

UFF NORWAY

Textile Transparency Report



Collection and distribution of textiles 2022



1 About the report

The Humana People to People network are working for more transparency and traceability in the business sector for used textiles.

Traceability in the value chain of used textiles is a crucial aspect of promoting sustainability, resource efficiency, quality assurance, ethical practices, and consumer empowerment within the textile industry.

In line with the Humana People to People Code of Conduct, all sorting centres used by the Humana People to People organisations must report the delivery and shipment of used textiles.

The purpose of this report is to investigate and present where the textiles from UFF Norway ends up, and what purpose they serve.

2 Methodology

2.1 Data collection

This report is based on data collected from Humana organisations in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, and Sweden and from sorting centres receiving textiles from these collection organisations.

Collection organisations

Data from the collection organisations were collected through a survey in the form of a spreadsheet. The collection organisations were asked to provide quantitative information on the amounts of textiles they collected and sold in 2022, as well as qualitative data on their collection system and how they register data on the textiles they handle.

Sorting centres

The list of sorting centres to be contacted was established based on the reports from the collection organisations. Data from the sorting centres were collected through a survey form.

Two forms were used: one for sorting centres receiving more than 1000 tonnes from all the participating Humana collection organisations, and one simplified form for sorting centres receiving between 100 and 1000 tonnes.

The sorting centres were asked to provide data on all textiles that are received from and sorted at their location, as required of them according to the Humana People to People Code of Conduct.

Comparison with previous results

The collected data were registered in the database which Mepex has compiled as part of the work with previous years' reports. In the registration process, the data were checked for consistency and quality, and where necessary, the sorting centres were asked to clarify. All communication with the sorting centres has been done in writing.

2.2 Assumptions and calculations

Assumption on quality and averages

The sorting centres do not have specific information on the fate of textiles collected by any single collection organisation as the textiles are mixed with textiles from other collection organisations in the sorting process.

For each sorting centre, a distribution of uses of the textiles (reuse, recycling, and waste disposal) is established.

We assume that for each sorting centre, the quality of the textiles from the Humana organisation is at least equal to the average quality of the total amount of textiles received at the sorting centre.

The overall distribution of uses for each collection organisation is then calculated as a

weighted average based on the amounts of textiles sold to each sorting centre.

Calculations

The calculations are made based on the reports from the sorting centres. Percentages are calculated in relation to the amount of textiles arriving at the sorting centres. This means that waste removed by the collector prior to export is not included in the calculation.

Textiles accounted for is calculated as the share of textiles sold from the collection organisation to sorting centres which have reported, in relation to the total amount of textiles sold by that collection organisation.

2.3 Sources of uncertainty

Shipments in transit

There are some examples of minor differences between the amounts of textiles reported as received by the sorting centres and the amounts sent by the collection organisation. This difference is in most cases attributed to the transit of shipments, i.e., shipments sent late in the year and received at the sorting centres early in the next year. We have no reason to think that these differences influence the overall results, as the quality of the original is assumed to be quite stable.

Interpretation of the survey form

The sorting centres are asked to report on the purposes that the sorted textiles are used for, hereunder reuse of clothes, shoes, textiles and accessories. In 2022, the option “sold for further sorting” was added, to reduce the possibility for counting textiles more than once.

We are aware that the definitions of reuse and recycling given in the reporting form are interpreted in slightly different ways, which might

affect the balance between reuse and material recycling.

Furthermore, the sorting centres use different labelling systems for their qualities, which means there is an interpretation done to match the survey form.

In some cases, typically for low price mixed qualities sold to Asia, the sorting centres are not sure whether the sold textiles are reused or being recycled. As a principle, textiles are accounted for as gone to material recycling when it is unclear whether the textiles have gone to reuse or recycling.

3 Textile collection

UFF Norway collects used textiles from collection points and recycle stations across all of Norway.

The textiles are picked up by drivers in trucks that bring the textiles to a central location for repacking. The drivers remove or separate obvious waste (both textile and non-textile) from the textiles at the collection point and deliver the waste to local recycling stations.

The textiles are repacked in big bags. Shipping containers are used for transporting textile to all sorting centers cooperating with UFF Norway

Some textiles are weighed in when they are received at the sorting centre, while weight of textiles exported in containers are calculated from container gross masses.

