

Sus- tainable Fashion for Geneva?

State of play and proposals for the future

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1. Executive summary

THE GLOBAL SALES OF APPAREL (CLOTHES, FOOTWEAR, AND ACCESSORIES) CONTINUE TO GROW EXPONENTIALLY, BUT SO DO THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL COSTS OF SUCH GROWTH.

22.6 kg

In 2019, Swiss consumers purchased ca. 22.6 kg of clothes, footwear, accessories, and household textiles per person.

In Europe, household consumption of textiles and fashion is the fourth most polluting and resource-intensive lifestyle domain, after food, housing, and transport (EEA 2019). Switzerland has, after Luxembourg, the highest per capita expenditure on clothing and shoes in the world (Statista 2022). The country imports over 95% of clothes sold on the local market – primarily from China and Bangladesh – and 90% of sales in the clothing market are attributable to non-luxury products. In 2019, Swiss consumers purchased ca. 22.6 kg of clothes, footwear, accessories, and household textiles per person. In the same year, Switzerland exported ca. 8 kg of second-hand goods in the same categories,



© Sophie Pichon

Sweaters with holes upcycled during the repair cafes organised by Red Cross Geneva.

“Geneva has a limited but growing number of actors that promote different forms of collaborative fashion consumption.”

per person. These numbers indicate a quick turnover and a high material throughput in Swiss household apparel consumption.

These numbers indicate a high material throughput: imported garments are bought in large quantities, discarded after little to no use, and then directed towards exports as second-hand merchandise. A widespread lack of data on the volumes of discarded textile products – in Geneva and in Switzerland

more generally – obscures the scale and urgency of the problem of overconsumption. Our research indicates that there is a need to reduce the overall consumption of fashion and textiles, through: less overall consumption, more second-hand consumption, and more repair and reuse.

An analysis of the existing ecosystem of sustainable fashion initiatives, which could offer an alternative to fast fashion, indicates that Geneva has a limited but growing number of actors that promote different forms of collaborative fashion consumption, including second-hand boutiques, swapping, and rental. A mapping exercise has identified 50 second-hand boutiques, including 28 independent shops and 22 locations that belong to charities. There are also 16 boutiques that sell sustainable fashion garments, shoes, or accessories, 2 rental places (special occasion outfits), and 1 swapping association. Despite the growing consumer interest in more sus-

Based on a conceptual approach that considered system dynamics between a landscape, regime and niche level, as well as the development of sustainable proto practices in relation to existing unsustainable fast fashion consumption practices, we have assessed different windows of opportunity. The key focus areas for future action include:

A Increase visibility of local actors involved into sustainable fashion initiatives.

This can be achieved, for example, by creating a single online platform to promote these initiatives, supporting festivals and events focused on sustainable fashion, or by banning advertisement of fast fashion in the city centre.

B Support consolidation of local actors and synergies among different sustainable fashion initiatives.

A slow fashion center in Geneva, in a visible central location (e.g., subsidized rent or rent-free central location, paid part-time or full-time positions) could be supported by the city and serve as a hub for sustainable fashion initiatives.

C Revive clothing repair, care, and upcycling skills.

This could be achieved through a structured program of upcycling workshops and repair cafes.

D Build a dedicated community around sustainable fashion practices.

Create hot spots for sustainable fashion in Geneva, or ‘sustainable fashion’ hubs that become go-to spaces for different alternatives to fast fashion, bringing together a great diversity of actors, including producers, consumers, repair professionals, stylists, second hand resellers, swapping associations, etc.

E Deal with the growing textile waste locally.

Create separate collection points, sorting facilities, fibre-to-fibre recycling infrastructure, and support local resale options. ■

tainable fashion consumption practices, these initiatives remain a niche and require major support – from the City as well as other actors – to be able to cater to a growing demand.

The report proposes a number of recommendations that could be implemented at the level of the City of Geneva to help promote a sustainable fashion niche, in a more circular economy.

2. Context of the study

2.1 STATE OF FASHION CONSUMPTION GLOBALLY AND IN GENEVA

THE GLOBAL SALES OF CLOTHES HAVE DOUBLED BETWEEN 2000 AND 2015, WHILE THE USE-TIME OF GARMENTS TODAY IS HALF OF WHAT IT WAS IN 2000 (FIGURE 1).

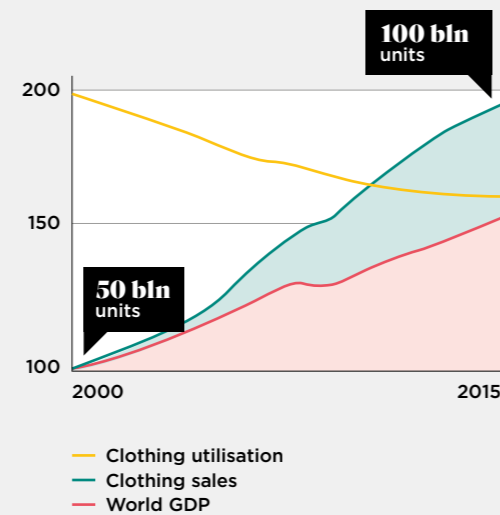
In 2019, just before the COVID-19 pandemic, European consumers bought on an average 17 kg of clothing, shoes, and home textiles per person (European Environment Agency, 2022, p. 12). European exports of clothing and textiles amounted to 61 billion euros in 2019 and imports to 109 billion euros, with almost half of all textiles imported from China and Bangladesh (European Commission, 2022, p.1). In 2019, the EU-27 also exported some 1.3 million tons¹ of second-hand textiles worth €1 billion, mainly to African countries (UN-Comtrade, 2021).

Recently, household consumption of textiles and fashion (including clothing, footwear, and home textiles) has been estimated by the European Environment Agency to be the fourth highest pressure category in terms primary resources usage (e.g., water and fossil fuels) and greenhouse gas emissions - after food, housing, and transport (European Environment Agency, 2019, p. 23). The COVID19 pandemic had a slowing effect, albeit temporary, on European and global apparel consumption; however, apparel imports have rebounded, and the apparel market is expected to show volume growth in 2023 (McKinsey, 2023).

The fast fashion system relies on externalizing environmental and social impacts of fashion production primarily to Asian countries (in particular, China and Bangladesh) and textile waste - to African countries (in particular, Ghana

and Tunisia). Low prices that are the result of this externalisation drive overconsumption and encourage a shorter use span of garments. The need to develop and support more sustainable and circular alternatives to fast fashion has been highlighted by the United Nations Environment Program (2020), European Environment Agency (2021), and the European Commission (2022).

Figure 1: Growth in clothing sales in relation to a decline in utilisation, 2000-2015



Source: Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2017, p.18

In Switzerland, publicly available data on clothing consumption is limited. Switzerland has, after Luxembourg, the highest per capita expenditure on clothing and shoes in the world (Statista, 2021). Women's clothing represents the largest market share (about 57% in 2019) and 90% of sales in the clothing market are attributable to non-luxury products in 2019 (Statista, 2021). The share of sustainable apparel has been consistently growing over the past years; however, it remains quite low, around 6% of the total apparel market (Statista, 2021).

The Swiss apparel market in 2021 had the total revenue of ca. 11 billion CHF (Statista, 2021). Sales of clothing manufactured in Switzerland were ca. 1.27 billion CHF in 2018 and exports of clothes accounted for 940 million CHF in 2021 (Swiss Textiles Coalition, 2022). While more precise data on the sales of Swiss-made garments is not available for the year 2021, it is possible to estimate that the share of clothes manufactured in Switzerland contributes to roughly 3-5% of clothing consumption in the country. These numbers suggest that clothing consumption in Switzerland is primarily constituted of imported goods, and the share of locally made garments is negligible.

For this report, an original analysis of import and export data from the Swiss Federal Customs Administration (AFD 2021a; 2021b) has been conducted by our team at the University of Ge-

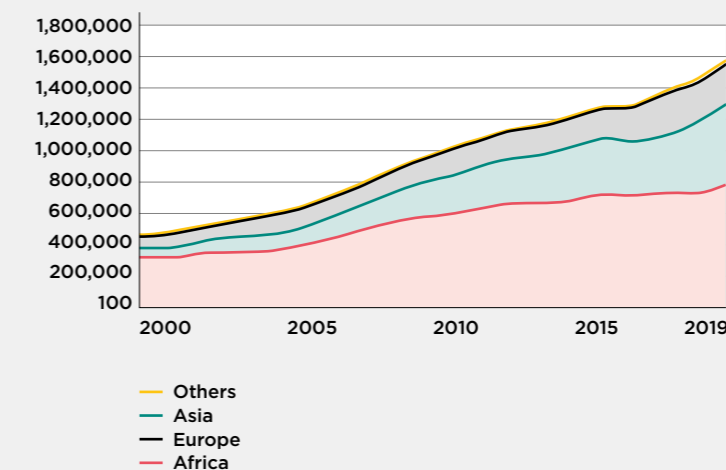
“In 2019, Switzerland exported 68,357 tons of used clothes, shoes, and household textiles.”

neva. Based on the import statistics (AFD, 2021a), Switzerland imported ca. 184,325 tons of new clothes, footwear, and home textiles in 2019 (30% from China, 13% from Bangladesh, 10% from Germany). Including 5% (a generous estimate) to account for the consumption of local Swiss-made products in these categories, the total consumption level comes up to 193,541 tons, or ca. 22.6 kg per capita, in 2019. Year 2019 has been chosen as a pre-COVID-19 level of consumption; consumption levels in 2020 and 2021 have been artificially lower due to the pandemic.

In recent years, much attention has been paid to human rights violations

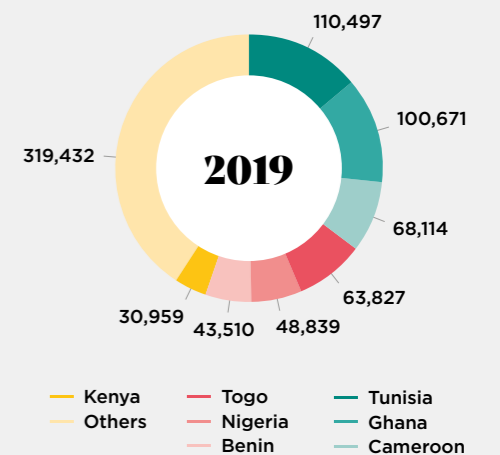
Figure 2: Exports of used textiles by tons and destination

EU-28 export of used textiles in tons p.a.



Source: Graphs derived from UN Comtrade portal, presented at the closed expert consultations on the EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles by TextAid representative, in June 2021.

Export EU to Africa in tons



Over 95% of clothes, shoes, and household textiles consumed in Switzerland are imported - ca. 184'325 tons of new products in 2019.

¹ A more recent report by the European Environment Agency estimates the number to be closer to 1.7 million tonnes (EEA, 2023).



© Mikhail Rojkov

Final exhibition of Micha Rojkov's Master's thesis at HEAD - a mountain of textile waste generated by students during their fashion studies.

“Most of the unusable textiles today end up in incinerators, open landfills, water streams and oceans.”

and environmental pollution in fashion supply chains, mainly in Asian countries - including China and Bangladesh, countries of origin of most Swiss clothing imports. This report acknowledges these significant impacts but also considers what happens to the garments after their owners no longer want them, to follow the value chain of garments until

their end of life. This downstream side of the fashion system is also responsible for enabling overconsumption - as it hides its environmental and social impacts by exporting unwanted clothes to other countries.

Our analysis concludes, based on the AFD exports statistics (AFD, 2021b), that Switzerland exported ca. 96,324 tons of clothes, footwear, and household textiles in 2019. Out of total exports, 68,357 tons (71%) are used products in these categories, which roughly amounts to 8 kg per person. This per capita amount does not include garments that are recirculated locally and direct disposal of worn-out textile products and shoes to unsorted waste bins. These numbers indicate a quick turnover and a high material throughput in household apparel consumption (AFD, 2021b).

A further analysis of the Swiss exports statistics indicates that export destinations for used garments are primarily in Europe (Germany and Eastern European countries), where second-hand exports are directed for further sorting. Less than 10% of garments are exported directly from Switzerland to the African countries. However, as mentioned earlier, European exports of second-hand garments to Africa have increased

three-fold over the past ten years (UN Comtrade, 2021). Even if second-hand clothes enter the resale market in Switzerland and are initially exported to other European countries, eventually a larger part of these material flows end up in Africa as part of European second-hand apparel exports.

