

Joint Press Release: a successful green and digital transition of the EU Textiles Ecosystem (TCLF sectors)

Action needed to ensure a successful green and digital transition of the EU Textiles Ecosystem

(05 July 2022)

The European social partners of the textiles, clothing, leather, and footwear (TCLF) industries agree joint demands to ensure that the textiles ecosystem can become more resilient, sustainable, and digital as set out in the EU textiles strategy. This involves tackling strategic dependencies, appropriate funding, incentives and support to help the European TCLF sectors decarbonise their production and become more circular, and initiatives to ensure that workers have the right skills for the future.

In yesterday's Sectoral Social Dialogue meeting, employers' and workers' representatives for the European TCLF sectors, [CEC](#), [Cotance](#), [Euratex](#) and [industriAll Europe](#) met with the European Commission to discuss how to ensure a successful green and digital transition of the EU Textiles Ecosystem. During the meeting, national and European social partners adopted a joint statement setting out clear demands for the TCLF sectors to become more resilient, sustainable, and digital.

The joint statement follows the European Commission's [EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles](#) and the launch of co-creation process towards a [transition pathway for a more resilient, sustainable and digital textiles ecosystem](#) (TCLF sectors). The transition pathway recognises the need to build a resilient textiles ecosystem, based on innovation and global competitiveness, noting that the European TCLF sectors face tough global competition, and that **measures are needed to encourage sustainable production and consumption in Europe's internal market.**

The strategy aims to ensure that by 2030, the ecosystem's products placed on the EU market are long-lived and recyclable, while the industry moves from a linear to a circular business model. Initiatives in the strategy include new design requirements for textiles and leather products under the Eco-design for Sustainable Products Initiative, clearer information on products and a Digital Product Passport, measures to tackle greenwashing, and action to discourage the destruction of unsold or returned articles.

As a response, the **TCLF social partners have agreed on specific joint demands to ensure that the ecosystem can become more resilient, sustainable, and digital.** These include decisive action by Member States and the EU to tackle strategic dependencies, appropriate funding, sound metrics, legal incentives and support to help the European TCLF sectors decarbonise their production and become more circular, and initiatives to ensure that workers have the right skills for the future.



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Dirk Vantyghem, Director General of Euratex, said:

The essence of the EU textile strategy is to reconcile sustainability and competitiveness. We believe it is possible; we even believe that sustainability can become a source of competitiveness. But to make that happen, we need thoughtful legislation, support to the industry to make that transition, and a market willing to buy sustainable products. The coming months will be critical to shape that conducive environment.

Carmen Arias, Secretary General of CEC, said:

Footwear companies are reinventing their business strategies to address the fast-changing environment, and adverse political and economic scenarios. Digitalisation and sustainability can make a difference in maximising the efficient production of their high-quality products, but both public support and consumers' awareness are needed. Furthermore, any legislative proposal should consider the complexity of a shoe, its design, multiplicity of materials and processes, in order to succeed.

Gustavo Gonzalez-Quijano, Secretary General of Cotance, said:

“Leather is the best example of a circular economy product, as it is the result of recycling an unavoidable residue of meat production. In doing so, European tanners create wealth and jobs for an entire value chain! The “Green Transition”? It’s our DNA! And leather can and will become even more sustainable, but this needs to be done hand in hand with our regulators and stakeholders.”

Judith Kirton-Darling, Deputy General Secretary of industriAll Europe, said:

“Trade unions insist that the green and digital transition of the TCLF sectors is a Just Transition, for us this means ensuring that no sector, region, or worker is left behind. Concrete measures are needed to transform the ecosystem into a more sustainable one, with skilled workers and quality jobs at its centre. Investment and support will be required to increase the production and demand for sustainable products and we will continue to work with our sectoral social partners and policy makers to ensure that this is a success.”

The European TCLF social partners agreed to continue their good cooperation including during the co-creation process towards a transition pathway for a more resilient, sustainable and digital textiles ecosystem (TCLF sectors) noting the importance of quality sectoral social dialogue.

ENDS.



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Notes to the editor:

Please find a copy of the Social Partner's joint statement [HERE](#).