



CBI  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

# CBI Product Factsheet

## Outdoor mats

### 'Practical market insights into your product'

The garden is considered to be an extension of the house and is increasingly fulfilling a decorative purpose. Due to this trend, outdoor mats are gradually becoming popular in Europe, providing opportunities to exporters in developing countries who offer original designs and handmade value. Industry sources indicate that demand is increasing, especially in spring and summer time. Besides the trend of outdoor living, exporters should pay attention to sustainability as the trend of conscious and ethical consumption has been expanding among European consumers.

#### Product definition

*This section provides an overview of the products within the range of the general product view, as well as mentioning the common trade names of the product.*

An outdoor mat is a woven article which can be placed on outdoor surfaces, such as gardens, porches and terraces, but also in parks and on the beach. Outdoor mats can be used as decoration, but also as flat surfaces to sit or lie on, or have a picnic.

Classification of outdoor mats:

- **Harmonised System (HS)** Within the EU/EFTA, the following HS codes are used to indicate trade in outdoor mats:
  - 5702.3290: carpets and floorcoverings of man-made textile materials, other
  - 5702.4290: carpets and floorcoverings of man-made textile materials, made up
  - 5702.5031: carpets and floorcoverings, not of pile construction, not made up, of polypropylene
  - 5702.5039: carpets and floorcoverings, not of pile construction, not made up, of man-made textile materials, other
  - 5702.9200: carpets and floorcoverings of man-made textile materials, made up
- **Prodcom:** the following prodcom code is used to indicate EU/EFTA production of outdoor mats:
  - 1393.1200: woven carpets and other woven textile coverings (excluding tufted or flocked)

#### Product specification

*This section gives an overview of the product's key specifications regarding quality requirements, labelling, materials, design and packaging.*

#### Examples of outdoor mats



Source:  
[outdoorrugsonly.com](http://outdoorrugsonly.com)

- **Functionality:** Outdoor mats are made for outside usage; on terrace or balcony but also picnics in the park or on the beach, since they do not absorb mud and stains. Although designed for outdoors, they are also effective indoors, for example on kitchen floors, in garden houses, sheds and kids' areas. Apart from their main function, outdoor mats are used as a decorative article for the garden and the terrace.
- **Raw material quality:** Outdoor mats are mainly manufactured using polypropylene (plastic) or recycled plastic from water bottles and other kinds of packaging. They can also be produced of natural materials, such as reed or palm leaf for example.
- **Sizes:** Standard outdoor mat sizes include: 48cm x 72 cm, 120cm x 179cm, 150cm X 238cm and 188cm x 286cm. Other sizes are also possible; it is wise to communicate, to your potential EU buyer, the sizes you are able to produce during the early stages of collaboration.
- **Design:** Outdoor mats come in a large variety of colours, styles and patterns. Styles vary from plain colours to striped and spotted patterns, as well as animal and floral prints.

#### Labelling:

- Labels for transport should include information on the producer, consignee, composition of the product and the size of the product, number of pieces, box identification and total number of boxes, net and gross weight.
- The most important information on the product or packing labels of outdoor mats is: composition, size, origin and care labelling. For more information and illustrations of product labelling, please refer to the labelling-specific rules for textiles under buyer requirements.

#### Packaging:

- When shipping your product to a client, the outdoor mats should be packed according to the instructions of your buyer. The packaging usually consists of plastic wrapping to protect the mats from solar radiation and staining. The packaging should also be in dimensions and weights, which are easy to handle. Standards in Europe are often related to labour regulations at point of destination and will have to be specified by the buyer. Boxes are usually palletised for air or sea transport and exporters are requested to maximise pallet space.
- Outdoor mats are usually displayed unpacked, making attractive consumer packaging of minor importance. In general, consumer packaging can be simple in design, for example a simple paper or plastic wrapping.

