

## RESEARCH SUBJECT

How can Royal Textile effectively- enter the German market  
with its newly unknown “So Cute” bedding collection?



## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a detailed analysis of the German market concerning the bedding industry as well as a detailed recommendation to Royal Textile on whether they should enter the German market and how. Therefore the focus of this report refers to further expansion of Royal Textile on the European market. As a result a central research question was formulated *How can Royal Textile effectively- enter the German market with its newly unknown "So Cute" bedding collection?* Thereby different marketing tools and models are integrated in order to answer the stated question. Furthermore articles, books and websites were used to highlight relevant information on the position of Royal Textile. Qualitative research is applied to gain knowledge on the German bedding industry. With this interviews were conducted and information of E-mails received is processed in the report as well.

As Stated in the company description Royal Textile is one of the biggest wholesalers and distributors of bedding (incl. blankets, mattresses, pillows, covers.)in the Benelux (royal textile,2015). The company has plans to expand and is already determined to export to Germany. The organisation has been given the licensee to launch and sell a new brand of bed textiles namely So Cute. So Cute is a new young Dutch brand especially meant for young girly girls. The export plan will focus on a Business- to- Business selling approach, this means reselling to wholesalers and retailers in Germany. It gives the company the opportunity to create brand awareness, hence a fast way in selling and promoting the new product.

In 25 years the company grew tremendously and created a concept of products with a good price quality ratio with a wide and deep product range available for a broad target group. The internal analysis shows a company that is dynamic and also modern due to social media activities. However the company faces some obstacles regarding a small distribution centre and less manpower to organize international activities. The external analysis demonstrates that the German market complies with different packing regulations and that they are very environment driven, hence CSR and sustainable features in products are highly appreciated. According to Marketline entering the German home textiles market is easy, however the threat of competitive rivalry is high. Royal textile should create a unique selling position in order to keep up with these competitors.

The recommendations chapter of this report is created by applying the Marketing Mix. Royal Textile should consider promotional activities among the individual customer as well in gaining more interest, thereby wholesalers and retailers could encounter customer needs. Social media for instance is an important channel. Furthermore price setting is advisable as it

gives German consumers and businesses the opportunity to experience the quality of the product and increases brand recognition. Finally it is advisable to enter the German market via indirect export. Eventually the company could hire German business experts to increase the likelihood of success on the German market.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....	viii
GLOSSARY .....	ix
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Problem statement .....	1
1.2 Research objective .....	1
1.3 Central research question .....	1
1.4 Outline of the report .....	2
1.5 Limitations .....	2
2. METHODOLOGY .....	3
2.1 Desk research.....	3
2.2 Models used.....	3
2.3 Field research.....	5
2.3.1 Qualitative methods .....	5
2.4 Appendices .....	5
3. INTERNAL ANALYSIS .....	7
3.1 COMPANY OVERVIEW ROYAL TEXTILE B.V.....	7
3.1.1 Mission.....	7
3.1.2 Vision .....	7
3.1.3 Organizational structure .....	7
3.1.4 Product range description.....	9
3.1.5 Distribution Channels.....	9
3.2 COMPANY OVERVIEW SO CUTE .....	10
3.2.1 History .....	10
3.2.2 Mission.....	11
3.2.1 The role of Royal Textile .....	11
3.3 ABELL FRAMEWORK.....	11
3.4 STRENGTHS .....	13
3.5 WEAKNESSES.....	14
4. EXTERNAL ANALYSIS.....	16
4.1 MACRO ENVIRONMENT: DESTEP MODEL .....	16
4.1.1 CORPORATE CULTURE.....	19
4.1.2 Conclusions on the Macro environment.....	21
4.2 MICRO ENVIRONMENT: INDUSTRY ANALYSIS.....	22

4.2.1 Wholesale and retail trade in Germany .....	22
4.2.2 Entering the german textile market .....	23
4.2.3 Trends and development home textiles.....	24
4.2.4 Porter five forces .....	26
4.2.5 Competitor analysis .....	29
4.2.6 Conclusion on the micro analysis .....	34
4.4 OPPORTUNITIES .....	36
4.5 THREATS .....	37
5. SWOT .....	39
5.1 SWOT analyse .....	39
5.2 Confrontation Matrix .....	39
5.3 Strategic options .....	40
5.3.1 Strengths versus opportunities .....	40
5.3.2 Weaknesses versus opportunities.....	40
5.3.3 Strengths versus threats .....	41
5.3.4 Weaknesses versus threats.....	41
6. ENTRY STRATEGIES .....	42
6.1 Direct export .....	42
6.2 Indirect export .....	43
6.3 Legal constructions.....	44
7. CONCLUSIONS.....	45
8. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	48
8.1 Marketing mix .....	48
8.1.1 Product .....	48
8.1.2 Price .....	48
8.1.3 Place.....	49
8.1.4 Promotion.....	49
8.1.5 People .....	49
LIST OF REFERENCES .....	51
APPENDICES .....	58
LIST OF APPENDICES .....	59
APPENDIX 1. Interview Rameez Ahmed Royal Textile .....	60
APPENDIX 2. Interview Anna Gewering DNHK .....	62
APPENDIX 3. Eurostat tables import development bed textiles Germany .....	64
APPENDIX 4. Prüfung und Zertifizierung von Textilien- Europäische und nationale Kennzeichnungen 2008.....	100



## PREFACE

This report presents a detailed analysis of the German market concerning the bedding industry as well as a detailed recommendation to Royal Textile on whether they should enter the German market. As a European Studies student, I have knowledge on the German market, Export Management, Research Skills and Marketing in particular.

The main purpose of this research is to underline the reality of a more globalised world and the opportunities it creates for companies planning to operate internationally. Moreover, it highlights Germany as a potential market for Royal Textile B.V. This research I is also aimed at eventual companies planning to export to Germany.

Since this report contains a large part of my research undertaken in the past eight months, I want to thank the people that have supported and empowered me during this period. I am privileged to have had Mr. Kramer as my thesis advisor. His recommendations and opinions on my research methods and sources have been truly useful to me. I would also like to thank the company Royal Textile B.V., in particular Mr. Rameez Ahmed (Head of Buying) and for giving me the opportunity to conduct this research. In addition, I would like say thank you to my family and friends for supporting me all the time and helping me with this research project when times were tough. I have furthermore been fortunate to be working with experts Anna Gewering and all the other parties who helped me gain insight into German laws, the textile market and the German business environment. Last, I want to acknowledge the work of all the authors and researchers that have helped me raise my project to the next level.

Charlotte Leitner 29-12-2015

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UAI	Uncertainty Avoidance Index
B2C	Business to Consumers
B2B	Business- to- Business
CDH	Centralvereinigung Deutscher Wirtschaftsverbände für Handelsvermittlung und Vertrieb
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DNHK	Deutsch-Niederländische Handelskammer
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

## GLOSSARY

Abell model:

‘transparent market delineation of the current activities of an organisation’ (muilwijk, 2014).

Backwards integration:

A form of vertical integration that involves the purchase of suppliers. Companies will pursue backward integration when it will result in improved efficiency and cost savings (market industry profile, 2014).

Confrontation matrix

‘a tool which helps to formulate strategic options for a company for the future’ (harlaar, ouwehand, leeuw, & otto, 2012).

Corporate social responsibility:

‘the commitment by organisations to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and society at large’ (johnson, whittington, & scholes, 2012)

DESTEP :

‘demographic, economic, social, technological, environmental and political aspects of an external market’ (ebert & griffin, 2009).

Differentiated (segmented) marketing:

‘a market-coverage strategy in which a firm decides to target several market

segments and designs separate offers for each’ (armstrong & kotler, 2011).

E-Commerce:

The buying and selling of products and services by businesses and consumers through an electronic medium, without using any paper documents (Ixpos, 2015).

Ethics :

‘frameworks for human conduct that relate to moral principles and attempt to distinguish right from wrong’ (preble & hoffman, 1999).

External environment:

‘everything outside an organisation’s boundaries that might affect it’ (ebert & griffin, 2009).

Gross domestic product:

‘tool which shows the value of all final goods and services produced within a nation in a given year’ (indexmundi, 2014).

Marketing mix :

‘set of controllable tactical marketing tools that the company blends to produce the response it wants in the target market’ (armstrong & kotler, 2011).

Human development index:

The HDI was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the

development of a country, not economic growth alone (marketline, 2014).

Micro environment:

are factors close to a business that have a direct impact on its business operations and success (ebert & griffin, 2009).

Macro environment:

The major external and uncontrollable factors that influence an organization's decision making, and affect its performance and strategies (ebert & griffin, 2009).

Mission

'long-term goals and the overall purpose of the organisation which often describes a challenging situation' (johnson, whittington, & scholes, 2012).

Porter's five forces:

'a tool which helps to identify the attractiveness of a certain industry in terms of five competitive forces' (johnson, whittington, & scholes, 2012).

Positioning:

'act of designing the company's offering so that it occupies a meaningful and distinct position in the target customer's mind' (vigar-ellis, barrett, & chiweshe).

Primary data:

'information which is first published in, for example, governmental documents and is directly retrieved by the author' (saunders, 2011).

Product Hacking:

modifying and customizing everyday products (designboom, 2015).

Qualitative research:

'information which is not used for analysing a great part of something but puts emphasis on quality rather than quantity' (saunders, 2011).

Quantitative research:

'numerical research used for the purpose of analysing a great part of something' (saunders, 2011).

Secondary data:

'information which is published in for instance magazines and is not directly retrieved by the author' (saunders, 2011).

SWOT analysis:

'overall evaluation of the company with regards to the internal and external environment' (armstrong & kotler, 2011).

Target market:

'a set of buyers who share common needs or characteristics that a certain company decides to serve' (armstrong & kotler, 2011).

Undifferentiated (mass) marketing:

'a market-coverage strategy in which a firm decides to ignore market segment differences and go after the whole market with one offer' (armstrong & kotler, 2011).

Vision:

'an aspiration which can help mobilise the

energy and passion of organisational members and refers to the desired future state of an organisation' (johnson, whittington, & scholes, 2012).



# 1. INTRODUCTION

As a student of The Hague University, studying European Studies, I was asked to write an export plan for the Dutch company Royal textile and thereby analyse the German market focussing on a business to business selling approach.

## 1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As one of the biggest wholesalers and distributors of bedding (incl. blankets, mattresses, pillows, covers) in the Benelux (royal textile, 2015) Royal Textile has plans to expand and is already determined to export to Germany. The organisation has been given the license to launch and sell a new brand of bed textiles namely So Cute. So Cute is a new young Dutch brand especially meant for girls. The brand gives the company the opportunity to gain more familiarity and brand awareness onto the European market, while this is the first step in internationalizing. The plan will focus on a B2B selling approach, this means reselling to wholesalers and retailers in Germany.

## 1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The aim of this research is to provide a detailed and coherent recommendation to Royal Textile and to establish whether it is feasible for them to expand activities and how to enter the German market, taking into consideration different trends and developments in this specific industry.

## 1.3 CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTION

Germany as a neighbour of the Netherlands could be an interesting country for Royal Textile to expand its activities too. It has low transport cost and easy access while it is an EU member. However, entering a foreign market has possible challenges regarding the complexity of the German market, researching regulations on textiles and the German character for instance. Thus, before entering a new market all relevant aspects should be examined to be able to conclude whether it is suitable or not to start operating internationally and to give advice on how to export the product. The research report will finish with a concrete advice for Royal Textile. To be able to give a detailed recommendation, the central research question is as follows:

*How can Royal Textile effectively- enter the German market with its newly unknown “So Cute” bedding collection?*

Several sub questions are important to be able to answer the central question. These questions are as follows:

- What kind of company is Royal Textile?
- What kind of brand is So Cute?
- What are the company's main Strengths and Weaknesses?
- What external factors of the German market can be taken into account?
- Which entry strategy would be most appropriate for Royal Textile?

#### 1.4 OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

The next chapter contains information on the methodologies used for this research report. The third chapter contains the internal analysis with a description of the company, such as the financial history, product range, mission and vision, target group, and organisational structure. The aim of this chapter is to provide a clear overview of the activities of Royal Textile. Therefore the major strengths and weaknesses are examined as well. The external analysis (chapter 4), will provide information about the German market which might affect Royal textile. Thereby the macro and micro environment are distinguished and the major opportunities and threats are stated. Based on the internal and external analysis, a SWOT analysis and confrontation matrix are designed in order to provide a clear overview of the strategic options for Royal Textile (chapter 5). Chapter 6 includes all information on different entry strategies. Subsequently a coherent conclusion and recommendation is written to Royal Textile on how to enter the German market (chapter 7 and 8). Last, the appendices contain summary of interviews, additional tables and regulations.

#### 1.5 LIMITATIONS

During the writing of this report I bumped into divers problems. Firstly it was difficult finding the correct information on the bedding industry in Germany. Even the Deutsch Niederländische Handels Kammer (DNHK) did not had that particular information in their data system. However during the interview Mrs, Gewering helped me looking for the right parties to contact. She had some relevant information on the general textile industry as well. Though, contacting different businesses in Germany asking them how the bedding industry works and what the trends and developments are, was not an easy task. A lot of these parties or unions did not want to give information because of the competitive nature this industry has in Germany. Hence, some market research reports helped me giving me good insights on the bedding industry. Royal Textile should consider interviewing more potential German customers for gaining more knowledge on bed textiles in Germany

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In order to provide a detailed recommendation for Royal Textile, several relevant research methods are used. All methods are explained below.

### 2.1 DESK RESEARCH

All results retrieved via desk research are classified as secondary data. The internet is used to outline the German market. Furthermore, case studies, books and academic articles are used to construct more objective information on the German market demonstrated in the external analysis of this report. It can be concluded that the research findings retrieved via desk research are objective as they contain facts about the German market. Subsequently, objective sources are compared with biased statements to create a valuable report.

### 2.2 MODELS USED

Several marketing and export tools have been designed to help gain insights into certain business aspects and whether it is feasible for a company to enter a foreign market. These tools will be explained below. These models are integrated because of the relevance they have in writing an export plan, regarding other cultures, customs and regulations.

#### **Abell model**

The Abell model provides a 'transparent market delineation of the current activities of a certain company' (Muilwijk, 2014). The Abell model analysis a business's scope of operation (Muilwijk, 2014). The model is also a tool that can fine-tune the future strategic approaches of a company. The model consists of three subdivisions: customers, wants and needs, and technologies. All three elements combined display the scope of a certain company.

#### **DESTEP model**

As communicated in the book Business Essentials written by marketers Ronald J. Ebert and Ricky W. Griffin, 'an external environment consists of everything outside an organisation's boundaries that might affect it' (Ebert & Griffin, 2009). A useful model for analysing the external environment of an organisation is the DESTEP model, which refers to the demographic, economic, social, technological, environmental and political aspects of a certain industry (Ebert & Griffin, 2009).



### **Porter's five forces**

As stated in the book Fundamentals of Strategy, the Porter's five forces framework helps to identify 'the attractiveness of a certain industry in terms of five forces: the threat of entry, the threat of substitutes, the power of buyers, the power of suppliers, and the extent of rivalry between competitors' (Johnson, Whittington, & Scholes, 2012). An attractive industry is one that offers a good profit potential. The five forces help to identify the structure of an industry and is therefore applicable for many companies who plan to operate internationally (Johnson, Whittington, & Scholes, 2012).

### **SWOT analysis**

According to marketers Armstrong and Kotler, 'a SWOT analysis is an overall evaluation of the company looking at the internal and external environment' (Armstrong & Kotler, 2011). SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A division can be made between these four elements. Strengths and weaknesses belong to the internal environment of a company. Opportunities and threats refer to the external environment of a company, specifically to the market in which the company is operating (Harlaar, Ouwehand, Leeuw, & Otto, 2012).

