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*Plenary sitting*

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**A9-0176/2023**

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# REPORT

on an EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles  
(2022/2171(INI))

Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Rapporteur: Delara Burkhardt

Rapporteur for the opinion of the associated committee pursuant to Rule 57 of  
the Rules of Procedure:  
Christian Ehler, Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

### on an EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles (2022/2171(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission communication of 30 March 2022 entitled ‘EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles’ (COM(2022)0141),
- having regard to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 11 March 2020 entitled ‘A new Circular Economy Action Plan – For a cleaner and more competitive Europe’ (COM(2020)0098) and to Parliament’s resolution of 10 February 2021 thereon<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 20 May 2020 entitled ‘EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 – Bringing nature back into lives’ (COM(2020)0380) and to Parliament’s resolution of 9 June 2021 thereon<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 20 May 2020 entitled ‘A Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system’ (COM(2020)0381) and Parliament’s resolution of 20 October 2021 thereon<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 16 January 2018 ‘A European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy’ (COM(2018)0028) and Parliament’s resolution of 13 September 2018 thereon<sup>4</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 14 October 2020 entitled ‘Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability – Towards a Toxic-Free Environment’ (COM(2020)0667) and to Parliament’s resolution of 10 July 2020 thereon<sup>5</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 5 March 2020 entitled ‘A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 (COM(2020)0152),
- having regard to Decision (EU) 2022/591 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 April 2022 on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030<sup>6</sup> (‘8th Environment Action Programme’),
- having regard to Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives<sup>7</sup> (‘Waste Framework

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 465, 17.11.2021, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 67, 8.2.2022, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 184, 5.5.2022, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 433, 23.12.2019, p. 136.

<sup>5</sup> OJ C 371, 15.9.2021, p. 75.

<sup>6</sup> OJ L 114, 12.4.2022, p. 22.

<sup>7</sup> OJ L 312, 22.11.2008, p. 3.

Directive’),

- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011 on textile fibre names and related labelling and marking of the fibre composition of textile products and repealing Council Directive 73/44/EEC and Directives 96/73/EC and 2008/121/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>8</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 30 March 2022 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for setting ecodesign requirements for sustainable products and repealing Directive 2009/125/EC (COM(2022)0142),
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 23 February 2022 for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937 (COM(2022)0071),
- having regard to its position at first reading of 17 January 2023 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on shipments of waste and amending Regulations (EU) No 1257/2013 and (EU) No 2020/1056<sup>9</sup>,
- having regard to the European Environment Agency (EEA) briefings of November 2019 on ‘Textiles in Europe’s circular economy’, January 2021 on ‘A framework for enabling circular business models in Europe’, of January 2021 on ‘Plastic in textiles: towards a circular economy for synthetic textiles in Europe’, of February 2022 on ‘Textiles and the environment: the role of design in Europe’s circular economy’ and of February 2022 on ‘Microplastics from textiles: towards a circular economy for textiles in Europe’,
- having regard to the Joint Research Centre technical report of June 2021 entitled ‘Circular economy perspectives in the EU Textile sector’,
- having regard to the report of the Inclusive Labour Markets, Labour Relations and Working Conditions Branch of the International Labour Organization of 2017 entitled ‘Purchasing practices and low wages in global supply chains: Empirical cases from the garment industry’,
- having regard to the report of 2017 of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation entitled ‘A New Textiles Economy: Redesigning fashion’s future’,
- having regard to the Textile Exchange report entitled ‘Preferred Fiber & Materials Market Report 2022’,
- having regard to the report of the Hot or Cool Institute ‘Unfit, Unfair, Unfashionable: Resizing Fashion for a Fair Consumption Space’,
- having regard to Rule 54 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the opinions of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, the Committee on Development, the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer

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<sup>8</sup> OJ L 272, 18.10.2011, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0003.

Protection and the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality,

- having regard to the report of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (A9-0176/2023),
- A. whereas global textile production almost doubled between 2000 and 2015<sup>10</sup> and garments' use time lifespan decreased by 36 % in the same period<sup>11</sup>; whereas global consumption of clothing and footwear is expected to increase by 63 %, from the current 62 million tonnes to 102 million tonnes, by 2030; whereas clothing comprises the largest share of EU textile consumption, with 81 %<sup>12</sup>; whereas the trend of using garments for ever shorter periods before throwing them away is the biggest contributor to unsustainable patterns of overproduction and overconsumption<sup>13</sup>; whereas between 1996 and 2018, average household expenditure on clothing increased, despite the drop in clothing prices in the EU relative to inflation by more than 30 %; whereas current trends in textile consumption cannot be maintained if we aim to achieve a fair and just transition to climate neutrality; whereas recent research indicates the existence of varying degrees of responsibility according to different income groups in the carbon footprints from fashion consumption<sup>14</sup>; whereas synthetic and man-made fibres already account for more than two thirds (64 %)<sup>15</sup> of total global fibre production;
- B. whereas studies indicate that consumers agree that it is important for brands to share reliable information about the environmental impact of their products, and that many consumers are ready to change their purchasing patterns for sustainable options, provided that clear and reliable labels are at their disposal<sup>16</sup>, which can help drive demand towards high-quality clothes that are less damaging to the environment and workers; whereas the provision of information should not lead to greenwashing practices; whereas industry initiatives such as the use of more sustainable fibres and textiles or ethically-conscious options may account for only a small percentage of a brand's offerings, with the remaining part of operations continuing in a business-as-usual manner;
- C. whereas 92 million tonnes<sup>17</sup> of textile waste is generated worldwide each year, the vast majority of which ends up in landfills; whereas 5.8 million tonnes<sup>18</sup> of textile products are discarded each year in the EU, which amounts to approximately 11 kg<sup>19</sup> per person, with garments typically having been worn only 7 or 8 times<sup>20</sup>; whereas textile waste

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<sup>10</sup> <https://ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/a-new-textiles-economy>.

<sup>11</sup> European Environment Information and Observation Network ETC/CE Report 2/2022 – 'Textiles and the Environment – The role of design in Europe's circular economy', European Environment Agency, European Topic Centre on Circular Economy and Resource Use, 10 February 2022.

<sup>12</sup> <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC125110>.

<sup>13</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52022DC0141>.

<sup>14</sup> [https://hotorcool.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Hot\\_or\\_Cool\\_1\\_5\\_fashion\\_report\\_.pdf](https://hotorcool.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Hot_or_Cool_1_5_fashion_report_.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> [https://textileexchange.org/app/uploads/2022/10/Textile-Exchange\\_PFMR\\_2022.pdf](https://textileexchange.org/app/uploads/2022/10/Textile-Exchange_PFMR_2022.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/consumer-packaged-goods/our-insights/consumers-care-about-sustainability-and-back-it-up-with-their-wallets>.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/blogpost/why-fast-fashion-needs-slow-down>.

<sup>18</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52022DC0141#:~:text=About%205.8%20million%20tonnes%20of,is%20landfilled%20or%20incinerated%20%20>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/textiles-in-europes-circular-economy>.

<sup>20</sup> <https://emis.vito.be/sites/emis/files/articles/91/2021/ETC->

represents one of the largest components of municipal waste and is therefore subject to the recycling targets laid down in the Directive 2008/98/EC, but no specific textile recycling targets have been set; whereas less than 1 %<sup>21</sup> of all textiles worldwide are recycled into new products;

- D. whereas several social issues exist in the textile and footwear sector; whereas the textile and footwear value chain has become increasingly buyer driven, which has put pressure on manufacturers to minimise production costs and turnaround time; whereas the conditions of market power asymmetries between suppliers and global buyers, as well as harmful purchasing practices, exacerbate the risk of labour rights abuses; whereas women, migrant and informal workers are especially vulnerable to negative social impacts; whereas improving social sustainability requires a holistic approach covering the value chain;
- E. whereas 73 %<sup>22</sup> of clothes and household textiles consumed in Europe are imported, amounting to approximately 26 kg<sup>23</sup> of textiles per person per year, with 7.4 kg<sup>24</sup> of textiles per person per year produced domestically; whereas the majority of environmental and climate change impacts occur in upstream production processes, often taking place in non-EU countries where the protection of the environment and the fulfilment of labour and human rights need to be duly assessed and ensured; welcomes initiatives that lead to continuous improvements in labour rights and factory safety; whereas fossil fuel-based polyester accounts for about 50 %<sup>25</sup> of fibre production and the fashion industry's use of synthetic fibres accounts for 1.35 %<sup>26</sup> of global oil consumption, much of it imported from Russia;
- F. whereas existing systems for separate collection of textiles in the EU are voluntary and focus on collecting clothing that is deemed re-wearable; whereas the Joint Research Centre estimates that between 50 % and 75 %<sup>27</sup> of these separately collected textiles are reported as reused; whereas a large share of collected clothing is exported to non-EU countries with no collection infrastructure in place; whereas no viable business case currently exists to separately collect and process all textile waste in the EU, highlighting the need for a collective system and infrastructure to capture the value of used textiles<sup>28</sup>;
- G. whereas the European textile sector is economically important in the Union and has an important role in the achievement of the EU's circular economy objectives, with an annual turnover of EUR 147 billion<sup>29</sup> and EUR 58 billion<sup>30</sup> in exports and EUR 106 billion<sup>31</sup> in imports as of 2022 and therefore has considerable leverage to

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[WMGE\\_report\\_final%20for%20website\\_updated%202020.pdf](#).

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20201208STO93327/the-impact-of-textile-production-and-waste-on-the-environment-infographic>.

<sup>22</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA\\_22\\_2015](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA_22_2015).

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/textiles-in-europes-circular-economy>.

<sup>24</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA\\_22\\_2015](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA_22_2015).

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/waste/resource-efficiency/plastic-in-textiles-towards-a>.

<sup>26</sup> [https://changingmarkets.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/FOSSIL-FASHION\\_Web-compressed.pdf](https://changingmarkets.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/FOSSIL-FASHION_Web-compressed.pdf).

<sup>27</sup> <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC125110>.

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/eu-exports-of-used-textiles>.

<sup>29</sup> [https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX\\_FactsKey\\_Figures\\_2022rev-1.pdf](https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX_FactsKey_Figures_2022rev-1.pdf).

<sup>30</sup> [https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX\\_FactsKey\\_Figures\\_2022rev-1.pdf](https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX_FactsKey_Figures_2022rev-1.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> [https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX\\_FactsKey\\_Figures\\_2022rev-1.pdf](https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX_FactsKey_Figures_2022rev-1.pdf).

address the negative social and environmental impacts of the textile and footwear industry; whereas more than 99 %<sup>32</sup> of the EU textiles ecosystem consists of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); whereas the textile sector employs 1.3 million<sup>33</sup> European citizens; whereas this industry is made up of approximately 143 000<sup>34</sup> European companies, of which 11 %<sup>35</sup> are SMEs, and 88,8 %<sup>36</sup> are micro enterprises with less than 10 employees, which often face intense competition from non-EU countries; whereas coherent legislation is crucial to avoid creating a fragmented market that could have a negative impact on the sector, particularly on micro enterprises and SMEs;

- H. whereas highly complex and fragmented supply chains in the garment sector at global level further complicate the work of market surveillance authorities, consumer associations and resellers; whereas the textile production sector was already under a lot of pressure from environmental and social dumping as a result of low production costs and environmental standards in non-EU countries and whereas this was exacerbated further by the COVID-19 pandemic, with a number of cases of abusive practices involving international brands and their suppliers and workers having come to light;
- I. whereas industry stakeholders are encouraged to apply the New European Bauhaus's guiding principles of sustainability, inclusiveness and aesthetics for the transition of the textiles ecosystem, as connecting creativity, the arts and science could help to create a positive impact;
- J. whereas, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 6th Assessment<sup>37</sup>, limiting warming to around 1.5 °C requires global greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced by 43 % below 2019 levels by 2030; whereas textile production and consumption have negative impacts on the environment in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, chemical pollution, biodiversity loss, natural resource use of water and land, and the volume of textile waste that is sent to landfill, accounting for the fourth-biggest environmental footprint;
- K. whereas the transition to a well-being economy, and the development of indicators measuring economic, social and environmental progress 'beyond GDP' is embedded in the EU's 8th Environmental Action Programme; whereas one of the 8th Environmental Action Programme's priority objectives is advancing towards a well-being economy that gives back to the planet more than it takes and accelerating the transition to a non-toxic circular economy; whereas the 8th Environmental Action Programme recognises that human well-being and prosperity depend on healthy ecosystems and on significantly decreasing the Union's material and consumption footprints to bring them within planetary boundaries as soon as possible;
- L. whereas an estimated figure of between 16-35 %<sup>38</sup> of global microplastics released into the oceans are from synthetic textiles, which means that between 200 000 and 500 000

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<sup>32</sup> [https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX\\_FactsKey\\_Figures\\_2022rev-1.pdf](https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX_FactsKey_Figures_2022rev-1.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> [https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX\\_FactsKey\\_Figures\\_2022rev-1.pdf](https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX_FactsKey_Figures_2022rev-1.pdf).

<sup>34</sup> [https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX\\_FactsKey\\_Figures\\_2022rev-1.pdf](https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX_FactsKey_Figures_2022rev-1.pdf).

<sup>35</sup> [https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX\\_FactsKey\\_Figures\\_2022rev-1.pdf](https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX_FactsKey_Figures_2022rev-1.pdf).

<sup>36</sup> [https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX\\_FactsKey\\_Figures\\_2022rev-1.pdf](https://euratex.eu/wp-content/uploads/EURATEX_FactsKey_Figures_2022rev-1.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> [https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_WGIII\\_SPM.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGIII_SPM.pdf).

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/microplastics-from-textiles-towards-a>.



tonnes<sup>39</sup> of microplastics enter the global marine environment each year;

- M. whereas hazardous chemicals used in the manufacturing of textiles are harmful to both the environment and people, with 20 %<sup>40</sup> of all clean water pollution being caused by dyes and chemicals used by the textile industry; whereas highly toxic chemicals, such as per- and polyfluorinated substances (PFAS), continue to play a role in the production of textiles; whereas PFAS are present and sometimes necessary in textile products that constitute essential use, such as in safety apparel; whereas many products, including textile products, sold to European consumers do not comply with EU chemicals legislation such as REACH<sup>41</sup>; whereas in its ‘Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability: Towards a Toxic-Free Environment’, the Commission has committed to minimising the presence of substances of concern in textile products through the introduction of new requirements;
- N. whereas the textile sector uses non-textile parts of animal origin, with animals often bred specifically for the purpose, including in countries with inadequate animal welfare legislation;
- O. whereas gender equality is a core principle of the EU enshrined in the Treaty on European Union (TEU)<sup>42</sup>, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union; whereas Goal 5 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals is ‘Gender Equality’, Goal 8 is ‘Decent work and Economic Growth’ and Goal 12 is ‘Responsible Consumption and Production’; whereas in its gender equality strategy 2020-2025, the Commission committed to integrating a gender perspective into all aspects and at all levels of policymaking, but this is inadequately covered in the Textiles Strategy;
- P. whereas women account for approximately 80 % of the global garment workforce<sup>43</sup>; whereas the majority of low-wage labour in the textile sector in both the Union<sup>44</sup> and third countries is made up of women, whose salary contributes significantly to household incomes and poverty reduction<sup>45</sup>; whereas garment workers on average only receive 1-3 % of the final retail price of clothing<sup>46</sup>; whereas low wages, coupled with low or non-existent social protection, make women and children particularly vulnerable to exploitation, human rights violations, workplace violence and sexual harassment, lack of access to healthcare, gender discrimination, including pregnancy discrimination, with little to no remediation and recourse opportunities; whereas 189 states have signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which states that discrimination against women ‘violates

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<sup>39</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/microplastics-from-textiles-towards-a>.

