



O2.1. ESTABLISHMENT OF SUPPORT SERVICE

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PreVEnting and
ReDucing the
tExtiles waste mountain
in the MED area



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Acronyms

APs	Associated Partners
B2C	Business-to-Consumer
M	Month
PoC	Proof of Concept
PPs	Project Partners
T/C	Textile and Clothing
WET	Western European Time
WP	Work Package
RTOs	Research and technology organizations
TAS	Technical Assistance Service
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises



1. Summary

This document provides a comprehensive report on the architectural blueprint of the Activity 2.1. Establishment of Support Service.

The Support Service is based on the structure of the Knowledge Platform and it aims to provide coordinated and effective support to 3 target groups: industry to offer business, financial and technical support, consumers to promote sustainable consumption and consumer engagement through co-creation campaigns and policy makers to provide evidence based and demand driven policy recommendations, strategies and action plans targeting the circular T/C economy transition.

By tailoring its approach to the needs of different stakeholders, the Support Service ensures that businesses can implement efficient circular practices, consumers gain necessary awareness on the footprint of their consumption habits, and policymakers develop informed and effective regulations.

The report outlines the structured approach adopted for this activity, highlighting the key phases from planning and resource development to execution and evaluation.

2. Support Service Overview

The Support Service has been designed to deliver tailored technical assistance to a diverse range of stakeholders, including SMEs, start-ups, research and technology organizations (RTOs), consumers, and policymakers. By leveraging tested methodologies and insights from three Proofs of Concept (PoCs)— Act2.2 Proof of Concept (POC) – Technical Assistance Service, Act2.3 Proof of Concept (POC) – B2C Living lab, and Act 2.4 Proof of Concept (PoC) – Capacity Building for Public Authorities (VERDE Academy)—alongside already implemented projects such as finMED and CreativeWear, the Support Service is poised to provide targeted and impactful solutions that address specific challenges within the industrial, consumer, and policy sectors.

Central to the service's design is the general assessment of stakeholder needs, ensuring solutions are aligned with their requirements. The service demonstrates added value to existing solutions by not only building upon proven methodologies but also addressing previously unmet challenges in sustainable innovation, green financing, and creative industries. Its foundation ensures adaptability, replicability, and transferability across regions and sectors while relying on robust data and tested methodologies to drive meaningful outcomes.

The VERDEinMED Support Service is strategically designed to integrate the strengths of two proven methodologies: the finMED Support Service and the CreativeWear methodology. The methodology that followed by the Consortium is as follows:

1. Setting up national Hubs to define the common vision and objectives of the textile and clothing value chain, based on regional needs and dynamics
2. Mapping the main beneficiaries of each Support Service, depending on expected target and impact
3. Clarifying the state of the art of the textile and clothing sector in each country (based on D1.2.2)
4. Clarifying the needs of each beneficiary (industry through a survey, consumers through a survey and policy makers through a community of practice approach)
5. Engaging and matching all involved actors

2.1. Support Service for the Industrial Sector

The executive planning of the TAS is divided into three phases. These phases ensure a structured approach to identifying needs, selecting experts, and implementing tailor-made support to promote sustainability and circularity across the value chain of the T/C sector:

- The first phase, Target Analysis, is based on identification and analysis of the specific needs and potential of the target organisations in each pilot country. This phase focuses on understanding the market dynamics, technological requirements, and innovation potential in order to tailor the support services effectively;
- The second phase, Technical Assistance Service designing, involves the careful selection of local and transnational mentors based on their expertise and alignment with the needs identified in the first phase. It is expected that during this phase the precise nature of the technical assistance required for each project will be defined, ensuring that the support provided is relevant and impactful;
- The third phase, Technical Assistance Service Implementation, involves the actual delivery of tailored support to selected companies, ensuring that they receive comprehensive assistance to advance their sustainability and circularity goals. Each phase builds on the insights and foundations laid in the previous phase, promoting a seamless and comprehensive approach. This iterative process ensures that the support provided is not only relevant and targeted but also continually evolves to meet the changing needs of businesses. As a result, the TAS framework serves as a robust and adaptable system that is driving tangible progress towards a circular economy within the T/C sector.

Inspired mainly by the finMED project, this aspect of the service focuses on supporting SMEs in accessing financial resources necessary for developing environmentally friendly innovations. By reducing barriers to funding, the service enhances innovation capacity, thereby promoting the adoption of sustainable financing strategies crucial for the transition to green economies.



Based on the Needs Assessment that took place in the context of Activity A2.2: Technical Assistance Service (TAS), the Industrial Sector will be supported based on the following Needs:

- **Capacity building:** Providing tailored training programmes and mentoring to enhance technical and operational capabilities (covered by CreativeWear and finMED)
- **Funding support:** Facilitating access to financial resources and reducing barriers to certification and technology adoption (covered by finMED)
- **Regulatory guidance:** Assisting companies in navigating complex compliance requirements (covered by CreativeWear)
- **Stakeholder collaboration:** Promoting partnerships and cross-sector networking to drive collective solutions for circularity (covered by CreativeWear and finMED) solutions provided by the Support Service are inherently adaptable, drawing from the finMED project's scalable and transferable frameworks. By integrating region-specific insights, the service ensures its relevance across different industrial ecosystems, making it easily replicable in diverse contexts.