### **Confrontation matrix**

A confrontation matrix is designed in a link with the SWOT analysis. Additionally, the matrix helps to determine future strategic options. In order to do this, it is important to point out that the strengths of a company should exploit opportunities and avoid threats (Harlaar, Ouwehand, Leeuw, & Otto, 2012). The aim of the confrontation matrix is to research the challenges and/or obstacles before entering a foreign market (Harlaar, Ouwehand, Leeuw, & Otto, 2012).

### **Marketing mix**

As suggested by researchers Armstrong and Kotler, 'the marketing mix is a set of controllable marketing tools that the company blends to produce the response it wants in the target group' (Armstrong & Kotler, 2011). Thus, the marketing mix helps to market a certain product, service or brand. The marketing mix consists of five P's: product, place, price, promotion, people (Armstrong & Kotler, 2011). The marketing mix is implemented in the recommendation section as it determines the proposed strategy to enter the German market successfully.

## 2.3 FIELD RESEARCH

All results retrieved via field research are primary data. In this case only qualitative research methods are used as the quantitative methods are not applicable. This is explained and demonstrated below.

### 2.3.1 QUALITATIVE METHODS

The methods used are two interviews and information gained from e-mail contact with different parties. The interviews add value to the research report as they contribute to a clear understanding of external aspects that affect Royal Textile.

The first interview conducted was with an employee of Royal Textile, namely Rameez Ahmed asking him about the shortages and strengths of the company and the knowledge they already have regarding the international market environment. This interview has been conducted via skype, is summarized and can be found in appendix 1. The results of the interview are processed in the report.

Furthermore a phone interview with the Deutsch Niederlandische Handels Kammer (DNHK) was conducted with Export advisor Anna Gewering. This is the German-Dutch trade company, they research important trends and developments in different branches in Germany. The DNHK is a non-profit organisation that aims to advise companies who are planning to enter the German market. It offers services in the fields of German taxes, law, human resources, and the German market. The company has 35 committed members (Deutsch Niederländische Handelskammer). She could tell me more about the ins and outs when entering the German market and referred me to other parties and businesses in Germany when selling with a B2B approach. The interview is summarized in appendix 2 and the results are processed in the report.

Subsequently information has been gained from e-mail contact with Heimtex.de, Deutschestextilverband, ixpos.com, Bundesverband des deutschen Textil Einzelhandels. This information is processed in the report.

## 2.4 APPENDICES

The attached appendices of the report can be found on page 58. As mentioned above, the conducted interviews are processed in appendix 1 and 2. However more valuable information on the German market is stated in the appendix as well. Appendix 3 contains a line of tables from 2009 up to 2014 regarding the import development on all different bed textiles in Germany. This is retrieved from Eurostat Data. It shows an increasing market, so

an interesting trend for Royal Textile when exporting bed textiles to the country. After that appendix 4 can be found which contains German written regulations on textiles (Textil Kenzeichnungen), including labelling and packaging. This could be relevant information for the company when looking into the German and European legislation on textiles.

### 3. INTERNAL ANALYSIS

In the internal analysis the organisation has been researched from the inside. Thereby main strengths and weaknesses are determined by looking at the company's mission and vision, the organizational structure and the Abell framework is applied as well.

#### 3.1 COMPANY OVERVIEW ROYAL TEXTILE B.V.

The Dutch Royal textile is a wholesaler, distribution centre and supplier of high quality bed textiles in The Netherlands and Belgium and thereby one of the biggest as well (royal textile, 2015). As the organization mentions on their website they are an experienced party in doing business with. Royal textile already exists 25 years in this industry and offers partners the opportunity to create their own design with their own private label (royal textile, 2015). The enterprise sells products with a B2B and a B2C approach. At this moment the company is trying to gain more familiarity within the European market.

##### 3.1.1 MISSION

Royal textile is keen to create the greatest European platform for bedding products and collections in combination with products with a good price quality ratio and service focussed. The company wants to be the number one bed textiles provider on the B2B and B2C market throughout Europe.

##### 3.1.2 VISION

For reaching their mission, the organisation is engaged in selling on a large- scale by gaining more Global/ European awareness on their brands and products. The export plan of So Cute is already a major example of their so called expansion.

##### 3.1.3 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

As showed in the figure below Royal Textile is a small enterprise with a so called flat organisational structure (see fig. 1). Eventually all the departments are responsible for the inflow and outflow of the products from the distribution centre. Due to the low number of employees most of decisions are made together, involvement of all parties is thereby of high importance in the decision making process. Royal textile has a distribution centre in Belgium as well.

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

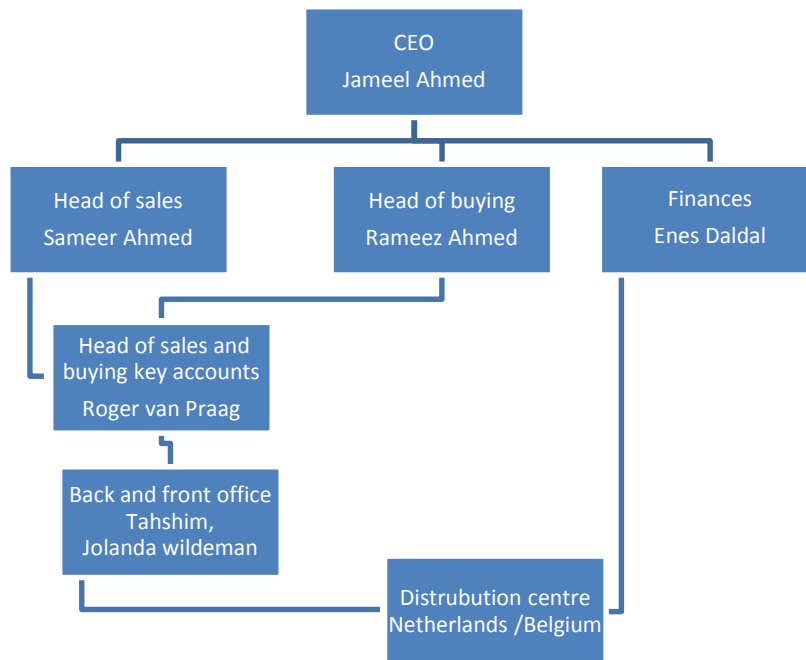


Fig. 1 Organizational structure, Source: Charlotte Leitner ,2015

### **CEO:**

Jameel Ahmed is heads the organization and is ultimately responsible for the results of the chain. He also directs the management team.

### **Head of sales:**

Sameer Ahmed ensures that the brand is clearly visible to the outside world as a part of marketing of their services. Thereby he engages in in campaigns, online activities, promotion and communication. Regarding the Sales part he is engaged in the sales of their products nationally and internationally in B2B and B2C.

### **Head of buying:**

Rameez Ahmed is responsible for the buying of the products and is aware of the different trends and development in the area of bed textiles. Thereby the needs of the consumer are taken into account.

### **Head of sales:**

Enes daldal deals with all budgets, monthly statements, all the accountancy tasks and makes statements of the results obtained.

**Head of sales and buying key accounts:**

Because of the fact that Royal textile is a small organization with a low number of employees, Roger van Praag is responsible for the key accounts of buying and sales. These accounts are of high importance to the company because they generate an enormous inflow and outflow of money.

**Back and front office:**

Tahsims and Jolanda Wildeman can be seen as the office assistants and secretary of the organisation. They do administrative tasks and answer phone calls and put through with the right person when necessary.

**Distribution centre:**

Several employees are working in the distribution centre in which all departments are connected to. In the distribution centre all products are stored and adapted to the buying and sale process. However as mentioned further in this chapter and the expansion of Royal Textile the centre is becoming too small and cannot keep up with all the product inquiries.

**3.1.4 PRODUCT RANGE DESCRIPTION**

As mentioned before Royal textile is active in the industry of bed textiles. Within this category the company supplies in high quality duvet covers, bed sheets, pillows, blankets, fitted sheets, bed spreads and beach towels. All these products are derived by various partnerships with different brands. These partners are expensive brands as Dreamhouse bedding, Disney, Home living, Magic dream, Marvel, Mattel, Nickelodeon, Primaviera deluxe and So Cute for instance (royal textile, 2015). The offer varies from textiles for children to textiles for adults in the selling price range of three segments namely, €20- 40, €30- €60 and €40- €60 euros. For the B2B selling the website: royaltextile.nl is only accessible for partners and not the individual-end consumer (royal textile, 2015). These partners are mainly retailers or wholesalers. Though the company's sells B2C as well and is accessible for the individual customer via primavieradeluxe.com (primavieradeluxe, 2015). Primaviera deluxe offers a wide range of bedding textiles. These exist of brands as Sleeptime, Dreamhouse bedding, Primaviera deluxe, Hotel Linnen en Fancy embroidery (primavieradeluxe, 2015).

**3.1.5. DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS**

As said before different selling approaches are applied, Royal Textile utilises four different channels.

- Webstore

primavieradeluxe.com is the web shop for the end individual customer. Consumers can easily add different products to their personal and digital shopping cart. The company uses a 24 hours delivery service (primavieradeluxe, 2015).

- Distribution centre

As Royal Textile does not have physical retail stores, products are stored in their distribution centre. The centre stores products for the individual customers and the businesses they sell to. These businesses are retail stores or other wholesalers Royal textile supplies. Hence, the middleman between the manufacturer and the retailer (encyclo, 2015).

- Wholesaler

Royal textile is a wholesaler as well, the company resells products to physical retail stores. These businesses can find the correct information on royaltextile.nl. This website is also available for businesses that would like to start partnership with Royal Textile.

- Supplier

Refers to all the channels above. Royal textile supplies bedding goods. A supplier may be distinguished from a contractor or subcontractor, who commonly adds specialized input to deliverables (business dictionary, 2015). Also called vendor.

## 3.2 COMPANY OVERVIEW SO CUTE

As already mentioned in the introduction the brand So Cute is key in this research project. So Cute is a new young Dutch brand especially meant for girls (pre-teens). It combines fresh vibrant colours, soft vintage and girly pink for their products (So Cute, 2015). The designs include candy, cupcake, flower and butterfly patterns and other sweet pictures. The brand is inspired by the style of Katy Perry for her unconventional style of dress like humour, bright colours and food related themes (So Cute, 2015).

### 3.2.1 HISTORY

La Terzi, the founder of the company, is in the business of making designs and concepts for the last 10 years. Through the years the company serviced several companies and brands from all over the world with their designs, colour themes and concepts for many product groups (So Cute, 2015). La Terzi was ready for a new challenge and launched their own kids brand 'So Cute' in 2013.

### 3.2.2 MISSION

The company's goal is to realize the so called "make believe world", as mentioned on their website, they apply that in their designs and accessories (So Cute, 2015).

### 3.2.1 THE ROLE OF ROYAL TEXTILE

So Cute offers different products as bedding collections, postcards, bags, towels, table covers etc. For the first collection Royal Textile has the license to sell and position the new product not only on an national level however internationally as well. Hereby a B2B and B2C approach will be used. For now this project focuses on the corporate/business market as this is most relevant for the start of exporting. A duvet cover set is available in the price category from 40 euros.

## 3.3 ABELL FRAMEWORK

For a good overview of the various customer groups, their needs and the technologies that can best be used to serve the customer, Derek F. Abell developed a Business definitions model, the Abell Framework (abell model, 2015). The model for Royal Textile can be found in the figure below. In some cases their technologies can be distinguished in B2B and B2C services.

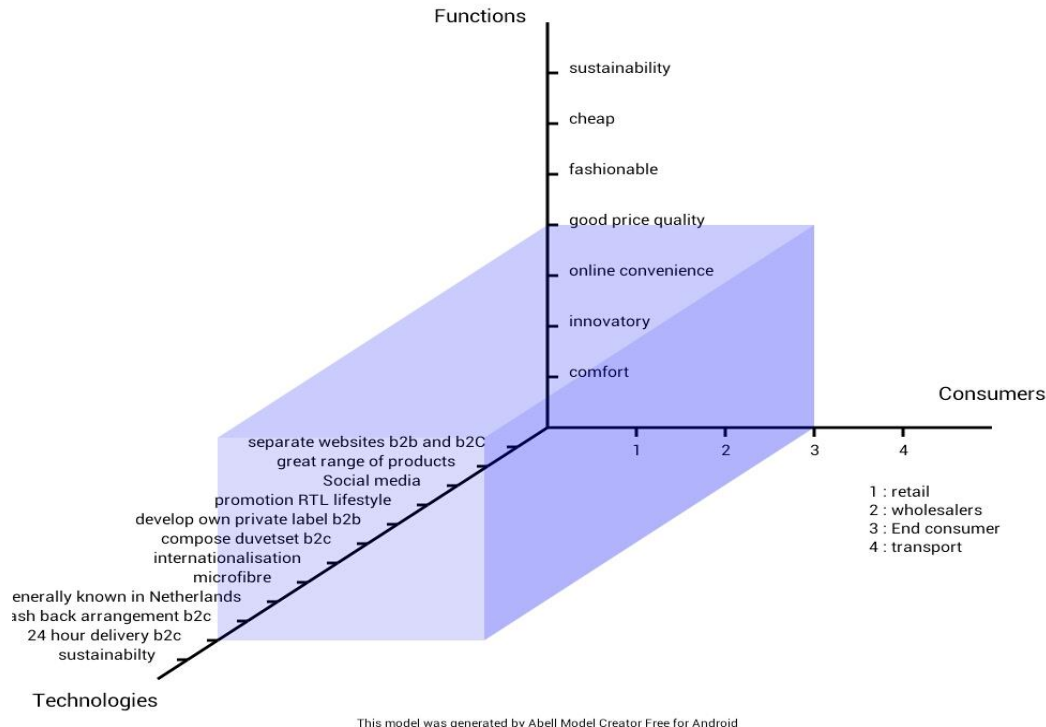


Fig. 2 Abell model Royal Textile, source: Abell creator, Charlotte Leitner, 2015



### **Customer needs/ functions**

For the model all the relevant needs for the chosen market and company should be highlighted. Regarding Royal textile the products provided belong to the bed textiles product group. As showed in the figure above the company fulfils different customer needs. Royal Textile claims to be innovatory in their product line, comfort is a major factor and they offer a good price quality (Ahmed, 2014). However regarding the trends and developments on bed textiles the customer is looking for inexpensive products and is the convenience of online purchases of more importance (Rabobank, 2014). The communication between customers and company is an obstacle and requires more structure and good clear systems (Ahmed, 2014). Automatics is of high relevance in the business environment at this moment, a mobile responsive website could be essential as a businesscard (Morskate. T, 2015). Nowadays sustainability has gained more relevance to the customer as well (bijkorf, 2015). Thereby a focus on the environment is a major factor in selling and exporting.

### **Technologies**

In this part an answer has been given to the question in how the company fulfils the several needs. Royal Textile makes a clear distinction between the end consumers and their partners. This comes forward in the separate websites the organisation has for these customer groups. For the end consumers Royal textile feels it is important to facilitate the order and delivery process of their products as much as possible. Customer service is a major factor, as a 24 hour delivery is provided and there is a cash back arrangement for instance (primavieradeluxe, 2015). While the customer is looking for fashion and choice options, the company offers a great range of products and gives the partners and end consumer a chance to design their own duvet set (bijkorf, 2015). Furthermore Royal textile is actively promoting their products on social media and even came on a Dutch lifestyle program (wics, 2015). Besides the company is generally known in the Netherlands and is internationalizing for expansion

### **Customer groups**

Within this part the most important customer groups are formed. Thereby Royal Textile mostly focuses on the first three groups. As said before the company uses B2B selling and B2C selling. B2B can be divided into two groups: Namely retail and wholesalers. B2C is a direct selling approach to the end- consumer, this is achieved by their online store. As the company's transport partners are customers as well, it is mentioned however not explicitly used in this model.

### 3.4 STRENGTHS

Regarding the extensive internal analysis the major strengths of the company can be clearly determined. These will be explained and mentioned in this part below.

