



Results from transition arena discussions on promoting reuse of plastics

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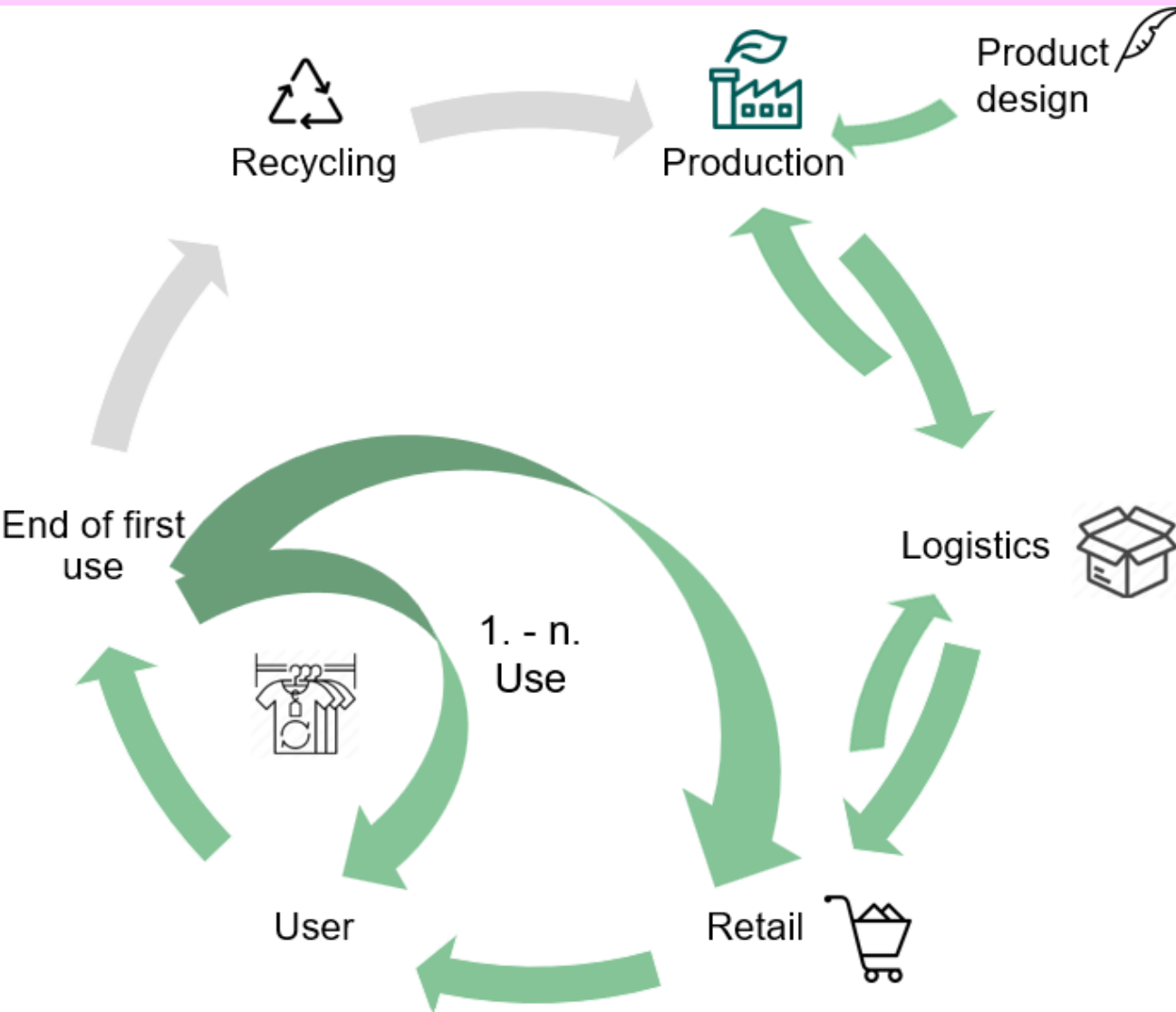
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REUSE of products and packaging



Reuse starts with product design.

The products can be packed in reusable packaging.

Products are transferred from one user to another either directly or through services.



