



*Press Release*  
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## TEXTILE CARE: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS NOW CENTRAL TO EUROPEANS' NEW HABITS



Photo – Marcella Barbieri

### GINETEX unveils the results of its third European IPSOS 2021 barometer on textile care:

- **More than 8 out of 10 Europeans find that the textile care label is useful.** 74% find it useful in Spain and 87% in Sweden.
- **The vast majority (71%) of Europeans follow the care instructions.** 81% follow them in Sweden, compared to only 65% in the United Kingdom.
- **74% of Europeans never or rarely buy a garment without a care label.**
- **Europeans want to buy in a more ethical and responsible manner. 65% of them want to see more environmental information on their textiles' care labels.** In this respect, they would preferably like to see: a highlight on ecological care recommendations (65%), the creation of an environmental eco-score (56%), or a focus on the proportion of recycled fabrics (57 %).



GINETEX, the International Association for Textile Care Labelling, announces the results of its third European barometer for 2021, "Europeans and the textile care label" conducted with IPSOS. The survey presented today was carried out in seven European countries: France, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Sweden, the Czech Republic and Spain.

### Europeans are regular textile consumers who need to be informed

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*49% of Europeans pay attention to the quality of the garment that they are about to buy. This answer rates 4 points above its 2019 score!*

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According to the results of this third barometer, Europeans – who are major clothes consumers - are increasingly aware of their purchase when they buy their textile items. In the seven countries that were surveyed for instance, **almost all respondents (93%) had bought at least one piece of clothing in the past six months**. This figure reached 95% for Italians, 96% for Czechs and 97% for Spaniards who were the most likely to have purchased a piece of clothing in the last six months.

Europeans are concerned with the quality of their clothing and attach great importance to its technical aspects. While **price remains the main criterion for choosing a garment**, value for money, quality, comfort and general appearance of the garment are also important criteria for consumers.

When compared to the previous 2019 barometer, some features like **the quality of the garment are increasingly decisive in the actual purchase**. Today, 49% of Europeans consider that the quality of the clothing they are about to buy is an important criterion – a percentage that increased by 4 points over two years. Also, to be noted: other criteria such as the brand (+ 4 points), or the garment's country of origin (+ 1 point) are also becoming increasingly important.

### The textile label: a popular source of information with Europeans

While the size (96%) and composition of textiles (74%) remain the Europeans' most sought-after piece of information, the presence or absence of care instructions also has a significant impact on their purchasing decision.

**Almost six in ten Europeans (59%) pay attention to the care label when they buy a garment**. This proportion reaches 63% in Germany, 65% in Sweden, and even 66% in Italy.

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*74% of Europeans refuse or avoid buying clothing without care instruction labels!*

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The textile care label is an essential piece of information for a large majority of people surveyed: **74% of Europeans would never, or rarely buy a garment without a care instruction label**. This illustrates how important it is to Europeans. The British and Germans are the most attached to care instruction labels: for 83% of them, buying a textile without a label is not an option, or is only rarely the case.

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*68 % of Europeans cut off their clothes' labels.*

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Despite its popularity and the attention that it raises, the relationship of Europeans with the care label is contradictory in terms of interest. While **71 % of Europeans on average, say that they follow the care instructions (82% even find them useful)**, this barometer also shows that this figure varies considerably from one country to another. Only 65% of Britons and 67% of Spaniards say that they



follow the care instructions, compared to more than 80% of Swedes. Yet, **68% of the people surveyed say that they cut off their clothing labels**. While most of European consumers cut their labels off, the British however, prefer to keep them. Only 46% of them cut the care label off.

Why such a difference? Most of the time, Europeans read the instructions on their care labels **when they wash them for the first time** (47%) or when they buy a new piece of clothing (25%).

Two main reasons explain why Europeans read and follow the care instructions: **34% say that they follow the instructions to keep their clothes in good shape in order to be able to wear them longer, while 32% follow them to avoid any problems when they wash their clothes**.

Finally, while consumers complain that the labels are too long (56%), they would still like them to include more information, particularly environmental information. In fact, **65% of respondents would like labels to offer environmentally-friendly care instructions**, for instance. This score is particularly important in France (68%), Spain (69%) and Italy (80%). Likewise, Europeans would like to be better informed on the proportion of recycled fabrics in their clothing (57%). The expectations of Spanish (60%) and Italian (72%) consumers are even higher.

