Circular economy and textiles: European Unions’ policy context

Harri Moora
SEI Tallinn
What could a circular textile system look like?
Effective policies are needed to drive a circular textiles economy

• We need a systemic change towards circularity

• Circular textiles economy needs to be supported by effective policies addressing materials and design, production and distribution, collection, use/reuse and recycling.

• This includes a set of different policies, regulations and standards – materials/chemicals and products, public procurement, waste, trade, innovation, etc.
EU policy context

- According to the recently adopted Circular Economy Plan, the Commission will propose a comprehensive **EU Strategy for Textiles**.

- The strategy will aim at boosting the EU market for sustainable and circular textiles (incl. market for textile reuse, addressing fast fashion and driving new business models).

- Planned measures:
  - Applying the new **sustainable product framework to textiles**, including developing eco-design measures to ensure that textile products are fit for circularity, ensuring the uptake of secondary raw materials, tackling the presence of hazardous chemicals, and empowering business and private consumers to choose sustainable textiles and have easy access to re-use and repair services.
  - Improving the **business and regulatory environment** for sustainable and circular textiles in the EU, in particular by providing incentives and support to product-service models, circular materials and production processes, and increasing transparency through international cooperation.
  - Providing **guidance to achieve high levels of separate collection of textile waste**, which the Member States have to ensure by 2025.
  - Boosting the **sorting, re-use and recycling of textiles**, including through innovation, encouraging industrial applications and regulatory measures such as **extended producer responsibility (EPR)**.
Implementation of EU policy at national level

- EU policy
- Policy measures
- Policy goals and targets
- Regional/national context
Policy goals

Overall goal:

Moving towards a more circular and sustainable textile system via increased collection, reuse and recycling of textiles

Source: http://livecircular.com/
Possible policy measures

Policy measures

- National strategy/action plan that supports circular economy of textiles
- Collection obligation for municipalities
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)
- Circular public procurement
- Economic incentives – tax reliefs for specific activities
- Voluntary actions – commitments and standards to engage stakeholders
- Financial support – infrastructure and technology investments
- Informative measures – information campaigns, etc.
- Funding pool for startup’s R&D grants

Possible policy measures

- National strategy/action plan that supports circular economy of textiles
- Collection obligation for municipalities
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)
- Circular public procurement
- Economic incentives – tax reliefs for specific activities
- Voluntary actions – commitments and standards to engage stakeholders
- Financial support – infrastructure and technology investments
- Informative measures – information campaigns, etc.
- Funding pool for startup’s R&D grants

Project “Towards a Nordic-Baltic circular textile system”