Three aspects for plastic reuse



Replacing single-use plastic consumer packaging with reusable packaging



Replacing single-use plastic transport packaging with reusable packaging



Reuse of consumer products containing plastic

Reducing single use and overconsumption of plastics by reusing them

What is a transition arena?



- Co-development method, where together with stakeholders, a medium-term goal is created for the studied phenomenon and transition paths aimed at it with measures
 - Question: What needs to happen in society for change to start? Who is responsible for the actions?
- Participants: A diverse group of experts from different perspectives
- The method has been used in Finland before, e.g. for energy policy evaluation.

¹ <https://research.aalto.fi/fi/publications/murrosareenan-muutospolkuty%C3%B6kalu>

Aims of the PlastLIFE transition arena

- Increase understanding of the possibilities and limitations of reusing plastics
- Identify issues needing development and measures
- Give an initial impetus to reuse experiments
- Network and exchange information
- Form key messages about reuse of plastic products and packaging!
- Implement the plastic road map and serve for its update in 2025



In PlastLIFE arena, future change paths until 2045 were considered

Syke and the PlastLIFE project implemented in cooperation with Aalto University

Series of four workshops in spring 2024

Participants were experts and developers from companies, expert and research institutes, municipalities, communities, government



Picture: Annika Markuksela, 2024



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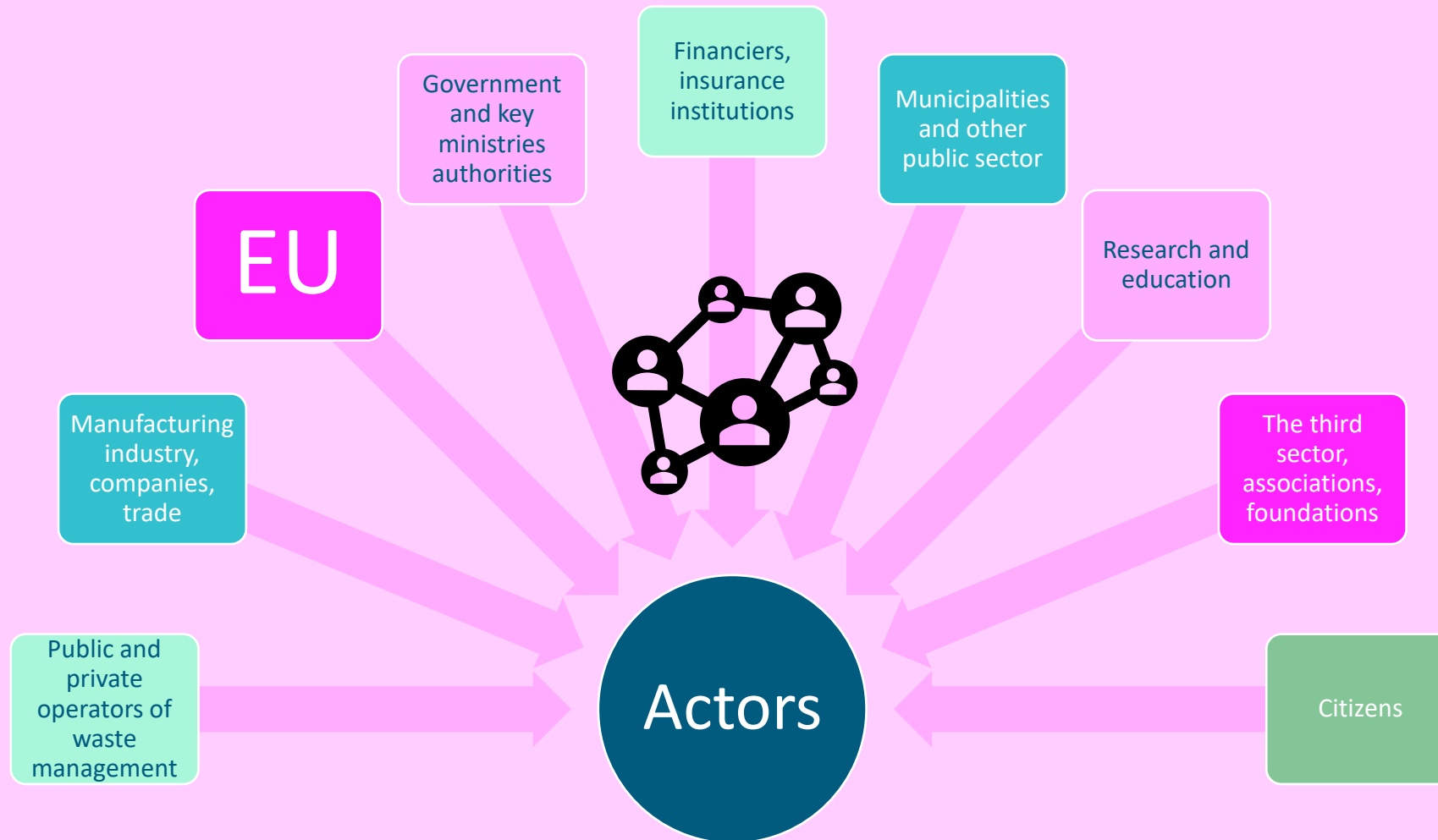
The results of the PlastLIFE transition arena



