

**OEKO-TEX®**  
INSPIRING CONFIDENCE

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

ENVIRONMENT



NATURE

**OEKO-TEX®**  
INSPIRING CONFIDENCE

GREEN

ECOLOGY

Recycle



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## SHAPING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE.



**Dear readers,**

The past year has turned our industry and world upside down. The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting supply chain challenges have made us all painfully aware of how globally interdependent we are. However, OEKO-TEX® sees great opportunities in these disruptive times. The rapid progress of digitalisation and the increasing international focus on sustainability are having positive influences on society and the economy. Despite the global challenges, OEKO-TEX® can report a successful year. In particular, our MADE IN GREEN by OEKO-TEX® label experienced strong growth once again.

Our OEKO-TEX® mission remains unchanged: to make the international textile and leather industry more sustainable, trustworthy and safe. This requires action from all of us. Therefore, we welcome the prioritisation of sustainability by lawmakers. While manufacturers and retailers are challenged with tracking industry and legal changes, aspirational due diligence laws can spur action across the industry. As customer demand for transparency continues to grow, new digital tools are enabling traceability. OEKO-TEX® will continue to support the industry by monitoring these changes and helping our industry make decisions toward greater sustainability.

We are also determined to drive innovations that align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To limit global warming to 1.5 °C and reduce the fashion industry's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 30% by 2030, goals shared by organisations, governments and businesses, practical and scalable solutions are needed. After 2 years of development, the OEKO-TEX® Carbon & Water Footprint Tool will be integrated into STeP by OEKO-TEX® in 2022. It will enable companies to identify their potential to reduce carbon emissions and water consumption.

We are growing our industry's biggest network and helping to lower its impact. The path remains exciting – join us!

Yours faithfully,

**Georg Dieners**  
Secretary General, OEKO-TEX®



## OEKO-TEX® RESPONSIBILITY FOR A BETTER FUTURE.

The OEKO-TEX® Association consists of 18 independent textile and leather institutes in Europe, Japan and their contact offices in more than 70 countries.

Currently, over 21,000 manufacturers, brands and retailers in nearly 100 countries work officially with OEKO-TEX® to ensure that their products are tested for potentially harmful substances. Simultaneously, millions of consumers around the globe use the OEKO-TEX® labels as information for their purchasing decisions. Its goal to improve transparency in manufacturing processes has made the OEKO-TEX® Association both a pioneer and a trusted partner of the textile and leather industry.

Our core tasks are the development and advancement of our standards. To ensure that the standards remain at the highest technical level, they are revised every year. Various OEKO-TEX® committees track global regulations, scientific data and industry technologies and deal with the necessary updates of the OEKO-TEX® standards. The committees are made up of internal and external experts from various disciplines and countries who discuss possible adjustments. Textile engineers, technicians, chemists, toxicologists, lawyers, social scientists, marketers, etc. are represented so that as many perspectives as possible can be considered. Through this broad-based expertise and the collaborative negotiation process, we create industry-leading standards that meet the high demands for transparency and credibility.

# HIGHLIGHTS 2020/2021.



**MADE IN GREEN**  
**INCREASED NUMBER OF LABELS BY**

**108%**



Certification fee waived for

**373**

STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX®

**CERTIFICATES**

for mouth and nose masks  
to support the fight against Covid-19

**COLLABORATION WITH QUANTIS**

Carbon & Water Footprinting for textile processes and products



**PARTICIPATION IN UN PROJECTS**

through United Nations Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Change (UNFCCC)

**OVER 620K**

workers benefit from working in STeP certified facilities



**31,696 CERTIFICATES AND LABELS**

issued in 2020/2021  
+31% versus 2019/2020



**REACHED 10,000 ECO PASSPORT CERTIFIED PRODUCTS**

**COLLABORATION WITH SPOOR**


to enable more transparency through traceability in the leather supply chain



OEKO-TEX® went live on **Instagram**

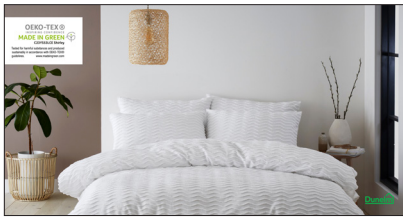
**+40% USERS**  
on oeko-tex.com

Page views on oeko-tex.com increased by **+62%**



First **ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**  
took place in April 2021

# A SELECTION OF OUR PARTNERS



Dunelm produces textiles such as towels and bed linen. Their MADE IN GREEN by OEKO-TEX® labelled products have been tested for harmful substances and were produced with environmentally friendly processes under safe and responsible working conditions.