2.2. Support Service for Consumers

For consumers, the Support Service employs co-creation methodologies to actively involve individuals in shaping sustainable production and consumption models. This aspect is deeply rooted in the CreativeWear project, which has revitalized the crisis-hit Textile and Clothing (T/C) sector by integrating creativity, personalized design, and small-scale production. By fostering conscious consumption, the service empowers consumers to drive sustainable practices that align with local cultural and economic contexts. This is achieved through the establishment of National Hubs.

In general, consumers play a pivotal role in influencing production models, but their active participation in shaping sustainability strategies has been limited. The Living Labs will enrich the Support Service which addresses this gap by engaging consumers as co-creators rather than passive participants as the CreativeWear's Events.

Building on CreativeWear's innovative approach to revitalizing the T&C sector, the service introduces consumer-driven business models that prioritize sustainability and creativity. By integrating traditional Mediterranean consumer behaviors with modern, creative and environmentally friendly models ensures a unique and culturally relevant value proposition.

The adaptability of the CreativeWear methodology has been demonstrated through its implementation in various creative hubs across the Mediterranean. This approach ensures that the service can be easily transferred to other regions and sectors while maintaining its core principles of sustainability and cultural coherence.

The service employs the living lab approach, which relies on real-world data and iterative testing to refine its methodologies. This ensures that the solutions developed are both practical and effective, with a strong foundation in empirical evidence.

2.3. Support Service for Policymakers

For policymakers, the Support Service offers a structured, evidence-based framework for developing demand-driven policies that support both green growth and creative innovation. Drawing on insights from finMED and CreativeWear, the service ensures that policy recommendations are aligned with the unique challenges and opportunities of the Mediterranean region.

Policymakers face the challenge of balancing diverse stakeholder needs while advancing green and creative economies. The Support Service addresses this by providing systematic insights and fostering synergies between policy objectives and stakeholder requirements.

The service capitalizes on the finMED project's emphasis on sustainable financing and CreativeWear's alignment with policy frameworks. By combining these proven methodologies, the service delivers a comprehensive approach to



polymaking that addresses both economic and environmental priorities.

The collaborative framework established by the Support Service ensures that its methodologies can be localized and adapted to different regional contexts. This scalability makes it a valuable tool for policymakers seeking to implement context-specific solutions across various Mediterranean territories.

3. Detailed description of Support Service

3.1. Technical Assistance Service

3.1.1 Introduction

To advance the transition towards a circular economy within the textiles and clothing (T/C) sector, the VERDEinMED project will launch an Expression of Interest Call to select local mentors which will provide technical assistance to companies, helping them progress towards market readiness.

The Technical Assistance Service (TAS) will cover a wide range of stakeholders, including manufacturers and end-of-life operators of the T/C sector, thus promoting a comprehensive approach to sustainability.

TAS beneficiaries, consisting mainly of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including start-ups and social enterprises, will be provided with support paths tailored to their specific needs.

TAS providers (local mentors, consisting mainly in research and technology organizations (RTOs) and counselling companies will be selected and overseen by transnational mentors drawn from the Project Partners (PPs) and Associated Partners (APs).

The delivery of the TAS will involve a variety of methods to maximize engagement and effectiveness. Local mentors will be selected based on the necessity of the companies. Once the local mentors have been appointed and the services have been selected, the mentoring will be carried out selecting the fittest approach to the needs of target entities: webinars, face-to-face meetings, group workshops, and remote mentoring sessions.

In addition, the VERDEinMED project will facilitate peer review meetings and VERDE Academy events, providing a platform for continuous learning and knowledge sharing. Through these structured and comprehensive support mechanisms, VERDEinMED aims to create a robust ecosystem that fosters innovation and accelerates the transition towards a sustainable and circular T/C sector.

3.1.2. Implementation methodology

Going into detail, the methodology of the TAS within the VERDEinMED project is divided into three phases. These phases ensure a structured approach to identifying needs, selecting experts, and implementing tailor-made support to promote sustainability and circularity across the value chain of the T/C sector:

- The first phase, Target Analysis, is based on *identification and analysis of the specific needs and potential of the target organisations in each pilot country*. This phase focuses on understanding the market dynamics, technological requirements, and innovation potential in order to tailor the support services effectively;
- The second phase, Technical Assistance Service designing, involves the careful selection of *local and transnational mentors based on their expertise and alignment with the needs identified in the first phase*. It is expected that during this phase be defined the precise nature of the technical assistance required for each project, ensuring that the support provided is relevant and impactful;
- The third phase, Technical Assistance Service Implementation, involves the *actual delivery of tailored support* to selected companies, ensuring that they receive comprehensive assistance to advance their sustainability and circularity goals.

Each phase builds on the insights and foundations laid in the previous phase, promoting a seamless and comprehensive approach. This iterative process ensures that the support provided is not only relevant and targeted but also continually evolves to meet the evolving needs of businesses. As a result, the TAS framework serves as a robust and adaptable system that is driving tangible progress towards a circular economy within the T/C sector.

Target Analysis

The first phase of Target Analysis provides the foundation upon which subsequent phases are built. This phase is designed to fully identify and understand the enterprises that could benefit from the TAS, ensuring that the support provided is both relevant and impactful.

The initial step in this phase involves the target identification through a meticulous mapping of the entities that are potential candidates for the TAS starting from the background analysis carried out in the frame of the Ac. 1.2 (Regional Reports of State of the Art of Textile Waste Management and Recycling) which will also provide indication for the identification of the scope of the support service. This mapping process is multi-dimensional, focusing on three parameters: the geographical area, the size of the enterprises, and the specific sectors to which they belong.

