GLOBAL ORGANIC TEXTILE STANDARD

ECOLOGY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



HOW GOTS CERTIFICATION HELPS YOUR COMPANY COMPLY WITH LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND EMPOWERS YOU TO EXCEED THOSE, SHOWCASING YOUR COMMITMENT TO PEOPLE AND THE PLANET

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1. INTRODUCTION

With this document Global Standard aims at providing GOTS Certified Entities and other companies striving for more sustainable business models with a comprehensive overview of the regulatory landscape relevant to sustainability and textiles in the European Union and in some selected countries. Our goal is to help understand the content of upcoming legislation related to textiles and the legal requirements companies in scope must comply with.

In addition, this document describes how GOTS certification supports companies in fulfilling binding obligations and how it empowers them to even exceed those - which is even more important given the current context in which the textile sector finds itself:

A POLITICAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISED BY UNCERTAINTY AND VOLATILITY

Since the publication of the European Green Deal in 2019, the EU Circular Economy Action Plan in 2020 and the EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles in 2022, legislative activities and initiatives relating to textiles have increased significantly, both within and outside the EU. Many companies feel uncertain regarding the upcoming legal obligations and hope that certifications will help them to comply. In a recent OECD survey[1] carried out among brands, retailers and suppliers, 72% of brands and retailers and 67% of suppliers considered "Comply with government regulation" a very relevant motivation for using certification – and it can be expected that these percentages will increase as the legal obligations become clearer and as the dates of enforcement approach.

Already today, more and more companies are realizing that legislation regarding e.g., Green Claims, or the Digital Product Pass will require certifications to substantiate and verify claims and to gather data and information needed, and that (as survey participants put it) it will be "almost impossible to not have any certifications". This, however, might lead to unrealistic expectations regarding certifications, to a proliferation of certification schemes, and to a loss of quality and credibility – which in turn could prompt policy makers to regulate them more closely.

Finally, as the recent example of the Omnibus Package proposed by the EU Commission shows, navigating the legislative changes in the EU (and beyond) seems to become a bumpy ride with sudden, unexpected changes of direction. However, reprioritizing sustainability on a political level, unfortunately does not mean that the textile sector (or any other industry sector) is "on track".

SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS IS NEEDED MORE THAN EVER

Despite efforts toward sustainability, the textile industry's current trajectory is incompatible with achieving key goals to mitigate climate change and its negative environmental and social impacts are further increasing with overproduction remaining rampant and unsustainable business models persisting.

Many responsible textile companies have therefore started long ago to pursue alternative, more sustainable business models and have long turned to Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) such as GOTS for support in identifying and addressing risks and impacts in their often complex and geographically dispersed supply chains and in communicating their sustainable and responsible practices to consumers.

1 OECD (2025). "The role of sustainability certifications in due diligence in the garment and footwear sector", OECD Business and Finance Policy Papers, No. 77, OECD Publishing, Paris.

THE BENEFITS OF GOTS CERTIFICATION

By continuously monitoring legislative developments within and outside the EU, analysing the legal requirements companies in scope must comply with, assessing the role assigned to VSS in legislative initiatives and eventually adjusting GOTS' requirements and/or implementation policies, GOTS strives to provide certified companies with the best possible compliance support.

Considering that the landscape of sustainability certifications is increasing in size and complexity, and that a stronger regulation of certification schemes is to be expected, GOTS is also continuously working on an even closer alignment with important international norms such as ISO 17065 and ISO 14024 to minimize any room for interpretation.

Finally, GOTS will continue to offer "compliance+", this is, to go beyond legal requirements by stipulating science-based, ambitious, robust, and verifiable requirements throughout the value chain for ecological, human rights including social criteria and business conduct in the textile sector. By ensuring traceability from farm to final product, GOTS enables certified companies to showcase their strong commitment to people and the planet and to demonstrate that business success can be based on sustainable and ethical practices.

We believe that it is businesses that – independently from regulation or deregulation – hold the real power to shape the future of the textile sector and the planet and we want to provide the best possible support to companies that are using certifications not in the first place because they are forced to do so by legislation, but because certifications help them to identify and mitigate risks, to trace their products, to maintain a good reputation and to gain market access.

