



BULGARIA



NEGOTIATING AT 27

Regulation on a fair fashion label

Role profiles | EN



Council of the
European Union

Proposal for a
**REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL**
on the establishment of a fair fashion label

(presented by the Commission)

CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSAL

When the Rana Plaza factory building in Bangladesh collapsed, killing more than 1,100 people, it was a wake-up call. It drew attention to an industry in which child labour, exploitation and abject working conditions are part of the business concept.

This is why the EU is working towards a fairer global fashion industry and seeking to prevent child and forced labour and poor working conditions. It is not acceptable for a T-shirt to be sold for EUR 3. It is alarming that people now buy 400 % more clothes than they did 20 years ago.

The EU and most Member States already have policies in place to encourage sustainable consumption, but so far consumers have been faced with a patchwork of different national, regional, public and private schemes.

The new EU label for fair fashion responds to consumers' increasing demand for sustainable products and aims at creating more clarity for consumers throughout the EU.

Article 1

MINIMUM SOCIAL STANDARDS

The fair fashion label sets **high social standards** which provide for living wages, prohibit child and forced labour and guarantee good, safe working conditions.

Article 2

BINDING NATURE OF THE CRITERIA

Strict measures hold businesses liable for proving compliance with the standards and for answering to the European courts if the standards are not met.



BULGARIA

Agenda

On the Competitiveness Council agenda today is the Commission's proposal for a new regulation on the establishment of a fair fashion label. You will discuss the draft with the representatives of the other member states, aiming to reach a compromise.

Your primary objective

Take a common position of the Council that reflects your interests. You can also consider supporting a compromise option that partly reflects your interests.

Your tasks

1. Carefully **read your group information**, which sets out your interests and positions.
2. You share **similar positions with Romania and Croatia (like-minded countries)**. To achieve your common goals more efficiently, you should cooperate closely. Use the informal breaks to talk to each other.
3. Prepare an **opening statement** (maximum 1 minute) for the first round of official negotiations. State your position on Articles 1 and 2. The following script might help you:

Madam/Mr President, Commissioner, colleagues,

I would first of all like to thank the Commission for its proposal and the presidency for including this issue on today's agenda.

In advance of today's meeting, we had fruitful deliberations with _____, and we agreed on a common position.

We think it is necessary to revise the standards set out in Article 1 of the regulation. We argue for basic social standards, because _____.

With regard to Article 2, we are in favour of light measures: introducing a 'code of conduct' to which all retailers should commit.

We are confident that we will find a workable compromise during today's meeting.

Thank you.



4. Make your opening statement when the Presidency (who chairs the meeting) gives you the floor. If you agree with other countries' positions that have already been mentioned, make this clear.
5. Listen carefully to the positions of the other countries. **Fill in the table on page 7** to keep track of their positions. A major part of the negotiations is about listening to each other and finding solutions that work for everyone.
6. During the official negotiations, **present your positions and arguments** together with the like-minded countries. Decide in advance who is going to take the floor to speak on behalf of your countries on Articles 1 and 2.
7. Of course, it is **your decision how to vote** in the end. But you might want to discuss this with your colleagues from Romania and Croatia. Be aware that when it comes to the final vote on a compromise proposal, you need to decide whether you prefer a compromise with which you may not be 100 % satisfied or no result.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Source: Eurostat 2019, Eurobarometer 2018



1. Average amount spent on clothing by EU citizens every year (in euro)

0 - 250 250 - 500 500 - 750 >750

2. Percentage of people surveyed who responded 'yes' to the question "Do you make ethical choices when you shop for groceries, clothing, etc.?"

Yes, in %

ARTICLE 1

Minimum social standards

■ High social standards

... which prohibit child and forced labour and guarantee good, safe working conditions and provide for living wages.

■ Medium social standards

... which prohibit child and forced labour and guarantee minimum requirements for wages and working conditions.

YOUR POSITION

■ Basic social standards

... which eliminate the worst forms of child labour and prohibit forced labour.

■ Other option:



YOUR ARGUMENTS

■ The textile industry is important for your country, as many people work in textile factories. These are closely associated with suppliers and businesses all over the world. That is why it is important for you not to burden the textile industry too much. A label costs money, and the higher the standards, the more money it costs. You advocate basic standards in order to protect companies. Most people in your country do not have the money to buy fair fashion and they do not care. That is why this topic is not a priority for you. There are already many private labels, so everyone can buy fair fashion if they wish. You find that quite sufficient and see no need for an EU-wide legal label.

■ Your red lines: the regulation must noticeably improve the lives of workers. Children must be protected from exploitation.

■ Your notes:

ARTICLE 2

Binding nature of the standards

■ Strict measures

Making businesses liable for proving compliance with the standards and for answering to the European courts if the standards are not met.

■ Moderate measures

On-the-spot checks whereby independent bodies monitor whether the standards are being met.

YOUR POSITION

■ Light measures

General commitments ('code of conduct') whereby the retailers themselves take measures to comply with the standards.

■ Other option:

Strict measures

businesses are liable to prove compliance with the standards

Moderate measures

on-the-spot checks whether the standards are being met

Light measures

general commitments to comply with the standards

YOUR ARGUMENTS

- European politicians should trust businesses. The existing fair labels already show that very good results are achieved when companies and civil society voluntarily join forces. If the EU hires independent companies to monitor textile companies around the world, it will be a bureaucratic nightmare. Clothes will become more expensive and expensive products do not sell. As a consequence, sales will fall and jobs will be lost.

■ Your notes:

	Article 1				Article 2			
	High social standards	Medium social standards	Basic social standards	Other suggestions/notes	Strict measures	Moderate measures	Light measures	Other suggestions/notes
Belgium								
Bulgaria			■				■	
Czechia								
Denmark								
Germany								
Estonia								
Ireland								
Greece								
Spain								
France								
Croatia								
Italy								
Cyprus								
Latvia								
Lithuania								
Luxembourg								
Hungary								
Malta								
Netherlands								
Austria								
Poland								
Portugal								
Romania								
Slovenia								
Slovakia								
Finland								
Sweden								
Commission								



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