First of all, each partner according to the characteristics of its own area will identify the fittest dimension for target identification, selecting the *geographical levels* which could be national, regional, and cluster areas. This will ensure that the project can address a wide range of contexts and conditions, from broad national initiatives to more localised cluster dynamics, each with its unique challenges and opportunities.

Furthermore, the mapping will categorise the organisations by their *size*: large, medium, and small. This categorisation is crucial because the needs and capabilities of enterprises can vary significantly depending on their size. Larger enterprises may have more resources but also more complex supply chains, while smaller enterprises may be more agile but lack the necessary resources to implement significant change.

Lastly, the *sectoral* focus ensures that all relevant stakeholders within the T/C value chain are involved. By engaging a wide range of sectors, the project can promote a more comprehensive approach to achieving circularity in the textile industry, and therefore the sectors of interest including manufacturers and end-of-life operators of textile materials.

Once the target organisations have been identified, a detailed needs analysis will be carried out to understand the specific requirements and challenges they face in terms of sustainability and circularity. This analysis is crucial for tailoring the TAS to address the actual needs of the enterprises, and it will employ different methodologies to gather comprehensive data depending on the size of the target entities:

- For analysing a larger number of companies, *questionnaires* will be used to collect quantitative data on their current practices, challenges, and specific needs related to sustainability and circularity. The questionnaires will be designed to capture a wide range of information, from operational practices to strategic priorities. This method allows for efficient data collection from a large number of respondents.
- *Focus groups* will facilitate in-depth discussions between different stakeholders within the T/C value chain, and will provide qualitative insights into the perceptions, attitudes, and needs of medium-sized enterprises. They will allow for a more in-depth exploration of issues than questionnaires, and will help to uncover any underlying concerns or opportunities that may not be immediately apparent.
- For smaller groups, targeted *interviews* will be conducted with key industry figures such as opinion leaders, innovators, and experts. These interviews will provide expert insights and validate the findings from the questionnaires and focus groups. They will also help to identify best practices and innovative approaches that can be shared with the wider community.

This needs assessment will be carried out in all countries involved, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the regional and national contexts. This will enable the project to develop tailored strategies that address the specific conditions and challenges of each area.

This first phase of target analysis will culminate in the identification of target entities by sector, size, and key needs. This detailed understanding will form the basis for the development of the TAS, ensuring that the support provided is aligned with the specific needs of the enterprises. It will also identify the core topics of the TAS by focusing on the most critical areas that need to be addressed to drive sustainability and circularity in the T/C sector. These topics will guide the subsequent phases of the project, ensuring a targeted and effective approach. The targeting analysis represents a thorough and systematic process designed to map out the landscape of potential

beneficiaries, understand their needs, and lay the groundwork for tailored technical assistance. By undertaking this detailed analysis, the VERDEinMED project ensures that its interventions are both relevant and impactful, setting the stage for successful implementation in the subsequent phases.

Within October 20th 2024 all partners will have carried out the needs analysis according to the characteristics of their specific context.

Technical Assistance Services (TAS) designing

The second phase, which focuses on Expert Selection and the Identification of Technical Assistance Services (TAS), builds on the findings of the Target Analysis phase. This phase is dedicated to assembling the right team of experts and designing a customized approach to delivering the technical assistance required by the identified enterprises, ensuring that the assistance provided is not only relevant but also effective in addressing the specific challenges and opportunities identified in the first phase.

The selection of experts is a critical component of this phase, as the success of the TAS depends on the expertise and experience of the mentors involved. Based on the specific needs identified during the Target Analysis phase carried out in each area, Confindustria will design a call for expression of interest which will guarantee the coverage of all the services needed for answers to the target organisations needs, as well as to select the highest possible experienced experts in the specific fields of actions. The Call for expression of interest will be sent to the partners within the end of November.

Subsequently all partners will present their comments and amendment proposals, and Confindustria will make available the final version of the Call for expression of interest.

The call with respective terms of reference and application form, agreed among the partners, will be published in parallel through the respective official channels within February 2025.

Local mentors will be selected on the basis of their expertise in relevant areas, i.e. for their in-depth understanding of the local context, industry practices, and regulatory environment. Their local insights are invaluable in tailoring the TAS to the specific needs of enterprises in their respective regions.

Within February 28th, 2025, Confindustria, with the support of all partners, will define the common short list with the selected local mentors and respective services where each partner can select the best proposal for their organizations.

In addition to local mentors, *transnational mentors* will be selected from the Project Partners (PPs) and Associated Partners (APs). These mentors bring a broader, cross-border perspective and specialized knowledge that can help to address challenges that transcend national boundaries. Their expertise will complement that of the local mentors, providing a well-rounded and comprehensive support system for the enterprises.

Once the team of experts is in place, the next step is to define the approach for delivering the Technical Assistance Services. This involves identifying the most effective methods and formats for providing support, as well as allocating the necessary resources to ensure that the assistance is effective and sustainable.