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20201208STO93327/the-impact-of-textile-production-and-waste-on-the-environment-infographic>.

<sup>41</sup> [https://www.greenpeace.de/publikationen/S04261\\_Konsumwende\\_StudieEN\\_Mehr%20Schein\\_v9.pdf](https://www.greenpeace.de/publikationen/S04261_Konsumwende_StudieEN_Mehr%20Schein_v9.pdf).

<sup>42</sup> Articles 2 and 3(3) TEU, Article 8 TFEU and Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

<sup>43</sup> European Parliament, Directorate-General for Parliamentary Research Services, Briefing, ‘Textile workers in developing countries and the European fashion industry: Towards sustainability?’, 24 July 2020.

<sup>44</sup> <https://cleanclothes.org/file-repository/exploitation-made.pdf/view>.

<sup>45</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms\\_848624.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_848624.pdf).

<sup>46</sup> Clean Clothes Campaign, ‘Another wage is possible: A cross-border base living wage in Europe’.



the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity’;

- Q. whereas women generally have access to a narrower range of jobs and tasks, and face horizontal and vertical segregation; whereas women also suffer direct and indirect gender-based discrimination as a result of the gender power imbalances between a mostly female workforce and predominantly male management structures, with a disproportionate number of men in leadership, managerial and mid-level positions;
- R. whereas women and girls are globally more likely to be financially dependent on climate-vulnerable sectors and natural resources<sup>47</sup> and are frequently exposed to additional gender-specific factors and barriers that consistently render them more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and disasters;
- S. whereas human rights, the environment and climate change are strongly interlinked; whereas human rights cannot be enjoyed without a healthy environment and a sound climate;

### ***Union Strategy***

1. Welcomes the Commission communication on an EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles and the vision it presents for 2030; stresses that actions following the publication of the Strategy should be fully aligned with the Union’s climate and environmental objectives, in particular that of achieving climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest, of halting and reversing biodiversity loss, as well as achieving zero-pollution for a non-toxic environment;
2. Stresses further that the actions following the publication of the strategy should be fully in line with the Union’s international commitments, including the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals;
3. Underlines that moving towards sustainable and circular textiles requires a holistic approach progressively covering the whole value chain of textile products; highlights the importance of ensuring synergies between the Textiles Strategy and the Union’s industrial strategies in order to ensure the transition to sustainable and circular business models and products with high standards for the protection of human health, human rights and the environment, while strengthening the competitiveness and resilience of sustainable textile ecosystems; notes that the Textiles Strategy contributes to the twin green and digital transitions;
4. Welcomes the fact that textiles have been identified as a priority product category for action under the Circular Economy Action Plan; calls on the Commission to set specific targets for textiles in order to achieve compliance with the Biodiversity Strategy;
5. Calls for the European Environmental Agency (EEA) to be given the role and resources to monitor and assess whether measures taken under the Textiles Strategy are sufficient for the described objectives, including the quantitative targets, progress indicators and overarching 2030 vision; considers that progress against those indicators should be

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<sup>47</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/environment/making-climate-finance-work-for-women.htm>.

monitored at a minimum every two years; requests the EEA to assess policy gaps and provide options for further policy improvements;

6. Acknowledges the urgency of ensuring that textile products placed on the EU market are long-lived, reusable, repairable, recyclable, made to a great extent of recycled fibres, and free of hazardous substances; underlines that textile products should be produced in a way that respects human and social rights, the environment and animal welfare;
7. Expresses its concern that the measures identified in the EU Strategy might not be sufficient to fulfil the 2030 objective and calls on the Commission to ensure all necessary measures, including additional legislative and non-legislative measures to those identified in the strategy, are taken to achieve the 2030 vision expressed in the Textiles Strategy; underlines that the adopted measures should prioritise waste prevention in line with the waste hierarchy;
8. Stresses the importance of ensuring coherence and clearly defining the scope of application of all pieces of legislation that will be adopted under the strategy, in order to ensure legal certainty and predictability in the single market;
9. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to adopt measures to put an end to fast fashion, as the current levels of production and consumption are unsustainable; calls on the Commission, in collaboration with the Member States and in consultation with researchers, civil society and industry stakeholders, to establish a clear definition of fast fashion, which is based on high volumes of lower quality garments at low price levels; welcomes the encouragement in the Textiles Strategy for businesses to reduce the number of collections per year; stresses the need, in particular, for measures to reduce the global use of primary materials and the overproduction of textiles;
10. Underlines the need for a paradigm shift in the fashion industry to end overproduction and unsustainable consumption, driving fast fashion to go out of fashion; encourages the production and consumption of sustainable slow fashion; believes that the Textiles Strategy and the envisaged measures should better tackle overproduction and overconsumption;
11. Reiterates the need for an absolute decoupling of growth from resource use in the textile sector and its request for the Commission to propose binding EU targets for 2030 to significantly reduce the EU's material and consumption footprints and bring them within planetary boundaries by 2050, using the indicators adopted as part of the updated monitoring framework; calls on the Commission to propose comprehensive science-based targets for the textiles sector without delay, in order to measure the sector's transition to circularity, including on the use of raw materials; reiterates its request for the setting of the EU targets through a back-casting approach to ensure that policy objectives are on a credible path towards achieving a carbon-neutral, environmentally sustainable, toxic-free and fully circular economy within planetary boundaries by 2050 at the latest;
12. Stresses the need to support consumers in moving away from fast fashion and the high level of consumption of clothing and in making informed, responsible and sustainable textile consumption choices; underlines that increasing the sustainability of textiles, such as improving their durability has a significant impact on the environment, while at

the same time creating cost-saving opportunities for customers; highlights the need to ensure that high-quality, durable and sustainable clothing and footwear are affordable; calls on the Commission and the Member States to adopt measures to reduce aggressive and false advertising; calls further on the Commission and the Member States to develop and implement awareness-raising programmes on sustainable consumption and the climate, the environmental, health and social impacts of the textile and clothing industry, in collaboration with researchers, civil society and industry stakeholders; considers that the campaigns and programmes should make use of up-to-date research on consumer behaviour;

13. Highlights the need to better understand the impact of online marketplaces and social media platforms in driving textile consumption and their use of practices such as targeted advertising and the creation of incentives with buy-now-pay-later options, free shipping and returns, and quantity discounts; calls on the Commission to assess policy options to reduce such practices and enable consumers to limit their exposure to this form of advertising; stresses the need to create consumer incentives for sustainable consumption;
14. Draws attention to the fact that imports of non-compliant products sold through online marketplaces are widespread, and calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that the textile products those service providers sell comply with EU law; calls for online marketplaces to be included in the definitions of the types of economic operators that market surveillance authorities can take action on;
15. Urges the Commission to ensure a clear framework on the question of liability in EU legislation and to ensure that online platforms and digital services do not facilitate the import of non-compliant textile products to the internal market;

### ***Environment and climate impacts***

16. Expresses concern that from a consumption point of view, over their life cycle, textiles have on average the fourth highest negative impact on the climate and the environment, after food, housing and mobility<sup>48</sup>; points out that in 2020, the textiles sector was responsible for the third highest impact on water and land use and the fifth highest impact on the use of raw materials and greenhouse gas emissions<sup>49</sup>;
17. Stresses the need to reduce the impact of the manufacturing and wet processing stages, where 60 %<sup>50</sup> of the climate impact occurs;
18. Recalls the need to promote circularity and to implement a life-cycle approach, taking into account the entire value chain, while ensuring the production and use of textiles that are more durable, reusable, repairable, recyclable and energy-efficient;
19. Calls on the Commission to propose further legislation to fully decarbonise the industry in a progressive manner, starting with full transparency on scope 1 and 2 emissions and, where relevant, more transparency on scope 3 emissions, in textile supply and value

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<sup>48</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/textiles-and-the-environment-the>.

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/textiles-and-the-environment-the>.

<sup>50</sup> [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/20\\_REP\\_UN%20FIC%20Playbook\\_V7.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/20_REP_UN%20FIC%20Playbook_V7.pdf).

chains, and to set ambitious science-based targets by 2025 at the latest for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the textiles sector, covering their entire life cycle, including the emissions of raw material throughput, in line with the Paris Agreement goal of keeping global warming to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial temperatures, reflecting equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, recalls that around 70 % of the emissions related to the Union's textile consumption take place outside of the EU<sup>51</sup>; calls for more robust information and disclosure on the climate and environmental impacts, including on biodiversity;

20. Welcomes the fact that a review of the Best Available Techniques Reference Document (BREF) for the textile industry is currently underway; stresses that this review should fully reflect the best available data and contribute to achieving a high level of environmental performance;
21. Calls on the Commission, the EEAS and the Member States to provide relevant support to third countries to help decarbonise textile supply chains;
22. Calls on the Commission to facilitate sector-specific climate dialogues and partnerships with textile stakeholders to encourage the drawing up of voluntary roadmaps, in line with the European Climate Law (Regulation (EU) 2021/1119<sup>52</sup>);
23. Expresses concern about the water use of the textiles sector and the pollution caused by the dyeing of textiles; recalls that 20 % of global water pollution comes from dyeing and finishing textile products<sup>53</sup>; calls on the Commission to set ambitious, science-based and mandatory targets to progressively reduce the water footprint within the textile industry; calls on the Commission and the Member States to incentivise the development of processes which are less energy and water intensive, avoiding the use and release of harmful substances; stresses the importance of research and innovation, in particular into new forms of sustainable recyclable fibres that require less water, as well as into the development of alternatives to the conventional use of chemicals, water reuse through the development of wastewater treatment technologies, and to reduce energy and water consumption in the production process; calls on the Commission to address water use and pollution caused by dyeing and finishing, within the Ecodesign Regulation;
24. Recalls that more than 200 million trees are logged each year for the purpose of processing them into cellulosic fabrics such as viscose and rayon, and that up to 30 % of the viscose and rayon used in the fashion industry is made from endangered and ancient forests which once were home to native plants and animals<sup>54</sup>; recalls, furthermore, that in Brazil, land clearing to raise cattle, which are then slaughtered for food and fashion purposes, is responsible for 80 % of the Amazon's deforestation<sup>55</sup>; highlights that the new EU regulation on deforestation-free products will also include leather;

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<sup>51</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/textiles-in-europes-circular-economy>.

<sup>52</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999, OJ L 243, 9.7.2021, p. 1.

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/textiles-in-europes-circular-economy>.

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.sustainably-chic.com/blog/how-the-fashion-industry-contributes-to-deforestation>.

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.collectivefashionjustice.org/articles/leather-lobbying-and-deforestation>.

25. Welcomes the fact that the strategy makes a link between fast fashion and the use of fossil fuel-based synthetic fibres, which in turn has major implications for microplastic and nanoplastic pollution; points out that microplastics release climate pollutants such as methane and ethylene into the environment, contributing to climate change, and that microplastics undermine the resilience of the ocean and the environment in general;
26. Points out that microplastics and nanoplastics can also have an impact on human health; draws attention to the exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals caused by microplastics;
27. Underlines the need for the continued research and collection of data on how microfibrils, microplastics, and nanoplastics from the textile industry impact the environment, climate and human health;
28. Calls on the Commission to swiftly present the initiative on the reduction of unintentionally released microplastics, which has been delayed; emphasises the importance of tackling the problem at source and covering the whole life cycle; calls for the setting of clear targets and measures in the upcoming proposal, to prevent and minimise the release of micro and nanoplastics and microfibrils into the environment, covering both unintentional and intentional releases; considers that ecodesign requirements should favour fabrics which, based on current scientific knowledge, are prone to releasing less microplastics and microfibrils;
29. Underlines that micro and nanoplastic pollution is often caused by the dyeing and washing processes of synthetic textiles, as synthetic microfibrils are released into wastewater; points out, in this context, that most microplastics from textiles are released during the first 5 to 10 washes, which only solidifies the link between fast fashion and microplastic pollution<sup>56</sup>; stresses that measures are needed to reduce the amount of microplastics released during industrial wet processing and washing and drying by industry and consumers;
30. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to support research into the impacts of microplastics and nanoplastics, as well as of microfibre shedding in general, including through innovation that would avoid microfibre and microplastic release at each stage of the life cycle;
31. Underlines the importance of developing non-toxic material cycles for the transition to a circular economy and climate-neutral economy; reiterates the call to close the gaps in the current chemicals legal framework, giving priority to products consumers come into close and frequent contact with, such as textiles; regrets the fact that hazardous chemicals are widely used in various textile production processes that have severe impacts on the environment and workers, and can remain in garments and household textiles, impacting consumers; considers that any use of harmful chemicals needs to be prevented or reduced to levels that are no longer harmful to human health and the environment; reaffirms that, in accordance with the waste hierarchy, as defined in the Waste Framework Directive, prevention takes priority over recycling and that, accordingly, recycling should not justify the perpetuation of the use of hazardous legacy

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<sup>56</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/microplastics-from-textiles-towards-a>.

substances; stresses that textiles should be safe, sustainable and circular by design;

32. Regrets the slow implementation of the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, and, in particular, expects the REACH Regulation to be revised; urges the Commission to adopt the proposal without further delay and to deliver on its commitment to substitute as much as possible and otherwise minimise the substances of concern in textile products placed on the EU market; underlines the need for greater alignment of the REACH Regulation with the principles of the circular economy with regard to the specificities of the textile sector, notably to phase out the use of hazardous chemicals, disclose information on the chemicals used in products and ensure traceability; highlights that the phase-out of hazardous chemicals would strengthen the secondary raw materials markets;
33. Expresses concern that around 60 chemicals in textile products placed on the EU market are considered as carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic to reproduction; emphasises the importance of continuing research into the chemicals used in textiles, including their impact on the recyclability of textiles; recalls the Commission's commitment in the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability to ensure that consumer products do not contain chemicals that cause cancers, gene mutations, affect the reproductive or endocrine system, or are persistent and bioaccumulative; urges the Commission to implement this commitment without delay, including through the adoption of the necessary legislative measures; highlights that exposure to endocrine disruptors can have multiple harmful health effects by targeting different organs and systems in the human body and can interrupt other hormonally regulated metabolic processes, yet a specific framework on endocrine disruptors in textiles is lacking;
34. Stresses that PFAS have proven to be extremely persistent in the environment and both their production and use have resulted in the severe contamination of soil, water and food; highlights that PFAS are widely and commonly used in the textile industry; calls, therefore, for the stringent regulation of PFAS in textiles;

### ***Circular by design***

35. Welcomes the proposal for a regulation for ecodesign for sustainable products; welcomes the Commission's assessment of textiles and footwear as being a priority group of products to be potentially regulated under the Ecodesign Regulation; stresses that ecodesign requirements for all textile and footwear products should be adopted as a priority;
36. Stresses that ecodesign requirements should address the textiles sector comprehensively across product parameters; calls on the Commission to ensure that trade-offs between different product aspects are analysed; underlines that the ecodesign requirements should effectively address the overproduction and overconsumption of textiles, the material footprint and the presence of substances of concern;
37. Stresses that the ecodesign requirements for textiles should be set in line with the Union objectives in the fields of climate, notably the objective to achieve climate neutrality at the latest by 2050, the environment, including biodiversity, resource efficiency and security, and the reduction of the environmental, material and consumption footprints, and staying within the planetary boundaries as set out in the 8th Environmental Action



