000 tones are collected in Bulgaria.

In October 2023, a textile recycling plant was inaugurated in Varna.

To track the impact of BACT's activities, **environmental savings for the period 2019-2021** have been calculated across several environmental components:



96 170 tonnes*



SORTED TEXTILE WASTE
Ready for reuse or recycling

5 472 tonnes*



**SEPARATELY COLLECTED TEXTILE
WASTE IN BULGARIA**
Sorted and prepared for reuse or recycling

Best case scenario for improvement

- ✓ Establish a mandatory separate textile collection system by the beginning of 2025.
- ✓ Regulate the mechanism for implementing a system.
- ✓ Targets to be considered (EU or national level) – separate collection, preparation for reuse, second-hand clothing placed on the market.
- ✓ Recycled content in new textile products.
- ✓ Encouraging textile manufacturers to apply sustainable practices in the design and production.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- First steps toward establishing a comprehensive textile strategy -Expert round table Circular Economy in the Textile Sector: Practices, Solutions, and Policies(October 2023).
- Challenges for Bulgaria:

Regardless of BACT's efforts, the separately collected textile waste is close to 2% of the total estimated amount of textiles placed on the market (2021).

BACT's activities are entirely on a market basis, without support from the state.



4. HORIZON EUROPE FUNDINGS OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SUSTAINABLE AND CIRCULAR TEXTILE SECTOR

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Horizon Europe fundings opportunities for the sustainable and circular textile sector

Webinar - Cristina Colonna d'Istria Casian,
Europe and International Executive Director
for Ea éco-entreprises and National Contact
Point Bio environment Horizon Europe

8th November 2023

from 10 to 11:30am CET



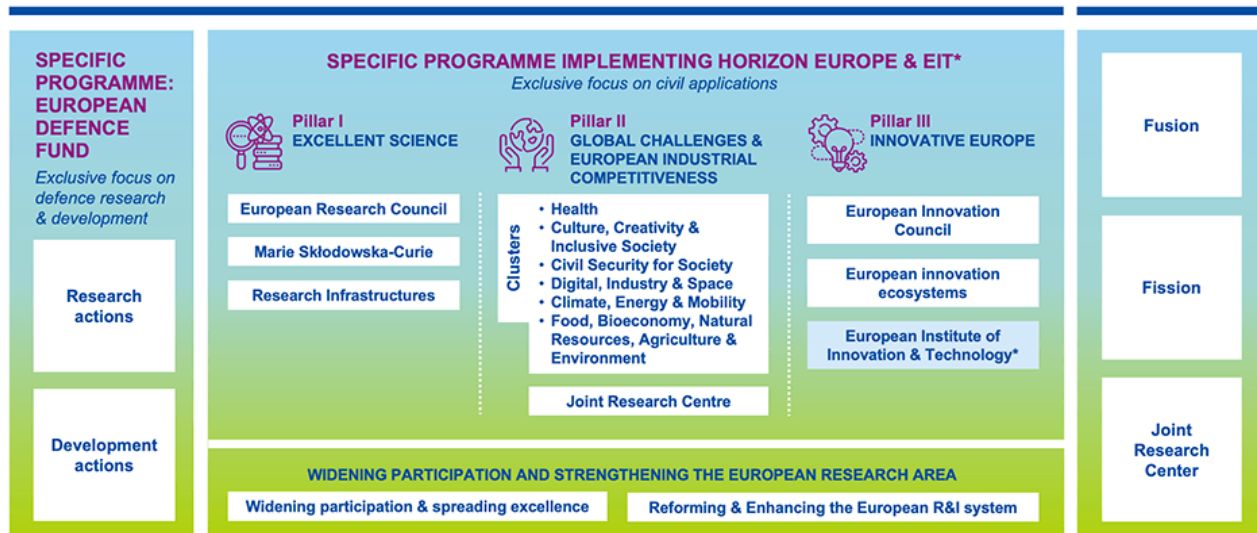
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HORIZON EUROPE

HORIZON EUROPE

EURATOM



* The European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) is not part of the Specific Programme

Calls for proposals

- HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-02-1-two-stage: Circular solutions for textile value chains through innovative sorting, recycling and design for recycling (RIA)
- HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-01-2: Circular solutions for textile value chains based on extended producer responsibility (IA)
- HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-01-3: Innovative circular solutions for furniture (IA)

HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-02-1-two-stage: Circular solutions for textile value chains through innovative sorting, recycling and design for recycling

Type of action	RIA
Budget	5M € / 3 projects
Deadline	February 2024 – September 2024
TRL	5/6 at the end of the project

Scope: The topic aims to improve the management of the end-of-life phase of textile products. Proposals should address one or more of the following subjects and combine the design, sorting, and recycling of textiles.

