Collection and distribution of textiles in 2020

U-landshjelp Folk til Folk Norge

mepex

1 Collected textiles in 2020

UFF Norway reported that 9 474 tonnes of used textiles were collected in 2020. The total amount sold and sent to sorting centres in 2020 was 8 843 tonnes. The difference between collected and sold is explained by the storage balance. Overall, this is a small reduction compared to 2019.

Before export, 395 tonnes of waste were removed from the collected amounts. This waste consists of a mix of textile waste, non-textile waste, electric waste, and small items for reuse (e.g., toys). The waste is handled by a waste management company and not included in the results in this report.

Sorting centres that received less than 100 tonnes in the collection period (2020) were not required to report on these amounts. The table below shows that Mepex has received reporting forms covering 80.2 % of the textiles collected, which forms the basis for this report.

Table 1 - Overview of the flow of used textiles from UFF Norway, and reported amounts received at sorting centres - 2020

	Reported amounts sent from UFF Norway (tonnes)	Unreported amounts from sorting centres (tonnes)
< 100 tonnes (not required to report)	345	345 (3.9 %)
> 100 tonnes	8 483	1 401 (15.8 %)
Total	**8 827**	**1 745 (19.8 %)**

Reporting forms were received from 5 of 7 sorting centres (or suppliers of used textiles) used by UFF Norway in 2020. The sorting centres receiving textiles from UFF Norway are listed in the table below.

Table 2 - Sorting centres receiving >100 tonnes textiles from UFF Norway in 2020

Sorting centre	Country	Short name used in figures	Reported?
Bultex Bulgaria	Bulgaria	Bultex	Yes
One World Clothes Trade Bulgaria	Bulgaria	OWCT Bulgaria	Yes
Lithuania LT	Lithuania	HPP Lithuania	Yes
HPP Slovakia s.r.o.	Slovakia	HPP Slovakia	Yes
Textile House Slovakia	Slovakia	TH Slovakia	Yes
Texx Team Bulgaria	Bulgaria	TexxTeam	No
Syrowka	Poland	Syrowka	No

The reports received from the sorting centres are mostly satisfactory, however there are uncertainties in a few areas. These are mostly regarding:

1. The amount of textile waste that arises during sorting,
2. Which treatment methods the waste is sent to, and
3. The distribution between clothes sold for re-use, and clothes for material recycling by some customers.

The uncertainties that have not been revealed during the reporting period represent very marginal amounts.

Figure 1 shows where collected textiles by UFF Norway are sent for sorting. The figure shows that the textiles from Norway are primarily sent to sorting centres in Bulgaria and Lithuania. As seen in the figure, 43% of the textiles are sorted by Bultex. The overall results are therefore to a large extent influenced by where Bultex send their sorted textiles.

Figure 2 shows the share of Norwegian textiles sorted at the sorting centres that has reported for 2020. The figure shows that Norwegian textiles constitute most of the incoming textiles at Bultex, hence the results from this sorting centre will give a good representation of the qualities of textiles collected in Norway.