While the second-hand market undoubtedly helps extend the useful life of clothing, any garment, shoe or bag eventually reaches its end of life. Exporting used clothing and textiles is not a solution to overconsumption: at some point, the last user will have to get rid of them. In this respect, it is important to track where the clothes that have acted as donations are sent, as this will have major implications for their eventual fate and the extent of their negative environmental and social impact as waste.

Infrastructure and technology for fibre-to-fibre recycling (to make clothes out of clothes) is only starting to emerge, in experimental pilot projects, and primarily in Europe, but less than 0.5% of second-hand textiles is recycled in this manner globally (Textile Exchange, 2022). Most of the unusable textiles today end up in incinerators (where synthetic fibres emit toxic chemicals) or in open landfills, water streams and oceans (synthetic fabrics do not biodegrade and prevent other matter around them from biodegrading by blocking access to oxygen).

2.2 SITUATION IN GENEVA

2,225 tons of clothes, shoes, and textile products have been collected through donation boxes in 2022 in Geneva.

The Geneva metropolitan area (Grand Genève) is an important regional centre of commerce that hosts a plenitude of clothing stores, with the key fast fashion retailers (e.g., ZARA, H&M, etc.) present as stand-alone stores and in malls (e.g., Balaxert). Considering its population size of over a million inhabitants in 2019, and per capita consumption levels calculated above, the Grand Genève consumers - including consumers from the neighbouring France - purchased around 23.2 kilotons of garments, footwear, and household textiles in 2019, based on our calculations.

Meanwhile, every year unwanted clothes, footwear, and accessories end up as donations to charity organisations. In 2022, an association Coordination Textile Genevoise (CTG) that has a mandate from the City of Geneva and the communes to collect used clothes received around 2740 tons of clothes, footwear, accessories, and household textiles, according to its President, Typhaine Guihard (interview 03.09.2021; updated on 27.02.2023). Approximately 2,225 tons are collected via donation containers (boîtes à fringue) and ca. 500 tons are brought by individuals directly to charities.

Charities in Geneva sort and redistribute approximately 915 tonnes of donations locally, including 100% of what is received as direct donations and part of what gets donated through containers, which gives a local sorting ratio of 33% of the total volume of donations. The sorting work is done by volunteers and by people in professional reintegration programs. High quality donations in good condition are resold through charity shops or given directly to people in need through Vestiaire Social; average quality donations in fair condition are typically sold to commercial resellers and those of low quality and in poor condition are locally incinerated.

In 2022, an association Vestiaire Social stocked and redistributed approximately 120 tons of textiles to people in precarious situations (roughly 4.3% of the total volume). Some of the donations, due to low quality, are discarded into general waste bins (there is no precise data due to the shortage of human resources, which prevents the association

from consistent tracing). Unfortunately, there is also no precise data available on the volume of textiles that are directly discarded by consumers into unsorted waste bins (latest exchange with the Geneva City Waste Department – October 2022).

Among four textile sorting facilities, Geneva charities do not have the physical capacity to sort the increasing volumes of donations. More than 60% of all donations in the city are sold in closed bags to Texaid, a German-Swiss company that has an exclusive contract to buy second-hand apparel from charities in Geneva. Selling donated clothes allows to finance part of the social projects of the charity associations. However, over the past 5-10 years, there has been a decrease in second-hand prices due to the rising offer globally. Texaid sorts and further exports most of the second-hand garments, shoes, and household textiles out of the country (Texaid, 2017).

The current economic model behind fashion consumption remains relatively linear. More could be done to achieve circularity and slow down the ever-increasing consumption pace and volumes. To take responsibility for overconsumption as opposed to externalizing

over 60%
of textile donations leave Geneva canton.

“It is imperative to increase dramatically local sorting and reuse and limit clothing exports as much as possible.”

its impacts onto vulnerable populations in developing countries, it is imperative to increase local sorting and reuse and limit clothing exports as much as possible. It is equally critical to lower consumption volumes of new clothes. The Climate Strategy of the City of Geneva (2022) also acknowledges the importance of overconsumption of clothes as one of the priorities to address as part of the measures to combat climate change.

This project aims to map and improve our understanding of the existing sustainable fashion initiatives in Geneva,

notably the second-hand market, clothing rental and swapping, and buying new from ethical/sustainable brands. The goal of the project is to provide recommendations to the City of Geneva regarding how to better support these initiatives, towards social change and increased circularity in apparel and textile consumption. To achieve these objectives, the research team conducted desk research, interviews with the key actors, participatory workshops, and obser-

ventions over the period between May 2020 and June 2022. Moreover, eight public events (clothing repair cafes, experimental workshops, and theatre performance) were organised as part of the project between November 2021 and May 2022. ■



A child of the international city of Geneva, proud of her Italo-Ivorian origins, Teresa Fini of the Purple and Gold Rain promotes the ideas of diversity and inclusion through her vintage boutique.

3. Conceptual framework and methods

3.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

TO ANALYSE SOCIAL CHANGE, DIFFERENT THEORIES CAN BE RELEVANT AS A FRAMEWORK THROUGH WHICH THE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF APPAREL AND TEXTILE CAN BE UNDERSTOOD, AND PROMISING INITIATIVES MIGHT BE SUPPORTED.

We propose both the Multi-Level Perspective (MLP) and Social Practice Approach (SPA) as two, complementary theoretical frameworks. This innovative double-lens approach allows to investigate the phenomenon in more detail through each framework, while leaving room for a criss-cross analysis between the two to identify system lock-ins that can be easily missed by doing two analyses separately. Moreover, this approach allows to explain not only the status quo but also discuss possibilities for social change and a transition towards sustainability.

From transition theory, the MLP is interested in dynamics between three different levels (or scales): **landscape, regime, and niche**. The landscape represents the broadest scale, including the socio-economic and political dimensions of the “context”. The intermediary scale is the regime: at this level, established actors maintain a status quo based on interactions between the economic market, available technologies, culture and social norms, and existing policies or rules and regulations. Niches represent the third level of analysis; these are emerging initiatives that have an innovation at the core and could have the potential to disrupt existing dominant regimes. Niches are weak and require protection

until they mature enough to pose real alternative to the dominant practices of the regime they are contesting.

In an early work by Geels, the main author of the MLP, this framework was used to understand how automobiles came to displace horses and carriages in 19th century North America (Geels, 2005). In that example, horse carriages were the regime, and the automobile was a niche. In our case, fast fashion is an established regime, and slow and sustainable fashion is a niche. In order to destabilize a regime, a niche level innovation might need State support, but could also benefit from changes in landscape dynamics. The Fukushima disaster was a landscape dynamic that incited a wave of support for phasing out nuclear energy in Europe, for example. In the case of fast fashion, the collapse of Rana Plaza factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh served as a similar force at the landscape level.

The Social Practice Approach (SPA)¹ builds on social practice theories, which propose a framework for understanding everyday life as embedded in what people do. When applied to consumption studies, the focus is often on the routines and daily lives of people, or mundane activities. Rather than see

individuals as having agency, this perspective sees agency as distributed across different elements of practices, involving material arrangements and things, meanings, and other forms of social norms, as well as skills and competencies of people who are considered to be “carriers” of practices (Shove et al, 2012).

While social practice theory can be used to describe existing practices, it has also been applied to understand how interventions in practices might be effective, towards more sustainable outcomes (Hoolohan & Browne, 2020). According to Sahakian and Wilhite (2014), changing a practice implies changing at least two out of its three elements. Social practices in themselves contain the “seeds of change” (Warde 2005). SPA distinguishes between social practices and systems of social practices that are more established, and proto practices that are emerging and are not yet widely accepted – making the approach compatible with the MLP, as a recent review of the literature has demonstrated (Keller, Sahakian & Hirsh, 2022). MLP and SPA share many similarities and can work hand-in-hand to uncover issues and system lock-ins that are less evident when applying MLP and SPA separately (Seyfang & Gilbert, 2019).

A direct citation from an interview with Benjamin Lecrivain, founder of Clothier, illustrates well the importance of changing habits but also the dominance of other approaches to social change.

Figure 3: Graphic representation of the conceptual framework (MLP)

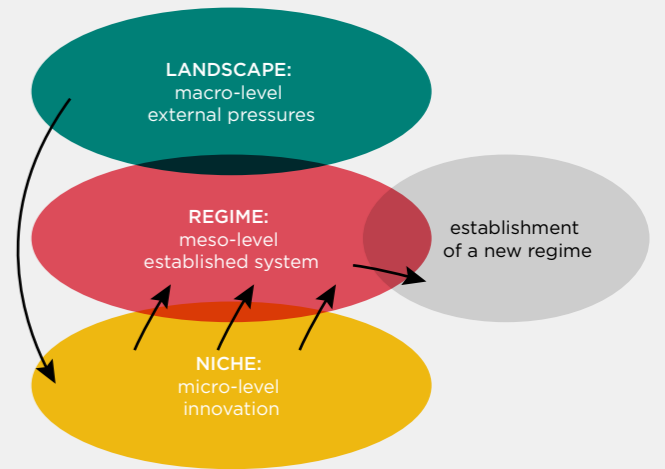


Figure 4: Social Practices Approach (SPA)

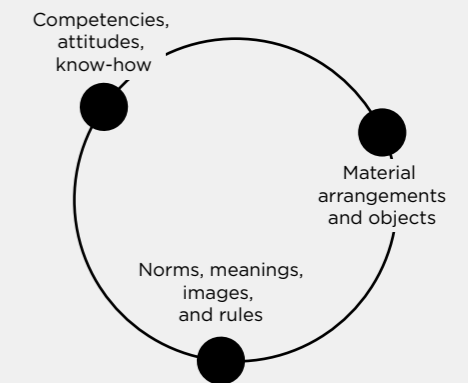
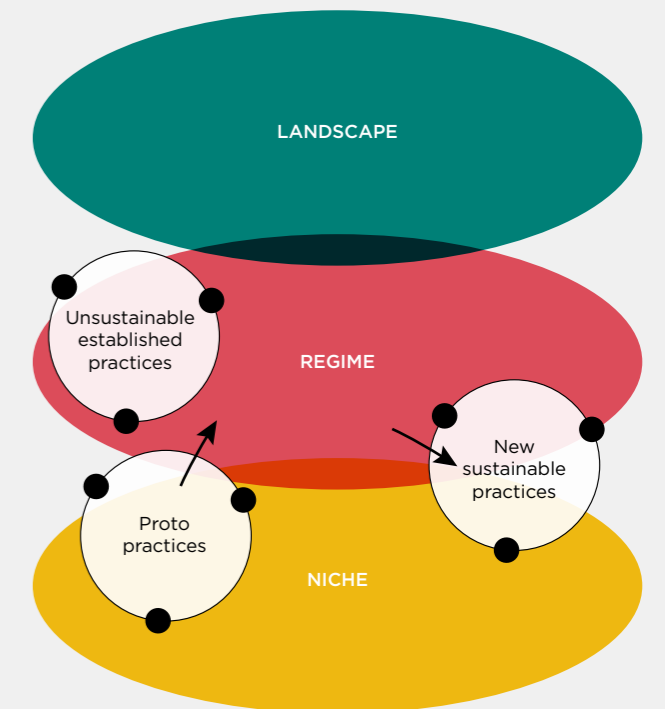


Figure 5: Combination of MLP and SPA



¹ Please see the GEFlyLess report prepared for the City of Geneva in 2021 for an overview of social practice theory.



“Many people are aware of the environmental impact of their consumption, without being ready to change their behavior (out of habit, comfort, ease, etc.). It is a challenge to attract these people to more sustainable fashion. And that’s what I would like to achieve with CLOTHER: convince consumers to buy less and buy better and make sustainable fashion mainstream. Convince them that the nature of the fabric and the place of production are important. Convince them to replace the pleasure of buying a lot with the satisfaction of buying well. Convince them that it doesn’t necessarily cost more if you buy less and better. And finally convince them that sustainable fashion has style! It is a long-term job, even though we are short of time. One solution to accelerate this transition is to have real support from the public authorities: to raise awareness among the population, to communicate on more sustainable alternatives, and why not to create a place for sustainable, pleasant and trendy fashion within the city (e.g., La Caserne in Paris).”

Benjamin Lecrivain
Founder of Clother

This direct quote shows the predominance of approaches that rely on behavior change by informing individuals more, which has the effect of over-individualizing responsibility. By linking APS and MLP, we hope to demonstrate how change should be understood in relation to broader social dynamics. While education and awareness may be one way of achieving social change, the SPA suggest that more is needed when it comes to changing habits: the virtual and physical presence of stores offering second hand clothing may contribute to the normalization of such products, as well as the skills and competencies of

people who might find new meanings in second-hand, high-quality goods.