- Roll-out of systemic solutions for textile sorting, using innovative digital technologies (such as AI, robotics, IoT and blockchain).
- Roll-out of feasible solutions for facilitated disintegration to be incorporated in product design.
- Increased uptake of mechanical recycling solutions that deliver competitive, high-quality secondary materials.
- Roll-out of thermo-mechanical, chemical and other recycling solutions.

HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-02-1: Circular solutions for textile value chains based on extended producer responsibility

Type of action	IA
Budget	7M € / 2 projects
Deadline	February 2024 –
TRL	6/8 at the end of the project

Scope: The topic aims to enable the optimal functioning of EPR schemes for textiles within the EU and to take into account the commitments of the textile strategy on EPR.

- Recommendations on best innovative solutions for the identification of material composition of used textiles.
- Recommendations on design for recycling for textile products that allows the use of targeted EPR schemes.
- Recommendations on tools for the EU institutions.

HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-01-3: Innovative circular solutions for furniture

Type of action	IA
Budget	5M € / 2 projects
Deadline	February 2024 –
TRL	6/8 at the end of the project

Scope: Six key cycles can be highlighted to make furniture more circular. All proposals should target several of these cycles: maintain, repair, reuse, refurbish or remanufacture products.

- Increased deployment and demonstrated benefits of advanced digital solutions.
- Emergence of new value chains using upcycled, recycled and/or biobased resources.
- Increased recycling rates and upcycling to new higher-value products.
- Increased uptake of recycled and/or renewable material.
- Increased deployment and market uptake of circular design.
- Increased reuse, refurbishment and remanufacturing rated and diffusion of new circular business practices.
- Increased resource efficiency along and across value chains.

Advice on writing an application

- Taking part in European projects should be a long-term strategy.
- “Recycle” projects that have been well-rated but not selected.
- Identify the expertise in which you have real added value.
- Find the call most closely matches your expertise and identify a potential coordinator.

Recommendations on analyzing a call

- Understand the context in which you are applying.
- Pay attention to the eligibility criteria.
- Take into account the TRL objectives.
- Each element mentioned in the call must be integrated into the proposal.
- Calls are more or less perspective.
- Read the call in 2 ways: as a “*giraffe and the ant*”.

Find partners

- [Contacts of national NCPs](#)
- Search partners on funded projects
 - Interreg Europe
 - Life Programme
 - Horizon Europe
- Brokerage events

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Taking part in European projects should be a long-term strategy.
- Find the call most closely matches your expertise and identify a potential coordinator.
- Understand the context you are applying, understand the public policies that are being targeted and to which you will have to contribute.
- Very valuable indications about how to read the call

A circular frame made of evergreen tree branches, likely spruce or fir, surrounding a central text area. The branches are dark green and dense, creating a natural, organic border. The background within the circle is a light, hazy sky.

5. NEW RESEARCH ABOUT THE TRANSITION TOWARDS A CIRCULAR TEXTILE FUTURE



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New Research about the transition towards a circular textile future

 **Thomas Østergaard - Webinar**

 **November 9th, 2023**

 **14:00-15:00 CET**



This project was funded
by the European Union's
COSME Programme



PhD: Lost in Transition. Fashion Design Educations in Anthropocene

BACKDROP OF THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

In the EU

- Almost 9/10 Europeans (88%) think that clothing should be made to last longer.
- About 5.8 million tonnes of textiles are discarded every year, equivalent to 11,3 kg per person
- An average of 20 to 33 jobs are created for every 1000 tonnes of textiles collected for re-use.