The reported amounts of textiles collected by UFF Norway and sold to sorting centres in 2022 is shown in Table 1. The difference between collected and sold is explained by the stock balance.

Table 1: Reported amounts of used textiles collected and sold in 2022

	Amount (tonnes)	Comment
Collected textiles 2022	7 456	
Accumulated in warehouse storage	41	
Total sales 2022	7 580	
Waste removed prior to sorting	62	Waste removed prior to export of textiles. Not included in further calculations.

4 Textile sorting

In 2022, UFF Norway sold original clothes from collection to nine different clients, as shown in Table 2. Except for Syltex, all the clients are sorting centres.

Eight of the clients were asked to report based on the amounts received. Syltex received a simplified reporting form.

All the seven sorting centres have replied, which means that 95 % of the total textiles collected by UFF Norway have been accounted for in 2022.

The difference between reported sold from collection organization and reported received from sorting centres are attributed to shipments in transit.

Table 2: Overview of textiles received per sorting centre in 2022

Sorting centre	Short name	Sent from collection organisation (tonnes)	Received at sorting centre (tonnes)
Bultex Ltd.	Bultex Bulgaria	2 772	2 888
Textile House	TH Slovakia	1 215	1 193
Humana LT	HPP Lithuania	1 161	1 187
Texx Team EAD	Texx Team Bulgaria	991	991
One World Clothes Bulgaria	HPP Bulgaria	724	675
Humana People to People Slovakia	HPP Slovakia	344	345
Syltex	Syltex	290	Not reported
Texland	Texland	65	Not asked to report
Humana Kleidersammlung	HPP Germany	17	17
Total		7 580	7 296

Figure 1 illustrates the proportion of the collected textiles sent to the different sorting centres, while Figure 2 shows the share of textiles from UFF Norway compared to the overall amounts of textiles received at the sorting centres.

Overall, the amount of collected textiles is lower than the previous year. UFF Norge has a long-standing customer relationship with the sorting centres used, but the number that has received textiles from UFF Norge has been reduced from 2021 to 2022. All the sorting centres used are located in Europe. As can be seen from the

figure, more than 60 % of the textiles are sorted in Bulgaria. The remainder is sorted in Lithuania and Slovakia, while a few tons were sorted in Germany.

A large share of the textiles sorted at Bultex Bulgaria are received from UFF Norway. We expect the results from this sorting centre to give a more accurate representation of the quality of the textiles collected by UFF Norway than the other sorting centres, where textiles from Norway represent only a small fraction of the sorted textiles.

