TEX-BREIN – Interregional community of TEXtile ecosystems for the circular transition: Building capacities, REINforcing network and organisations

# D5.3 Policy Recommendation


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## PROJECT DETAILS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The green and digital transition must enable textile businesses to adopt new solutions while remaining competitive. TEX-BREIN identifies barriers in costs, skills, testing capacity, material processing and demand.

This report sets out 25 recommendations for EU institutions, national governments and regional authorities. EU action should connect funding stages, make requirements feasible and coordinate material flows. National action should reduce implementation costs, clarify service funding and strengthen skills and markets. Regions should translate RIS3 priorities into accessible services and develop Re-Hubs according to demand and readiness.

Each recommendation links a project finding to an action, a responsible actor, an expected benefit and a source. Sensitive findings are summarised. Proposed instruments and benefits describe intended future effects, to be monitored after implementation.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations and project terms used in this report are listed below.

| | |
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| CIRI | Centre for Investment, Development and Innovation |
| DPP | Digital Product Passport |
| EISMEA | European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency |
| EPR | Extended Producer Responsibility |
| EU | European Union |
| I3 | Interregional Innovation Investments Instrument |
| Re-Hub | Textile circularity hub or service network |
| RIS3 | Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation |
| SME / SMEs | Small and medium-sized enterprise(s) |
| TEX-BREIN | Project acronym; full title is given in Project and Deliverable Information. |

# 1 INTRODUCTION

TEX-BREIN supports the green and digital transition of European textile ecosystems by strengthening innovation capacity, interregional cooperation and the preparation of circular business solutions. It connects businesses, research organisations, public authorities and innovation intermediaries to address the needs of the textile sector, particularly SMEs.

The project covers Severovýchod in Czechia, Łódzkie in Poland, Toscana in Italy, Catalonia in Spain, Västra Götaland in Sweden and Norte in Portugal. These ecosystems differ in their industrial specialisation, innovation capacity, available infrastructure and institutional readiness. The project promotes knowledge exchange and cooperation that reflect these differences.

Project activities include regional ecosystem analyses, stakeholder consultations, capacity-building webinars and workshops, Learning Expeditions, the preparation of project ideas and business plans, and the development and assessment of Re-Hub models. Together, these activities provide evidence on barriers to transformation, business support needs and opportunities for cooperation.

This report forms part of the project's work on communication, dissemination and exploitation. It translates documented findings into policy recommendations for EU institutions, national governments and regional authorities. The recommendations address complementary responsibilities at these levels and aim to improve the conditions for a feasible and competitive textile transition.

Each recommendation identifies a proposed action, a responsible actor, an expected benefit and its supporting project findings. Sources are described by their names, with detailed references provided in the annex. Sensitive information is presented in summarised form.

# 2 SHARED STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The following table presents the strategic priorities shared across all levels of governance, from European to regional policy. The following chapters will provide detailed recommendations for each level of governance.

| **Priority** | **Required change** |
|---|---|
| Competitive and resilient manufacturing | Lower transition costs and improve productivity. |
| Predictable and feasible requirements | Provide usable rules, guidance and services. |
| Funding the pathway from innovation to market | Link testing, pilots, certification and deployment. |
| Infrastructure and Re-Hubs | Fund hubs with demand and viable operations. |
| Skills and specialist capacity | Connect learning and mentoring to business tasks. |
| Textile ecosystems and cooperation | Close capacity gaps through mapping and cooperation. |
| Markets and demand | Secure demand for quality circular textiles. |

# 3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EU INSTITUTIONS

## Funding the pathway from innovation to market

### 3.1 Link funding from validation to market

European Commission and programme administrators: Connect funding for testing, pilots, certification, business model development and first industrial deployment. Enable SMEs to combine European, national and private finance according to solution maturity, with guidance on moving between instruments. Project finding: The project ideas portfolio documents prepared business concepts requiring further validation; the funding opportunities database maps support for successive development stages.

