

THE FUTURE WE WANT

Open letter to the European Parliament

Dear members of the European Parliament, **we, the Youth of Europe**, supported by experts, activists, decision makers and civil society organisations, **urge you to take immediate action on the pressing issue of fast fashion and its detrimental impact on our societies and environment.**

Fast fashion has created **a culture of disposable clothing**, where new collections are churned out at an alarming rate. This relentless production cycle demands vast amounts of natural resources, contributing to **severe environmental degradation**. The fashion industry is now one of the largest polluters in the world, responsible for 10% of global carbon emissions¹. The rivers are contaminated with toxic dyes and microplastics, while landfills overflow with garments that decompose slowly, releasing harmful chemicals into the soil and air².

Beyond the environmental impact, the human cost of fast fashion is staggering. The pursuit of ever-cheaper production has led to the exploitation of millions of workers in developing countries³ and not only. These individuals, often women and children, work in unsafe conditions for meagre wages, devoid of basic rights and protections⁴. **It is unacceptable that in the 21st century, we still tolerate modern-day slavery in the name of fashion.**

Fast fashion encourages a culture of **overconsumption** and **overproduction**. We are bombarded with the message that our worth is tied to the latest trends, leading to a cycle of constant purchasing and disposal. This throwaway culture not only depletes our planet's resources but also undermines the values of quality and longevity in the products we buy. We must move away from a mindset of consumption to one of mindful purchasing and sustainability.

The time for change is now. With the collective voice of young Europeans and the support of civil society, we ask the European Union to reshape the fast fashion industry into one that respects both people and the planet or refuse them access to the European market.

¹ [Carbon Literacy Project. Fast Fashion's Carbon Footprint. August 2021.](#)

² [European Parliament, The impact of textile production and waste on the environment \(infographics\), December 2020.](#)

³ [Le Monde. Fast fashion commercial practices exploit workers and enslave them to an industry that fills its pockets while disregarding human rights. March 2023.](#)

⁴ [Le Monde. Fast fashion commercial practices exploit workers and enslave them to an industry that fills its pockets while disregarding human rights. March 2023.](#)



aldA
European Association
of Environmental Democracy

Eine Welt Netz
NRW

SLOGA
Slovenian Global Action



BINS
BalkanIDEA Novi Sad

Eclósio
THE HSI OF LEEUE UNIVERSITY

Finnish Peace Committee



We call upon our governments and EU policymakers to take immediate action to address the detrimental effects of fast fashion. We demand:

1. Integrating a ban on fast fashion advertising into the European Green Deal to discourage unsustainable consumer behaviour.

This ban should compel fast fashion brands to redesign their business models if they wish to promote their products within the European Union. It must encompass both physical and online advertisements as well as the influencers promotion on social media.

To support this effort and ensure its effectiveness, this **must be accompanied by:**

2. Combating greenwashing advertisement by endorsing the Directive on Green Claims, mandating that all environmental claims are scientifically validated by independent third parties.

This directive ensures that environmental claims are credible and based on rigorous evidence. By enforcing strict validation standards, the directive aims to eliminate misleading greenwashing and promote transparency. This approach will protect consumers from false claims and encourage brands to genuinely adopt sustainable practices.

3. Defining fast fashion brands by regulating clothing production, setting a cap of four collections per year with a maximum of three drops allowed per brand.

This cap identifies fast fashion brands and controls excessive production. Brands surpassing these limits will be categorised as fast fashion and banned from advertising. This measure is designed to prevent brands from expanding their collections solely to follow trends and embrace the emerging fast fashion model. By slowing the pace of production and consumption, it aims to combat trend-driven consumerism and promote a more sustainable fashion industry.

4. Requiring Member States to impose penalties on fast fashion companies that exceed these limits to reduce overproduction.

This advocates for an annual cap on market launches, combined with a progressive reduction target, in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement. A return to four annual collections to slow down production and consumption in the fashion industry should be an objective promoted by the European Union. Additionally, a bonus/malus system, similar to the French model, should be established. Overproduction, which often leads to environmental degradation and human rights abuses, should be penalised, with the fines redistributed to support sustainable brands economically.



Signed,

The Youth of Europe

Supported by,

A.R.T. Fusion, Romania

ALDA - Association Europeene Pour la Democratie Locale, France

Balkan Idea Novi Sad Udruzenje, Serbia

Associazione Centro Ricerche e Attivita - Crea Onlus, Italy

Suomen Rauhanpuolustajat Ry Fredskamparna I Finland Rf Suoma Rafibealusteadjt Rs, Finland

Sloga Platforma Nevladnih Organizacij Za Razvoj, Globalno Ucenje In Humanitarno Pomoc, Slovenia

Eine Weltz Netz NRW EV, Germany

Teatro Metaphora - Associacao de Amigos Das Artes, Portugal

Eclosio, Belgium

Asociația HaicuBicla, Romania

Asociația REPER 21, Romania

Asociația Bankwatch Romania

Cătălin Teniță - Deputat Partidul REPER, Romania

Agent Green, Gabriel Paun, Romania

Asociația ÎntreVecini, Romania

Fundația Eco-Civica, Romania