The *contents* of the TAS will be tailored to address the core issues and key needs identified in the Target Analysis phase. A variety of delivery methods will be used to meet the different learning styles and operational needs of the enterprises. These methods include:

- webinars: these will provide a flexible and accessible way for enterprises to gain insights and knowledge from experts on specific topics related to sustainability and circularity;
- face-to-face team meetings: these meetings will allow for deeper, more interactive discussions and hands-on guidance, enabling real-time problem solving and feedback;
- individual counseling: one-on-one sessions will provide personalized support tailored to each company's specific needs and challenges;



- group workshops: these collaborative sessions will enable peer learning and the sharing of best practices between different enterprises, fostering a community of practice;
- remote mentoring: virtual mentoring sessions will ensure continuous support and accessibility, regardless of geographical constraints.

Moreover, to ensure that the TAS is both effective and efficient, each partner will establish the allocation of time and resources available for each target entity receiving TAS. These allocations will be tailored to the size, sector, and specific needs of the organizations present in each pilot country to maximize the impact of the support provided.

Finally, to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the TAS, peer review meetings will be held alongside VERDE Academy events. These meetings will provide a platform for continuous evaluation and improvement of the TAS, leveraging feedback from both the enterprises and the mentors. The VERDE Academy events will further enhance the learning experience by providing additional training and development opportunities for both the enterprises and the mentors.

In conclusion, this second phase is a carefully structured process designed to assemble a team of experts and develop a tailored approach to the provision of technical assistance. By selecting the right mentors and defining a comprehensive, customized TAS approach, this phase ensures that enterprises receive the support they need to move closer to market readiness and contribute to the transition towards a circular economy in the T/C sector.

TAS Implementation

The third phase, focusing on the implementation of the Technical Assistance Services (TAS), is the culmination of the insights and groundwork laid in the previous phases. The processes and outcomes of the target and needs analysis and expert selection phases directly inform and shape this implementation phase, ensuring that the selected enterprises receive tailored and effective support.

This phase is critical for translating the project's preparatory work into actionable and impactful assistance to enterprises.

The selection of enterprises to receive the TAS is a direct result of the comprehensive mapping and needs assessment carried out in the first phase. This ensures that the enterprises selected for support are those that will benefit most and are best positioned to advance the project's goals of sustainability and circularity in the T/C sector. The detailed categorization from the target analysis phase, taking into account geographical area, enterprise size, and sector, will guide the selection process.

The *selection procedure* for enterprises will be defined to ensure transparency and fairness each partner will publish a call for expressions of interest to select the interested enterprises. This approach allows for a wider pool of candidates and encourages the participation of a diverse range of enterprises.

The selection will be finalized by all partners within March 31st, 2025.

Once the enterprises have been selected, the actual TAS implementation begins. This stage involves a number of key activities designed to provide comprehensive and effective support and ensure the effectiveness of the TAS and will cover the period April – September 2025.

Each partner can decide, according with target organization's needs, how to plan the specific kind of services for instance foreseeing some *preliminary activities* such as thematic training sessions and workshops focused on the key issues identified in the needs analysis also using and adapting the training material developed in the Ac1.3 and the contents of the knowledge platform Thematic training sessions will provide enterprises with essential knowledge and skills; meanwhile interactive workshops will facilitate peer learning and the exchange of best practices. All these activities aim to build a foundational understanding of sustainability and circularity concepts among the selected enterprises. They will also prepare the enterprises for the more intensive support they will receive during the implementation of the TAS.

After this first phase, it will start the heart of TAS implementation based on the *provision* of tailored support based

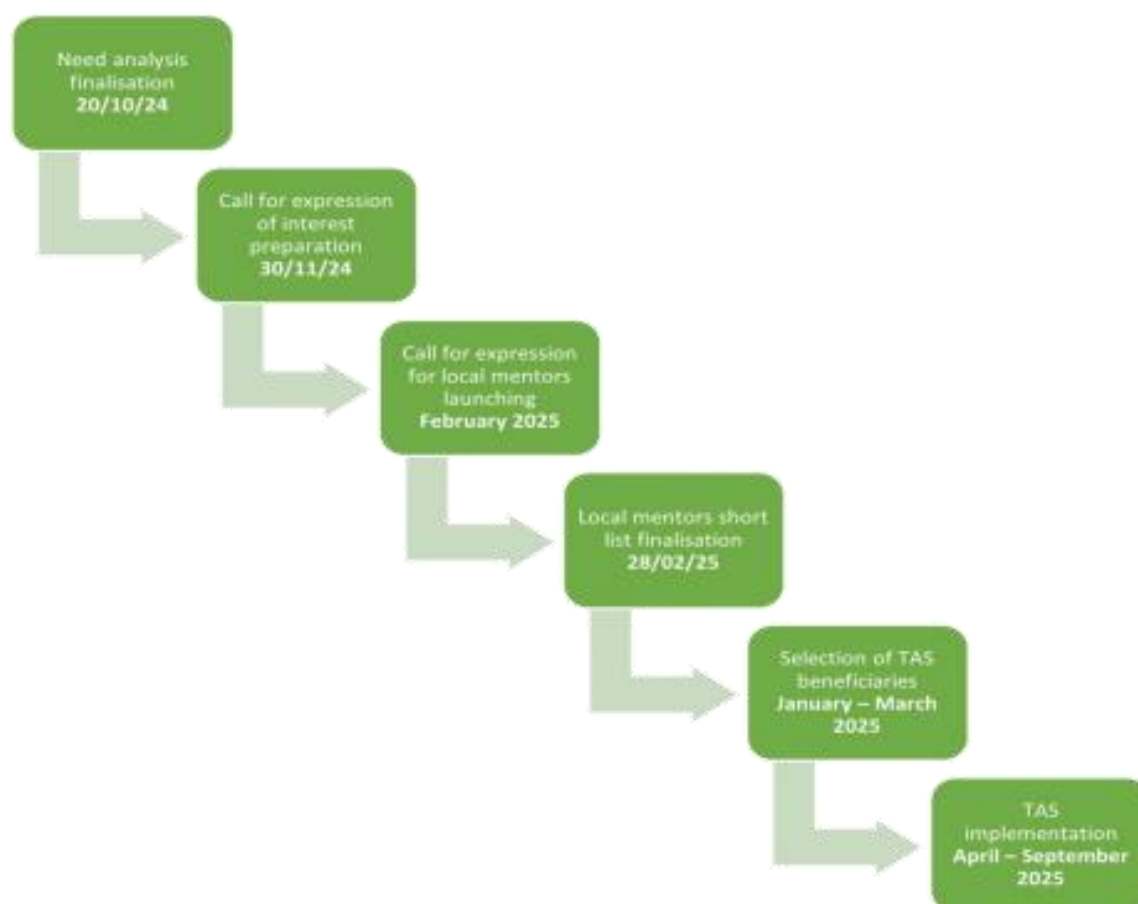
on the needs identified in the earlier stages. This assistance will be delivered through a variety of methods, allowing for flexible and adaptable support that can address the unique challenges and opportunities faced by each enterprise. The focus will be on creating an interactive and supportive environment where enterprises can receive expert guidance, engage in collaborative problem solving and continuously improve their practices.

