

Essenza Home's full answer

We are aware of the working conditions in Turkmenistan which are highly concerning, as well as the tragic story of Khudayberdy Allashov.

Following an internal investigation, we can confirm that Essenza Home does not source from DAZOGUZ TEXTILE since 2021. In the past it was a subcontractor of our supplier Evliyaoglu Textile Industry&Trade Inc. but they confirmed to us that they stopped working together as of 2021. At our production location list from 2022 DAZOGUZ TEXTILE is no longer mentioned as a production location. As reported to you the list you've found on our English website was not updated the last years, since we switched to information via the Open Supply Hub.

ESSENZA HOME does not accept forced, bounded and child labour and works hard to prevent them and to support human rights. We are committed to prevent forced labour at every level of the textile supply chain and will continue to uphold and safeguard labour standards.

In line with our code of conduct, employment must be freely chosen, adhering to the principles outlined in ILO Conventions 29 and 105. We strictly oppose the use of forced labor, considering it a zero-tolerance issue. Through external factory audits, we ensure compliance with these labor standards.

1.Prohibition of sourcing from Turkmenistan

We regularly remind our partners that sourcing materials from Turkmenistan is strictly prohibited. Together with multi-stakeholder initiatives such as the AGT and the German Textilbündnis, we conduct due diligence throughout our supply chain to ensure compliance with this requirement. We actively support our direct suppliers in adopting responsible sourcing practices and are working on a robust purchasing policy based on the OECD Guidelines for Due Diligence to reduce the risk of forced labor further down the supply chain.

2.Promoting sustainable cotton (GOTS certified)

Increasing the use of sustainable cotton across all production countries is a key step in reducing reliance on conventional cotton and mitigating associated risks.

3.Enhancing supply chain mapping and traceability

We are committed to mapping our supply chain more comprehensively to improve traceability and verification of the conventional cotton used by our suppliers. This will help minimize the risk of exposure to cotton production in high-risk areas such as Turkmenistan, where forced labor concerns have been raised.

4.Commitment to accountability

Given the complexity of the cotton market, with its numerous suppliers and intermediaries, tracking and tracing cotton precisely remains challenging. However, we are dedicated to this effort. If any mills are identified as using cotton from Turkmenistan, we will require our factories to immediately cease business with these suppliers. These measures will be carried out in close collaboration with relevant multi-stakeholder initiatives, as we believe that collective action is essential to finding sustainable solutions.

The Dutch Agreement on Sustainable Garments and Textile (AGT) is a multi-stakeholder initiative launched in 2016 to improve sustainability, human rights, and environmental conditions in the international garment and textile supply chain. It brings together businesses, government bodies, trade unions, and NGOs to collaboratively address challenges in the industry.

By signing the AGT, we committed to:

- Due diligence: Identifying, prioritizing, and addressing risks related to human rights violations, environmental harm, and animal welfare in their supply chain, following the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.
- Transparency: Mapping our supply chain and providing detailed information about suppliers and production locations.
- Improvement plans: Developing and implementing action plans to address identified risks and improve social and environmental conditions.
- Collaboration: Cooperating with other stakeholders to achieve industry-wide improvements and sharing best practices.
- Reporting: Regularly updating the agreement's secretariat on their progress and actions, which may be reviewed by independent experts.

Key obligations under the agreement

- Supply chain mapping: Companies must identify all suppliers, subcontractors, and production locations down to Tier 1 (and beyond, if possible).
- Human rights risk management: Actively address issues such as forced labor, child labor, discrimination, and unsafe working conditions in their supply chains.
- Environmental impact reduction: Take measures to reduce water pollution, CO2 emissions, and waste, and improve material recycling.
- Stakeholder engagement: Engage with unions, workers, and NGOs to ensure their concerns are addressed.
- Annual reporting: Submit detailed reports on progress, which are evaluated by the AGT monitoring committee.

At the moment the AGT stopped, we are part of the work group for a new initiative to build upon the goals of the AGT, to align Essenza Home efforts with the latest global standards.

I hope you see and understand that, as a small Dutch company, we work hard every day to improve, with the goal of helping everyone sleep better. We are fully committed to making continuous progress, and I hope our efforts are recognized and appreciated. We understand there is always room for improvement and kindly ask for your understanding as we take this journey step by step, with the care and attention it deserves.