

De Witte Lietaer

COMPETENCE IN LINEN

Corporate Social Responsability

Rapport

January 2022

De Witte Lietaer
COMPETENCE IN LINEN

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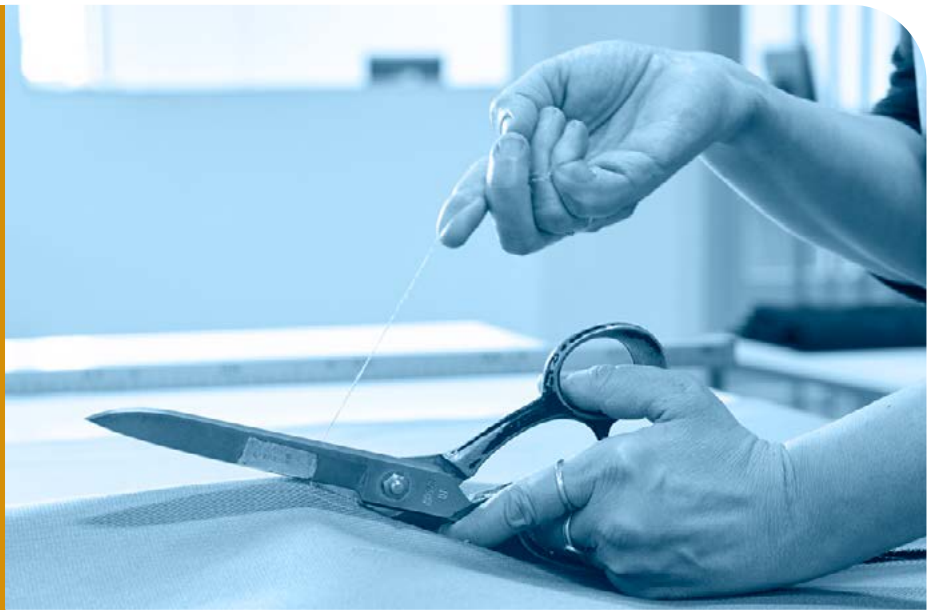
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FOREWORD



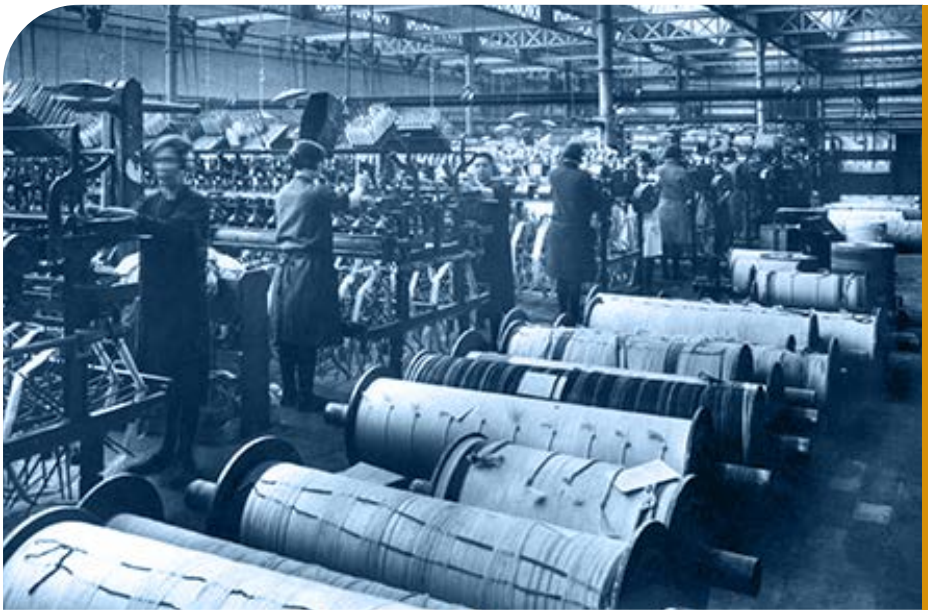
We are pleased to share our progress and vision for the future. Sustainability has always been an important issue for De Witte Lietaer, from its founding in 1898 until today (and tomorrow).

As we are living in a global world, we based our goals and this report on the seventeen **Sustainable Development Goals** of the United Nations.

These have been signed by no fewer than 194 countries worldwide. Aligned with the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals, this report brings quantifiable and verifiable goals and measurement to more sustainable way of doing business and drives continuous improvement in **three key sustainable metrics:**

- **Environment**
- **Governance**
- **Social**

We hope you enjoy reading our report and look forward to working together on these goals for a better tomorrow.