While MLP and SPA are the tools we will use to analyse the data gathered during this project investigation, we would also like to expose **circularity and sufficiency as the normative aim** that we see as the desirable form of social change that might be supported by an actor such as the City of Geneva. While there are over a hundred definitions of circular economy (Kirchherr et al, 2017), for the purpose of this study we broadly define circular economy as a way of moving from a linear approach to using resources (make - sell - throw away model), to a system that is inspired by natural ecosystems and seeks to minimize final waste. A circular economy approach, coupled with the principle of sufficiency, focuses on closing loops - and reducing the intensity of - material flows and, consequently, reducing final waste.

In the case of fashion, this normative vision - captured in Figure 6 (Vladimirova et al., 2021) - implies better acquisition practices that help keep garments in circulation longer and support better, more sustainable production processes. It also implies a longer use of textiles, to decrease the volumes of unwanted clothes that end up in donation boxes. With the absence of specialized collection and treatment for post-consumer textiles, consumers are effectively using clothing donations as a way to dispose of unwanted textiles, including worn out garments, which can no longer be reused.

Practical urban waste management strategies, such as the 5R or 10R frameworks, suggest prioritizing actions in the following order: refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle, and return to the earth (Hoffmann & Koesoemo, 2003; Reike et al., 2022). Recycling in these strategies is a penultimate option and it is not always possible - either for economic reasons (not cost effective) or for logistical issues. It is estimated that today less than 0.5% of used clothing is recycled for the production of new clothing worldwide and there are no textile recycling technologies that could be deployed on a large scale (Textile Exchange, 2021, p.3).

In addition, the idea of recycling - whether for textiles or other products such as PET plastic - sends a misleading message to consumers. There is always material degradation in any recycling

process, which requires other inputs (energy and material). Sending a product for recycling is therefore not “free” in ecological terms. The problem must also be addressed at the source, i.e., by reducing the volumes of textile objects, clothes and accessories that are purchased (and therefore produced).

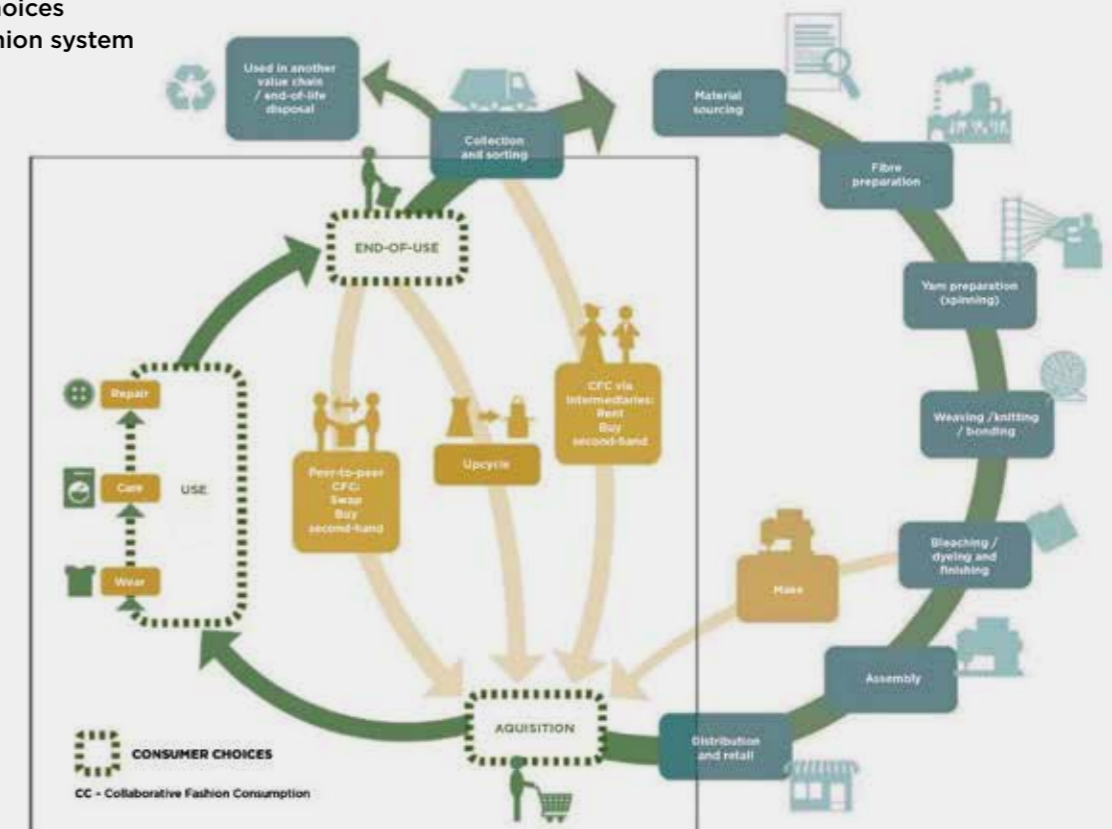
In order to “close the loop” of the circular economy, it is necessary to offer an institutional framework (e.g., in the form of textile recycling or sorting infrastructure and regulations) rather than putting responsibility for change on individuals (Moreau, Sahakian et al 2017). However, due to the lack of empirical research and understanding of circular approaches applied to textiles, it is not yet clear which local and national policies are best suited to support these efforts.

This project focuses on closing the loops at the consumption and, to some extent, post-consumption phases of the garments’ life span - which all fall within the geographical boundaries of the Greater Geneva area. In a linear economy model, which characterises

“We understand sustainable or ethical fashion as an assembly of production, consumption, and disposal practices that are consistent with the principles of circularity, sufficiency, and social justice.”

the fast fashion regime, consumers are used to buying (many) new garments, using them for a short period of time, washing them frequently and at high temperatures, neglecting repair and mending, and then disposing of garments by donating them to charity at the end of life. Figure 6 illustrates more sustainable choices available to consumers at the acquisition, use, and

Figure 6:
Sustainable fashion consumption choices in a circular fashion system



Source:
Vladimirova et al., 2021



Giji Gya and Christofe Obradovic, founders of the Downtown Uptown, luxury consignment boutique in Pâquis.

end-of-use phases (all of which together make up the “consumption” or “use” phase in circular models).

Adopting this analytical framework, which is in line with the work on circular business models done by the European Environment Agency (2021) and Ellen McArthur Foundation (2021), limits the scope of this study to sustainable practices and initiatives around (1) buying second-hand garments, shoes, and footwear; (2) swapping; (3) rental; and (4) buying new garments from ethical shops. These choices are related to the “acquisition” phase – practices that are primarily in the spotlight of consumer-oriented discussions around sustainable fashion. Choices 1-3 are considered to be “sustainable” because they help keep garments in circulation longer. Choice 4 allows to support more responsible production practices. More broadly, in this study we understand *sustainable or ethical fashion* as an assembly of production, consumption, and disposal practices that are consistent with the principles of circularity, sufficiency, and social justice.

In addition to the above-mentioned local sustainable fashion consumption practices and initiatives, this report also includes a general overview of online-only initiatives. It was done to understand which options are available to consumers living in Geneva and whether they hinder the development of local practices with a physical presence. The focus of this study, however, was from the start on the local grassroots initiatives in Geneva. This research relied on observations in the field and meetings with actors at festivals, yard sales, or swapping events, organised by local associations, small enterprises, and individuals. Furthermore, repair workshops and events have also been taken into account but not studied in detail, due to the limited time and resources.

For more information, there is a website managed by the City of Geneva (www.gerepare.ch) that contains addresses of clothing repair shops.

3.2 METHODS

TO COLLECT DATA FOR ANALYSIS, THIS STUDY RELIED ON DESK RESEARCH, INTERVIEWS WITH THE KEY ACTORS, PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOPS, AND OBSERVATIONS DURING EVENTS AND DURING THE REGULAR WORK HOURS OF SHOPS.

The first step of the project was to map existing initiatives by doing desk research and observations. This step coincided with the first months of COVID-19 lock-downs in Switzerland, during which commerce was closed and events cancelled, making in-person observations impossible. It is important to note more broadly that the sustainable fashion scene in Geneva is dynamic, with initiatives and shops emerging and disappearing regularly, for a variety of reasons. This project focused on more stable initiatives that operate semi-regularly.

Following desk research, empirical field work for the project was carried out between February 2021 and May 2022. The pool of relevant respondents in Geneva is rather limited due to the size

of the sustainable fashion scene in the city. Identification of the key actors to interview for the project was based on the snowball sampling principle (e.g., Parker et al, 2019). The number of interviews has been defined by respondents' availability and by data saturation. Several actors were approached but refused to participate in the study due to lack of time or interest – but they appear in the mapping.

“Fieldwork took place between February 2021 and May 2022.”



© Lea Kloos

Vestiaire Social is a charity project that offers second-hand clothes, shoes, and accessories to people in vulnerable situations in Geneva. There is also a selection of toys for children.



Jeanne von Segesser, Maria Rakontarivo, Typhaine Guihard, Katia Dayan Vladimirova, and Anja Imobersteg after the fair trade weekend in May 2022.

The total of 9 semi-structured interviews were conducted with actors from the second-hand boutiques (2), charity organizations that are involved into management of post-consumer textiles and resale (2), small enterprises involved in selling new ethical fashion (2), a swapping initiative (1), an upcycling initiative (1), and an awareness raising initiative (1).

Moreover, additional insights were gathered from two participatory discussions, the first moderated by Katia Vladimirova, the second one - by Jeanne von Segesser (Table 1), as well as nine public events around repair cafes organized under the supervision of Katia Vladimirova, in the framework of the project (Table 2).

Additional locations where observations were carried out throughout the period of empirical work (February 2021 and May 2022):

- CSP Renfile Meyrin
- All second-hand shops of Croix-Rouge genevoise (Vêt'Shop)
- All second-hand shops of CARITAS Geneva (La Recyclerie)
- HAZARD second-hand shop
- Plainpalais flea market
- Boutique Ayni
- Pop-ups of Purple and Gold Rain ■

Table 1:
Participatory discussions

12.05.2021 10h00 - 12h00	7.05.2022 17h00 - 18h00
MODALITY	
Zoom meeting	In person meeting during the Weekend International du Commerce Equitable
PARTICIPANTS	
Giji GYA (Downtown Uptown boutique) Anja IMOBERSTEG (Good As New Festival) Typhaine GUIHARD (Coordination Textile Genevoise) Simon GROBET (City of Geneva) Marlyne SAHAKIAN (University of Geneva) Katia VLADIMIROVA (University of Geneva)	Jeanne von SEGESSER (Bubble Ethic; Fashion Revolution) Anja IMOBERSTEG (Fair Trade Switzerland) Typhaine GUIHARD (Coordination Textile Genevoise) Perrine BAH YABI (WaxUp Africa) Katia Vladimirova (University of Geneva)
KEY QUESTIONS DISCUSSED	
Rationale and opportunities to create an online platform for promoting sustainable fashion in Geneva	The key challenges for sustainable fashion initiatives in Geneva

Table 2:
Repair cafes and related public events

EVENT	ORGANIZER	LOCATION	DATE	NUMBER OF ATTENDEES
Repair cafes (x4)	Bubble Ethic / Jeanne von Segesser	MACO (manufacture collaborative), Chemin des Sports 87, Geneva 1203	14.11.2021 et 21.11.2021 14h00 - 15h30 16h00 - 17h30	30
Repair or waste? <i>Edition 1.0</i> Talks + repair cafe + idea wall	Event: Addict Lab / Jan van Mol Repair Café: Bubble Ethic / Jeanne von Segesser	FabLab, SDG Solutions Space, Avenue de Sécheron 15, Geneva 1202	12.11.2021 14h00 - 16h00	14
Mindful Repair Theatre performance + talk + repair / upcycling café	Performance: Theatre Studio BELOE / Maria Rakontarivo Repair Café: Super Manos / Jelena Zhurajeva	Salle de St-Gervais - Pâquis, 11 rue Jean Dassier, Geneva 1201	11.12.2021 16h00 - 18h00: Repair café 18h00 - 18h30: Talk 18h30 - 19h30: Theater performance	56
Repair or waste? <i>Edition 2.0</i> Talks + repair cafe + idea wall + experiences (sewing workshop, mending station, book binding station, pin making activity)	Event: Addict Lab / Jan van Mol Repair Café: Bubble Ethic / Jeanne von Segesser	FabLab, SDG Solutions Space, Avenue de Sécheron 15, Geneva 1202	12.02.2022 10h00 - 16h00	48
Mindful Repair Theatre performance	Performance: Theatre Studio BELOE / Maria Rakontarivo	Fair Trade Festival, Rue des Pâquis 22, Geneva 1201	7.05.2022 16h00 - 16h30	23

4. Key sustainable fashion initiatives in Geneva

USING DESK RESEARCH AND FIELDWORK OBSERVATIONS, WE HAVE MAPPED THE KEY INITIATIVES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND BUSINESSES THAT OFFER CONSUMERS OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE IN MORE RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE FORMS OF FASHION CONSUMPTION.