#### S1 B2C and B2B selling approach

Royal textile sells products to businesses and the end consumer. With this they clearly distinguish these customer groups regarding the products and separate websites. The company approaches these groups differently and could thereby encounter their needs best.

#### S2 Service focussed

As said before the company applies a B2C and a B2B selling approach. The two websites show that Royal textile is very service oriented. For the end consumer good service is important in buying online. The organisation has a 24 hours delivery service and a cashback arrangement if the purchase is not satisfactory. As for the partners the company has a clear website and an information request form which is immediately considered.

#### S3 Generally known in the Netherlands

This is another strength of the company, as 25 years of experience on the Dutch market can be crucial for internationalization of their products and services.

#### S4 Dynamic company

From an interview with the company and a video on their website it appears that their collections and processes towards customers are volatile. The company quickly adapts to various trends and developments in the field of bedding. It is dynamic to their customers' needs as well.

#### S5 Good price-quality ratio

Due to the wide range of products of different brands, carefully chooses on their quality, Royal textile gives one's money worth. These products therefore have a good price- quality ratio.

#### S6 Extensive product range

As said before the enterprise operates with a great range of products and different brand and price levels. Thereby a large audience can be reached whether they are adults or children, female or male, there is a duvet cover set available for everyone. This is attractive in b2b and b2c selling as well, and can therefore be seen as a strength.

### S7 Active on Social media

Nowadays a life without social media is no longer to imagine in the marketing world. It gives companies a large share in increasing brand awareness and is an inexpensive manner of advertising (joomla design, n.d). Furthermore, the competitors will also use social media and organisations can keep up with their activities. Royal Textile uses Twitter and Facebook as advertising channels.

## 3.5 WEAKNESSES

Regarding the extensive internal analysis the major weaknesses of the company can be clearly determined as well. These will be explained and mentioned in this part below

### W1 Bad communication inwards/outwards the company

From the interview and some bad experiences it appears the communication inwards and outwards the company can be improved. Due to less employees and people with busy schedules communication skills on problems or appointed meetings are inevitable.

### W2 Small distribution centre

As Royal textile is expanding and licensed to sell for more and more brands, their distribution centre is almost too small for their stock. As a consequence less can be sold and the process of delivery can be delayed as well.

### W3 Outdated system

The organisation still operates with an outdated system. As a consequence more manpower is necessary to structure the processes and more time is needed to finalize an order.

### W4 Less attention internationalization on websites

Royal Textile is internationalizing, however this is not seen on their Facebook page yet, which is only in Dutch (facebook Royal Textile, 2015). It is of high relevance to give more attention the international customer as Social media reaches a large audience. As for exporting to Germany with a B2B focus, the German customer highly appreciates knowledge on the German language. A translator on the website is therefore a necessary tool.

#### W5 Small enterprise

The company has a small organizational structure, and therefore less employees. When internationalizing it might be difficult to pay full attention to this procedure. The organisation needs more manpower for market research though the will rise and is more time consuming.

## 4. EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

In the external analysis extensive research has been done to the external forces and factors that could affect the company while exporting to Germany. By investigating the MACRO and MICRO environment of the chosen country the major threats and opportunities can be determined.

### 4.1 MACRO ENVIRONMENT: DESTEP MODEL

DESTEP stands for demographic, economic, social, technological, ecological and political analysis. It is a broad analysis of macro factors that may affect the organization's business internationally and nationally. Macro environmental factors need to be taken into account when entering a new market, as these factors can have major influences on the decision-making process of a company (Encyclo, 2015). Firstly the general factors of each theme are explained and then what this could mean for Royal Textile.

#### THE DEMOGRAPHIC FACTOR

Germany is Europe's second most populous nation; only Russia has a larger population. Germany has around 81 million inhabitants. The age and gender structure of the country is described in the chart below (CIA, 2014).

**0-14 years:** 13% (male 5,386,525/female 5,107,336)

**15-24 years:** 10.6% (male 4,367,713/female 4,188,566)

**25-54 years:** 41.7% (male 17,116,346/female 16,664,995)

**55-64 years:** 13.6% (male 5,463,221/female 5,574,166)

**65 years and over:** 21.1% (male 7,468,552/female 9,659,265)

The vast majority (91,5%) of the country's population is German and thereby Turkish people are the largest ethnic minority, making up 2.45% of the country's population. The life expectancy at birth is 78.15 years for males and 82.86 years for females. The five largest cities in the country are Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, Cologne and Frankfurt am Main (CIA, 2014).

#### THE ECONOMIC FACTOR

The German economy is the fifth largest in the world and the largest in Europe. The country is the leading exporter in Europe of different kinds of goods, including machinery, chemicals, vehicles and household equipment (CIA, 2014). The German gross domestic product in 2014 was around 3,621 trillion dollars (atlas media, 2014). The GDP per capita in Germany is

\$44.700. Germany was seriously affected by the global financial crisis in 2008. In 2009 the gross national product of the country dropped by 4.7%. In 2010 the gross national product increased 3.6%, which is the biggest increase since German reunification in 1990 (Duitsland Web, 2014). The total labour force was around 44.76 million people in 2014. Thereby the country's unemployment rate is 5 %. Furthermore the inflation rate in 2014 was 0.9% which is a decrease in comparison with 2013 (CIA, 2014)).

Germany has an enormous flow of import and export. Around 71% of Germany's import comes from Europe. The Netherlands is the major trade partner in exporting goods and services to Germany following by China. In 2014 Germany imported goods worth around 97.7 billion dollars from the Netherlands, which is almost 10% percent of Germany's total imports (Atlas media, 2014)).

### **THE SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTOR**

Socio cultural factors are typical customs, lifestyles and values that characterize a society (ask, 2015). These factors can affect businesses, an extensive explanation of cross cultural differences can be found after this part. However some general trends come forward regarding culture. The intervention of the Internet has led to a growth of interconnectedness for instance (ask, 2014). This is due to the increase of the use of social media and telecommunications. By sharing information a lot of things are not anonymous anymore.

To point out some typical German customs, the National language is German, which is a West Germanic language and derives most of its vocabulary from the Germanic branch of the IndoEuropean language family. The use of English language is upcoming as 64% of the people speak English (Google, 2014). These are mostly students and business people whom have a higher level of English while practicing. The use of the language is widespread enough and is mandatory in school, though it is a matter of practicing skills. The main religions in Germany are Protestant 34%, Roman Catholic 34%, and Muslim 3.7%. A significant number of the population 28,3% is unaffiliated or another religion (CIA, 2014). Regarding education, Germany had one of the world's best and most extensive school and university systems. 86% of the Germans have at least finished high school (88% of the men and 83% of the women) (Countrystudies, n.d). From experience the country is very attractive for foreign students, because the students pay nothing or very little for tuition fees.

According to the MarketLine, life expectancy at birth for the whole population stood at 80.4 years in 2014. Moreover, Germany ranked sixth out of 187 nations in the UNDP's 2014 Human Development Index (Marketline, 2014). These indicators indicates the country's high

levels of human development. According to Eurostat, around 20.3% of the German population was at risk of poverty or social exclusion (Eurostat, 2015). Compared to the Netherlands this is relatively high.

### **THE TECHNOLOGICAL FACTOR**

In 2013 about 77 % of the Germans used the internet on a regular basis (statista, 2014). The biggest age group that has access to the internet are people 14 to 19 years old which is 97% of the total group (statista, 2014). This could be an important aspect to Royal textile in promoting the product. In total 18.7 million Germans have access to a mobile device or a tablet. Thereby the most active group on these devices are in the age group of 16-24 years old. Also, the most preferred payment method in Germany is purchase on account, followed by PayPal and direct debit (GTAI, 2013). According to a study conducted by the E- Commerce-Center, “over eighty percent of people making online purchases consider the availability of their preferred payment procedure to be very or absolutely important” (GTAI, 2013). Furthermore a sustainable business approach is greatly valued in Germany.

### **THE ENVIRONMENTAL FACTOR**

Under the National Development Plan for Electric Mobility, the government plans to put 1 million electric vehicles on the roads by 2020, and then aims to raise this number to 6 million by 2030 (marketline, 2014) .

Germany faces a significant threat from airborne particles, which contribute to high pollution levels. A survey of air quality by the Federal Environmental Agency (UBA) showed that in more than 50% of measuring stations in urban areas, thereby the permitted levels were exceeded (marketline, 2014).

### **THE POLITICAL FACTOR**

The European Union has an internal market which seeks to guarantee the free movement of goods, capital, services and people (Europa, 2014). Some articles which protect these rights are described below.

- Article 30 TFEU 'Customs duties on imports and exports and changes having equivalent effects shall be prohibited between Member states. This prohibition shall also apply to customs duties of a fiscal nature' (Van ooik. R, & van damme. T, 2013).

- Article 110 TFEU: 'No Member State shall impose, directly or indirectly, on the products of other Member States any internal taxation of any kind in excess of that imposed directly or

indirectly on similar domestic products. Furthermore, no Member State shall impose on the products of other Member States any internal taxation of such a nature as to afford indirect protection to other products' (Van ooiK. R, & van damme. T, 2013).

#### 4.1.1 CORPORATE CULTURE

Understanding a country's organizational culture is key in reaching a successful negotiation (trade). It indicates the behaviour of humans within an organization and the meaning people attach to those behaviour. According to needle (2004), organizational culture represents the collective values, beliefs and principles of organizational members and depends on factors as history products, market, technology and strategy, type of employees, management style and national culture (entrepreneur, 2014). Hereby culture includes the organizations vision, values, norms, systems, symbols, language, assumptions, beliefs and habits (entrepreneur, 2014). Thus, organizational culture affects the way people and groups interact with each other, with clients, and with stakeholders. For examining the specific export country, namely Germany, divers examples of their typical habits will be mentioned. For creating a clear image the six dimensions of Hofstede will be used as well. An explanation of these dimension can be found further in this chapter.

When doing business in Germany, it is essential that you appreciate the business etiquette this is of great importance to your German partners. Germany is a nation that is strongly individualistic, and demands respect at all times, therefore the highest of standards are expected(business culture, 2014)). Any unethical behaviour will seriously have a negative effect to all future business negotiations. Another interesting aspect of doing business in Germany is that the German government takes environmental issues in the country very seriously and the inclusion of the Green party has influenced Germany's energy and environmental policy objectives (expatica, 2014). Germany has become a pioneer within the EU in reducing greenhouse gas emissions . Thus they think it is of high importance that a company operates under a Corporate Social and Responsible approach.

##### 4.2.1.1 DIMENSIONS OF HOFSTEDÉ

For a better understanding of cultural differences Geert Hofstede created of model of cultural dimensions which can be compared with the large differences in company cultures. He initially identified four cultural dimensions to distinguish one culture from another. Later he added a fifth and a sixth dimension, and that is how the model stands today (Mindtools,



2015)). He scored each country using a scale of 0 to 100 for each dimension. The higher the score, the more that dimension is displayed in society (Mindtools, 2015). In the figure below the model can be found regarding the German culture in comparison with the Dutch culture (fig. 3). By exploring the culture through the model, a good overview comes forward of the factors of the German culture relative to other world cultures.

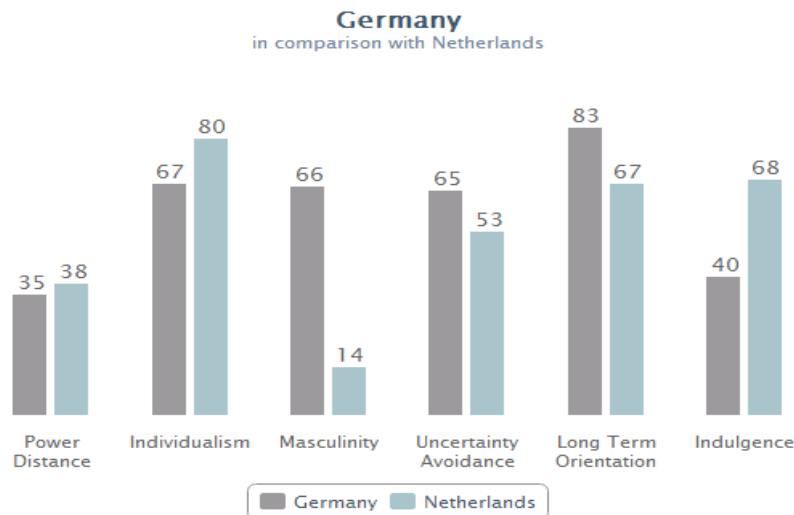


Fig.3 Dimensions comparison, source: Geert Hofstede, 2015

### Power distance

This dimension is about the fact that all individuals in societies are not equal. It shows the attitude of the culture towards inequalities amongst us. Power distance is defined as *the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally* (Geert-hofstede, 2015). The country is highly decentralised and supported by a strong middle class, though Germany is not a low power distant countries (score 35).

### Individualism

The issue addressed by this dimension is *the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members* (Geert- Hofstede, 2015). It has to do with whether people thinking in terms of “I” or “We”. In Individualist societies people are supposed to look after themselves and their direct family only. In Collectivist societies people belong to ‘groups’ that take care of them in exchange for loyalty. The German society is a very individualistic one (67).

### Masculinity

A high score (masculine) on indicates that the society is driven by competition, achievement and success, with success being defined by the winner. A low score (feminine) on the means that the important values in society are caring for others and quality of life. *The fundamental*

*issue here is what motivates people, wanting to be the best (masculine) or liking what you do (feminine) (Geert Hofstede, 2015).* With a score of 66 Germany is considered a masculine society.

### **Uncertainty avoidance**

Uncertainty Avoidance is about the way a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known. It is *The extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations and have created beliefs and institutions that try to avoid these (Geert-hofstede,2015)* is reflected in the UAI score. Germans often avoid uncertainty (65); the score is on the high end, so there is a slight preference for uncertainty avoidance.

### **Long Term Orientation**

This describes *how every society has to maintain some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and future( geert hofstede, 2015).* Normative societies who have lower scores, prefer to maintain time-honoured traditions and norms. Those with a culture which scores high, on the other hand, take a more pragmatic approach. Germany's high score of 83 indicates that it is a pragmatic country

### **Indulgence**

One challenge that confronts humanity, is the degree to which children are socialized. This dimension is defined as *the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses,* based on the way they were raised (geert- Hofstede, 2015). Relatively weak control is called “indulgence” and relatively strong control is called “restraint”. The low score of 40 indicates that the German culture is restrained.

## **4.1.2 CONCLUSIONS ON THE MACRO ENVIRONMENT**

Regarding So Cute the most important groups for their segment are the first two age groups with young girls as targeted customers. However as for the first age group the parents will often pay and make decisions over their children's bedroom interiors. In this case it is of high relevance to promote products among the third group as well. Germany's import on Textiles lays around 47.7 billion dollars per year which is 4.36% of the total import of products (europa, 2014). For newcomers like Royal Textile this could be an beneficial development bedlinen (see appendix 3 for the Eurostat tables). It indicates that the country imports a large amount of bed textiles and is still increasing.

As the Germans expect and appreciate if a business partner has a little knowledge of the German language it could be useful to speak German, even if it is just for showing interest and creating partnerships. As internet and different mobile devices gained more popularity it is important to respond to this trend. With teenagers as the target group it could be useful to promote the product. Regarding the environment Corporate Social Responsibility for example is a major aspect in doing business with Germany as people are very conscious about the environment (Expatica, 2015)). Royal textile could play a role in these developments by taking the environment into account and make use of so called green logistics or green packaging and labelling for instance. It is of course a particular investment, however you encounter the governments inquiries and thereby consumer needs.

When it is about the specific textile industry Germany is obliged to follow the European rules but also their national and private law these can be found in appendix 4. under the name Textil Kenzeichnungen. As a member of the EU Germany is an accessible country for EU members. This will cause less problems for Royal Textile when entering the market. However the autonomous way of governing, when looking at the different states, different rules could be taken into consideration.

