



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**



## **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.



# EUROPEAN COMMISSION

## Agenda

On the Competitiveness Council's agenda today is your proposal for a new regulation on the establishment of a fair fashion label.

When the presidency (chairing the meeting) gives you the floor, you present your proposal to the representatives of the member states and take part in the negotiations.

The two articles presented should be discussed by the ministers to reach an agreement. The other articles of the proposal have already been agreed on at preparatory level ( <sup>1</sup> ) (working parties and COREPER).

## Your primary objective

To make sure that as much of the initial text as possible is included in the final version, while helping the Council to find a common position. A common European solution is urgently needed!

## Your tasks

1. Carefully **read your group information** which sets out your interests and positions.
2. Prepare an **opening statement** (maximum 1 minute) to present and explain your proposal. The following script might help you:

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/preparatory-bodies/>

*Honourable members of the Council,*

*It is good to have this important debate today on a new fair fashion label.  
The label would be of great benefit to citizens and to the EU as a whole because*

\_\_\_\_\_.

*In the Commission's draft regulation we propose high social standards because*

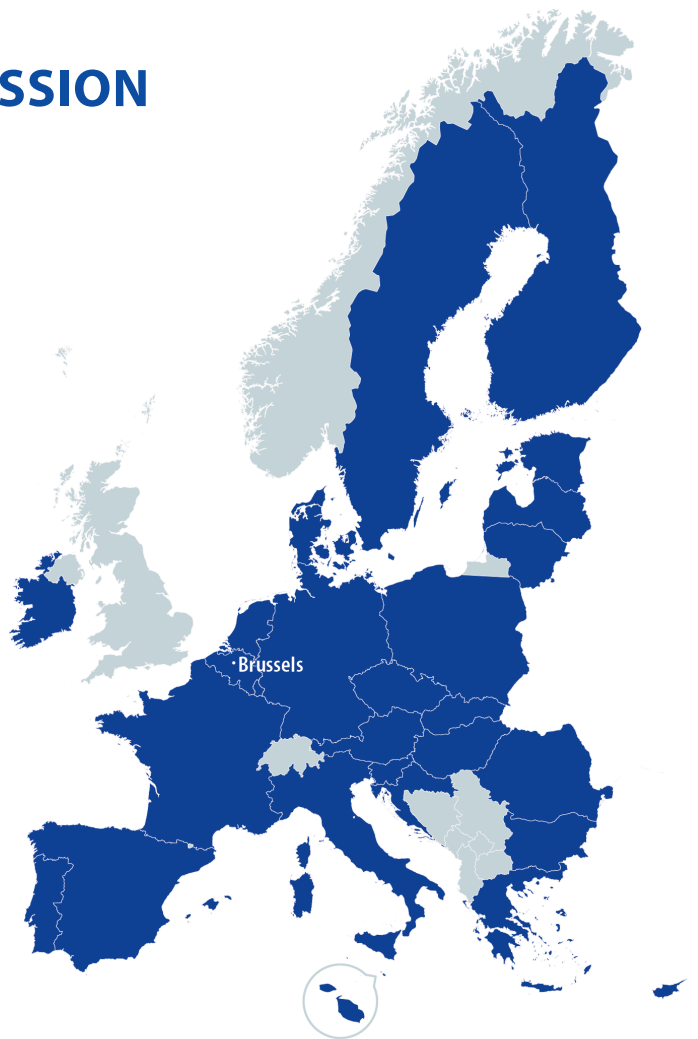
\_\_\_\_\_.

*Those standards should be enforced by making businesses liable, for several reasons:* \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

*Together as a community, let's contribute to a fairer world economy.  
The new fair fashion label would be a sensible first step.*

*Thank you.*



3. Listen carefully to the member states' positions. **Fill in the table on page 7** to keep track of their positions.
4. During the negotiations explain your positions and **defend your draft**. Take the floor and help the Council find a compromise that meets your expectations!
5. You have **no right to vote at the end**. Use the informal breaks to persuade delegates to follow your suggestions.

# 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

### OPTIONS

#### ■ High social standards

... which prohibit child and forced labour, 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

#### ■ Basic social standards

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

#### ■ Other option:

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## Your choice : high social standards

### YOUR ARGUMENTS

- More and more Europeans want to buy fair clothing. They want clear and high standards. The EU should respond to citizens' wishes.
- The EU promotes human rights worldwide, and you want to strengthen this image with this regulation.
- Your proposal to the member states includes very high social standards. This gives you the opportunity to move away from this maximum position step by step.
- Medium social standards would be your minimum goal for the new regulation.
- Your notes:

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## ARTICLE 2

### Binding nature of the standards

#### OPTIONS

##### ■ 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.

##### ■ Light measures

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

##### ■ Other option:

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## 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 choice : strict measures

#### YOUR ARGUMENTS

- Whatever standards are set, they must be enforced. Only then will the EU be able to act, and the regulations will no longer exist merely on paper.
- At the same time, the administrative burden and costs should be kept within reasonable limits. The more complicated the procedure, the more expensive the fair clothing will be in the end.
- The label will only be used only if consumers trust it. Making businesses liable would ensure a reliable and practical label. Less rigorous controls would entail the risk of breaches of the standards going undetected.
- Your notes:

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	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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