ABOUT US

SINCE 1898

De Witte Lietaer is a Belgian linen producer and textile company since 1898. We are known for high quality linen, produced with a great eye for detail and made from the best materials.
Since 1898, De Witte Lietaer has guaranteed timeless, stylish and above all high-quality products.



De Witte Lietaer is active in the hospitality, retail, project and contract market.
Our main offices are located in **Belgium** (Lauwe) and we have our own production department in **Turkey**. Clients of De Witte Lietaer include the likes of international hotel, restaurants and industrial laundries. **We export our products** mainly to Western Europe: Benelux, France, Germany, Spain and partly to the Middle East.

Hospitality
—
Retail
—
Project
—
Contract

The company supplies a differentiated range of **bed, table, kitchen and bath linen** collections to various types of retailers such as department stores, boutiques and specialty shops.

VALUES



AFFORDABLE QUALITY & EXPERTISE

De Witte Lietaer offers **excellent value** that meets the highest demands and a total service tailored to the taste of each customer. We are an **experienced partner** in all market segments, retail as well as the B2B contract market, across the world.

SUSTAINABLE LINEN PRODUCTS

Our products are produced with an eye for detail and are made of the best possible materials to meet the **highest quality standards**. We have a well thought-out product development concept and take pride in our R&D and **regular quality control**.