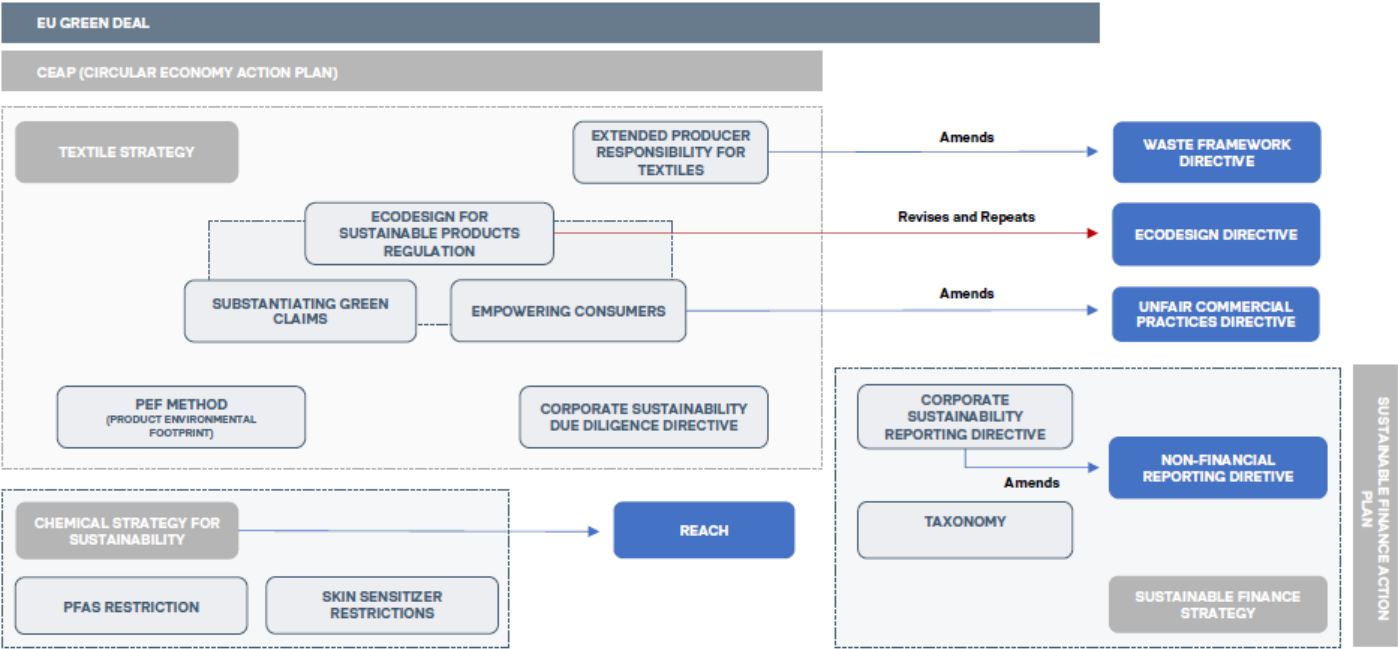
Globally

- Textiles production doubled between 2000 and 2015
- One full truckload of textiles goes to landfill or incineration every second
- >1% of material used to produce clothing is recycled into new clothing
- Up to 35% of all the microplastics released into the environment can be traced back to textile products

EU legislations on sustainability

Eco design and DPP	Extended Producer Responsibility	Waste Shipment	Green Claims and textile labelling
Green Public Procurement	Waste Legislation	Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence	Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive
Industrial Emissions	Sustainable Finance	Microplastic	PFAS Restriction
Skin Sensitisers	Bisphenol	Reach Revision	PFHxA Restriction

EU initiatives relevant for the Textile sector

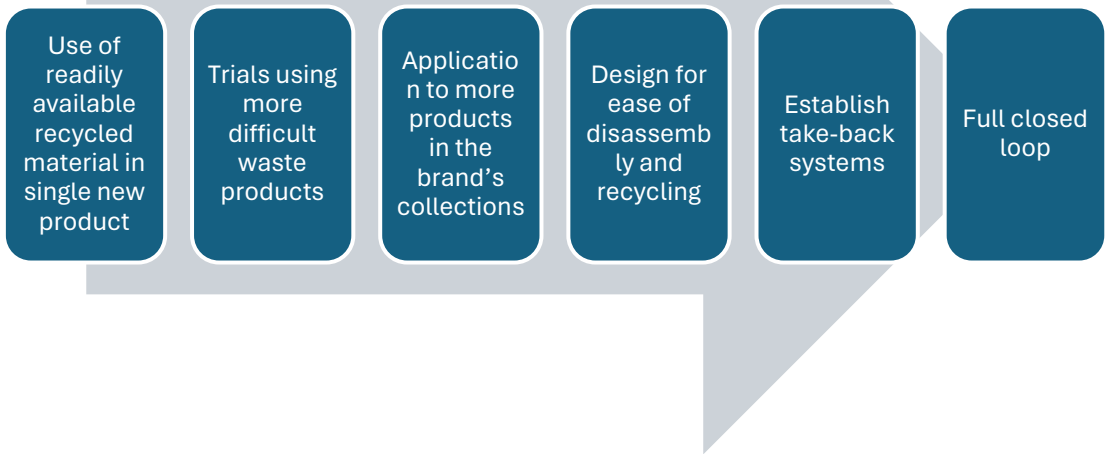


Communications:
Inform about orientation of EU legislation and the articulation between different laws.