OEKO-TEX® is proud to partner with terracare leather and certify that its leather is tested for harmful substances.



Vossen towels are beautiful and luxuriously soft. But they also carry the MADE IN GREEN by OEKO-TEX® label, which means they have been tested for harmful substances and were produced responsibly.



Safety, quality and trust are very important for Hanna Andersson. This is why they test their products for harmful substances and certify to STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX®.

## OEKO-TEX®

INSPIRING CONFIDENCE



Every child is precious and deserves unconditional love, care and protection. The Lillydoo diapers and change mats carry our MADE IN GREEN by OEKO-TEX® label.



Norwegian brand Lillelam AS and OEKO-TEX® have a similar mission: to make sure everyone – even the smallest – can feel comfortable and safe in textiles.

With the STeP by OEKO-TEX® certificate, Zimmerli of Switzerland sets an example for environmentally friendly production and safe and socially responsible workplaces.



TotalEnergies certifies its knitting oil range with ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX®. Chemicals certified in accordance with the ECO PASSPORT have been tested for harmful substances in critical concentrations as listed in the ECO PASSPORT standard.

OEKO-TEX®  
AT A GLANCE



# SUPPORTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development provides a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future. The 17 SDGs form a clear call to action. Through standards and innovations, OEKO-TEX® supports the industry and society on its path of transforming the world through actions.



**Gender Equality is a basic requirement for all our OEKO-TEX® certificates:**  
Our Code of Conduct is related to the UN Global Compacts' 11 principles and the ILO labour standards to ensure an active engagement of all employees.

**Fair wages, working hours and equal treatment of workers** without any discrimination regarding race, origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation and ethnicity – that's what we stand for.



Our MADE IN GREEN label guides consumers to responsible consumption by making **supply chains transparent and traceable**. The STeP certification ensures the **long term implementation of environmentally friendly production processes**.



STeP provides a comprehensive analysis and assessment of all production processes with the aim to implement best practices, efficient processes and **reduce the carbon footprint across the whole supply chain**.



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**DETOX TO ZERO** supports facilities to **monitor and optimize their chemical management and wastewater quality** - for more agile responses to new demands, prevention of hazardous chemical use and disposal of untreated wastewater.



**17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS**



We cooperate with global NGOs and industry initiatives to harmonize sustainable standards and actions. **We engage with various multi-stakeholder initiatives, such as the UN, the OECD or initiatives of the Partnership for Sustainable Textiles and ZDHC.**



**Safe workplaces, good hygiene, medical requirements and social insurance** are required for the STeP certification. Extensive **product tests for harmful substances ensure consumer safety for OEKO-TEX® labelled products**.



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## TRADEMARK PROTECTION.

The misuse or infringement upon intellectual property has always presented a challenge. In our digital age, this challenge is magnified by the ease of copying, distributing and modifying documents. This issue is particularly relevant to the certification industry, where trust from the market is fundamental to the value of a certificate.

The OEKO-TEX® Association has implemented a number of legal measures to protect our valuable assets across distribution channels. We take legal action against infringement and strive towards a market awareness that our globally protected trademarks cannot be infringed upon without consequences. We feel confident that our dedication to this matter will benefit both our customers and their consumers.

Since beginning of 2021 OEKO-TEX® has worked with the brand protection software SENTRYC to act against online trademark infringement. So far, over 2600 misuse cases have been detected and resolved.







## PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS.

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### MADE IN GREEN SUPPORTS AMAZON'S CLIMATE PLEDGE FRIENDLY

In September 2020, Amazon US launched their Climate Pledge Friendly program to make it easier for customers to discover and shop for more sustainable products. We are proud that products with a valid MADE IN GREEN label automatically meet the Amazon Climate Pledge Friendly requirements.