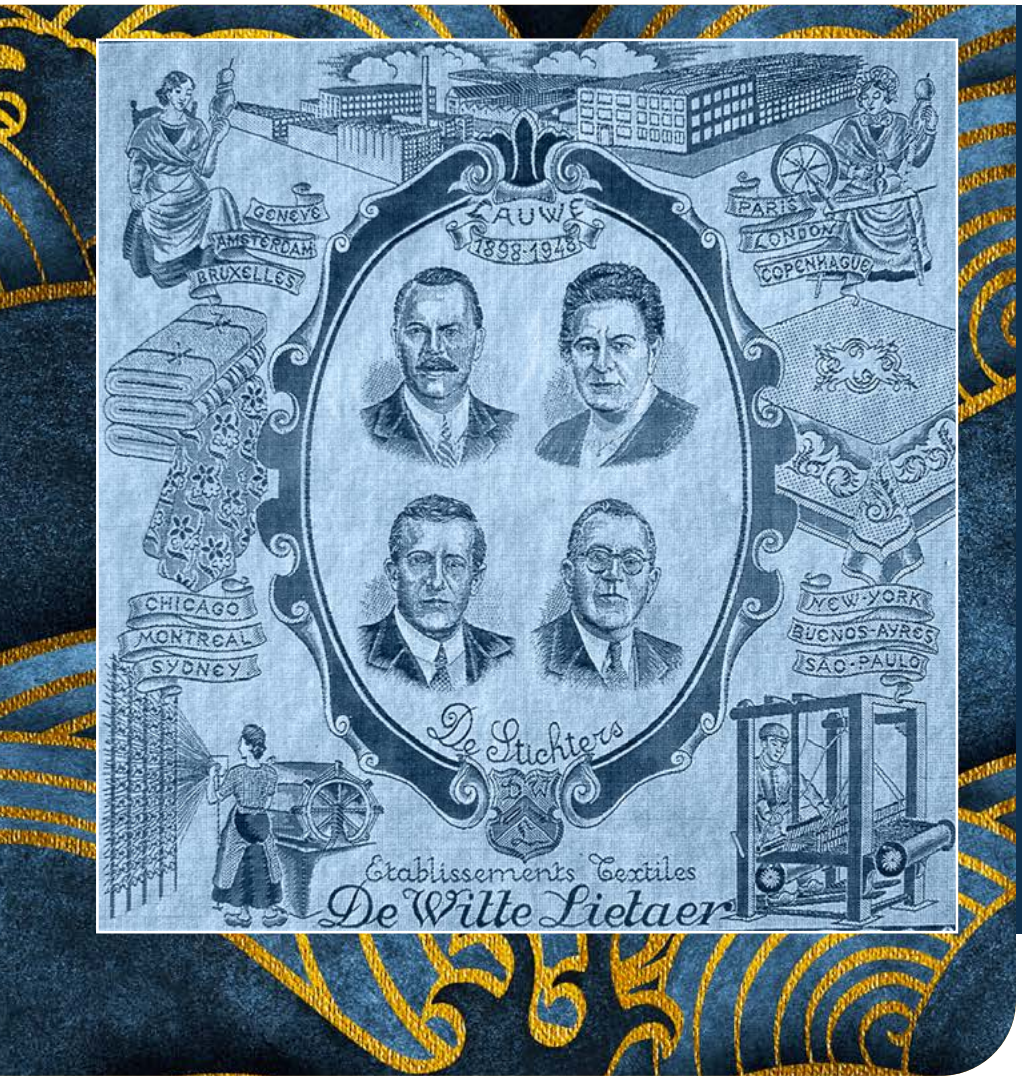
DIVERSITY AND ONE-STOP-SHOPPING CONCEPT

We offer a **wide collection** of bed, bath, table and kitchen linen and decorative fabrics. We are committed to finding the best possible match with your interior or project. De Witte Lietaer is also a partner for **promotional textile**, so customers can easily receive durable personalized linen.

REMARKABLE SERVICE AND OPERATIONALLY STRONG

De Witte Lietaer is your **smart & cost effective** linen solution including product specifications, regional production, storage, worldwide distribution and logistics.

These values distinguish De Witte Lietaer from other brands. This, combined with our 124 years of experience, is the reason our brand is loved universally.



ORIGINS AND RELEVANCE

Zeno De Witte and Leonie Lietaer

start a flax weaving mill together in 1898. De Witte Lietaer is born. The founders of the company and the many generations of employees have transformed De Witte Lietaer into a textile company known for its quality products, know-how and perseverance.

KEY DATES

1898 — Mr. Zeno De Witte and wife Mrs. Lietaer found a flax scuttle company on the borders of the river Leie and buy their **first weaving loom**.

1939 — The company grows and by 1939 there are 750 looms and **1350 employees**. This makes it one of the **biggest weaving mills in Europe**.

1942 — During World War II, Mr. Omer De Witte started the build of **'the Social Resort'** with the intention to help workers in all forms: The Resort functioned as a cheap restaurant, a medical center, banquet hall and so on. It also offered playgrounds, tennis courts and showers.

1960 — Start of weaving and knitting **car fabrics**.

1987 — New production hall for dying and finishing fabrics, only using **river water** for the process.

1991 — A **purification system** is put into operation. This allows the company to make the obtained river water even more pure and clean when putting it back into the river, **making life below water better,** long before the SDG's existed.

2005 — Creation of **Anileks** – Our weaving and confection mill for table linen and terry fabrics in Turkey.

2006 — Acquisition of the Household Linen-division by the French **HDM-Holding**.

2011 — First **'Fair Trade'** License.

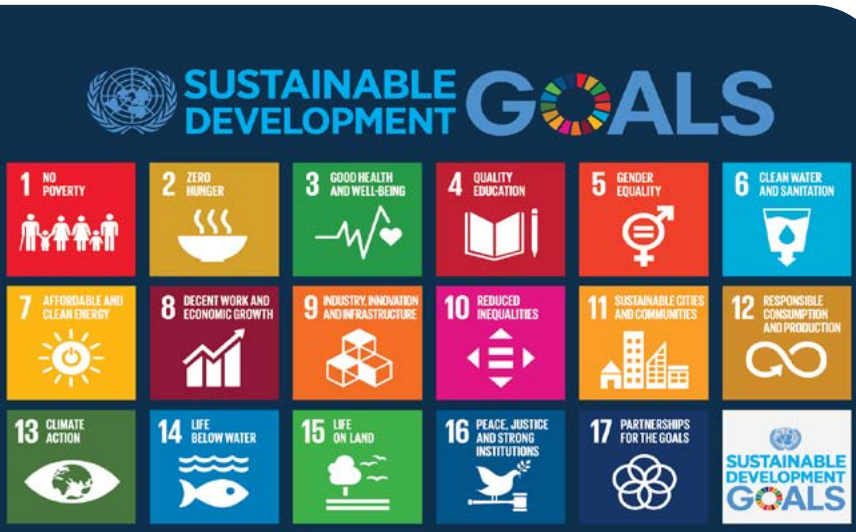
2012 — Registration into the **'Charter of Sustainable Entrepreneurship'**.

2014 — First license Gots – for the usage of **Organic cotton**.

2017 — Creation of our own **"Green Label"**, which is represents our own values even better.

2021 — Creation of a complex new product line: **Mood!t**. All products are registrated 'Made in Green' by Oekotex.

ENVIRONMENT



Here are some of the biggest ways we reduced our energy consumption:

De Witte Lietaer has always paid a lot of attention to the environment. The **use of river water** during production already started in 1937 and was steadily increased until the commissioning of the new dyeing facility in 1987 that exclusively used river water for the wet processes. During the nineties, De Witte Lietaer took as one of the first textile companies a **water purification plant** in use.

