

# Masters of LINEN™ Standard

Version 1.0



Alliance for European  
Flax-Linen & Hemp



Masters of  
**LINEN**™

CERTIFIED LINEN OF EUROPEAN ORIGIN,  
FROM FLAX FIBRE TO YARN TO FABRIC.

The audience for this document includes any stakeholder interested in knowing more about the **Masters of LINEN™** standard, which focuses on the needs of both current and future **Masters of LINEN™** certified companies.

Document name:

**Masters of LINEN™ Standard**

Document Title:

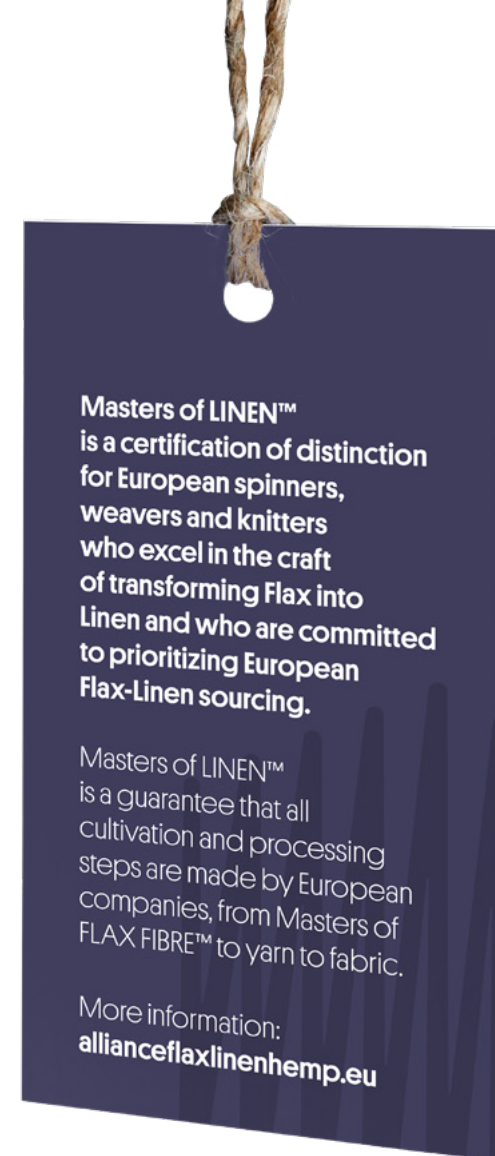
**Masters of LINEN™ Standard version 1.0**

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Revision: The **Masters of LINEN™** Standard is revised at least every five years.

Feedback and suggestions may be submitted to [certification@allianceflaxlinenhemp.eu](mailto:certification@allianceflaxlinenhemp.eu)



## Information for correct use of this document:

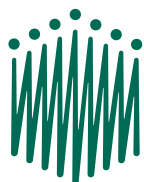
The following verbal forms are used to indicate requirements, recommendations, permissions, or capabilities in this standard:

- **“shall”** indicates a requirement strictly to be followed in order to conform with the standard
- **“should”** indicates a recommendation
- **“may”** indicates a permission
- **“can”** indicates a possibility or capability

The vocabulary identified in grey color is defined in the Glossary of this standard. Additionally, all acronyms are defined in the Acronym List.

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## Alliance for European Flax-Linen & Hemp

Alliance for European Flax-Linen & Hemp brings together all the European Linen & Hemp value chain from growers to weavers and knitters.

Founded in 1951 as the European Flax and Hemp Confederation (CELC), the organisation was renamed Alliance for European Flax-Linen & Hemp in 2023.

CELC DEVELOPPEMENT is a commercial company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Alliance, whose role is to provide Alliance with technical, administrative, and commercial support to enable it to fulfil its mission:

- to inform its members, brands, and consumers
- to support the European ecosystem and know-how, and
- to promote the European value chain.

Alliance generates an environment favorable to competitiveness among businesses as part of its mission by providing pragmatic and forward-looking solutions to the current challenges of the fashion, home and technical industries.

Alliance is the guarantor for all technical, scientific, environmental and economic data on Flax-Linen and works towards three strategic pillars: innovation, creativity, and sustainability.

Committed to collectively implementing these strategic pillars, Alliance has led the way in terms of promoting transparency through two origin and traceability certifications, Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ and Masters of LINEN™, aimed to support the development of an incomparable European expertise.

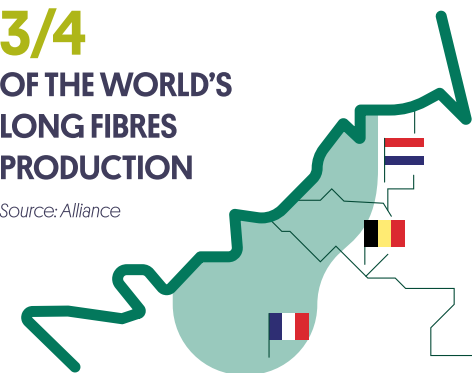
Masters of LINEN™ is a registered mark and is the property of the Alliance for European Flax-Linen & Hemp and its subsidiary CELC DEVELOPPEMENT.