Another essential component of the TAS implementation is the ongoing *monitoring and evaluation* of its impact. Regular assessments will track the progress of each enterprise in adopting sustainable and circular practices, ensuring that the support provided is effective and aligned with their evolving needs.

Continuous feedback from the enterprises will be collected to refine and improve the TAS, creating a responsive and adaptable support system. The overall impact of the TAS on the enterprises' market readiness and sustainability practices is evaluated to measure success and identify areas for further improvement. This systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation will ensure that the project remains focused on its objectives and delivers tangible benefits to the participating enterprises.

In summary, this third and final phase aims to ensure that the selected organizations receive targeted and effective support that meets their specific needs. The preparatory work carried out in the previous two phases is crucial for the concrete implementation of the TAS, ensuring that the support provided is precisely tailored to the needs of the selected enterprises. In addition, the structured approach to monitoring and evaluation ensures that the impact of the TAS is continuously assessed and improved, maximizing the impact of the project and contributing to its overall success.

3.1.3. Executive planning





3.2. Living Labs and Consumer Campaigns

3.2.1. Introduction

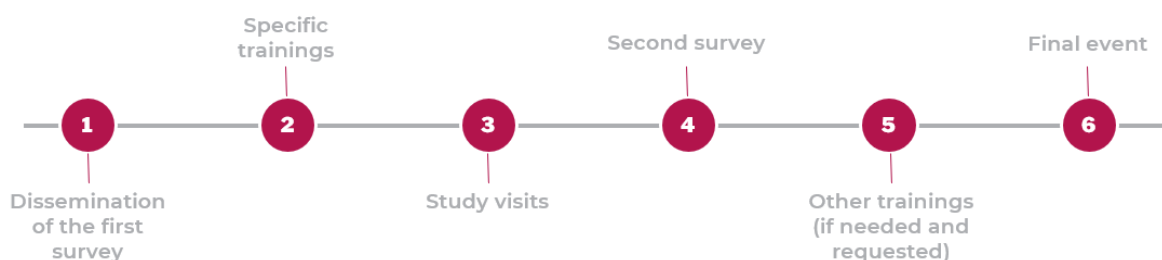
This document aims to describe the basic methodology for the development of the living lab (Activity 2.3), giving advice on how to approach an awareness-raising activity through the involvement of consumers and companies.

The following steps will be as listed:

1. Dissemination of the first questionnaire for the consumers
2. First training on general aspects (to prepare for the visits)
3. Study visits
4. Second questionnaire on how the perception is changed
5. If needed, other trainings
6. Final event

3.2.2. Implementation and methodology

The implementation methodology will be detailed based on the activities outlined previously.



Dissemination of the first survey

Legambiente, together with Confindustria Umbria, prepared a questionnaire (Annex A) to be disseminated among consumers. The questionnaire will be provided in English; the partner will take care of the translation.

The questions deal with the perception of the textile industry and the knowledge of the basic facts and issues related to the waste created by the sector. The questionnaire and the activity in general, will be launched, disseminated, and promoted with the communication campaign (call to action), during local events e through the Regional Hub (activity 1.1), including the relative stakeholders. To make it easy to access, the questionnaire can be completed both online (via link and/or QR code – each PP can use the most appropriate platform) but also in paper mode and then returned to the partner of reference, that will upload these data online.

The minimum number of answers useful for the following elaboration is about 100 per country involved in the action (300 in total).

The call to action will be launched during period 3, January 2025 and the answers will be collected until March 2025.

Each partner will elaborate national data to create a national report. Legambiente will elaborate the project report, matching the 3 national reports.



Specific trainings

After the elaboration of the data from the survey, at regional level, we will have an idea of the perception of the textile sectors issues among consumers, and of the major gap of knowledge to be filled. Specific training sessions will be proposed, also exploiting the tools and materials of the Train to trainers (activity 1.3). If needed, the trainings could be more than one, covering different aspects.