The initial 2022 list was updated in March 2023. Some initiatives went bankrupt during the project time, some were rebranded, new stores opened. A summary table of actors is provided below. Section 4.1 discusses each type of initiative in detail. Section 4.2 provides an overview of online-only initiatives.

Table 3:
Key local actors around sustainable fashion consumption options

TYPE OF INITIATIVE WITH PHYSICAL PRESENCE	NUMBER OF SHOPS / LOCATIONS
Second hand: Independent	28
Second hand: Charity shops	22
SWAPS	1
Rentals	2
New ethical fashion boutiques	16

4.1 INITIATIVES WITH PHYSICAL PRESENCE

4.1.1. Second-hand shops

For the purposes of this study, the second-hand fashion market is understood to include clothing, footwear, and accessories that are re-sold after being owned by individual consumers. These items may be old or new, worn or with tags still attached. According

to the Vestiaire Collective (2022), a Paris-based online platform for second-hand resale, the term 'vintage' can be applied to pieces that are at least 15 years old. However, there is no universal rule or definition, which allows second-hand boutique owners interpret it in various ways and sometimes include

more recent pieces. The second-hand market today also includes new garments which were bought by mistake, on impulse, or for further speculation on second-hand platforms. Most items on the second-hand fashion market today are from fast fashion brands.

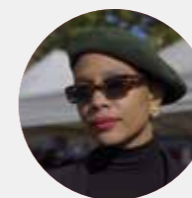
In Geneva, an online search identified a total of 50 stores selling second-hand fashion items (see Annex 2). Independent stores represent more than a half (28 stores). Among the independent second-hand stores, four offered men's fashion, while the rest sold exclusively women's fashion. A majority of the independent second-hand boutiques offered a selection of luxury and high-end clothing – which is understandable from a business point of view, since higher value garments and accessories allow for higher resale margins. Few independent second-hand shops offer mid-priced clothing (e.g., **Hazard**).

Independent boutiques follow different business models. Most second-hand fashion shops operate as consignment stores, where consumers can drop off their items for resale and get a share of the price. Few boutiques own their merchandise or part of it. When asked about the origins of their merchandise, second-hand boutique owners were reluctant to expose their sources in detail. However, some confirmed that while most of their merchandise comes from Geneva, they also must import some.

“Most second-hand fashion shops operate as consignment stores, where consumers can drop off their items for resale and get a share of the price.”

In addition to physical stores, some second-hand boutiques also offer pop-up sale events. Pop-up shops, or ephemeral retail, are short-lived (usually a day-long) appearances of shops at new locations (Boustani, 2021). **Purple and Gold Rain**, for example, is active and well-followed on Instagram and draws crowds of young adults to its pop-up events.

With the rise of social media and online resale platforms, peer-to-peer resale of fashion garments has been booming in recent years (ThredUp Report, 2022), which had adverse effects on second-hand fashion boutiques. In Geneva and French-speaking Switzerland, curated vintage capsules or individual pieces are regularly sold by various local Instagram nano-influencers through their accounts. Online peer-to-peer resale transactions are not subject to the same taxes as resale in registered stores (physical stores also pay rent). Re-selling clothes online, peer-to-peer, is different from curated consignment store collections.



“In recent years, the market is flooded with Zara and H&M and other fast fashion brands. It's getting harder and harder for me to find good quality vintage pieces. I even have to import some outside of Geneva. Rather, I would like to be able to help reuse the merchandise that is available here in our city.”

Teresa Fini
Purple and Gold Rain

50
shops in Geneva sell second-hand fashion items.

2,225 tons

Donations via clothing containers have increased dramatically, from 250 tons in 1994 to 2,225 tons in 2022.



“We, as a professional luxury consignment shop, are very different from selling between individuals and via platforms. We inspect each piece, professionally photograph it, include an accurate description of the item and condition, and guarantee the condition will be the same when sold. We filter out fakes, copies, and items in poor condition. We also have a wealth of items and brand information, thanks to our experts who process hundreds of pieces each month. We only sell items from verified sources. This is also different from resellers who sell peer-to-peer online, where you don't know where the items came from, whether the condition is accurate, or if they are counterfeit.”

Giji Gya

Downtown Uptown

It is worth noting that, following *Le Bon Marché* and *Galleries Lafayette* in Paris, the department store *Manor* has also introduced a vintage clothing corner. However, the offer is limited to less than 100 garments (visit on 19.01.2023). Moreover, next to pre-owned garments there are new items (hats, bags) labelled as “sustainable” but made in China, out of synthetic materials, and offer no certifications to support their claims.

The second group are **charity shops** (22 stores: 8 Caritas, 7 CSP, 3 Red Cross, 2 Emmaus, 1 Salvation Army, 1 SOS Femmes). Charity shops resell clothes, footwear, and accessories donated by Geneva inhabitants. To sort and resell donations, charities work with volunteers and people in professional reinsertion programs who are not necessarily specialized or professionally trained for this work (other than through practical training on the job). **Fringantes**, a

second-hand resale boutique next to Plainpalais founded by SOS Femmes, provides employment to women in vulnerable situations. Sales from second-hand boutiques help finance charitable social projects.

According to Typhaine Guihard (Coordination Textile Genevoise), donations via clothing containers have increased dramatically, from 250 tons in 1994 to 2,225 tons in 2022. Today charities do not have the capacity to sort even a third of incoming items. The associations sort 100% of the donations brought to them directly (approximately 500 tons). Consumers are increasingly turning to donation boxes to get rid of clothes they no longer want, including worn-out pieces that can no longer be recycled.



“The municipalities have separate recycling areas for PET, paper, and glass and they also often put collection bins there for clothes. This can be confusing. Thus, although it is clearly indicated on these collection containers that the clothes deposited must be clean and in good condition, there is also textile waste, sometimes wet, which contaminates the entire batch.”

Sophie Pichon

Croix-Rouge genevoise

Charity shops in general offer low or medium-low price range clothes, shoes, and accessories. However, some work has been done recently to diversify the offer, according to Sophie Pichon, head of Textile Service at Red Cross Geneva. To target different audiences, **Vêt'Shops** (Croix-Rouge brand) offer a pricing range from clothes “by the kilo”, to mid-range offerings and one boutique specializing in upper-middle and high-end fashion (Vêt'Shop Lissignol).

Overall, charity shops are making efforts and are evolving to make boutiques and

spaces more attractive to the younger public. Caritas Geneva shops (**La Recyclerie** brand) offer discounts to students. A big innovative re-use centre (**Renfile**) has opened in Espace Tourbillion in August 2021. It offers upcycling and textile repair workshops to the public - but unfortunately is located far from the city center.

Upcyclerie is another important example. Born from a meeting between Caritas Geneva and the creation studio Wondervision, the Upcyclerie is an essential place in Geneva, at the crossroads of fashion, design, and environmental issues. It is both a creative laboratory and a shop specializing in upcycling products. Several partners active in fashion, design and architecture co-inhabit the space and share the same objective: to promote more sustainable consumption

patterns through the reuse of materials. At the sales area, there are the creations of each entity, including those of the Upcyclerie brand from a sewing workshop set up by Caritas Geneva.

Geneva clothing donations are known for their quality, which is a direct result of the wealth present in the city and the high purchasing power of Geneva consumers.

L'Upcyclerie, an essential place in Geneva, at the crossroads of fashion, design, and environmental issues.



According to Typhaine Guihard, clothing donations to charities have increased dramatically in volumes over the past ten years, and today charities do not have the capacity to sort even half of the incoming items. Geneva second-hand merchandise is known for its quality, which is the direct result of the wealth present in the city and the high purchasing power of Geneva consumers.



“Sometimes we receive donations from very expensive luxury brands. For example, here is an original scarf from Hermès. We receive donations from retirement homes. They put small tags with the owner’s name and room number on all clothes and objects. It turns out that they are impossible to remove and this damages the textile forever. And that’s bad because it’s an original Hermès scarf that’s in good condition. But who wants to wear the label of a deceased person?”

Typhaine Guihard
Coordination Textile
Genevoise

Despite the decline in overall quality of the merchandise in the recent years, Geneva donations are comprised primarily of garments from fast fashion, non-luxury brands in relatively good condition. Sometimes donations contain clothes from ultra fast fashion brands, like SHEIN, that are brand new, with tags — and occasionally in multiple sizes. (Consumers buy a model in several sizes to choose the one that suits them best and put the rest directly into donation boxes, because of the low prices.) The quality of these garments (cut, fabric, finish) is low, and their lifespan is short. Unlike good quality clothes, these pieces usually do not last more than a few washes.

Clothes and accessories are also sold at local flea markets and yard sales. In Plainpalais, markets on Wednesdays and Saturdays offer a selection of second-hand clothing at very low prices. According to Typhaine Guihard, some of these piles of clothes are obtained illegally from charity donation boxes: “entrepreneurs” block the door to the container and wait for people to leave their bags of donations in front of the blocked box.

4.1.2. Clothing swaps

Clothing swaps became a popular phenomenon in Europe in the years leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic. Informal or semi-formal swaps can be a closed exchange among friends, among parents (mostly mothers) for children’s clothes, or among neighbours – with a clear gender bias towards women. In Geneva, clothing swaps organised by individuals take place on a semi-regular basis and are communicated mainly via Facebook and Instagram. The informal and often closed nature of these events makes it difficult to trace their frequency and assess their prevalence.

There are also more formally organised swaps open to the public, which require participants to pay a fee to a facilitating third party. In 2016, Isa Doninelli and Simon Cappelle started clothing swaps in Geneva and Lausanne, which attracted many participants and eventually were transformed into an association named Sipy. In 2020, Sipy opened a boutique at the Manufacture Collaborative (MACO) where members can bring their clothes, receive a coupon, and pick up a corresponding number of clothes from the available stock deposited by other members.

At the end of 2021, the association counted over 200 members. According to Simon Capelle, a co-founder of Sipy, their target audience are women between 18 and 40 years old; however, the largest number of members are between 25 and 35 years old. 90-95% of clothes going through the swapping association is for women, primarily basic garments for daily life.



“We have everything, even new clothes. But we don’t refuse clothes that have signs of wear, as long as garments are recent and wearable. But clothes surely have not been ironed or cleaned especially, they are not vintage pieces... It’s really something that you can find in your wardrobe.”

Simon Cappelle
Sipy

Clothing swaps is a way for participants to exchange existing clothes they have in their wardrobe as opposed to buying additional pieces, which has certain repercussions for the association.

“90-95% of clothes that go through the swapping association are for women.”



“The people who come are the people who obviously have clothes. Our project is not really aimed at people who don’t have clothes. In fact, that’s one of the criticisms we got. “If I don’t have any clothes, can I come?” No, but you can go to a second-hand store to buy clothes.”

Isa Doninelli
Sipy

4.1.3. Clothing rental

Our research identified three boutiques that exclusively offer clothing rental services in Geneva. Two boutiques specialize in high-end clothing for special occasions. **La Garde-Robe Genève**¹ targets a female clientele, offering special occasion dresses and outfits. **Saint Frusquin boutique** rents formal menswear, such as tuxedos. (The Downtown Uptown boutique also offers a selection of high-end dresses for special occasions, but it is one of several commercial activities the shop is involved in.)

La Mascarade rental boutique, a Geneva institution since 1985, offers costumes, historical dresses, and evening gowns. According to Tanya Benat-Monla, the owner of La Mascarade, the store’s artisans handcraft all costumes the store offers. With over 20,000 costumes available for rent, their concept seeks to minimize the use of poorly made “disposable” party costumes and offer high quality pieces for rent. The store also offers a small selection of vintage pieces.

25-35 year old

Target audience of Sipy are women between 18 and 40 years old; however, the largest number of members are between 25 and 35 years old.

¹ Update March 2023: The shop has closed.



The Plainpalais market offers second-hand clothes at low prices.



Benjie offers a take-back program for used shoes from their brand. Shoes in good condition are donated to Vestiare Social.

4.1.4. New sustainable fashion boutiques

In Geneva, consumers can buy ethical fashion brands in specialized boutiques, in some department stores (e.g., Globus, Manor) and shopping malls, and during special events such as festivals, Christmas markets, etc.