2. SCOPE AND STRUCTURE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is intended to be a non-exhaustive overview of important laws and legislative initiatives relevant to the textile sector in the European Union and in selected countries within and outside of Europe.

While mentioning also some non-binding initiatives, the presentation focuses on binding legislation.

For each piece of legislation, the presentation includes a brief description of its status, the companies in scope, the purpose and main topics addressed by it as well as information on how GOTS certification supports companies in scope to comply with the respective legal requirements and how GOTS certification enables them to even exceed those.

Please note that the information provided in this document is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute and is not intended to constitute an exhaustive compilation of legislation.

While we strive to provide accurate and up-to-date information, we do not take responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or relevance of the information provided. The use of this document is at the discretion of the user, and any risks arising from such use are assumed by the user, and in no case can Global Standard be held accountable for actions undertaken or omitted as per user discretion.

3. EU LEGISLATION

Before describing the individual legislative initiatives, here is a brief overview of the most important types of legislations in the European Union:

- **Directive:** A legislative act that sets out a goal for EU member countries who then must devise their own laws on how to reach these goals
- **Regulation:** A binding legislative act which must be applied in its entirety across the EU
- **Delegated Act:** Non-legislative acts adopted by the European Commission aimed at supplementing elements of a legislative act for uniform implementation
- **Decision:** A binding legislative act only on those to whom it is addressed (e.g. an EU member state or an individual company) and which is directly applicable

3.1. EU LEGISLATION ON REPORTING, DISCLOSURE AND DUE DILIGENCE

EU DIRECTIVE ON CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING 2022/2464	
Status	The CSRD came into force on January 5, 2023. EU member states had until July 6, 2024, to transpose the CSRD into their national laws, but several have still failed to do so.
Companies in scope	Compared to the former EU Non-Financial Reporting Directive (NFRD), the CSRD substantially expanded the scope. The sustainability reporting requirements will take effect on a staggered basis with reports due until 30th of June of the year following the respective Financial Year (FY): • Wave 1 (from FY 2024): Large companies incorporated in the EU which are public interest entities and have more than 500 employees on average, • Wave 2 (from FY 2025): Large companies incorporated in the EU (including EU subsidiaries of non-EU parent companies) that meet two of the following criteria: Balance sheet total of at least EUR 25m, annual net turnover of at least EUR 50m and/or an average of 250 employees or more during the FY, • Wave 3 (from FY 2026, option for SMEs to opt out for two years): SMEs incorporated in the EU that are listed on EU-regulated markets (other than micro companies) and that meet two of the following criteria: Balance sheet total of at least EUR 4m, annual net turnover of at least EUR 8m and/or an average of 50 employees or more during the FY, • Wave 4 (from FY 2028): Large companies not incorporated in the EU which meet the following criteria: Annual net turnover of at least EUR 150m in the EU for each of the last two consecutive FYs and at least one subsidiary that meets the criteria of Wave 2 or Wave 3 or EU branch that generated a net turnover of more than EUR 40m in the prior FY.

Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The CSRD is intended to help a company's stakeholders (such as investors, civil society actors, customers, or policy makers) better understand its sustainability performance and impact. It sets out how companies must report on their social and environmental performance, this is, what types of information they need to disclose and how those disclosures should be made. Companies in scope will need to follow the reporting requirements set out in the ESRS which are being developed by EFRAG. The first set of ESRS applies since January 1, 2024, and consists of two general cross-cutting ESRS and ten topical ESRS. The adoption of a second set of standards for "high-impact" sectors including textiles and footwear, originally planned for mid-2024, was postponed by two years. In addition, a simplified standard for listed SME (LSME) is under development whereas a voluntary standard for SME (VSME) which is outside the scope of the CSRD, was published in December 2024.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	GOTS certification offers a robust framework and a comprehensive risk management instrument for a company's supply chain which covers many of the environmental and social criteria required by the CSRD and its underlying ESRS. By adhering to GOTS criteria, companies in the textile sector demonstrate their commitment to sustainability, social responsibility and accountability showing their alignment with important CSRD principles such as focus on environmental impact, due diligence, traceability and transparency. GOTS supports the implementation of ESRS by providing robust environmental, social, and governance criteria that align with these reporting frameworks. For ESRS, data from GOTS certification directly contribute to disclosures on pollution (ESRS E2), resource use and circularity (ESRS E5), and social impacts on both direct employees (ESRS S1) and workers in the value chain (ESRS S2). For example, GOTS' strict chemical management policies and wastewater treatment requirements support pollution-related disclosures, while its social compliance criteria – covering living wages, fair working conditions, and health and safety – align with ESRS social reporting obligations. By integrating GOTS certification, companies can streamline their CSRD reporting while demonstrating at the same time compliance with other global sustainability standards, such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) framework for sustainability reporting, International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) or standards set by the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB). Since GOTS certification involves independent third-party verification by accredited certification bodies, it ensures the credibility and reliability of reported information, which aligns with the CSRD's mandatory assurance requirement.