Barriers and drivers of reuse

- Weak guidance and incentives
- Cheap and short-lived products
- Investments in single use and recycling
- Business models, scale challenges and profitability
- Rules of the game, player field, infrastructure are missing
- Consumer attitudes
- Information gaps
- Monitoring the amount of reuse
- Definitions and terms unclear
- New legislation and goals on the horizon
- Pioneering companies point the way
- Standardization
- Accessibility (packaging) and availability (products)
- Durable products
- Growing environmental awareness at home and in the workplace
- Accumulation of knowledge and research involving extensive collaboration

A wide and multi-level field of actors



GOAL 1 for 2045:

"The reuse of **consumer packaging** has come alongside single use as a strong system that is easy, safe, commercially profitable and focuses on the most significant environmental benefits."



Consumer packaging 2024 – 2035

First steps



- Key stakeholder consensus on packaging reuse orientation, definitions
- Information on environmental, economic and social impacts – method development, initial data
- Safety and responsibility issues to be clarified and instructed

Regulation and administrative practices support development

- Strong guidance: regulation, fiscal means, eco-modulated fees for producer responsibility, financial instruments
- Reuse for public procurement
- Measurement and monitoring and voluntary means

Dialogue and information on the promotion and direction of reuse

- Campaigns and trials of new packaging and return systems - encouraging and easy activities
- Means of service design to help consumers' reuse activities
- Kitchen and apartment design

Consumers as part of change



Consumer packaging 2030 – 2045

Following steps

- **Financial instruments** to reduce the single use, ban on using disposable cups and plates at events, EU standards, new quantitative targets
- **Incentives for companies** to commit to the system
- **Accessibility:** Urban planning to consider return systems
- **New consumption, packaging and housing practices**

The construction of the system requires research and development

- **R&D:** New technologies, materials, concepts, traceability, digitization, (also refill)
- **R&D support**
- **Cooperation** even between competing companies, emphasis on trade and the horeca sector
- **Learning** from practices, experiments and models of other countries

The introduction of reuse systems



GOAL 2:

"Reducing single-use plastic transport packaging by reusing it 70% by 2040."



Transport packaging 2024-2030

First steps



Cooperation to clarify the situation of transport packaging

- **Information:** Quantity and quality of packaging, definitions, costs, effects
- **Sharing of best practices, user experiences and primary pilots**
- **Business cooperation** and support of interest organizations - solutions at an EU-level perspective

- **Financial instruments** (taxation, subsidies for experiments, use and infrastructure, deposits, procurements)
- **Interpretations of competition regulations** to enable the cooperation
- **Ambitious goal setting**

Effective incentives for companies developing reuse and regulation supporting reuse

Concept and product development for packaging, logistics, washing systems

- **Policy measures:** Investment subsidies, innovation competitions, voluntary agreements
- Finding out the climate benefits