There are several physical boutiques that specialize in ethical and sustainable fashion brands from Switzerland and abroad. The search identified 16 boutiques that sell clothes, shoes, and accessories (e.g., Ayni, ApeSigned, La Collective, La Baladeuse, Au temps pour moi, Coeur Cabane, Magasin du Monde,

“For consumers who are only starting to look for more responsible fashion choices, it is difficult to find names of sustainable fashion shops and initiatives in Geneva.”



“Whenever we organize an ethical fashion market or an event, people always ask why you don’t stay longer? Why don’t you open the doors, not only on weekends but also for weeks and months? Yes, it would be so great to have a presence during the whole year.”

Jeanne von Segesser
Bubble Ethic

WaxUpAfrica) and two boutiques that offer bags (Kokoso and AgentSpecial). Downtown Uptown also offers every 6 months, a new sustainable brand, manufactured in a responsible way.

Boutiques included in this list sell brands that engage in more responsible



and ethical production practices: from local production, better materials use, to working with vulnerable groups in other countries, etc. Compared to fast fashion brands, prices in ethical fashion boutiques are quite high.

For consumers who are only starting to look for more responsible fashion choices, it is difficult to find names of sustainable fashion shops and initiatives in Geneva. Some lists of ethical fashion stores are available on lifestyle blogs, but they are not updated regularly and are mostly incomplete (e.g., Good Brand Guru, 2019; Conscious By Chloe, 2018).

Department stores, like Manor and Globus, offer some more established brands that have ethically made products (e.g., Calida, Stella McCartney) – among other brands they sell, including fast fashion.

Typhaine Guihard, President of the Geneva Textile Coordination, scaled up the Vestiare Social project.

4.2 ONLINE-ONLY INITIATIVES

IN TERMS OF RESALE, CONSUMERS IN GENEVA HAVE ACCESS TO A NUMBER OF LUXURY RESALE ONLINE SOLUTIONS.

A global Paris-based luxury resale platform **Vestiaire Collective** is available but requires buyers and sellers from Switzerland to pay higher transaction fees due to customs regulations. There is also a Geneva-based platform that has specialized in luxury resale since 2016 (**My Private Dressing**). The items listed on the site are localized and can only be shipped to Switzerland, which solves the problem of customs fees.

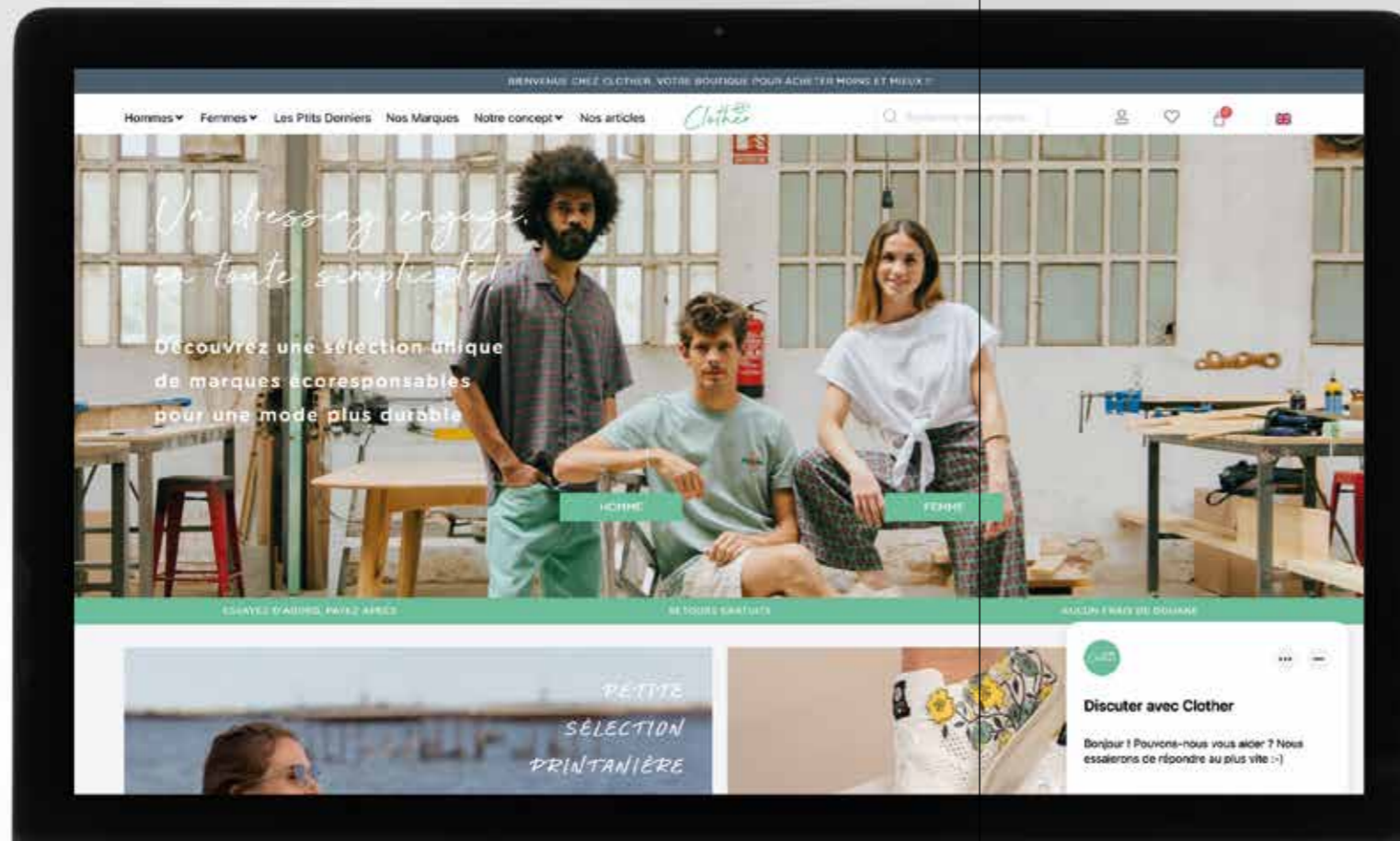
Notably, the online platforms mentioned above focus on the resale of luxury

fashion and accessories and do not offer consumer garments at a medium-low price segment. Consumers interested in buying more affordable, used clothing online tend to use Facebook Market Place or Facebook groups, which also advertise in-person events, such as swaps or yard sales. Due to customs restrictions, the largest European peer-to-peer resale platforms, like **DePop** or **Vinted** are not available in Switzerland.

Online, there are several women's fashion rental platforms in Switzerland, mainly in German-speaking Switzerland (e.g., Kleihd.Ch, Teil.Style). The platform OhMode.Ch has a French website and delivers in Geneva, but the choice is limited. The platform Oioioi.Rent offers monthly rental packages for baby clothes.

As for new ethical and sustainable fashion, there are several online markets in Switzerland and specifically in Geneva that propose curated collections of ethical brands. Launched in Geneva in 2020, **Clother** is a local example of an online platform selling sustainable fashion brands. Clother facilitates the purchase of ethical brands for consumers who do not have to worry about customs fees and taxes on the clothes they buy. Another Geneva-based shop and blog **ECOLABO** launched an online marketplace of Swiss ethical brands in 2021, including some fashion brands (e.g., Labisk.ot, Jungle Folk, Ethical Minds). **GeneveAvenue**, a Geneva-based e-commerce platform for various types of local goods, also sells some fashion brands that define themselves as ethical (Appareal, Awana Alpace, Beanie Beanie, pink maharani, The Tallis). However, the platform does not specialize in sustainable fashion. ■

“Due to customs restrictions, the largest European peer-to-peer resale platforms, like DePop or Vinted, are not available in Switzerland.”



www.clother.ch is an online platform based in Geneva that aims to make ordering sustainable fashion in Switzerland easy.

5. Conceptual analysis

TO BETTER UNDERSTAND POTENTIAL LOCK-INS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE FASHION INITIATIVES IN GENEVA, AND HOW THESE MIGHT BE SUPPORTED BY THE CITY OF GENEVA, WE HAVE APPLIED A DOUBLE ANALYTICAL LENS OF MLP AND SPA.

First, each perspective is discussed individually, by distinguishing between fast fashion regime and sustainable fashion niche and between the dominant social practices of fast fashion and the emerging proto practices of sustainable fashion consumption. Then, a criss-cross analysis of the two theoretical lenses is presented.

5.1 FAST FASHION REGIME VERSUS SUSTAINABLE FASHION NICHE

First, we outline in Table 4 all of the ways in which the fast fashion regime is expressed – through market and industry dynamics, enforced by policies,

technology, scientific knowledge and culture. At the same time, we expose how the niche of sustainable fashion is evolving in parallel to the regime.

Table 4: Comparative analysis of the fast fashion regime and sustainable fashion niche in Geneva (based on Seyfang & Gilbert, 2019)

Fast fashion regime
Sustainable fashion niche

Market

Large global enterprises selling inexpensive apparel (ie, does not account for social and environmental impacts elsewhere) that has not been designed to last, in large quantities, in-store and online. Relatively new regime (15-20 years).

Small or medium size businesses, non-profit organizations, charities, citizens' initiatives. Selling new garments that are made responsibly. Re-selling, swapping, renting, or otherwise recirculating second-hand garments. Upcycling and repairing garments. Primarily offline initiatives, events, shops.

Users

Primary target group: younger people (Gen Z, Millennials); general public.

Primary target group: consciously minded Millennial women and men, with pro-environmental and social justice motivations.

Industry

Profit maximization. Shareholder ownership. Few large brands, in terms of market share, drive the (ultra) fast fashion market and rely on overconsumption.

Global supply chains: environmental and social costs externalized. Responsibility rests on the shoulders of individual consumers. Some responsible production but remains minor compared to overall offer.

Triple bottom line, sustainability values, sufficiency, circularity, social and environmental responsibility. Few small, values-driven initiatives across a spectrum of more sustainable offering.

Local recirculation: re-use, waste prevention. Import of responsibly made garments.

Policy

Retail and import regulations. Significant lobbying power as an important employer. Outsourcing of labour and externalization of the environmental costs in countries with weaker policy frameworks.

Retail and (for some) import regulations. Some indirect support from climate / sustainability policies. Lack of harmonization with other policies (regarding SMEs, waste management, circular economy).

Technology

Reliant on hyper-industrialized systems of production (ie, styles move from runway to store in a matter of weeks) Strong reliance on e-commerce (especially ultra-fast fashion brands which sell exclusively online) and social media marketing.

Highly developed, smooth, and easy "customer experience" – from ad to check-out.

SMS, email, app notifications, etc. are used to create Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and drive sales.

Weak e-commerce presence overall. Online offer of new sustainable brands and second-hand resale platforms is growing but compared to fast fashion is very limited.

Social media is primarily used to advertise local events and shops – and to raise awareness around sustainable fashion more generally.

Science, knowledge

Increasing recognition around environmental and social impacts of fast fashion. Acknowledgment of the environmental and social consequences of production.

Routine overproduction and destruction of unsold and returned merchandise.

Increased use of synthetic and mixed fibres – to reduce the costs of production.

Low production costs but high margins for the shareholders / CEOs – contingent on large volumes.

Critique around low prices, routine deep discounting (which habituates consumers to artificially low prices of garments).

Focus is on small-batch production, production on-demand, tailored solutions (for new brands), local recirculation. Use of sustainable and natural materials, design for durability of garments is emphasized.

Culture

Culture of "eternal youth", of newness, instant gratification. Reinforced through extensive media campaigns (fashion magazines, billboards, product placement in films, music videos etc)

Instagram and social media promote a wear-once culture.

Fast fashion, due to its affordability, often portrayed as democratic.

Shopping for clothes as a way to pass time with friends and family; associated with leisure time and fun.

Slow fashion approach. Focus on local and small.

Focus on re-use and extending life span of garments.

Sustainable fashion considered as more expensive and less democratic.

Sustainable fashion seen as a form of social distinction for some.

Stigma sometimes associated with second-hand and charity boutiques (viewed as places for under-privileged groups).

In addition to the analysis above, landscape pressures on the fast fashion regime are mounting. Collapse of the Rana Plaza factory in Bangladesh in 2013, for example, has triggered a global social movement against exploitative and polluting practices in fashion supply chains, raising awareness among

“The sustainable fashion niche in Geneva is at an early stage of development and scaling and it requires much support to challenge the dominant regime of fast fashion.”

consumers who seek more responsibly produced options. Moreover, new emerging sustainability regulations for the fashion sector at the European level aim at changing production practices of fashion retailers, including material and design standards, as well as their marketing practices and greenwashing tactics (European Commission 2022).