### SUSTAINABILITY MAPS

We are happy to announce that MADE IN GREEN is now part of ITC Sustainability Maps, a “platform that enables users, regardless of their position in the value chain, to better understand the sustainability landscape and to connect with business partners.”

The neutral Sustainability Maps platform helps users compare MADE IN GREEN with other standards through comprehensive, transparent information verified by ITC.

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### RECYCLED MATERIALS IN STANDARD 100 BY OEKO-TEX®

OEKO-TEX® has developed an approach to include recycled materials for greater sustainability as part of the STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX®. This uniform approach requires a minimum amount of recycled material adapted test programs based on the origin of the material and the background information necessary for traceability and verification. A hangtag is available to educate consumers about textile recycling in the circular economy.

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### INDUSTRY COLLABORATION FOR LEATHER STANDARD BY OEKO-TEX®

We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Sustainable Leather Foundation CIC. This allows us to work collaboratively across a number of areas within the global leather industry.

Our common goal is to support the improvement of standards and promote an ethical, fair, and open dialogue for the leather industry's benefit.



## PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS.

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### DETOX TO ZERO AS MANDATORY REQUIREMENT FOR STeP CUSTOMERS

As of 2020, the DETOX TO ZERO by OEKO-TEX® independent reporting system has been integrated with STeP. STeP certified facilities can easily determine the status of their chemical management and wastewater quality and improve it accordingly.



The transition period for existing customers has been very successful and is nearly completed. All STeP customers with wastewater and chemicals can demonstrate compliance with the STeP Manufacturing Restricted Substances List (MRSL).

### OPEN APPAREL REGISTRY

To increase visibility a list of our current STeP certified facilities is now viewable on the Open Apparel Registry (OAR) platform. This map eases identification of production facilities via the "OAR ID" and supports collaboration with brands and other organisations.



### RESTRICTED SUBSTANCES LIST

To promote industry collaboration and transparency, OEKO-TEX® publicly discloses its updated RSL/MRSL. This comprehensive list shows chemicals we currently restrict across our certifications (ECO PASSPORT, STeP, STANDARD 100, and LEATHER STANDARD). Our disclosure also supports industry collaborations such as ZDHC and AFIRM.

The list includes detailed information about the toxicity of the restricted chemicals based on evaluation by our toxicology partner, Toxnot PBC.



50

Professional auditors working within the OEKO-TEX® Association, successfully completed the first virtual STeP Auditor Training.



5,026

On-Site Visits for STANDARD 100 and LEATHER STANDARD were carried out. Due to pandemic restrictions, 470 of these were self-assessments.

Guidelines for virtual audits were established due to Covid 19 travel restrictions and 75 virtual audits have been conducted for STeP by OEKO-TEX®.

## OUR AUDITORS.

Quality assurance through verification is crucial for trust in a sustainably produced textile or leather article.

It all starts on-site: with over 200 auditors and quality assurance officers based in 52 countries, we perform On-Site Assessments in over 85 countries. Our auditors and quality assurances officers speak over 40 languages and are able to communicate with most customers in their native language.

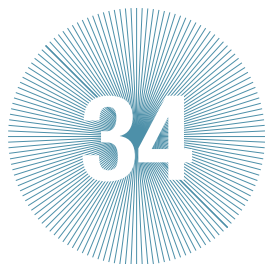
## ROUND ROBIN TESTS.

Round robin testing provides an interlaboratory comparison between our testing institutes. They are an important part of our strategy to ensure the high quality of our measuring procedures and laboratories. Identical samples are tested with identical test methods at each institute. The results are compared for accuracy and consistency. These important quality measures allow us to make confident statements about the integrity of our certificates and our trusted member institutes. Participation in the annual Round Robin Tests is mandatory for institutes that test for OEKO-TEX® and vital to guaranteeing the quality of our certifications.



Testing laboratories have participated

Test parameters were checked



## PRODUCT CONTROLS.

The OEKO-TEX® quality assurance strategy includes control testing of STANDARD 100, LEATHER STANDARD and ECO PASSPORT certified products. A process to incorporate MADE IN GREEN products was trialed.