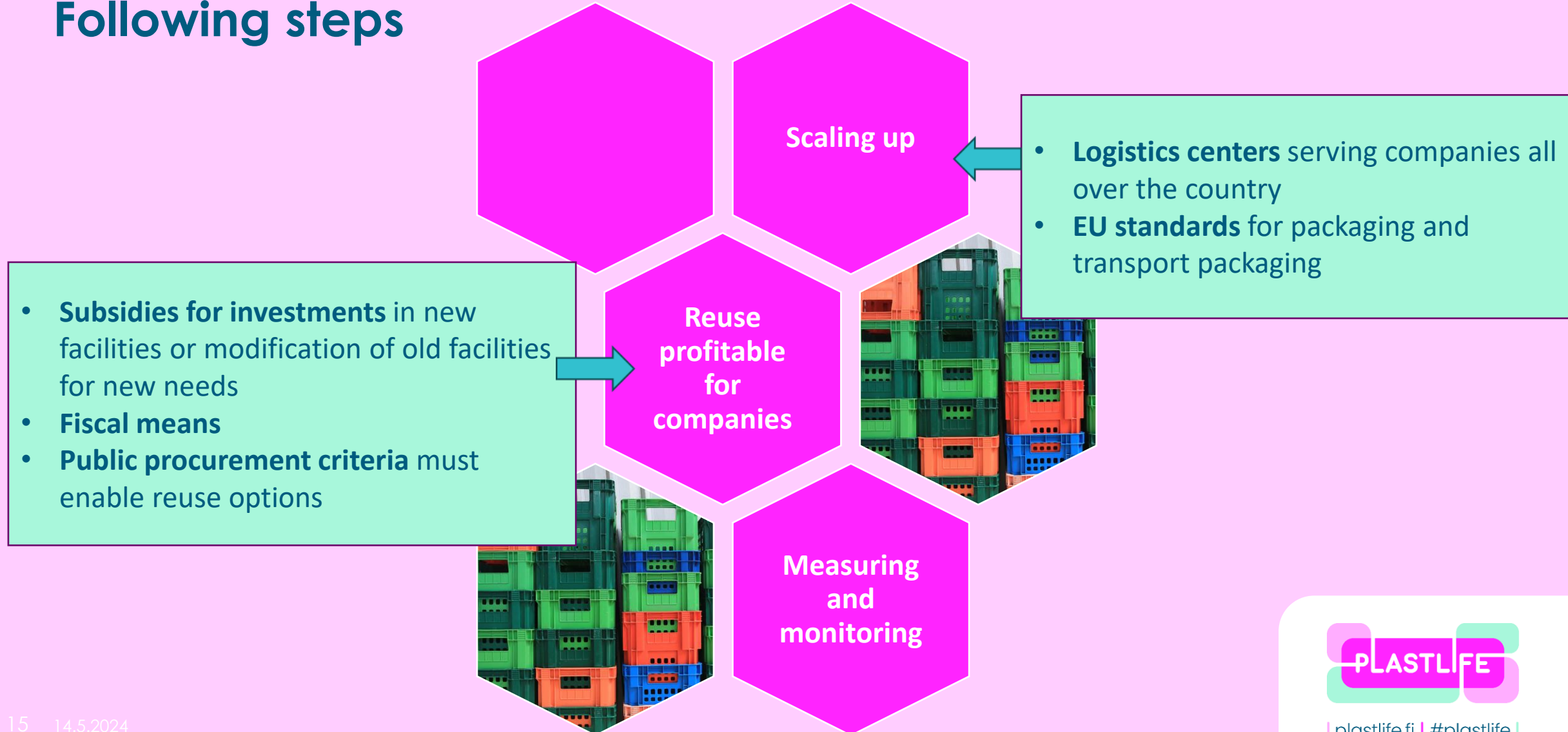
- **Training** for different levels of education and communication and training for operators
- **A new financing instrument** for piloting

Investments in training, R&D activities and piloting

Mid-term review, whether the direction and solutions are in line with the original goal