However, the fast fashion regime remains dominant for clothing and textiles consumption. It offers multiple attractive options to consumers: physical shops in the most central locations, well-developed e-commerce, a variety of styles at a low price point. Large multinational corporations, fast fashion retailers can afford the investment in self-promotion, including extensive and multi-million advertising and promotion campaigns. Supply is effectively creating demand when it comes to fashion.

The sustainable fashion niche in Geneva is at an early stage of development and scaling and it requires much support to challenge the dominant regime of fast fashion. It is a poli-centric set of actors, initiatives, and events that are currently not operating in a synchronized manner. To become an attractive alternative, sustainable fashion initiatives in Geneva require support, first and foremost, in terms of coherence and visibility, to gain enough cohesion as a whole, in order to destabilize the regime. Conversely, the fast fashion regime could receive less support, for example, through a ban on fast fashion advertising in the city of Geneva.

5.2

FAST FASHION DOMINANT CONSUMPTION PRACTICES VERSUS SUSTAINABLE FASHION PROTO PRACTICES

In table 5, we describe both fast and sustainable fashion as practices. Fast fashion is a more established practice while sustainable fashion is a proto practice - meaning that it has not come together yet as an established and highly recognized practice, at least

not mainstream. By using direct quotes from the interviews, we hope to tease out the emerging meanings, competencies and material arrangements around slow fashion that could destabilize the dominant meanings around fast fashion.

Table 5:
Comparison of existing dominant fast fashion practices and emerging alternative sustainable fashion proto practices.

Fast fashion regime
Sustainable fashion niche

Images / Meanings / Norms

Fashionable, sexy. Eternal youth. Fun. Newness.
Abundance and convenience. Constant renewal.
Atomized, individualized, unique.
Affordable. Cheap. Democratic. Care-free, “Don’t think twice”.

Environmentally friendly, ethical. Responsible. “Doing the right thing”. Social and environmental justice. Community, sharing.

Unique finds. Treasure hunting (in case of second-hand) but also clothing basics.

Isa Doninelli, Sipy: “We often have people who think that second hand is plaid shirts, Hawaiian shirts. In fact, if there are almost 150 garments that are taken over a week, it is because in the end we have clothes that people put on every day, not costumes. Clothes that could be worn every day, but that people no longer wear.”

Durability. Re-use, pre-loved.

Giji Gya, Downtown Uptown: “Second-hand is about recycling things, giving them a second life, not about making profits. We don’t compromise in our principles. We curate, so we only select certain items, we don’t just take anything just because it is going to resell at a profit. That’s not our principle. So, we try to come from a non-economic centric approach.”

Good value (second-hand)

Teresa Fini, Purple and Gold Rain: “Most of my Generation Z customers are largely aware of the negative impacts of fast fashion. But they buy from my pop-up store first and foremost because of its affordable prices. My clients know they can find truly unique, high-quality pieces.”

Premium for sustainability.

Marie-France de Crecy, L’Upcyclerie: “[one of the biggest challenges for the Upcyclerie is to] make it clear that a product produced responsibly cannot cost the same as a fast fashion product. Find a viable and sustainable economic model.”

Stigma against shopping second-hand.

Anja Imobersteg, Fair Trade Switzerland: “I grew up thinking that I was not allowed to shop at CARITAS charity shops. I thought, wrongly, that this type of shop was reserved only for people in precarious situation.”

Fast fashion shopping mentality may shift to second hand.

Giji Gya, Downtown Uptown: “The world cannot absorb the amount of second-hand clothing coming out to the market right now. We need to slow down consumption of second hand as well as fast fashion.”

Skills / Competencies

Shopping experience made as easy as possible, especially online – for the “digital nomads” (Gen Z)
No mending or repair skills required (cheap replacement options readily available)
Little to no communication with another person necessary to purchase
Hiding the label to take a picture in an outfit, to post on social media and then return the outfit.

Research and commitment needed to find the right boutiques or online platforms, to verify green claims.

Jeanne von Segesser, Bubble Ethic: “If you are a newcomer to [sustainable fashion], you want really to consume better, then it is very difficult to find options in Geneva. You can only mainly Google “sustainable fashion” in the city but there is little there for the Canton or the city of Geneva. It would be great to have a reliable website where people can simply find sustainable options, links with different partners (people, local associations) that promote local initiatives.”

Repair and mending skills to extend the life span of garments with which one has emotional connection.

Giji Gya, Downtown Uptown: “We lack the understanding of the repair of what we use. Sewing a button, darning a hole in a knit garment, which we no longer have the capacity to do, so no one does. We’ve also lost the ability to figure out how to mix and match a wardrobe if you want to cut to the chase. My wardrobe is made up of pieces I’ve collected for 30 years. I am not joking. We have lost the ability to know how to mix and match in the trendy style you want.”

Small scale of boutiques implies personal exchanges and communication.

Perrine Bah Yabi, WaxUp Afrika: “With many new customers, I have to spend time before making a sale [in my shop] to justify higher prices for my products that are more sustainable. Many consumers do not understand why they should buy from me and not from a fast fashion brand. These are hours and hours of awareness work.”

Material arrangements

Conveniently located shops. Stylish merchandizing. Loud music, attractive young staff, environment aimed to increase sales.

Easy-to-navigate e-commerce platforms open 24/7.
Standardized sizing.

Remote locations for some initiatives (requires extra effort / commitment).

Jeanne von Segesser, Bubble Ethic: “With the Bubble Ethic association, our goal is to give visibility to local craftsmen and ethical creators with sustainable values. For this we have opened the Bubble Ethic shop in downtown Nyon which highlights their products and services and thus offers a sustainable alternative with local, handmade and ethical products. I think if we had a space in Geneva in a central location where you wouldn’t have to drive to get there, it would certainly be successful. We wanted to create with my association a kind of concept store, everything related to sustainable fashion but not only. It is also articles, objects and accessories, etc. I think if we had that kind of space in Geneva, but really in a central location where you wouldn’t have to drive to get there. It would be something that people would like to have.”

Infrastructure (equipment, spaces) and support are limited.

Marie-France de Crecy, L’Upcyclerie: “There is a real lack of infrastructure and we need to be supported. We are today “valiant soldiers” seeking to transform a system that is very difficult to change. We will never get there without the help of policy makers. We need to federate, communication and support. Sustainable fashion goes with the challenges of a local economy, so it is a story of economic and social policies.”

Events and pop-up shops. Community feeling, often joint initiatives with other actors that practice responsible and ethical commerce.

Jeanne von Segesser, Bubble Ethic: “The Repairs Coutures workshops that we organized with Bubble Ethic & apesigned at MACO and at SDG Solution Space showed us a real interest from the public with a high participation rate. People were eager to come, test their abilities and actively participate. The enthusiasm was such that some people even came back to introduce their children and husbands to it - it was simply incredible and so encouraging! Many have also asked us to do these workshops on a regular basis throughout the year and wanted to know the next dates.”

In second hand: unique finds, no sizing variations – but also tailoring options available.

Giji Gya, Downtown Uptown: “When you go to a store and try on an item of clothing, nothing will fit you perfectly unless it fits your body. And it got away from us, we didn’t understand that things won’t always work out for us and we have to accept that and wish that you too learned to make things work out for you. That’s what I do with my good clients who understand. I repair the sleeves, the hems, the waist...”

Practice as a whole

Well established, highly visible and recognizable.

Less convenient, less accessible practice with various interpretations (second hand, luxury sustainable clothing, repair, etc.)



© Sophie Pichon

Collective Hi Bye works on textile and clothing recycling projects in one of the Geneva Red Cross sites, rue Leschet.

(Ultra) fast fashion continues to grow globally and remains an easy option for consumers because it offers high time-space flexibility: easy to shop, 24/7, from anywhere. A system of dominant social practices associated with fast fashion shopping indicates a strong coherence among its different elements, which rely on and produce material overconsumption, overspending, and generation of textile waste. For fast fashion consumers, material throughput of a wardrobe (clothes going in and out) has intensified due to limited average storage space.

Configuration of the elements of sustainable fashion proto practices supports lower carbon footprints of consumers' wardrobes, and an increase in mindful consumption. However, in Geneva these

5.3 OVERLAPS IN MLP AND SPA

Having analysed the situation separately from an MLP and SPA perspectives, this section discusses possible lock-ins and intersections between the two analytical lenses. First, we discuss how some established practices are blocking the development of the sustainable fashion niche.

5.3.1. Dominant social practices blocking sustainable fashion niche

1. SHOPPING CONVENIENCE (material arrangements)

Problem: *it is easier to buy fast fashion than to buy responsibly*

Physical shops of fast fashion companies are conveniently located, and their e-commerce is highly developed, intuitive, and easy-to-follow, offering instant gratification from purchases and hassle-free returns. These shopping practices are stable, reliable, and predictable.

Sustainable fashion initiatives in Geneva today do not offer a reliable and rich network of shopping venues and have limited, underdeveloped online presence (due to lack of investment).

proto practices are at an early stage of development, remain fragile and small-scale, and at this point do not offer a viable alternative to fast fashion. Sustainable proto practices require compromise, commitment, and additional efforts from consumers on multiple fronts (more research, further travel, inconvenient hours, higher prices, fewer options, etc.). Time in addition to money is a necessary resource when it comes to slow fashion practices.

Possible solutions: offer predictable, stable, and easily-accessible shopping solution; create one or multiple central locations to offer sustainable fashion products, among others - that would be easy to access and attractive.

Example: Let's Refashion Center in Luxembourg, funded by the Government of Luxembourg and created by CARITAS Luxembourg based on the concept developed by Dr. Katia Vladimirova in 2019, offers consumers a one-stop-shops for all the sustainable alternatives to fast fashion available in Luxembourg. Part of ReThink Your Clothes campaign, the shop is centrally located next to fast fashion shops in the city downtown and offers curated selections of second hand and local designers. It also offers skills-based workshops and talks, to build local community around the topics of sustainable fashion consumption.
<https://rethink.lu/letzrefashion.html>

2. ABUNDANCE AT A LOW PRICE POINT

Problem: *fast fashion offerings are cheap, pretty, and plenty*

Consumers of (ultra) fast fashion brands are used to having many options to choose from and any given model in multiple sizes, all at a low price point.

Despite the high purchasing power of Swiss consumers, it is important to note that the consumption of new ethical and/or sustainable clothing in Europe in general, and in Switzerland in particular, can be more expensive per unit, which excludes many consumers due to their income. According to a study on people who voluntarily chose to adopt "sufficiency" practices, sustainable clothes and shoes are more difficult to access than public transport or local/vegetarian food, for example, due to a higher price point (Rossier & Sahakian, 2021).

Sustainable fashion initiatives have a limited (but growing) offer for the middle price range that would be compatible with current fast fashion prices, most of which are charity boutiques. Swaps in particular could offer an affordable alternative.

Isa Doninelli, Sipy: *"In Paris I was in a second-hand space which sold everything at 3 €. It's true that sometimes the prices here (in Geneva) are a bit expensive compared to what you can find. And it's true, every vintage store has a big selection and all; but ultimately it's second hand anyway, it's super expensive. That's how I said to myself that we have to create a swap."*

However, there is a risk that overconsumption mentality may shift to second-hand and to swaps.

Isa Doninelli, Sipy: *"We have a lot of people who were fans of shopping, who went all the time to buy new clothes and there, since we have existed, there are even some who have hardly ever bought new. They come because they have so many clothes that in fact they bring them to us then they take them back and then it can go on forever, let's say. They keep this habit of change, but in a slightly more closed circuit by upgrading the clothes. This has been called ethical overconsumption."*

Possible solutions: Promote the vision of sustainable fashion in terms of sufficiency and true value of clothes. Reframe shopping for clothes as a practice of "treasure hunting" which is also affordable (for second-hand and swapping) or as mindful curation of the wardrobe (new ethical brands). Offer consumers a possibility to split the payment for particularly expensive (second-hand or new) items. Develop a new narrative that "less is more" and circular is the way to move forward.

The repair cafés organized by Bubble Ethic at SDG Solutions Space and MACO attracted many participants, including families.



© Katia Vladimirova

3. BUYING CLOTHES AS A FORM OF LEISURE ASSOCIATED WITH GOOD LIFE

Problem: *shopping for clothes as a form of leisure brings people together*

A typical shopping practice – to go to a fashion shop or a mall with fashion shops – often has nothing to do with actually needing clothes but rather serves as a pre-text to spend time together with other people while doing something (“Dis-

However, there is a danger of transferring the fast fashion overconsumption logic to more sustainable alternatives – thus, the “less is more” logic must be emphasized towards overall sufficiency (rather than excess and abundance).