All Alliance Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Innovation, Creativity, Marketing Developments are targeted towards reaching the collective ambition shared by all Alliance's members to establish European Flax-Linen and Hemp as the preferred sustainable fibres worldwide.

### A European exception:

**3/4**  
OF THE WORLD'S  
LONG FIBRES  
PRODUCTION

Source: Alliance



The Alliance for European Flax-Linen & Hemp offers a platform for reflection, support, market analysis, dialogue, and strategic orientation.

It gathers 10,000 members from 16 European countries and bases its work on the values of solidarity, innovation, scientific validation, and respect for people and planet, encouraging dialogue with national and European public authorities.



## Masters of LINEN™ Certification



**Masters of  
LINEN™**

CERTIFIED LINEN OF EUROPEAN ORIGIN,  
FROM FLAX FIBRE TO YARN TO FABRIC.

**A certification of distinction for European spinners, weavers and knitters who excel in the craft of transforming Flax into Linen and who are committed to prioritizing European Flax-Linen sourcing.**

Masters of LINEN™ is a guarantee that all cultivation and processing steps are made by European companies, from Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ to yarn to fabric.

This initiative supports European jobs, offers a high level of service to customers and ensures excellence and innovation, while operating under European labor and human rights regulations. It represents not only excellence in Linen textile craftsmanship, but also a civic commitment to regional sourcing and textile expertise.

Masters of LINEN™ is exclusively dedicated to Flax-Linen.

All certified companies are listed on [allianceflaxlinenhemp.eu/en/directory-certified-companies](https://allianceflaxlinenhemp.eu/en/directory-certified-companies)

\*Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ is a certification that ensures integrated crop management practices and highlights the unique expertise of European fibre producers. Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ provides European origin traceability from Flax fibre to finished product, for all end markets.

# Principles

**Masters of LINEN™ Companies are guided by the following principles, which represent the core values that guide the Masters of LINEN™ Standard.**

The principles are divided into Fundamental principles, which serve as an essential foundation for the standard, and Progressive principles, which encourage companies to adopt better practices as they evolve. They provide clear direction, ensuring alignment and meaningful implementation through specific criteria.

Unlike fundamental principles, which are essential and non-negotiable, progressive principles allow for gradual enhancements over time, adapting to new best practices, technologies, or industry advancements.



## Fundamental principles



### 1 Traceability and Transparency

**For Masters of LINEN™, traceability is not merely a requirement; it is a commitment to authenticity and excellence, safeguarding the integrity of each product from the field to the final business-to-business transaction.**

It also offers the guarantee that all the processing steps from the field to the finished fabric are carried out by European companies that are subject to strict European regulations on labour and human rights.

Masters of LINEN™ has a strict Chain of Custody criteria to ensure documented and unbroken tracking of its materials. All Masters of LINEN™ companies shall adopt the **Flax-Linen Traceability Platform** (European Certified Fibres to Retail) by TextileGenesis – Lectra and are subject to the **Policy for Use of the Flax-Linen Traceability Platform**.

By tracing every stage in the production chain of European Flax-Linen textiles, it ensures complete transparency and accountability, strengthening consumer trust, supporting sustainability goals, and reinforcing the legacy of quality that defines Masters of LINEN™.



### 2 Excellence and European Know-How

**Masters of LINEN™ celebrates and preserves the unique European textile expertise in transforming Flax into Linen.**

Certified companies shall uphold the highest standards of craftsmanship in spinning, fancy spinning, weaving, and knitting, maintaining techniques rooted in European tradition while embracing technological innovations that enhance quality.

Therefore, the Masters of LINEN™ companies shall be European, guaranteeing that all cultivation and processing steps are made by European companies, from the Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ certified fibre, to yarn to fabric. Additionally, the certified companies shall prioritize European Flax-Linen sourcing.

Only companies with in-house processing facilities in Flax-Linen spinning, fancy spinning, weaving or knitting activities are eligible for Masters of LINEN™ certification.

## Progressive principles



### 3 Business Integrity

Adopting responsible business practices is crucial for mitigating risks and ensuring legal and ethical compliance. Masters of LINEN™ companies should implement due diligence processes that assess risks in accordance with European Union requirements, create and promote policies among their key stakeholders and establish a grievance mechanism.

Those actions will foster a more transparent and responsible corporate governance.