At least 40 among the 100 consumers previously involved, will be involved in this training. The trainings could be both online or in person.

The aim is to prepare as much as possible participants for subsequent study visits.

The training will be done starting from April 2025.

Study visits

Among the useful tools to create knowledge and awareness on the subject, we imagined guided tours and/or study visits: industries and companies can show how they work and what they do; or the industries could be bring inside the schools and design institutes that deal specifically with eco-design and sustainability of T/C sector, involving the stakeholders of the Regional HUB (Activity 1.1).

Every partner involved will propose at least 1 study visit or guided tour to the 40 consumers involved in the first training. The participants could also be subdivided in smaller groups, depending on logistic and management needs.

The guided tours could be done in one of the following types of plant:

- Production industries: to know the production processes, the resources used, and the potential environmental problems related.
- Waste treatment plants: with specific sector for textile waste. How are they treated? Where do they end?
- Cooperatives for reuse and recycling: to know the alternatives to the classic route of textile waste, even better if local.
- Schools and design institutes: bringing the world of academic research closer to that of work. The choice of the specific activity is crucial: it must be in line with the purpose of the project. The visit will be done from July 2025 to September 2025.

Following steps

At the same time, a second survey will be sent out to assess the effectiveness of the proposed actions.

Feedback, suggestions and ideas will be collected, to try to make the sustainability of this supply chain more recognized and recognizable: how to make consumers aware of what they are buying and especially that alternatives exist.

After this phase, if needed, other training and awareness-raising meetings can be proposed, also with respect to what comes out from the analysis of the second survey data. Within December 2025, the second survey has to be done; second training within March 2026.

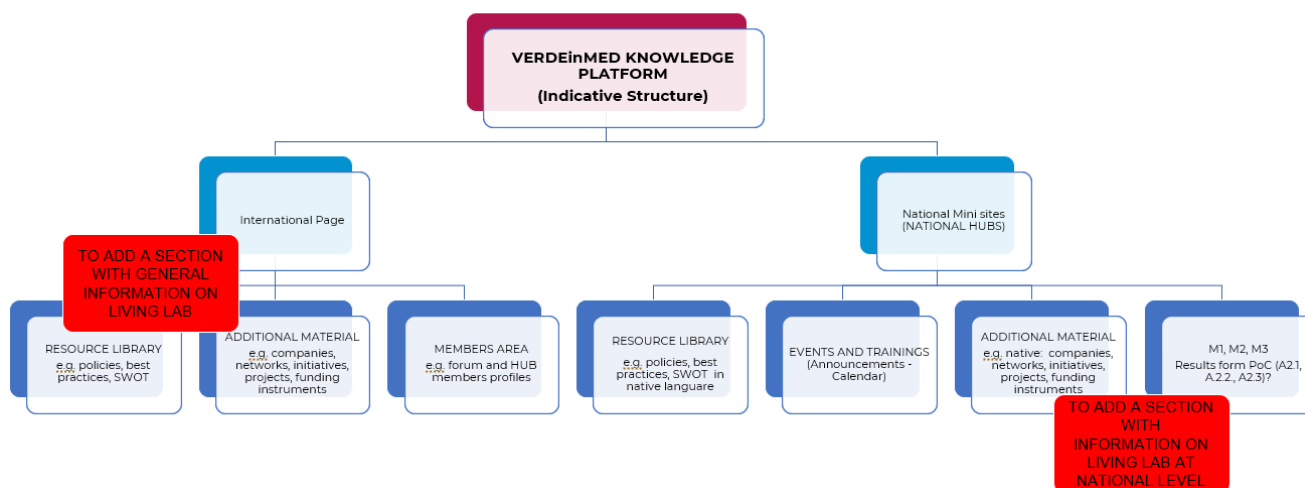
A report per each country will be realized by each PP, with the analysis of the survey and the feedback. A final event will be organized, within June 2026, to exchange other feedback and to present the report.

Dissemination of the information

Information from the living lab activities will be shared with users through the Knowledge Platform. General



information on activities will be provided in the general page (in English), while specific information for each national living lab will be available on the partner pages, in different languages, as showed in the following image:



3.2.3. Executive planning

The table below illustrates the preparation, development, implementation, and reporting timelines for the proposed activities.

	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25	Apr 25	Ma 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Jan 26	Feb 26	Mar 26	Apr 26	Ma 26	Jun 26
Dissemination of the first questionnaire																		
First training																		
Visits to the industries																		
Second questionnaire																		
Other trainings (if needed)																		
Report and final event																		

3.3. Capacity building for Public Authorities

3.3.1. Introduction

To promote the transition towards a circular economy in the textiles and clothing (T/C) sector, the VERDEinMED project will launch a series of capacity-building activities aimed at public authorities. The VERDE Academy will provide training and development opportunities to enhance the capabilities of public authorities in promoting and implementing sustainable practices. This Proof of Concept (PoC) document outlines the framework and guidelines for these capacity-building activities.

The participation of public authorities in the actions of the VERDEinMED project, such as the VERDE Academy, is crucial for the successful transition to a circular economy in the textiles and clothing (T/C) sector. Public authorities can develop and implement policies that promote reuse, recycling, and waste reduction, creating a favorable environment for the circular economy. Their involvement will enhance collaboration and networking among stakeholders, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and best practices.



This Proof of Concept (PoC) document outlines the framework and guidelines for these capacity-building activities.

