

# Reversing direction in the used clothing crisis: Global, European and Chilean perspectives



# Fixing a Leaky System: Creating Resource Management Systems for Used Textiles



## Background

- Surge in the production of low-cost, disposable apparel in the past decades
- Sevenfold increase in global discarded clothing volumes over the past forty years, with an average annual growth exceeding 10%
- Export of large volumes of second-hand clothes and textiles waste from developed countries unwilling or unable to circulate them in their home markets
- Dumping and incineration in developing countries of imported waste clothes

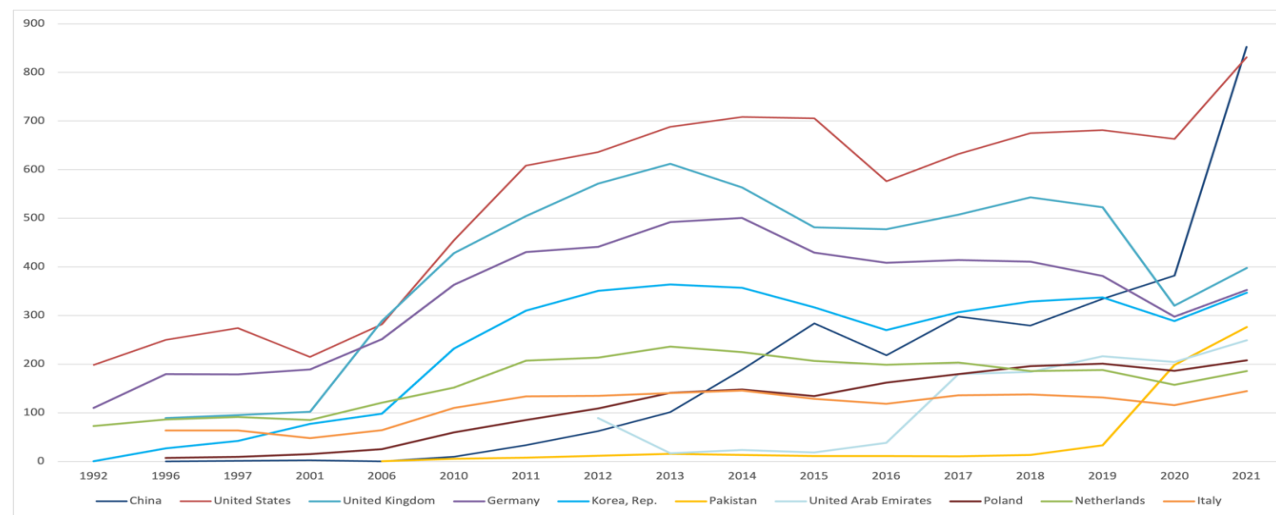


Figure 1: Global Exports of used clothing, 1992-2021, million USD

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## This study from ECE and ECLAC presents:

- The perspective of importing countries using the example of Chile, including field work in the Tarapacá region and a comparison to other LATAM countries
- The perspective of exporting countries using the example of the EU, including an overview of value chain actors involved
- Global trade flows of second-hand clothes and their long-term drivers
- Policy recommendations targeting trade agreements, exportin countries as well as importing countries



<https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/UN%20EX%20sum%20-%20Improving%20the%20sustainability%20of%20used%20clothing%20-%20Final.pdf>

# Policy Recommendations



Adjust **international trade agreements** to improve the quality of used clothing trade (EU-Chile example)



Pursue domestic policy action in **exporting countries** to minimize the export of textile waste



Pursue domestic policy action in **importing countries** to minimize waste imports and deal more effectively with those that occur

# An Engagement Strategy with Chilean government



## Assistance to limit imports to better quality clothes:

- Include trade to the National Strategy for Circular Economy in Textiles (ENECT)
- Design technical barriers that only allow imports of recyclable garments
- Cooperate with top trading partners to promote better sorting at the origin



## Help in the design of ERP Law that complements the ENECT:

- Due diligence through traceability and transparency of sustainable import of new and used textiles, clothing and footwear
- Financing of the “5Rs” of circularity to cover infrastructure and labor cost