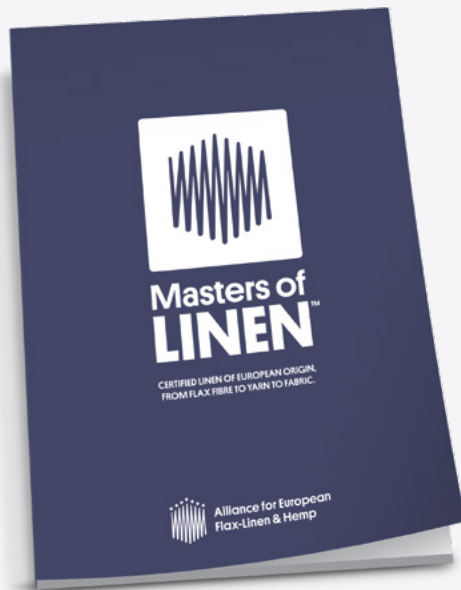


### 4 Sustainability

Sustainable practices are essential for minimizing the environmental impact of textile manufacturing. Masters of LINEN™ companies should implement responsible water and energy management, adopt waste reduction strategies, and ensure compliance with European environmental regulations.

Quality local sourcing, low impact processing, and circular economy concepts should be integrated into every stage of the supply chain to promote long term sustainability.

## Reference documents



The Masters of LINEN™ certification concepts are detailed on the following documents:

### The Masters of LINEN™ Standard

Concise document that outlines the foundational principles, the scope, intent, and core commitments.

1

### The Masters of LINEN™ Criteria Guideline

Comprehensive explanation of each criterion included in the checklist, providing context, rationale, and interpretation to ensure its consistent understanding and application.

2

### The Masters of LINEN™ Checklist

Structured tool used for both internal and external audits, listing all compliance criteria to systematically evaluate conformity with the Standard.

3

### The Masters of LINEN™ Audit Protocol

Sets out the rules and procedures for conducting audits, including auditor qualifications, audit methodology, frequency, reporting requirements, etc.

4

### The Policy for Use of the Flax-Linen Traceability Platform

Sets out the rules and procedures required in terms of traceability, transparency and accountability.

5



All reference documents including support documents **are available on the Alliance's website:** [allianceflaxlinenhemp.eu/en/technical-documents-download](https://allianceflaxlinenhemp.eu/en/technical-documents-download)

## Criteria

**The criteria are the specific questions that bring the principles to life. They serve as a practical tool to assess alignment with the Standard, ensuring concrete action and measurable outcomes.**

In the Masters of LINEN™ certification there are 3 types of criteria: Critical, Major and Minor, for each of the four principles.



The complete list of criteria used to evaluate conformity is presented in the **'Masters of LINEN™ Checklist'**. The **'Masters of LINEN™ Criteria Guideline'** gives a comprehensive explanation of each criterion.



## Principles

The principles represent the core values that guide the Masters of LINEN™ Standard. They provide a clear direction, ensuring alignment and meaningful implementation through specific criteria.

### Fundamental

### Progressive

## Criteria

The criteria are the specific questions that bring the principles to life. They serve as a practical tool to assess alignment with the Standard, ensuring concrete action and measurable outcomes.

### Critical

### Major

### Minor

## Critical criteria

Minimum compliance:

100%

**Essential requirements that shall be fully met during the audit verification.** Non-compliance (NC) with these criteria shall result in immediate certificate suspension or certification failure. The company shall be given 30 days to present an action plan to the certification body (CB). The certification body shall then grant a timeframe for resolving the NC. If not corrected within the required timeframe, the certification shall be withdrawn. In this case, a new application shall be submitted if the company wishes to reapply for certification. In extreme cases, the company may be banned from the certification program for one year.

## Major criteria

Minimum compliance:

100%

**Important requirements that significantly impact compliance.** Non-conformance may lead to certification failure if not corrected within a specified timeframe. The company shall be given 60 days to present an action plan to the certification body. The certification body will then grant a timeframe for resolving the NC. Once the issue has been corrected, the company shall contact the certification body. The CB will then evaluate the action taken. Additional audits may be required to verify the corrective actions (depending on the NC). If not corrected within the required timeframe, the certification shall be suspended. If the issue is corrected after the suspension, the company shall contact the certification body for re-evaluation. The CB will then evaluate the action taken following the same procedure for all major non-conformities.

## Minor criteria

Minimum compliance:

30%

**Lower-impact requirements that do not immediately affect certification but should be addressed for continuous improvement and full compliance over time.** The company will be given 30 days to present an action plan to the certification body. The CB will then grant a timeframe for resolving the NC. If not addressed within the deadline, it may escalate to a major non-conformity. The company may choose for which criterion to develop an action plan to fill the gap until minimum compliance (e.g. 30% of minor criteria shall be met).

# Masters of LINEN™ product certification overview

A product [finished or semi-finished product] **shall be certified as Masters of LINEN™ only if it meets all the following criteria.**

## 1 Production criteria

It was produced from **certified materials made by Masters of LINEN™ certified companies**, meaning:

- The yarn was made by a Masters of LINEN™ certified spinner  
AND
- The fabric was made by a Masters of LINEN™ certified weaver or circular knitter  
OR
- The fully-fashioned knitted end-product was knitted and manufactured by a Masters of LINEN™ certified flatbed knitter

The material originates from an ecosystem committed to **prioritizing European Flax-Linen sourcing**, ensuring traceability, European expertise, and alignment with certified sourcing standards.