Existing EU laws:
In force today, passed several years ago.

New EU texts:
New legislative initiatives, that are not yet laws. Initiatives that will trigger a transition in the textile industry.

Transition pathways towards textile-to-textile recycling



Relevant findings of the PhD

Article #1 Circular fashion: the new roles of designers in organisations transitioning to a circular economy

1. The designers do not feel they have the relevant knowledge regarding sustainability and Circular Design Skills.
2. The notion of “Sustainable design’s” deeper significance has still to be recognised among designers.
3. Designers in the industry still perceive fashion as a visual and stylistic endeavour related to shape and good aesthetics and disconnected from the social context.
4. The “what and how” of the education of the designers becomes essential.
5. It also becomes central if the educators have the right competencies and didactic understanding to teach the students circular competencies.
6. Teaching at design-schools is often shaped by disciplinary structures and aims, but research in Educations for Sustainable Development has shown this has very little effort.
7. The transition from a linear to a circular economy entails new requirements, tasks and interactions for designers.
8. Designers can enhance the developing and integrating of new knowledge on circular design strategies.

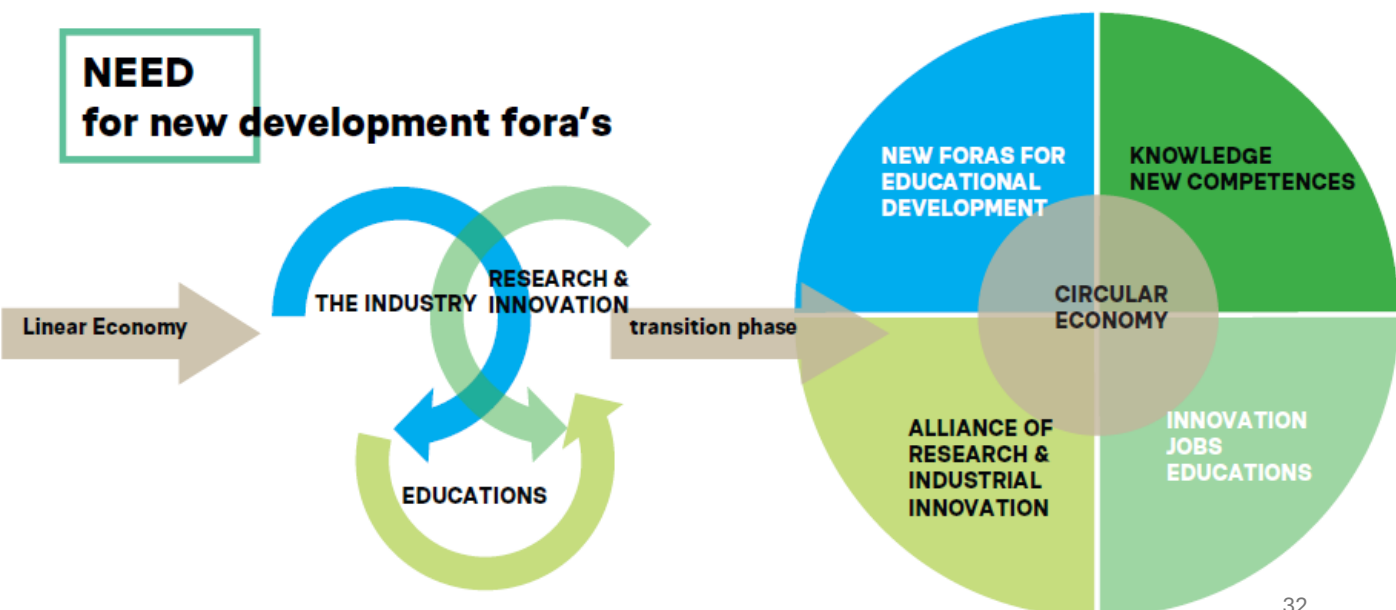
Article #2 Circling Round Circular Change

1. Competences and knowledge about sustainability and circularity is something most of the designers have made on their own, mostly unaware of existing tools.
2. A need for time to re-learn and the provision of Sustainable Collaborative teams.
3. Most fashion educations are mirrored in order to match the industrial wish for economic growth.
4. Very little focus on the use and after use phases in the educations and the industry.