**5,270**

certificates inspected from companies in 66 countries (71% Asia, 28% EU, 1% other regions)

**~25%**

STANDARD 100 and LEATHER STANDARD certificates  
10% of ECO PASSPORT certificates were inspected

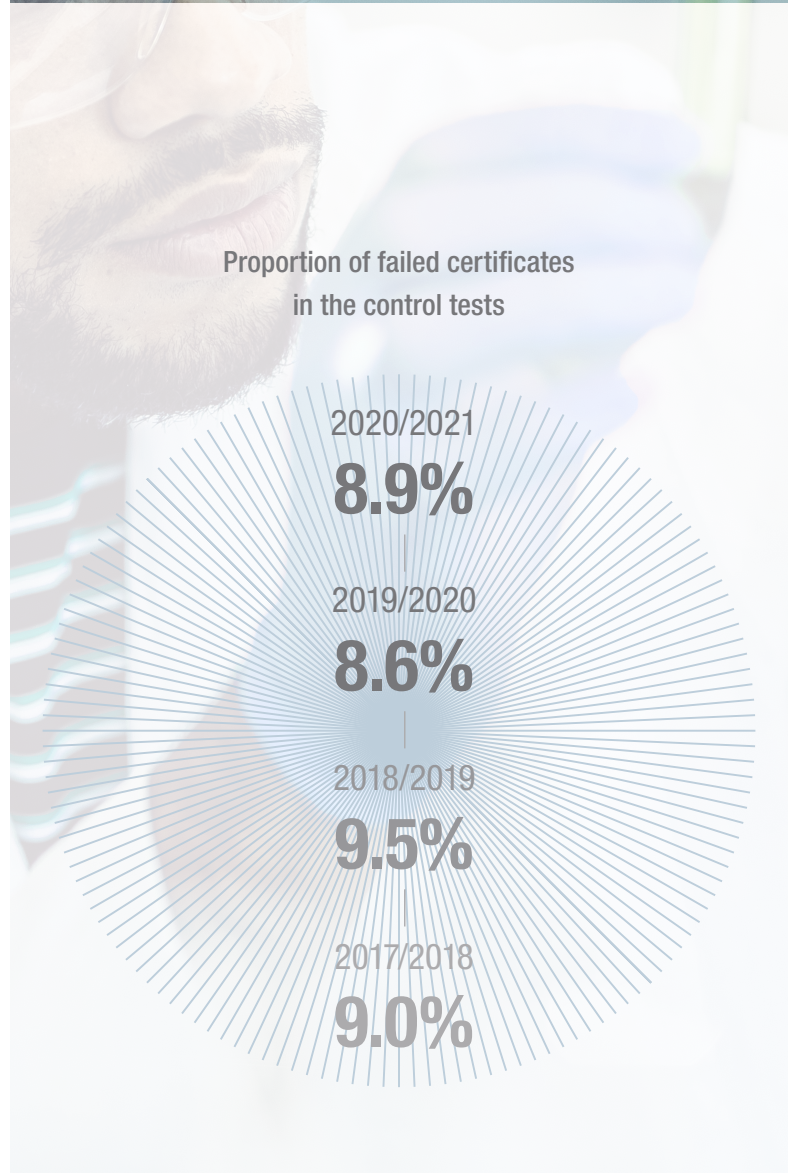
**8,776**

samples taken from retail stores or during On-Site Visits

**91.1%**

of the random samples confirmed certification results

The certificate holders of the failed control tests were informed. They are required to prove compliance with the standard and submit new samples to verify the successful implementation of the requirements. In rare cases of continued failures or refusal to cooperate, the certificate is revoked.



## WEBSITE WINS.

The aim of OEKO-TEX® has always been to create more transparency along the textile and leather production chains, to protect consumers and to ensure greater safety and trust for all parties involved. With our website, OEKO-TEX® is focusing on improving the user experience. In order to provide the best possible experience and to be able to improve and adapt continuously according to user's needs, OEKO-TEX® has focused strongly on data analysis with new tools such as Hotjar. OEKO-TEX® is pleased to report a further increase in users, page views and sessions compared to last year.