Programme, non-toxicity, energy efficiency as well as other related Union objectives, legislation and international commitments;

38. Calls on the Commission to set horizontal ecodesign requirements for textiles and footwear swiftly, and to focus on setting product-specific requirements between different textile products later on;
39. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to provide economic operators with sufficient time to adjust to new ecodesign requirements, particularly taking into account the needs of micro enterprises and SMEs;
40. Considers that consumption of new textiles, such as clothes, depends on several factors, including the availability of the products and their pricing, and not only on the need to replace a product that is no longer functional; calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that the policy framework on textiles takes a holistic view of durability, including both the physical and the emotional durability of textile products put on the market, which describes the garment design that takes into account long-term relevance and desirability to consumers, as clothing represents a cultural value;
41. Encourages the Commission and Member States to support research into how emotional durability can effectively be measured and be reflected in policy responses;
42. Stresses the need for the Commission and the Member States to promote business models and other measures that contribute to longer lifespans for textiles products and their use for longer, as well as the re-use and repair sectors as alternatives to purchasing new products;
43. Calls on the Member States to explore the setting of incentives to encourage sustainable consumption such as reduced VAT for second-hand products and repairs;
44. Considers that public authorities should drive the development of more sustainable textiles and circular business models and aim to reduce the environmental impact of textiles when making public purchases; calls for a broader and more effective application of socially responsible and sustainable public procurement criteria for textiles, in order to avoid market fragmentation; encourages the participation of social enterprises in public tenders;
45. Considers that garments, shoes, accessories and home furnishing products should comply with the welfare of animals; regrets the lack of attention paid to the well-being of animals in the Textiles Strategy; welcomes innovations by some parts of the industry such as sustainable alternatives; believes that more support should be given to related research and development;
46. Calls on the Commission to put forward measures on animal welfare and protection within the textiles industry and sector, focusing on eliminating harmful practices and illegal wildlife trade, and increasing transparency and awareness about the use of animals for the production and testing of textiles, also in third countries;
47. Stresses the need for the Commission and the Member States to promote research, foster innovation and develop policies supporting new sustainable circular business



models for the textile industry, such as, re-use, rental, on-demand production and technological innovations that can reduce the environmental and social impacts of the sector, provide information and improve consumers' health; underlines that research and innovation are key to strengthening the competitiveness of the EU textile industry; calls for research and innovation into artificial fibres, including recycling of waste-to-fibre and fibre-to-fibre, and the upcycling of synthetic waste in the textile industry;

48. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to facilitate the creation of sustainable business models and the competitiveness of the sector;
49. Highlights that not just products and materials, but also business models and the wider infrastructure should be designed to support waste prevention, preparation for reuse and high-quality recycling, in line with the waste hierarchy; considers that sustainable circular business models should become the norm; calls for the establishment of metrics and benchmarks that demonstrate the environmental performance of the circular business model, with policy incentives linked to these demonstrated impacts;
50. Underlines the importance, after following the waste hierarchy, of recycling for circularity, as a source of raw materials for textile production in Europe; underlines that the purity of the input in fabrics affects the efficiency and economic viability of the recycling process and that reduced mixed-material composition would help recyclability in Europe; underlines the need for a competitive European secondary market for raw materials;
51. Calls for extended producer responsibility schemes and other measures to incentivise research, innovation, investments and the scale-up of infrastructure for the collection, sorting and composition sorting, preparation for reuse and reuse and high-quality fibre-to-fibre recycling solutions that allow the separation and recycling of mixed materials and the decontamination of the waste stream;
52. Encourages Member States, regions and managing authorities to make use of the European Structural Funds and the Recovery and Resilience Instrument to unlock the potential of the European textile industry for innovative solutions to further digitalise and decarbonise the sector; encourages the development of circular economy hubs that would bring together innovative research centres and collection, sorting and recycling plants, which would turn waste into value and create new jobs in textile manufacturing; calls for the creation of a network of regional and national sustainability and innovation textiles hubs to assist companies, in particular SMEs, in the twin digital and green transitions;
53. Recalls that several EU funding opportunities exist, such as via Cluster 2 Horizon Europe or the European Innovation Council; emphasises that the EU research and innovation agenda has to address the whole value chain of circularity in the textiles ecosystem; in this context, calls for a dedicated co-programmed Partnership at EU level for advancing the European Union's competitiveness in innovative and sustainable textiles; stresses that the upcoming Horizon Europe work programmes should reflect the goals of circularity and sustainability, as set out in the EU Textiles Strategy and in the corresponding EU research and innovation agenda for textiles; underlines the role the European Institute of Innovation and Technology Knowledge and Innovation

Communities on Culture & Creativity and Manufacturing; calls on the Commission to appoint a European Innovation Council (EIC) programme manager on innovative, smart and sustainable textiles, and to run dedicated EIC Accelerator challenges;

54. Underlines the importance of sector-specific dialogues to increase the sectoral engagement of the textiles industry in the transition to a circular and climate-neutral economy; looks forward to the creation of transition pathways as an important building block for the textiles ecosystem in Europe;
55. Calls on the Commission, in collaboration with industry stakeholders and research institutions, to develop a life cycle assessment methodology applicable to the textile industry in order to ensure fair comparisons of textile products; points out that the life cycle assessment as a principle is crucial to avoid unintentional environmental impacts and to incentivise the invention of new raw materials that can demonstrate a lower impact on the environment; stresses the need for a European standard on life cycle assessments and the need for better data infrastructures across supply chains to enable this;
56. Underlines the importance of a coherent and consistent legal framework for the industry; emphasises the specific role that first movers, micro enterprises, SMEs and start-ups are playing in the transition to a circular and climate-neutral economy; highlights the need to support SMEs in the textile industry in moving away from linear business models and unsustainable practices with respect to the climate, the environment, health and social issues, including through guidelines to facilitate access to the available funding and compliance with administrative procedures; emphasises the importance of training opportunities for SMEs; notes the opportunities provided by the Enterprise Europe Network and the European Digital Innovation Hub;

### ***Textile waste and extended producer responsibility***

57. Considers that textile producers should have extended producer responsibility for the textiles they make available on the market for the first time within the territory of a Member State; welcomes the intention of the Commission to set out harmonised EU rules on extended producer responsibility for textiles, with eco-modulation of fees as part of the revision of the Waste Framework Directive; calls on the Commission to ensure that a significant proportion of the contributions made to extended producer responsibility schemes will be used for waste prevention and preparation for re-use measures, respecting the waste hierarchy;
58. Emphasises that extended producer responsibility should comply as a minimum with the requirements of Articles 8 and 8a of Directive 2008/98/EC, in addition to which it should include any other relevant costs specific to the textile sector; emphasises the need to ensure consistency between the eco-modulation of fees and the future delegated acts on textiles adopted under the Ecodesign Regulation, whereby the ecodesign requirements should be used as a basis and extended producer responsibility fees can incentivise businesses to go further;
59. Calls on the Commission to ensure that online marketplaces are also covered by the extended producer responsibility rules; considers it important for the extended producer responsibility scheme to promote the activities of social enterprises involved in used

textiles management;

60. Underlines the need to ensure the environmentally sound management of collected textiles; recalls that separate collection of textiles will be mandatory from 1 January 2025; encourages the Commission to monitor the Member States that have already implemented separate collection in order to facilitate exchanges of best practices and improve implementation;
61. Underlines that the revision of the Waste Framework Directive should introduce specific separate targets for textile waste prevention, textile collection, textile reuse, preparation for reuse, closed loop fibre-to-fibre recycling and phase out the landfilling of textiles; stresses that reliable data and benchmarks are needed for monitoring the targets; underlines also the importance of setting harmonised end-of-waste criteria for textiles;
62. Highlights the need to invest in re-collection infrastructure and high-end sorting and recycling facilities in order to be able to manage textile waste as of 2025; stresses the benefits of scaling up automated sorting infrastructure for post-consumer textiles, which can deliver high levels of precision and efficiency;
63. Considers it important to promote social economy enterprises collecting and re-using textiles as partners in meeting the collection and waste management obligations and targets;
64. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote concrete measures to raise awareness and achieve higher separate textile collection rates, including through the use of economic incentives;
65. Agrees with the Commission that the production of clothing from recycled bottles is not consistent with the circular model for PET bottles; considers that misleading claims should not be made about the recycled content in clothing based on PET, and that this should be taken into account, inter alia, in the review of the EU Ecolabel criteria;
66. Regrets the fact that about 20 % of textile fibres become waste before they reach the end-consumer; considers that great uncertainty exists about the total amount of fibres discarded in the pre-consumer phase; calls on the Commission to introduce mandatory reporting requirements on pre-consumer waste;
67. Stresses the importance of the revision of the Waste Shipments Regulation in strengthening the efforts to combat illegal shipments of waste to third countries; stresses the need to establish criteria to distinguish between used goods and waste; notes that these measures will be of particular importance to textile waste; is concerned that textile waste is still falsely labelled as second-hand goods<sup>57</sup>; while emphasising the principle of proximity as laid down in the Waste Framework Directive, points out that shipments of waste between EU Member States can be important for facilitating the recycling of waste in order to introduce secondary raw materials into the circular economy;
68. Reaffirms its position that the export of waste to non-EU countries should only be

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<sup>57</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/eu-exports-of-used-textiles/eu-exports-of-used-textiles>.

allowed when the receiving countries manage it under human health and environmental protection standards that are considered equivalent to those of the EU, including respect for international conventions on labour rights, and that all receiving facilities should be audited for environmentally sound management prior to exports;

69. Urges the Commission and the Member States to ensure that the likely increase in collected textile waste after the introduction of separate collection in 2025 does not lead to the incineration or landfilling of such textiles in non-EU countries; calls on the Commission to clarify that a specification of what constitute worn clothing and other worn textiles includes, inter alia, pre-sorting;

### ***Transparency and traceability***

70. Welcomes the initiative to empower consumers with regard to the green transition and the resulting EU rules that should ensure that consumers receive information at the point of sale on a commercial durability guarantee for textile products, as well as relevant information on their reparability, their end-of-life management and on the production year of the product;
71. Expresses its concern over the widespread practices of greenwashing; points out that that 53 % of green claims give vague, misleading or unfounded information and 40 % of claims have no supporting evidence; welcomes the Commission's proposal to empower consumers for the green transition and the proposal for a directive on green claims; emphasises the need to establish clear rules to put an end to greenwashing practices and to raise awareness of the implications of fast fashion and consumer behaviour for the environment;
72. Calls on the Commission to revise and reinforce the EU Ecolabel for textiles to enable the identification of the most sustainable textiles;
73. Welcomes the development of Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules for apparel and footwear; calls on the Commission to ensure that these methods address all relevant environmental impacts; expresses concern over the environmental impact factors, such as micro and nanoplastic emissions and biodiversity loss, which are currently missing; highlights the need to include both industry and non-industry organisations in the development of such rules, as well as to ensure the transparency and accessibility of data;
74. Welcomes the introduction of the digital product passport (DPP) in the ecodesign proposal, which, as part of a coherent framework with corporate due diligence legislation on sustainability and the forced labour proposal, will provide increased transparency; considers the DPP to be a decisive tool for circularity and welcomes the role which the DPP can play in enabling new sustainable business models for textiles and in consumer empowerment, facilitating sustainable choices by making data more accessible and transparent; stresses that the information provided by the DPP needs to be accurate, complete and up to date;
75. Expresses concern that high volumes of surplus, excess inventory and deadstock, as well as returns, lead to the destruction of perfectly usable textiles; underlines that a ban on the destruction of unsold and returned textile goods at Union level should be enacted

and considers that comprehensive information to allow monitoring of the ban on the destruction of unsold textile goods is essential, in accordance with the revision of the Ecodesign Regulation;

76. Underlines the importance of a harmonised and properly functioning internal market; regrets the large proportion of textiles available on the Union market that are non-compliant with Union law<sup>58</sup>; calls on the Member States to ensure stronger market surveillance, more frequent controls and dissuasive penalties for infringements, to ensure that all products placed on the EU market, including by online marketplaces from non-EU countries, meet the requirements set out in Union legislation; underlines the importance of preventing the import of counterfeited or unsafe textile products and of harmonised surveillance of the internal market;
77. Calls on the Commission to audit the enforcement systems in the Member States with regard to textiles and to make recommendations for improvement, strengthen cooperation and coordination between enforcement bodies and propose EU enforcement instruments, where necessary; calls on the Commission to make use of the powers granted under Article 11(4) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 in order to ensure the adequate testing of products across the Union; reaffirms its call on the Commission to take swift legal action when it establishes that EU laws, pertaining in particular to the protection of human health and the environment and the functioning of the internal market, are not being observed; recalls its position that procedures should be made more efficient in the field of environmental infringements<sup>59</sup>;

#### ***Due diligence and social fairness***

78. Regrets that the EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles falls short on social elements, such as workers' rights and the gender perspective;
79. Stresses that the textile sector is host to a broad range of labour rights abuses, in particular affecting women and other marginalised groups, including poverty wages, wage theft, undue limitation of the right to join or form a union of an individual's choosing, child labour, forced labour, exposure to unsafe working conditions and sexual harassment<sup>60 61</sup>;
80. Welcomes the Commission's proposal for a corporate sustainable due diligence directive as an important step to address specific problems in the textile sector; highlights that negative environmental impacts and social impacts in supplier countries cannot be avoided through due diligence legislation alone, and that improving social and environmental sustainability requires a holistic approach; calls on the Commission to provide additional support for local actors in partner countries and to take additional legislative measures to address these impacts in countries outside the EU; underlines, furthermore, the need for the EU to promote the ratification of all International Labour

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<sup>58</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/safety-gate/#/screen/pages/reports>.

<sup>59</sup> European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2020 on the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity, paragraph 59, OJ C 270, 7.7.2021, p. 94.

<sup>60</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms\\_836396.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_836396.pdf).

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.eprs.sso.ep.parl.union.eu/filerep/upload/EPRS-Briefing-652025-Textile-workers-developing-countries-European-fashion-rev2-FINAL.pdf>.

Organization (ILO) conventions that are relevant to the textile industry; calls on the Member States to support efforts to prevent gender-based violence in the textile sector by committing to the ratification and implementation of ILO Convention No 190 on Eliminating Violence and Sexual Harassment in the World of Work;

81. Calls on the Commission to mainstream the gender perspective in the implementation of the EU Textile Strategy; draws special attention to the fact that women account for 80 %<sup>62</sup> of the global garment workforce and are therefore disproportionately affected by the negative impacts of the industry; highlights that gender-based violence has been widely reported in the textile industry; stresses that women and girls in garment factories are particularly at risk of harassment and gender-based violence owing to their precarious, low-income employment, as well as their limited upward mobility, the location of workplaces and their dependence on on-site housing; stresses that special attention should be paid to gender equality and women's rights in the textiles sector; strongly insists that women workers' unions be allowed to freely establish and operate, and asks for the right to collective bargaining to be respected;
82. Notes that women in the textile industry are often excluded from decision-making; calls on employers in the textile industry to take steps to ensure female representation in managerial and leadership positions and to ensure female representation in consultation forums; calls further on employers to provide training courses to managers and employees on gender equality and gender discrimination; calls on the Member States to promote studies in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics among girls and women to ensure that women play a key role in all aspects of the textile industry, including the use of the high-tech machinery that is often required during various manufacturing procedures, and thereby to underline the link between women, technology and textiles;
83. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to ensure the collection of comprehensive gender-disaggregated data to ascertain the involvement of women in the textile industry and any potential variations or discrepancies between Member States;
84. Recalls that indigenous crafts are often appropriated, which is related to structural racism, and are often used for clothing for mass consumption; recalls that traditional crafts and their makers are sacrificed, as local communities are pushed into low-paying garment worker jobs<sup>63</sup>;

### ***Harmful purchasing practises***

85. Regrets that the strategy does not envisage any action against the harmful purchasing practices of companies; points out that according to the ILO, the current power imbalance between garment buyers and their suppliers, in particular SMEs, causes overproduction and exploitation of workers in the industry<sup>64</sup>; considers that unfair purchasing practices by companies such as last-minute changes in design or lead times,

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<sup>62</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_835423.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_835423.pdf).

