



Pushing the boundaries of EPR policy for textiles: The Netherlands factsheet



EPR Status

EPR for textiles	Other EPR schemes
 <p>Entry into force: 1 July 2023</p>	 <p>Tyres, vehicles, batteries, electronic equipment, packaging, single-use plastics¹</p>

Separate collection & sorting of discarded textiles

Separate collection rate ²	Share of discarded textiles sorted after collection ³
47% ⁴	70% ⁵

Destinations of used textiles collected in the Netherlands

Reusable textiles ⁶	
Textiles considered reusable after sorting <i>Relative to the quantity of textiles collected</i>	80% ⁷
Reusable textiles sold on the national market <i>Relative to the quantity of textiles considered reusable after sorting</i>	26% ⁸
Reusable textiles exported internationally <i>Relative to the quantity of textiles considered reusable after sorting</i>	74% ⁹
Non-reusable ¹⁰ and waste ¹¹ textiles	
Textiles considered non-reusable or waste after sorting <i>Relative to the quantity of textiles sorted after collection</i>	20% ¹²
Recycling and downcycling <i>Relative to the quantity of textiles collected</i>	Textile-to-textile recycling: 1% ¹³
	Downcycling: 5% ¹⁴
Incineration <i>Relative to the quantity of textiles collected</i>	Incineration: <1% ¹⁵

EPR and the path to a circular textiles economy in the Netherlands

The Netherlands aims to establish a circular economy by 2050. As part of the Dutch circular economy strategy for textiles, EPR legislation for textiles was introduced in July 2023, with mandatory targets for producers in place as of 2025. Producers will need to report on those targets from 2026 onwards. The Dutch EPR scheme covers clothing, workwear, and household textiles such as tablecloths, bed linen, and towels. It does not apply to footwear, bags, blankets, or curtains.

Driving implementation

The development of the Netherlands' EPR for textiles scheme involved an assessment of EPR's track record in other sectors. In the eyes of the policymakers developing the legislation, ambitious targets are vital to stimulating effective change.



EPR needs to evolve over time

Marije Slump

Marije Slump, Senior Policy Officer, and Emile Bruls, Senior Advisor at the Dutch Ministry for Infrastructure and Water Management, explain the thinking that underpinned the target setting: “Our EPR targets have been set with the intention that they are both ambitious and achievable. They have been developed based on research and monitoring data and will increase over time. With our EPR for textiles, we have a first-of-its-kind EPR scheme in the Netherlands, namely one that sets clear targets on reuse. We believe that focusing on keeping products in use and lengthening the lifespan of products is an important element of an EPR scheme in order to lead system change”.

Targets ¹⁶ (percentage of textiles relative to the volume placed on the market in the preceding year)	2025	2030
Prepared for reuse or recycling	50%	75%
Prepared for reuse	20%	25%
Reused in the Netherlands	10%	15%
Fibre-to-fibre recycled (percentage relative to the volume that is being recycled)	25%	33%

Towards a circular economy

“Going forward, EPR needs to help ensure that waste is not exported to third countries,” says Bruls. “To do so, it needs to accelerate actions on fibre-to-fibre recycling, for example by joining efforts with other EPR schemes and working towards an industry-wide, global goal on fibre-to-fibre recycling.

“What we have learnt in the Netherlands and from the many stakeholders involved, is that while EPR is essential, EPR alone is not sufficient to achieve a circular economy,” reflects Slump. “Other policy measures such as legally binding ecodesign rules are needed as well. Still, EPR is an important part of the toolbox of policies that can help reduce the volumes of textile waste generated. There is room to further develop EPR policy in line with principles of the circular economy, by giving more attention to circular design, reuse, and repair. “Ultimately, EPR needs to help reduce the consumption of new products, especially those made from finite materials.



For EPR for textiles to be successful, we need global alignment

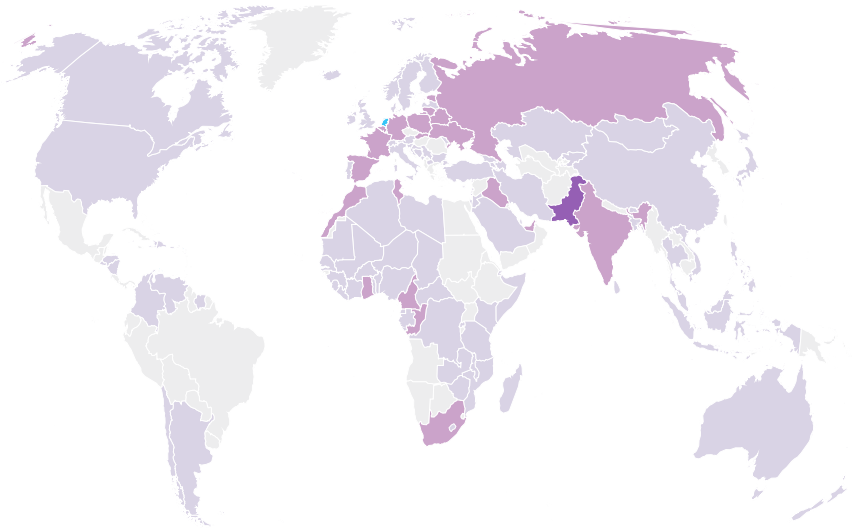
Emile Bruls



The role of the Netherlands in the used textiles trade

The Netherlands is a net exporter of used textiles, however, it also acts as a key sorting hub for used textiles from other European countries with imports of used textiles from other European countries making up approximately 98% of the Netherlands' annual used textile imports. The top importing countries to the Netherlands include Germany (58%), Belgium (17%) and France (8%). In 2021 the Netherlands was the 6th largest importer, accounting for 3% of global imports, and the 11th largest exporter accounting for 3% of global exports.¹⁷