ELECTRICITY

Down with 10% (2018-2020)
Due to new investments in the last 2-3 years, among others, the gradual replacements of fluorescent lamps by LED lamps.



GAS-USAGE

Down with 15% (2018-2020)
Due to extra isolation of roofs & rooms, better organisation of the working area's less heating is needed.

WATER USAGE

Down with 38% (2018-2020)
We only use water for fire extinguish tanks, toilets and drinking water by inspection and renewal of piping, tanks and toilet bowls.



WASTE

We minimalize industrial waste and have contracts with high-performance specialized companies in waste collection and processing.

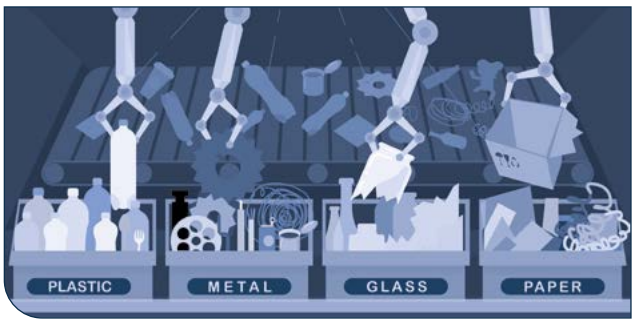
Permanent separated collection of:

- Paper
- Cardboard
- Plastics
- Non treated wood
- PMD

In addition, we collect, separate and process:

- Textile process waste is being recycled into fibers for new yarns
- Metals are processed for recycling
- All other small hazardous wastes are separate, collected by specialised companies.





SORTING & RECYCLING

We are member of **Fost+ and Valipac**, two Belgian organisations for collecting, sorting and sustainable recycling of packaging materials (retail and industrial).



GOVERNANCE

Through the years De Witte Lietaer has made decisions that have benefited environmental, social and financial aspects of manufacturing textiles.

MADE IN GREEN by OEKO-TEX® is a traceable product label for all kinds of textiles and leather products that have been manufactured in environmentally friendly facilities under safe and socially responsible working conditions.
https://www.oeko-tex.com/en/our-standards/made-in-green-by-oeko-tex

OEKO-TEX®
CONFIDENCE IN TEXTILES
MADE IN GREEN

LABELS

- Oekotex since 1994 = REACH compliance
- Fairtrade
- Gots
- DWL Green Label
- STeP
- Made in Green
- ISO-certification

INVESTMENTS

The influence on the environment is one of the major topics in the structural investments we as a company make.
In 2018 for example we had a partial renewal of the roof of the offices.
The chosen material is

- **Cleaning the air** (NO, Noo en SO_2 are being transfered into environmentally harmless substances. The annual emissions of 450 cars are neutralised.
- **Heat reflecting** – creates a cooler working environment

PURCHASE & TRANSPORT

- Using a **Zero-carbon** programme of Kuehne und Nagel for container transport
- Supplier Code of conduct

RECYCLING – CIRCULAR INDUSTRY:

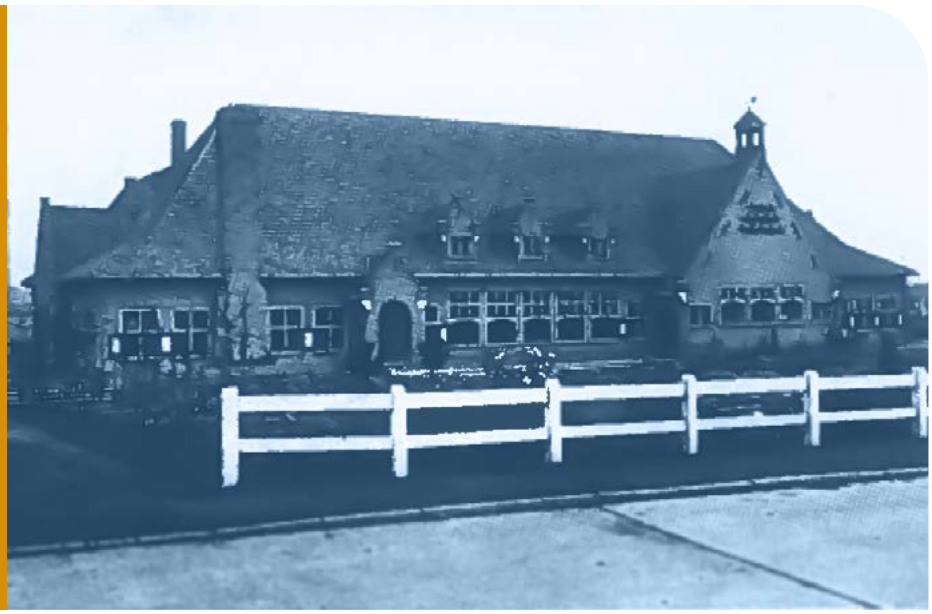
- First steps in **recycling** by taking back end-of-life products (since 2011)
- Member of Ecy-Twin workgroup Contract to create the first **"circular hotelroom"**. Picaride- flanders - walloon

