



10 April 2024

(24-3027)

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Original: English/anglais/inglés

**UNOFFICIAL ROOM DOCUMENT<sup>1</sup>**

**DIALOGUE ON PLASTIC POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENTALLY  
SUSTAINABLE PLASTICS TRADE**

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (EEA) PRESENTATION ON  
EU EXPORTS OF USED TEXTILES AND PLASTICS WASTE

*Pre-Plenary Meeting – 12 April 2024*

**DOCUMENT DE SÉANCE NON OFFICIEL<sup>1</sup>**

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\* In original language only/En langue originale seulement/En el idioma original solamente.

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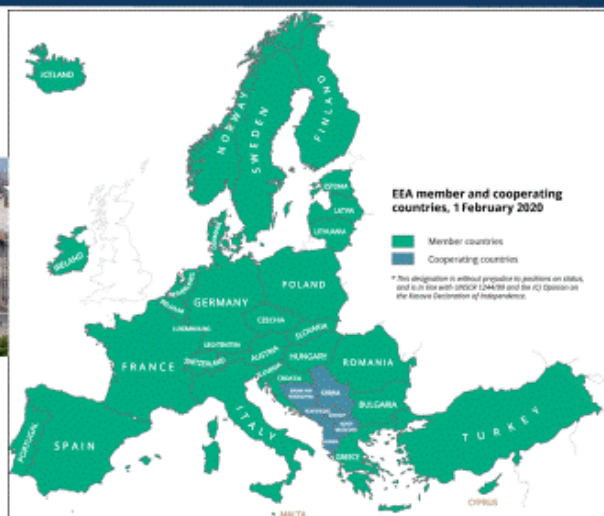


## The European Environment Agency

EU mandate to monitor Europe's environment and climate



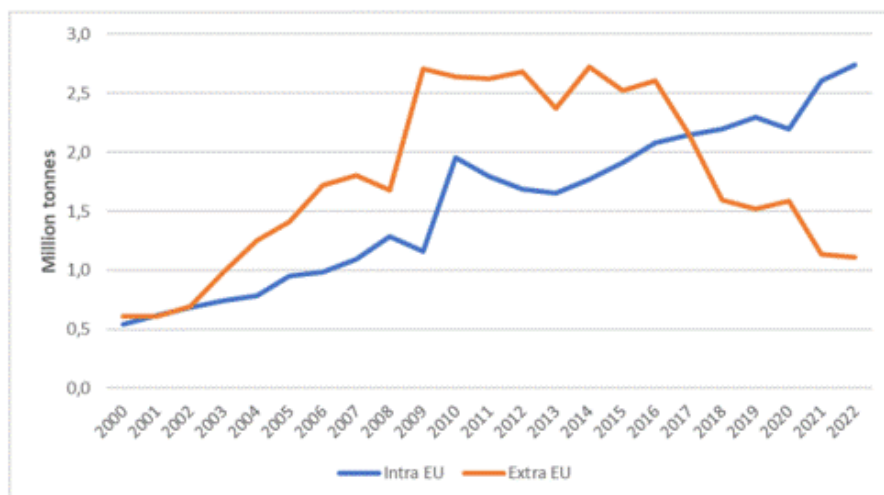
I am responsible for our work with plastic and textiles in a circular economy



## Points

- 
- 1 **EU exports of plastic waste**
  - 2 EU exports of used textiles
  - 3 Considerations

## Volume of extra- and intra-EU exports of plastic waste, EU, 2000–2022



Source: [ETC CE Report 2024/2 Drivers of EU plastic waste exports — Eionet Portal \(europa.eu\)](#)

## Drivers of EU export of plastic waste

Type of driver or barrier to export of plastic waste	Impact on exports (green- fewer exports; yellow – neutral, or hard to assess; red – more exports)	Comments
1) Trade bans and restrictions by third countries		Regulation and bans affecting export to non-OECD countries have been shown to have a significant impact on legal trade.
2) Export procedures		Enforcement of export procedures is difficult due to the complex chain of actors, and it is often hard to identify the waste, which may drive incorrect or illegal trade.
3) Economic drivers (both push and pull factors)		There are economic reasons to sometimes export plastic waste for recycling. The combination of several push and pull factors may drive an increase or a decrease in exports.
4) Infrastructure challenges		There is currently a great imbalance in the EU between the generation of plastic waste and management infrastructures, this gap may lead to an increase in exports.
5) Indirect consequences of the EU circular economy policy framework		The circular economy framework is among the factors supporting the functioning of secondary raw materials markets. A better intra-EU market may reduce extra-EU trade, but more circular waste management may increase the availability of materials to be exported.

