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# Communication of Engagement 2019

SVERIGES TVÄTTERIFÖRBUND

## From our Chairman

# Spotless services to the society – every single day

The Swedish textile service industry consist of almost 5000 employees, distributed amongst around 300 companies. These companies and employees provide fundamental services to the society every single day of the year.

High quality textile service will many times go unnoticed – until no longer there. The day your doctor no longer has a clean coat, when there are no clean towels and sheets in your hotel room, or the mats in the lobby remains covered with mud after a rainy day, that's when you notice the importance of the services provided daily by the textile service industry. The members of Sveriges Tvätteriförbund take pride in remaining unnoticed, as this is a true indication of high quality and strong liability.

As the leading industry association for textile rental service providers, Sveriges Tvätteriförbund represents about 125 companies within the Swedish textile service industry. Sveriges Tvätteriförbund is convinced that fair healthy competition on equal terms will drive the industry forward. In the textile services industry, sustainability and social commitment are integrated with the everyday working life. And although we have come a long way in our efforts to reduce our use of resources, we're still looking for new innovative, climate-smart and environmentally-friendly solutions. Our business models are circular and support the selection of top-quality textiles that last a long time. This way, we reduce the wear and tear of products

Our vision is that our members continuously will develop the textile service industry for the benefit of customers. We do so by developing quality, environmental, social and economic requirements for the industry. Our authorisation procedure ensures high quality textile service, with pronounced respect to environmental and social values. Based on this, you as a customer are choosing a company that takes responsibility for their co-workers, the society, and the planet we live on.

By continuously improving our services, we help our customers to focus on their core business and what they do best – while we do what we do best.

## We care

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund participates in dialogues with Swedish authorities with focus on issues such as improved competitive neutrality, ways of minimizing spreading of micro-plastics to the environment and decreased content of hazardous chemicals in textiles. The industry employs many people, such as the young, those with a short education, and the newly arrived in Sweden. With

us they get the possibility to grow to their full potential. Since many years, we are a well-functioning force for integration with the potential and intention to grow in order to create even more jobs.

We provide a first job to many people who would otherwise be far from the labour market. It stimulates growth and makes a real difference!

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund's Sustainability Prize is yearly rewarded an individual or organization that has presented outstanding efforts for enhanced sustainability within the industry.

The association also support two Swedish football clubs in their work with youth and for integration. We firmly believe in a sustainable inclusive society.

## **We welcome these commitments**

We are happy and proud to reaffirm Sveriges Tvätteriförbund's commitment to the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. Sveriges Tvätteriförbund welcomes new members who live up to these standards and work on a commercial basis.

The Communication on Engagement (COE) is an opportunity for us to share how we and our member companies address the social, environmental and economic aspects of sustainability and corporate responsibility. In this COE, we describe our actions to continually improve the integration of the Global Compact into our strategy, culture and daily operations. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

**Sincerely,**

**Jan Kluge**

**Chairman of Sveriges Tvätteriförbund**

# Brief description of the nature of the organization

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund represents textile rental and laundry firms and dry cleaner firms. Sveriges Tvätteriförbund is a non-profit organisation and was founded in 1940 to represent and promote the interests of the Swedish textile service industry. Sveriges Tvätteriförbund is a member of the European Textile Services Association (ETSA).

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund continuously rises the standards within the textile service industry, by ensuring that members associations respect laws and regulations in areas such as taxes, environmental care, working environment and anti-discrimination. Through this work, Sveriges Tvätteriförbund promotes fair competition within the industry.

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund has developed a framework of ethical rules, based on the following four key-words: Competence, Quality, Environment and Social engagement. The ethical rules should be guiding for all member associations.

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund is a member of the UNGC since 2016. Through this second communication on engagement (COE), we are proud to re-confirm that we remain firmly committed to the 10 principles of Global Compact.

*Period covered by this Communication on Engagement (COE)  
From: 18.02.2018 To: 06.09.2019*



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## Human rights

### Our commitment

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund is committed to the principles of human rights embodied by UN Global Compact. Our Ethical rules and Code of Conduct take a strong stand against any kind of discrimination, whether based on gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age.

### Implementation

It is mandatory for all members of Sveriges Tvätteriförbund to sign up on the Ethical Rules of the association. All members are also reminded of these rules as a part of the yearly member authorisation procedure. In the same procedure, members are also reminded of the necessity of the use of the Code of Conduct, developed in 2016, when subcontracting non-member organizations.

### Measurement of outcomes

According to the latest figures, an increasing number of our members reported having structured procedures to ensure that the same ethical guidelines that apply to our member companies are also complied with by their suppliers.

# Labour

## Our commitment

Based on statistics from member organizations, salaries and wages account for half of the laundry and textile services industry's costs. Thus, the industry is labour intense and important from an employment perspective. In several Swedish municipalities, members of Sveriges Tvätteriförbund are amongst the most important local employers.

In addition, many of the jobs created in our industry are ideally suited for entry-level positions. This provides great opportunities for those who, for whatever reason, find themselves far from the labour market. We consider diversity to be a strength and our industry employs the young, those with shorter educations, and those newly arrived.

