

SDEX Best Practices for Brands

How to Fill in the SDEX Tool

Updated June 2026

General

Fill in SDEX to the best of your ability. It is not unusual that not all data points can be filled in. Please consider filling out the entire SDEX Tool to be aspirational.

Start with the General, Brand, and Climate tabs. Every brand should be able to fill in this information. Sometimes Product/Material composition data is not often readily available. Brands should fill out these attributes as data is available.

The SDEX tool contains built-in functions to help prevent errors and maintain standard data collection. If an incorrect or unaccepted value is entered, the cell will turn red. Please check formatting and use dropdown lists where applicable.

A color scheme shows which fields to complete:

Yellow cells = fields to be filled in by brands

Blue cells = system fields that should not be filled in

If you need to copy or cut information from the SDEX Tool, please note that using the keyboard shortcut 'Ctrl-x' (cut) is not possible with sheet protection activated. To copy from the SDEX Tool, please use the keyboard shortcut 'Ctrl-c' (copy).

Data Responsibilities

The data needed for SDEX should already exist within your organization. We recommend coordinating with colleagues to collect it. Please refer to the Retailer Guidance document for preferred timings on when to send this data.

General Data – This should be filled in by the person managing/coordinating the completion of the SDEX Tool. Often this person sits within CSR or Sales.

Brand Data – This information usually exists within CSR/ESG teams.

Climate Data – This information usually exists within CSR/ESG teams.

Textile/Footwear/Hard Goods Data – This information usually sits within CSR/ESG teams, or product management.

SDEX Tabs

General Tab

SMEs are asked to provide less information than larger companies. SME status is determined by turnover and employee number, based on [EU legislative thresholds](#).

For companies that are a subsidiary or part of a larger group, you will need to assess your SME status based on ownership and control relationships, including non-EU parent companies.

Info on SME Classification for Companies Part of a Subsidiary or Group:

If a brand is part of a group or has a parent company, you generally cannot assess SME status on the brand's own figures alone. There are three distinguished cases:

Autonomous enterprise (<25% ownership): report your own data only

Partner (25–50% ownership): include a proportional share of partner data

Linked (>50% ownership or consolidated accounts): aggregate 100% of group data

Where companies are included in full consolidate accounts of another company, they are automatically treated as linked enterprises, meaning group figures are used.

For Non-EU Parent Companies: The geographical location of the parent is irrelevant. Links and partnerships must be considered “irrespective of whether the other enterprises are located inside or outside the EU”. So, if the parent company is in the US, Japan, or elsewhere, but it owns >50% of the EU entity, you must aggregate the global group's headcount and financial figures. The logic is to prevent large multinationals from appearing as SMEs through small subsidiaries – so even a small EU-based product/distribution company will lose SME status if its parent group exceeds the thresholds.

Please confirm your classification using the [European Commission SME self-assessment tool](#)

Brand Tab

The Brand Tab now includes a filter that reduces the number of questions for SMEs. This filter is activated based on the information entered in the General Tab. For SMEs, many rows will appear blue (not to be filled in). In this case, only the yellow cells need to be

completed. Occasionally, text may not appear fully in some cells. This is related to the version of Excel, not SDEX 3.0. If this occurs, adjust the zoom (scroll in/out) and text will readjust.

Climate Tab

For organizations that are part of a group or have a parent company, questions on total carbon emissions may be answered at either parent company or individual brand level. Brands may choose the approach but should agree on the approach with their retail partners, and this should be indicated in the notes.

Product Tabs

The product tabs include Textile, Footwear, and Hard Goods.

Within the three product tabs, there is a Product Master Data section. This data is the non-sustainability, sales/identification data for each product and typically includes items such as article name, GTIN/EAN, creation data, size/size system, color code/name, customs tariff number, FEDAS code, packaging unit, net/gross weight, RRP, purchase price and VAT. This Product Master Data is usually managed by Sales or Operations colleagues.

Definitions

Textile Products: Apparel, sleeping bags, tents, ropes, gaiters, belts, hammocks, and other textile based products.

Footwear Products: High- and mid-cut boots, approach and running shoes, and sandals

Hard Goods Products: Rucksacks, package/luggage accessories, gloves, helmets, climbing harnesses, climbing devices/equipment and non-textile components on climbing equipment, tent poles and pegs, walking poles, outdoor accessories (lighting, cooking, eating and hydration), skis, snowboards, ski and snowboard boots.

The Hard Goods Tab offers greater flexibility regarding product components and materials. If you are struggling to fit your product into the Textile Tab, try to insert the product and its information into the Hard Goods Tab.