#### Example of shipment packaging

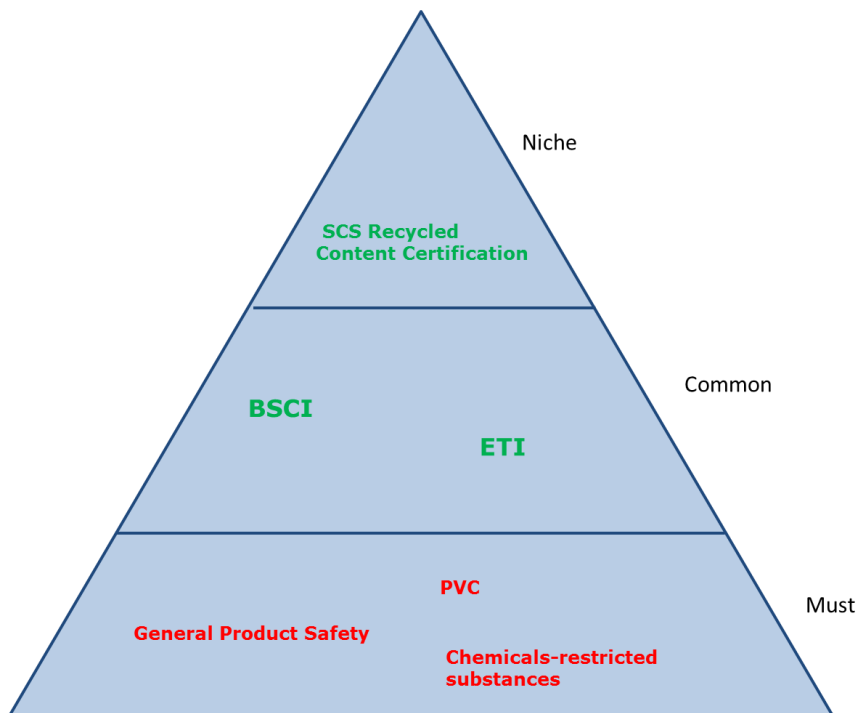


Source: [boxexpress.co.uk](http://boxexpress.co.uk)

## Buyer Requirements

*This section provides an overview and analysis of requirements that DC exporters face in the market for outdoor mats. The analysis includes legal requirements and non-legislative requirements.*

**Figure 1: Buyer requirements**



## Requirements you must meet

**General Product Safety:** The general product Safety directive states that all products marketed in the EU must be safe to use and forms a network for all specific legislation established for specific products and issues. If no specific legal requirements have been established for your product and its uses, the General Product Safety Directive still applies. If there are specific requirements applicable to outdoor mats, the general Product Safety Directive applies in addition, covering all other safety aspects which may not have been described specifically.

**CFA<sup>1</sup>:** Study the specific legal requirements listed to ensure the product does not cause any danger in its normal use. Most buyers will require proof that the DC exporter complies with legal requirements and most large retailers have their Codes of Conducts. You can read more about the [General Product Safety Directive in the EU Export Helpdesk](#).

**Chemicals-Restricted Substances:** The EU has restricted a great number of chemicals in products that are marketed in the EU. These are listed in the so-called REACH regulation (Regulation (EC) 1907/2006). If you dye your outdoor mats, make sure you do not use any of the [azo dyes](#) that release any of the 22 aromatic amines which are prohibited. EU legislation lists the aromatic amines, but not the azo dyes which release them. The vast majority of azo dyes is therefore legally acceptable. Furthermore, the [flame retardants](#) which can be

<sup>1</sup> Consideration for action

used have been restricted, where Tris (2,3 dibromopropyl) phosphate (TRIS); Tris (aziridinyl) phosphineoxide (TEPA) and; Polybromobiphenyles (PBB) have been prohibited in products intended to come into contact with the skin.

**CFA:** In the case of dyeing: Make sure your products do not contain any of the *azo dyes* which release the forbidden aromatic amines. This includes checking your own suppliers. To test your products, use the official tests. You can find the tests on the [CEN website](#): CEN Textiles – Methods for the determination of certain aromatic amines derived from azo-colourants – Part 1: Detection of the use of certain azo-colourants accessible without extraction. Reference: EN 14362:2003 / EN 14362-1:2012.

**CFA:** Follow developments in the field of *flame retardants*, as new alternatives are being developed. You can do so for instance through the [European Flame Retardants Association \(EFRA\)](#). Familiarise yourself with the full list of restricted substances in products marketed in the EU by checking out [restricted chemicals in textile products in the EU Export Helpdesk](#).

**PVC:** In fabrics coated or manufactured with polyvinyl chloride (PVC) intended for outdoor applications, there are certain chemical substances that are forbidden to enter the European market. Consequently, if you use PVC for your outdoor mats know that organostannic compounds are also restricted.

**CFA:** Find out more about PVC and the banned chemical substances [here](#).

## Common requirements

**Social performance:** Companies/producers can differentiate themselves by introducing sustainability. The means of offering sustainable products are numerous, ranging from recycling to certification and use of labels. Two retail initiatives have gained quite some ground especially in West-European countries:



The [Business Social Compliance Initiative \(BSCI\)](#) has been developed by European retailers to improve social conditions in sourcing countries. Suppliers to BSCI participants are expected to comply with the BSCI Code of conduct. To prove compliance, your production process can be audited at the request of the importer. Once a company is audited, it will be included in a database which can be used by all BSCI participants.