Global distribution of exports from the Netherlands

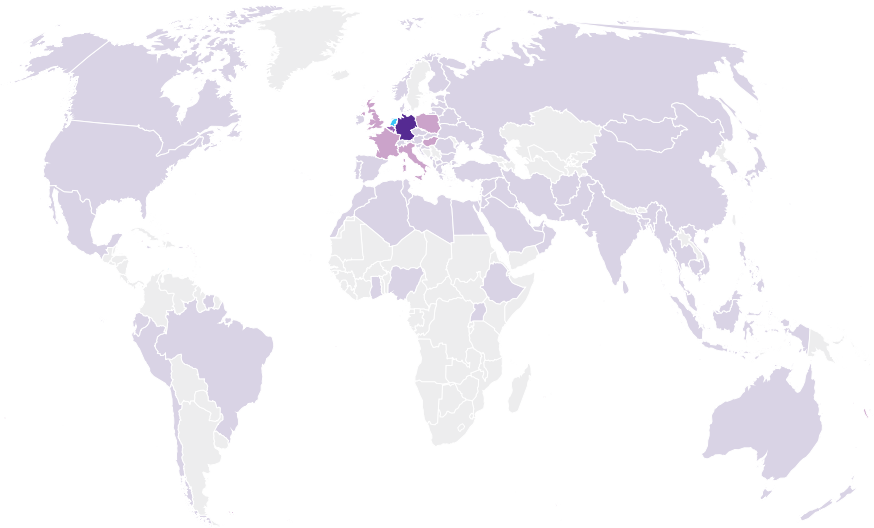


Annual used textile exports (2021): 160kT¹⁸



Quantity of used textiles (kT)

Global distribution of imports to the Netherlands



Annual used textile imports (2021): 150kT¹⁹



Quantity of used textiles (kT)

Acknowledgements

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Endnotes

- 1 [Circulaire Economie en Afval, *Uitgebreide producentenverantwoordelijkheid*](#) (accessed on 10th July 2024)
- 2 Ellen MacArthur Foundation's report "[Pushing the boundaries of EPR for textiles](#)" recommends that EPR schemes measure the absolute volumes of textiles collected separately and set targets on the relative increase of such volumes (as explained in Chapter 4 "EPR policy design: A common direction of travel"). However, in this table separate collection rates have been calculated as the percentage of collected textiles relative to the total amount of textiles discarded by households in the same year, based on available data sources.
- 3 In addition to sorting textile waste discarded in the Netherlands, Dutch sorters also imported 68kT of unsorted foreign textile waste in 2022. The remaining collected Dutch textiles were sent abroad for sorting. See Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstat, [Monitoringsrapportage beleidsprogramma circulair textiel 2022](#) (2024), p.16
- 4 Ellen MacArthur Foundation analysis based on data from Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstat, [Monitoringsrapportage beleidsprogramma circulair textiel 2022](#) (2024), p.15
- 5 Ellen MacArthur Foundation analysis based on data from Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstat, [Monitoringsrapportage beleidsprogramma circulair textiel 2022](#) (2024), p. 15-16. Volumes of textile waste either presorted or sorted in the Netherlands were used to calculate the share of discarded textiles sorted after collection.
- 6 Textiles that, after sorting, are considered suitable for reuse and can be sold to reuse markets, either nationally or internationally.
- 7 Ellen MacArthur Foundation analysis based on data from Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstaat, [Monitoringsrapportage beleidsprogramma circulair textiel 2022](#) (2024), p.15-17
- 8 *ibid.*, p.16-17
- 9 *ibid.*
- 10 Textiles that, after sorting, are considered unsuitable for reuse due to them being worn out, damaged, or stained, but can be sold as feedstock for downcycling into lower-value applications, such as insulation material, wiping cloths, or mattress stuffing. Feedstock for textile-to-textile recycling has not been included as this process is not yet available at scale and there is currently no cost and revenue data available for this fraction.
- 11 Textiles that, after sorting, are considered unsuitable for reuse, recycling, and downcycling. These textiles are disposed of through landfill or incineration
- 12 Ellen MacArthur Foundation analysis based on data from Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstat, [Monitoringsrapportage beleidsprogramma circulair textiel 2022](#) (2024), p.15-17
- 13 *ibid.*
- 14 *ibid.*
- 15 *ibid.*
- 16 Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstaat, [Decree on rules extended producer responsibility for textile products](#) (2023), p.2
- 17 Based on analysis of the UN Comtrade data (HS-6309). See Ellen MacArthur Foundation, [Pushing the boundaries of EPR policy for textiles](#) (2024), Appendix D
- 18 *ibid.*
- 19 *ibid.*



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