<sup>63</sup> [https://cleanclothes.org/file-repository/an-intersectional-approach-challenging-discrimination-in-the-garment-industry\\_lbl\\_dci-wpc-paper-final.pdf](https://cleanclothes.org/file-repository/an-intersectional-approach-challenging-discrimination-in-the-garment-industry_lbl_dci-wpc-paper-final.pdf).

<sup>64</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms\\_561141.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms_561141.pdf).



unilateral amendments to contracts and last-minute cancellation of orders should be effectively tackled; calls on the Commission to provide an assessment of how best to minimise these practices, including through legislation taking inspiration and learning from the experience of the implementation of Directive (EU) 2019/663<sup>65</sup> on unfair trading practices in the agricultural and food supply chain;

86. Insists that the green and digital transitions of the European textiles sector drive forward a Just Transition which leaves no one behind; stresses that the transition to more sustainable and circular business models within the textile industry presents significant potential for the creation of new business opportunities, new green jobs and for the upskilling and reskilling of the workforce, while offering the opportunity to improve the working conditions and attractiveness of the sector and the remuneration of workers, who will play a central role in the transition; recognises that while the transformation of the sector can create new jobs with new skill requirements, other types of jobs might be lost; emphasises the importance of quality social dialogue and the engagement of national and regional authorities to adequately plan for the transition and ensure that mitigating measures are put in place and that change is managed in a socially responsible way, including ensuring that newly created jobs in the circular economy are quality jobs;
87. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure the provision of sectoral training and education in the field of sustainable textiles to safeguard current jobs, improve worker satisfaction and ensure the availability of a skilled workforce, together with social partners, the industry and other stakeholders; underlines the importance of ensuring that low-wage textile sector workers, including those engaged in the most precarious forms of employment, have access to quality lifelong learning and training opportunities, particularly after periods of absence for care reasons;
88. Calls on the Commission and Member States to assist social economy actors, including social enterprises active in circular activities, in their reskilling and upskilling activities;
89. Calls on the Commission to ensure a level playing field with a high level of environmental protection for products produced and consumed within the EU and those exported or imported; notes that most clothing in the Union is imported from third countries<sup>66</sup>, contributing to harmful environmental and social impacts outside of the Union; points out that trade policies can play a crucial role in contributing to sustainable value chains, notably through the effective enforcement of the trade and sustainable development chapters of EU trade agreements; considers that the Union should ensure that trade agreements and preference programmes are used as levers to promote sustainable development, protection of climate and environmental, human rights, labour rights and fair and ethical trade around the world, as well as the responsibility of value chains;
90. Recalls the principle of policy coherence for development (PCD) and, in particular, Article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which states that

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<sup>65</sup> OJ L 111, 25.4.2019, p. 59.

<sup>66</sup> European Parliament, Directorate for Parliamentary Research Services, Briefing, 'Textiles and the environment', 3 May 2022, available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/729405/EPRS\\_BRI\(2022\)729405\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/729405/EPRS_BRI(2022)729405_EN.pdf).



the Union ‘shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries’; stresses the importance of minimising possible contradictions and building synergies with development cooperation policy for the benefit of developing countries and to increase the effectiveness of development cooperation; highlights the importance of PCD in enabling an integrated approach to achieve the SDGs;

91. Strongly encourages the Commission, therefore, to supplement the strategy with corresponding regional and country programming for developing countries in the framework of the Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe and Team Europe initiatives, which should visibly promote and communicate sustainable projects that promote governance reforms and better enforcement of laws, in particular labour laws, as well as sustainable projects that help to build textiles production and distribution infrastructure;
92. Denounces the vicious circle created by climate change effects which force agricultural workers to abandon their land, as it is no longer suitable for farming, move to industrial centres and be forced to seek exploitative employment in the garment and other industries; recalls that these migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, as they lack social support networks and owing to the general lack of social infrastructure and legal protection; recalls that the increasing number of droughts and floods also threatens cotton farmers worldwide; recalls that cotton is a particularly striking example of the aforementioned vicious circle, as growing it involves excessive water use, which harms the soil, as well as the use of pesticides, which has damaging effects on farmers and the environment;
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93. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The European Commission presented a new EU Sustainable and Circular Textiles Strategy<sup>67</sup> on 30 March 2022. The strategy sets out a series of actions and the Commission's 2030 vision for the sector, including: All textile products placed on the EU market are durable, repairable and recyclable, made largely from recycled fibres, free from hazardous substances and produced with respect for social rights and the environment; "Fast fashion" is out of fashion and consumers benefit longer from high quality, affordable textiles; profitable reuse and repair services are widespread; The textile sector is competitive, resilient and innovative, and manufacturers take responsibility for their products along the entire value chain with sufficient capacity for recycling and minimum incineration and landfilling.

Already today, European textile consumption has the fourth<sup>68</sup> largest impact on the environment and climate change, after food, housing and mobility. Textiles rank third<sup>69</sup> in terms of water consumption and land use, and fifth in terms of primary raw material consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The global textile and clothing industry is currently responsible for 92 million<sup>70</sup> tonnes of waste annually. An industry mainly driven by fossil fuels. In 2015, we consumed 98 million tonnes of oil just for the fashion industry. Mostly for the production of synthetic fibres, which account for a large proportion of the materials used. It is estimated that there are already 1.4 trillion<sup>71</sup> microfibers in the oceans. The washing of synthetic fibre clothing accounts for the largest share of all, 35%.<sup>72</sup> Every year, 552,000 tonnes of microfibers alone end up in the water.

We are producing more clothes and textiles than ever before. In the EU alone, demand has increased by 40%<sup>73</sup> in recent decades. We consume more and more often than ever before. At the same time, we only wear our clothes a few times on average. We forget how much work and resources are used. More collections than there are seasons, faster trends and before the new collection is in the shops and websites, yesterday's collection is disposed of. At the same time, only 1%<sup>74</sup> are recycled.

However, not only the environment pays its price, but also the people who produce our textiles along the entire supply chain.

The industry employs 60 million<sup>75</sup> people worldwide, most of them women. The wages of garment workers are often far away from living wages. Unpaid overtime, health hazards, no fixed contracts, psychological and physical abuse are just some of the problems in the industry. Regardless of whether it is in the cotton field or in the textile factory, precarious working conditions dominate. All over the world, women<sup>76</sup> are hit particularly hard by environmental

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<sup>67</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12822-EU-strategy-for-sustainable-textiles\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12822-EU-strategy-for-sustainable-textiles_en)

<sup>68</sup> [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/729405/EPRS\\_BRI\(2022\)729405\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/729405/EPRS_BRI(2022)729405_EN.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/729405/EPRS\\_BRI\(2022\)729405\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/729405/EPRS_BRI(2022)729405_EN.pdf)

<sup>70</sup> <https://ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/a-new-textiles-economy>

<sup>71</sup> <https://ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/a-new-textiles-economy>

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/textiles-in-europes-circular-economy>

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/textiles-in-europes-circular-economy>

<sup>74</sup> <https://ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/a-new-textiles-economy>

<sup>75</sup> <https://cleanclothes.org/news/2022/live-blog-on-how-the-coronavirus-influences-workers-in-supply-chains>

<sup>76</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms\\_836396.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_836396.pdf)

disasters and climate extremes. We cannot cope with the worst crisis in the world without involving half of its population.

The constant downward pressure on social and environmental standards is leading to more and more social inequalities and environmental devastation. The circular economy must play a major part in managing the transition towards social, economic and environmental sustainability.

The rapporteur thinks that without a functioning circular economy, we cannot achieve climate neutrality and our environmental goals. We therefore need binding rules, which guarantee a responsible use of raw materials worldwide. We as the EU must lead by example and ensure that the textiles sold in our shops and information society services, such as online platforms, guarantee high environmental and human rights standards.

The responsibility for sustainable purchasing should no longer be shifted to consumers alone, but the existing linear model must be stopped - towards a circular and decent model that does not rely on volume.

For this, we need binding legislation, because so far the textile industry has been left relatively untouched by lawmakers.

Therefore the rapporteur calls for European legislation, which guarantees that fashion is not produced at the cost of environmental destruction and human lives. The new proposal on an Ecodesign Regulation can play a key role in this regard.

Furthermore, requirements should be set that prevent unsold clothes from being shredded or sent to landfill just because they are no longer in fashion or the warehouse is full. The rapporteur considers that only textiles that meet a minimum standard of sustainability requirements should be imported into the EU or produced within the EU. We need to design textiles that are reusable, repairable, recyclable and energy efficient. Therefore, the EU has to set binding targets for the reduction of the carbon footprint of textiles. One core problem is overconsumption and overproduction. A holistic strategy for sustainable textiles can only be genuine, if we reduce the absolute quantity of natural resources used and at the same time reduce the quantity of waste.

29.3.2023

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY**

for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on an EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles  
(2022/2171(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion (\*): Christian Ehler

(\*): Associated committee – Rule 57 of the Rules of Procedure

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Highlights the importance of the textiles ecosystem for jobs, growth and the preservation of know-how and cultural heritage in Europe; underlines that the European textile sector had an annual turnover of EUR 147 billion in 2022, with EUR 58 billion in exports and EUR 106 billion in imports, employs 1.3 million European citizens, and that women hold fewer than 25 % of leadership positions in top fashion companies while representing more than 70 % of all employees in the textile industry; recalls that more than 99 % of the EU textiles ecosystem consists of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that in general have low profit margins; underlines that EU textiles companies face intense competition from Asia, mainly China<sup>1</sup>, to where some EU companies have been outsourcing their production and where environmental and social regulations are less strict or non-existent;
2. Notes with concern that global textiles production, in particular the production of unrecyclable low-quality apparel, has significantly increased due to the development of fast fashion in the clothing industry, which has a negative impact on natural resources; stresses the importance of supporting the EU textile industry in moving away from fast fashion and towards the promotion of a sustainable manufacturing model that combines creative capacity and production systems based on the quality of processes, materials and details, which would significantly reduce EU material waste in the textile industry and strengthen the strategic value of the supply chain in the EU; stresses, further, the importance of developing and implementing awareness-raising programmes for consumers on the environmental and climate impacts of the textile and clothing industry and empowering consumers to make sustainable and smart choices;

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<sup>1</sup> Study – ‘Data on the EU Textile Ecosystem and its Competitiveness: final report’, European Commission, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, 17 December 2021.

3. Acknowledges the threat to European industry and sustainability posed by imports of counterfeit or unsafe products or products that are not compliant with EU legislation on textiles; urges the Commission and the Member States to provide a more coordinated monitoring and market surveillance system and increase resources and facilities to ensure compliance with EU legislation, including the REACH Regulation<sup>2</sup>, in order to ensure a level playing field for European businesses; notes the potential for establishing new mutually beneficial trade agreements and strengthening current trade relationships, which can safeguard the conformity of textile products with EU legislation and, further, support the creation of jobs and boost economic growth both in the EU and among trade partners; calls on digital and analogue marketplaces to ensure that the textile products they sell comply with EU law; considers greenwashing to be unfair competition for SMEs truly committed to greener manufacturing processes and particularly misleading for consumers;
4. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to analyse the possibility of providing relevant and cost-effective support to non-EU countries to decarbonise textile supply chains, which will have a positive influence on European businesses;
5. Takes note that the regulatory burden, which directly and indirectly affects the EU textile industry, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, the rise in energy prices and the consequences of inflation on industry, is threatening the competitiveness of EU businesses; welcomes and encourages, in that regard, national and EU efforts to bring down energy prices to an internationally competitive level; recalls that the EU textiles ecosystem is a front-runner in the uptake of sustainability practices; calls on the Commission and the Member States to implement regulation that avoids unnecessary burden, facilitates sustainable business models and improves the competitiveness of the sector, as a high number of obligations drastically increases costs and red tape, especially for SMEs;
6. Stresses the need to support SMEs within the textiles ecosystem in moving away from linear business models and unsustainable practices; calls, therefore, for the creation of a network of regional and national sustainability and innovation textiles hubs to assist companies, in particular SMEs, in the twin digital and green transition; notes the opportunity which the Enterprise Europe Network and the European Digital Innovation Hubs may offer in this regard; calls for easy guidelines on accessing funding and the simplification of administrative processes that would enable SMEs to transform their industries, with dedicated incentives, timing, availability of dedicated training and an SME toolbox to reduce complexity;
7. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure coherence among the policy measures identified in the EU textiles strategy and the transition pathway in order to create a predictable and harmonised legal framework in line with EU legislation and the EU Green Deal objectives, in particular regarding the ecodesign requirements for

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<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, amending Directive 1999/45/EC and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 793/93 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 as well as Council Directive 76/769/EEC and Commission Directives 91/155/EEC, 93/67/EEC, 93/105/EC and 2000/21/EC (OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1).

textiles and with a sufficient transition period for businesses; urges, further, the Commission and the Member States to safeguard the harmonisation of national policies at EU level in order to ensure legal certainty and predictability and avoid a fragmented EU single market and bureaucratic burdens for business operators, especially SMEs; stresses that policy measures should be duly justified by examples of positive environmental impacts;

8. Recalls the need for facilitating sector-specific dialogues to increase the sectoral engagement of the textile industry in the transition to a circular and climate-neutral economy, and recognises the transition pathway as an important building block to transform the textiles ecosystem in Europe accordingly; regrets the fact that the Commission has taken almost two years since the update of the EU's industrial strategy to launch the textiles ecosystem's transition pathway; stresses that the quick finalisation and implementation of the support actions for businesses is of utmost importance for enabling a sustainable transition and adapting to the legislative requirements while reducing the environmental footprint with feasible and predictable targets; stresses that actions taken in accordance with the transition pathway should be fully aligned with the EU industrial strategy, the legislative activities envisaged in the EU textiles strategy, the goals of open strategic autonomy and the objectives of the European Green Deal;
9. Calls on the Commission, the Member States and industry stakeholders to follow the New European Bauhaus initiative's guiding principles of sustainability, inclusiveness and aesthetics for the transition of the textiles ecosystem, as a connection between creativity, arts and science can help to create a positive impact; highlights the strengths of the European creative sector, which can influence consumers' preferences and habits and thus facilitate a sustainable transition of the textile industry in Europe and in the world;
10. Recalls that the transition of the textiles ecosystem to a circular economy also presents a significant potential for creating new green jobs; urges the Commission and the Member States to facilitate access to innovative educational curricula for the development of relevant skills and for the upskilling and reskilling of the current labour force, including for the necessary digital transition of the textile industry, in particular for SMEs which often lack skilled employees; highlights the need to increase the attractiveness and perspectives of employment for young professionals in the textiles ecosystem; calls, further, on the Commission and the Member States to direct close attention to merging artistic and technological training for workers in the textiles ecosystem, thereby harnessing synergies between creative and technological skills, in order to continuously promote the mobility of skilled labour across Europe and to preserve European know-how and the cultural heritage of textile crafting skills; calls on employers in the textile industry to take steps to ensure female representation at managerial and leadership level and in mid-level positions;
11. Acknowledges the need for and challenges to achieving a fully circular business model for textile companies, in particular given the current technological and physical constraints on production, recycling, sorting and collecting, the use of chemicals, the lack of circular design, digitalisation gaps and the workforce's upskilling and reskilling needs; notes that specific funding, sound metrics and economic and legal incentives are needed to transform the sector into a truly sustainable and resilient sector and to



safeguard the textile industry and its jobs in Europe;