**Expected benefit:** More solutions reach industrial validation and investment readiness.

## Competitive and resilient manufacturing

### 3.2 Assess costs and sequence new requirements

European Commission: Assess economic, operational and environmental impacts together, including interactions between requirements. Involve SMEs, test transitional approaches and align implementation schedules with available guidance, technologies and support. Project finding: The webinar and workshop report records anticipated compliance burdens; the regional action plan identifies high technology and energy costs.

**Expected benefit:** More feasible requirements and fewer disproportionate costs or unused investments.

### 3.3 Review customs conditions and import enforcement

European Commission, customs and market surveillance authorities: Review textile import conditions and enforcement, including imports from Asian countries. Determine any changes to customs or controls through impact assessment and ensure comparable conditions for products on the EU market. Project finding: The webinar and workshop report records concerns about textile import controls and competition, including from Asian producers.

**Expected benefit:** Fairer competitive conditions and better-targeted trade and control instruments.

## Predictable and feasible requirements

### 3.4 Coordinate EPR and textile material flows

European Commission and Member States: Align EPR records, scope and cost principles with collection, sorting, reuse and secondary-material markets. Distinguish production residues from post-consumer textiles by legal classification, and use compatible sorting and quality criteria. Project finding: The regional action plan and webinar and workshop report identify fragmented systems, unclear material rules and funding needs for collection, sorting and reuse.

**Expected benefit:** Better-connected material flows and clearer responsibilities.

### 3.5 Provide usable guidance and compatible digital procedures

European Commission and implementation bodies: Provide regularly updated, sector-specific guidance and model data procedures through accessible advisers. Reduce duplicate reporting and support digital compatibility. Adapt procedures to product type, function and use in the value chain. Project finding: The regional action plan identifies knowledge gaps; the mentoring guidelines support practical preparation for circular and digital requirements, including DPP.

**Expected benefit:** Lower administrative burdens and easier SME participation.

### 3.6 Match ecodesign to function and processing capacity

European Commission and specialist bodies: Test requirements with manufacturers and processors against durability, repairability, safety and actual processing capacity, including technical textiles. Link recycling support to input quality and markets. Where chemical safety needs affect function or recyclability, fund safer-alternative validation while preserving essential protective properties. Project finding: The regional action plan identifies complex-textile processing constraints; ecosystem desk research maps material and chemical safety issues.

**Expected benefit:** Longer product use and technically feasible material recovery.

## Textile ecosystems and cooperation

### 3.7 Fund interregional validation and shared capacity

European programme administrators: Fund cooperation tied to technical or commercial validation, shared laboratories and pilots, joint business plans and local application. Connect technical textile producers with processors and materials research. Assess less-prepared territories by their actual value-chain role. Project finding: The project ideas portfolio documents collaborative concepts; expert Re-Hub assessments recommend partner mentoring and transfer of validation procedures.

**Expected benefit:** Better access to expertise and cooperation leading to validated next steps.

## Markets and demand

### 3.8 Create demand through public procurement guidance

European Commission and Member States: Develop and test procurement guidance for durable textiles, repair and suitable recycled products. Enable buyers to assess safety, functionality and life-cycle costs, and facilitate SME participation. Project finding: The regional action plan identifies weak demand for recycled products and proposes public procurement to stimulate uptake.

**Expected benefit:** More predictable demand for validated circular solutions.

# 4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

National action should provide accessible support, clear responsibilities and practical conditions for businesses and services, adapted to each country.

## Funding the pathway from innovation to market

### 4.1 Fund pilots and documented implementation costs

National ministries and managing authorities: Provide accessible support for pilots, technology investment, certification and preparation for new requirements. Enable individual and joint business projects. Select grants, financial instruments and incentives through country-specific cost and feasibility assessments. Project finding: The regional action plan identifies high investment costs; ecosystem desk research highlights a need for accessible finance and shared pilot facilities.

**Expected benefit:** Lower entry costs and more opportunities to validate before investing.

## Competitive and resilient manufacturing

### 4.2 Reduce energy and operating costs

Industry and energy ministries: Support energy audits, savings, equipment modernisation and efficient processes. Assess operating costs and productivity alongside investment needs, including transport and material treatment across the circular processing route. Project finding: Ecosystem desk research and the regional action plan identify high energy costs and transformation costs as competitiveness risks.