- Spinners shall source a minimum of 70% of their total flax fibre supply as Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ certified.
- Weavers, fancy spinners, and knitters shall source a minimum of 55% of their total Linen supply as Masters of LINEN™ certified yarns and fabrics.

## 2 Certified chain of custody

- **Until the finished fabric**, all the transformation and trading steps were performed **in Europe\***:
  - by **Masters of LINEN™** certified **companies** and their verified subcontractors [for non-Core activities]. Masters of LINEN™ companies shall also be certified to Masters of LINEN™ CoC or to Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ for their non-Core activities.
  - by **Masters of Flax FIBRE™** certified companies **for all the other steps**.
- **After fabric finishing**, all transformation and trading steps were performed by **Masters of Flax FIBRE™** certified companies [in or outside of Europe.
- All the transactions followed the **Policy for Use of the Flax-Linen Traceability Platform**.
- Brands and specifiers, when relevant, shall become certified under **Masters of LINEN™ Chain of Custody (CoC)**. This is required when there are subsequent Business to Business [B2B] transactions or when they are involved in the transformation processes of their **certified products** [directly or through subcontractors]. This ensures Chain of Custody requirements are respected up to the finished product..

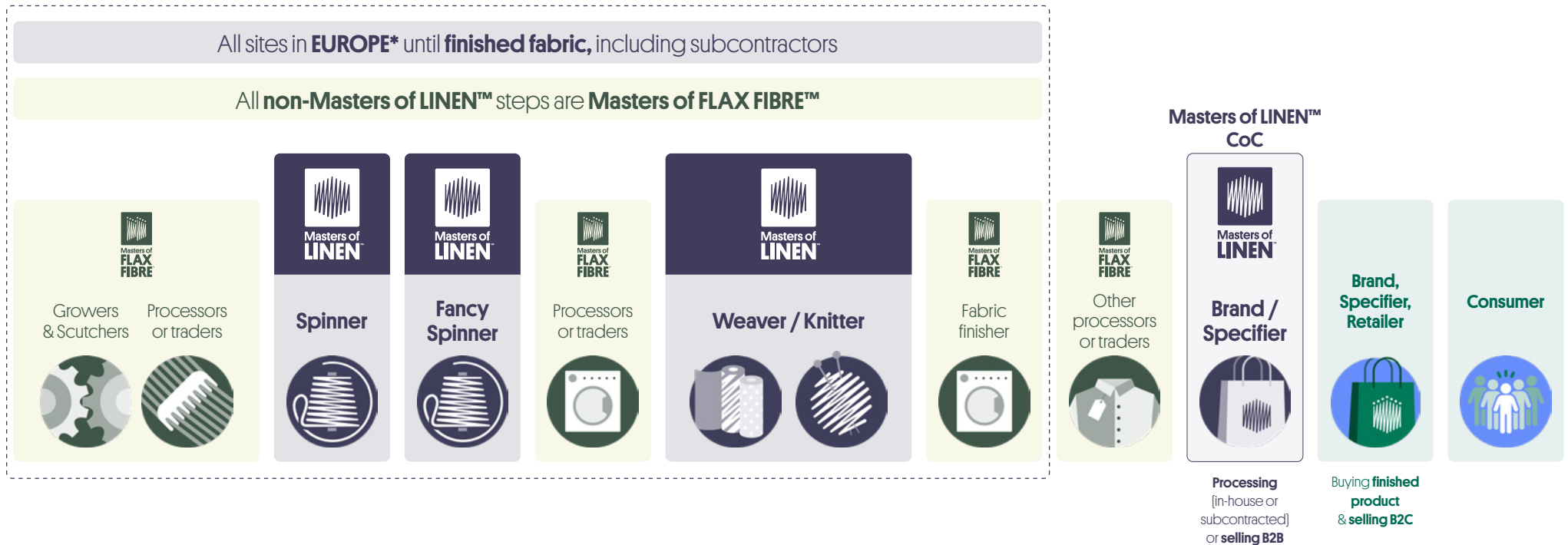
\*Exception: One Masters of LINEN™ founder spinner site in Tunisia is the only exception.

## 3 Composition criteria

The product/material meets the 2 Masters of LINEN™ composition criteria:

- It is made from **100% Masters of LINEN™ certified Linen**.  
This means that no blending is allowed with other types of Linen [Masters of Flax FIBRE™, organic, recycled or conventional].
- It has a composition of **at least 50% Linen or is woven as Linen union** or “métis” = [cotton warp, Linen weft, minimum 40% Linen and 60% cotton composition].