12. Welcomes the extension of the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation<sup>3</sup> to cover goods beyond those related to energy, including textiles; underlines the fact that great potential for more circular and sustainable textiles lies in the design phase of textile products; urges the Commission to consult with research institutions and relevant stakeholders before setting clear, feasible and predictable targets and metrics in the ecodesign delegated acts for different textile product categories following a risk-based and life-cycle approach, taking into account the laws of physics; stresses the need to start implementing the ecodesign regulation in respect of those textiles with the highest environmental impact and for which the regulation is the easiest to implement, and to take into account the many differences within the textile industry, where several sectors have already developed products that are designed to be more durable and repairable; calls, further, for a transition period to enable the ecosystem to comply with new product-based ecodesign requirements;
13. Recognises the considerable amount of investment needed for the digitalisation of the textiles ecosystem and therefore calls on the Commission, the Member States and the regions to increase their funding efforts in this regard; recognises that accessing, sharing and processing data relating to the textiles ecosystem is essential for its digital transition; welcomes the Digital Product Passport (DPP) as a decisive tool for circularity and the role which the DPP can play in enabling new sustainable business models for textiles by making data more accessible and transparent along the supply chain; is convinced of the potential business opportunities for commercialisation and consumer empowerment to facilitate sustainable and circular choices, which the DPP can enable due to the benefits it brings in terms of transparency, understanding consumer behaviour, supply chain and environmental and social information requirements, traceability, waste reduction and the correct treatment of textiles for recycling, reuse and repair, taking into account that access rights should be differentiated for the various categories of data users; underlines that information and, in particular, performance requirements for each product should rely on a harmonised and standardised methodology and be carefully fine-tuned to ensure technical and economic feasibility, including on aspects such as functionality, scalability and competitiveness of European businesses, as well as affordability for consumers; calls, therefore, for the immediate creation of a pilot project, funded by Horizon Europe, laying down the fundamental criteria and infrastructure needs for the DPP;
14. Points out that the information provided by the DPP needs to be relevant, accurate and up-to-date, and that the information must be easily accessible and usable by authorities, consumers and stakeholders along the supply chains; highlights the importance of aligning coherent information requirements for textile products with the functionalities and responsibilities of the DPP, in line with data protection obligations, trade secrets and intellectual property rights; recommends that products should hold essential information in digital format, which is accessible, for example, via a QR code, and simultaneously in analogue format for consumers to make well-informed choices and for industrial usage; calls on the Commission to use the DPP pilot project for its gradual

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<sup>3</sup> Commission proposal of 30 March 2022 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for setting ecodesign requirements for sustainable products and repealing Directive 2009/125/EC (COM(2022)0142).



phase-in and to set an implementation period for SMEs, and especially micro-enterprises, based on lessons learnt from the pilot project and taking account of their capacities, and to support them in ensuring full compliance with the regulation; further calls on the Commission to base the DPP's implementation on current databases, data infrastructures, data standards and data-sharing best practices in order to avoid duplication and an unnecessary administrative burden; recalls that questions regarding data reliability and verifiability, legal liability for data published and access to data by companies along the whole supply chain remain unanswered to date and need to be duly addressed by the Commission and the Member States prior to the DPP's implementation;

15. Welcomes the planned revision of the Textiles Labelling Regulation<sup>4</sup> and the Eco-Label Regulation<sup>5</sup> as an opportunity to avoid greenwashing practices through labelling and to harmonise the criterion for the mandatory labelling of textile products across the EU; recognises the untapped potential of public procurement in supporting circular models and companies with sustainable manufacturing processes as part of a possible revision of the 'Made in Europe' label; highlights the fact that all rules on labelling textile products, using both physical and digital labels and on all labelling domains, including for sustainability and circularity, are introduced with a view to ensuring legal clarity, lower compliance costs for companies, in particular SMEs, and that information is easily accessible, readable and comparable by consumers and relevant businesses and is developed using an evidence-based approach, in order to ensure measurable positive impacts; notes that digital labels could take advantage of the technical solutions provided in the DPP; calls on the Commission to further clarify and simplify the classification process for applying for new fibre composition names for novel and distinctive materials;
16. Underlines the need to reduce the carbon footprint of the sector, largely by investments into greenhouse gas reduction technologies and research thereon; strongly believes that the question of worldwide water usage in the production of textiles has to be addressed immediately; calls on the Commission to set targets to reduce the water footprint of the textile industry, incentivise the development of processes which are less energy and water intensive and avoid the use and release of harmful substances; stresses the importance of research and innovation, in particular relating to new forms of recyclable fibres that require less water, as well as to developing alternatives to the conventional use of chemicals, water reuse through the development of wastewater treatment technologies, and reducing energy and water consumption in the production process;
17. Welcomes the Commission's intention to achieve the target of textile products being free of the most hazardous chemicals by 2030 and its commitment to address the presence of hazardous substances used in textile products and in production processes; regrets the fact that the presence of dangerous chemicals in textiles often hampers their

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<sup>4</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 September 2011 on textile fibre names and related labelling and marking of the fibre composition of textile products and repealing Council Directive 73/44/EEC and Directives 96/73/EC and 2008/121/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 272, 18.10.2011, p. 1).

<sup>5</sup> Regulation (EC) No 66/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the EU Ecolabel (OJ L 27, 30.1.2010, p.1).

reusability and recyclability<sup>6</sup>; supports, therefore, the introduction of technically feasible targets for reducing dangerous chemicals in textiles and their waste, as well as the full traceability and disclosure of chemicals used in manufacturing processes, making use of the benefits of the DPP, in order to ensure clean textile recycling from the outset; stresses the need to continuously support research into and funding for preventing microplastic pollution from synthetic textiles and microfibre shedding; calls on the Commission to address this issue in its planned proposal on measures to reduce the release of microplastics into the environment; calls for innovation to prevent the release into the environment of microfibres and microplastics at each stage of a product's life cycle through adequate technical solutions;

18. Underlines the business opportunities and alternative business models for reuse and repair and their contribution to a more sustainable and circular textiles ecosystem, as well as the potential for job creation through the development of reuse and recyclability sectors in the EU; calls, in this regard, for the establishment of incentives to support the reuse and rentals sectors, as well as businesses focused on extending the life of garments; underlines the importance of recycling for circularity and the reduction of waste and as a source of raw materials for textile production in Europe; takes note, in this regard, of the fact that achieving 100 % recyclability and circularity of currently existing fibres is limited by the laws of physics; underlines the fact that the purity of the input for fabrics also affects the efficiency and economic viability of the recycling process and that reduced mixed-material composition would bolster recyclability in Europe; highlights the need to create strong incentives for recycling in both production and demand and to create a stable and open market for recyclers and recycled products; encourages the use of recycled raw materials and underlines the need for a competitive European secondary market for raw materials that allows producers to move towards higher rates of recycled materials in their products; recalls that in order to create a European recycling industry, collection, sorting, waste treatment and shipment requirements across the whole value chain require the necessary investments; calls for the Member States to increase their investments in recycling technologies, including the scaling up of existing recycling plants, and in particular investments in mechanical and chemical recycling technologies; calls, therefore, for European funding to be directed towards the development of market-ready technologies for recycling;
19. Underlines the importance of harmonised end-of-waste criteria and waste definition for textiles in order to ensure a move towards higher rates of recycled materials in textile products; calls for the elimination of possible barriers to the recovery of waste material that can no longer be used in the textile sector and for innovation in its possible uses in other sectors; calls on the Commission and the Member States to consider textile waste as raw material, in order to transform waste into value after it has undergone a sufficient recovery process, for the production of textiles; recalls the obligation for Member States to have separate collection infrastructure for textiles as of 1 January 2025; underlines the urgent need to direct funds at both EU and national level into research, innovation and the scaling up of infrastructure for the high-quality manual and automatic composition sorting of textiles in order for the industry to be ready to make use of collected waste by means of recycling, reusing or repairing and to ensure the environmentally sound management of the collected textiles; calls, given the low

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<sup>6</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/739a1cca-6145-11ec-9c6c-01aa75ed71a1>.

collection rates, for the development of consumer incentives to achieve higher textile collection rates, including for reuse for social purposes; encourages the Commission to monitor the Member States that have implemented separate collection before 1 January 2025 in order to gather best practices and identify possible issues related to the harmonisation of sorting and collection practices at EU level;

20. Underlines the fact that actions taken under the EU textiles strategy should primarily focus on digital innovations, phasing out non-recyclable fibres and developing new types of fibres with a lower environmental impact; calls on the Commission, alongside the Member States, industry and research institutions, to encourage and fund research into making textile products free of hazardous substances and into the trade-offs between fibres that are more durable, reusable, recyclable and repairable; stresses the need to look beyond the currently existing fibres and textiles in order to increase research and innovation related to inventing new raw materials in order to diminish the carbon footprint of textile production and to reduce the dependency on land, water and oil for the textiles ecosystem; notes that new types of fibres and textiles combined with digital solutions will be able to improve citizens' lives, for example, by providing health information to product users, in line with privacy considerations; highlights the fact that artificial fibres are still essential in the manufacturing of technical textiles alongside many other textile categories; highlights the need for research and innovation related to artificial fibres, both bio-based and synthetic, such as the recycling of waste-to-fibre, fibre-to-fibre and the upcycling of plastics from resources to create new textiles;
21. Underlines that research and innovation is key to strengthening the competitiveness of the EU textile industry's leading position in innovation, especially in sustainable manufacturing processes, biodegradable and sustainable fibres such as bio-based fibres, bio-solutions to be used throughout the textile value chain, inventing and scaling up circular and safe production, high-quality automatic composition sorting technologies and recycling technologies, and harnessing the opportunities offered by digitalisation, for example related to smart textiles and an interoperable and standardised SME-friendly DPP; encourages the Member States, regions and managing authorities to make use of the European Structural Funds as well as the Recovery and Resilience Facility to unlock the potential of the European textile industry for innovative solutions to further digitalise and decarbonise the sector, support SMEs and support upskilling and reskilling initiatives; calls, therefore, for the development of European textile hubs that connect innovative research centres with collection, sorting, recycling and disposal plants, turning waste into value and creating new jobs in textile manufacturing hubs; calls on the Commission to launch a dedicated EU industrial alliance;
22. Recalls that several EU funding opportunities exist, such as under Cluster 2 of Horizon Europe or through the European Innovation Council (EIC); calls for the creation of an EU research and innovation agenda aligned with the transition pathway for the textiles ecosystem; emphasises that the EU research and innovation agenda has to address the whole value chain of circularity in the textiles ecosystem; calls, in this regard, for a dedicated co-programmed partnership at EU level for increasing the European Union's competitiveness in innovative and sustainable textiles; stresses that such a partnership should pool and accelerate research, innovation, pilot testing, demonstration and education activities in four strategic domains, namely the circular, responsible and bio-based economy, digital manufacturing and supply chains, smart and high-performance

materials and products, and advanced digital and greener skills; stresses that the upcoming Horizon Europe work programmes should reflect the goals of circularity and sustainability as set out in the EU textiles strategy and in the corresponding EU research and innovation agenda for textiles; points out, furthermore, that related calls should be based on the structural engagement of stakeholders in the whole ecosystem while encouraging the textile and digital technology sectors to develop the full digital potential of the textile industry; underlines the leading role which the European Institute of Innovation and Technology and Knowledge and Innovation Communities (Culture & Creativity<sup>7</sup> and Manufacturing<sup>8</sup>) should play in this process; considers that the innovative and entrepreneurial potential of the textiles ecosystem is not yet fairly recognised within the innovation community and calls on the Commission to appoint an EIC programme manager for innovative, smart and sustainable textiles and to run dedicated EIC accelerator challenges.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://eit.europa.eu/eit-community/eit-culture-creativity>.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.eitmanufacturing.eu/>.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	28.3.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 64 -: 2 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Matteo Adinolfi, Nicola Beer, François-Xavier Bellamy, Hildegard Bentele, Tom Berendsen, Vasile Blaga, Paolo Borchia, Marc Botenga, Markus Buchheit, Martin Buschmann, Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Jerzy Buzek, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Ignazio Corrao, Beatrice Covassi, Ciarán Cuffe, Josianne Cutajar, Nicola Danti, Martina Dlabajová, Christian Ehler, Valter Flego, Niels Fuglsang, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Jens Geier, Nicolás González Casares, Bart Groothuis, Christophe Grudler, Robert Hajšel, Romana Jerković, Seán Kelly, Izabela-Helena Kloc, Łukasz Kohut, Andrius Kubilius, Marisa Matias, Dan Nica, Angelika Niebler, Niklas Nienä, Johan Nissinen, Mauri Pekkarinen, Morten Petersen, Markus Pieper, Maria Spyrali, Beata Szydło, Riho Terras, Patrizia Toia, Marie Toussaint, Isabella Tovaglieri, Henna Virkkunen, Pernille Weiss, Carlos Zorrinho
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Alex Agius Saliba, Rasmus Andresen, Tiziana Beghin, Franc Bogovič, Jakob G. Dalunde, Pietro Focchi, Klemen Grošelj, Martin Hojsík, Marina Kaljurand, Dace Melbārde, Rob Rooker, Bronis Ropė, Ernő Schaller-Baross, Jordi Solé, Susana Solís Pérez
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Sven Simon

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

64	+
ECR	Pietro Fiocchi, Izabela-Helena Kloc, Beata Szydło
ID	Matteo Adinolfi, Paolo Borchia, Markus Buchheit, Isabella Tovaglieri
NI	Tiziana Beghin, Martin Buschmann, Ernő Schaller-Baross
PPE	François-Xavier Bellamy, Hildegard Bentele, Tom Berendsen, Vasile Blaga, Franc Bogovič, Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Jerzy Buzek, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Christian Ehler, Seán Kelly, Andrius Kubilius, Dace Melbārde, Angelika Niebler, Markus Pieper, Sven Simon, Maria Spyrali, Riho Terras, Henna Virkkunen, Pernille Weiss
Renew	Nicola Beer, Nicola Danti, Martina Dlabajová, Valter Flego, Bart Groothuis, Klemen Grošelj, Christophe Grudler, Martin Hojsík, Mauri Pekkarinen, Morten Petersen, Susana Solís Pérez
S&D	Alex Agius Saliba, Beatrice Covassi, Josianne Cutajar, Niels Fuglsang, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Jens Geier, Nicolás González Casares, Robert Hajšel, Romana Jerković, Marina Kaljurand, Łukasz Kohut, Dan Nica, Patrizia Toia, Carlos Zorrinho
The Left	Marc Botenga, Marisa Matias
Verts/ALE	Rasmus Andresen, Ignazio Corrao, Ciarán Cuffe, Jakob G. Dalunde, Niklas Nienaa, Bronis Ropé, Jordi Solé, Marie Toussaint