EU CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY DUE DILIGENCE DIRECTIVE 2024/1760 (CSDDD)	
Status	After long debates the CSDDD was finally adopted in June 2024 and entered into force on July 25, 2024. Member states have two years to transpose it into national laws.
Companies in scope	The CSDDD applies to companies, irrespective of whether they are incorporated in the EU, which meet the defined thresholds: Companies established in the EU: • Companies and Parent companies of a group with more than 1,000 employees on average and a net worldwide turnover of at least EUR 450m in the last FY, • Companies or Parent companies with franchising or licensing agreements in the EU with annual royalties of more than EUR 22.5m and a net worldwide turnover of at least EUR 80m in the last FY. Companies established outside of the EU: • Companies and Parent companies of a group with a turnover of at least EUR 450m in the last FY, • Companies or Parent companies with franchising or licensing agreements in the EU with annual royalties of more than EUR 22.5m and a net worldwide turnover of at least EUR 80m in the FY preceding the last FY. SMEs are excluded from the direct scope of the CSDDD, although they may still be indirectly impacted due to actions taken by the larger companies in scope. Companies in scope have different timelines to comply with CSDDD obligations: • July 2027: more than 5,000 employees and turnover of at least EUR 1.5 billion, • July 2028: more than 3,000 employees and turnover of at least EUR 900m, • July 2029: all companies in scope.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The CSDDD requires companies inside and outside of the EU to undertake due diligence (DD) on their environmental and human rights impacts and create and implement a transition plan to mitigate climate change. DD in this context extends beyond a company's direct operations to cover its entire supply chain, including all activities, actors, and business relationships. To comply with the CSDDD requirements, companies must follow a risk-based approach and implement a DD process covering six steps: 1. Integrate due diligence into policies and management systems; 2. Identify and assess adverse human rights and environmental impacts; 3. Prevent, cease or minimize adverse impacts; 4. Monitor and assess the effectiveness of measures; 5. Communicate transparently; 6. Provide remediation. Companies must also establish and maintain a notification mechanism and complaints procedure, conduct meaningful stakeholder engagement, and monitor and report upon their efforts on an annual basis.

How GOTS certification supports compliance	GOTS provides a structured roadmap guiding companies to mitigate potential harm to human rights and the environment. This enables companies to align with the increasing global focus on responsible business practices and to comply with due diligence (DD) requirements as per the OECD Due Diligence Guidelines for Responsible Business Conduct, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and the CSDDD. Global Standard offers trainings on Responsible Business Conduct and DD for GOTS Certified Entities and Certifying Bodies and has developed and published the following two handbooks for guidance: • GOTS Due Diligence Handbook for Certified Entities • GOTS Due Diligence Handbook for Auditors
EU OMNIBUS PACKAGE	
Status	Following the so-called Draghi report on EU competitiveness, published in September 2024 and the EU Competitiveness Compass, presented by the European Commission in January 2025, the EU Commission, on February 26, 2025, introduced the EU Omnibus Package, a set of proposed changes to the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), the EU Taxonomy and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). The European co-legislators were asked to treat the proposal with high priority. The proposed changes regarding the timelines for the CSRD and the CSDDD have been separated into a so-called 'Stop-the-clock' Directive, to which the EU Council and the EU Parliament already agreed on March 26, 2025, and April 3, 2025, respectively. The official adoption of the Stop-the-clock Directive is expected to take place soon, it must be transposed into national law by December 31, 2025. On April 3, 2025, the Commission also officially mandated EFRAG to revise the ESRS in line with the simplification objectives laid out in the Omnibus Package.
Companies in scope	The Omnibus Package introduces significant changes regarding the timeline and the scope of the CSRD and the CSDDD: CSRD: • The application for companies belonging to the 2nd and the 3rd Wave will be delayed by two years, this is, these companies must comply with the reporting requirements only from FY 2027, respectively 2028 (already approved via Stop-the-clock Directive), • The scope of the CSRD shall be limited to companies with more than 1,000 employees and either a turnover of more than EUR 50m or a balance sheet of more than EUR 25m; listed SMEs shall be taken out completely. This change reduces the scope by about 80%. CSDDD: • The Omnibus Package introduces a delay in the implementation of the CSDDD by one year, moving from July 2027 to July 2028 for the first batch of companies in scope (already approved via Stop-the-clock Directive).

Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The Omnibus Package seeks to streamline reporting obligations, reduce administrative burdens, and strengthen Europe's competitive position by introducing the following changes: CSRD: • Value-chain cap: the proposal limits the information that companies can ask from suppliers outside the (now reduced) CSRD scope to what is specified in the VSME (which shall be adopted as Delegated Act now), • Assurance: whereas CSRD asked for a shift from 'limited' to 'reasonable' assurance, this is, to a more in-depth examination of the accuracy and reliability of the sustainability reports provided by companies, after an initial reporting phase, this shift shall now be deleted, and assurance shall remain 'limited', • Data points: the number of data points (especially narrative ones) shall be reduced (work on this already started by EFRAG), • Sector specific standards are not foreseen anymore under the CSRD. CSDDD: • Value chain scope: the legal requirement to conduct DD shall only apply to direct business partners, excluding suppliers with less than 500 employees. Companies shall only be obliged to go beyond this Tier 1 if there is a complaint, or credible NGO or media reports about harmful activities at the level of an indirect supplier. DD effectiveness beyond Tier 1 shall be ensured by 'contractual cascading', • Due Diligence duty: whereas CSDDD has so far required companies to report on their DD activities annually, the tracking of their effectiveness shall now take place only every 5 years. In addition, the proposal removes the duty to terminate the business relationships in case of both actual and potential adverse impacts and allows companies to just 'suspend' activities, • Stakeholder engagement: the proposed changes limit the obligation of meaningful stakeholder engagement to 'relevant' stakeholders, • Legal harmonization: whereas CSDDD was introduced as a "floor" which allowed member states to define further rules, the proposal now sets a legal "ceiling", • Climate transition plan: the obligation of companies to put into effect a climate transition plan for climate change mitigation was deleted which means that this plan only needs to be adopted, • Civil liability: the Omnibus Package proposes the deletion of the EU-wide civil liability provision, • Financial penalties: penalties shall no longer be based on a company's global turnover, and it shall be at the discretion of member states to set maximum limits for penalties.

How GOTS certification supports compliance	Irrespective of changes or dilutions to legal requirements GOTS continues to help sustainable and responsible businesses showcase their commitment to people and the planet. For details, please see the description of GOTS' support under the CSRD and the CSDDD.
EU FORCED LABOUR REGULATION AND GUIDANCE 2024/3015 (FLR)	
Status	The Regulation has been formally adopted and entered into force on December 13, 2024. EU member states have 36 months to begin applying the Regulation.
Companies in scope	All economic operators, defined as natural or legal persons or associations of persons placing or making products available on the EU market or exporting products from the EU are in scope of the FLR.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The Regulation aims at prohibiting the sale of products made with forced labour within the EU and to hold businesses accountable for ensuring compliance within their supply chains. It sets out a detailed investigation procedure, which authorities and companies must follow if there's a suspicion of forced labour. Businesses are required to demonstrate that there was no forced labour used in production, and to provide detailed information on product details, relevant manufacturers, suppliers, or exporters. If an investigation concludes that forced labour is present within a product's supply chain, the company will be prohibited from placing these products on the market until the issue is resolved. It must also withdraw the products from circulation and either destroy or donate those already on the market. Decisions by national authorities will be recognized across all member states. By June 2026 the Commission shall publish guidelines and set up a new Forced Labour Single Portal to help enforce the new rules, including guidelines, information on bans, publicly available evidence, risk areas / sectors (e.g., textiles), and a whistleblower portal.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	GOTS is dedicated to eliminating forced labour in the textile sector and upholds a zero-tolerance policy regarding any cases of forced labour. In October 2021, GOTS implemented a requirement to specify the region of origin of the raw material in transaction certificates, allowing buyers to perform their due diligence. GOTS strictly prohibits forced labour throughout the value chain and provides comprehensive tools and guidance for GOTS Certified Entities to meet due diligence requirements, including the ban on forced labour, particularly in high-risk areas. It also offers auditors tools to evaluate the due diligence measures implemented by GOTS Certified Entities concerning forced labour and supplies auditing techniques for identifying potential human rights abuses related to forced labour.