## 4.2 MICRO ENVIRONMENT: INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

In this part the Micro environment of Germany is investigated. Firstly the trends and developments of the textile industry in the country will be researched and highlighted. Then, wholesales business and the specific bedding industry are discussed. Subsequently the branch is researched by the Porter five forces model.

### 4.2.1 WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE IN GERMANY

German retail and wholesale industries link manufacturers to customers. In total, approximately 530,000 (163,000 in wholesale; 367,000 in retail) companies that employ about 4.9 million (1.9 m in wholesale; 3 m in retail) people (ixpos, 2015). The sector is making an annual turnover of approximately 1.5 trillion euro (1.1 trillion in wholesale; 498 billion in retail) (ixpos, 2015). Germany is one of the top exporting nations, it's economic success also depends on imports to a large degree. For this, wholesalers, international trading companies and commercial agents support foreign importers with broad knowledge of the German and European markets (Gewering, 2015)

#### **Retail**

German retailers know the preferences of local consumers well and help to supply Europe's largest consumer market of 80 million potential customers with the products and goods it

requires. The modern retail structures and innovative sales services support suppliers in meeting the consumers' demand. The German retail industry employs 2.9 million individuals who work for 410,000 companies making it the third largest industrial sector (ixpos, 2015). Its annual turnover of more than 400,000 billion Euros is earned by small and medium sized enterprises. As a result of stable consumer spending, these revenues remained relatively constant during the financial crisis. In 2010, retail sales demonstrated a strong development and increased by 1.8 percent (ixpos, 2015)

### **Wholesale**

The German wholesale sector counts 120,000 companies with 1.4 million employees (ixpos, 2015). Further, there are approximately 70,000 specialized commercial agencies active in the German market. The wholesale industry provides the indispensable link between production and retailing. Nowadays, wholesale businesses have developed into modern marketing and distribution enterprises that offer good business-to-business services ( (Gewering, 2015)) In 2010, the turnover of German wholesale companies increased by 13 percent (ixpos, 2015).

### **E-commerce**

In 2010 the turnover of distance selling businesses was 32.4 billion Euros, which led to a growth of 7 percent (ixpos, 2015). Especially E-commerce is expanding its market share. In 2010, online purchases were 23.7 billion Euros. Over the last five years, E-commerce experienced growth rates of more than 10 percent. Sixty six percent of all distance purchases were made online, 44 percent were ordered via traditional distance sales channels like mail and teleshopping (ixpos, 2015). Emerging trends are the use of mobile devices and social media (Gewering, 2015)

## **4.2.2 ENTERING THE GERMAN TEXTILE MARKET**

Entering the German textile market requires research and preparation. There are many aspects to be taken into consideration, these are demonstrated and explained below.

### **Standardization**

The Textiles and Textile Machinery Standards Committee (Textilnorm) is in charge of establishing DIN standards for textiles, clothing as well as textile machinery (ixpos, 2015). The different DIN standards define the requirements, dimensions, technical terminology and testing standards for particular areas in the textile industry. Foreign companies must ensure that their textile products fit to all relevant standards in Germany (Gewering, 2015)

### **Labelling**

The German Textile Labelling Law is the foundation for the labelling of textiles on the market. All textiles manufactured, imported and sold in Germany must have a label indicating their raw materials composition (ixpos, 2015). According to the law which applies to all textile products, textiles may only be sold if they possess the appropriate specification of the fibre contents and care and washing instructions ( (Gewering, 2015)). The Textile Labelling Law unifies with the EU Directive 96/74/EC in order to make sure that these rules are general throughout the EU.

### **Certification**

The most used and recognized certificate of quality for textiles in Germany and the EU is the Oeko-Tex Standard 100 (ixpos, 2015). This voluntary certificate provides the textile and clothing industry a constant standard for consumers who aim to buy textiles that are free of harmful substances. All raw material and end products at all stages of production are tested and certified to comply with the standard.

Another voluntary label is the European Ecolabel. This "bio" label stands for products that have been manufactured and can be recycled according to strict ecological requirements (ixpos, 2015). The logo may be used after a detailed examination and certification process, on a number of various organic products including textiles.

### **4.2.3 TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENT HOME TEXTILES**

In the upcoming years a total new trend comes forward in the interior. Textiles are innovated and are more seen as part of art in the interior. As seen in the 'Heimtextil messe' in Frankfurt, designers speak of Experience, a theme that is divided in four important categories namely: Sensory, mixology, discovery and memory (nachtmanufaktur, 2015). These will affect interior designs and the home textile trends these months. Also other important trends are visible.

#### **Sensory - how we feel**

It is about innovative products for the living area. The feel-good factor in your own home is always important. People want to feel comfortable and protected. Also "intelligent textiles" play a role. So-called responsive technologies and react to the change by light for instance. Super-sensory materials surprise you with an incredible variety of effects that appeal to the sense of touch and always trigger new sensations (nachtmanufaktur, 2015). The surfaces of the fabrics range from paper-like structures on or painted with a likely oily structure.

### **Mixology - diversity and mixing of different styles**

The fascination of diversity and blending of various styles is the foundation of mixology. It makes no difference what cultural or ethnic background shape, colour or feel it is from. If this pleases the customer everything is permitted - from multiculturalism to MixMax of fantasy in designing there are no limits (nachtmanufaktur, 2015). But the themes of "recycling" and the so-called "ProductHacking" play a role in mixology (nachtmanufaktur, 2015). Waste or totally untypical materials are increasingly used in the production of textiles

### **Discovery - the joy of exploring**

Not only designers discover the valuable resources of the planet Earth. Consumers also are inspired by the materials and finishes of lunar rocks, asteroids and meteorites. The exterior specifics of these materials bring a special fascination to the textile industry. When viewing the cosmos there are infinite things to discover. the contrasts between light and dark as well as colour and monochrome - From the total light absorption of a black hole on the brilliant colour rays of the nebula to the final sparkle of a supernova attract the interest to designers this year (nachtmanufaktur, 2015).

### **Memory - reflectiveness and reorientation**

A counterpoint to the optimism of the previous topics is simplicity and purity. The desire for ethically proper awareness are more popular than ever. When creating value for customers by producing their favourite pieces and artifacts of lasting value -is a need that increasingly expresses itself in maximum overstimulation, consumerism and total accessibility (nachtmanufaktur, 2015). Many materials are therefore more honest and useful and that brings even old friends like denim or linen back on the market.

### **Cotton made in Africa**

The Aid by Trade Foundation and its Cotton made in Africa label initiative celebrated their 10th anniversary in 2015. The initiative supports around 700,000 African cotton growers in ten sub-Saharan countries and thus reaches around 5.5 million people (heimtextil blog, 2015). At Heimtextil, Cotton made in Africa will present itself in the 'Green Village' part. Hence an trends of CSR is upcoming.

### **Digital printing**

Fine patterns are the trend in bedding. Featured like binding effects and weave structures of Melange on herringbone and Faux-Unis to fine damask (heimtextil blog, 2015). Another strong theme is digital printing. With deep sharp and brilliant color decorations on satin background he plays now also in an important linen (fashion) role.

**Individuality is the key**

Design for tomorrow's world must be personal, distinctive and sustainable. These are just some of the requirements that 200 or so design studios, who are exhibiting within the framework of 'Design Live', have set out to meet (heimtextil blog, 2015). These could already be the new products and ideas for 2016.

**4.2.4 PORTER FIVE FORCES**

The following model is partly derived from research conducted by MarketLine and describes the five forces of Porter. Information is gained from different reports on the home wares and textile industry in general. The homewares market includes the following segments: home hardware, lighting, textiles and soft furnishings, and window dressings. Textiles and soft furnishings include the sale of bathroom textiles, beddings, cushions, futons, hammocks, mattresses, table linen and other textile and soft furnishings like clothing and furniture coverings, door mats, laundry bags, parasols, shoe bags and shopping bags (marketline industry profile, 2014). The textiles market includes yarns, fabrics, apparel, and non-apparel finished products. The value of each segment is for consumption, defined as domestic production plus imports minus exports, all valued at manufacturer prices (marketline industry profile, 2014). Apparel covers all other clothing except leather and footwear. Non-apparel products include technical, household, and other made-up non-clothing products.

The outcomes are partly used in this model, however the interview with DNHK was of high importance as well to this part of the report. A combination of these reports and interviews will be used for the creation of this analysis. The specific industry will be analysed taking retailers of homewares/textiles as the key buyers, and manufacturers of homewares/textiles as the key suppliers. (MarketLine Industry Profile, 2014)

**BUYER POWER**

Textiles:

Textile materials have a wide assortment of uses, the most common of which are for clothing, carpeting, upholstered furnishings, window shades, towels, covering for tables, beds, etc. These wide areas of use highlight both the large number of buyers within the textiles market, as well as the importance of products sold here for buyers' business. Finished apparel is sold to retailers, and again, there are usually a large number of potential buyers. There is no brand loyalty in this market and with fairly low switching costs and commoditized products (except for some niche materials) (marketline industry profile, 2014). Overall, buyer power is assessed as moderate.

**Homewares:**

The large number of buyers curtails consumers ability to influence the market. However, the necessity of many homeware products to consumers makes them available through a large number of different retailers; thus increasing choice and enhancing buyer power. While many of the same product lines are stocked by different retailers, there are instances where a certain product is stocked selectively; for example a premium brand may have negotiated exclusive distribution through one retailer, or larger homeware items may only be available on larger out of town premises compared to a high street presence (marketline industry profile, 2014). This limits buyers' choice of retailer and thus reduces buyer power.

Price sensitivity is relatively high and most product lines are available from different retailers, some homewares may also be considered luxuries rather than necessities. With the exception of some luxury homeware retail companies, brand strength is relatively unimportant and enhances buyer power. Price is a more significant factor than brand loyalty; supermarkets' or department stores' own brands and shopping at retailers with a reputation for low-cost, such as IKEA, are prevalent (marketline industry profile, 2014). The overall, buyer power in this case is weak.

***SUPPLIER POWER*****Textiles:**

Yarns and fabrics can be made from various materials coming from sources as diverse as animals (e.g. wool) to synthetic (e.g. polyester). Polyester and cotton dominate the apparel category, though smaller but significant volumes of viscose and wool are used. Different kinds of fibre require raw materials from radically different industries and therefore act as alternatives to each other (marketline industry profile, 2014). The specific nature of some companies means that they will only have the resources to supply raw materials such as cotton or wool. For example, if cotton prices began to rise, a fibre manufacturer may be able to increase its usage of nylon (provided the company had already invested in suitable equipment); however, it would be very difficult for cotton growers or traders to defend against this strategy (marketline industry profile, 2014). This weakens supplier power.

**Homewares:**

Manufacturers of homewares typically have small- to medium-sized operations and often specialize in one area, such as pottery, glassware, metallurgy or soft-furnishings. Due to the expertise required, backward integration of homeware retailers into manufacturing is generally not common. Many manufacturers rely on retailers reselling their products. Brand tends to be relatively unimportant to end-consumers, who are generally more concerned



with the quality and design of the product, as well as value for money (marketline industry profile, 2014). The lack of brand strength restricts the ability of manufacturers to dominate the market. However, the ability of suppliers to diversify their product through design and quality is possible. Due to the wide availability of products and easy access to products similar to branded ones, means switching costs are relatively low.

In some instances, players do backwards integrate. IKEA is vertically integrated throughout the production process, sourcing 12% of its raw materials internally in 2014 (marketline industry profile, 2014). This undermines supplier power. Thus the overall, supplier power is moderate.

### ***NEW ENTRANTS***

Textiles:

Textile manufacture is based in the conversion of different types of fibre into yarn, then fabric, then textiles. These are then fabricated into clothes or other artifacts. Investment in production equipment, such as fibre extruders, carders and ring spinners are required for entry into the market. Factors such as brand strength are of little significance in a business-to-business (B2B) market. Germany accounts for just over 16% of the European market. The German market has seen decline in recent years, although growth since 2009 may encourage new entrants (marketline industry profile, 2014).

EU trade rules on textiles are moderately strict. The EU oversees agreements between European and developing economies on the basis of technical and environmental standards. The interior trade of textile and clothing articles is also regulated by the EU's Agreement on Textiles and Clothing within a frame of the World Trade Organization (marketline industry profile, 2014). New entrants may renounce plans by the need to comply with such regulations, as this requires money and time. Overall, the threat of new entrants is assessed as moderate.

Homewares:

Low brand loyalty means that it is relatively easy for new players to enter this market. Large retailers also benefit from economies of scale that allow them to negotiate better deals with suppliers and be more price competitive. Further options include innovative new entrants who accommodate for smaller living spaces a new trend in Berlin for instance will succeed in this market. New entrants further benefit from low-switching costs for buyers and low product differentiation. Germany's homewares market has grown moderately defying the wider Eurozone economics, which will prove attractive to new entrants to the market

(Marketline industry profile, 2014). Overall, the threat of new entrants in this market is strong.

#### ***THREAT OF SUBSTITUTES***

Textiles:

There are limited options for fiber substitution. However, players with appropriately diversified manufacturing capacity can use several different raw materials, and the degree of diversification influences the threat of substitutes (marketline industry profile, 2014). If a fiber manufacturer specializes in one market segment, such as woolen yarns, then the threat of substitutes is strong. A wool fiber specialist cannot readily respond to this, as the production techniques for wool, cotton, and synthetic fibers are quite different, requiring investment in different equipment. In practice, it is common for textile fiber manufacturers to offer products in more than one market segment. Overall, the threat of substitutes is assessed as moderate.

Homewares:

There are few substitutes to retailed homeware goods and products. Some homeware items such as textiles, soft furnishings and window dressings can be home-made; however this constitutes a weak threat of substitution given the time involved and skill level required to create these products. This is also mitigated by instances where retailers also provide fabrics and materials for buyers to create their own cushions or curtains (marketline industry profile, 2014). These alternatives, coupled with low switching costs for buyers, puts the overall threat of substitutes as low.

#### **4.2.5 COMPETITOR ANALYSIS**

This section provides an overview of the main competitors of Royal Textile when entering the German market. The competitors are analysed on several aspects: target group, product range, direct and indirect, concept and head office. Table 1 provides a clear overview of each competitor.


Company	Target group	Product range	Concept	Direct/ indirect	Originated
<b>PIP studio b.v</b>	Teenager / young women	Wide not only bedding	Distributor/ webstore	direct	Netherlands
<b>Essenza Home</b>	All ages	Narrow but deep	Retail/ webstore	Indirect	Netherlands
<b>Snurk</b>	Teenager	Narrow	Distributor/ webstore	direct	Netherlands
<b>Herding 24</b>	All ages	Narrow but deep	Distributor/ webstore	direct	Germany
<b>Giant homeware houses: Ikea</b>	All ages	Wide and deep, homewares	Retail/ webstore	Indirect	Sweden

Table 1, source: Charlotte Leitner, 2015

**PIP Studio B.V.**

Pip studio is originated in de Netherlands. The concept they use is most comparable with the design So Cute applies. PIP's style has a warm and almost intimate touchy-feely character. The company often uses a mix and match concept with layered patterns and a sharp eye for tiny details and special finishing touches combined with a subtle colour pallet (pip studio, 2015). Most PIP products are available throughout Europe in the better specialist shops and chain stores. PIP is also currently attracting a lot of attention outside Europe. The company is beginning to make a name in Australia and Brazil, and is taking the first careful steps in America too. Their motto 'Happy products for Happy people' expresses that (pip studio, 2015). Below a table with the most obvious strengths and weaknesses (see table 2)

Regarding their website PIP has special dealers/suppliers for the selling of their brand. The Online shop for these bed textiles is Essenza Home (essenza home, 2015).