Transport packaging 2030-2040

Following steps

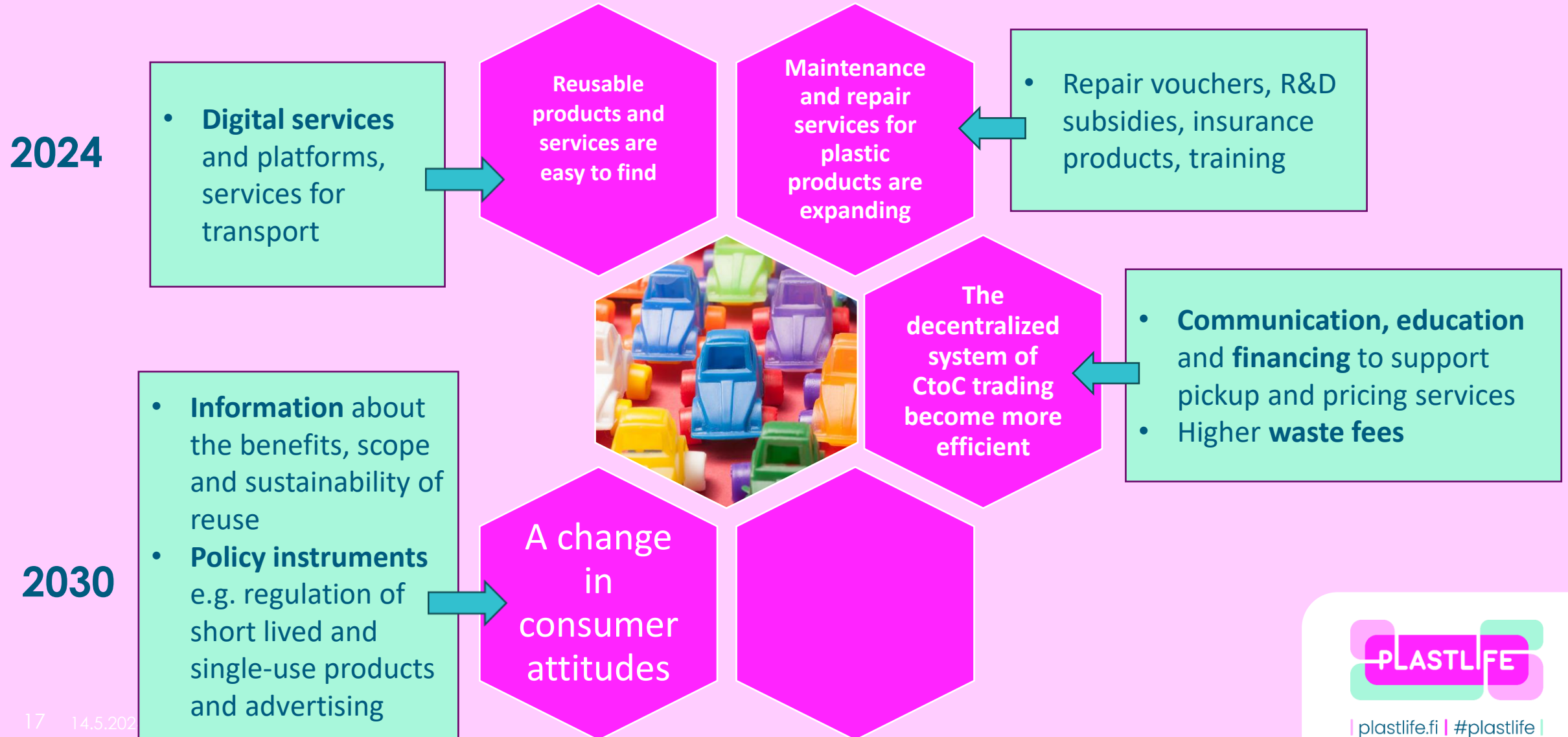


GOAL 3 for 2045:

”Finland will have a diversified ecosystem for the reuse of plastic consumables based on know-how and knowledge. The goods are designed to be reused and no reusable goods end up as waste. Reuse is a widely accepted, preferred and established way of purchasing a product.”