# Masters of LINEN™ certified Chain of Custody

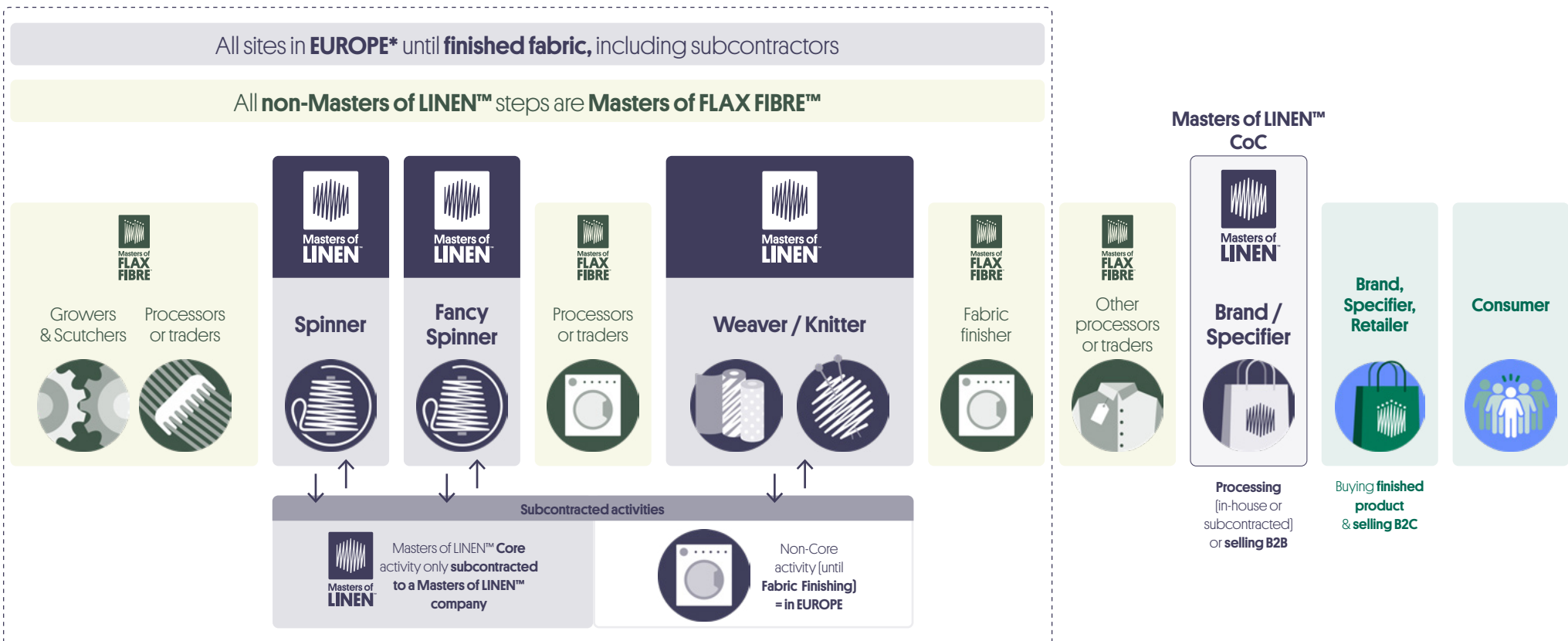


1. All spinners, fancy spinners, weavers or knitters must be Masters of LINEN™ certified
  2. All non-Masters of LINEN™ activities shall be Masters of LINEN™ CoC or Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ certified until the last B2B transaction.
  3. All sites are in Europe\* until finished fabric, including subcontractors.
- \*With one Masters of LINEN™ founder spinner site in EUROMED 1



The complete criteria list applicable to Masters of LINEN™ certified companies and its guidelines are presented in the **'Masters of LINEN™ Criteria Guideline'**