2	-
ECR	Johan Nissinen, Rob Rooker

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

2.3.2023

## OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT

for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on the EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles  
(2022/2171(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion: Marlene Mortler

### SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas the textile, clothing, leather and footwear sector (TCLF) is one of the largest sectors in the global economy, with the majority of workers being women; whereas it is characterised by poor working conditions and workers' rights violations, including with regard to the conditions and rights of farmers that grow agricultural fibre crops like cotton;
  - B. whereas the TCLF value chain has become increasingly buyer-driven, which has led to low prices, increased time pressure and poor payment terms; whereas these conditions of market power asymmetries between suppliers and global buyers fuel and exacerbate the risk of labour rights abuses in TCLF producing factories;
  - C. whereas textile production and consumption also have severe impacts on the environment in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, chemical pollution, resource use and the volume of textile waste that is sent to landfill;
  - D. whereas approximately 60 % of all the garments produced in Bangladesh are imported into the EU; whereas the Bangladesh Sustainability Compact (2013) aims to promote continuous improvements in labour rights and factory safety in the ready-made garment sector; whereas the Sustainability Compact achieved tangible improvements in enhancing building and workplace safety while it failed as an effective tool for promoting workers' rights;
  - E. whereas the EU plays a key role as producer, investor, buyer/importer, retailer and consumer in TCLF value chains and therefore has considerable leverage to address the negative social and environmental impacts of the TCLF industry;
1. Welcomes the proposal for a regulation for ecodesign for sustainable products and especially welcomes the EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles as a step forward in tackling the challenges linked to textile and clothes (T&C) production, unsustainable consumption patterns, waste and so-called greenwashing; calls on the Commission to publish the legislative proposal on substantiating environmental claims



and recalls that sustainability claims in the EU single market should be clear, relevant and substantiated; stresses that measures adopted following the presentation of the EU strategy should be fully aligned with the Union's climate and environmental objectives, in particular achieving climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest and halting and reversing biodiversity loss; welcomes further EU efforts to meet its commitments on the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production) and SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) while still taking into account the administrative and financial burden that these efforts create for businesses; strongly encourages promoting this approach internationally, including through strengthening cooperation with partner developing countries to limit the negative impacts of the global textile industry on climate change and biodiversity, but also to improve the labour and social conditions in this specific market sector;

2. Denounces the vicious circle created by climate change effects which force agricultural workers to abandon their land because it is no longer suitable for farming to go to industrial centres and to be forced to seek exploitative employment in the garment and other industries; recalls that these migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, as they lack social support networks and because there is a general lack of social infrastructure and legal protection; recalls that the increasing number of droughts and floods also threatens cotton farmers worldwide; recalls that cotton is a particularly striking example of the aforementioned vicious circle, as it harms the soil due to excessive water use while also having damaging effects on farmers and the environment because of the use of pesticides;
3. Recalls the principle of policy coherence for development (PCD) and especially Article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which states that the Union 'shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries'; stresses the importance of minimising possible contradictions and building synergies with development cooperation policy for the benefit of developing countries and to increase the effectiveness of development cooperation; highlights the importance of PCD in enabling an integrated approach to achieve the SDGs;
4. Highlights that the production of T&C often takes place outside the EU and most T&C traded in the EU are imported from developing countries, which generates environmental, labour and human rights risks that need to be identified and addressed; calls on the Commission to ensure a level playing field for products produced within the Union and those exported or imported in order to promote green and fair value chains across borders and continents; underlines that moving towards the sustainable and circular production of T&C requires a holistic approach and investment throughout the textile value chain to create opportunities for local high-value circular economic activities; stresses that EU market power must be leveraged to encourage sustainable production practices in the T&C industry, including through the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainability Compact as a tool for promoting workers' rights; recalls the need to promote circularity and to implement a life cycle approach, taking into account the entire value chain, while ensuring traceability as well as supporting the production of innovative textiles that are more durable, reusable, repairable, recyclable and energy-efficient; supports measures aimed at tackling greenwashing and raising awareness of the implications that 'fast fashion' and

consumer behaviour have for the planet;

5. Stresses that T&C value chains are frequently characterised by social and environmental risks that affect companies and stakeholders along the value chain, including farmers, producers and workers; welcomes the Commission's proposal for a corporate sustainable due diligence directive (CSDD) as an important step to address specific problems in the textile sector; highlights that negative environmental and social impacts in supplier countries cannot be avoided through due diligence legislation alone; calls on the Commission to provide additional support to partner countries, in particular for local actors; recalls that the CSDD proposal aims to foster sustainable and responsible corporate behaviour in global value chains as a means of protecting human rights and the environment; points out that, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the current power imbalance between garment buyers and their suppliers (manifested in phenomena such as last-minute changes to designs or lead times, unilateral amendments to contracts, unacceptable purchasing practices and last-minute cancellation of orders) causes overproduction, wastes natural resources and exploits workers in the industry, thus increasing the risk of labour and human rights violations; emphasises the need to tackle unfair trading practices in the T&C sector through a regulatory approach, including through the banning of unfair trading practices for companies active in the EU single market by revising existing legislation;
6. Recalls that indigenous crafts are often appropriated, which is related to structural racism, and are often used for clothing for mass consumption; recalls that traditional crafts and their makers are sacrificed, as local communities are pushed into low-paying garment worker jobs<sup>85</sup>;
7. Points out that T&C from Europe are often exported to developing countries for disposal; stresses that this harmful practice shifts environmental problems arising from the disposal of T&C caused by overproduction and overconsumption to developing countries; recommends that proper circularity be established to avoid these kinds of harmful practices; recommends further that the capacity to repair and reuse T&C be scaled up in Europe; underlines the need to also support investments in recycling/repair infrastructure in developing countries and to upgrade their capacities to recycle and repair clothes; urges the EU and its Member States to fundamentally overhaul the linear nature of the textile industry so as to reduce the consumption of resources such as water and to reduce pollution and waste, in particular by improving end-of-life processing to address the huge problem of the tonnes of microplastics that are released each year and that end up polluting our waters, seas, land and air as well as causing harm to our ecosystems; urges the EU and its Member States to also use non-hazardous substances, to create decent jobs in the repair, recycling and servicing sectors, and to work towards effectively reducing overproduction especially with a view to uphold environmental and labour standards in third countries; calls on the EU to set up an effective control mechanism for the export of used textiles in order to prevent illegal shipments to third countries, and to establish EU criteria for the labelling of waste streams as second-hand goods to avoid the circumvention of controls;
8. Recalls that a separate collection of textiles will be mandatory in the EU from

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<sup>85</sup>[https://cleanclothes.org/file-repository/an-intersectional-approach-challenging-discrimination-in-the-garment-industry\\_lbl\\_dci-wpc-paper-final.pdf](https://cleanclothes.org/file-repository/an-intersectional-approach-challenging-discrimination-in-the-garment-industry_lbl_dci-wpc-paper-final.pdf).

1 January 2025; underlines that the revision of the Waste Framework Directive planned for 2024 should consider specific separate targets for textile waste prevention, textile reuse, preparation for reuse and recycling; underlines that strongly promoting the reuse sector is essential in order to provide consumers with affordable sustainable clothing options, which in turn is an essential factor in tackling ‘fast fashion’;

9. Stresses the need to intensify the search for innovative solutions (such as machines, equipment and digital platforms) for the sorting, reuse and management of collected textile waste up to the recycling stage;
10. Stresses that working conditions in the textile industry in developing countries are often substandard and have a direct negative impact on workers’ living standards due to, among other factors, low wages, poor working conditions, inadequate safety standards, workers’ rights violations, long working hours, limitations to freedom of association and collective bargaining, harmful practices such as the use of dangerous chemicals or other health hazards, gender-based violence, and psychological and physical abuse; recalls that human rights violations associated with T&C value chains and occurring in producer countries can often be attributed to weak laws or the lack of enforcement of existing laws; emphasises that, when violations do occur, workers face numerous barriers to access or receive remediation for such harm; recalls the importance of reaching SDG 5 on gender equality for the sector, as an estimated 75 % of employees in the garment sector are women and are socially and economically in an even more vulnerable position; recalls that women are hit particularly hard by poverty, economic crises, violence, environmental disasters and climate extremes; denounces the gender pay gap and the lack of women in senior leadership roles in the T&C sector worldwide; condemns persisting child and irregular migrant labour, forced labour and corruption in the industry; underlines, in this regard, the need for the EU to promote the ratification of all ILO conventions that are relevant to the textile industry in partner countries; reiterates the EU’s responsibility to design partnerships with local actors that promote human rights, democratic processes, good governance, gender equality and sustainability in the textile sector;
11. Recalls that global textile production almost doubled between 2000 and 2015 while less than 1 % of all textiles worldwide are recycled into new products; points out that roughly two-thirds of T&C turnover in Member States are imported and that a sizeable share of this turnover is imported from developing countries such as Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Cambodia; notes that most of the environmental impact of EU textile consumption occurs outside the EU, such as 90 % of land use, almost 90 % of water use, 80 % of raw material use, and nearly 75 % of greenhouse gas emissions; calls for more robust information and disclosure on the impacts of the T&C industry on the environment and especially on biodiversity; recalls that, as the global T&C industry is currently responsible for the production of 92 million tonnes of waste annually, developing countries face more difficulties maintaining adequate social and environmental standards in T&C production;
12. Welcomes the introduction of a digital product passport (DPP) for textiles; stresses that the DPP should contain information on how environmental, labour and human rights standards are complied with through the entire supply chain;

13. Underlines that the transition to a more sustainable and circular textile industry offers the opportunity to improve the working conditions and remuneration of workers; calls on the Commission and Member States to ensure the possibility of sectoral training and education in the field of sustainable textiles in order to safeguard current jobs, improve worker satisfaction and ensure the availability of a skilled workforce within and outside the EU;
14. Strongly encourages the Commission, therefore, to supplement the strategy with corresponding regional and country programming for developing countries in the framework of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe and Team Europe initiatives, which should visibly promote and communicate sustainable projects that promote governance reforms and better enforcement of laws, in particular labour laws, as well as sustainable projects that help to build T&C production and distribution infrastructure which protects the environment as well as social and labour rights, including through the support and promotion of small and medium enterprises and social enterprises;
15. Recalls that trade policies can play a crucial role in contributing to sustainable TCLF value chains, notably through the effective enforcement of trade and sustainable development chapters of EU trade agreements, including through complaint mechanisms to report non-compliance with multilateral labour and environmental agreements, and through systematic use of ex ante and ex post trade sustainability impact assessments and increased participation of stakeholders; urges the EU, in addition, to effectively implement and monitor, in a publicly transparent and participative manner, the social and environmental conditions linked to the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP, GSP+ and Everything but Arms);
16. Encourages the customs and market authorities of Member States, coordinated and supported by the Commission, to improve and increase surveillance of T&C imports and exports in order to prevent goods produced in developing countries under violation of labour, social and environmental standards from entering the single market, as well as to prevent the export to developing countries of T&C which are labelled as second-hand products but are actually waste;
17. Recalls the need to improve the accountability and transparency of brands in the T&C sector in order to guarantee the right to information for consumers;
18. Calls on the EU to strengthen political dialogue with producer countries, including about the issue of shrinking political spaces for civil society and trade unions to advocate for decent working conditions in TCLF factories;
19. Recalls that more than 200 million trees are logged each year for the purpose of processing them into cellulosic fabrics like viscose and rayon, and that up to 30 % of the viscose and rayon used in the fashion industry is made from endangered and ancient forests which once were home to native plants and animals<sup>86</sup>; recalls, furthermore, that in Brazil, land clearing to raise cattle, which is then slaughtered for food and fashion purposes, is responsible for 80 % of the Amazon's deforestation<sup>87</sup>; highlights that the

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<sup>86</sup><https://www.sustainably-chic.com/blog/how-the-fashion-industry-contributes-to-deforestation>.

<sup>87</sup><https://www.collectivefashionjustice.org/articles/leather-lobbying-and-deforestation>.

new EU regulation on deforestation-free products will also include leather.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	1.3.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 19 -: 1 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Barry Andrews, Hildegard Bentele, Stéphane Bijoux, Dominique Bilde, Udo Bullmann, Catherine Chabaud, Elisabetta De Blasis, György Hölvényi, Beata Kempa, Karsten Lucke, Erik Marquardt, Michèle Rivasi, Eleni Stavrou, Tomas Tobé, Bernhard Zimniok
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Marlene Mortler, Maria Noichl, Carlos Zorrinho
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Alexander Bernhuber, Katrin Langensiepen, Aušra Maldeikienė



## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

19	+
ID	Dominique Bilde, Elisabetta De Blasis
PPE	Hildegard Bentele, Alexander Bernhuber, György Hölvényi, Aušra Maldeikienė, Marlene Mortler, Eleni Stavrou, Tomas Tobé
Renew	Barry Andrews, Stéphane Bijoux, Catherine Chabaud
S&D	Udo Bullmann, Karsten Lucke, Maria Noichl, Carlos Zorrinho
Verts/ALE	Katrin Langensiepen, Erik Marquardt, Michèle Rivasi

1	-
ID	Bernhard Zimniok

1	0
ECR	Beata Kempa

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

29.3.2023

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE INTERNAL MARKET AND CONSUMER PROTECTION**

for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on the EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles  
(2022/2171(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion: Anne-Sophie Pelletier

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas textile production and consumption in Europe have a substantial environmental and climate impact, accounting for the fourth-biggest environmental footprint<sup>88</sup>;
- B. whereas consumers are sensitive to price increases; whereas studies indicate that consumers agree that it is important for brands to share reliable information about the environmental impact of their products, and that many consumers are ready to change their purchasing patterns for sustainable options, provided that clear and reliable labels are at their disposal;
- C. whereas well-informed choices about sustainability and the origin of products can help drive demand towards high-quality clothes that are less damaging to the environment and the transition towards a supply chain that respects nature and workers;
- D. whereas Europe has a rich tradition and long-standing experience in the textile sector; whereas the sector includes over 160 000 producers, most of them SMEs, that are subject to extensive European and national legislation; whereas many producers from the textile industry have expressed their interest in developing more sustainable and durable textiles and production technologies to address the challenges presented by the European Green Deal;
- E. whereas textile production doubled between 2000 and 2015<sup>89</sup> and garments' use time lifespan decreased by 36 % in the same period<sup>90</sup>; whereas 'fast-fashion' models encourage the mass consumption of poor-quality clothes that are often unrecyclable,

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<sup>88</sup> European Environment Information and Observation Network ETC/WMGE Report 6/2019 – 'Textiles and the environment in a circular economy', European Environment Agency, European Topic Centre on Waste and Materials in a Green Economy, 19 November 2019.

<sup>89</sup> Report – 'A new textiles economy: Redesigning fashion's future', Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 28 November 2017.