The [Ethical Trading Initiative \(ETI\)](#) is an alliance of companies, trade unions and voluntary organisations, working in partnership to improve the working lives of people across the globe who make or grow consumer goods.

**CFA:** Since more and more European importers participate in BSCI and ETI, complying with the BSCI and ETI codes of conducts is currently seen as a basic requirement. If you haven't done so already, you may want to look into the opportunities for improving your sustainability performance. This may not always include immediate certification or application of a label, but familiarising yourself with issues included in the initiatives will give you an idea on what to focus on. Also see CBI's publication '[CBI Tailored Intelligence: the Sustainable Design market for Home Decoration and Home Textiles](#)'.

## Niche requirements

While sustainability is gaining ground, the actual use of certification is still a niche in this sector. For outdoor mats, the certification schemes that are used, not on a wide scale yet, are concerned with recycling.



The [SCS Recycled Content Certification](#) evaluates products made from pre-consumer or post-consumer material diverted from the waste stream. Pre-consumer materials are by-products never reaching the consumer market and post-consumer materials are end products having completed their life cycle as consumer products. Certification measures the percentage of recycled content for the purpose of making an accurate claim in the marketplace.

**CFA:** Consider the possibility of using recycled plastic for the production of your outdoor mats. Post- or pre-consumer material which meets the definition in ISO 14021 is considered for certification.

For a complete overview of certifications for textiles please turn to [ITC's Standards Map](#)

## Trade and Macro-Economic Statistics

*A statistical analysis of the major product developments and forecasts will be given, based on trade and macro-economic statistics. The statistical indicators being analysed are import, export, production and consumption statistics for outdoor mats.*

*No specific trade data is available for outdoor mats. Therefore, an overview is given on the main suppliers and importers of outdoor mats, based on interviews with industry sources (importers and retailers).*

**Suppliers:** According to industry sources, Senegal and Morocco are the bigger producers of outdoor mats, mostly supplying the high and middle-high ends of the market. China and India are the main producers of lower quality outdoor mats. Other producing countries supplying the low-end market include Thailand and Indonesia.

Production countries of outdoor mats		
Low-end segment	Middle segment	High-end segment
China	Senegal	Senegal
India	Morocco	Morocco
Thailand		
Indonesia		

**CFA:** Be aware that competition from DCs has been significant for outdoor mats imports. Make sure that you stand out from the crowd by offering added value, i.e. craftsmanship and hand-made products.

**European production:** There is no significant production of outdoor mats in the EU/EFTA. Outdoor mats' production mostly takes place outside the EU/EFTA, because production costs in Europe would be too high. Therefore, apart from a few exceptions, such as Portugal, European countries do not participate in outdoor mat production.

**Importers:** According to industry sources, the biggest European market for outdoor mats is Germany. Other European countries where outdoor mats are popular include the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and Norway. These countries have been less affected by the crisis, compared to the rest of Europe, which explains this development.

**Market development:** In the past few years, outdoor mats became more popular in Europe, due to the increasingly popular trends of kitsch and folklore products. At the same time and because of the economic crisis which severely

affected Europe, demand for outdoor mats stagnated (indicated by industry sources). Similar to other outdoor articles, demand increases seasonally; there is an increasing demand during the spring and summer seasons.

**CFA:** Consider supplying your outdoor mats in northern European countries and mostly during the summer season.

**CFA:** GDP & consumer confidence are expected to increase in 2014, as mentioned in the [CBI Trade Statistics for Home Decoration](#). As GDP and consumer confidence are improving, consumers are more willing to spend money on decorative items or gifts. This will affect consumption of outdoor mats in a positive direction.

## Market Trends

*The trends provide an overview of relevant market trends and forecasts in the market for outdoor mats. In the past few years, outdoor mats became more popular in Europe, due to the increasingly popular trends of kitsch and folklore products. Trends among European consumers for outdoor mats include outdoor living and sustainability.*

### Outdoor living

The garden and the terrace are an extension of the house, and it is a fashionable trend that they are decorated like the other rooms of the house. The desire to expand outdoors leads consumers to shop for products which combine elegance and durability. The outdoor mats fulfil this consumer need, offering very elegant and colourful solutions. Just a few centimetres of floor space can radically change the atmosphere and style of an outdoor space.

**CFA:** Consider using elegant designs which can be matched with living room furniture, especially when you are targeting the high and middle-high segments of the market.

**CFA:** For more information on trends in the garden, please read the CBI Trend Special Garden on garden decoration and textile articles.