# Masters of LINEN™ certified Chain of Custody with subcontracting



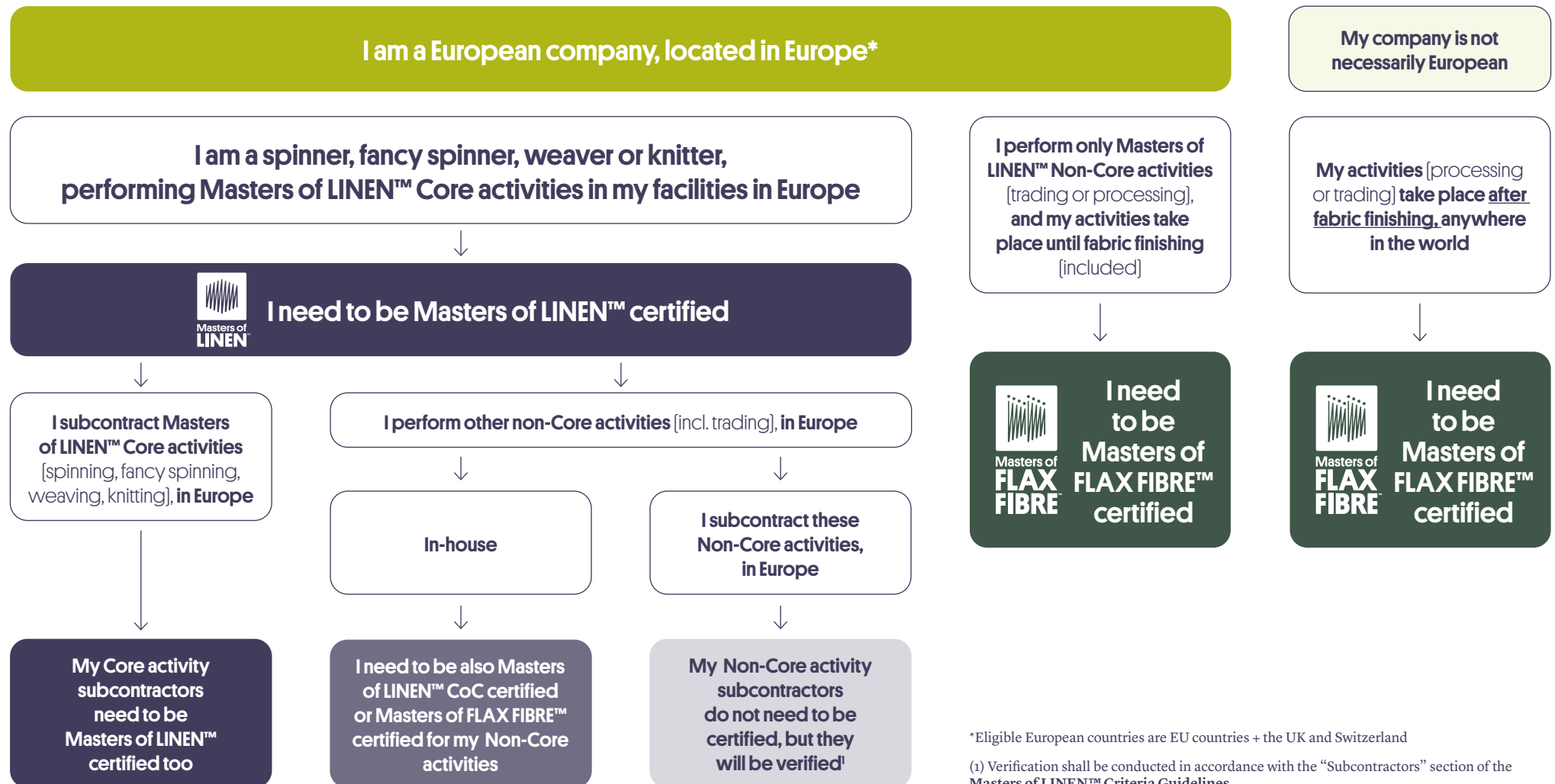
1. All spinners, fancy spinners, weavers or knitters must be Masters of LINEN™ certified
2. All non-Masters of LINEN™ steps must be Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ certified, or Masters of LINEN™ Chain of Custody certified at the last B2B transaction
3. All sites are in Europe\* until finished fabric, including subcontractors.
4. Masters of LINEN™ Core activities are spinning, fancy spinning, weaving and knitting (circular and flatbed). Masters of LINEN™ Core activities shall only be subcontracted by a Masters of LINEN™ company to a Masters of LINEN™ company.
5. Masters of LINEN™ Non-Core activities can be subcontracted by a Masters of LINEN™ certified company to a non-Masters of LINEN™ certified company. For example: yarn/ roving dyeing, yarn/ roving twisting & covering, winding, warping, fabric dyeing, printing, end product manufacturing and yarn, fabric and end-product finishing.

