

## Overview of materials used – explanation

One of the commitments of AGT signatories is to annually submit an overview of materials used, starting the second year of joining the Dutch Agreement on Sustainable Garments and Textile (AGT). The overview presented on 4 July 2019 reflects material use of companies of the AGT who are reporting on materials for the first time this year and companies that are doing so for the second time.

The group reporting on materials for the second time has seen some changes owing to insolvencies and cessation of activities. In addition, some information was not yet available at the time of publication and is therefore only being published this year. It is therefore impossible to compare last year's and this year's figures directly.

Even so, we were able to draw a number of conclusions based on the information provided:

- With respect to more sustainable options, the Agreement considers the use of (certified) more sustainable materials in the collections of AGT signatories. Circularity efforts (e.g. end-of-life / take back) are therefore not reflected in the figures.
- Cotton and polyester are the most commonly used materials. Animal derived materials represent less than 1% of the all the materials used.
- There has been a marked increase in more sustainable materials, such as Tencel, Tencel Lyocell, Refibra, Modal, and Tencel Modal. Although such materials account for less than 1% of all materials used, the increase is a clear sign that companies are looking for more sustainable alternatives.
- Companies now have a better understanding of their material use. Two Excel formats (which can be found in the [list of publications](#)) have allowed companies adhering to the Agreement to identify risks and more sustainable alternatives and, consequently, to make more sustainable choices. The companies reporting on their materials for the second time this year have recorded an increase in more sustainable materials.
- Making materials quantifiable enables companies to define precise KPIs, thus allowing for improvement. Companies reporting for the first time are now able to formulate and monitor specific objectives and actions concerning more sustainable materials.
- Companies can make their supply chain more sustainable by taking action at different points in the chain. For example, they can often choose fabrics themselves, whereas it is often more complicated to choose a production site for dyeing fabric. By choosing to use sustainable raw materials, companies can exercise more control over sustainability deeper in the supply chain.
- Companies reporting for the second time are committed to sustainability as members of the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), among others. BCI wants companies to use less water and member companies are expected to improve their performance in this regard every year. In addition to environmental standards, the initiative also imposes social and economic standards.
- Recycled cotton is still being used to only a limited extent, as is the case worldwide. Although it has the most favourable environmental sustainability impact among

cotton options, the quality of the fibre means that it is not an option for every company.

- There has been a slight increase in the use of recycled polyester. Recycling is not always possible if the fabric contains a mixture of polyester and other materials. That is why companies are looking for more sustainable polyester.
- Companies still tend to make limited use of more sustainable materials from animal origin, except in the case of down, for which 92% of the materials used are certified under the Responsible Down Standard (RDS).
- Wool and leather are the animal derived products most widely used by companies adhering to the Agreement. The availability of certified sustainable wool and leather is still limited. Although there are few options, companies adhering to the Agreement are looking for more sustainable alternatives as a group.