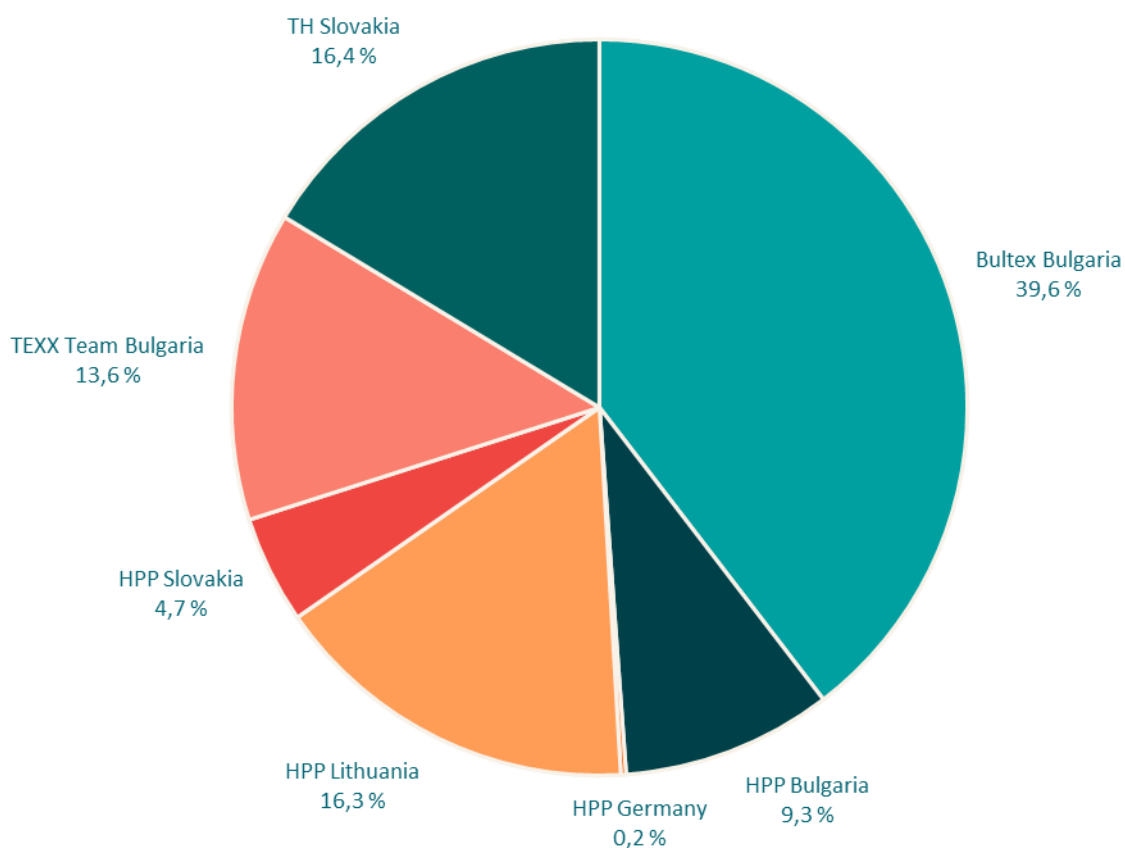


Figure 1: Sorting centres buying textiles from UFF Norway in 2022

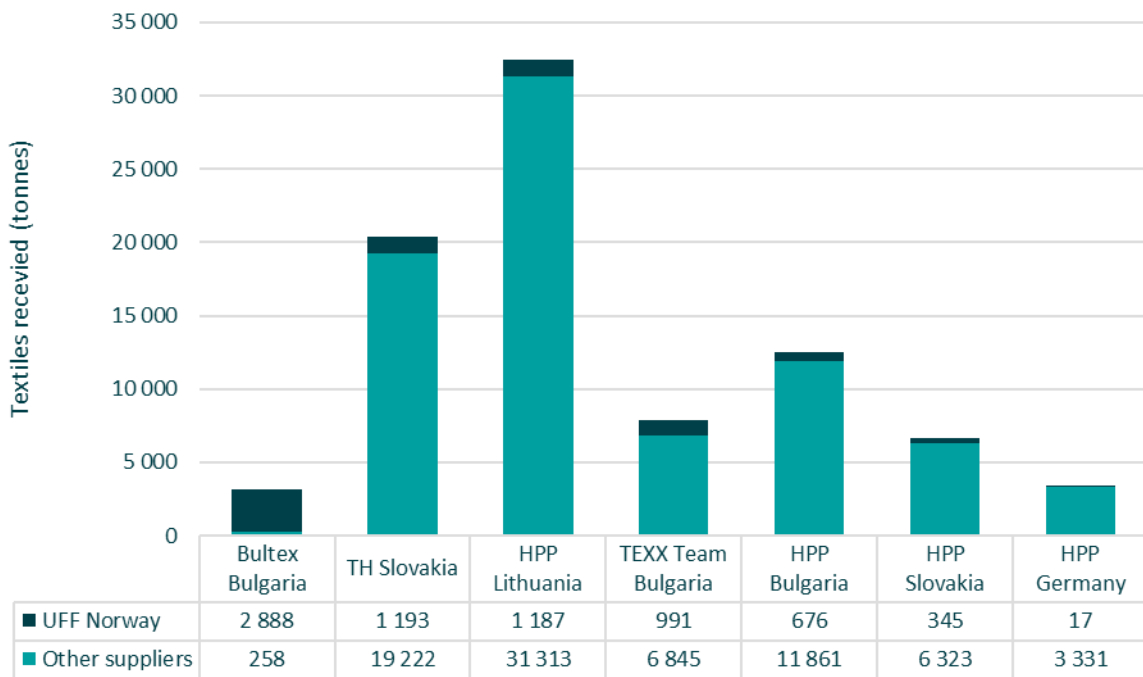


Figure 2: Share of textiles received from UFF Norway at sorting centres in 2022.