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong worldwide brandname</li> <li>- B2C and B2B selling approach around the world</li> <li>- For Germany same shipping costs as for the Netherlands: 4.95</li> <li>- Active on different social media, Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook: 75.000 likes (Facebook PIP, 2015)</li> <li>- Great range of products, home, bed, clothing, bath, porcelain, stationary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Website less accessible, less public information. Difficult to get in touch with PIP.</li> <li>- High shipping costs outside Europe increasing to almost 130,-</li> <li>- Expensive price range, A duvet cover set is available from 70,-</li> </ul>
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Table 2, Strengths and weaknesses. Source: Charlotte Leitner 2015

### Essenza home

Essenza home is a Dutch inspiring home styling concept with beautiful brands suitable for various interior styles. Essenza home offers an all-round mix of international outstanding brands like Essenza, covers & co, Vanezza, Marc O'Polo and Pip Studio (essenzahome, 2015). The versatile collection consisting of bed and bath textile, home wear and home accessories, invites to style every interior according to the latest trends in interior styling, where personal style comes first. The first Essenza home store has opened in October 2012 in Utrecht. More stores will follow. The cooperation with international agents and distributors increased and because the company set up its own sales offices in Belgium and Germany in 2010, van Es home became a global leading player in interior styling products (essenzahome, 2015). Below a table with the most obvious strengths and weaknesses (see table 3)



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expanding, sales offices in Belgium and Germany</li> <li>- Own retail stores</li> <li>- Active on different social media, Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No B2B selling approach</li> <li>- Social media only in Dutch</li> <li>- Expensive price range, A duvet cover set is available from 60,-</li> <li>- Pillowcases and duvet covers have to be ordered separately.</li> </ul>
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Table 3. Strengths and weaknesses. Source: Charlotte Leitner, 2015

## Snurk beddengoed

As mentioned on their website Peggy and Erik are the founders of Snurk, a Dutch webstore and a distributor of bedding (snurkbeddengoed, 2015). It had always been their idea to create a duvet cover with a print of cardboard boxes. Especially made for charity. Together they created Le-Clochard and Le-Trottoir. A duvet cover and fitted sheet that look like a cardboard box and a sidewalk. Most profits of these two special designs went to a charity organization supporting homeless youngsters in the Netherlands: 'Stichting Zwerfjongeren Nederland' (snurkbeddengoed, 2015). Supplies sold out in no-time.

But Peggy still had more ideas.' Today, people from Amsterdam to Australia are sleeping under a Snurk design. The brand is sold in over 500 stores.. Below a table with the most obvious strengths and weaknesses (see table 4).




 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Own design concept</li> <li>- Worldwide brand awareness</li> <li>- Donating a part of their returns to a charity.</li> <li>- Website available in German</li> <li>- US website which shows the prices in Us dollars</li> <li>- B2B and B2C selling approach</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Not active on social media</li> <li>- Expensive price range, A duvet coverset is available from 60,-</li> </ul>
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Table 4, Strengths and weaknesses. Source: Charlotte Leitner

## Herding24

Herding 24 is a German internet shop and has the licensee to sell a great range of bed textile brands. In the licensing area, It is the market leader for home textiles in German-speaking Europe (herding-heimtextil, 2015). The target groups are primarily babies, children, and young adults. The collection includes the entire spectrum of classic home textile products: bed linens, pillows, blankets, carpets, curtains, hand towels, and bath robes. Herding primarily serves the retail market and has a B2C selling website as well, the company supplies all distribution channels (trendtextilien, 2015). Herding is able to provide individual

products and packages depending on the customer and customer structure. As a result, a great degree of flexibility and reliable service are the hallmarks of the Herding company (herding heimtextil, 2015). Below a table with the most obvious strengths and weaknesses (see table 5)



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Marketleader Germany</li> <li>- originated in Germany in 1957 Greater access German consumers</li> <li>- Different websites b2b and b2c selling</li> <li>- licensed to resell a great collection of brands</li> <li>- advantageous price range a duvet coverset is available from 30,-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-unstructured characterless b2c webstore</li> <li>-Not active on social media</li> </ul>
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Table 5 Strengths and weaknesses, source; Charlotte Leitner 2015

## IKEA

Ikea a warehouse and nowadays webstore as well and was founded in Sweden in 1951. The IKEA Group is headed by President and CEO, Peter Agnefjäll, together with the Group's management. The IKEA Group is active throughout the entire value chain, from product range strategy and product development to production, distribution and retail (ikea, 2015). It has own manufacturing facilities, commercial offices, customer distribution centres and 315 stores in 27 countries( Ikea, 2015). In total the IKEA Group is active in 42 countries. Below table with the most obvious strengths and weaknesses (see table 6).



<p>Own design concept</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Worldwide brand awareness and warehouses</li> <li>- Germany ikea's largest market</li> <li>- Focused on sustainability and Corporate social responsibility</li> <li>- Every country has own website and domain</li> <li>- encounters every country's needs</li> <li>- own producer to substitute</li> <li>- reasonable price range, wide reach market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- focusing on the mass market, no particular focus, less service or quality</li> <li>- no b2b selling approach</li> </ul>
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Table 6. strengths and weaknesses. Source: Charlotte Leitner, 2015

#### 4.2.6 CONCLUSION ON THE MICRO ANALYSIS

Royal Textile has to take different factors into consideration concerning the industry they operate in. When entering textile market in Germany the company can look into various rules and regulations. This concerns standardization, labelling and certification of the product. Regarding the wholesale and retail market, this market is still increasing and is an advantageous trend for Royal textile when introducing their product. More market potential and more customers to sell too.

As Royal textile is operating in the bedding industry, it is concerned with fluctuations in the textile market (non apparel) and plays a certain role in homeware goods and products as well. As stated in the porter analysis for both industries, the specific market highly depends on the demand of the final consumer. As retailers encounter customer needs manufacturers and producers have to adjust as well. Brand strength is seen as unimportant thereby the price is significant in this industry with a lot of retailers offering soft furnishing. Hence the buyer power is weak.

Supplier power on textiles is low when producing methods are replaced. When home textiles are bought by the wholesaler and then resold to retailers, it constrains supplier power. On the contrary raw materials can be produced internally, giant homeware markets like Ikea have the ability to do that. This can be an indirect competitor to Royal Textile they cover a huge market segment and have a familiar name in this industry.

With low brand loyalty it is easy for new entrants to entry the market. The industry on bedding is more price competitive. If a new entrant can adjust to the trends and developments in living they can succeed. Regarding Non apparel goods which are distributed by Royal Textile it is necessary to follow EU law on textiles. As the company is operating in The Netherlands it is therefore less complicated to access the German market. Overall the threat of new entrants is strong.

Looking at the threat of substitutes on non apparel textiles it majorly depends on the prices, the materials used and size of the segment the company is operating in. big manufacturers can overrule smaller fibre specialists as they can use different techniques and often have a greater share of the market. As a consequence the threat of substitutes is moderate. Looking at the end consumer bed textiles can be substituted and handmade. However, the time and skills needed for producing weakens the threat of substitutes and is thereby not applicable on Royal textile.

Regarding the main competitors for Royal Textile, it can be concluded that these vary from webstores to distributors to different big warehouses. It is almost not feasible to research them all, hence the competitors chosen, have the same selling concept as Royal textile, show similarities to the So Cute design, have great name awareness and sell teen duvet cover sets.



## 4.4 OPPORTUNITIES

### 01: Promotional activities to attract German Retailers

As stated in the micro analysis of this report, it could be difficult to attract wholesalers and retailers in a foreign market. By designing promotional and informational activities, Royal Textile may be able to attract the German customer. Hence, the company was present at the 'Heimtextil Messe' in Frankfurt. This is of major importance for promoting the new product to other businesses in Germany.

### 02: German specialists at Royal Textile.

As stated in the macro analysis German character refers to the complexity of the German market and business environment. Aspects such as conservatism, inflexibility, trust and insecurity are noteworthy elements in the German market. As a result, trading in the German market may be difficult. Therefore, hiring German specialists and introducing a German department at Royal Textile B.V. may be beneficial as it potentially increases the possibility of business success in Germany.

### 03: Corporate Social Responsibility

The German market has the largest growth of sales of certified products (fair trade) in the world (Marketline industry profile, 2015). As indicated in the trends and developments part of this report, a major upcoming trend is the use of African cotton. This is also called the green village, while African farmers are supported and is thereby seen as a fair trade manner to negotiate. Regarding the competitors, CSR is applied in donating a part of their revenues. Particular products sold are socially driven, which is majorly valued by the German customer.

### 04 More use of social media

Regarding the industry analysis E-commerce has gained popularity over the years. Looking at different competitors the use of social media is inevitable. As some of the companies use a lot of channels to promote their products. For Royal textile it is of high importance to make this channels accessible for a wider international segment. It is useful to use more channels like Instagram or pinterest and create the possibility to switch languages. German businesses appreciate when partners speak their language. This could attract more cooperative partners in the future.

## 05 Sustainability

Many companies are actively integrating sustainability principles into their businesses, and they are doing so by pursuing goals that go far beyond earlier concern for reputation management—for example, saving energy, developing green products, and retaining and motivating employees, all of which help companies capture value through growth and return on capital. According to the mckinsey survey, surveyed 203 companies, this year's results show that, since last year, larger shares of executives say sustainability programs make a positive contribution to their companies' short- and long-term value (mckinsey, 2011). Regarding this research and the appreciated factor in doing business in Germany, also a reasonable alternative to consider.

## 4.5 THREATS

### T1: German character

Section 2.4 of this report refers to the complexity of the German market. For instance, the presence of conservatism as well as the inflexibility of German entrepreneurs, may lead to disadvantageous situations for Bakker Bart when entering the German market. Moreover, many entrepreneurs tend to avoid risks in business.

### T2 Competitive rivalry

As stated in the competitor analysis Royal Textile could be threaten by different companies. These businesses with all their own concept, have conquered the European market and also operate outside Europe. Even great warehouses like Ikea can be a problem to Royal Textile. As the company applies a B2B selling approach and with the retailers as customers Ikea is a step ahead on small companies. The worldwide brand awareness plays a major role and the inexpensive prices are important as well. Royal textile is a wholesaler, distributor, webstore and supplier at the same time, hence different competitors have to be taken in consideration.

### T3 New entrants

Low brand loyalty means that it is relatively easy for new players to enter this market. New entrants benefit from low-switching costs for buyers and relatively low product differentiation. Germany's homewares market has grown, which will prove attractive to new entrants to the market. This means the degree of rivalry in the specific industry is increasing, looking at webstores and distributors outside Germany that enter the German market.

#### T4 Rise of webstores

E-commerce and webstores are an uprising trends in Germany. . Sixty six percent of all distance purchases were performed online, while 44 percent were ordered via traditional distance sales channels like mail order and teleshopping. Emerging trends are mobile commerce and social media. As the retailers encounter customer needs it could be a threat to tangible stores, and an indirect threat to Royal Textile. Hence, is could be an opportunity to focus more on supplying German webstores to than tangible retailers.

#### T5 Fluctuation of fibre prices

As stated in the porter model different kinds of fibre require raw materials from radically different industries and therefore act as alternatives to each other. If cotton prices began to rise, a fibre manufacturer may be able to increase its usage of nylon. This can be a threat for Royal textile as the prices on fibres and therefore textiles are fluctuating. Hence, the company needs to encounter these price developments.

## 5. SWOT

### 5.1 SWOT ANALYSE

Combining the internal analysis with the external elements of Royal Textile results in a SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis identifies situations that can be improved by the company and defines the possible drawbacks when entering the German market. The SWOT analysis below is based on information in this research report ( see table 7).

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<b>S1</b> B2B and B2C selling approach	<b>W1</b> Bad communication inwards and outwards
<b>S2</b> Service focussed	<b>W2</b> small distribution centre
<b>S3</b> Generally known in the Netherlands	<b>W3</b> outdated system
<b>S4</b> Dynamic company	<b>W4</b> less attention internationalization
<b>S5</b> Good price- quality ratio	<b>W5</b> small enterprise
<b>S6</b> Extensive product range	
<b>S7</b> Active on social media	

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<b>O1</b> promotional activities to attract customers	<b>T1</b> German character
<b>O2</b> German specialists at Royal Textile	<b>T2</b> Competitive rivalry
<b>O3</b> Corporate Social Responsibility	<b>T3</b> new entrants
<b>O4</b> more use of social media	<b>T4</b> Rise of webstores
<b>O5</b> sustainability	<b>T5</b> Fluctuation of fibre prices

Table 7. Swot analysis Royal Textile B.V. Source: Charlotte Leitner, 2015

### 5.2 CONFRONTATION MATRIX

The confrontation matrix shows strategic options Royal Textile could implement when entering the German market (see figure 4). It increases the chance for success combining different aspects of the SWOT.

		Opportunities					Threats				
		O1	O2	O3	O4	O5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
<b>Strengths</b>	S1	++	NA	NA	++	+	NA	±	NA	±	±
	S2	NA	NA	++	+	++	NA	±	±	NA	NA
	S3	NA	+	+	++	NA	-	NA	±	NA	NA
	S4	NA	+	++	+	++	NA	++	++	++	++
	S5	NA	NA	+	NA	±	NA	++	++	NA	±
	S6	NA	+	++	+	±	NA	+	+	NA	±
	S7	++	++	+	++	+	±	+	+	++	NA
<b>Weaknesses</b>	W1	NA	+	NA	NA	NA	NA	--	NA	NA	NA
	W2	-	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	--	-	--	NA
	W3	NA	NA	+	NA	+	NA	--	-	--	NA
	W4	+	++	±	++	+	-	--	--	±	-
	W5	+	±	-	++	-	NA	-	±	NA	NA

++	= excellent
+	= good
±	= Average
-	= Bad
--	= Extremely bad
NA	= Not applicable

Fig.4. Swot Matrix. Source: Charlotte Leitner, 2015

## 5.3 STRATEGIC OPTIONS

### 5.3.1 STRENGTHS VERSUS OPPORTUNITIES

As demonstrated, 24 out of 30 combinations are likely to result in positive outcomes for Royal textile. Especially when the company decides to do CSR and Sustainable activities, which make the company service focussed and will strengthen their dynamic nature. Furthermore, they will therefore keep up with the many competitors and their CSR activities in Germany. Moreover, Royal Textile should keep the level of innovation high, regarding Social media use as well. The world is changing and, therefore, Royal Textile should continually research which new trends can be enhanced. Overall, focussing on the dynamic nature of the company and customer service these are the main vanguards for Bakker Bart.

### 5.3.2 WEAKNESSES VERSUS OPPORTUNITIES

As already shown in the confrontation matrix, not all combinations are possible. However, there are some good points that Royal Textile could take into consideration when entering the German market. Hiring German specialists remains questionable as it increases costs. On the other hand, it could increase the chance for long-term success as specialist knowledge

concerning trade in Germany is at advanced levels. Furthermore, as Royal textile is expanding, they do not have the modern system and distribution centre to compete with orders. In conclusion, some aspects of this section could result in positive outcomes; however, Bakker Bart should carefully investigate these options.

### 5.3.3 STRENGTHS VERSUS THREATS

17 out of 30 combinations could result in positive outcomes. There is not a strong motive to implement the other combinations as the outcome is unsure. Despite high levels of competition and the threat of new entrants, the eventual extensive product range of Royal textile can contribute to success in the German market as consumers should succeed in finding the right product for a reasonable price. However, the German character can be disadvantageous for Royal Textile because of the several aspects that create the Germans as they are. All these strengths can have different outcomes on the German market than in the Netherlands for instance. To sum up, when combining strengths with threats is important to highlight what competitors are currently doing in the Germany.

### 5.3.4 WEAKNESSES VERSUS THREATS

These combinations are not relevant to Royal Textile as it is predicted that the outcomes are negative. For instance, the fact that the company is expanding, however less attention is given to international promotion and the company is a small enterprise with a small distribution centre, combined with the level of high competition it is not an ideal situation for Royal textile. Instead, the enterprise should focus on other strategic options in order to have a chance of success in the German market.

