

GOVERNMENT

European Parliament backs strategy to end textile waste

June 6, 2023



If enacted, recommendations could mean massive shifts for players operating under the jurisdiction of the 27-country-wide network. Image credit: The Fashion Act

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

The European Parliament is backing a series of recommendations that would curb the apparel industry's outsized impact on the planet.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Introduced last year on behalf of the European Commission, the push for the implementation of sustainable practices across the continent reached a turning point last Thursday. On June 1, the [EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles](#) received 600 upvotes, with just 17 members voting against the fashion-focused proposal and 16 abstaining from action.

"Consumers alone cannot reform the global textile sector through their purchasing habits," said Delara Burkhardt MEP, member of Parliament, in a statement.

"If we allow the market to self-regulate, we leave the door open for a fast fashion model that exploits people and the planet's resources," she said. "The EU must legally oblige manufacturers and large fashion companies to operate more sustainably."

An end to fast fashion?

While regulating the excessive creation of textiles that contributes to the phenomenon known as fast fashion, the EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles would also put an end to other wasteful manufacturing methods.

If enacted, recommendations could mean massive shifts for players operating under the jurisdiction of the 27-country-wide network and would serve as a blow to fast fashion across the board.

Check out some of the highlights of what Parliament has been working on this week

European Parliament (@Europarl_EN) [June 2, 2023](#)

A ban on the destruction of unsold or returned clothing products is addressed by the legislation, which seeks to cut down the number of microplastics released into the environment from the practice, sharing that laundering synthetic clothes accounts for 35 percent of primary microplastics released into the environment.

Aiming to heighten quality, clothing and shoe manufacturers would also be subject to ecodesign requirements, ensuring consumers a longer life cycle and the ability to more easily repair or recycle products when the time comes.

Among other highlights are provisions intended to heighten corporate accountability and the minimization of carbon and environmental footprints the fashion industry is responsible for approximately 10 percent of global carbon emissions. Tactics such as the introduction of a digital product passport and implementation of [EU Ecolabels](#) are included as well.

Next, member states are set to negotiate regarding the EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles before policies can be fully operationalized, a process that could last up to a few years in total.

Slotting in under the legislative body's larger [European Green Deal](#), efforts would aid the region in cutting at least 55 percent of net greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, compared to 1990 levels, as the EU eyes a goal to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050.

"People and the planet are more important than the textile industry's profits," Ms. Burkhardt said.

"The disasters that have occurred in the past, like the collapse of the Rana Plaza factory in Bangladesh, growing textile landfills in Ghana and Nepal, polluted water, and microplastics in our oceans, show what happens when we do not pursue this principle," she said. "We have waited long enough it is time to make a change!"

In a similar, but less impactful governmental move, the state of Washington passed a ban on common toxins found in personal care products ([see story](#)).