



PRESS RELEASE

ACTE and the ETUF:TCL call for the defence of the health of European citizens

Today, the President of the **European Textile Collectivities Association (ACTE)**, Teo Romero, and the President of the **European Trade Union Federation: Textiles, Clothing, Leather (ETUF:TCL)**, Valeria Fedeli, presented to the press the "*Petition for a certified quality. Transparency, traceability, composition and origin of TCL products*".

With the Petition, ACTE and the ETUF:TCL express their concern as regards the health risks for European workers and consumers arising for the presence of dangerous substances in TCL products.

Scientific studies have shown that the textiles, clothing and other products of the TCL sectors are amongst the most frequent causes of irritating dermatitis (DIC) and allergies (DAC) for contact, and can contain annoying, toxic and carcinogenic substances prohibited by European norms and of individual Member States.

Consumer policy constitutes a key element of the strategic objective of the European Commission that consists in improving the quality of life of all citizens of the EU. However, the increase in international trade flows and the progressive elimination of tariff barriers expose the sector to new risks due to the entry in trade of textile, clothing, leather and footwear products whose production process is outside the control, since they often use products and processes which are no longer permitted in Europe.

In view of a confirmed rise in dermatological pathologies especially in the youngest age categories, ACTE and the ETUF:TCL ask the European Commission and Member States to take a series of actions considered as necessary to reduce irritating and harmful substances in clothing:

- A **clear definition** of "risks arising for textile, clothing, leather, footwear and accessories products", both in the production processes and in their final use;
- An **increased coordination** between the European Commission and Member States as regards the creation, update and networking of specific national databases aimed at the collection and monitoring of all chemical substances used in the production processes of TCL sectors;
- To guarantee the transparency and **raise European consumer' awareness** through the definition and the experimentation of a process aiming at a **guaranteed traceability of TCL products** destined for consumption on the basis of health and safety requirements.

The Petition has been formally approved by the Executive Committees of ACTE and the ETUF:TCL on 18 September and will be adopted by the plenary sessions of ACTE member cities and regions by the beginning of December.

ACTE was created in 1991 in Guimarães (Portugal) and currently comprises more than 70 members from 6 EU Member States and Croatia. ACTE represents European territories with a strong presence of the textile and fashion sector.

The ETUF:TCL was created in 1975 and brings together 70 free and democratic trade union federations stemming from 40 European countries (mainly the European Union, the European Economic Area, accession countries as well as EU candidate countries, but also from the Balkans and a number of other Eastern European countries).

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