## 6. ENTRY STRATEGIES

According to the writers of the book Export, a practical guide, 'entering a foreign market can be accomplished via several ways, either by negotiating with consumers directly or through a third party' (Harlaar, Ouwehand, Leeuw, & Otto, 2012). Both methods have advantages and disadvantages. Royal textile is a distributor in b2b and b2c selling, in this case all relevant entry strategies are researched.

As suggested in the book written by researchers Harlaar et al., 'there are two major methods of exporting products on a foreign market, namely through direct and indirect export' (Harlaar, Ouwehand, Leeuw, & Otto, 2012). Direct export refers to direct contact with the customers, e.g. a webshop. Thus, direct export eliminates intermediaries whereas indirect export uses intermediaries (Harlaar, Ouwehand, Leeuw, & Otto, 2012). Besides direct and indirect export, there are also three other entry strategies that are classified as legal constructions:

- Licensing
- Franchising
- Contract manufacturing

### 6.1 DIRECT EXPORT

Direct export is probably the fastest way of exporting to a foreign market as the exporting company negotiates directly with its consumers (Harlaar, Ouwehand, Leeuw, & Otto, 2012). The most cost-effective way of entering the German textile market is to hire a commercial agent or representative. Commercial agents are normally paid on a commission basis and are specialized by branch. Textile companies interested in finding a qualified commercial agent or representative can contact the National Association of German Commercial Agencies and Distribution e. V. (CDH)(ixpos, 2015). Commercial agents intermediate the sales of goods between businesses of all market levels e.g. between industry and retail or wholesale and retail (CDH, 2015)

More advantages include interpersonal contact with consumers and the fact that the exporting company has more control over the export process. Because of this, it is likely that the exporting company will generate more profits. However, higher costs are inevitable as more staff is needed to organise all activities. Hence, Royal Textile should consider hiring

German trading experts. Direct export is a possibility for Royal Textile as it gives the company more control in the introduction phase of exporting as well as knowledge about the German market.

## 6.2 INDIRECT EXPORT

As mentioned before indirect export is usually conducted with the assistance of individual representatives or as a collaborative effort with other companies in the same field. Below the most appropriate indirect approaches for Royal Textile.

- Foreign distributor/wholesaler

A distributor buys goods from the seller and sells it to the customer (Harlaar, Ouwehand, Leeuw, & Otto, 2012). Businesses who intend to enter the European market can take advantage of German distributors' extensive knowledge on the preferences of local consumers. Especially foreign small and medium enterprises (SME) otherwise may find it difficult to place their products. German wholesalers and import trading companies help to overcome lack of information on the market, mitigate financial risks and navigate through legal requirements. These wholesalers/importers are generally experts in the field and have in-depth knowledge of the different segments in the textile industry (ixpos, 2015). Furthermore, they also take care of all the necessary importing procedures, paperwork, product warehousing and distribution activities.

- Retail

When selling direct to retailers the products are generally limited to consumer lines and more difficult to encounter customer needs as divers retailers have different concepts (Harlaar, Ouwehand, Leeuw, & Otto, 2012). However with the involvement of sales representatives it could be feasible applying this strategy. German retailers know the preferences of local consumers well and help to supply Europe's largest consumer market (ixpos, 2015). The increase of the retail market in Germany and increasing revenues and selling of bedlinen even during the financial crises, makes it an eventual successful strategy to use.

- Collaborative indirect export

Due to the high degree of rivalry in the textile and homeware market, a cooperation is not recommended. While So Cute is a new brand and to set up an alliance or a merger is not



advisable while less complementary products can be found. In addition the big company PIP, which is comparable with So Cute products and prints is a huge competitor to Royal Textile. As for a merger this is not of much interest to new entrants (Harlaar, Ouwehand, Leeuw, & Otto, 2012).

### 6.3 LEGAL CONSTRUCTIONS

Franchising, licensing and contract manufacturing are not applicable for Royal Textile and are not examined any further. Franchising is not an option because the company does not have a retail store concept, the entry strategy is complex to implement in Germany as well (Deutscher Franchise Verband, 2015). Secondly licensing the SO Cute product is not a possibility because Royal Textile already has the licensee the resell. When the company would like to choose this entry strategy the decision lays in hands of the So Cute company. Thirdly contract manufacturing is not an opportunity as Royal textile does not manufacture their own products.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this research was to provide a detailed and coherent recommendation to Royal Textile, and to provide information on whether it was feasible for them to expand activities into the German market. In order to formulate an answer, a central research question was designed:

**How can Royal Textile effectively- enter the German market with its newly unknown “So Cute” bedding collection?**

By drafting several questions and integrating the Marketing Mix, the central research question can be answered and a detailed recommendation can be made in the next chapter. Answers to the questions are given below.

-What kind of company is Royal Textile?

Royal textile is a Dutch supplier, wholesaler and distribution centre at the same time of bedding textiles and products in the Benelux. The enterprise is stationed in Belgium as well. The company's history goes 25 years back in time and has experienced a tremendous growth and is still growing. The enterprise sells their products with a B2B and a B2C approach, these are distinguished regarding different websites and different services for both parties. For partners, retailers and wholesalers information can be found at [royaltextile.nl](http://royaltextile.nl) for the individual customers products can be ordered at [primavieradeluxe.nl](http://primavieradeluxe.nl). Thereby bedlinen and duvet cover sets are available in the price range of €40- €60, euros. The target market of Royal Textile consists mainly of kids, teenagers, adolescents, and adults. As Royal Textile is a small company they have a flat organisational structure, therefore all parties are involved in the decision making process. To conclude it can be said that the company positions itself on the high end of the market as a provider of good quality products for a reasonable price and is therefore accessible for a wide target group.

- What kind of brand is So Cute?

So Cute is a newly yet unknown Dutch brand especially meant for young/teenage girls. It combines fresh vibrant colours, soft vintage and girly pink in their designs. The brand offers different collections of products and thereby bed textiles are a part of their collection. Royal Textile is licensed to introduce the bedding collection not only on the Dutch market however on the European market as well. Thereby this Export plan is the first step in the internationalization process for the company and the brand too. It can be concluded that So

Cute has similarities with the well-known brand PIP Studio. However looking at the price So Cute is less expensive and thereby more accessible for a target group who considers PIP as pricey. As the German market is very price sensitive Royal Textile could have a good chance of succeeding with the bedding collection.

-What are the company's main strengths and weaknesses?

Regarding the internal analysis of the report and looking at the overall results of the SWOT, some aspects constantly return during the research. Royal Textile is a dynamic and therefore innovative company that could encounter to new trends and developments quickly. Because of the wide range of products in different price ranges it is accessible for a great target group and a wider segment. Even though the company is generally known in the Netherlands it has less experience on the international market. With a small distribution centre, less manpower and an outdated supply system it could be difficult to easily enter another market. Regarding stock space and the products ordered it is necessary to expand the office and distribution centre as well. In conclusion the company has to consider factors as space and make their website and social media more accessible for other foreign parties when internationalizing.

- What external factors of the German market can be taken into account?

As shown in the external analysis different aspects of the macro- and micro environment should be taken into account. The demographic and the economic factors could be attractive aspects to look into. As the targeted segments spread a wide part of the country, then the import of textiles is still increasing. Regarding the political and technological factors, Royal Textile should follow EU regulations on packaging and labelling, there are regional rules as well that the company could look into. Looking at the environment Corporate Social Responsibility for example is a major aspect in doing business with Germany as people are very conscious about the environment.

When researching the specific textile industry in Germany some important outcomes are relevant to answer the question. Regarding the wholesale and retail market, this market is still increasing and is an advantageous trend for Royal textile when introducing their product. More market potential and more customers to sell too. Entering the German market involves some risks for Royal Textile due to the high level of competition in the particular industry. Prospective competitors of the company include webstores, big suppliers of bedding handling the same selling concept as Royal Textile and big warehouses like Ikea. These are companies offering goods with low prices or have a good price quality ratio. Because of the high level of competitors and the high price sensitivity the threat of new entrants is high. Other aspect of

the porter five forces model do not form a significant threat to the company. In conclusion, the German market can be classified as innovative, environmentally friendly and with a highly competitive market for bedding.

-Which entry strategy would be most appropriate for Royal Textile?

As the most appropriate strategies are already examined, indirect export may seem the most legit strategy to enter Germany. Looking for potential business partners, indirect export is most effective as the company has immediate access to the ins and outs of doing business in Germany. However as Germans do not appreciate unethical situations, Royal textile should carefully examine what is appropriate and what is not. Therefore direct export is often a safe and secure manner of entering a new complex market. Though indirect export, focussing on businesses, have knowledge on the German market as well and can eventually help the company to gain more brand awareness among other distributors and wholesalers. When this approach is less effective direct export can always be considered as different agencies in Germany introduce and support a new company in B2B selling in their country.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering all the information processed in the previous subsections, a recommendation is written. Based on all the information in this report, entering the German market is possible for Royal textile when carefully integrating the marketing mix which is explained below

### 8.1 MARKETING MIX

#### 8.1.1. PRODUCT

Bed textiles of So Cute, the product Royal Textile will introduce in Germany should be aimed at sustainability and thereby different trends and developments. Hereby the innovative and dynamic nature of the company is of good stead. As So Cute is a new Girly brand it encounters divers researched trends and developments on the Home textiles market in Germany. The so called mixology trend fits very well as So Cute offers a combination of divers prints and colours to a cheerful interior. Looking at sustainability the German government is focussed on environment friendly packaging and labelling this is also according to European law. When exporting textiles to Germany it is of high importance to comply with these rules. According to the customer needs Cooperate social responsibility is nowadays highly valued by Germany. Cotton made in Africa for instance, is a fair way of trading. Furthermore, because of the threat of new entrants and the increase of competitive rivalry, Royal Textile should consider offering a more wide and deep product range. In addition, many Dutch, German and other international companies operate with the same concept as Royal Textile. The enterprise already distinguishes from other brands as it is an new payable product in comparison with big competitor PIP Studio for instance. However, the choice of other products to be integrated into the German product range, should be carefully researched by Royal Textile by conducting quantative research among businesses.

#### 8.1.2 PRICE

As it seems that the German textile market is very price sensitive instead of looking at the brands, it is advised that Royal Textile should start with price setting. This means it will offer new customers as wholesalers and retailers low prices during the first months of operation as it gives them and the end consumer the opportunity to get familiar with the product. In addition once brand recognitions is gained, the company could raise its prices to the current price levels. As a sustainable manner of packaging and trading is applied the Germans are willing to pay more for the quality of the product. Thereby extra transport and packaging costs will be inevitable, this might results in extra costs, however once businesses and customers are aware and interested in the product the last mentioned points are

opportunities to focus on when encounter customer needs. The supply and demand side will be balanced. It is important that Royal Textile maintains its most important vanguard, presenting itself as an accessible brand with a good price quality ratio.

#### 8.1.3 PLACE

The So Cute products will be firstly distributed and stored in the centres in Belgium or Hoofddorp. It depends on what business or consumer is most close by. Subsequently, these products will be transported by road to the customer, as the company is very service focussed they should continue doing that across borders as well. In addition, the products will be resold by retailers or wholesalers directly to the consumer. It could be recommended promoting the product near to the border of the Netherlands, Germany is a large country and it should be carefully considered if it is feasible transporting to the other side of Germany. However when people are familiar with So Cute it could be a possibility to establish a new distribution centre in Germany that stores the collection to keep up with the demand and lower transporting costs. With this it gains more access for German businesses and to visit the company.

#### 8.1.4. PROMOTION

Promotional activities to attract businesses to resell the products could be the presence on a textile fair. Royal Textile made use of this opportunity and went to the Heimtextil Messe in Frankfurt Germany at the beginning of 2015. With this it gained interest among other businesses and already has some customers to resell the collection too. This is a beneficial development as these businesses can do mouth to mouth advertising. However it could never hurt to attend the fair once again in 2016 to gain more knowledge on customer needs and the German business environment. In addition it is advisable to give new potential customers the opportunity to test the product. Moreover, mail order catalogues are also a way of distributing textile products in Germany, since they are widely used by consumers throughout the country. Especially nowadays, mail order activities complement the extensive usage of e-commerce for the sales of textiles and clothing very well. In addition, possible other promotions could include a German Facebook page which gives both parties the opportunity to interact. As a result, the likelihood for customer retention increases.

#### 8.1.5 PEOPLE

It is recommended that Royal Textile starts with indirect export, cooperation between business already gives a good insight on the German business environment. However working together with agencies can be useful for reaching a wider segment on a larger scale in Germany. Hiring employees with knowledge of the complex German market and ethical

behaviour is effective. Moreover, German language skills and a committed attitude toward Royal Textile B.V. is required. Furthermore, when an extra distribution centre is opened in Germany employees will be hired according to the German labour law.

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## APPENDICES

## LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Interview Rameez Ahmed Royal Textile .....	60
Appendix 2 Interview Anna Gewering DNHK.....	62
Appendix 3 Eurostat Tables, Import development bed textiles Germany .....	64
Appendix 4 Prüfung und Zertifizierung von Textilien- Europäische und nationale (Deutsche) Kennzeichnungen, 2008.....	66



## APPENDIX 1. INTERVIEW RAMEEZ AHMED ROYAL TEXTILE

10 april 2015.

*This interview is conducted via Skype. As Rameez was very busy Skype was the best option for him. Rameez Ahmed is head of Buying at Royal Textile and my assignment mentor as well. As I want to gain more knowledge on the company and the textile market, I asked him about the Dutch bed textile market and what the company's main strengths and weaknesses are according to him. The interview is summarized in a story below.*

Firstly I asked him question about the mission and vision of the company, as this is not clear on their website. He told me that they offering products on a very good price/ quality ratio. This is their objective in the Netherlands and they would like to continue this mission on European-global base with B2B and B2C selling. To reach this goal, the expansion with So Cute and the writing of this export plan is already a major step to internationalize.

Secondly I would like to have more information on the organisational structure of Royal Textile. However it appeared that the company is so small they do not have such information to give to me. With this he e/mailed me departments and employees that work for the company. With his feedback I created an organisational chart for the company. I also appeared that there is an second distribution centre, namely in Belgium. Also Royal Textile is a known company in the Benelux.

Thirdly, I asked question on the price range they operate in and thereby their target groups. These consist of 4 segments. The duvet cover sets are available in the price range of 20/40€. These consist of 1 pers. Cover sets 30/60€ and 2 pers. Cover sets 40- 80€. For B2B selling the price is lower than b2c selling. The company would like to be accessible for a wide target group regarding their prices and products.

Fourthly, I wanted to know who exactly are the customers of Royal Textile. As Rameez stated these consists of individual customers (so the end consumer) and other wholesalers and retailers. Then the question was how they sell their products to these customers, so which channels are used?. For B2C selling Royal textile uses their own brand Primaviera deluxe. This is a website as well. All information can be found on service an products they sell. For B2B selling and partners they use their own name as website namely, royaltextile.nl. Hence the company is a wholesaler, webstore, supplier and distributor at the same time. In additions I asked Rameez how they find partners and customers on the business market. He told me businesses approach them, and then the Sales department comes forward. These customers

are wholesalers and retailers. For promotion they are sometimes present on a fair. With this businesses approach them as well

Furthermore I asked Rameez about the strengths and weaknesses he clearly sees in the company. Also in this case he gave me some information as they do not have a SWOT themselves because of the small company. Different strengths are that Royal Textile is a dynamic and innovative company regarding their products, they could encounter to different trends and developments easily. Also they are automated, with this they can quickly switch between productions. However they are partly automated which could be an opportunity in the future. Rameez indicated that the company could improve their lack of space, if they will expand they have to keep up with orders and stock space is low. Furthermore, the communication between departments and the distribution centre is not smooth. This causes mistakes between seller and buyer and slow logistical processes. As the system is not fully automated they cannot keep up with the stocks. Also communication plays a major role in this problem, according to Rameez.

