

WEBINAR

Nordic-Baltic textile circularity and extended producer responsibility

5 September

11:00–13:30 EET

10:00–12:30 CET



Nordic Council of Ministers'
Office in Latvia





HELICOPTER VIEW

Method: survey in spring 2025 involving targeted experts from Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia; limited desk research, with time to add more details to be discussed at a regional conference in Riga in the first half of 2026.

- Early-birds in mandatory separate collection of post-consumer textiles: Finland and Latvia since January 2023, Denmark since July 2023.
- Early bird in EPR implementation: Latvia since July 2024.

POST-CONSUMER TEXTILE COLLECTION

Country	Collection methods	Separation of reusable and waste textiles
Latvia	Containers in streets, malls, apartment yards; waste collection sites	No separation; charities collect reusables
Lithuania	Containers at waste collection sites, malls; in-store take-back	No separation, except hazardous textiles
Estonia	Bins, waste centers, in-store drop-offs, mobile collection	Reuse ideally directed to charities, but division often unclear
Denmark	Street bins, household pickup, waste centers	Partial separation; charities collect for reuse
Finland	Street bins, containers in malls and waste centers	Separate bins for reuse; mixed collection possible
Sweden	Recycling centers, occasional public bins	Partial separation; trend toward single-fraction collection
Norway	Public bins, municipal or charity-managed	Some separation; no mandatory reuse obligation

Preliminary findings from the project “Paving the way for strategic cooperation on textile circularity in the Nordic-Baltic region”

SORTING METHODS

Country	Sorting methods	Technology use
Latvia	Manual pre-sorting by waste companies; quality sorting by wholesalers and charities	Very limited
Lithuania	Manual sorting of both local and imported textiles	Experiments with NIR and AI, but no operational automation yet
Estonia	Manual sorting only; waste companies not active in textile sorting	Automation planned in Sillamäe, but unclear timeline
Denmark	Manual sorting dominant; some pre- and fine sorting	NIR-based robots at NewRetex
Finland	Primarily manual; some pre-sorting by municipal companies and charities	Occasional handheld devices; halted automation projects
Sweden	Pre-sorting before export, but some unsorted exports; advanced automated facility	Siptex: industrial-scale NIR sorting by fibre type and colour
Norway	Mostly export; limited domestic manual and tech-assisted sorting	Manual and tech-assisted sorting

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PREPARING FOR REUSE AND REPAIR

- Very limited across the Nordic-Baltic region - limited to charities or pilot initiatives.
- Charities and social enterprises in all the countries are crucial knowledge and operational stakeholders, helping extend textile lifespans and improve circularity, despite gaps in legislation and market mechanisms.

