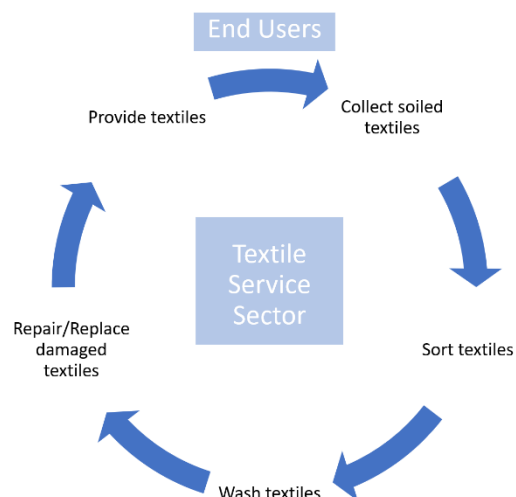


Why textiles win in the long run - Sustainability performance of table linen as compared to disposables

The textile services sector encompasses the supply, rental, laundering and maintenance of textiles, including table linen used in hotel/restaurant/catering. The performance of two alternative types of table linen used in hotels and restaurants has been examined; textiles (product-as-service through professional textile service) on the one hand, and disposable paper products on the other. The report has an emphasis on four countries: UK, Belgium, Sweden and the US and shows that:



Hygiene

- The hygiene performance of textile table linen is equal to disposable table linen.
- Thorough, comprehensive and systematic hygiene management saturates the textile service industry. Implemented hygiene management is commonly also reviewed by third-party agents, guaranteeing compliance.
- Amongst plastic, paper, stainless steel, glass, vinyl and cotton fabric, cotton fabric was the material with the lowest half-life, implying that the COVID-19 virus dies faster on this type of surface compared to paper surfaces, according to independent research.
- Consumers do not see textiles as a relevant path for contamination of COVID-19.

Environment

- Using updated data for the use of energy and water in washing of laundry decreases the climate impact from the use of textiles to only half of the impact from disposables, when comparing previously performed LCAs of textile and disposable table linen.
- Recycling of textile fibers, use of alternative fibers in textile-production and increased use of non-fossil energy in the washing process, are continuously decreasing environmental impacts from textiles.
- Multi-use of textile table linen in circular processes is already preferable to use of disposables, and several ongoing processes strongly point at further environmental benefits from use of textile table linen as compared to disposables in the future.

Economy

- The circular business model where textile table linen passes through multiple washing cycles creates Jobs on a local scale, different from the linear business model of disposables.
- Each job created in textile service industry creates another 0.25 indirect and induced jobs. The European and the US textile service sectors together support almost 330 000 jobs in total.
- The diversity amongst workers in the sector clearly reflects the important role that the laundry and textile service industry has for the provision of jobs and opportunities for foreign-born people. The textile service industry is a motor for integration in countries through-out the world.
- Choosing textile table linen generates jobs locally through textile service companies. Supporting the sector is therefore utterly important in times with rising unemployment.

The report was developed by Klorofyll Environmental Consultancy on behalf of:

ETSA- European Textile Service Association

Fédération Belge de l'Entretien du Textile (FBT) BE

Textile Services Association (TSA) UK

TRSA USA

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The full report can be downloaded from www.textile-services.eu/news/why-textiles-win-in-the-long-run--a-new-study.cfm

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