

Textile products: textile fibre names and labelling

2009/0006(COD) - 29/10/2014 - Follow-up document

The Commission presented a report on the application of Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011 on textile fibre names and related labelling and marking of the fibre composition of textile products.

To recall, as from 8 May 2012, the Textile Regulation repealed and replaced the three 'Textile Directives': (i) Directive 2008/121/EC on textile names, (ii) Directive 96/73/EC on certain methods for the quantitative analysis of binary textile fibre mixtures and (iii) Directive 73/44/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the quantitative analysis of ternary fibre mixtures.

The Regulation shares the general objectives of the previous Textile Directives, i.e. to eliminate potential obstacles to the proper functioning of the internal market and to provide consumers with adequate and relevant information.

The Textile Regulation applies to textile products and products or textile components made up at least 80% by weight of textile fibres. It contains rules on:

- the labelling and marking of the fibre composition of textile products;
- the labelling or marking of textile products containing non-textile parts of animals; and
- the determination of the fibre composition of textile products by quantitative analysis of binary and ternary textile fibre mixtures.

(1) Application of the Regulation: the Commission noted that the period provided for by the Regulation for carrying out an evaluation of its application was limited (2012-2014) and insufficient for detecting all the strengths and weaknesses of the legislation for the time being.

The general outcome of the survey and consultations with Member States' and other stakeholders' experts seem to show that **the Regulation has been functioning well since it entered into force:**

- it provides for appropriate measures to achieve its objectives, namely the proper functioning of the internal market, giving accurate information to consumers, introducing more flexibility to adapt the legislation to technological changes, and simplifying the regulatory framework;
- moving from three Directives to one Regulation has led to less red tape and more certainty for businesses and consumers.

(2) Identified effects: the majority of Member State authorities reported **no major difficulties or specific problems.**

The requirement to indicate non-textile parts of animal origin (Article 12) and the requirement to label or mark textile products in the languages of the Member States in which the products are marketed (Article 16(3)) were cited by some Member States and many stakeholders as causing most problems (confusion, unnecessary complexity and cost).

The kinds of problem reported by market surveillance authorities as regards application of the Regulation concerned: (i) non-compliance by businesses, namely: the use of textile fibre names not listed in Annex I; (ii) the non-indication of fibre composition in the official language of the country in which the product is marketed; the incorrect indication of fibre composition on a label or marking; (ii) limited availability of resources, both human and financial, resulting in a reduced number of samples that can be tested.

The Commission considered that practical and compliance-related issues which still raise questions among practitioners can be clarified in various ways, in particular by **issuing technical guidance**. The new provisions may have led to increased costs for businesses, but it could be considered that these have been offset by better information to consumers.

(3) EU actions and perspectives: to complement the Regulation, the Commission has drawn up a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) to provide businesses with answers to questions raised by its application. The list is updated regularly and made publicly available on the Commission's website.

The report noted that despite the practical challenges involved in applying certain provisions in the current regulatory framework, **no major gaps, inconsistencies or administrative burden have been detected that would require amendment of the Regulation**.

In order to improve the existing regulatory framework, the Commission concluded that the following could be envisaged:

- issuing a **guidance document**, based on the current FAQs, to clarify various aspects of the Textile Regulation;
- examining practical possibilities for improving the **process for dealing with applications for new fibre names**; and
- considering a request for **standardisation work** from the relevant European standardisation organisations, notably CEN.

In addition, the Commission will **carry out further and ongoing monitoring** of the Regulation with the assistance of Member States and relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, Member States will be encouraged to consider additional checking and controlling of textile products under their market surveillance national programmes.