At the remaining sorting centres, textiles collected by UFF Norway only represent a small share of the total amount of incoming textiles. The results from these sorting centres will therefore largely represent textiles collected in other countries and will to a lesser extent represent the true qualities of the textiles collected in Norway.
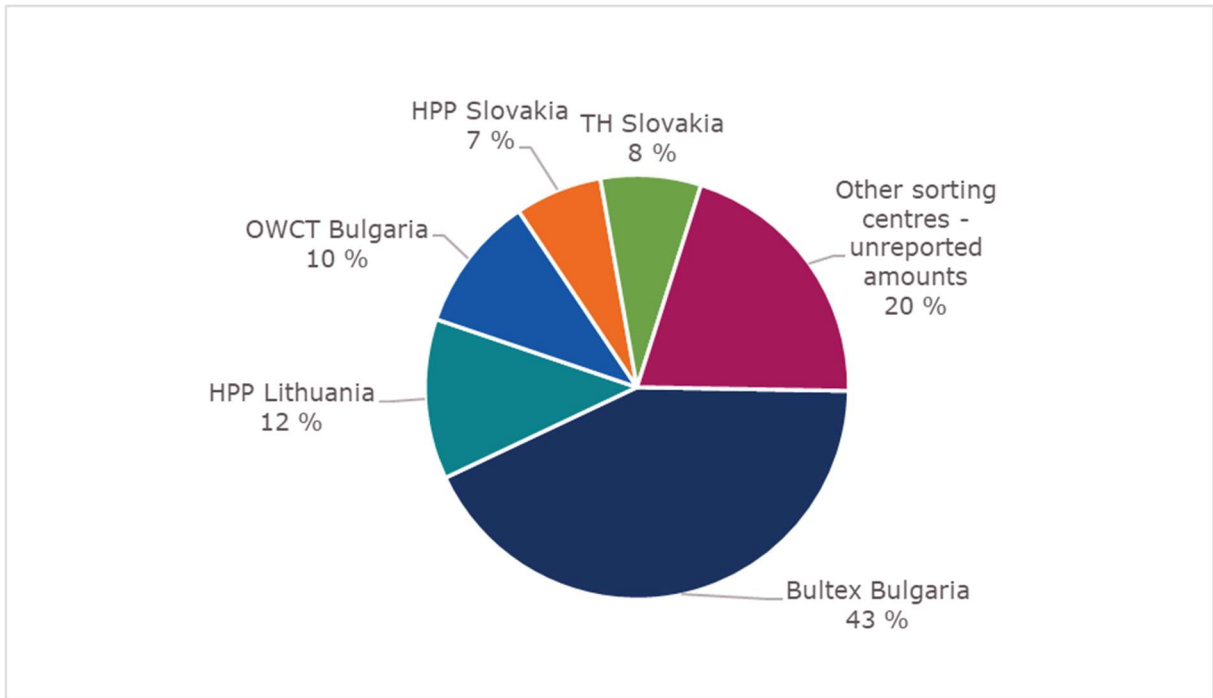
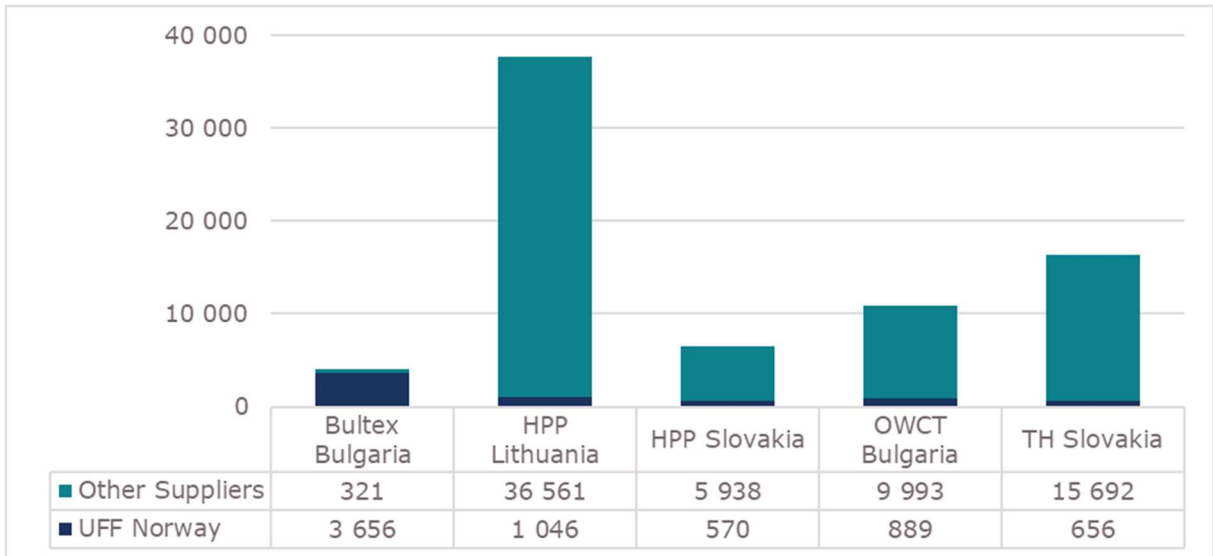*Figure 1 – Distribution of textiles sent to sorting centres – 2020*

	Bultex Bulgaria	HPP Lithuania	HPP Slovakia	OWCT Bulgaria	TH Slovakia
■ Other Suppliers	321	36 561	5 938	9 993	15 692
■ UFF Norway	3 656	1 046	570	889	656

Figure 2 - Share of textiles reported received from UFF Norway at sorting centres – 2020[1].

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[1] The amounts received could differ from the amounts sent from UFF Norway, depending on if the sorting centre reports on received or invoiced amounts.

2 Results from the collection of textiles by UFF Norway

The sorting centres do not have specific information on the sales/distribution of textiles collected by UFF Norway as the textiles are mixed with textiles collected by other collection organisations. This is done to achieve a desired quality of the sorted textiles as the quality of collected textiles varies between countries.