5 Utilisation of the collected textiles

Figure 3 shows how the textiles originally collected by UFF Norway are distributed between reuse, material recycling and waste treatment (incineration and landfill). Figure 4 compares the results from 2022 with the four previous years.

In 2020, adjustments were done to the reporting method, which may have clarified the distinction between the terms ‘reuse’ and ‘material recycling’, thereby causing an apparent reduction in reuse share. The difference between 2020 and previous years is also likely to be connected to the COVID-19 pandemic, which had a significant impact on the market for second hand textiles.

As can be seen from Figure 4, the share of textiles sold for reuse seems to increase in the period 2021-2022. The change might indicate changes in the quality of textiles collected in

Norway, but it might also be caused by factors not directly connected with the Norwegian textiles.

As textiles from UFF Norway only make up a small share of the sorted textiles at all sorting centres except Bultex, it is likely that other factors are also affecting the share of textiles going to reuse.

An important factor is the selection of sorting centres. While UFF Norway has long term collaborations with several sorting centres, the set of sorting centres receiving textiles from UFF Norway has changed from year to year.

This is important to keep in mind, as there are large differences in the share of reuse between the various sorting centres. The reason behind the differences is that sorting centres differ in terms of sorting strategy, as well as the set of customers and clients.

The sorting centres will always produce as much of the reusable categories as possible as the reuse qualities are worth significantly more than textiles for material recycling. Each sorting centre aim to optimise their sorting to maximise sales, as waste handling is an expense.

The sorting centres have different approaches to achieve this goal. The result of this is that the number of sorting categories varies amongst sorting centres, as well as the content of categories with the same name.

The result also depends on the set of clients, which determine the average quality of the textiles sorted. Different customers may have

varying requirements for which qualities they consider suitable for reuse. What is e.g., regarded 'shop quality' is different in the Nordics versus Eastern European countries, and so the content of the category might depend on who is sorting and who is buying.

In total, this means that the development seen from year to year might be an indicator of changing quality of the used textiles, but it might also be the result of a different selection of sorting centres, or textiles received from other sources.

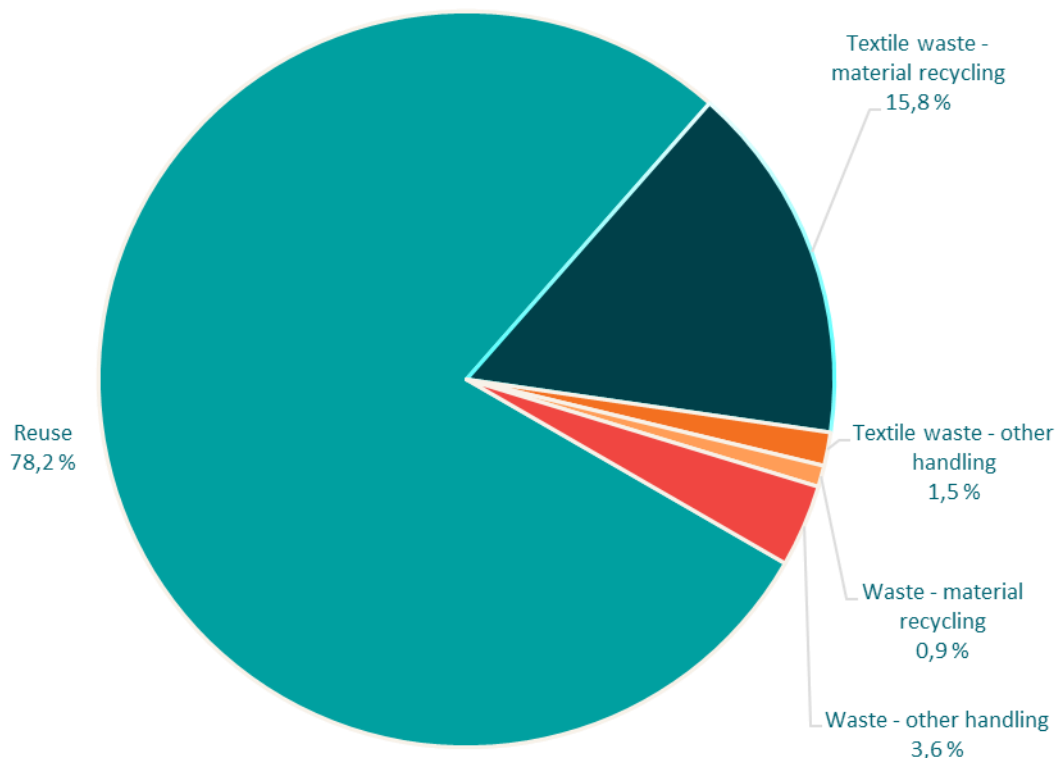


Figure 3: Distribution of purposes for textiles originally collected by UFF Norway in 2022