\*With one Masters of LINEN™ founder spinner site in EUROMED 1



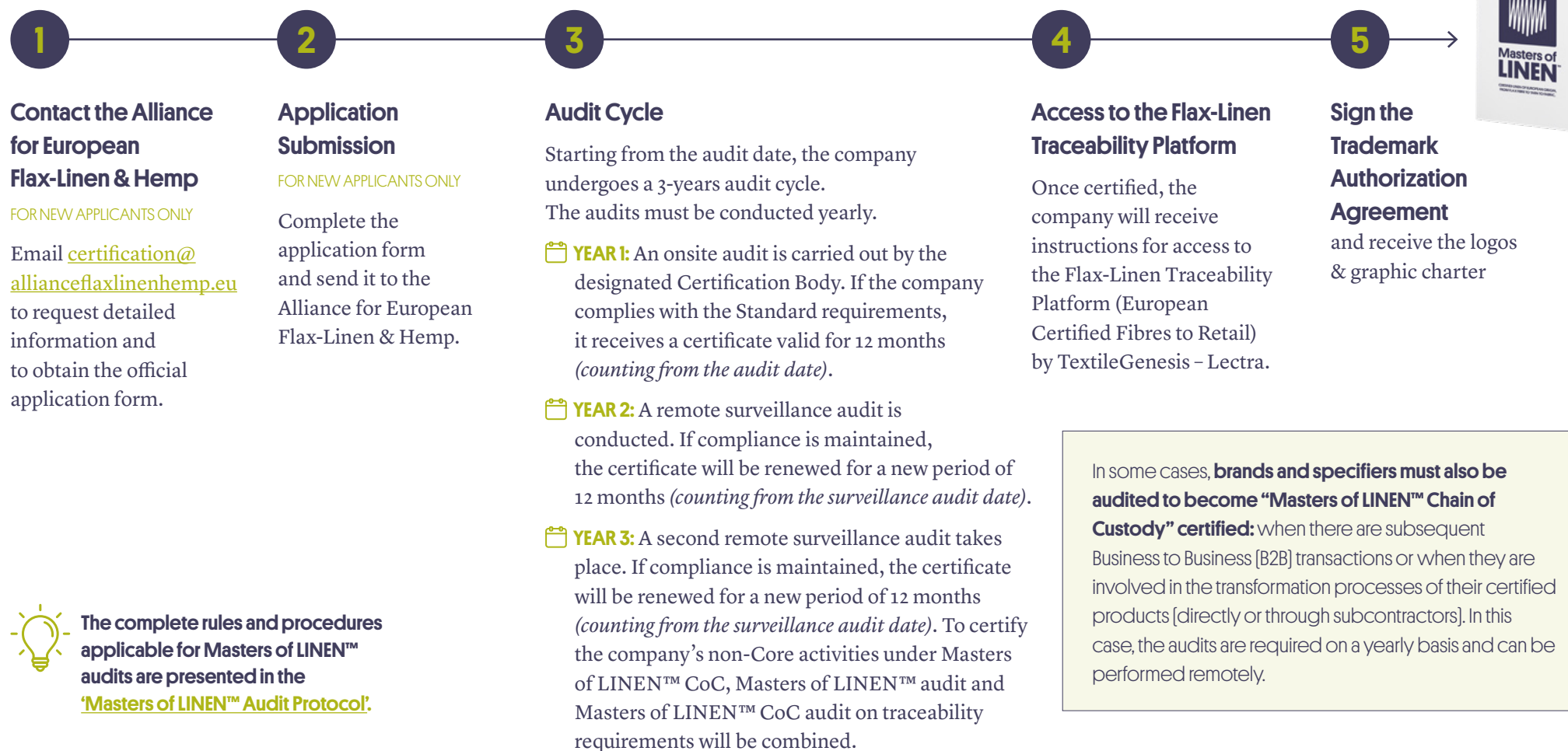
The complete criteria list applicable to Masters of LINEN™ certified companies and its guidelines are presented in the **'Masters of LINEN™ Criteria Guideline'**

# Certification options per type of activity within a Masters of LINEN™ product's supply chain



# Certification process

To obtain the Masters of LINEN™ certification, spinners, fancy spinners, weavers and knitters must undergo a 3-years certification cycle with yearly independent audits by a Certification Body. The certification process steps are detailed as follows.



## I'm a Brand/ Specifier/ Retailer

WORLDWIDE

Buying Linen products  
and performing **in-house**  
a **Masters of LINEN™ Core**  
**activity** [in EUROPE]

Brand/specifier needs  
to become Masters of  
LINEN™ certified as a  
Spinner, Fancy Spinner,  
Weaver or Knitter.



See **Masters**  
**of LINEN™**  
**Audit Protocol**

Buying Linen products  
and **processing**:  
• performing a **non-Core activity**  
[in-house or subcontracted]  
• **commissioning a Masters**  
**of LINEN™ Core activity** to a  
Masters of LINEN™ company

To ensure Chain of Custody,  
brand/specifier needs  
to become Masters of LINEN™ CoC certified



See **Masters**  
**of LINEN™**  
**Audit Protocol**

Buying Linen finished products  
and **selling** them to a retailer  
[or any other **B2B** selling  
transaction], without performing  
any kind of processing  
[in-house or subcontracted]

Buying Linen finished products  
and **selling** them directly  
**to the final customer**,  
without performing  
any kind of processing  
[in-house or subcontracted]

Brand/specifier does  
not need to become  
certified

See dedicated  
**process for brands' use**  
**of Trademark**

## How to label my Masters of LINEN™ products?

Only Masters of LINEN™ certified products can be labelled as such. All types of communication, labelling, logo use and claims around the Masters of LINEN™ certification must comply with the Masters of LINEN™ Graphic Charter and be validated by the Alliance for European Flax-Linen & Hemp before publication.

The use of the Masters of LINEN™ Trademark is granted free of charge by the Alliance for European Flax-Linen & Hemp under the following conditions.



