

Textile-to-textile recycled content is essential for EU textile circularity.

An update from the European Circular Textiles Coalition.

Europe needs binding rules prioritising European textile-to-textile recycled content to support investment, scale infrastructure, and drive innovation

The EU has set ambitious objectives for circularity in textiles. But ambition alone will not transform the market. The transition to circular textiles cannot happen in time only with voluntary uptake or fragmented initiatives. It requires regulatory clarity and a reliable demand framework.

In a context of growing global competition and increasing dependency on imported raw materials, strengthening Europe's recycling capacity is not only an environmental priority but also an industrial and strategic one. A clear and predictable demand for recycled materials is urgently needed to anchor investment and innovation in Europe.

We call on the European Commission to introduce mandatory minimum recycled content targets for textile products, prioritising European textile-to-textile recycled content. We support applying an approach similar to that taken under the implementation of the Single-Use Plastics Directive, whereby recycled content initially focuses on end-of-life steps taking place within the EU. This can be aligned with the development of the Eco-design requirements for textile apparel and the upcoming Circular Economy Act.

Mandatory recycled content from textile waste, with a clear focus on textile-to-textile recycling, is needed to establish predictable demand for recycled materials in textile products. That demand is what gives investors, manufacturers, and innovators the confidence to expand capacity, develop new technologies, and build long-term supply chains. Without a concrete requirement to use recycled materials now, circular solutions will remain limited in scale and unable to compete with established linear production models.

Minimum recycled content requirements should be introduced through a progressive ramp-up, aligned with the effective availability of textile-to-textile recycling capacity based on robust chain-of-custody mechanisms. Targets should be periodically reviewed and adjusted based on transparent market and capacity assessments, ensuring credibility. The production of recycled materials will need to be designed in close coordination with Extended Producer Responsibility schemes, which should be crafted to support the offtake of recycled materials from the outset.

A mandatory recycled content requirement would:

- Provide the long-term certainty needed to develop recycling capacity in Europe
- Allow for the emergence of a European textile-to-textile recycling industry
- Encourage innovation across the textile value chain
- Reduce dependence on primary raw materials
- Improve European resilience to mitigate geopolitical risks.
- Reinforce Europe's broader circular economy, climate, and competitiveness objectives

If Europe is serious about textile circularity, it must move from vision to implementation without delay. Introducing minimum recycled content requirements that prioritise European textile-to-textile recycled content will give the European textile value chain the clarity it needs to build a circular economy at scale.

On behalf of the following organisations and networks:

European Circular Textile Coalition - Members

Together, we launched an advocacy campaign to call on the European institutions to provide the framework that will build circular business models.