Although we know it is not the case, we assume the distribution patterns are the same for all collected textiles. The results are calculated based on a weighted average of the amount of textiles received from UFF Norway at each sorting centre.

In the reporting for 2020, the reporting form was updated with the aim of improving the understanding of the composition of the received textiles and how different qualities are handled. To this end, the reporting included more details than previous years.

The category re-wear, which had two subcategories was renamed to reuse, which is divided into four categories: clothes, shoes, accessories (e.g., belts and hats) and other textiles (e.g., bed linen, towels and similar). The sorting centres were also asked to provide information on the qualities sold to different regions.

Figure 3 shows the collective distribution of textiles, textile waste and other waste from the sorting centres that receive used textiles from UFF Norway. The figure shows that textiles collected by UFF Norway are mainly sold for reuse or material recycling. Roughly 89% of the reuse segment consists of clothing.

A comparison between the results from 2017-2020 is shown in Figure 4. The figure shows that the amount of textiles categorized as going to reuse is lower in 2020 compared to 2019, while the share of material recycling is increased by a similar amount. The distribution of textiles remains stable with a slight increase in the amount of waste removed from the collected amounts.

It is expected that the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has affected the markets for second-hand textiles. This is reflected in the total share of textiles going to reuse at the different sorting centres compared to the previous year. The more detailed reporting and stricter definitions applied in this year's reporting might also have clarified the distinction between reuse and material recycling.

The sorting centres were given the option of providing information on the type of material recycling. Limited feedback was received, and the responses indicated that the information on the type of material recycling used is limited. It is anticipated that information quality would benefit from better definitions.

Figure 3 shows that approximately 8 % of the material received at the sorting centres is waste that is not suitable for reuse or material recycling. This waste is sent to incineration with energy recovery (ca. 54 %), or landfill (ca. 46 %)[2].
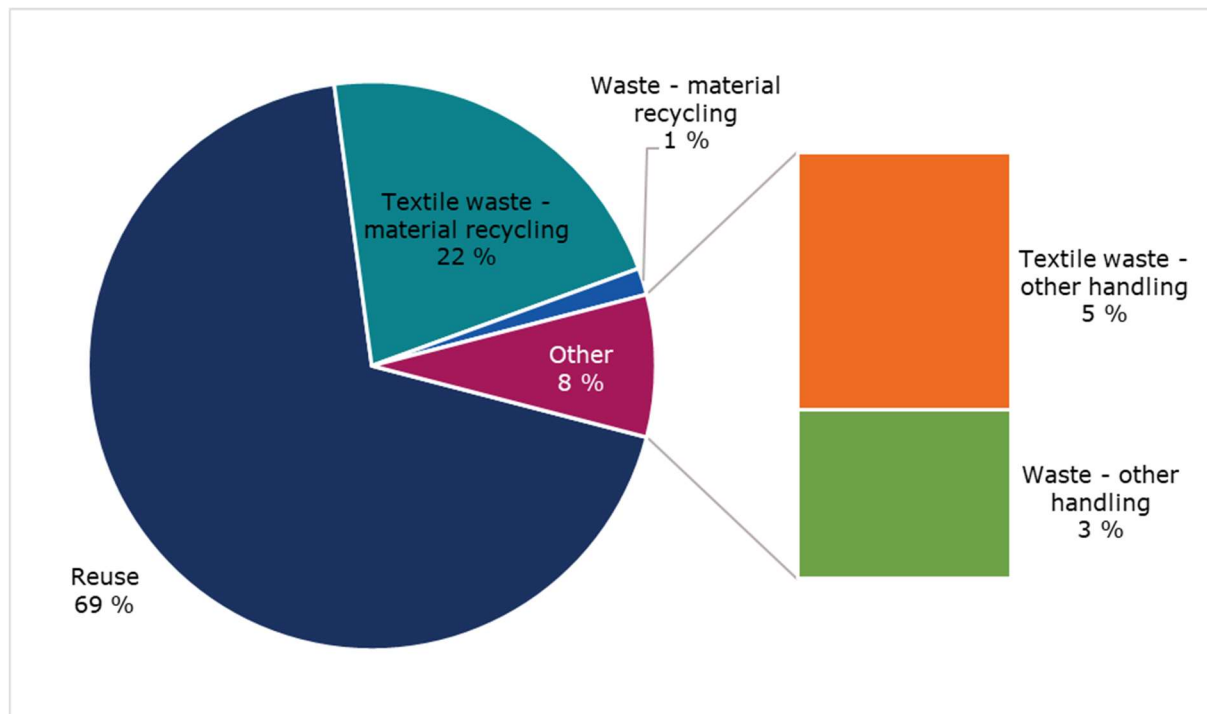