## Implementation

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund is engaged in issues related to labour from three different aspects:

- Ensuring sound working conditions for employees in the Swedish textile service industry
- Creating possibilities for individuals with disabilities to enter the working market
- Increasing the number of employees within the industry as a whole, and eliminating undeclared employments

Some examples of how Sveriges Tvätteriförbund works in relation to these:

In the yearly member authorisation procedure, member organizations are asked to report how they fulfil the high standards for working conditions set by Swedish authorities. Members of Sveriges Tvätteriförbund are reminded to report any work-related illness or accidents to the Swedish Work Environment Authority in the yearly member authorisation procedure. Since 2018, Sveriges Tvätteriförbund also offers member organizations assessments of sound-pollution and illumination within the work-place as a part of the yearly member authorisation procedure.

Many of our member organizations have a close collaboration with the Swedish Public Employment Service, with the mission to decrease unemployment. Several member organizations provide trainee-programs – in some cases mixed with lessons in Swedish.

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund strongly advocates that a tax-reduction that currently is available by Swedish households using cleaning services in their homes, should be available also when household textiles are washed by professional laundry service companies. This could increase the number of employments in the industry even more. The association is also participating in a taskforce in collaboration with the Swedish Tax Agency, with the aim of reducing undeclared employments and other forms of economic crimes.

## Measurement of outcomes

The number of cases of work-related illness and accidents, as reported to the Swedish Work Environment Authority, is followed and reported yearly in Sveriges Tvätteriförbund's sustainability report. From 2010 and onwards, these data show a slight increase in the number of reported accidents, and a slight decrease in the number of reported cases of work-related illness.

The most important key numbers are reported in the Annual industry report – among those numbers are employees born outside Sweden. They are now about 43 % of the work force. This means that the Swedish textile service Industry is an important player in the integration of new Swedes.



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# Environment

## Our commitment

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund strives for a constant reduction of negative environmental impacts from the professional textile service industry. The safety measures ensured by annual member authorisation procedure should vastly decrease the risk of emissions of hazardous chemicals to the environment. Environmental engagement amongst member organizations should be credited and good examples spread in order to inspire others. The association should participate in activities where new possibilities for an ever-greener professional textile service are investigated and developed.

## Implementation

The yearly member authorisation procedure aims at checking the compliance of environmental laws, regulations and recommendations. Irregularities are followed up upon, and continuous non-compliance result in exclusion. This process also includes the follow-up of subcontractors, using a Code of Conduct, developed by the Sveriges Tvätteriförbund.

During the reporting period, Sveriges Tvätteriförbund has participated in a dialogue process on microplastics and hazardous chemicals in textiles, organized by the Swedish EPA. Through the dialogue process, the latest findings within these areas are spread to member organizations.

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund is continuously engaged in the advances in textile recycling. The amount of textile waste generated by member organizations and the destination of this waste is followed yearly.

During the reporting period, the association has facilitated applications for public funding for member organizations aiming at investing in climate friendly technologies.

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund plays an important role in spreading good examples of environmental efforts amongst member organizations, through newsletters, yearly chronical, sustainability report and member meetings.

The Association takes an active role in highlighting cases where existing legislation decreases the possibilities for the textile service-industry to act in a more sustainable manner.

## Measurement of outcomes

According the latest authorisation procedure for members, the following can be ascertained:

- An absolute majority of members have a good knowledge of how to correctly manage chemicals and waste, thus reducing risks for environmental damage.
- The number of facilities operated by member companies that are certified according to ISO 14001 or the Nordic Swan has increased during the reporting period.
- 35 % of member organizations report use of renewable energy to a level of more than 75 %.

The amount of textile waste generated by member organizations and the destination of this waste is followed yearly. The latest assessment shows that more and more member organizations have a close collaboration with charity organizations or up-cycling designer for reuse of textile waste.



# Anti-Corruption

## Our commitment

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund strongly believes that the professional textile service industry will be best served by market conditions characterised by healthy competition and takes a clear stand against any form of corruption.

The Ethical code of Sveriges Tvätteriförbund requires that members pay taxes and fees, have finances in good order, and that accounting are done according to generally accepted principles.

## Implementation

All member organizations must present approved tax declarations and annual reports prior to authorisation as member of Sveriges Tvätteriförbund.

The annual member authorisation procedure ensures that all member organizations fulfils required level of personnel ledger. Any remarks from the Swedish Tax Agency on the personnel ledger must be corrected prior to authorisation.

The member authorisation procedure also checks that private consumers always are given a machine-stamped receipt stating the corporate identity number and VAT.

Sveriges Tvätteriförbund participates in a task force organized by the Swedish Tax Agency, with the aim of reducing undeclared employments and other forms of economic crimes. The national coordinator of this group, representing the Swedish Tax Agency, was rewarded Sveriges Tvätteriförbund's Sustainability Price in 2017.

## Measurement of outcomes

No cases of corruption within the industry have been reported during the reporting period. The level of corruption is in general low in Sweden. The textile service-industry has previously been pointed out as one of the areas where the risk of corruption is higher compared to the average. However, in the latest available summary of all corruption compilations in Sweden, the textile service-industry is no longer presented as a risk-sector (BRÅ, 2013 – Den anmälda korruptionen i Sverige).



# Facts: The ten principles

**HUMAN RIGHTS Principle 1.** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights. **Principle 2.** and make sure they are not complicit in human right abuses.

**LABOUR Principle 3.** Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. **Principle 4.** Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour. **Principle 5.** Uphold the effective abolition of child labour. **Principle 6.** Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

**ENVIRONMENT Principle 7.** Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges. **Principle 8.** Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility. **Principle 9.** Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

**ANTI-CORRUPTION Principle 10.** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

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**Sveriges Tvätteriförbund**  
**SWEDISH LAUNDRY ASSOCIATION**

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[kemtvaett.se](http://kemtvaett.se)  
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