<sup>90</sup> European Environment Information and Observation Network ETC/CE Report 2/2022 – 'Textiles and the Environment: the role of design in Europe's circular economy', European Environment Agency, European Topic Centre on Circular Economy and Resource Use, 10 February 2022.

raising concerns about workers' social rights and greenwashing practices;

- F. whereas highly complex and fragmented supply chains in the garment sector at global level further complicate the work of market surveillance authorities, consumer associations and resellers, such as by sometimes hindering compliance with relevant Union law on the quality of products and manufacturing conditions, including with regard to forced labour; whereas the textile production sector, which is mostly composed of SMEs, was already under a lot of pressure from social dumping, as a result of very low production costs in non-EU countries; whereas this has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with a number of cases of abusive practices involving international brands and their suppliers and workers having come to light since the pandemic's outbreak;
1. Recalls the paramount importance of protecting consumers by addressing misleading claims that do not comply with Union or national consumer protection law, as well as greenwashing practices and the over-reliance on plastic and use of harmful chemicals in garments, and by immediately taking all appropriate measures to deal with products that do not respect Union law; welcomes, in this regard, the Commission's proposal on empowering consumers for the green transition<sup>91</sup>, which would help to protect them from misleading advertising and greenwashing; welcomes, moreover, the initiatives announced to strengthen consumer information regarding the durability, reusability, reparability and recyclability of textile products; calls for an ambitious proposal on substantiating green claims, in order to empower consumers and businesses for the green transition and provide the methodology to inform consumers adequately about the sustainability of the products that they purchase; emphasises that producers should provide downstream operators, including retailers and online marketplaces, with information regarding ecodesign requirements, so that consumers can be duly informed;
  2. Welcomes the introduction of the digital product passport in the proposal for a regulation on ecodesign requirements for sustainable products<sup>92</sup>, which, together with the proposed corporate sustainability due diligence directive<sup>93</sup> and the forced labour proposal<sup>94</sup>, can provide a stepping stone for improving the understanding of supply chains and heightening their transparency, including with regard to labour rights; calls for this important tool to aim for increased transparency and reliable information for consumers, as well as intermediaries in the supply chain; believes that, in order to be relevant, this passport needs to be harmonised, easy to read and available on the product itself or, if that is not possible, on its accompanying packaging; favours open, easily accessible, regularly updated and trustworthy data that ensures traceability along the whole supply chain, down to factory level, including regarding the components and substances used in textile products, with particular attention being paid to harmful

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<sup>91</sup> Commission proposal of 30 March 2022 for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directives 2005/29/EC and 2011/83/EU as regards empowering consumers for the green transition through better protection against unfair practices and better information (COM(2022)0143).

<sup>92</sup> Commission proposal of 30 March 2022 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for setting ecodesign requirements for sustainable products and repealing Directive 2009/125/EC (COM(2022)0142).

<sup>93</sup> Commission proposal of 23 February 2022 for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937 (COM(2022)0071).

<sup>94</sup> Commission proposal of 14 September 2022 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on prohibiting products made with forced labour on the Union market (COM(2022)0453).

chemicals; welcomes the set of standards on the traceability and transparency of sustainable supply chains in the garment and footwear sector approved by the UN Economic Commission for Europe in 2021; encourages their uptake by EU-based companies; believes that enhanced supply chain traceability could encourage circular retail and consumption models such as the resale and reuse of textile products; believes, however, that supply chains are non-linear and comprise many intermediaries, including those involved in the bulk trading of raw materials on commodity stock exchanges, and that traceability requirements must therefore be applicable to such players as well as to producers, and support must be provided to help SMEs in this sector to adapt to the new rules; underlines, in that respect, that the digital product passport should be an instrument that enables companies, in particular SMEs and micro-enterprises, to better communicate about their sustainable practices, but must not become a costly and bureaucratic requirement;

3. Believes that the digital product passport goes hand in hand with the simplification of existing labels to allow consumers to receive coherent and reliable information on the environmental and social footprint of products, as well as on their origin and material and chemical content; stresses that this simplification of existing labels can be undertaken by building on existing certification schemes and standard methodologies covering sustainability aspects such as circularity performance, reparability and durability, while ensuring transparency and credibility through the accountability of labels and certification schemes; notes that certain multi-stakeholder initiatives and certification schemes, as well as private label schemes concerning sustainability, have shown shortcomings in the past; notes, moreover, that some retailers have recently been sanctioned for greenwashing practices in the context of such schemes; underlines the potential of e-labelling, which would provide consumers with detailed information about textiles, including care advice and repair and recycling options; underlines, however, that e-labels cannot replace physical labels, which should continue to provide basic information on care and composition;
4. Believes that consumer demand and purchasing power play a role in changing consumption patterns; encourages initiatives to help consumers switch to more sustainable and responsible consumption patterns by providing high-quality products at an appropriate price and reducing waste, including by incentivising the design and production of clothes that use only natural and ecological fibres and textile raw materials and thus last longer and are easier to recycle; underlines the importance of protecting consumers from price escalation caused by changes in legislation and the need to adapt production processes; underlines, furthermore, the importance of informing consumers about the positive impact that they can have on the environment by changing their habits, for example by recycling and reusing products or curbing their consumption; underlines, in this respect, the importance of consumer information campaigns or tutorials on how to reuse or recycle textiles; recalls the importance of creating a feasible and sustainable recycling ecosystem and framework that include SMEs and other economic actors, where textiles and textile fibres are reused and recycled in both classic and innovative manners; recalls that such ecosystems can be supported through financial incentives; underlines that increasing the durability of textiles has a significant impact on the environment, while at the same time creating cost-saving opportunities for customers; calls, in this respect, for measures to support research on sustainable textiles;

5. Believes that textile producers and brands should be drivers of sustainability by being transparent in their practices throughout their supply chains and respecting human rights and the environment; believes that the goal of respecting human rights and the environment could also be achieved by supporting producers and brands along the supply chain and favouring high-quality European products while ensuring a just transition; recalls, in this regard, the importance of facilitating research and innovation in the textile sector, including by providing more flexibility in registering new fibres and creating a clear and efficient legal framework for companies and consumers;
6. Notes that the business model of fast fashion in supply chains and consumption patterns puts pressure on suppliers, which are often SMEs, and their workforce through unfair trading practices; highlights the power asymmetry between brands and their suppliers and the fact that this has resulted in certain harmful trading practices in the textile sector, such as delayed payments, short turnaround times for orders, late order cancellations and payments that are not enough to cover the production costs; considers that such practices have detrimental effects on suppliers and their workforce and must be prohibited; calls on the Commission to assess possible ways to tackle these unfair practices at European level, drawing inspiration from Directive 2019/633 on unfair trading practices in business-to-business relationships in the agricultural and food supply chain<sup>95</sup>; considers, in this regard, that the strategic value of the supply chain should be boosted by favouring to the greatest possible extent a sustainable production model, as opposed to the ‘throwaway’ model, combining innovation, creative capacity and production systems based on the quality of processes, materials and finishes, while encouraging the recycling of unsold products instead of the destruction of such products; welcomes the introduction in the ecodesign proposal of the possibility of the Commission banning the destruction of certain categories of unsold goods; welcomes the fact that the EU textile strategy presented by the Commission is in line with the European Green Deal and the circular economy action plan; underlines that the fast fashion sector leads to a low product lifespan and increases textile waste, which makes it essential to consider recycling targets while helping the industry with sufficient support to adopt the optional classification of textiles based on durability and sustainability; welcomes the efforts announced to promote circular business models, such as ‘take-back’ services, second-hand collections and clothes resale, rental, swapping and repair services; calls, therefore, on the Commission and the Member States to encourage the development of such solutions and innovative selling practices to boost repair and reuse, while promoting the relevant green and transferable skills and lifelong learning opportunities;
7. Considers that public authorities should drive the development of more sustainable textiles and circular business models and aim to reduce the environmental impact of textiles when making public purchases; calls for a broader and more effective application of socially responsible and sustainable public procurement criteria for textiles, in order to avoid market fragmentation; encourages the participation of social enterprises in public tenders;
8. Recalls the paramount importance of ensuring that market surveillance authorities are

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<sup>95</sup> Directive (EU) 2019/633 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on unfair trading practices in business-to-business relationships in the agricultural and food supply chain. OJ L 111, 25.4.2019, p. 59.

adequately resourced, including with regard to staff, who must be appropriately trained, and in terms of financial resources and tools; calls on the Member States to ensure stronger market surveillance, more frequent controls and dissuasive penalties for infringements, in order to ensure that all products placed on the EU market, including by online marketplaces from non-EU countries, meet minimum environmental standards, such as in relation to chemical substances limits in garments, as well as social standards; calls for better and more harmonised surveillance of the internal market, with stricter customs controls to prevent the import of counterfeit or unsafe textiles that do not conform to the expressly stated requirements, thereby protecting consumers and the environment; calls for surveillance to be stepped up in particular for repeat offenders, including traders; calls for more cooperation between market surveillance authorities and customs authorities, including by revising the Union Customs Code (Regulation (EU) No 952/2013<sup>96</sup>);

9. Recalls the need to support the EU textile sector, which actively contributes to the EU's competitiveness; encourages the Commission to create guidelines and provide support to ensure that the administrative requirements for textile products do not become too burdensome, especially for SMEs; stresses the importance of continuous dialogue with the sector and joined-up solutions; stresses that SMEs are often front runners in the use of innovative and durable technologies that promote sustainable consumer behaviours; stresses the need to create an environment that is conducive to such action; stresses, in addition, the need to ensure policy coherence and harmonisation at EU level, including with regard to data requirements and the methodologies of all the EU policy initiatives announced in the strategy.

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<sup>96</sup> Regulation (EU) No 952/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 October 2013 laying down the Union Customs Code. OJ L 269, 10.10.2013, p. 1.



**ANNEX: LIST OF ENTITIES OR PERSONS  
FROM WHOM THE RAPPORTEUR FOR THE OPINION HAS RECEIVED INPUT**

The following list is drawn up on a purely voluntary basis under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur. The rapporteur has received input from the following entities or persons in the preparation of the draft opinion:

<b>Entity and/or person</b>
BEUC
Clean Clothes Campaign
Fair Trade Advocacy Office
The Good Goods
RREUSE
Fashion Revolution
Zero Waste Europe

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	28.3.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 41 -: 2 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Andrus Ansip, Pablo Arias Echeverría, Brando Benifei, Adam Bielan, Biljana Borzan, Markus Buchheit, Anna Cavazzini, Dita Charanzová, Lara Comi, David Cormand, Alexandra Geese, Sandro Gozi, Maria Grapini, Krzysztof Hetman, Virginie Joron, Eugen Jurzyca, Arba Kokalari, Kateřina Konečná, Andrey Kovatchev, Jean-Lin Lacapelle, Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques, Antonius Manders, Beata Mazurek, Leszek Miller, Anne-Sophie Pelletier, Miroslav Radačovský, René Repasi, Christel Schaldemose, Andreas Schwab, Tomislav Sokol, Róza Thun und Hohenstein, Tom Vandenkendelaere, Kim Van Sparrentak, Marion Walsmann
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Marc Angel, Vlad-Marius Botoș, Malte Gallée, Ivars Ijabs, Tsvetelina Penkova, Romana Tomc, Isabella Tovaglieri, Kosma Złotowski
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Miriam Lexmann, Jan-Christoph Oetjen

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

41	+
ECR	Adam Bielan, Beata Mazurek, Kosma Złotowski
ID	Virginie Joron, Jean-Lin Lacapelle
NI	Miroslav Radačovský
PPE	Pablo Arias Echeverría, Lara Comi, Krzysztof Hetman, Arba Kokalari, Andrey Kovatchev, Miriam Lexmann, Antonius Manders, Andreas Schwab, Tomislav Sokol, Romana Tomc, Tom Vandenkendelaere, Marion Walsmann
Renew	Andrus Ansip, Vlad-Marius Botoș, Dita Charanzová, Sandro Gozi, Ivars Ijabs, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Róza Thun und Hohenstein
S&D	Marc Angel, Brando Benifei, Biljana Borzan, Maria Grapini, Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques, Leszek Miller, Tsvetelina Penkova, René Repasi, Christel Schaldemose
The Left	Kateřina Konečná, Anne-Sophie Pelletier
Verts/ALE	Anna Cavazzini, David Cormand, Malte Gallée, Alexandra Geese, Kim Van Sparrentak

2	-
ECR	Eugen Jurzyca
ID	Markus Buchheit

1	0
ID	Isabella Tovaglieri

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

10.3.2023

## OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on the EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles  
(2022/2171(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion: Alice Kuhnke

### SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- having regard to UN General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015 entitled 'Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development',
  - having regard to its resolution of 27 April 2017 on the EU flagship initiative on the garment sector<sup>1</sup>,
- A. whereas gender equality is a core principle of the EU, enshrined in Articles 2 and 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights; whereas the Commission committed in its gender equality strategy 2020-2025 to including a gender perspective in all aspects and at all levels of policymaking, internal and external, including addressing needs, challenges and opportunities in specific sectors;
- B. whereas the textile and garment industries often rely on cheap labour; whereas women account for approximately 80 % of the global garment workforce<sup>2</sup>, and therefore are disproportionately affected by the negative impacts of the garment industry; whereas low wages<sup>3</sup> coupled with low or non-existent social protection make women and children particularly vulnerable to exploitation; whereas the minimum wages in textile producing countries are two to five times lower than the living wage; whereas garment workers receive on average only 1-3 % of the final retail price of clothing<sup>4</sup>; whereas the employment of women in the garment sector in developing countries contributes

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 298, 23.8.2018, p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> European Parliament, Directorate-General for Parliamentary Research Services, *Textile workers in developing countries and the European fashion industry: Towards sustainability?*, 24 July 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Clean Clothes Campaign, *Another wage is possible: A cross-border base living wage in Europe*.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

significantly to household incomes and poverty reduction; whereas the EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles contains green ambitions but falls short regarding other key aspects of the sector such as workers' rights and the gender perspective;

- C. whereas jobs that are traditionally labelled as 'women's work' or that are in highly feminised sectors such as the garment sector, tend to be under-valued; whereas women generally have access to a narrow range of jobs and tasks, and face horizontal and vertical segregation and gendered wage segregation; whereas they also suffer occupational diseases and a lack of access to appropriate and much-needed healthcare; whereas women also suffer direct and indirect gender-based discrimination as a result of the gender power imbalances between a mostly female workforce and predominantly male management structures, with a disproportionate number of men in leadership, managerial and mid-level positions;
- D. whereas many women workers in the garment industry face the constant threat of violence and sexual harassment at work; whereas issues linked to gender-based harassment and violence are often silenced by giant global value chains and intensified by gender power imbalances;
- E. whereas many of the human rights violations that take place in the textile sector, including the garment sector, concern labour rights; whereas the widespread abuse of female garment workers intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially outside of the EU; whereas despite widespread violations of human rights, remedial actions generally remain rare and victims face multiple obstacles to access to judicial remedies, including procedural obstacles pertaining to admissibility and disclosure of evidence, often prohibitive litigation costs, the absence of clear liability standards for corporate involvement in human rights abuses, and a lack of clarity regarding the application of the EU's rules on private international law in transnational civil litigation; whereas voluntary frameworks to protect women garment workers from violence and exploitation in the workplace in countries involved in textile subcontracting have proven ineffective; whereas binding measures have to be put in place to address these violations of human rights;
- F. whereas Goal 5 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals is 'Gender Equality', Goal 8 is 'Decent work and Economic Growth' and Goal 12 is 'Responsible Consumption and Production'; whereas many countries are falling behind on their targets for achieving these goals, which Member States have committed to completing by 2030;
- G. whereas 189 states have signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which states that discrimination against women 'violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity';
- H. whereas the textile industry is one of the most polluting industries<sup>5</sup>, producing 1.2 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per year; whereas Europeans consume on average 26 kg of textiles per person per year – a significant share of these coming from non-EU countries; whereas the textile industry, in particular footwear and clothing production, is

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20201208STO93327/the-impact-of-textile-production-and-waste-on-the-environment-infographic>.