**Expected benefit:** Lower production costs and more economically viable solutions.

### 4.3 Fund materials research for industrial use

Industry and research ministries: Fund joint testing of materials and functional properties in real production conditions. Assess domestic and European raw materials, secondary inputs and alternatives by quality, availability and cost. Involve manufacturers and customers when defining research needs. Project finding: The regional action plan identifies difficult-to-process materials; the funding opportunities database and Re-Hub model report describe circular inputs and fibre resources.

**Expected benefit:** More usable domestic materials and stronger raw material resilience.

## Predictable and feasible requirements

### 4.4 Clarify EPR responsibilities and funding

Waste ministries and stakeholders: Define responsibilities, eligible activities, cost principles and funding oversight, including municipal collection, sorting and preparation for reuse. Assess targeted bridging support where preparation of the EPR system puts necessary services at documented risk. Project finding: The regional action plan identifies loss-making collection and sorting and municipal uncertainty; the webinar and workshop report highlights unclear EPR cost arrangements.

**Expected benefit:** More stable services and transparent allocation of costs.

### 4.5 Clarify reuse and material transfer rules

National ministries and specialist bodies: Issue practical procedures distinguishing usable products from waste and clarifying preparation for reuse and return to production. Specify documentation and quality requirements for subsequent use, including cross-border transfers and public-sector material surpluses. Project finding: Ecosystem desk research and the regional action plan identify unclear material rules, end-of-waste criteria and standards as barriers to reuse.

**Expected benefit:** Easier lawful transfers and less loss of usable textiles.

### 4.6 Provide transparent municipal service funding

Waste and local government ministries: Provide municipal guidance on service costs, contracts and funding allocation. Specify costs covered by EPR and other sources, support transparent procurement and prevent double payment. Project finding: The regional action plan records municipal funding uncertainty and rising collection and sorting costs.

**Expected benefit:** More predictable funding and clearer cost responsibilities.

## Infrastructure and Re-Hubs

### 4.7 Stabilise core repair and reuse services

National ministries and managing authorities: Enable multi-year funding for documented public-benefit repair, reuse, redistribution and education services. Distinguish these functions from development funding and market-priced services. Link support to availability, use and demonstrable results. Project finding: The regional action plan identifies reliance on short-term grants for reuse and community services.

**Expected benefit:** Greater continuity of essential circular and social services.

## Skills and specialist capacity

### 4.8 Provide practical skills and specialist advice

National ministries, managing authorities and sectoral institutions: Provide continuing training and advice tailored to job roles, materials and transition stage. Support vocational education, trainers and school-business cooperation, update project learning resources and maintain specialist capacity. Project finding: Ecosystem desk research, the regional action plan and expert Re-Hub assessments identify specialist skills needs; the mentoring guidelines link learning with practice.

**Expected benefit:** Better skills for technological and regulatory tasks.

## Markets and demand

### 4.9 Use public procurement to support demand

National ministries and public buyers: Prepare and test model textile tender specifications, including workwear, medical textiles, repair and take-back services. Check supply, safety, functionality and life-cycle costs, and enable SME participation. Project finding: The regional action plan identifies weak demand and reluctance to adopt recycled materials. **Expected benefit:** More stable demand and better investment conditions.

# 5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Regional support should reflect local specialisation, material flows, available capacity and institutional readiness.

## Textile ecosystems and cooperation

### 5.1 Turn RIS3 priorities into accessible support

Regional and managing authorities: Translate relevant RIS3 priorities into calls, advice and routes to national or EU funding. Designate a coordinator and accessible contact point. Select measures according to local specialisation, missing capacities and documented demand. Project finding: The regional action plan links textile transition needs to RIS3 and stronger cooperation between businesses, researchers and public authorities.

**Expected benefit:** A clearer link between strategy and available support.

### 5.2 Map material flows and available capacity

Regional authorities and ecosystem coordinators: Map inputs, services and downstream customers. Distinguish reusable textiles, production residues, post-consumer textiles and difficult materials. Verify processing capacity by input quality, logistics and SME accessibility, including cooperation outside the territory. Project finding: The regional action plan and Re-Hub model report identify processing gaps and fragmented value chains.

**Expected benefit:** Better investment choices and connections to processing and markets.

## Infrastructure and Re-Hubs

### 5.3 Fund Re-Hubs according to demand and readiness

Regional and managing authorities: Require identified users, accountable governance, expertise and a viable operating plan. Link funding to development stage and verified material flows. Assess costs, revenues, asset responsibility and legal arrangements before investment, and use suitable existing infrastructure. Project finding: The Re-Hub model report and expert assessments identify different readiness levels and risks in governance, future financing and market uptake.

**Expected benefit:** Accessible services with lower risks of unused or unfunded capacity.

### 5.4 Open access to shared testing

Regional authorities, laboratories, research organisations and Re-Hubs: Publish available tests, access conditions and contacts, with follow-up advice. Help SMEs validate their materials and results. Support access vouchers and shared use where demand is documented. Project finding: The Re-Hub model report and expert assessments identify shared testing as a way to reduce investment risk.

**Expected benefit:** Lower validation costs and better investment evidence.

### 5.5 Provide local repair and reuse facilities

Regional authorities and municipalities: Provide suitable premises, equipment and collection or donation links according to demand. Connect repair, redistribution, community workshops and business services. Link support to quality, accessibility and appropriate operating funding. Project finding: The regional action plan identifies needs for stable reuse facilities and connections with other textile services.

**Expected benefit:** More opportunities to extend textile use.

## Funding the pathway from innovation to market

### 5.6 Connect advice to the next implementation step

Regional authorities, clusters and innovation agencies: Give each supported concept a responsible lead and next step. Provide technical assessment, business model validation and funding advice. Follow up contacts, adapt transferred experience to local conditions and monitor continuing cooperation. Project finding: The project ideas portfolio, funding opportunities database and working exploitation plan support follow-up to expeditions, matchmaking and prepared business concepts.

**Expected benefit:** More validated concepts and prepared funding applications.

## Skills and specialist capacity

### 5.7 Link education and research with business tasks

Regional authorities: Fund joint business-school tasks, placements, demonstrations and mentoring in textile circularity and digitalisation. Involve vocational institutions and research organisations according to ecosystem needs, and test acquired skills through real tasks. Project finding: The regional action plan identifies skills gaps and weak links between research and industrial application; the mentoring guidelines support learning through practical tasks.

**Expected benefit:** Stronger practical skills and links to business innovation.

## Markets and demand

### 5.8 Connect public information with available services

Regional authorities and municipalities: Explain repair, donation, reuse and textile handover through available services, with locations, contacts and acceptance conditions. Monitor input quality and subsequent use with operators, and adjust information accordingly. Project finding: Ecosystem desk research, the regional action plan and Re-Hub model report identify gaps in consumer information and a role for outreach in reuse services.

**Expected benefit:** Better collected materials and clearer guidance for residents.

# 6 DISSEMINATION AND FURTHER USE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Coordinate submission to competent institutions through the policy recommendations lead, project coordinator and regional partners. Use the recommendations in consultations, programme development and strategic planning.

Track submission, institutional responses and policy uptake separately. Monitor completed tests, service use, prepared investments, continuing cooperation and verified market uptake. Base targets on baseline data and agreed capacity.

# ANNEX A SOURCES AND REFERENCE MAPPING

The recommendations use shortened descriptive source names; full titles and codes are listed below. The mapping retains section and page locators for each recommendation. Page locators refer to positions in the cited electronic files.

Consultation findings relate to participating ecosystems. The original Re-Hub assessments, dated 20 February 2026, address model design and readiness. The working exploitation plan supports follow-up recommendations. Sensitive findings are summarised.

### A.1 Source documents

S00 D1.1 Desk Research of Regional Textile Ecosystems. Baseline context.

S01 D1.2 Regional Innovation Boosting Action Plan TEX BREIN Contributions. Public findings and action plan.

S06 D2.2 Report on the Implementation of Capacity Building Webinars and Workshops. Qualitative workshop findings.

S07 D2.3 Capacity Building and Mentoring Guidelines for Regional Support Ecosystem Stakeholders and Applying SMEs. Public mentoring guidance.

S12 D3.3 Portfolio of Project Ideas. Prepared concepts and business plans.

S14 D3.2 Funding Opportunities Database. Public funding routes.

S15 D4.1 The Definition of the Potential Structure of the Textile Re Hub Pilot. Models and development steps.

S20 D5.4 Exploitation Plan. Working version for follow-up.

S22 Assessment Report Textile Re-Hub Severovýchod. Original expert assessment.

S23 Assessment Report Textile Re-Hub Łódzkie. Original expert assessment.

S24 Assessment Report Textile Re-Hub Norte. Original expert assessment.

## A.2 References by recommendation

| Rec. | Source references |
|---|---|
| 3.1 | S12 Sections 5 and 6; S14 Section 4.3, Tables 12 and 13; S00 file pages 210 and 264 to 265. |
| 3.2 | S06 Section 4.1.3; S01 Sections 4.1 and 5.1, file pages 15 and 47 to 48; S00 file pages 264 to 265. |
| 3.3 | S06 Section 4.1.3, file pages 18 to 20. |
| 3.4 | S01 Sections 4.6, 5.2 and 6.1; S06 Section 4.1.3; S00 file page 209; S15 Section 3.1, file pages 8 to 10. |
| 3.5 | S07 Section 3; S01 Sections 5.2 and 6.1; S00 file pages 264 to 265. |
| 3.6 | S01 Sections 4 and 5.1; S00 file pages 29, 101 and 263; S24 Section 8. |
| 3.7 | S12 Sections 5.2 and 5.3; S22 to S24 Section 8. |
| 3.8 | S01 Sections 5.1, 5.2 and 6.1, file pages 48, 51 and 54; S14 Section 4.3, Table 13, file pages 18 to 19. |
| 4.1 | S01 Sections 5.1 and 6.1; S14 Section 4.3; S00 file pages 263 to 265. |
| 4.2 | S01 Section 4, file pages 13, 15 and 18; S00 file page 45. |
| 4.3 | S01 Sections 4 and 5.1; S14 Section 4.3, Table 13; S22 Sections 3 and 6; S15 Section 3.2, file pages 11 to 14. |
| 4.4 | S01 Sections 4.6, 5.2 and 6.1; S06 Section 4.1.3. |
| 4.5 | S01 Section 4.6, file pages 44 to 45, and Section 6.1; S00 file pages 209 and 264. |
| 4.6 | S01 Section 4.6, file pages 42 to 44; S06 Section 4.1.3. |
| 4.7 | S01 Sections 4.6, 5.2 and 6.1. |
| 4.8 | S00 file pages 263 to 265; S01 Sections 5.1 and 6.1; S07 Sections 2 and 3; S23 and S24 Section 8. |
| 4.9 | S01 Sections 5.1, 5.2 and 6.1; S14 Section 4.3, Table 13, file pages 18 to 19. |
| 5.1 | S01 Sections 5.2 and 6.1. |
| 5.2 | S01 Section 5.1, file pages 47 to 48; S22 Section 3; S15 Sections 3.2 and 3.3, file pages 12 to 18. |
| 5.3 | S22 to S24 Sections 1 to 3, 7 and 8; S15 Section 3, file pages 8 to 18. |
| 5.4 | S22 to S24 Sections 2 and 3; S15 Sections 3.1 and 3.3, file pages 9 to 10 and 18. |
| 5.5 | S01 Section 4.6 and Sections 5.2 and 6.1. |
| 5.6 | S12 Sections 5.2, 5.3 and 6; S14 Section 4.3; S20 Sections 8 to 11. |
| 5.7 | S01 Sections 4.1, 4.6 and 6.1, file pages 18, 44 and 55 to 56; S07 Section 3; S15 Section 3.2. |
| 5.8 | S00 file pages 45 and 264; S01 Section 4.6, file pages 42 to 46; S15 Section 3.2. |