Possible solutions: target the root cause of the problem – lack of community and activities around fashion / clothes. Support community-building activities, e.g., sewing, fashion repair and upcycling workshops, swaps, festivals, and local ethical markets where people can spend time with friends and family and learn about local sustainable fashion offerings.

Example: Helsinki Fashion Library OODI (Niinimäki 2022): a library-hosted fashion space that aims to connect people and encourage time spent with others. “We have a huge fitting room where everybody fits the clothes together, so they are not queuing like when you go one by one, so it is a fun part of the thing that we are doing this together.” (Pedersen and Netter 2015, p. 266)

cussion Underpants” phenomenon described by Niinimäki (2022) as a practice of routinely buying something small and cheap, like a pair of underwear, to justify a trip to the shop/mall).

Sustainable fashion offers a plenitude of options for community-building, including workshops, festivals, vide-greniers, etc.

“The logic of ‘less is more’ must be emphasized towards overall sufficiency.”

The Caritas textile workshop offers services to small local brands and employs people in need of professional reintegration.



© Katja Vladimirova

4. SWITCHING TO MORE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES: COUNTER THE GREEN-WASHING AND VISIBILITY OF HIGH STREET BRANDS

Subject to landscape pressures centred on climate change and sustainability discourses, the fast fashion regime has been experiencing unprecedented criticism in the recent years from advocacy groups, consumers, and policy makers, regarding their business practices. As a response to growing consumer demand and to some emerging legislation (e.g., ban on burning or destroying unsold merchandise in France), fast fashion brands have adopted new marketing strategies for their products that involve sustainability claims. Due to a lack of commonly recognized sustainability standards in the industry, fast fashion brands have been engaging in the practice of “greenwashing” – activities that make people believe that a company is doing more to protect the environment than it really is (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022). Fast fashion has been adopting sustainability narratives and confusing consumers, making it difficult for consumers to distinguish between greenwashing and true efforts.

High-street brands that represent the dominant fast fashion regime are highly recognizable and can easily be found in most urban centres, including Geneva city centre. Their e-commerce platforms, as well as those of ultra-fast fashion brands that sell exclusively online, are the first that come up in search results. Even if a consumer has an intention to switch to a better practice, finding reliable information on the initiatives available in Geneva is difficult.

Giji Gya, Downtown Uptown: *“If you want real slow fashion, you’re going to have to subsidize that because if [slow fashion brands] are not going for exponential growth profits, it’s going to be difficult [for them] to have money to advertise. So either the government assists in providing spaces for advertising and publicity or subsidizes advertising and publicity for slow fashion brands.”*

Marie-France de Crecy, L’Upcyclerie: *“There is an acceleration of the sustainable offer and public awareness of these issues. We must seize this enthusiasm to formalize, at the level of the city of Geneva, an ambitious program of economic and cultural support for this movement in motion.”*

Possible solutions: The City of Geneva could partner with the Fédération Romande de Consommateurs (FRC) or another NGO to 1) Denounce greenwashing offers in fast fashion and 2) Offer a curated list of verified sustainable fashion alternatives. An online tool could showcase an up-to-date list of local sustainable fashion initiatives and information about the impacts of fast fashion. This could also include inputs from local/niche actors working on sustainable fashion into city mailing list updates and share them on City social media. The City could also decide to 3) Give less visibility to fast fashion brands by prohibiting their advertisement on city billboards or other media.

5.3.2. Other regimes influencing the emerging sustainable proto practices

This section discusses how existing regimes other than the fast fashion regime – and social practices embedded in them – influence and impede the transition towards more sustainable proto-practices in fashion consumption. For each regime, we identify a set of social practices to support.

1. SOCIAL MEDIA / “FASHION INFLUENCER” AND ADVERTISING REGIME

To stay up to date on fashion trends, most consumers have moved online, to social media, and away from fashion magazines that used to dictate what is in vogue. The social media regime encourages abundance, self-indulgence, and overconsumption of fashion. Social media influencers, the ultimate lifestyles and fashion authority for Gen Z consumers, foster a narcissistic culture by posting OOTDs (outfits of the day), haul videos, single-wear outfits just for the purpose of posting on social media. There is a false sense of proximity perpetuated thanks to the “authenticity” efforts by influencers – instead, the regime contributes to atomisation of the society, to loneliness. Sharing one’s own outfits with peers and followers, getting positive feedback (likes) also allows younger fashion consumers to express their identity and fosters a sense of belonging.

Social practice of engaging in social media activity is underpinned by people seeking validation and a sense of community but instead they are redirected towards consumption as a way to achieve these goals. The core need (being recognized, being part of a group) remains unsatisfied.

Possible solutions: Instead of impersonal social media interactions, the City could support in-person community building activities (social practices) around fashion. The emphasis would be on slow social connectivity and slow fashion.

2. URBAN WASTE REGIME

In recent years, overconsumption of fashion has increased material throughput of consumers' wardrobes and resulted in a surge in the volumes of textile donations and waste. Currently, the situation in Geneva is managed by charity organizations (Coordination Textiles Genevoise), which routinely have to put part of the donated garments directly into disposal bins (due to low quality, typical to fast fashion garments) and export over 60% of donated garments by selling them to TexAid.

Typhaine Guihard, Coordination Textile Genevoise: *"We collect more than 2,000 tons each year in Geneva, that's 2 million kilos of clothes, that's obviously too much! And even if we cut these volumes in half, it would still be too much! Failing to see the volumes drop, we should be able to sort a lot more, but that requires having premises and being able to employ trained people, and for that we need economic and political support."*

Lack of control and regulations for this area create a situation in which consumers have a "free pass" to continue buying and getting rid of clothes, in good consciousness - thinking they are donating their garments to a good cause. There is also a disconnect between local independent second-hand shops and charities.

Teresa Fini, Purple and Gold Rain: *"As a small second-hand shop, I cannot come to Caritas or Red Cross here and buy second-hand goods*



Example of upcycling at Vet'Shops, man's shirt.

directly from them. I have to buy from private individuals, hunt at garage sales and sometimes even buy from other

countries - which takes time and does not always guarantee results. If shops like mine could access and choose from their clothes, we could really improve the local circulation of clothes."

Possible solutions: The City of Geneva could help harmonize existing waste management policies with the climate change and sustainability policies and priorities of the City. Separate textile collection points, for waste and reusable garments, could be made available. Charities could be encouraged to provide access to local donations first to local independent second-hand boutiques as opposed to large second-hand resellers.

3. EDUCATION REGIME

Young people, including teenagers and young adults, are the primary target audience of fast fashion brands because they generally cannot yet afford to buy more expensive ethical brands, and are still experimenting with their image and self-identification so trying on new styles. While some changes at a landscape level are happening and education for sustainable development is becoming increasingly integrated into school curriculum, modules on responsible consumption of clothes and fashion more generally are not part of the mainstream teaching offerings in Geneva.

“Fast fashion regime and the culture of ‘disposable fashion’ drove out social practices that can extend garments life span.”

Over the past twenty years, modules on sewing, clothing repair and DIY have also been gradually pushed out of school curriculum and even from specialized professional schools. While some examples exist (e.g., fashion repair cafes organized occasionally by different actors), skills-based education focused on repairing and maintaining textiles, shoes, and accessories is no longer an integral part of the broader educational regime. Fast fashion regime and the culture of “disposable fashion” drove out social practices that can extend garments life span.

Marie-France de Crecy, L'Upcyclerie:
"Educate, educate, educate. We should implement a program in elementary school that informs the younger generation what act of consuming is an ecological or non-ecological act."

Possible solutions: The Canton could support the development of teaching modules on sustainable fashion consumption at a school level; they could also reintroduce modules focused on sewing and clothing repair skills at schools and *hautes ecoles*.

4. ECONOMIC REGIME: TOWARDS A DEGROWTH PARADIGM

The existing socio-economic context in Geneva is such that consumers have one of the highest purchasing powers in the world. Even for those who have less means, access to cheap credit allows to indulge into unnecessary overconsumption. The dominant paradigm that views economic growth as the ultimate good for society spills over to growth in consumption and growth in the accumulation of stuff. Fast fashion plays into the paradigm, offering consumers an endless choice of options. The urban waste management regime takes care of the problem downstream.

Sustainable fashion initiatives in Geneva are generally small scale. They offer local, humane, and responsible shopping solutions. Sustainable fashion consumption practices encourage mindful consumption, self-reflection, and restraint as opposed to overconsumption. These initiatives represent values of degrowth, sufficiency, and social and environmental justice – above profits.

Giji Gya, Downtown Uptown:
"We have got to slow down your consumption which means our profit will have to go down a little. Because this is unsustainable. I just drew a line going left to right upwards in the air by the way. Growth is not sustainable, it's not. We need to be more satisfied with a circle, but the problem is a circular economy is not going to have exponential growth. It is not going to be exponentially profitable and that's going to take people a long time to accept."

Possible solutions: The City of Geneva could play a role in contributing to a sufficiency and degrowth discourse around fashion, through advertising, citizen forums, etc. This will serve to reframe the role of fashion in society and how people experience fashion. ■

Purple and Gold Rain selects clothing and accessories inspired by flamboyance and the hedonism of the 80s to 2000s.



Hazard, an independent second-hand consignment that sells mid-priced clothing.

6. Summary of policy recommendations for the City

BASED ON THE ANALYSIS ABOVE, THIS SECTION SYNTHESIZES THE KEY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS THAT COULD BE IMPLEMENTED AT THE LEVEL OF THE CITY OF GENEVA.

A - VISIBILITY / Enhance visibility and help promote local sustainable fashion initiatives.

- 1 Create an online platform to share information about the different local sustainable fashion initiatives
- 2 Support festivals and events to promote sustainable fashion and mindful consumption – financially, by offering rent-free or low rent central locations, etc.
- 3 Advertise relevant events and initiatives on the City website, mailing list, social media channels, etc.
- 4 Ban fast fashion advertisements in the city centre (and all other forms of ‘planned obsolescence’ products)
- 5 Denounce greenwashing, in partnership with the FRC or another association
- 6 Encourage the Canton to develop sustainable fashion consumption modules for school curriculum
- 7 Through public communications, contribute to reframing fashion consumption paradigm towards the narratives of sufficiency and circularity

B - CONSOLIDATION / Support local sustainable fashion actors and initiatives in consolidating their efforts and enhance participatory involvement.

- 1 Encourage and support financially the development of a slow fashion hub in Geneva, in a visible central location (e.g., subsidized rent or rent-free central location, paid part-time or full-time positions)
- 2 Encourage local sustainable fashion initiatives and boutiques to form an association to speak in “one voice”, to join their efforts in raising awareness and to help communicate a variety of issues they are facing to the City and Canton
- 3 Invite local actors for participatory consultations twice a year, to discuss the key challenges they are facing and ways forward

C - SKILLS / Support the development of clothing care, repair, and upcycling skills.

- 1 Finance a regular program of upcycling workshops and repair cafes
- 2 Address the issue of a lack of time: consider supporting intermediary services to help consumers “treasure hunt” for new clothes or sell pre-worn clothes

D - COMMUNITY / Support in-person interactions and community building around sustainable fashion practices.

This could be achieved by supporting measures A-2, B-1 and C-1 from the list above

E - WASTE / Develop infrastructure to recycle unwearable apparel at the end of life.

- 1 Harmonize existing waste management policies with the climate change and sustainability policies and priorities of the City
- 2 Offer separate textile collection points for waste (unusable textiles, shoes, and accessories) – and develop a program to trace and recycle these end-of-life products ■

Performance Mindful Repair by Geneva-based Theatre Studio Beloe explored overconsumption and addiction to clothing and shopping.