**+40%**  
**USERS**

2020/2021: 1,133,786  
2019/2020: 706,132

**+70%**  
**SESSIONS**

2020/2021: 1,674,418  
2019/2020: 996,455



**+62%**  
**PAGE VIEWS**

2020/2021: 3,000,000  
2019/2020: 2.333.810

**+52%**  
**LINKEDIN**

2020/2021: 23,000 Follower  
2019/2020: 16,980 Follower



**+30%**  
**TWITTER**

2020/2021: 1,780 Follower  
2019/2020: 1,367 Follower

**+948%**  
**INSTAGRAM**

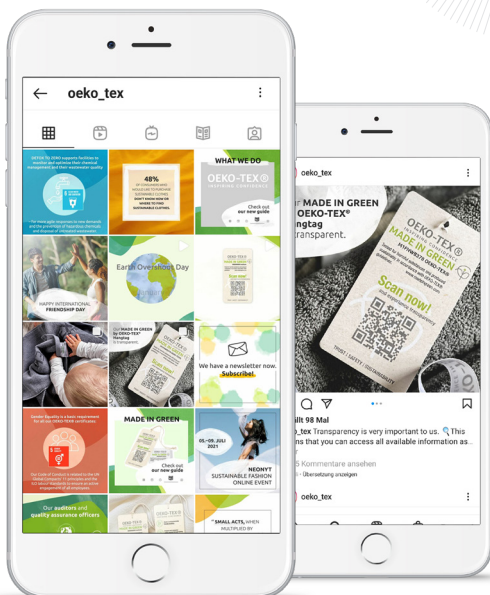
4,252 Follower in June 2021

**+492%**  
**WECHAT**

2020/2021: 8,388 Follower  
2019/2020: 1,418 Follower

**+20%**  
**FACEBOOK**

2020/2019: 6,265 Fans  
2019/2020: 5,240 Fans



## SOCIAL MEDIA INCREASED.

OEKO-TEX® has increased efforts to build engagement with target audiences using a focused social media strategy that achieved healthy KPI growth during 2020/2021. In an effort to increase the social media presence even further and target a younger audience, OEKO-TEX® successfully launched on Instagram in July 2020.

# OEKO-TEX® IN NUMBERS.

Number of issued certificates and labels	2019/2020	2020/2021	
STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX®	20,590	24,703	→ +20%
MADE IN GREEN by OEKO-TEX®	2,808	5,840	→ +108%
LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX®	53	69	→ +30%
STeP by OEKO-TEX®	215	244	→ +13%
ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX®	539	840	→ +56%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24,205</b>	<b>31,696</b>	→ +31%

## Number of issued certificates and labels worldwide

	2020/2021	
	absolute number	percentage
Asia	18,703	59%
Western Europe	8,663	27%
Middle East	2,368	7%
Eastern Europe	977	3%
North America	502	2%
Africa	275	1%
Central and South America	189	1%
Oceania/Australia	19	0%

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## PARTNERSHIP AND INITIATIVES.



**By incorporating external views, we are confident that the most significant perspectives will flow into our standards. Some of our engagements are described below.**

### **United Nations**

The specialized agencies and commissions of the United Nations are pursuing numerous projects in the social and environmental spheres. OEKO-TEX® has engaged in two UN-Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives (MSI) focusing on transparency and traceability. Our goal is to enable more transparency along the textile and leather supply chains for consumers, manufacturers and brands.

### **OECD**

The OECD's policies often form the foundation of other MSIs. The OECD provides an ideal platform for global dialogue.

### **ZERO DISCHARGE OF HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS (ZDHC)**

OEKO-TEX® is a ZDHC Contributor and pleased to continuously collaborate towards reducing the industry's chemical footprint.

### **Universities**

OEKO-TEX® has engaged in academic discourse since 2018 with the Academy for Fashion and Design and Hochschule Niederrhein. The OEKO-TEX® Association has renewed our sponsorship of three students from each school with the Deutschlandstipendium. Engaging with decision makers of the future around socially responsible and sustainable action is vital. We are very pleased to support the scholarship recipients.

### **OEKO-TEX® International Advisory Board**

The first OEKO-TEX® International Advisory Board (IAB) meeting took place this year. The core function of the IAB is to provide feedback on the OEKO-TEX® Working Group proposals for further development of standards. We discussed important technical topics as well as market trends regarding sustainability.