Article #3 From Vision to Practice

1. Circular economy is not taught by most of the educators.
2. Most of the educators believe that circular economy and circular design principles are relevant in the present curricula and would like to implement it further.
3. The educator's competencies are not as developed but there is willingness to further develop/learn.
4. There is a lack of confidence of the educator's own competences; presence of hesitancy towards adapting circular economy and circular design into the curriculum.
5. Cultivating a sustainable mindset while enhancing circular economy and circular design competencies might prove effective on a long-term.

NEED for new development fora's



Skills required in a circular textile industry

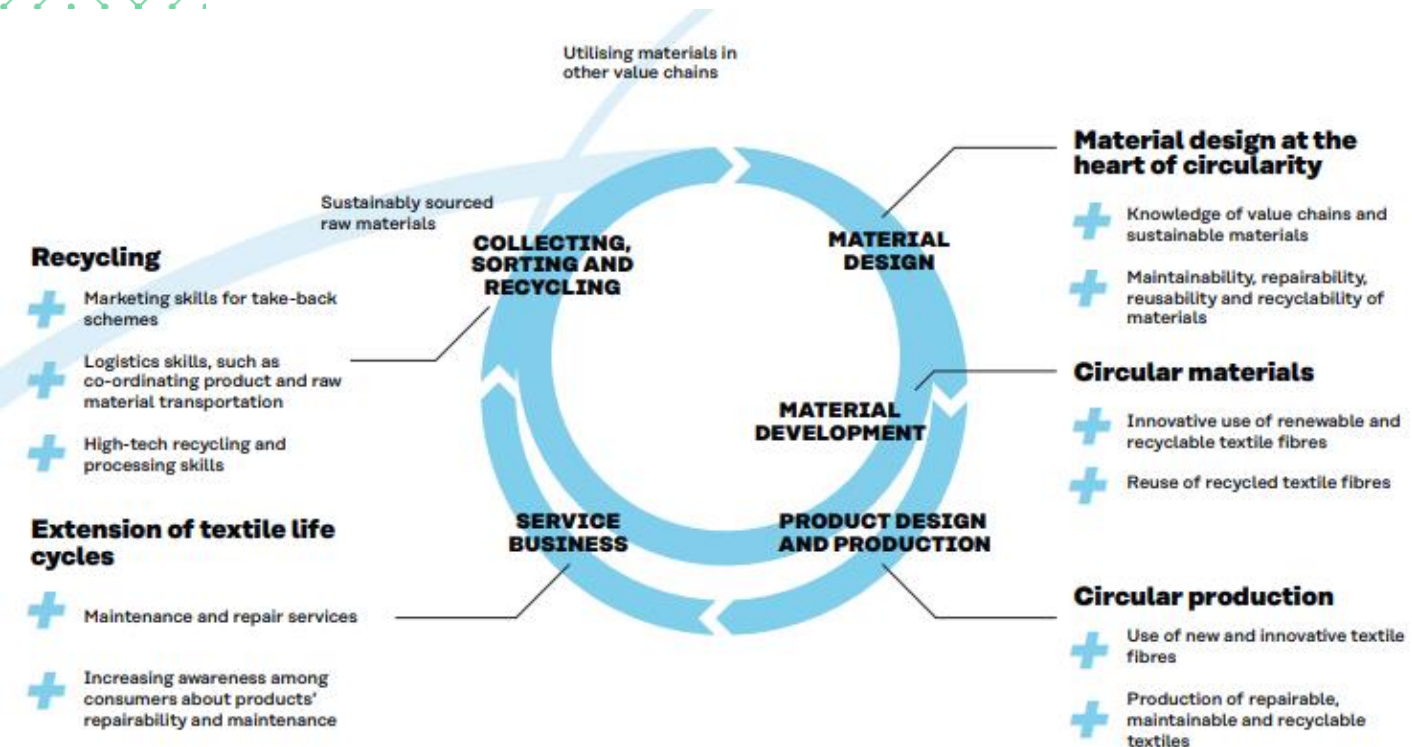


Image 2; From SITRA 2020

HIGHLIGHTS:

- The designers do not feel they have the relevant knowledge regarding sustainability and Circular Design Skills.
- The notion of "sustainable design's" more profound significance still has to be recognised by designers.
- Designers in the industry still perceive fashion as mainly a visual and stylistic endeavour related to shape and pleasing aesthetics and disconnected from the social context and fail to develop new knowledge, attitudes, strategies, techniques, and practices to be integrated into a sustainable design practice.
- The transition from a linear to a circular economy entails new requirements, tasks and interactions for the fashion designer within an organisation.
- Designers can enhance the development and integration of new knowledge on circular design strategies, context, and design dimensions, as well as increase collaboration between the different departments and actors within the company.



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