

## PRESS RELEASE

# *Clothing reuse has a 70 times lower environmental impact reveals new study*

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A **new life-cycle assessment (LCA)** commissioned by the European textile reuse and recycling industry has confirmed the significant **CO<sub>2</sub>** and **water** savings of reusing textiles compared to producing new clothing. The environmental impact of reusing textiles is **70 times lower**, even when accounting for global exports for reuse including transport emissions.

More specifically, the study revealed that a massive **3kg of CO<sub>2</sub>** is saved for each high/medium-quality clothing that is reused. While only a mere **0.01%** of the water used to produce new clothing is required for reuse. These results come on the back of the EU launching its **Strategy for Sustainable Textiles** just a few months ago and requirements for Member States to start collecting textiles separately by 2025.

While the study confirms **waste hierarchy** assumptions on the environmental benefits of reuse over recycling, in the case of low-quality clothing, typically entirely composed of polyester, recycling also has comparative environmental benefits when consumers are less likely to purchase second-hand clothing.

*“Regrettably, around **62% of used clothing** and textiles end up in household waste meaning valuable textiles are likely to be incinerated or landfilled. The European textile reuse and recycling industry envisages a circular textile value chain where every piece of clothing is reused in an optimal way and/or recycled,”* says Mariska Boer, President of EuRIC Textiles. *“This study endorses the environmental benefits of a global market for textile reuse and recycling’s potential to tackle the rising amounts of low-quality and non-reusable clothing,”* she added.

The study also emphasised recommendations to policymakers, calling for initiatives that accelerate investments in state-of-the-art textile recycling facilities **globally**. In particular, innovation in **fibre-to-fibre recycling** will be key to keep textile fibres in the loop as volumes of non-reusable clothing are set to dramatically increase. The study also notes the importance of **eco-design criteria** that enhance the lifespan of clothing before there is a need for recycling as well as rules that mandate detailed sorting of high/medium-quality and low-quality textiles.

### Note to editor:

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The **European Recycling Industries’ Confederation (EuRIC)** is the umbrella organisation for the recycling industries in Europe. Through its member federations from 21 European countries, EuRIC represents more than 5,500 large companies and SMEs involved in the recycling and trade of various resource streams. They represent a contribution of 95 billion EUR to the EU economy and 300,000 green and local

jobs. By turning waste into resources, recycling reintroduces valuable materials into value chains over and over again. By bridging circularity and climate neutrality, recyclers are pioneers in leading Europe's industrial transition.

The [Textile Recycling Association](#) is the UK trade association for collectors and processors of used clothing and textiles, is a member of EuRIC and sits of EuRIC's textiles division executive committee.