Plastic consumables: Culture change path



Plastic consumables: Building the ecosystem

2024

- **Incentives, taxation, standardization** and regulation

Product design enables the reuse

The quality and safety of the products are verified

- **Guidance**, product liability and consumer protection legislation, insurances

2030

- **EU-level targets**, possibly per product group and operator
- **Studies** on a good target level and effects

Binding targets

Industrial scale operation also at the end of the life cycle

- **Investments in technology** (automation and mechanization) and **logistics**
- Stronger inclusion of reuse in **waste management services**



Reuse becomes mainstream of commerce and other business

- Need for **forerunners**, experiments, **product liability guidance and incentives** (e.g. lower VAT, R&D subsidies for the trade sector)

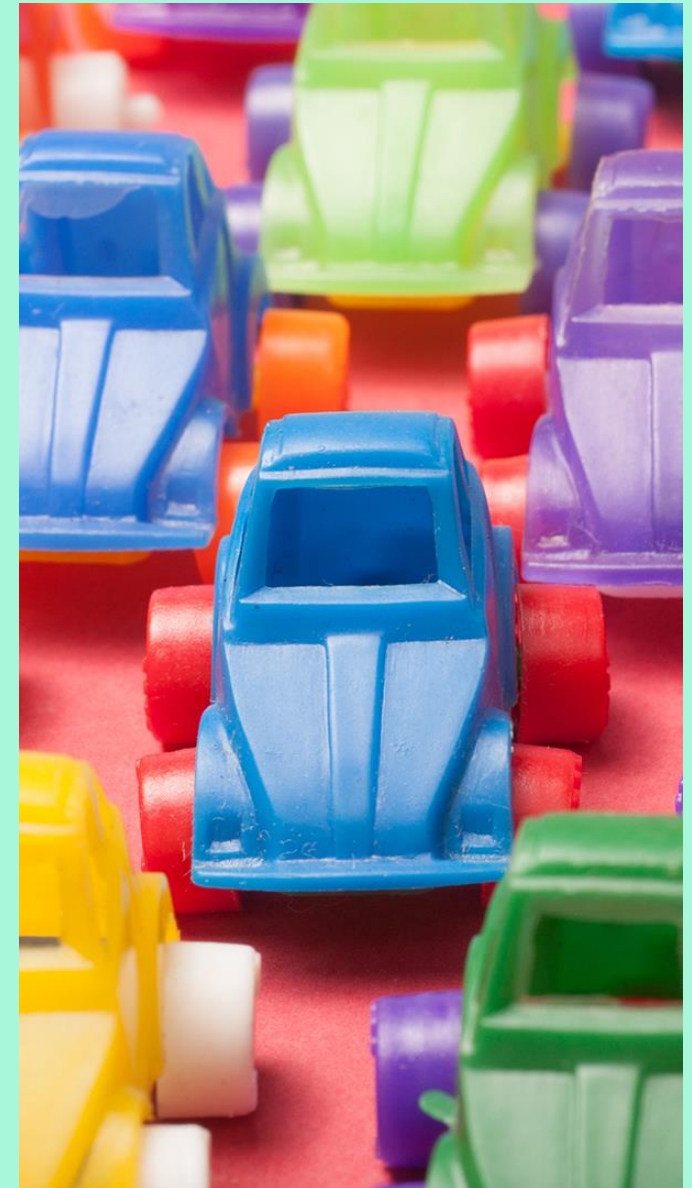


Uncertainties - reflections on the mainstreaming of reuse

- **The introduction of economic steering is uncertain** - a tax for single-use? Lower VAT? Business subsidies?
- **Does reuse ultimately increase consumption?** Will all reuse contribute to economic growth?
- **Changes in society that affect products and packaging** – change in the food system, transport needs and non-packaging, housing, cheap and short-lived products, costs of life
- **Liability issues, safety and environmental sustainability regarding plastics**
- **Are conflicts of interest solvable?** Reuse vs. disposable or recycling

Key messages

- **Reuse is an opportunity, not a threat.** Dialogue is needed to resolve conflicts of interest.
- **Effects of reuse:** Solutions based on the environment, economy, safety and social effects must be sought through multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral cooperation.
- **Experiments and innovations:** To develop return systems and reuse on an industrial scale, experiments are needed in broad cooperation. The important role of trade. Companies should be supported with the novel financial instruments.
- **Citizens' key role:** Household participation must be supported with incentives, services, communication and attitude education.
- **Incentives and regulation:** Strong guidance, goal setting and information are needed to strengthen reuse and long-life products, but also to reduce the attractiveness of new, short-lived goods.



Picture: Adobe Stock

Thank you!



Read more: [Uudelleenkäyttö etusijalle \(in Finnish\)](#)
[Toimintasuosituksia, PlastLIFE, Lokakuu 2024.](#)



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