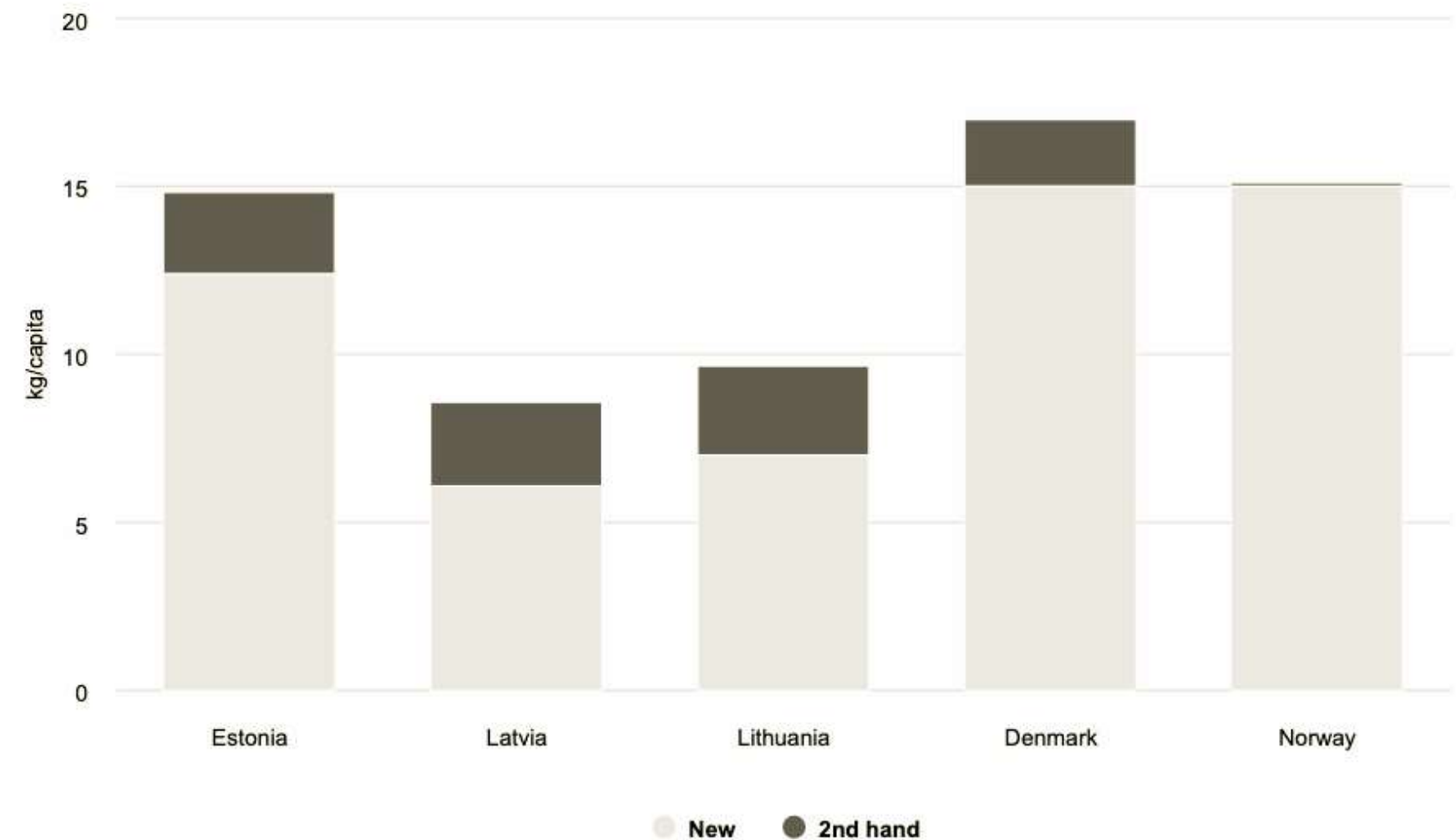


REUSE

Dependence on export markets for reuse, although second-hand textile consumption is more widespread in the Baltic countries (compared to the Nordics).

Source: “Post-consumer textile circularity in the Baltic countries: current status and recommendations for the future”, Nordic Council of Ministers, 2020

Figure 4.4: Consumption of new and second-hand textiles in the Baltics and selected Nordic countries (2018*)



*data for Denmark is from 2016

POST-CONSUMER TEXTILE FLOWS



	Sweden → Latvia	Sweden → Lithuania	Sweden → Estonia
2024	683,427	11,164,000	450,854
2023	737,000	9,653,000	723,845
2022	641,000	9,763,000	404,355
2021	582,000	10,225,000	172,000
2020	539,000	9,150,000	88,252

UN ComTrade data for product codes 6309,6310 in kg.

RECYCLING CAPACITY

Country	Focus	Technologies
Latvia	Pre-consumer and post-consumer waste	Mechanical (shredding, non-wovens, insulation, fillings), some upcycling
Lithuania	Pre-consumer and post-consumer waste	Mechanical (non-wovens, wiping cloths), upcycling
Estonia	Pre-consumer waste, virtually no post-consumer recycling	Mechanical (scraps reused in mattress fillings), some upcycling, future plans for downcycling (Greenful Group)
Denmark	Limited, especially for post-consumer waste	Mechanical (non-wovens), chemical pilot (Textile Change)
Finland	Pre- and post-consumer waste	Mechanical (Dafecor, Rester), Chemical (cellulosic textiles and cotton: Infinited Fibre)
Sweden	Pre-consumer and post-consumer	Chemical (cellulosic, polyester, polycotton blends), some mechanical
Norway	Industrial textiles, limited post-consumer waste recycling	Mechanical (pilots with mixed fibres, wool, polycotton)

Preliminary findings from the project “Paving the way for strategic cooperation on textile circularity in the Nordic-Baltic region”



CHALLENGES

- Due to January 2025 duty of separate collection of post-consumer textiles, there is a higher quantity and lower quality of post-consumer textiles collected in the region, but policy uncertainty with regard to EPR has reduced incentives for investments to enable textile circularity (collection, sorting, reuse, recycling).
- Challenges include limited post-consumer textile collection infrastructure in rural areas, inconsistent sorting standards and fragmented reporting, limited transparency on textile flows and the fate of exported textiles, limited availability of industry-scale recycling infrastructure (especially for post-consumer textiles), market limitations for non-reusable and recycled textiles (compared to virgin fibres).



OPPORTUNITIES

- Several promising initiatives in textile recycling (e.g. Rester and Infinited Fibre in Finland) demonstrate that the region has the potential to become a recycling hub, also making use of the textile manufacturing that is more prominent in Baltic countries.
- Strong and emerging ecosystem of projects, research institutions and colaboration networks between different stakeholders of textile circularity in many countries of the region, with some cross-border cooperation.

PANEL DISCUSSION I



11:15 EET

TEXTILE CIRCULARITY IN THE NORDIC-BALTIC REGION

10:15 CET

Pirjo Heikkilä, Principal Scientist and Project Manager at VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland (FI)

Rudrajeet Pal, Professor in Textile Value chains, Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås (SE)

Kaj Pihl, Environment and Recycling Advisor, Humana People to People (DK)

Viktorija Nausede, CEO and Founder of Circular Fashion Platform Looptex (LT)

Kerli Kant Hvass, Assistant Professor in Circular Economy, AAU (DK) and Textile Circularity Advisor, Revaluate (EE/DK)

Moderator: Dace Akule, Expert in circular economy and textiles, Green Liberty (LV)



BREAK

5 MINUTES