

Joint SSDC Textiles & Clothing Statement

Urgent European Industrial Strategy Needed for the Textiles and Clothing Sector

The European textiles and clothing sector includes approximately 192 000 companies and 1.3 million workers, generating €167 billion in annual turnover. Without swift and coordinated action, Europe risks losing its competitiveness, valuable industrial know-how and thousands of jobs, thereby jeopardising the future of the sector. Immediate policy measures, particularly at European level, are essential to protect workers, preserve European know-how and businesses - most of which are SMEs - to ensure the twin transition and secure the industry's place on the global stage.

IndustriAll European Trade Union (IndustriAll Europe) and **EURATEX**, representing the workers and employers in the textiles and clothing sectors respectfully, jointly highlight both the challenges and opportunities of the transformation of the sector and call for immediate action to ensure that European industrial policy is fit for purpose and enables the sector to transform without negatively impacting workers or European industry.

Specifically, the European social partners jointly call for:

1. Urgent EU action to guarantee that the European textiles ecosystem remains **competitive and socially sustainable**. Immediate steps should be taken to ensure a level global playing field by tackling unfair global competition and ending exploitative “fast fashion” models that rely on poverty wages and poor working conditions.
2. Measures to **boost demand for sustainable and fairly made textiles and garments**, including awareness campaigns, incentives on EU-made products, and mandatory social and environmental criteria in various public funding instruments such as public procurement.
3. Access to affordable and secure **energy** for companies, in particular SMEs, and for workers, supporting a just and inclusive transition towards cleaner energy while protecting existing industries and jobs.
4. Action to ensure that the **Ecodesign Regulation** and the forthcoming **Digital Product Passport** will offer a transparent and consumers/SME-friendly framework, and that the social partners will be included in the elaboration of the Commission **Working Plan specifically related to textile and apparel products**.
5. Major investment in **attracting, training, and reskilling textile workers**, including for the **EU Pact for Skills**, and ensuring fair wages, dignification of work, collective bargaining rights, and decent working conditions in all upskilling and transition initiatives. On skills, joint efforts should focus on integrating **sustainability and digitalisation into Vocational Education and Training (VET)** curricula, expanding apprenticeships and work-based learning, and supporting SMEs to invest in upskilling. Collaboration with education providers, regional authorities and innovation clusters is essential to ensure that workers and companies are equipped for the green and digital transitions, while preserving Europe's craftsmanship and industrial know-how.
6. Close coordination between regional and national authorities and the social partners to guarantee that the **twin transition is fair and just**, with no worker, region, or sector left behind, and that labour rights, social dialogue, and fair wages are central to all policy implementation.

Social dialogue is crucial in order to ensure that the European textiles and clothing sector can transform into a more sustainable and digital industry, while also remaining competitive on a fierce global market. IndustriAll Europe, EURATEX and their members will continue to engage in quality social dialogue and to respect collective bargaining in accordance with European and national practices. **The European social partners will continue to work together to ensure a resilient and sustainable future for the industry and its workers.**

Brussels, 16 October 2025