Blended Fabric: In the Textile Tab, a "blended fabric" refers to a fabric containing two or more fiber or material types. This may include traditional fiber blends (e.g. polyester/cotton) as well as laminated or bonded fabric constructions. For each textile component listed in the Textile Tab (e.g. outer fabric, lining, pocket bag), one fabric can be specified, containing up to three fiber/material types. We recognize that a garment

component may be constructed from multiple fabrics. Where this occurs, the principal or dominant fabric should be selected and recorded in SDEX.

In the case of bonded or laminated fabrics, the finished material should be recorded as a single fabric entry. This is because brands typically receive composition information for the finished fabric only (e.g. a bonded face fabric, membrane and backing), rather than separate composition data for each individual layer. Up to three fibre/material types can be specified within the single fabric record.

The examples below demonstrate how both traditional fibre blends and laminated fabric constructions can be recorded in SDEX. In each case, a single fabric entry is used, with the relevant fibre, material, and membrane information recorded in the appropriate fields.

	Outer	Outer - Material 1		Outer - Material 2		Outer - Material 3		Outer - Membrane		
	Is the outer a blended fabric	Select material 1. If blended, additional materials can be added in columns "Outer - Material 2/3"	%	If blended Select additional material 2	%	If blended Select additional material 3	%	Composition of membrane / laminate	Composition of backing fabric	% of membrane/laminate + backing fabric
Example 1	Yes	SM14-Polyester (PET)	65%	NM3-Cotton	30%	SM9-Elastane	5%	ME4-ePU - expanded Polyurethane	SM14-Polyester (PET)	5%
Example 2	Yes	RM8-Recycled Polyester (PET)	95%							

Example 1 – Fibre Blend

A blended fabric containing 65% polyester, 30% cotton and 5% elastane. The three fibre types are recorded within a single fabric entry.

Example 2 – Laminated Fabric

A waterproof laminated fabric consisting of a recycled polyester face fabric bonded to an ePU membrane and polyester backing. The recycled polyester is recorded as the primary material (95%), while the membrane composition and backing fabric percentage (5%) are recorded in the membrane fields.

Recommendations

SDEX Component Structure: The SDEX Component Structure may not fit internal component structures. While there is no formally recognized standardized classification system for product components, widely understood industry norms do exist, particularly in footwear and, to a large extent, apparel. Brands should align with these common industry conventions where possible. Where internal structures differ, a clear and consistent mapping to the SDEX component framework should be established and maintained throughout the season and communicated to your retail partners. SDEX may not provide enough space for all the materials in a component or for all the raw materials/fibers in a material blend. The number of fields offered is a compromise. Adding fields for all raw materials a product contains would lead to an overload of information. We are

recommending the brands to make an informed decision about what they consider the main material(s) of a fabric blend and fill this information in.

Recycled Content Calculations: All recycled content values in the SDEX Tool must be calculated based on the total product weight, not just individual components.

Chemical Attributes: Chemical attributes should be completed where relevant to support product-level claims. Where chemical-related claims are made, supporting documentation must be available to substantiate the claim, in line with regulatory requirements, such as the Empowering Consumers Directive (EU) 2024/825. This documentation may include test reports, supplier declarations, certification records, or other verifiable evidence demonstrating the accuracy of the declared attribute. Information recorded in SDEX should be consistent with available supporting documentation. Where chemical attributes are not relevant to the product type, users should select “Not Applicable (n/a)” rather than leaving the field blank.

Certifications:

When certification is used as supporting documentation, the certification number (or license number) should be recorded in SDEX, according to the requirements of the certification body.

If the certification is issued for a material blend, consisting of several raw materials/fibers: Please indicate the certification next to each raw material/fiber it applies to, meaning you must fill in the same certification multiple times.

Adding copies/evidence of certifications to the SDEX Tool: This is not currently possible. We are aware that the exchange of certifications is a huge challenge within the industry but had to exclude this point from the scope of the SDEX project.

If the certification is a certification for the chain of custody, making it difficult to list the correct certification number to each individual product at the point of ordering: Please speak to your retail partner or refer to the Retailer Guidance document about the timeline for the data exchange.

Scope or Transaction Certificates: This is not predefined in SDEX as it depends on what is needed and available. We recommend speaking to your retail partners or deciding in favor of one or the other and then communicating this to your retail partners.

Facility Sustainability Certification: There are a few nuances depending on the certification; most of these are site level certifications, meaning they are related to

products manufactured in those production sites. We do have brand level certifications in the Brand Tab.