It will be based on Deliverable D 1.2.1 Guide on the establishment of the Knowledge Platform and on VERDE Hubs, which sets the political agenda in the textile and clothing value chain, **Deliverable D 1.2.2 Regional Reports of State of the Art of Textile Waste Management and Recycling**, which provides information on key enabling technologies and industry transformation challenges, along with datasets on the sustainability impact and regulatory alignment, on European and national level. Furthermore, the Deliverable D.1.3.1 Training activities, tools and material provided all necessary information to set up a policy-oriented approach, as proposed below.

The PoC will serve as the basis for the policy procedures, be it recommendations or strategies of all levels, such as local, regional and national ones, which will be further elaborated in WP3.



3.3.2. Implementation methodology

Overview of policies

For most European municipalities, adopting waste prevention policies would be beneficial and can save costs within the wider waste management budget. Public administration, either on a local or national level, plays a central role in awareness-raising for waste prevention and for creating a reuse and repair culture.

VERDE academy events aim to showcase good practices around the MED, highlighting do's and don'ts for public authorities, guiding decision-makers towards making the most out of the resources available.

Especially, in view of the EU-wide mandatory separate collection of textile waste as of 2025, municipalities have the chance to align textile collection with the waste hierarchy and support a system of local reuse.

However, evidence in WP1 shows that there is no single optimized system in place that VERDEinMED would like to promote exclusively. Instead, it very much depends on the local context which system or actor delivers the best outcome.

Governance

To establish a successful textile waste collection system, municipalities must first develop a governance structure aligned with zero-waste goals. Existing second-hand stores and collection networks must be integrated, though falling revenues from used textiles make current funding models unsustainable.

Data collection is crucial, as there is little comparable information on textile waste. Municipalities should measure waste flows by weight and unit, track final destinations (reuse, recycling, export), and conduct annual waste compositional analyses. This helps target interventions and informs policy adjustments.

Social enterprises play a key role in textile collection, sorting, and reuse. Economic incentives, such as VAT reductions on donations and wage support schemes, can further offset costs.

Key barriers include a lack of sorting capacity, weak coordination, and unclear actor responsibilities. Addressing these requires monitoring all stakeholders, including maintenance services, clarifying roles, and implementing measures to prevent illegal activities.

Collection

The effectiveness of textile collection systems varies by local context, due to the established donation culture and developed infrastructure. Collection methods include charity and commercial collectors, as well as municipal efforts.

The EU recommends a combination of door-to-door collection, public collection points, mobile units, and reuse centers, with a focus on convenience and safety. While door-to-door collection minimizes contamination, it incurs higher costs. Bring banks should be placed away from waste bins to prevent contamination, and public awareness campaigns, branding, and citizen surveys can improve participation.

Challenges include limited urban space, theft from kerbside collections, and contamination.

Sorting

Once a textile collection system is in place, the next major challenge is sorting, which determines the quality and volume of textiles available for reuse, repurposing, or recycling. A high-quality sorting process involves:

- Separating reusable textiles from lower-quality fractions and foreign materials (plastics, metals, etc.).



- Manual assessment by trained professionals to determine reuse or recycling potential.
- Proper tagging and categorization of sorted textiles.

Sorting requires skilled labor, which is often lacking in many regions, leading to outsourcing to lower-wage countries, making local reuse more difficult. Municipalities can support local sorting by involving social enterprises and leveraging government support schemes. Once Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes are implemented, producers will cover sorting costs, reducing financial burdens on municipalities.

Reuse

Many second-hand textiles struggle to compete with cheap fast fashion. To boost reuse, actors have developed creative solutions such as outlet stores, clothing swaps, upcycling initiatives, and e-commerce platforms.

Local reuse strategies could focus on supporting low-income areas and integrating social community spaces in circular initiatives like swapping, resale, repair, and upcycling. Municipalities can also promote reuse through public procurement, especially for professional textiles like uniforms and PPE, which require specific standards. Encouraging a local reuse culture is key, and public authorities can distribute subsidies or vouchers to incentivize reuse and repair. Social enterprises play a crucial role by providing circular economy skills, fostering community engagement, and strengthening local textile reuse efforts.

Recycling

While reuse should take priority, local textile recycling is essential to divert non-reusable garments—often made from fossil fuels—away from incineration and landfills. Fibre-to-fibre recycling remains challenging and requires scaling innovation, improving design, and increasing recycling capacity.

Monitoring new recycling routes and partnering with industrial textile recyclers is crucial to reducing reliance on incineration.

3.3.3. Executive planning

The executive planning of the VERDE Academy within the VERDEinMED project will be divided into three phases. These phases will ensure a structured approach to identifying needs, designing training programs, and implementing capacity-building activities to promote sustainability and circularity across the value chain of the T/C sector.

The purpose of the VERDE Academy is to develop strong interaction, co-learning opportunities, and networking among project partners, associated partners, and other stakeholders to find replicable solutions to mutual challenges.

Target Analysis

The management of textiles and clothing products is critical from the perspective of policymakers, as this sector has a significant impact on the environment, economy, and society. The production and consumption of textiles contribute to climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. Promoting a circular economy in this sector can reduce negative impacts and enhance sustainability. Policymakers have the potential to create the right conditions and incentives to accelerate this transition by incorporating sustainable practices and policies that promote reuse, recycling, and waste reduction.