### Use by certified companies

Once Masters of LINEN™ certified, companies may use the Masters of LINEN™ Trademark on their Masters of LINEN™ certified semi-finished or finished products by:

1

Signing and sending the **Trademark Authorization Agreement** for the Masters of LINEN™ trademark to the Alliance for European Flax-Linen & Hemp in order to receive access to the Masters of LINEN™ logos and Graphic Charter.

2

Complying with the **Masters of LINEN™ Graphic Charter**.

3

Submitting **all** their **Masters of LINEN™ communications projects** [labels, swatch headers, brochures, websites, email signatures, wording etc.] for review and approval by the Alliance for European Flax-Linen & Hemp before publication.



**Contact the Alliance** for full information on the certification and its Trademark conditions of use: [certification@allianceflaxlinenhemp.eu](mailto:certification@allianceflaxlinenhemp.eu)



## Use by brands and specifiers

Brands and specifiers may use the Masters of LINEN™ Trademark in their communications and on their Masters of LINEN™ certified products by following the steps below:



**Contact the Alliance** for full information on the certification and its Trademark conditions of use:  
[certification@allianceflaxlinenhemp.eu](mailto:certification@allianceflaxlinenhemp.eu)

## Acronym list

**B2B:** Business to Business

**CB:** Certification Body

**CELC:** Confédération Européenne du Lin et du Chanvre, the previous name of the Alliance for European Flax-Linen & Hemp

**CoC:** Chain of Custody

**CSR:** Corporate Social Responsibility

**POS:** Point of Sale

**NC:** Non-Conformity or Non-Compliance

## Glossary

### Certification Body

A third-party entity responsible for auditing and certifying companies against the Masters of LINEN™ standard.

### Certified product

A product that is conform to all applicable certification requirements and is eligible to be sold with a “Masters of LINEN™ Certified” claim on invoices.

### Contracting organization

A certified organization using a subcontractor for any activities under the scope of its Masters of LINEN™ certificate.

### Criteria

Requirements organizations shall comply with to become Masters of LINEN™ certified and maintain their certification. The audits are performed against these requirements.

### Europe/ European

For Masters of LINEN™ certification, the Europe of Linen includes the European Union countries, the United Kingdom and Switzerland.  
One Masters of LINEN™ founder spinner site in Tunisia is the only exception.

### Finished product

A fully manufactured textile item that is ready for sale or end use.

### Flax-Linen Traceability Platform (*European Certified Fibres to Retail*) by *TextileGenesis – Lectra*

A platform that ensures the traceability of Masters of LINEN™ and Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ certified products throughout the entire custody chain.

**Masters of FLAX FIBRE™** is a certification that ensures integrated crop management practices and highlights the unique expertise of European fibre producers. Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ provides European origin traceability from Flax fibre to finished product, for all end markets.

### Masters of LINEN™ Core activity

Masters of LINEN™ Core activities are spinning, fancy spinning, weaving and knitting (circular & flatbed). Within Masters of LINEN™, Core activities can only be subcontracted by Masters of LINEN™ certified companies to Masters of LINEN™ certified companies.

## Masters of LINEN™ Non-Core activity

All activities which are not Masters of LINEN™ Core activities (e.g. not spinning, weaving or knitting) but can be either subcontracted by the Masters of LINEN™ company to a non Masters of LINEN™ company, or can be performed in-house by the Masters of LINEN™ company, provided the Masters of LINEN™ company is either Masters of LINEN™ CoC certified or Masters of FLAX FIBRE™ certified for these activities.

*For example: yarn/roving dyeing, yarn/roving twisting & covering, winding, warping, fabric dyeing, printing, end product manufacturing and yarn, fabric and end-product finishing.*

## Multi-site organization

An organization with two or more sites. All organization sites can be located in the same country or in different countries as the organization. The organization may also be a production site. The products and processes/activities included in the scope of the certificate are performed by the network of sites, and not necessarily by each of them. All sites of the organization involved in any kind of activities related to certified materials/products shall enter the scope of the certificate.

## Non-conforming product

Material or product for which an organization is unable to demonstrate that it conforms to the applicable Masters of LINEN™ certification requirements.

## Organization

A legal entity which may apply for or holds a Masters of LINEN™ certification. An organization may have one or more sites, in which case it is a multi-site organization.

## Semi-finished product

A partially processed textile material that requires further manufacturing steps before becoming a finished product, such as dyed fabric or cut but unassembled pieces.

## Site

A unit of an organization situated at one physical location. A site can never include more than one legal entity. A subcontractor is not considered as a site.

## Subcontractor/Outsourcing

Using a subcontractor means outsourcing work on certified Flax-Linen material. Purchase and sale of certified products are managed by the contracting organization, not by the subcontractor. The material remains the property of the contracting organization. Invoicing between the subcontractor and the contracting organization is only related to the outsourced activities.

## Trading

Activity of buying and selling/exporting Flax-Linen products without any on-site processing activity.





**Alliance for European  
Flax-Linen & Hemp**

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**allianceflaxlinenhemp.eu**