

# GINETEX



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## THE LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAM

The Lifelong Learning Program is a European program within the scope of Leonardo da Vinci set up to create and harmonize educational tools to support technical knowledge and consumer comprehension. In 2009 a care labelling project was started among Member States and is scheduled to run for 2 years, finishing in July 2011.

Participating in this project are Belgium, France, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, and the co-ordinating country, the Czech Republic.

The goal is to develop specific educational tools on care labelling. Retailers and sales personnel, producers, dry cleaners, laboratories, teachers and institutions are the target group for disseminating this information.

These electronic learning materials, which will be available in a range of languages, will be available from September 2011. If you, or your organisation, are interested in receiving these materials please get in touch.

Contact: [ginetex@ginetex.net](mailto:ginetex@ginetex.net).

# IMCO – PROJECT OF EU-REGULATIONS FOR TEXTILE LABELLING



In January 2009, the European Commission tabled a proposal replacing three existing Directives applying to textile fibers with a unique Regulation with the aim of simplifying the current legislation and facilitating the placing on the market of products containing new fibers. This simplification exercise was to be achieved by authorizing the use of new fibers through a non-legislative procedure (list of fibers transferred from the articles of the existing Directives to the Annex of the new Regulation). The final goal was to help the European apparel and textile industry adapt to technical change by reducing red tape and thus remaining internationally competitive.

The proposal for a Regulation on the labelling of textile fibers' names was first dealt with by the Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) from the European Parliament. Members of the IMCO Committee decided to discuss issues going far beyond the scope of the initial proposal as they not only dealt with the labelling of textile fibers' names (cotton, polyester, etc.) but also issues linked with the labelling of textile and apparel products in general (sizes, care, flammability, animal-derived materials, Made In, etc.). The work in the IMCO Committee led to the adoption of amendments extending the scope of the proposal and was followed by a legislative resolution calling for the introduction of new legislation concerning the labelling of textile products by the European Parliament as a whole in May 2010. In response, the Council came back to the "spirit" of the initial proposal by preserving its scope through the adoption of its Common Position in December 2010.

The European textile and apparel industry calls for all European stakeholders (Members of the European Parliament, Member states, European Commission, etc.) to join forces to help the companies from our sector, many of which are SMEs, to continue to innovate. In particular we would welcome any support that would encourage the development of innovative textile products. Any over-regulation of our sector compared to other industries would be very damaging for textile and clothing companies. Instead of adopting additional, restrictive legislation, more effective implementation and enforcement of the existing ones (product safety, anti-counterfeiting, REACH, etc.) would prove more far more useful in increasing consumers' protection and rights.

With regard to care labelling, the current arrangements, based on the symbols developed by the International Association for Textile Care Labelling (GINETEX), which have become ISO standards, work well and ensure that consumers worldwide are kept properly informed due to its market-driven nature. Besides, there has been no consumer led demand for a change to the current system.

The care labelling system is a global instrument covering practices all over the world. Different washing processes as well as different techniques (for instance horizontal drum washing machines/vertical agitator washing machines) are taken into account.

GINETEX is a non-profit association which finances communication on the meaning of symbols through its national member committees and bases all technical testing methods on ISO standards. The existence of the textile care symbols collective trademark is an excellent regulator of worldwide uniformity and identification.

The dynamics of technical and environmental developments as well as innovations can hardly be legislated for in due time. Legal adjustments are very cumbersome to implement. In addition, as experience shows, legal provisions in care labelling lead producers to adopt an overly cautious approach in their textile care recommendations. This is neither in the interest of care labelling nor in the interest of the consumer, but requires intensive verifications and inspections also. Due to geographical considerations, national laws in care labelling are mostly too restrictive and could amount to non-tariff barriers to trade.

GINETEX care labelling system has been functioning well for more than 40 years and neither the industry nor the consumers are asking for changes in the field of textile care labelling.

## NEW GINETEX BOARD



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For the years 2011 and 2012, the Board will be composed with:

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President: François-Marie Grau, Chairman of COFREET

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Vice-President: Dr. Kurt Gehri, Chairman of GINETEX Switzerland

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Treasurer: Rolf Langenegger, CEO of GINETEX Switzerland

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Furthermore the chair of the permanent committee has been confirmed:

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Technical Committee: Dr. Jean-Pierre Haug, Switzerland

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## NEW MEMBER CATEGORY: THE GINETEX ASSOCIATED MEMBER

Previously GINETEX only had two membership categories – Participating members and Observer Members. However there is now a third category, the “Associated Member”.

A committee “Associated Member” can be set up in a country where more than 80 % of the national textile and apparel manufacturers are subcontractors. It must be formed with Organisations of the Textile and/or Apparel Industry with valid legal structure according to the legislation of the country of the National Committee. Only one organization per country (Clothing, Textile Association...) could become a GINETEX member. It must comply with the following conditions:

- Legal structure conforming to the laws of the country in question
- Independence, i.e. autonomy
- Representation, i.e. it must, on principle, be made up of members of different organizations from branches of the textile chain and/or other interested parties
- Authority, i.e. capacity to enforce its decisions

- Adoption of the symbols and codes recognized by the International Association for Textile Care Labelling and use of them in accordance with the regulations laid down by the Association
- Agreement to assure protection of the symbols within the framework and according to the prescriptions of national law

The Committees “Associated Members” do not have the power to authorize the use of the registered marks outside their own country.

## TRADEMARK PROTECTION



The 5 symbols trademark has been filed for protection in the following countries:

Albania	Denmark	Latvia	Slovakia
Bosnia	Estonia	Lithuania	Canada
Bulgaria	Hungary	Poland	India
Croatia	Iceland	Romania	Pakistan
Cyprus	Ireland	Serbia	Bangladesh

## INTERNATIONAL APPAREL FEDERATION

The last IAF Convention was held in October 2010 in Hong Kong. The GINETEX delegation made there some contacts with professional organizations of the USA, Mexico, India and South Korea.

Australia is not interested in forming a committee as it does not have a significant number of export manufacturers. Some further business contacts have been taken with global labelling companies.

## NEW MEMBER AND PARTNERS

GINETEX is very pleased to welcome DENMARK as new member among its national participating committee. GINETEX now has the following countries in membership:

Austria, Belgium, Brazil, the Czech Republic, France Finland, Germany, Great-Britain, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and Tunisia. (Further information on members can be found on the web: [www.ginetex.net/members](http://www.ginetex.net/members))

As global partners, we are also pleased to welcome the American company Jones Apparel Group and the Finnish Group Fabric Sales Finland.

## NATURAL DRYING SYMBOLS

GINETEX still has only a qualified acceptance regarding the necessity and use of the natural drying symbols. Based on a global approach GINETEX accepts the introduction of these symbols on ISO level, however without promoting them for the time being.

This reservation is related with the principles of labelling of the maximal severity of the treatments. In a natural drying process only drying in the sun may cause an irreversible damage.

## NEW SYMBOL GRAPHICS

In order to be in accordance with ISO 7000 (graphic symbols) GINETEX modernised the graphics of the care labelling symbols, a new font has been designed: the appropriate information will be disseminated to each GINETEX partners on a CD this spring.

## ISO

The final voting on the new version of ISO 3758 should be finished in mid-2011. GINETEX and ISO ( Central Secretary ) updated their agreement from 1989 regarding the use of the care symbols based on international trademarks. The modifications update the present conditions ( internet addresses, Euro etc. )



## IMPRINT

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