

“Let it at least fragrance” – European consumers’ awareness and perception of textile material origins

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Introduction

Materials used for clothing matter to consumers, yet there is lack of knowledge on the origins of common textile materials.

900 Europeans from Italy, Germany, and the UK lent their time and thoughts on textile materials to us in winter 2025, via an online survey.

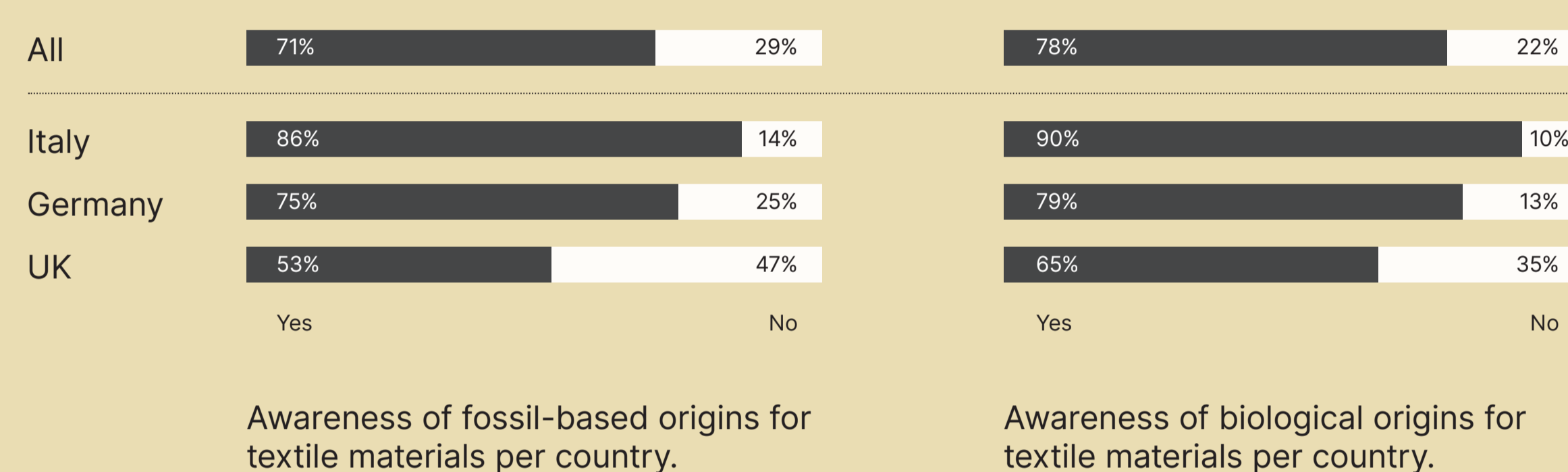
The findings expand current knowledge on consumer awareness and perception of textile materials, a gap identified in research literature.^{1 2}

Results

Key finding: Respondents lack knowledge of textile material origins.

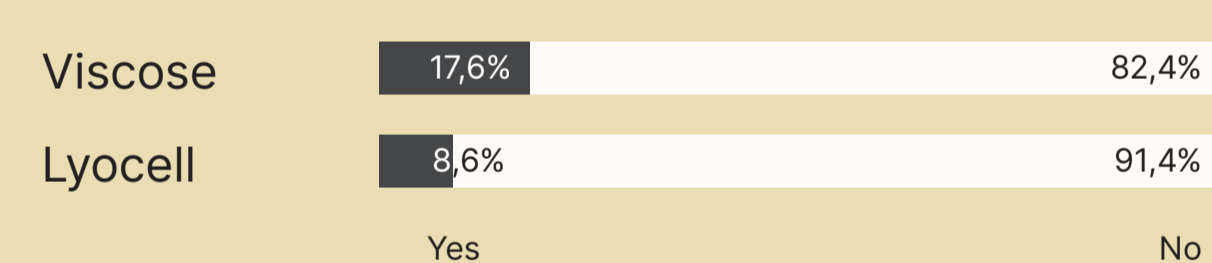
71% are aware that some textile materials originate in **fossil-based sources**, for example polyester originates in oil production.

78% are aware that some textile materials originate in **biological sources**, including plants, animal hair, and different kinds of biomass such as cellulose.



17,6% Share of the 78% who recognize **viscose** as **bio-based** (originating in a biological source).

8,6% Share of the 78% who recognize **lyocell** as **bio-based** (originating in a biological source).



Key finding: Respondents perceive textile material made with orange peel in diverse ways, with both optimism and caution.

Theme 1: Relating to sensorial and use experience

“The idea seems good to me because of the absence of synthetic materials in the fabric that is always in contact with the skin. I would be curious to try it.”

“If the material made from it is good quality and durable and doesn’t bobble then it would be a great idea.”

Theme 2: Relating to hygiene

“Unsure, the potential for the materials to smell, not last as long, hygiene.”

“I have doubts about the price, perhaps inaccessible to most people.”

“Unsure of the quality, how it washes.”

Theme 3: Relating to the context and process of manufacturing

“If it meets the safety standards and helps with reduction in fossil fuel use and assists climate change then it could be useful.”

“Better recycling of raw materials, less polluting microplastics”

“Encouraged, but also worried about sourcing raw [m]aterials. Whether it will create another monoculture.”

“More concerned about recycling the millions of tons of textiles and trash already in existence.”

Materials and methods

- **N=900 (300/ country)** aged 18-64, sampling based on socio-demographic characteristics for **statistical representativeness**.³
- Questions included single choice, multiple choice, and on a 5-point Likert-scale options as well as one open question.³
- Sequential **mixed-method analysis**: statistical analysis for the quantitative data followed by inductive thematic analysis for the qualitative data.^{4 5}

Conclusions

The respondents consider material composition of garments important when making purchase decisions.

Yet, they are not well aware of the material composition of the garments they own. Further, respondents lack knowledge of common textile material origins.

Both the lack of knowledge related to material origins and the diverse ways the respondents approach a novel material may have implications to development and marketing of new materials – their identity, narrative, and sustainability story.

Literature

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