Thereafter, I wanted to gain more information on the So Cute brand. Rameez told me the brand is new and not positioned yet, even not on the Dutch market. With this brand they would like to conquer the European market and start in Germany. Royal Textile is busy with introducing the product in the Netherlands with a B2C and an B2B selling approach. Regarding Germany this is exactly the same selling approach they would like to follow. For now the business market is the most important for brand awareness, hence the focus of your export plan, says mr. Ahmed. Moreover, So Cute is produced in Pakistan and Turkey.

Lastly, as I knew they went to the Heimtextil messe in Frankfurt, I wanted to know what they learned from their presence and what information they already have. Mr. Ahmed answered that the businesses there were retailers and wholesalers and that it was a very useful visit. Big competitors like Herding and PIP were present as well. In Germany Herding is their main competitor according to Rameez and PIP is very comparable with the prints SO Cute has. He told me it is very handy to look at the companies present at the child bed textile category on the fair. In addition, 20 businesses were interested in So Cute. In this case the best way to enter the German market is direct export as the potential customers are other distributors and retailers. They already tried that and it was a good manner.

## APPENDIX 2. INTERVIEW ANNA GEWERING DNHK

12 June 2015

*Anna Gewering is an Export advisor at the DNDK (Deutsch Niederlandische Handelskammer). She was kind of sceptic about my research project as the theme was so specific and it was very difficult for her to gain information on this. However she fortunately spoke to me and answered my question on the phone and helped me finding the right information through different German parties. I wanted to gain more knowledge on the different trends and developments on the German textile market, the Business to Business selling environment in Germany and the obstacles for new entrants in the market. The interview is summarized in a story below.*

Firstly, we had a little introductive conversation on the phone. As mentioned before she told me how difficult my subject was and to find information on the specific bedding industry, However she was willing to help and told me she could give me some information on entering the German market and the rules according to textiles.

She told me that since the establishment of the European Customs Union, the customs regime in Germany is governed by EU law. However, in the area of taxation, the European Union adopted a VAT System which allows each Member State to decide over national VAT tax rates as long as they comply to EU rules. Looking at Germany, customs are administered by the German Customs Administration (Zollamt) and VAT problems are taken care of by the Federal Ministry of Finance.

According to Mrs. Gewering there are some regulations on exporting products. As free trade provides an important incentive for global economic growth and an improved standard of living, Germany supports open markets and international trade within a set of clear agreements. As a result only a very small part of the goods traded in Germany are actually subject to direct market regulations. For example she said that:

- Textiles and steel products from a few third countries are generally restricted by import quotas and have to have an import license.
- Specific import control regulations apply to products that may pose a risk to human health, public security or environmental protection, such as medicine, weapons or endangered species of plants and animals, for instance.

She stated, that importers are still required to remain informed about the product-related rules that also apply to businesses active on the German market, as the legal environment and

administrative procedures guiding business transactions in Germany may be different from those in place in the importer's home country. Some parts in Germany have other regulations on textiles as well, this mainly is applicable on packing and labelling, which are also EU law. So good knowledge on the German market is highly advisable, according to Mrs. Gewering.

Furthermore, I asked her about the business environment in Germany, she could tell me more about wholesale in Germany and the different interesting parties to gain more knowledge on this environment. Wholesale in Germany is a growing market even though webstores are taking over, there is still potential, says Anna. Therefore it is important to promote the products on Social media and the Internet, it is a growing market, she told me. It makes it more accessible for businesses to contact the company and find information on the products. However even she tells me the industry of bedding is highly competitive so important to come up with a new product to attract customers.

Thereafter I wanted to find more information on the different trends and developments in the bed textiles market. She could not give me that specific information as it was not researched yet, however she sent me a report with info on different industries in Germany. She could tell me more about the textile industry in general. Some relevant points are described. For instance the rise of online buying in Germany is an important trend what companies can encounter too. It is also demonstrated that the group of age 30-39 is buying most online. Also the demand of fair fibres and products increases, this is sustainability. Thereby the government in Germany is more keen to adjust standards for the environment.

Lastly, she referred me to heimtextil fachverband, an union for home textiles in Germany, to visit a government website on entering the German market and the textile messe in Frankfurt, a fair on home textiles that returns every year. She hoped these organisations could help me gain more insights on the specific bed textiles market. I thanked her and she wished me a lot of luck finishing my final project.

APPENDIX 3. EUROSTAT TABLES IMPORT DEVELOPMENT BED TEXTILES GERMANY

**Sold production, exports and imports****[DS-0663]**

Last update: 30.10.15

Source of data: Eurostat

**PRCCODE:** 13921230 - Bed linen of knitted or crocheted textiles **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2009

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	27,510,200	146,572,690

## Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

## Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921230 - Bed linen of knitted or crocheted textiles **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2010

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	28,460,500	160,417,750

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

↓ see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921230 - Bed linen of knitted or crocheted textiles **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2011

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	30,844,000	209,553,450

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available



# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921230 - Bed linen of knitted or crocheted textiles **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2012

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	25,171,000	167,685,740

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

**PRCCODE:** 13921230 - Bed linen of knitted or crocheted textiles **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2013

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	29,077,700	188,356,190

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921230 - Bed linen of knitted or crocheted textiles **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2014

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	32,603,600	208,836,870

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921253 - Bed linen of cotton (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2009

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	47,383,600	321,908,140

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921253 - Bed linen of cotton (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2010

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	60,440,900	447,334,750

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921253 - Bed linen of cotton (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2011

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	62,319,300	565,384,140

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921253 - Bed linen of cotton (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2012

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	52,713,600	445,801,540

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921253 - Bed linen of cotton (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2013

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	60,595,100	493,487,050

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

↓ see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available



# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921253 - Bed linen of cotton (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2014

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	66,903,900	547,074,080

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921255 - Bed linen of flax or ramie (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2009

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	36,500	649,460

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921255 - Bed linen of flax or ramie (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.- Dec. 2010

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	51,200	905,910

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921255 - Bed linen of flax or ramie (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2011

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	120,500	1,782,190

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921255 - Bed linen of flax or ramie (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2012

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	177,500	3,652,580

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921255 - Bed linen of flax or ramie (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.- Dec. 2013

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	206,500	3,291,100

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921255 - Bed linen of flax or ramie (excluding knitted or crocheted) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2014

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	163,800	2,549,320

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

**PRCCODE:** 13921259 - Bed linen of woven textiles (excluding of cotton, of flax or ramie)**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2009

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	12,600,000	84,559,860

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available



# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921259 - Bed linen of woven textiles (excluding of cotton, of flax or ramie)

**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2010

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	13,255,900	89,270,640

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921259 - Bed linen of woven textiles (excluding of cotton, of flax or ramie)

**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2011

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	17,514,500	121,952,740

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921259 - Bed linen of woven textiles (excluding of cotton, of flax or ramie)

**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2012

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	15,204,000	108,643,110

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

**PRCCODE:** 13921259 - Bed linen of woven textiles (excluding of cotton, of flax or ramie)**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2013

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	17,017,200	121,321,600

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921259 - Bed linen of woven textiles (excluding of cotton, of flax or ramie)

**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2014

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	18,412,000	133,758,890

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921270 - Bed linen of nonwoven man-made fibres (excluding knitted or crocheted)

**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2009

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	263,300	1,833,160

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921270 - Bed linen of nonwoven man-made fibres (excluding knitted or crocheted)

**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2010

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	255,300	1,939,000

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921270 - Bed linen of nonwoven man-made fibres (excluding knitted or crocheted)

**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2011

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	258,300	2,247,520

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available



## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921270 - Bed linen of nonwoven man-made fibres (excluding knitted or crocheted)  
**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2012

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	203,500	2,174,220

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921270 - Bed linen of nonwoven man-made fibres (excluding knitted or crocheted)

**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2013

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	176,600	1,792,360

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921270 - Bed linen of nonwoven man-made fibres (excluding knitted or crocheted)

**PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2014

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	229,900	2,465,600

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921660 - Furnishing articles including furniture and cushion covers as well as cushion covers, etc for car seats (excluding blankets, travelling rugs, bed linen, table linen, toilet linen, kitchen linen, curtains, blinds, valances and bedspreads) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2009

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	0	123,548,360

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

↓ see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921660 - Furnishing articles including furniture and cushion covers as well as cushion covers, etc for car seats (excluding blankets, travelling rugs, bed linen, table linen, toilet linen, kitchen linen, curtains, blinds, valances and bedspreads) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2010

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	0	140,730,690

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921660 - Furnishing articles including furniture and cushion covers as well as cushion covers, etc for car seats (excluding blankets, travelling rugs, bed linen, table linen, toilet linen, kitchen linen, curtains, blinds, valances and bedspreads) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2011

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	:	140,711,380

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available

# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921660 - Furnishing articles including furniture and cushion covers as well as cushion covers, etc for car seats (excluding blankets, travelling rugs, bed linen, table linen, toilet linen, kitchen linen, curtains, blinds, valances and bedspreads) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2012

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	:	143,460,790

## Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

## Special value:

: not available

## EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921660 - Furnishing articles including furniture and cushion covers as well as cushion covers, etc for car seats (excluding blankets, travelling rugs, bed linen, table linen, toilet linen, kitchen linen, curtains, blinds, valances and bedspreads) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2013

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	:	139,699,760

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available



# EXPORT PLAN SO CUTE

**PRCCODE:** 13921660 - Furnishing articles including furniture and cushion covers as well as cushion covers, etc for car seats (excluding blankets, travelling rugs, bed linen, table linen, toilet linen, kitchen linen, curtains, blinds, valances and bedspreads) **PERIOD:** Jan.-Dec. 2014

INDICATORS	IMPQNT	IMPVAL
DECL		
Germany	:	149,414,450

Available flags:

b break in time series

e estimated

n not significant

s Eurostat estimate (phased out)

c confidential

f forecast

p provisional

u low reliability

d definition differs, see metadata

i see metadata (phased out)

r revised

z not applicable

Special value:

: not available



**APPENDIX 4. PRÜFUNG UND ZERTIFIZIERUNG VON TEXTILIEN- EUROPÄISCHE UND NATIONALE  
KENNZEICHNUNGEN 2008**

**Prüfung und Zertifizierung von Textilien –  
Europäische und nationale (deutsche)  
Kennzeichnungen (Stand: 2005-08)**

Dr.-Ing. Matthias  
Mägel,

Sächsisches Textilforschungsinstitut e. V.,  
Chemnitz

**1**

**Einleitung**

Die Qualitätssicherung und damit der Nachweis bestimmter Produkteigenschaften / -anforderungen gewinnen auf dem Europäischen Markt immer mehr an Bedeutung. Mit entsprechenden Prüf- und Zertifizierungsnachweisen werden einerseits die Einhaltung gesetzlicher Regelungen (z. B. in Bezug auf CE-Kennzeichnung und Textilkennzeichnungsgesetz) nachgewiesen und andererseits wichtige Verbraucherinformationen gegeben. Letzteres bezieht sich z. B. auf humanökologische und Schadstoffprüfungen, die zur Produktkennzeichnung führen können. Letzten Endes tragen Prüf- und Zertifizierungsleistungen auch zum Schutz des Verbrauchers vor Billiganbietern und nicht qualitätsgerechter Ware bei.

Prüfungen und Zertifizierungen können als „vertrauensbildende“ Maßnahmen eingeordnet werden – sollen sie doch dem Endverbraucher anzeigen, dass die für die Marktfähigkeit bzw. den Gebrauchswert erforderlichen Parameter nachgewiesen sind – und das möglichst von einem unabhängigen Institut. In einigen Fällen verpflichten sogar gesetzliche Regelungen zur Prüfung und Zertifizierung. Auch existieren eine Reihe „privater“ Labels, deren Anforderungsparameter durch Vereinigungen / Firmen / Institute entwickelt wurden und die sich mehr oder weniger auf dem Markt behaupten.

**2 Kennzeichnungen mit dem CE-  
Zeichen**



Die Abkürzung "CE" steht für "Communauté Européenne", also für „Europäische Gemein- schaft“. Dies drückt auch den Sinn des Zeichens aus – es soll als „Warenpass“ den freien Warenverkehr in der Europäischen Union ohne nationale Handelshemmnisse sicherstellen und signalisiert dem Käufer / Anwender, dass die relevanten EU-Richtlinien (z. B. zu Schutz- anforderungen) erfüllt werden.

Textilien sind z. B. in folgenden EU-Richtlinien verankert:

- 88/378/EWG [1] und Änderung 93/68/EWG [2] für Spielzeug
- 93/42/EWG [3] und Änderung 01/104/EG [4] für Medizinprodukte
- 89/686/EWG [5] und Änderungen 93/68/EWG [2], 93/95/EWG [6], 96/58/EG [7] für per- sönliche Schutzausrüstungen
- 89/106/EWG [8] und Änderung 93/68/EWG [2] sowie 96/581/EGEntsch [9] für Baupro- dukte

Diese EU-Richtlinien wurden in den EU-Ländern in nationale Gesetze umgesetzt und sind damit für die Anwendung bindend. Das betrifft in Deutschland z. B.

- das Gerätesicherheitsgesetz [10] und
- das Bauproduktengesetz [11].

In EU-Richtlinien verankert werden nur solche Produkte, für die europaweit ein gleicher Si- cherheitsstandard (Mindestanforderungen) verlangt werden muss. Für die Überwachung der Produkte / Produktion werden durch die EU (auf Vorschlag der Länder) sogenannte „Notified Bodies“ (Benannte Stellen) nach entsprechendem Nachweis ihrer Eignung zugelassen. Diese arbeiten nach einheitlichen Grundsätzen.

An zwei Produktgruppen soll dies untermauert werden:

## 2.1 Persönliche Schutzausrüstungen – PSA

Zur Erfüllung der Anforderungen der EU-Richtlinie für persönliche Schutzausrüstungen dienen Europäisch harmonisierte Normen (siehe auch <http://www.schutztextilien.de/> und <http://www.beuth.de/>), bei denen die Vermutung dafür besteht, dass bei ihrer Einhaltung die Anforderungen der Richtlinie erfüllt sind.

Diese Normen enthalten die technischen Mindest-Produktanforderungen, die für eine Produkt- / Marktzulassung zu erfüllen sind. Im Anhang ZA der Normen wird auf den Zusammenhang mit der EU-Richtlinie 89/686/EWG [5] verwiesen.

In Abhängigkeit von der Klassifizierung des Risikos (gering, mittel, hoch), gegen das eine PSA schützen soll, unterscheidet man folgende Kategorien, die sich dann auch in unterschiedlicher Produktkennzeichnung niederschlagen:

Kategorie I	Kategorie II	Kategorie III
CE	CE	CE 0516

Außer Produkte der Kategorie I, bei denen die Wirksamkeit gegenüber den geringfügigen Risiken durch den Benutzer selbst erkennbar ist, müssen alle PSA-Modelle einer EG-Baumusterprüfung durch eine zugelassene (notifizierte) Stelle – dem Notified Body – unterzogen werden. Prüfungen und Zertifizierungen für persönliche Schutzausrüstungen im Sinne der EU-Richtlinie 89/686/EWG dürfen nur durch „zugelassene“ Stellen durchgeführt werden, die eine entsprechende Kenn-Nr. führen.