PRODUCT RESPONSIBILITY

At De Witte Lietaer we find that the best way to pay respect to **natural resources**, is to market quality products that can be used for as long and as much use as possible. For this we use our **inhouse lab** to select the best producers.
Our **knowledge of household textiles** is listed in:

- Agumentarium Home Textiles
- Product Standard

SOCIAL





Already going back to 1942, Mr Omer De Witte started building the "Social Resport", a social place to help the workers in multiple ways (health, food, relaxation, ...). A lot of leisure clubs found birth in this club house (sports, IT, film, ...).

The DWL family

A total of **69** employees on payroll

With a total of **28** men and **41** women

100% open-ended contracts

Average seniority = **19,25** years

Average age = **51** years



DWL was 120 years YOUNG in 2018!



CHANGES IN THE WORKPLACE

The last five years De Witte Lietaer has realized many goals in order to make the order department more work friendly and efficient, so employees can enjoy a safer and enjoyable work environment.

A SAFER AND ENJOYABLE WORK ENVIRONMENT

- We do **proactive** and **extensive trainings** and courses for internal transport.
- Older and/or broken machines in the warehouse have been fixed or replaced systematically. We also further **automated** and extended machines to bring more **security** and less physically demanding work.
- These machines also require less maintenance, which we now closely follow up on with the means of detailed 'maintenance guides'.
- We completely remodeled the entrance, as well as the lunch room and dressing rooms, which are now **futureproof** with new showers and a fully functioning kitchen.
- The laboratory has been completely remodeled with the inclusion of a **water softener**.
- During the last five years we have systematically divided our warehouse and redone signalization so workers can access the stock more easily.
- We varnished our concrete floors to make them more **dust free**. This investment obviously helps keep the warehouse more clean, but more importantly also allows us to protect our products in stock much better. Therefore we prevent waste.

GOODWILL





©Cathobel

DAMIEN FOUNDATION

De Witte Lietaer supported the Damien Foundation and in particular the Brussels homeless who suffer from tuberculosis. By supplying quality textiles, we ensure that additional patients can be accommodated in a shelter, where they can tackle their illness in hygienic conditions.

The Damien Foundation is a medical development NGO that fights poverty diseases (leprosy, tuberculosis and leishmaniasis). They have projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America, but also in Belgium. They always work within national programmes and with local teams: De Witte Lietaer is proud to be part of their team.



©Fidema

FIDEMA

De Witte Lietaer supports the projects of Fidema. **This organisation supports the Daughters of Mary in Haiti and Cameroon**. Together, we invest in the reconstruction and adaptation of school infrastructure, sustainable energy and self-sufficient initiatives. In addition, Fidema provides pedagogical support and scholarships.

Fidema is the shortest route to effective support for the reconstruction of a badly affected **school network** through direct door-to-door assistance and professional project management by local forces.

SUPPORT TO FLOODED AREAS IN BELGIUM

During the summer of 2021 a rain storm flooded several parts of South Belgium, taking lives and destroying homes of hundreds of people. De Witte Lietaer offered aid to the victims of the flood by giving them blankets and other household linen.



©Eric Vanthournout

SPONSORING OF LOCAL SPORTS CLUBS

The village of Lauwe is permanently connected to De Witte Lietaer. Our main offices are still there. As a company with roots over a century long, we find it important to help and endorse the local communities. That is why we, among many other things, **support local clubs** such as the gymnastics club 'De Vaste Vuist'.



GOALS FOR THE COMING YEARS

- We are currently planning the further **isolation of the roof and walls** of our main offices to diminish energy costs and wasted heat.



- Lights in the warehouse are being systematically changed into **LED lamps**.



- Study the **health possibilities** of the offices.



- In 2025, the Belgian public will be able to only buy new electric cars. By that time, we will **electrify our car park** to service our employees and visitors.



- We are in the middle of getting our **STeP-certification** (Sustainable Textile & Leather Production).

- In a fast-paced changing environment and society, **we also have to adapt quickly**. Therefore, changes in the workplace will keep evolving and changing.



De Witte Lietaer

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