Source: Development based on tables in (ETC/CE, 2023; ETC/WMGE, 2019)

## Points



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- 2 **EU exports of used textiles**
- 3 Considerations



## The majority of textiles are made of plastic

### Most textiles are synthetic...

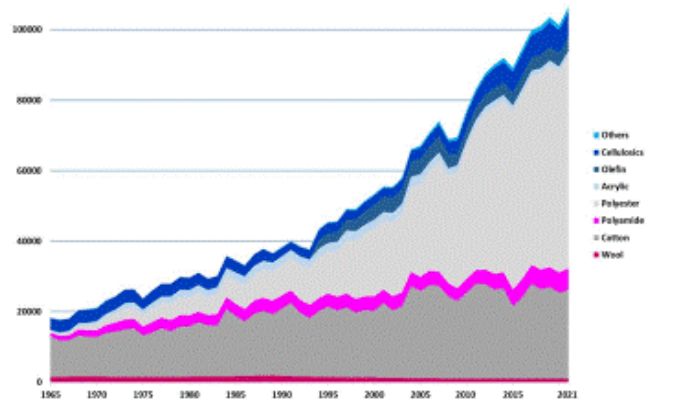


**Clothes:**  
60% synthetic  
(mostly polyester / PET)



**Household textiles:**  
70% synthetic  
(mostly polyester / PET and nylon)

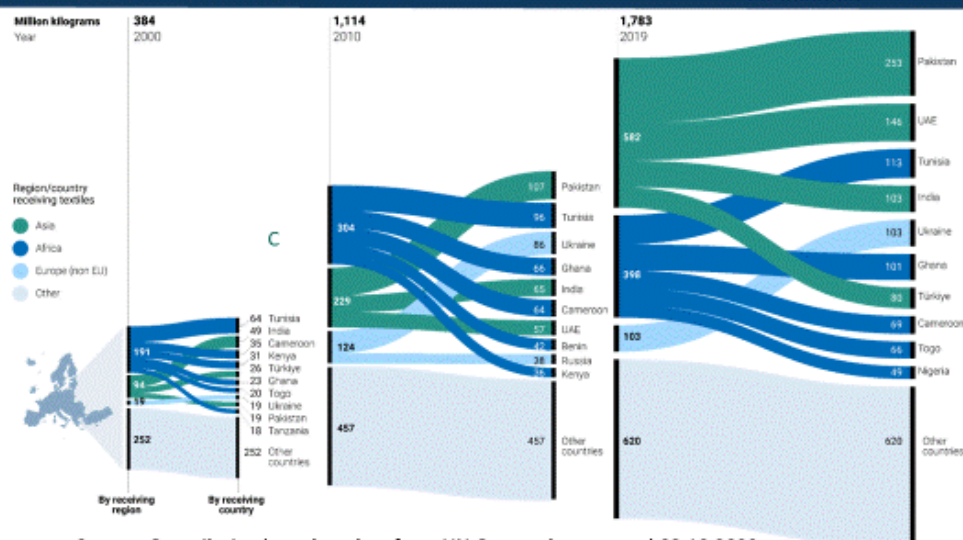
### Global fiber production



Source: <https://www.cirfs.org/statistics/key-statistics/world-production-fibre>

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## Countries receiving EU exports of used textiles




Source: Compilation based on data from UN Comtrade, accessed 02.10.2022

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## Considerations

- Europe have challenges sorting, reusing and recycling used textiles (and of plastics)
- Millions of people employed in the sorting, reuse and recycling of used textiles, especially in Asia and Africa
- Negative environment and climate effects of some used textiles being landfilled, burned or dumped, especially in A
- Regulation of exports need to consider carefully economic issues, employment, environment and climate issues

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