Finally, **56% of Europeans would like clothing to have an environmental eco-score**. For this, again, the French (64%), Spanish (64%) and Italian (71%) consumers are the most demanding.

On top of this ecological approach, consumers in Southern Europe **wish to consume in a more ethical and responsible manner**. The country of origin of the garment is a much more important criterion for French (59%) and Italian (66%) consumers than for the rest of Europeans (48% overall). On the contrary, British (39%) and Czech (32%) consumers attach little importance to the origin of the garment.

**Sometimes, the textile label's symbols remain unrecognized**



While Europeans widely recognize the usefulness of the textile care label, the understanding of the care symbols remains heterogeneous. 98% identify the ironing symbol perfectly. The same goes for the washing symbol, well recognized by nine out of ten people (90%). For the other symbols, however, the proportions are much lower. **Only 27% of people surveyed know the symbol for bleaching (yet 38% do recognize it in Spain and 37% in Italy), 25% for drying and barely 16% for professional cleaning**.

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*85% of Europeans take care of their clothes themselves.*

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The Barometer's results also show that **85% of respondents take care of their clothes themselves**. It is in the UK (88%) and Sweden (90%) that respondents take most care of their clothes themselves. Above all, the results show that **women are more likely to take care of their laundry themselves than men** (94% vs. 75%). The share of men who look after their laundry is lowest in Italy, Spain and the Czech Republic.



## **MY CARE LABEL – The new international application to understand your labels and take care of your textiles**

To help Europeans become familiar with these care symbols, GINETEX has developed a mobile application: "MY CARE LABEL". This new mobile application, now launched internationally by GINETEX, helps users to take care of their clothes on a daily basis. On top of explaining the care symbols of all existing textiles, **MY CARE LABEL provides tips and advices to clean and take care of your textiles while also caring for the planet.**



### **Europeans' common desire to better include environmental insights in textile care**

Today, environmental awareness has become widespread and this clearly translates in our barometer's results. If Europeans want more information on ecological textile care, it is because **they are themselves inclined to change their cleaning habits and make them more environmentally friendly.**

**54% of Europeans** use the right amount of detergent for environmental reasons (versus 36% for economic reasons). In addition, **half** (51%) try to wash their laundry at a colder temperature (36% do so for economic reasons), and **49%** of respondents fill their washing machine to its maximum capacity (40% do so for economic reasons).

These ecological efforts are also present in the Europeans' drying habits. When they let their laundry dry naturally in the open air, 46% of respondents say that they do so to protect the environment (31% for economic reasons). Finally, when it comes to ironing, Europeans also try to take care of their laundry by ironing at the right temperature (40% do so for ecological reasons against 34% for economic reasons), 39% of respondents also explain that they iron less in order to protect the environment (compared to 37% for economic reasons).

#### **Did you know?**



**Clevercare.info** provides consumers with the option to care for their textiles in a greener and more sustainable manner. Available online, in 23 languages, the website offers advice and tips to develop the right cleaning habits on a daily basis, while also respecting the care symbols on clothing labels.

55% of respondents would consider visiting the website soon, to find out about the simple and accessible steps to textile eco-care:

- Wash clothes only when necessary
- Reduce the washing temperature to reduce your energy consumption
- Favour natural drying for your laundry
- Use professional cleaning when recommended



## **Study methodology**

This study was conducted by the IPSOS institute, for GINETEX, the International Association for Textile Care Labelling, on a sample of 1 000 people aged 18 to 65 in each of the 7 countries (i.e. a total of 7 000 people): France, Germany, The Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Sweden, Italy and Spain. This study was conducted online from December 18 to 21, 2020 for France and from January 25 to February 15, 2021 for Germany, The Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Sweden, Italy and Spain.

## **About GINETEX**

*First founded in Paris, in 1963, GINETEX, the International Association for Textile Care Labelling, has devised an internationally applicable care labelling system for textiles based on symbols, which aims at informing textile companies and consumers on the best way to care for their textiles. The pictograms used are registered trademarks and are property of GINETEX. GINETEX promotes these symbols worldwide and coordinates its technical contents on a global scale - which is essential for the definition and application of the care labelling code. Today, GINETEX counts 22 member-countries.*

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