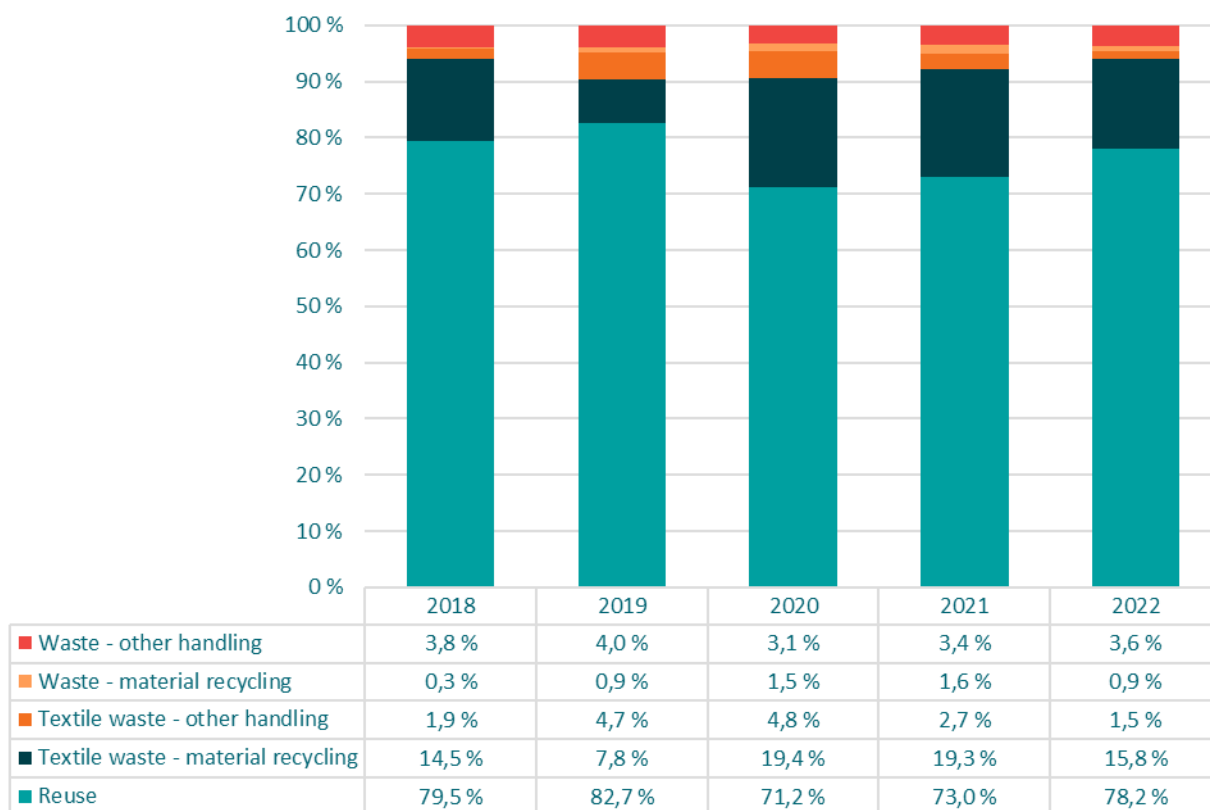


Figure 4: Utilisation of used textiles originally collected by UFF Norway in the period 2018- 2022.

6 Geographical distribution

The geographical distribution of sorted textiles and waste originally collected by UFF Norway is displayed in Figure 5.

The Asia region includes Turkey and United Arab Emirates. The Nordic region is shown separately, and consists of Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden.

Compared to 2021, the geographical distribution is quite similar, with the largest shift being a larger share of textiles for reuse going to Asia. share of textiles sold to Africa and Asia has increased significantly at the expense of textiles going to Europe. A very small textiles were exported to the Americas.