Figure 3 - Distribution of collected textiles and waste – 2020

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[2] The amount of waste removed from the collected items in Norway before transport to the sorting centres is excluded from the results. This waste is a mix of textile waste and non-textile items and is excluded because the shares are unknown.
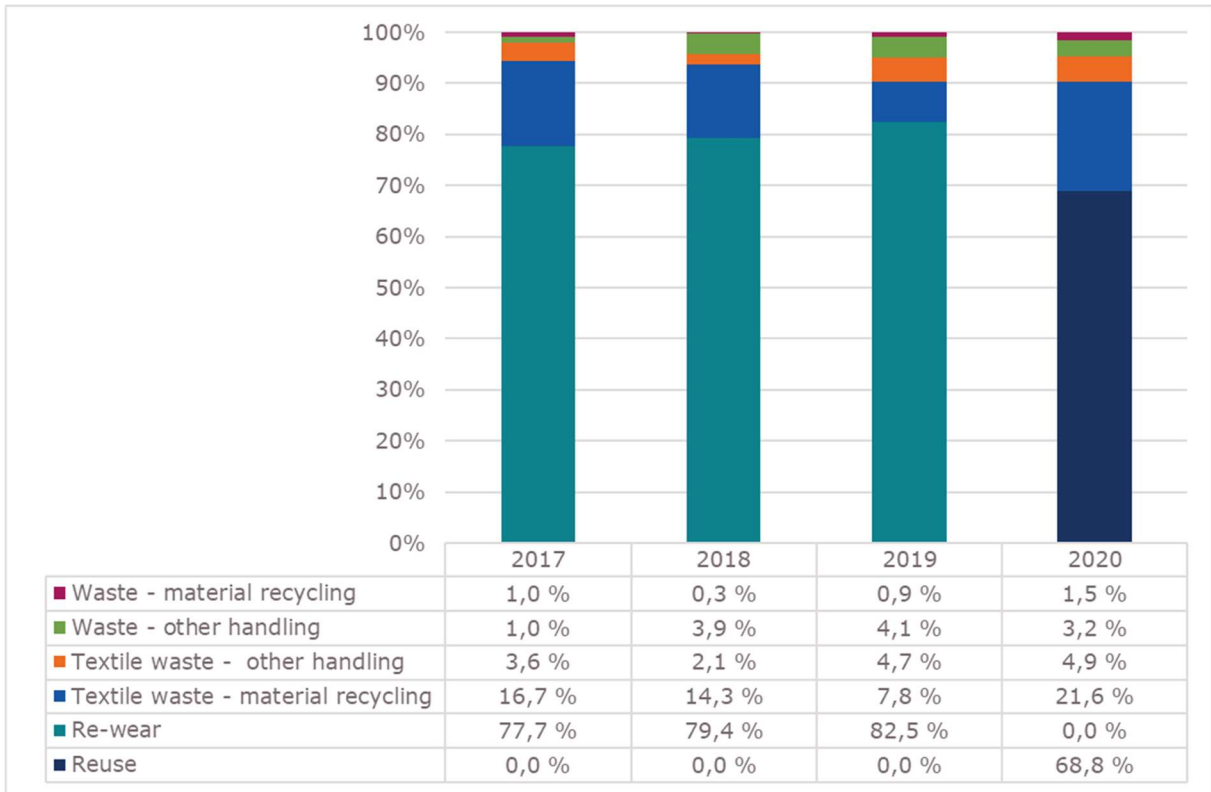
	2017	2018	2019	2020
■ Waste - material recycling	1,0 %	0,3 %	0,9 %	1,5 %
■ Waste - other handling	1,0 %	3,9 %	4,1 %	3,2 %
■ Textile waste - other handling	3,6 %	2,1 %	4,7 %	4,9 %
■ Textile waste - material recycling	16,7 %	14,3 %	7,8 %	21,6 %
■ Re-wear	77,7 %	79,4 %	82,5 %	0,0 %
■ Reuse	0,0 %	0,0 %	0,0 %	68,8 %

Figure 4 – Comparison between the composition of collected textiles from 2017-2020

The distribution of sorted textiles and waste (originally collected by UFF Norway) is displayed in the figure below. The distribution between the different regions is quite similar to the previous year, with Europe (including the Nordic region) being the region that receives the largest amount of the textiles, followed by Africa. The region *Other* covers both the Americas, Oceania and unknown destinations.