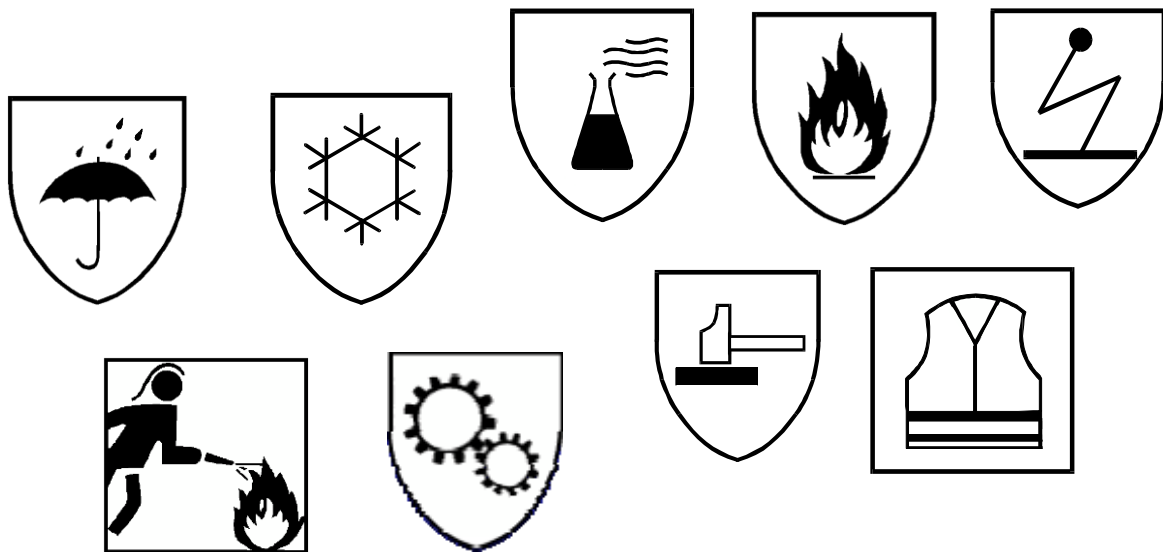


Für Produkte der Kategorie III, d. h. komplexe PSA zum Schutz gegenüber lebensbedrohenden Risiken, ist zusätzlich zur EG-Baumusterprüfung die Überwachung des Qualitätssicherungssystems des Herstellers durch eine zugelassene Stelle erforderlich.

Die Nachweise über die geprüften Eigenschaften des PSA-Modells schaffen die Grundlage für die vom Hersteller abzugebende rechtsverbindliche Erklärung (Konformitätserklärung), dass sein Produkt alle Anforderungen der Richtlinie erfüllt.

In Abhängigkeit vom Schutzziel – z. B. Feuerwehr- oder Chemikalienschutzkleidung, elektrostatisch ableitfähige Schutzkleidung oder Warnkleidung – werden neben dem CE-Zeichen verschiedene Piktogramme zur Kennzeichnung des PSA-Modells verwendet. Diese Piktogramme

gramme sind Bestandteil der Produktnormen, und dienen – ergänzt durch Leistungsstufen oder -klassen – einer Charakterisierung des Produktes bzw. seiner Eigenschaften



Zusätzlich zur Pflicht der Kennzeichnung des Produktes selbst muss der Hersteller für jedes PSA-Modell eine Informationsbroschüre erstellen und dem Produkt beifügen. Diese Informationsbroschüre muss neben Name und Anschrift des Herstellers klare und verständliche Anweisungen für den korrekten Gebrauch, der Lagerung, Reinigung oder Wartung enthalten und mindestens in der Amtssprache des Bestimmungsmitgliedstaates erstellt sein.

Seit dem 01. Juli 1995 ist die Inverkehrbringung und Benutzung von Persönlicher Schutzausrüstung (PSA) im europäischen Binnenmarkt an die obligatorische Kennzeichnung mit dem CE-Zeichen und die daran gekoppelten Bedingungen gebunden.



## 2.2 Geokunststoffe

In der EU-Richtlinie 89/106/EWG [8] ist für Geokunststoffe das Konformitätsbescheinigungsverfahren 2+ festgelegt.

Dies bedeutet für den Hersteller

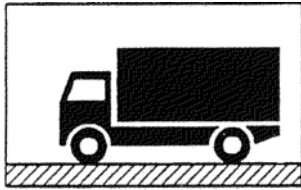
- Erstprüfung des Produktes
- werkseigene Produktionskontrolle
- ggf. Prüfung von im Werk entnommenen Proben nach festgelegtem Prüfplan bzw. für die eingeschaltete, zugelassene Stelle
- Zertifizierung der werkseigenen Produktionskontrolle aufgrund von



- Erstinspektion des Werkes und der werkseigenen Produktionskontrolle
- ggf. laufende Überwachung, Beurteilung und Anerkennung der werkseigenen Produktionskontrolle

Für Geokunststoffe liegen verschiedene Kennzeichnungsnormen vor bzw. sind in Vorbereitung (siehe auch <http://www.geokunststoffe.com/>).

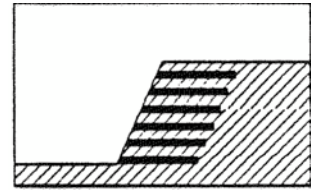
Für deren Anwendungsfälle werden im Entwurf DIN EN ISO 10318: 2001-02 [12] folgende Signets vorgeschlagen



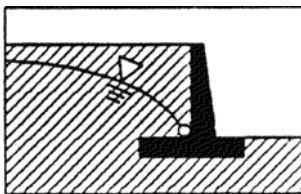
Straßen, Verkehrsflächen



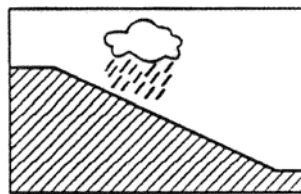
Eisenbahnbau



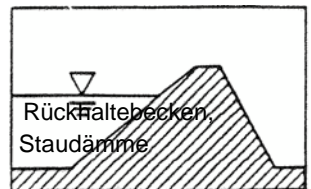
Erd- und Grundbau,  
Stützbauwerke



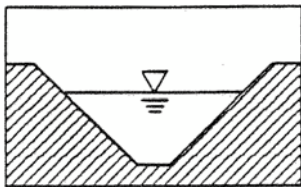
Dränanlagen



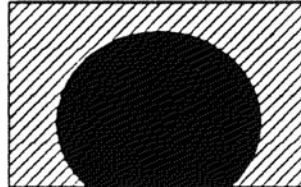
Erosionsschutz



Rückhaltebecken,  
Staudämme



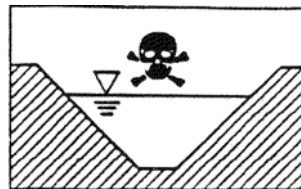
Kanalbau



Tunnelbau, Tiefbauwerke

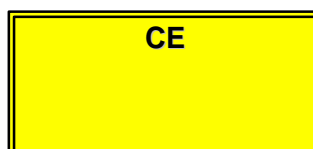


Entsorgung fester Abfälle



Einschluss flüssiger Abfälle

Die Kennzeichnung von Geokunststoffen erfolgt mit dem CE-Zeichen, der Nummer des „Notified Body“ und dem Produktnamen nach folgendem Beispiel:



### Textilfilt, Typ A

Neben dieser Kennzeichnung sind dem Produkt ausführliche Begleitpapiere u. a. mit technischen und Herkunftsangaben beizulegen.

Zugelassene Überwachungs- und Zertifizierungsstellen für Geokunststoffe im Sinne der EU-Bauprodukten-Richtlinie 89/106/EWG werden von der EU benannt und mit ihrer Kenn-Nr. veröffentlicht.



### 3 Nationale Gesetzgebung

Das deutsche Textilkennzeichnungsgesetz [13] mit seinen Änderungen [14] enthält Festlegungen zur Angabe von Art und Masseanteil der verwendeten Rohstoffe (Faserstoffe) zum Inverkehrbringen der Textilien. In den Anlagen zum Textilkennzeichnungsgesetz sind die Faserstoffe definiert sowie Handelszuschläge (auf die Trockenmasse) vereinbar

## 4 Humanökologische Kennzeichnungen

Von der Europäischen Kommission wurde eine Entscheidung zur Festlegung von Umweltkriterien für Textilerzeugnisse verabschiedet [15, 16] („EU-Blume“), die sich aber auf dem Markt noch nicht durchgesetzt hat. Zur Produktkennzeichnung ist hier die Erfüllung produkt- als auch unternehmensbezogener Kriterien



erforderlich (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/ecolabel>).

Neben dieser EU-Entscheidung existieren auch eine Reihe privater Kennzeichnungen auf humanökologischem Gebiet.

Die Vielzahl privater Labels für textile Produkte ist auf den ersten Blick enorm, ihre Akzeptanz zeigt sich jedoch auf dem Markt. Sicherlich ist hier auch zu unterscheiden, welche Zielgruppe jeweils erreicht werden soll. Außerdem bestehen für unterschiedliche Produktgruppen / -bereiche (z. B. Teppiche, Matratzen) auch differenzierte Anforderungen.

International seit mehreren Jahren eingeführt und mittlerweile stark verbreitet ist das Label „Textiles Vertrauen – Schadstoffgeprüfte Textilien nach Öko-Tex Standard 100“ (<http://www.oeko-tex.com/>). Die Prüfungen und Zertifizierungen erfolgen durch von der „Internationalen Gemeinschaft für Forschung und Prüfung auf dem Gebiet der Textilökologie (Öko-Tex)“ zugelassene Institute bzw. Einrichtungen.



Die einzuhaltenden Grenzwerte werden ebenfalls von der „Internationalen Gemeinschaft für Forschung und Prüfung auf dem Gebiet der Textilökologie (Öko-Tex)“ festgelegt und orientieren sich an gesetzlichen Vorschriften.

Obwohl gesetzlich nicht vorgeschrieben, gehört dieses Label zu den Zeichen, die der Endabnehmer zunehmend fordert.

Bei Einhaltung ökologischer Produktionsbedingungen kann dann auch das Zeichen „Textiles Vertrauen – Umweltfreundliche Betriebsstätte nach Öko-Tex Standard 1000“ vergeben werden (<http://www.oeko-tex.com/>).



Mit humanökologischen bzw. Schadstoffprüfungen an Textilien sind auch folgende Labels verbunden, die aber bei weitem nicht die Verbreitung wie das Zeichen „Textiles Vertrauen – Schadstoffgeprüfte Textilien nach Öko-Tex Standard 100“ gefunden haben und bisher nur für einzelne Produktgruppen Verwendung fanden:

- Toxproof - TÜV Rheinland für schadstoffgeprüfte Produkte (<http://www.de.tuv.com>)
- ECO - Umweltinstitut Köln (<http://www.eco-umweltinstitut.com/>)

Speziell auf die Untersuchung der „Körperverträglichkeit“ orientiert ist das Label „Medizinisch getestet – Fördergemeinschaft körperverträgliche Textilien e. V.“ (<http://www.koerpervertraegliche-textilien.de/>)



## 5 Produktlabels

Von einigen Verbänden und Vereinigungen wurden (freiwillige) produktbezogene Qualitätskriterien entwickelt, die in der Regel mit einem Label dokumentiert werden.

Als Beispiele seien hier zunächst Kennzeichnungen in Verbindung mit RAL-Registrierungen zu nennen: (RAL Deutsches Institut für Gütesicherung und Kennzeichnung e. V. – <http://www.ral.de/>):

- Gütezeichen „Matratzen“ (Gütegemeinschaft Matratzen e. V.)
- Gütezeichen „Medizinische Kompressionsstrümpfe“ (Gütegemeinschaft Medizinische Kompressionsstrümpfe e. V.)
- Gütezeichen „Sachgemäße Wäschepflege“ (Gütegemeinschaft sachgemäße Wäschepflege e.V. – <http://www.waeschereien.de/> )

Weitere Kennzeichnungen sind z. B.:

- Gütezeichen „Naturtextilien“ (IVN-zertifiziert)  
(IVN Internationaler Verband der Naturtextilwirtschaft e. V. – <http://www.naturtextil.com/>)
- Gütezeichen „Teppiche“ (GUT – Label)



Auch verschiedene Handelsketten und –häuser haben Qualitätskriterien für ihre Sortimente entwickelt und dokumentieren deren Erfüllung mit verschiedenen Kennzeichnungen, wie z. B.

- More care for the body (C& A)
- Öko-Blätter (Quelle)
- Grüner Baum (Otto Versand)
- TCM (Tchibo)



## 6 Liefervorschriften bzw. -vereinbarungen

Liefervereinbarungen legen Kunden-/ Lieferantenbeziehungen fest und sollten Qualitätsfestlegungen enthalten. Sehr oft orientieren sich diese an eingeführten Normen, Richtlinien oder Labels.

Hinweise zum Normenbestand sind auch aus der Homepage <http://www.textilpruefung.de/> erhältlich



## 7 Akkreditierungen / Zulassungen der Prüfeinrichtungen

Die auf Basis von EU-Richtlinien in die Prüfung und Zertifizierung einbezogenen Institute und Einrichtungen müssen durch entsprechende Akkreditierungsstellen akkreditiert bzw. zugelassen sein.

Diese nehmen für den gesetzlich geregelten Bereich z. B. vor

- die „Zentralstelle der Länder für Sicherheitstechnik“ (ZLS) für Spielzeug
- die „Zentralstelle der Länder für Gesundheitsschutz bei Arzneimitteln und Medizinprodukten“ (ZLG) für Medizinprodukte
- die „Zentralstelle der Länder für Sicherheitstechnik“ (ZLS) für persönliche Schutzausrüstung
- das „Deutsche Institut für Bautechnik“ (DIBt) für Bauprodukte (und damit auch für Geokunststoffe)



(Quelle: <http://www.dar.bam.de/> , DAR-Struktur – Dokumente „Struktur/Erläuterungen“ bzw. „Zuständigkeiten“)

Nach Anerkennung der Akkreditierung nach DIN EN ISO/IEC 17025 und ggf. produktspezifischer Gesetze und Regelungen erfolgt eine Benennung der Stellen bei der EU („Notified Body“). Entsprechend der Akkreditierungsregeln werden die Stellen durch die Akkreditierungsstellen laufend überwacht.

Nur anerkannte und zugelassene Stellen dürfen im Zusammenhang mit der CE-Kennzeichnung tätig werden.

Im gesetzlich nicht geregelten Bereich sollte die Akkreditierung nach DIN EN ISO/IEC 17025 Grundlage der Arbeit der Laboratorien sein. Diese Akkreditierung, ausgesprochen durch im Deutschen Akkreditierungsrat (DAR) zusammengeschlossene Akkreditierungsstellen (<http://www.dar.bam.de/>), wie z. B. das Deutsche Akkreditierungssystem Prüfwesen GmbH, gewährleistet eine gewisse



- Unabhängigkeit
- Vertraulichkeit
- fachliche Kompetenz des Labors.

Im nicht geregelten Bereich werden auch durch private Organisationen Anerkennungen / Zulassungen von Prüfinstituten ausgesprochen.





(<http://www.oeko-tex.com/>)

(<http://www.dincertco.de/>)

## 8 Zusammenfassung

Die Vielzahl von Regelungen und Labels für Textilien scheint zunächst verwirrend und unübersichtlich zu sein. Man kann diese jedoch wie folgt in drei Gruppen zusammenfassen:

- EU-Richtlinien und -Kriterien, die in der CE-Kennzeichnung münden können (für sicherheitsrelevante Erzeugnisse)
- Nationale Gesetzgebung
- Private / freiwillige Kennzeichnungen für bestimmte Produkteigenschaften / -anforderungen oder -gruppe

Mit den gesetzlichen Regelungen wird ein einheitlicher Marktzugang und ein gleiches Sicherheitsniveau bindend bzw. angestrebt; private Labels, die einen entsprechenden Marktzugang gefunden haben (wie z. B. Öko-Tex 100) dienen der Verbraucherinformation.

Alle o. g. Informationen dienen letztendlich dazu, eine gleiche Produktqualität bzw. Mindestanforderungen zu sichern und dem Verbraucher eine gewisse Sicherheit zu geben.

Basis aller Kennzeichnungen und Labels sollte die Arbeit kompetenter (akkreditierter) Prüf- und Zertifizierungsstellen sein.

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