The textiles sold to Africa are almost entirely for the purpose of reuse, besides a very small amount of 8,2 tons (0,1 %) sold for material recycling. Compared to 2021, a slightly larger share of the textiles sold to Europe goes to material recycling. The textiles sold to the Nordic region consist of equal parts of reuse and recycling qualities.

The figure also shows that all waste that occurs due to sorting is treated locally in Europe.

In line with the discussion in the previous chapter, the change from year to year might be more strongly linked to the selection of sorting centres, which have different sets of customers for sorted textiles.

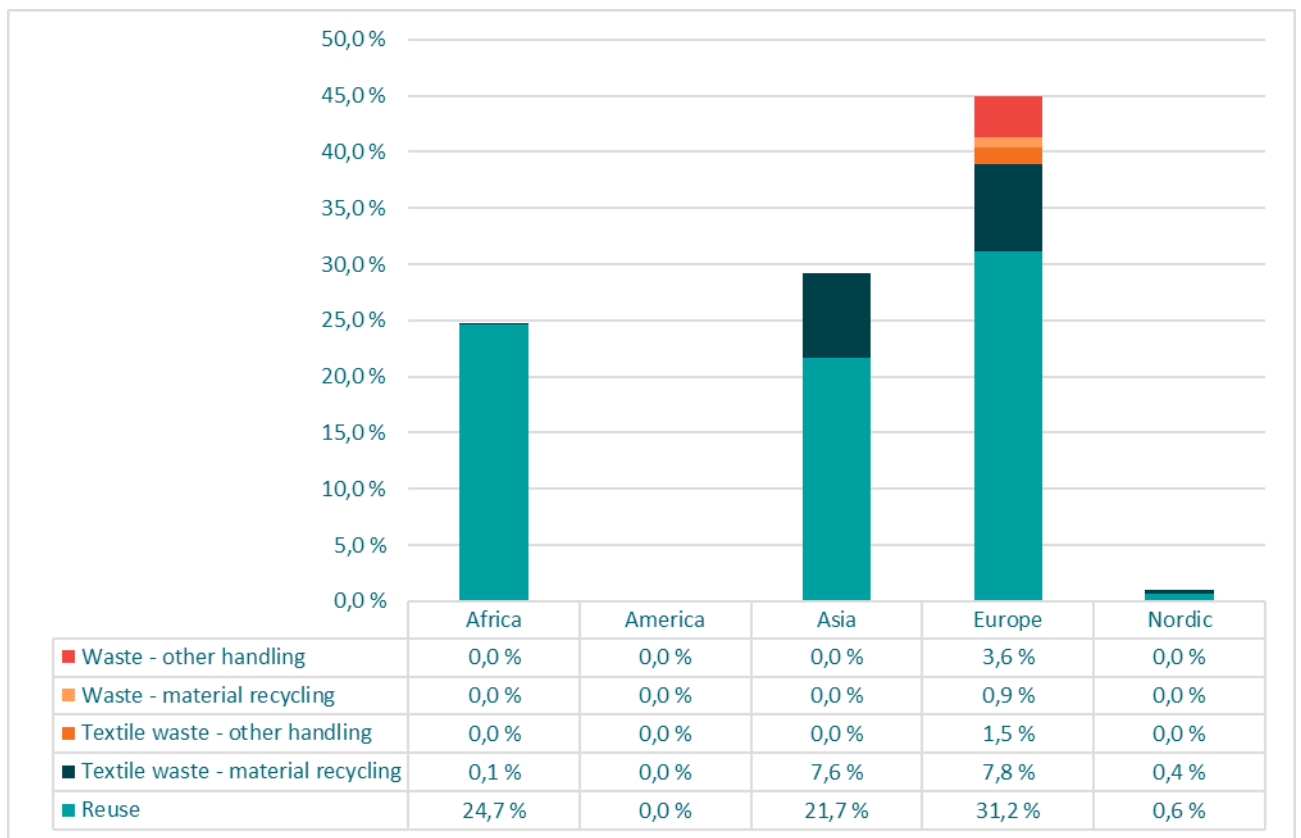


Figure 5: Recipient continents for used textiles originally collected by UFF Norway in 2022