The figure shows that there are differences between the regions in terms of what qualities are sent where. The best qualities (Trend, Shop A, Shop B) ends up in Europe, along with the waste (both textile and other), while items for recycling constitutes a large part of the amounts sent to Asia.

The chart includes the following data table:

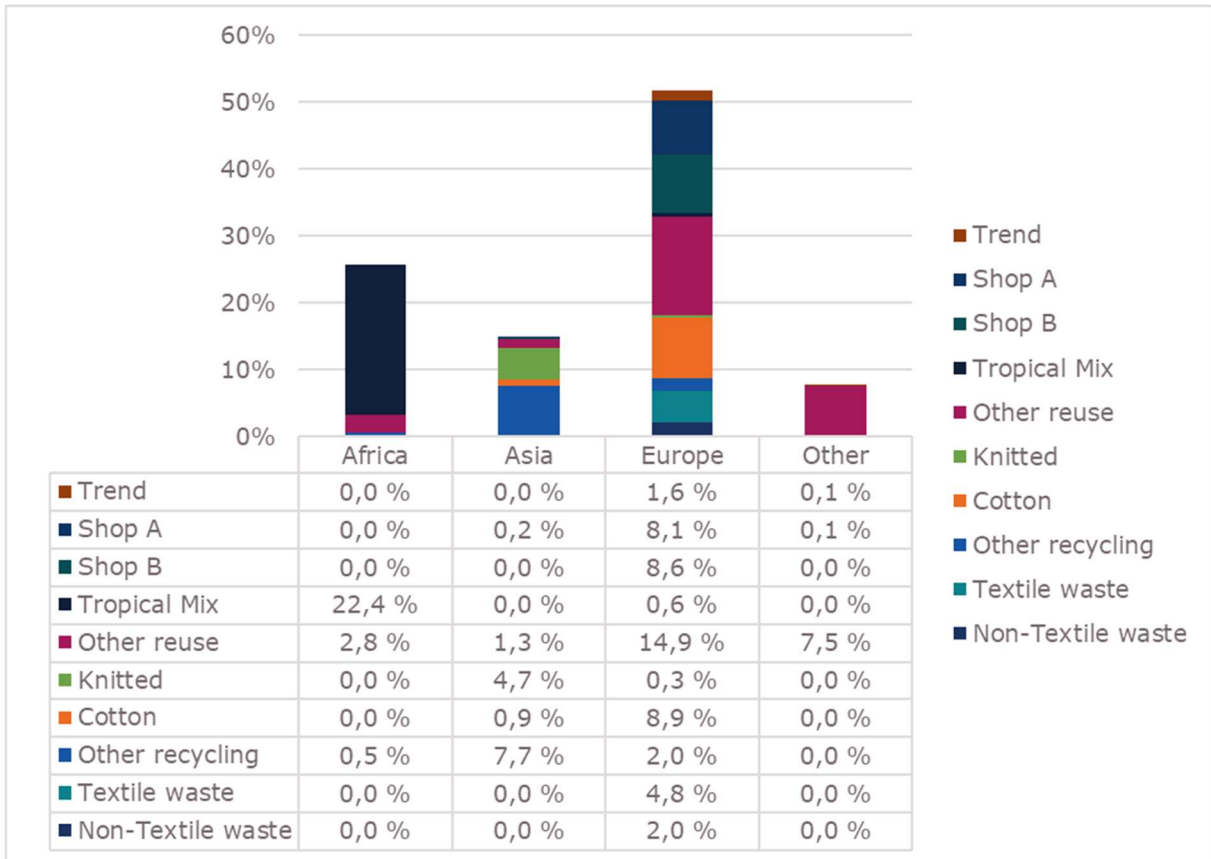|	Africa	Asia	Europe	Other
■ Trend	0,0 %	0,0 %	1,6 %	0,1 %
■ Shop A	0,0 %	0,2 %	8,1 %	0,1 %
■ Shop B	0,0 %	0,0 %	8,6 %	0,0 %
■ Tropical Mix	22,4 %	0,0 %	0,6 %	0,0 %
■ Other reuse	2,8 %	1,3 %	14,9 %	7,5 %
■ Knitted	0,0 %	4,7 %	0,3 %	0,0 %
■ Cotton	0,0 %	0,9 %	8,9 %	0,0 %
■ Other recycling	0,5 %	7,7 %	2,0 %	0,0 %
■ Textile waste	0,0 %	0,0 %	4,8 %	0,0 %
■ Non-Textile waste	0,0 %	0,0 %	2,0 %	0,0 %

Figure 5 - Recipient continents of collected textiles and waste – 2020