

THE GLOBAL ORGANIC TEXTILE STANDARD

FOR ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE TEXTILE PRODUCTION

The [Global Organic Textile Standard \(GOTS\)](#) that sets global requirements regarding ecology and social accountability for textiles, enables processors and manufacturers to supply their textiles made from organic fibres with one certification accepted in all major selling markets in order to provide credible assurance to the consumer.

In 2016 the organic certified companies adopting the GOTS criteria were about 1500 worldwide, including 2.811 industries in 55 countries following the textile standards. The GOTS accredited independent Certification Bodies report more than 1.4 million people working in GOTS certified facilities.

GOTS was developed in 2006 by four leading international standard setters: [Organic Trade Association \(U.S.\)](#), [Japan Organic Cotton Association](#), [International Association Natural Textile Industry \(Germany\)](#), and [Soil Association \(UK\)](#).

The GOTS includes ecological and social criteria in order to define world-wide recognized requirements that ensure organic status of textiles for the entire life-cycle of the products (including spinning, knitting, weaving, dyeing and manufacturing) of apparel and home textiles made with organic fibre (such as organic cotton silk, linen, and organic wool). The choice of accessories is limited in accordance with ecological aspects as well.

This standard stipulates requirements throughout the supply chain for both ecology and labour conditions in textile and apparel manufacturing using organically produced raw materials. It defines high-level environmental criteria along the entire organic textile supply chain and requires compliance with social criteria as well. Key requirements include a ban on the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), highly hazardous chemicals, and child labour, while requiring strong social compliance management systems and strict waste water treatment practices.

A product can only be certified and labelled with a GOTS label grade: *organic* or *made with organic* as a whole. It is not possible to certify and label only a part or component of a product. Only textile products that contain a minimum of 70% organic fibres can become GOTS certified.

Organic production is based on a system of farming that maintains and replenishes soil fertility without the use of toxic, persistent pesticides and fertilizers. In addition, organic production relies on adequate animal husbandry and excludes genetic modification.



Textile processing, manufacturing and trading entities can apply for certification according to the Global Organic Textile Standard. Any textile product is covered under the scope of GOTS, by following basic product category terms: fibres, yarns, fabrics, garments (or clothing or wear), home textiles, health & hygiene textiles and accessories.

On-site inspection and certification of processors, manufacturers and traders performed by independent specially accredited bodies is the basis of the GOTS monitoring system. This assures the integrity of GOTS certified textiles.

With completion of certification process, the entity acquires a license which entitles it to participate in the GOTS program, including use of the GOTS logo on its respective goods. The GOTS supply chain also facilitates contacts and relationships among worldwide international companies. Organic certified companies work together with further international stakeholder organizations and experts, their respective expertise in organic farming and environmentally and socially responsible textile processing.

The key criteria for organic certification of fibres production, with its quality assurance system and the principles of the review and revision procedure are very detailed and can be identified on basis of recognized international or national standards (IFOAM family of standards, EEC 834/2007, USDA NOP). Key criteria for processing and manufacturing and social criteria are based on the key conventions of the International Labour Organization ILO.

The latest version 5.0 of the Global Organic Textile Standard, released March 1st, 2017, is available for download in the GOTS website, together with all [procedural documents](#) for revision monitoring and certification requirements.

The GOTS [international online data-base](#) presents an updated information on organic certified companies adopting those GOTS criteria. It is a practical tool that enables users to search, according to individual needs, for GOTS certified entities in the supply chain, their location, field of operation, and GOTS certified products. The data-base collects information on nearly 400 dyeing plants, more than 200 spinning, knitting, weaving and printing units and about 140 production facilities. While more than 700 companies are listed in export business.

According the 2016 GOTS Annual report, countries or regions with the largest increase in GOTS certification in 2016 are ranked as follows: Bangladesh (+121), China (+68), Italy (+54), India (+47), Germany (+41); and Pakistan (+30). The top ten countries in terms of total number of certified entities were: India (1488), Turkey (423), Germany (347), Bangladesh (331), China (269), Italy (195), Pakistan (172), Portugal (96), Korea (61) and Japan (58).

With the internationally recognized certification enterprises will be entitled to develop and offer a wide choice of organic fibres, granting access to new markets, e.g. public procurement; they become explicitly recognized by governments and leading textile, sport, environmental, and organic organizations worldwide; the certified sustainability innovation provides added value over conventional products.

A [Pre-Conference to 19th Organic World Congress of IFOAM](#) was organized by GOTS in New Delhi, India, on 8th November, 2017,



focused on 'Social Compliance Issues in the Organic Textile Supply Chain'. More than 80 high profile attendees and speakers from twelve countries gathered and discussed how to landscape the future for textile supply chain.

To know more

[GOTS Website](#)

[GOTS Data base](#)

[GOTS Video](#)

[GOTS Annual reports](#)

[GOT Press Releases](#)

[2016 Annual Report](#)

[Soil Association Reports](#)

[Article in evoxtelevision.com](#)