### Sustainability

Sustainability is becoming increasingly significant as consumers want to avoid a negative environmental impact. Consequently, designers and producers aim to minimise the impact of their production on the environment. Specifically for outdoor mats, recycled plastic and certified PVC can be used as raw materials for their manufacturing. Additionally, an outdoor mat is considered more sustainable when it is more durable and can be used for multiple years.

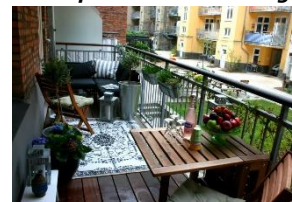
**CFA:** Consider eco-friendly materials for your outdoor mats construction, such as recycled plastic fibres, especially when you are targeting the high and middle-high ends of the market.

**CFA:** Use materials which are durable for your outdoor mats. When you have yarns which hold your product together, make sure that they are strong and will last for multiple seasons.

**CFA:** For more information on trends in sustainable home decoration and textile products, please read the CBI Trend Special Sustainability.

Please refer to [CBI Trends for Home Decoration & Textiles](#) for more information on general trends in home textiles.

#### Example of outdoor living



Source: [casalicious.dk](#)

#### Example of sustainability



Source: [dottybrown.com](#)

## Market Channels and Segments

*A description of the characteristics of different segments within the channel will be given.*

To illustrate the different segments in outdoor mats, examples of outdoor mats are presented in Table 1. In the low segment, simple outdoor mats without a brand are common. In the middle segment, outdoor mats are manufactured using sustainable raw materials and are more stylish when compared to the low end segment. In the high segment, designers' quality is common, while raw materials are sustainable (mostly recycled plastic).

**Table 1: Indicative channels and segments**

Low: simple and practical	Middle: sustainable and fashionable	High: designers quality
		
Source: <a href="https://thisnext.com">thisnext.com</a>	Source: <a href="https://rustandsunshine.com">rustandsunshine.com</a>	Source: <a href="https://interiordesign-world.com">interiordesign-world.com</a>

As market segments for outdoor mats do not differ significantly from this general overview, please refer to [CBI Home Textile Channels and Segments](#) for a general overview of the market segments.

## Prices

*This section provides an overview of the product's consumer prices on the European market.*

There is a very wide price range within the European market for outdoor mats. Outdoor mats' retail prices can vary from €8 to €70 or more. The prices vary based on the size, style and composition of the product, as well as the brand of the mat.

**Table 2: Indicative consumer prices**

	Low end	Middle-low end	Middle-high end	High end
Outdoor mats	€8-€22	€28-€35	€42-€65	€70 or more

**CFA:** Focus on the middle-high segment if you can offer some added value, such as handmade craftsmanship or on the middle-low end if you offer mechanised production.

Your products will be sold to European consumers for a price that is significantly higher than your selling price. The consumer price is approximately 4-6.5 times the FOB price in the country of origin. Besides energy, labour and transport costs, FOB prices depend heavily on the availability and prices of the raw materials. Incidental hikes in the price of raw materials are not directly passed on to the consumer, but they exert pressure on exporters, importers and retailers' margins.

**Figure 2: Indicative price breakdown**



Source: ProFound (2014)

## Field of Competition

Please refer to [CBI Home Textile Field of Competition](#), as the competitive field for outdoor mats does not differ significantly from this general overview.

## Useful sources

*Useful sources provides an overview of valuable references for DC exporters relevant to outdoor mats.*

## Trade fairs

Visiting and especially participating in trade fairs is highly recommended as one of the most efficient methods for testing market receptivity, obtaining market information and finding prospective business partners. The most relevant trade fairs in Europe for exporters of outdoor mats are:

- [Maison & Objet](#) - Paris, France
- [Heimtextil](#) - Frankfurt, Germany
- [Ambiente](#) - Frankfurt, Germany
- [Haus - Garten - Freizeit](#) - Leipzig, Germany
- [Feria Habitat Valencia](#) - Valencia, Spain

### More information

CBI market information: Promising EU export markets.  
 EU Expanding Exports Helpdesk - <http://exporthelp.europa.eu> - go to 'trade statistics'.  
 Eurostat - <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb> - statistical database of the EU.  
 Several queries are possible. For trade, choose 'EU27 Trade Since 1995 By CN8'. Use the guide 'Understanding Eurostat: Quick guide to easy comext' ([http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb/assets/User\\_guide\\_Easy\\_Comext\\_20090513.pdf](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb/assets/User_guide_Easy_Comext_20090513.pdf)) for instructions.  
 International Trade Statistics - <http://www.trademap.org> - you have to register

This survey was compiled for CBI by  
 ProFound – Advisers In Development

in collaboration with  
 CBI sector expert Steve Pepper

Disclaimer CBI market information tools: <http://www.cbi.eu/disclaimer>