one of the fastest growing industries and its effects on the environment are therefore intensifying continuously; whereas women and girls are more likely than men to be financially dependent on threatened natural resources and climate-vulnerable sectors and to be frequently exposed to additional gender-specific factors and barriers that consistently render them more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and disasters;

- I. whereas the social, green and feminist agendas are interlinked and share the goal of ensuring the fair distribution of resources; whereas women, migrant and informal workers and their leadership are central to the promotion of a circular economy which is also necessary for the realisation of the green and just transitions; whereas improving social sustainability therefore cannot be achieved through a single instrument but requires a holistic approach, mainstreamed into the various sectors of the industry, that looks at design, buying, production, consumption and recycling;
1. Notes that in addition to its significant negative environmental and climate impacts, the textile industry also has a detrimental social impact; stresses that a disproportionate number of women and marginalised groups are engaged in precarious work, with inhumane and dangerous working conditions, including high levels of part time and informal work, receipt of poverty wages substantially below living wages, forced labour, hazardous working conditions, health damage in connection with chemicals used, and gender-based violence including sexual harassment; regrets that the EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles does not recognise the value of the industry's labour, in particular of the role played by its women workers;
2. Highlights that working conditions and labour laws in non-EU countries supplying the EU with textile products are often extremely poor or not properly enforced; underlines in particular restrictions to sexual and reproductive health and rights and limitations on paid maternity leave; highlights that women and disadvantaged groups are often in informal employment and do not have access to social security; emphasises that the power asymmetry between buyers and suppliers that contributes to unfair trading practices has detrimental effects on labour conditions, wages and overproduction, disproportionately affecting women, especially in non-EU low-wage countries but also in producer countries inside the EU; calls on the Commission to include the gender perspective in any legislation it proposes on combating unfair trading practices in the textile sector;
3. Highlights that gender-based violence (GBV) has been widely reported in the textile industry; stresses that women and girls in garment factories are particularly at risk of harassment and GBV owing to their precarious, low-income employment, as well as their limited upward mobility, the location of workplaces and on-site housing<sup>6</sup>; highlights that victims of GBV may face barriers to reporting violence or harassment and calls for employers in the textile sector to ensure that robust, gender-sensitive operational-level grievance mechanisms are in place to enable workers to report harassment, violence or threats of violence anonymously and confidentially without fear of reprisal; calls for appropriate remediation mechanisms; calls for the inclusion of women in the designing of monitoring and evaluation measures; calls on employers to

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<sup>6</sup> <https://mneguidelines.oecd.org/oecd-due-diligence-guidance-garment-footwear.pdf>.



provide training and education on gender equality and GBV to male and female employees;

4. Regrets that, for the most part, the production processes of goods in the textile and garment industry has been delocalised to non-EU countries and laments the significant loss of employment and entrepreneurial opportunities this represents for European women workers;
5. Notes that women in the textile industry are often excluded from decision-making spaces; calls on employers in the textile industry to take steps to ensure women's representation at managerial and leadership level and in mid-level positions, and to ensure women's representation at consultation forums;
6. Welcomes the fact that the market for women's vintage garments has been reinvigorated in recent years;
7. Calls on buying companies and factories to develop gender-mainstreamed codes of conduct with policies on GBV and harassment as well as clear enforcement mechanisms; calls on buying companies to include gender equality in contractual agreements with suppliers;
8. Urges the Member States to ratify the relevant International Labour Organization conventions and implement its recommendations, especially those intended to ensure occupational health and safety and building standards, including in relation to homework as it is prevalent in the textile and garment supply chain, to reduce gender-based discrimination and the scale of precarious work and to protect workers from poor working conditions and the harmful effects of hazardous chemicals, for which gender-disaggregated data is unfortunately often lacking, as well as from violence and harassment in the workplace; points in particular to the Convention on Ending Violence and Sexual Harassment in the World of Work (No.190), the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) and the Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183); stresses that production of textiles is very chemical-intensive and exposes women to cancer-causing chemicals, endocrine-disrupting chemicals and allergens, among others; highlights the urgent need to adopt measures regarding health and safety at work that include a gender-sensitive approach;
9. Demands that women workers' unions be allowed to freely establish and operate and asks for the right to collective bargaining to be respected;
10. Highlights that skilling, upskilling and re-skilling in the textile sector play a key role in reducing the gender gap in employment and ensuring that EU and national policies and initiatives are backed by sufficient funding; underlines that it is important for corporate investors to ensure that low-wage textile sector workers, in particular women and other marginalised groups, including those engaged in the most precarious forms of employment, have access to quality lifelong learning and training opportunities, particularly after periods of absence for care reasons, to take strong measures to overcome the lack of time and resources dedicated to such opportunities and to address gender bias and gender stereotypes; highlights the need to inform workers about their rights, labour legislation and safety and health issues, as well as the need to provide

training to managers on gender equality and non-discrimination; calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop programmes to promote women's full participation in the textile and garment industries, focusing on all aspects related to those industries, and to foster a hospitable environment for the creation, promotion and development of women-driven activities;

11. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to adopt strong measures to ensure women's access to a fair and inclusive digital and green transition in the textile sector;
12. Calls for employers in the textile sector to ensure their employees have basic social security;
13. Welcomes the proposal for an ecodesign regulation covering textiles and the review of the Textile Labelling Regulation<sup>7</sup>; calls for the introduction of mandatory disclosure of information starting with the largest companies in the Union, including on their negative impacts on human rights and the environment; notes that such information should be gender-sensitive; calls for the inclusion of social and labour standards both in the proposed ecodesign regulation and under labelling requirements and for information on respect of these standards to be made available in digital product passports and to be made mandatory for public procurement; is concerned about the fragmented and limited picture of product impact that the development of criteria to substantiate green claims would create if it did not consider social and gender-related impacts; emphasises that such a narrow view of product sustainability is not in line with the EU's commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals, nor the European Green Deal; calls for companies in the textile industry to provide detailed information on the status of gender equality in companies throughout their supply chains, in accordance with the proposed corporate sustainability reporting directive and the future corporate sustainability due diligence directive;
14. Welcomes the expected Commission proposal to ban products made with forced labour from entering the EU market, which will cover the use of forced labour across entire supply chains; recalls the importance of gender mainstreaming in all EU policies; reiterates that compliance with due diligence obligations must be strictly and evenly enforced across the single market and that companies operating in the internal market that do not comply with the environmental and human rights criteria set out in the future due diligence legislation must be subjected to harsh penalties; regrets that the proposal for a corporate sustainability due diligence directive is gender blind and calls for the incorporation of a gender perspective in the text; emphasises that the negative gender-related impacts of the existing textiles value chain cannot be avoided through the proposed due diligence legislation alone; emphasises that the due diligence legislation as proposed by the Commission only covers 1 % of EU companies but that as the largest garment brands do not dominate the garment industry in the way the largest brands do in other highly concentrated industries; stresses therefore that regulations only applying to the largest brands will not allow the majority of the often women garment workers to benefit from the protections they are meant to provide; urges the

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<sup>7</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 September 2011 on textile fibre names and related labelling and marking of the fibre composition of textile products and repealing Council Directive 73/44/EEC and Directives 96/73/EC and 2008/121/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council. OJ L 272, 18.10.2011, p. 1.

Member States to include as many companies as possible when implementing the due diligence legislation;

15. Highlights the need to strengthen efforts to incorporate social gender-responsive considerations in public procurement in order to support sustainable textile production, use and end-of-life management; calls in this regard for a revision of the 2014 Directive on Public Procurement<sup>8</sup>, as well as for the inclusion of socially responsible, in addition to green, public procurement criteria under the ecodesign regulation;
16. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to engage with civil society stakeholders, including educational actors, gender equality organisations, the social partners and grassroots organisations working on the ground in order to develop programmes to increase awareness about the environmental, climate and human rights impacts of the textile and garment industries, including working conditions for women and girls, and to promote a circular economy encompassing the development of sustainability and respect for human rights throughout the entire textile value chain;
17. Calls on the Commission and Member states to promote and encourage the exchange of knowledge and best practices regarding circularity and sustainability in the textile sector; notes that sustainability and circularity should have a transversal character and should be mainstreamed into the various sectors of the industry; recalls that one of the aims of the EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles is to set in place a comprehensive framework to create conditions and incentives to boost the competitiveness, sustainability and resilience of the EU textile sector; urges the Commission to ensure that this aim takes into consideration the pivotal role of women within the industry; calls on the Commission to mainstream the gender perspective, particularly regarding women's rights, in the implementation of the strategy; believes that this initiative should promote non-discrimination and address the issue of violence and harassment in the workplace, as already envisaged by EU and international commitments;
18. Stresses the importance of safeguarding and preserving traditional craftsmanship, the most tangible manifestation of intangible cultural heritage, as well as establishing a gender lens through which to view the historic role played by women in creating, maintaining and enhancing high-quality workmanship;
19. Urges the Member States to employ existing funds to support financial instruments, to develop skills and performance output through education, training and advisory services and to increase participation in local action groups with a view to better guaranteeing the participation of women in entrepreneurship in the textiles and garment industry;
20. Welcomes the fact that there are examples of women in the textile industry successfully creating commercially viable products from by-products or waste products deriving from the food sector industries or other industries;
21. Urges the Commission and the Member States to develop strategies to ensure the commercial viability of eco-friendly products for women and girls; highlights the need

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<sup>8</sup> Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC Text with EEA relevance. OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 65.

for an overarching objective to reduce the cost of high-quality, durable and sustainable clothing and footwear so as to put an end to the situation whereby poor quality and polluting clothing from non-EU countries is the most viable, affordable option for women from disadvantaged economic backgrounds;

22. Recalls that in the textile industry, nearly 75 % of women have a medium to high level of education; regrets, in this context, that women occupy only 38 % of senior or managerial positions within the textile industry;
23. Notes that women of all ages often have a central role in organising, funding, running and promoting initiatives and charity organisations centred on the manufacturing and sale of textile products; underlines that such organisations have historically been of great social significance both by creating employment opportunities for women and by providing aid, support and charitable assistance for women in need;
24. Calls on the Commission to effectively communicate about and promote through online platforms the significance of sustainable women-run small and medium-sized textile enterprises across the EU, giving them greater visibility and encouraging greater awareness of women's eco-friendly entrepreneurship;
25. Calls on the Member States to promote learning in the science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics subjects to better ensure that women play a key role in all aspects of the textile industry, including the use of high-tech machinery that is often required during various manufacturing procedures, and thereby to underline the link between women, technology and textiles;
26. Calls on Member States to promote the economic independence of senior women and to recognise this as being another pivotal challenge for the coming years;
27. Calls for the collection of comprehensive gender disaggregated data to ascertain the involvement of women in the textile industry and any potential variations or discrepancies between Member States.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	28.2.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+:               24 -:                2 0:                3
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Simona Baldassarre, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, Frances Fitzgerald, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Arba Kokalari, Alice Kuhnke, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Radka Maxová, Karen Melchior, Maria Noichl, Carina Ohlsson, Samira Rafaela, Evelyn Regner, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Christine Schneider, Michal Šimečka, Sylwia Spurek
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Michiel Hoogeveen, Ewa Kopacz, Elena Kountoura, Johan Nissinen, Katarína Roth Nevedálová, Pernille Weiss
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Francisco Guerreiro, France Jamet, Łukasz Kohut, Ana Miranda

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

24	+
ID	France Jamet
PPE	Maria da Graça Carvalho, Frances Fitzgerald, Arba Kokalari, Ewa Kopacz, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Christine Schneider, Pernille Weiss
Renew	Karen Melchior, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Michal Šimečka
S&D	Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Łukasz Kohut, Radka Maxová, Katarína Roth Nevedálová, Maria Noichl, Carina Ohlsson, Evelyn Regner
The Left	Elena Kountoura
Verts/ALE	Francisco Guerreiro, Alice Kuhnke, Ana Miranda, Sylwia Spurek

2	-
ECR	Johan Nissinen
Renew	Samira Rafaela

3	0
ECR	Michiel Hoogeveen, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión
ID	Simona Baldassarre

**Key to symbols:**

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

<b>Date adopted</b>	27.4.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 68 -: 0 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Mathilde Androuët, Bartosz Arłukowicz, Margrete Auken, Marek Paweł Balt, Traian Băsescu, Aurélie Beigneux, Hildegard Bentele, Malin Björk, Michael Bloss, Delara Burkhardt, Pascal Canfin, Sara Cerdas, Mohammed Chahim, Tudor Ciuhodaru, Maria Angela Danzi, Bas Eickhout, Hélène Fritzon, Malte Gallée, Gianna Gancia, Andreas Glück, Catherine Griset, Teuvo Hakkarainen, Anja Hazekamp, Martin Hojsik, Pär Holmgren, Yannick Jadot, Karin Karlsbro, Ewa Kopacz, Joanna Kopcińska, Peter Liese, Liudas Mažylis, Marina Mesure, Tilly Metz, Silvia Modig, Dolors Montserrat, Alessandra Moretti, Ville Niinistö, Ljudmila Novak, Grace O’Sullivan, Jutta Paulus, Francesca Peppucci, Stanislav Polčák, Jessica Polfjärd, Erik Poulsen, Frédérique Ries, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Maria Veronica Rossi, Silvia Sardone, Christine Schneider, Günther Sidl, Ivan Vilibor Sinčić, Maria Spyraiki, Edina Tóth, Véronique Trillet-Lenoir, Alexandr Vondra, Mick Wallace, Pernille Weiss, Michal Wiezik, Tiemo Wölken
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Mercedes Bresso, Milan Brglez, Asger Christensen, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, Billy Kelleher, Massimiliano Salini, Susana Solís Pérez
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Attila Ara-Kovács, Colm Markey, Javier Moreno Sánchez



## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

68	+
ECR	Joanna Kopcińska, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, Alexandr Vondra
ID	Mathilde Androuët, Aurélia Beigneux, Gianna Gancia, Catherine Griset, Maria Veronica Rossi, Silvia Sardone
NI	Maria Angela Danzi, Ivan Vilibor Sinčić, Edina Tóth
PPE	Bartosz Arłukowicz, Traian Băsescu, Hildegard Bentele, Ewa Kopacz, Peter Liese, Colm Markey, Liudas Mažylis, Dolors Montserrat, Ljudmila Novak, Francesca Peppucci, Stanislav Polčák, Jessica Polfjärd, Massimiliano Salini, Christine Schneider, Maria Spyraiki, Pernille Weiss
Renew	Pascal Canfin, Asger Christensen, Andreas Glück, Martin Hojsik, Karin Karlsbro, Billy Kelleher, Erik Poulsen, Frédérique Ries, Maria Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Susana Solís Pérez, Véronique Trillet-Lenoir, Michal Wiezik
S&D	Attila Ara-Kovács, Marek Paweł Balt, Mercedes Bresso, Milan Brglez, Delara Burkhardt, Sara Cerdas, Mohammed Chahim, Tudor Ciuhodaru, Helène Fritzon, Javier Moreno Sánchez, Alessandra Moretti, Günther Sidl, Tiemo Wölken
The Left	Malin Björk, Anja Hazekamp, Marina Mesure, Silvia Modig, Mick Wallace
Verts/ALE	Margrete Auken, Michael Bloss, Bas Eickhout, Malte Gallée, Pär Holmgren, Yannick Jadot, Tilly Metz, Ville Niinistö, Grace O'Sullivan, Jutta Paulus

0	-

1	0
ECR	Teuvo Hakkarainen

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention