



**FINLAND**



## 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 model.

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 to provide greater 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.



FINLAND

## 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

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 Sweden and the Netherlands (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:

*Thanks to the Commission for preparing this draft and to the Presidency for prioritising this important issue.*

*I would also like to thank my colleagues from \_\_\_\_\_*

*for the very constructive negotiations in the run-up to this meeting and for the development of a joint position.*

*We fully support the Commission's good work in this regard. Indeed, we welcome this ambitious proposal in every respect because \_\_\_\_\_*

*We are looking forward to the debate and hope that a regulation on a comprehensive and sustainable fair fashion label can be adopted.*

*Thank you for your attention.*



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 Sweden and the Netherlands. 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

### YOUR POSITION

#### ■ 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

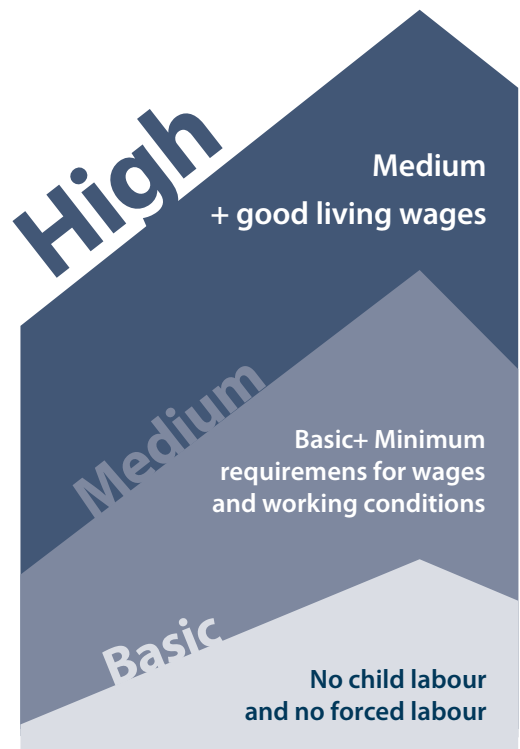
... which eliminate the worst forms of child labour and prohibit forced labour.

#### ■ Other option:

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### YOUR ARGUMENTS

- The EU promotes the worldwide protection of human rights, which includes the rights of workers in Bangladesh or Cambodia. They deserve more than slightly improved working conditions - they need good ones.
- More and more Europeans want to contribute by buying fair clothes. But how can they be sure that their money will reach the people who make the clothes? This requires clear legal labelling according to high, reliable standards.
- The EU organic food label serves as a model: it provides purchasing guidance to anyone in the EU who wants it.
- Your red lines: the regulation must noticeably improve the lives of workers. Children must be protected from exploitation.
- Your notes:

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## ARTICLE 2

### Binding nature of the standards

#### YOUR POSITION

##### ■ 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 ARGUMENTS

- Standards alone are not sufficient, they must be implemented and monitored. It is not enough to rely on the word of the companies. The supply chains are long and local factories are run by suppliers.
- Human rights violations are a crime. Whoever sells fair fashion is responsible for compliance with the standards – even before the courts. If faced with the possibility of high fines and imprisonment, companies will also carefully monitor their suppliers. After all, the aim is to prevent further accidents, such as fires in factories or collapsing buildings. The EU must ensure that it helps to uphold human rights worldwide.
- 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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