The first phase, Target Analysis, will involve a comprehensive identification and analysis of the specific needs, challenges, and potential opportunities faced by public authorities in each pilot country participating in the project. This phase aims to gain a thorough understanding of the regulatory frameworks, existing policy requirements, and critical capacity-building needs that will inform the development of tailored training programs.



- **Identification of Policymakers:** Each project partner will be responsible for identifying and actively engaging with key policymakers within their respective regions. The selection criteria for these policymakers will focus on public bodies that play integral roles in the implementation of textile waste management policies. This includes organizations responsible for waste collection and transportation, waste generation, waste treatment, preparation for reuse, and waste utilization processes.
- **Preparation of Contact List:** All partners will collaborate to create a comprehensive contact list of potential policymakers eligible to participate in the upcoming survey. This process will involve recording the perspectives and expressed needs of these policymakers. Partners within the same country will work together to compile a unified and streamlined list to ensure representation and inclusion.
- **Questionnaire Preparation:** DIADYMA will take the lead in designing a detailed questionnaire to gather insights and data from the identified policymakers. Once finalized, DIADYMA will distribute this questionnaire to all partner organizations. Each partner will then be responsible for translating the questionnaire into their national languages and disseminating it to the policymakers listed in their contact list.

Verde Academy Design

The second phase, Design of the VERDE Academy, will focus on developing interactive workshops based on the specific needs identified during the Target Analysis phase. The objective of this phase is to ensure that the capacity-building initiatives provided are not only relevant but also impactful and tailored to the unique contexts of the public authorities.

- **Interactive Workshops:** DIADYMA will develop materials for 2-3 thematic interactive workshops. Each partner organization will have the autonomy to select which workshops will be implemented based on the expressed needs and preferences of their public authorities. These workshops will be designed to facilitate hands-on learning and foster collaboration among participants.
- **Selection of Participants for Study Visits:** From among the workshop participants, those who demonstrate a keen interest in advancing their knowledge and expertise will be identified for further engagement opportunities. Specifically, individuals who wish to participate in study visits, which are aimed at providing practical insights and experiences in sustainability practices, will be selected based on their expressed enthusiasm and relevant roles within their organizations.

Proposed Topics of discussion

- **Green Procurement for Textiles:** Green procurement refers to the process of sourcing materials in a way that minimizes environmental impacts and promotes sustainability throughout the value chain. This includes procuring materials from suppliers who adhere to environmental standards and sustainable practices, using renewable energy sources, and reducing waste and emissions.
- **Upskilling and Reskilling Employees:** Upskilling and reskilling employees are crucial for adapting to new technologies and practices in the circular economy. This includes training in new skills and technologies that promote sustainability, as well as reskilling for adaptation to new roles and processes.
- **Repair and Reuse Centers:** Establishing repair and reuse centers can extend the life of textiles and reduce waste. These centers provide repair and refurbishment services, promoting reuse and reducing the need for new products.
- **Innovative Collection Systems for Textile Waste:** Developing and implementing innovative collection systems for textile waste can improve waste management and promote recycling. This includes using technologies for efficient waste collection and sorting, as well as developing systems that encourage consumer participation.



Implementation of Verde Academy Activities

The third phase, Implementation of Verde Academy Activities, will focus on the execution of the workshops designed for public authorities. This phase is critical to ensuring that these authorities receive substantial support to enhance their capabilities in promoting sustainability and circularity within their jurisdictions.

- **Verde Academy Delivery:** Conduct workshops and study visits using the methods and curriculum developed in the previous phase.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Throughout the implementation of the Verde Academy activities, continuous monitoring and evaluation will be conducted to assess the effectiveness and impact of the initiatives. Feedback will be systematically gathered from workshop participants to gauge their experiences and insights. This feedback will play a pivotal role in refining and improving future training sessions, ensuring that the capacity-building activities remain relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of public authorities.



4. Outlook

The Support Service represents a holistic and scalable solution to the challenges faced by the industrial, consumer, and policy sectors. By leveraging insights from proven projects and tested methodologies, it is expected to deliver added value to existing solutions, ensuring its adaptability, replicability, and transferability across diverse contexts. With a strong reliance on data-driven frameworks, the service is well-positioned to foster innovation, sustainability, and collaboration within the Mediterranean region and beyond. **The outlook section will be supplemented and finally substituted with a conclusion and an assessment section by the end of the project's implementation, that is by June 2026, where the threefold support service is expected to yield results and conclusions.**



PreVENTing and ReDucing the tEXtiles waste mountain in the MED area



Consortium

- Centre for Research & Technology, Hellas (CERTH)
- Bulgarian Fashion Association
- CITEVE
- Confindustria
- Consorci de la Ribera
- Corporación Tecnológica de Andalucía
- Diadyma S.A.
- e-Zavod
- Legambiente
- Textile Trade Association Textile Cluster (TTA-TC)



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Project overview

The VERDEinMED project is an initiative funded by the Interreg Euro-MED programme to promote the circular economy in the textile sector. VERDEinMED is a thematic project that will provide a support service to boost circularity in the textile value chain for businesses, consumers, policy makers and academia.

The project is part of the Innovative Sustainable Economy mission of the Euro-MED programme, which seeks cooperation between Mediterranean countries to promote smarter and greener business models. It brings together 10 partners and 15 associated entities from Greece, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Slovenia, North Macedonia, Bulgaria, Tunisia, Turkey, Belgium and Lebanon.