7. Conclusion

This report provides an overview of the existing sustainable fashion initiatives in Geneva, focusing on second-hand, swapping, rental, and new ethical boutiques. An analysis of the current status quo through the double lens of Multi-Level Perspective and Social Practice Approach has allowed to identify a number of system lock-ins that are blocking the sustainable fashion niche and proto-practices. On the one hand, the dominant practices of greenwashing, consumers expectations towards

price, choices, and size availability of clothes, as well as shopping convenience have been identified as challenges to scaling the sustainable fashion niche. On the other hand, other regimes, including social media, urban waste, education, and economic regimes, all interfere with sustainable fashion proto practices. Based on the analysis, the report proposes a list of measures and next steps for the City of Geneva to support sustainable fashion niche and proto practices. ■

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Annex 1:

List of actors who contributed to the study

NAME	AFFILIATION	TYPE	DATE AND FORMAT
Giji Gya	Founder and owner, second-hand boutique <i>Downtown Uptown</i>	Small entreprise	11.02.2021 Semi-structured interview, contribution to a participatory workshop
Jeanne von Segesser	Founder, <i>Bubble Ethic</i> Coordinator, <i>Fashion Revolution Genève</i>	Association	17.03.2022 Semi-structured interview, contribution to a participatory workshop
Anja Imobersteg	Project Manager, <i>Fair Trade Switzerland</i> Organiser, <i>Good as New Festival</i>	Association	22.04.2021 Semi-structured interview, contribution to a participatory workshop
Typhaine Guihard	Head, <i>Vestiaire Sociale</i> , President, Coordination <i>Textiles Genevoises</i>	Association	03.09.2021 Semi-structured interview, contribution to a participatory workshop
Isa Doninelli Simon Cappelle	Founders of <i>Sipy</i> , swapping association	Association	11.11.2021 Semi-structured interview
Teresa Fini	Founder and owner, pop-up vintage boutique <i>Purple and Gold Rain</i>	Small entreprise	18.06.2021 Semi-structured interview
Sophie Pichon	Textiles reuse lead, Red Cross Geneva	Association	20.09.2021 Semi-structured interview
Benjamin Lecrivain	Fonder, online platform <i>www.clother.ch</i>	Small entreprise	07.05.2022 Semi-structured interview
Marie-France de Crecy	Co-founder, <i>Upcyclerie Genève</i>	Association	12.04.2022 Semi-structured interview
Perrine Bah Yabi	Founder and owner, <i>WaxUp Africa</i>	Small entreprise	07.05.2022 Contribution to a panel
Jan Van Mol	Director and educator, <i>AddictLab</i>	Association	01.11.2021 Contribution to two public events
Maria Isabel Salgado	Founder, sewing and clothing repair studio <i>Bobbines Studio</i>	Small entreprise	21.02.2022 Contribution to one public event
Kate Stevenson	Awareness raising lead, <i>Resourcerie Ornex (France)</i>	Association	Contribution to one public event
Maria Rakontonarivo	Director, <i>Théâtre Beloe</i>	Small entreprise	11.12.2021 Contribution to two public events
Jelena Zhurajeva	Founder, clothing sewing and repair atelier <i>Supermanos</i> Instagram: @supermanos_	Small entreprise	11.12.2021 Contribution to one public event
Tanya Benat-Monla	Owner, costume rental boutique <i>La Mascarade</i>	Small entreprise	01.05.2021 Video contribution
Karima Habbes	Lead, <i>Le Geste</i>	Association	01.03.2023 Map

Annex 2:

List of sustainable fashion initiatives and boutiques in Geneva.¹

NAME	ADDRESS
Second hand shops - Independant	
1	Garçon Manqué Rue St-Victor 6, 1227 Carouge
2	Hazard Rue de Monthoux 34, 1201 Genève
3	Downtown Uptown Rue de Monthoux 32, 1201 Genève
4	La case à Max Rue de la Navigation 19, 1201 Genève
5	Mon Joli Trésor Rue des Boucheries 23, Versoix
6	Flair n°3 Rue John-Grasset 3, 1205 Genève
7	Affaires à suivre Rue Saint-Joseph 6, 1227 Carouge
8	Rafet Couture & Vintage Rue du Stand 24, 1204 Genève
9	Flamant rose Place du Bourg-de-Four 4, 1204 Genève
10	La Bourse du Luxe Rue Chausse-Coq 5, 1204 Genève
11	Vintage Garderobe Rue Henri-Mussard 11, 1208 Genève
12	Les Toutes Belles Rue des Etuves 17, 1201 Genève
13	Prise en flagrant délire Route de Frontenex 43, 1207 Genève
14	Mode & Luxe Grand-Rue 13, 1204 Genève
15	« ne m'oublie pas » 2 ^{ème} main Rue de la Madeleine 11, 1204 Genève
16	Frou Frou Rue des Glacis-de-Rive 21, Genève
17	GM Boutique Pictet Rochement 3, 1205 Genève
18	Coco and Co Rue Saint-Victor 7, 1227 Carouge
19	Boutique CHIC CHIC Rue Jean-Gutenberg 15, 1201 Genève
20	Purple and Gold Rain Rue de la Cité 19, 1204 Genève
21	Fleurs d'Oranger Bd. Carl Vogt 9, 1205 Genève
22	Hallures. Vintage Bd. De Saint-Georges 52, 1205 Genève
23	Wood Friperie Rue Marguerite-Dellenbach 4, 1205 Genève
24	Second Luxe boutique Rue Ancienne 58, 1227 Carouge
25	Boutique la Trouvaille Rue Henri-Blanvalet 9, 1207 Genève
26	Boutique Lili Tulipe Rue Merle d'Aubigné 10, 1207 Genève
27	Boutique de Claudie Rue de l'Ecole-de-Médecine 1, 1205 Genève
28	Lucky Boutique Rue de Lausanne 22, 1201 Genève
Charity shops	
29	Vêt'Shop Lissignol Rue Lissignol 1-3, Genève
30	Vêt'Shop Plainpalais Av. Henri-Dunant 2, 1205 Genève
31	Vêt'Shop Leschot Rue Leschot 2, 1205 Genève
32	Renfile Plainpalais Rue de Carouge 37, 1205 Genève
33	Renfile Paquis Rue du Môle 1, 1201 Genève
34	Renfile Jonction Bd Carl-Vogt 34, 1205 Genève
35	Renfile Eaux-Vives Rue de la Mairie 15, 1207 Genève
36	Renfile Plan-les-Ouates Ch. de la Cartouchière, 1228 Plan-les-Ouates
37	Renfile Meyrin Rue Alphonse-Large 19, 1217 Meyrin
38	Renfile Chêne Bougeries Rue des Charbonniers 9, 1225 Chêne-Bourg
39	L'Upcyclerie Rue des Bains 63, 1205 Genève
40	La Recyclerie Plainpalais Rue de Carouge 47, Genève

¹ This list has been updated in March 2023

NAME	ADDRESS
41 La Recyclerie Eaux-Vives	Rue des Cordiers 4, Genève
42 La Recyclerie Plan-les-Ouates	Chemin de la Milice 19, Plan-les-Ouates
43 La Recyclerie Chêne-Bourg	Rue de Genève 71, 1225 Chêne-Bourg
44 La Recyclerie Lancy	Av. du Petit-Lancy 3, Lancy
45 La Recyclerie Versoix	Route de Suisse 57-59, Versoix
46 La Solderie - Plainpalais	Rue de Carouge 51-53 (passage), Genève
47 Emmaüs magasin	Route de Drize 5, 1227 Carouge
48 Emmaüs boutique	Rue Ancienne 69, 1227 Carouge
49 Brocki.ch	Chemin Barde 6, 1219 Le Lignon
50 Boutique Les Fringantes	Rue Vignier 4, 1205 Genève

SWAPS

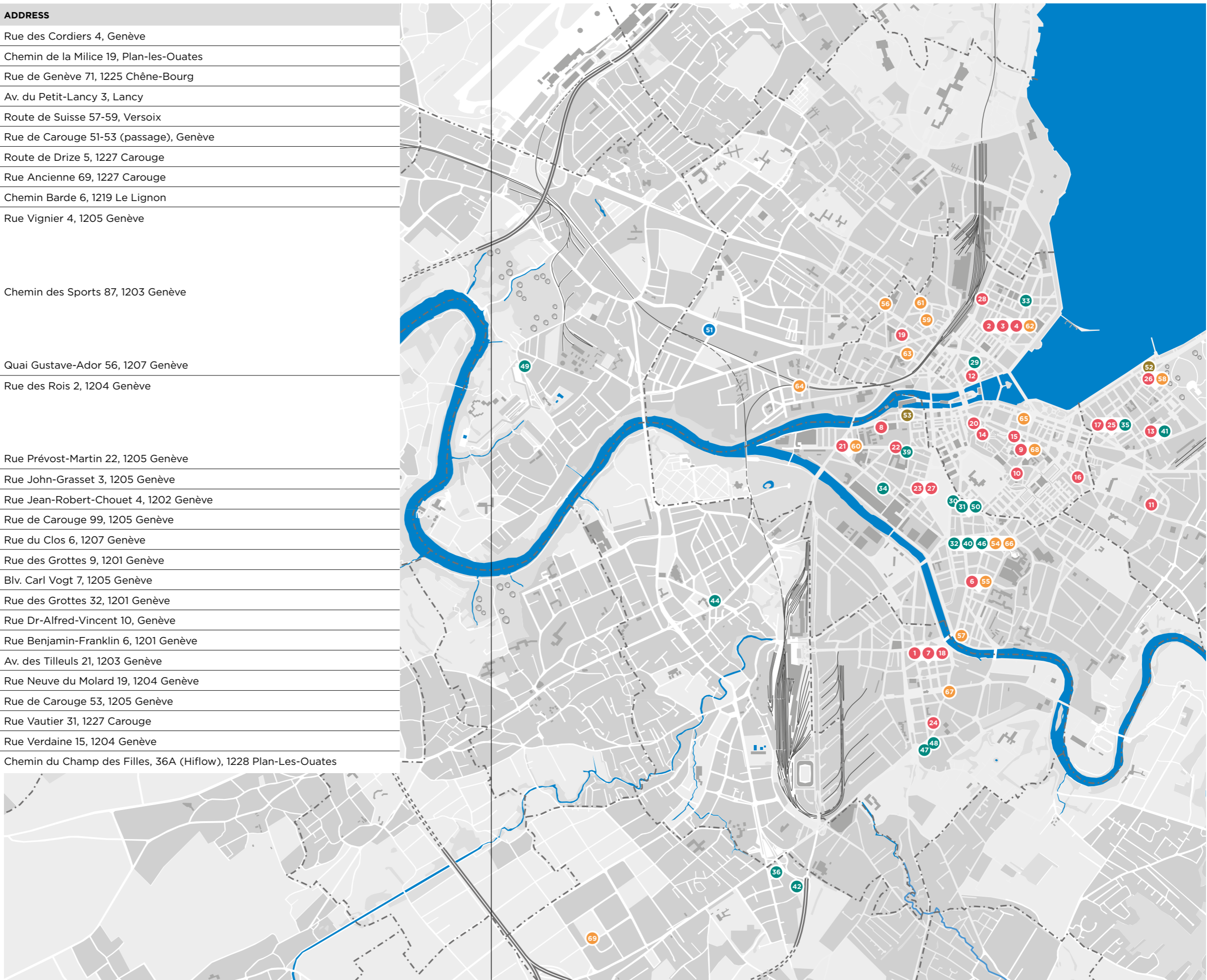
51 Sipy	Chemin des Sports 87, 1203 Genève
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Rental

52 Boutique Saint Frusquin	Quai Gustave-Ador 56, 1207 Genève
53 La Mascarade	Rue des Rois 2, 1204 Genève

Ethical fashion boutiques

54 La Baladeuse	Rue Prévost-Martin 22, 1205 Genève
55 Ayni boutique	Rue John-Grasset 3, 1205 Genève
56 ApeSigned	Rue Jean-Robert-Chouet 4, 1202 Genève
57 Au temps pour moi	Rue de Carouge 99, 1205 Genève
58 Cœur Cabane	Rue du Clos 6, 1207 Genève
59 Magasin du Monde Grottes	Rue des Grottes 9, 1201 Genève
60 Magasin du Monde Plainpalais	Blv. Carl Vogt 7, 1205 Genève
61 WaxUpAfrica	Rue des Grottes 32, 1201 Genève
62 La Collective	Rue Dr-Alfred-Vincent 10, Genève
63 AgentSpécial	Rue Benjamin-Franklin 6, 1201 Genève
64 Kokoso	Av. des Tilleuls 21, 1203 Genève
65 Benji of Switzerland	Rue Neuve du Molard 19, 1204 Genève
66 Cap Indigo	Rue de Carouge 53, 1205 Genève
67 SEP Jordan	Rue Vautier 31, 1227 Carouge
68 Black and yellow	Rue Verdaine 15, 1204 Genève
69 Clothier	Chemin du Champ des Filles, 36A (Hiflow), 1228 Plan-Les-Ouates



This map has been constructed based on the data collected during the project by partners from Le Geste (members of CENTRINNO project) and updated in March 2023.

Vladimirova, K. & Sahakian, M. (2023)

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University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland.
Graphic design: www.dussan.ch

April 2023