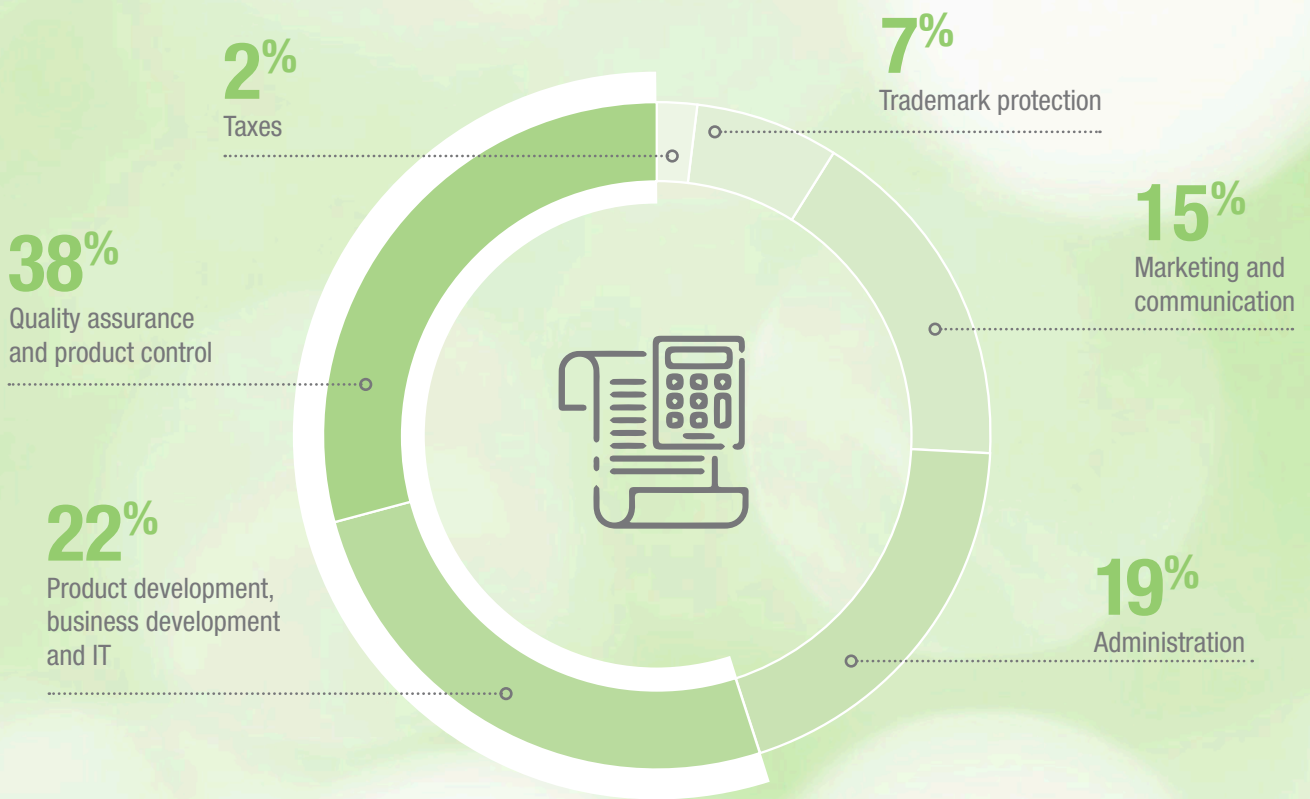
### **OEKO-TEX® CertLink and Global Library, Powered by Texbase**

We are constantly developing tools and partnerships that enable transparency and traceability. Our partnership with software provider Texbase allows suppliers to link material specific data with their MADE IN GREEN labels, STANDARD 100 and LEATHER STANDARD certificates. It allows manufacturers to link certificates to product codes (ASIN, UPC, EAN, etc). It helps brands find and trace certified materials and confirm certificates for materials they are using. And, it facilitates retailers who accept certificates in lieu of additional RSL testing. We are pleased to offer this service free to all OEKO-TEX® customers.

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# AN OVERVIEW OF EXPENSES. CLEAR FOCUS ON QUALITY.

OEKO-TEX® operations are funded by certification license fees.





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# PUBLISHER.

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