3.2. EU LEGISLATION ON PRODUCTS, CLAIMS AND LABELLING

EU STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE AND CIRCULAR TEXTILES (ESSCT)	
Status	The ESSCT was published on March 30, 2022.
Companies in scope	The ESSCT is a **non-binding** strategy framework.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The ESSCT is a critical component of the European Green Deal, which aims to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. It is also closely linked to the EU Circular Economy Action Plan which identified the textiles industry as a key area for action due to its substantial impact on resource use, waste production, and greenhouse gas emissions, and to the EU Industrial Strategy which supports the modernization and competitiveness of Europe's industrial sectors, including textiles, by promoting innovation in sustainable practices and technologies. The ESSCT, which serves as a foundational framework to develop binding legislation, strives to address the most relevant environmental-related issues within the textile industry, namely: high consumption of resources, this is, water, energy, and raw materials, significant waste generation with low rates of recycling and high volumes of landfill and incineration, extensive use of hazardous chemicals affecting human health and ecosystems, and social concerns and issues related to labour rights and working conditions in global textile supply chains. Legislative acts based on the ESSCT are for example the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) incl. the Digital Product Pass (DPP) and the Revision of the EU Ecolabel, the Directive on Green Claims, the Revision of the Waste Framework Directive, and the Revision of the Textile Labelling Regulation.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	ESSCT is a non-binding strategic framework. It therefore does not require legal compliance. By stipulating ambitious, robust, and verifiable requirements throughout the value chain for ecological, human rights including social criteria and business conduct, GOTS, however, is very well positioned to support compliance with the specific legislation derived from the ESSCT.
EU TEXTILE LABELLING REGULATION 1007/2011 (TLR) – REVISION	
Status	The Textile Labelling Regulation is effective since May 8, 2012. A revision of the TLR was scheduled for the end of 2024 but is delayed. It is expected that the EU Commission will present their formal proposal in Q2 2025.
Companies in scope	All companies planning to sell textiles products in the EU market (including retailers, manufacturers, importers, distributors) are in scope of the TLR.

Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The Textile Labelling Regulation was put in place to protect consumer interests and ensure that businesses that sell textile products across the EU were consistent in the way that they labelled or marked the products regarding, in particular, textile fibre names and fibre composition of textile products (defined as products containing at least 80% by weight of textile fibres). During the public consultation period for the revision of the TLR, the discussion centered around the expansion of labelling requirements to include sustainability and circularity labels, origin ('made in') labels, EU-wide uniform sizing, information on allergenic substances, leather and fur authenticity, flammability information, and organic or bio-origin labels. In addition, the Commission explores the addition of a mandatory digital label for textiles.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	It is not clear yet what the official proposal of the EU Commission will contain (especially regarding sustainability and circularity as well as digital labels) and how compliance with the requirements shall be ensured. Global Standard, together with IFOAM OE, had advocated strongly for making 'organic' a protected term which, however, was not supported by the Commission.
EU ECODESIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS REGULATION 2024/1781 (ESPR)	
Status	The Regulation has been in force since July 18, 2024. Since it is a framework regulation for many different product groups, it will be applicable only after the adoption of Delegated Acts. The ESPR working plan regarding the preparation of these Delegated Acts shall be adopted until April 2025. Textiles (garments and footwear particularly) are among the products with highest priority.
Companies in scope	The ESPR covers the supply of any product (except for excluded categories) for distribution, consumption or use on the EU market. This means that all members of the value chain of a company operating in the EU (including product manufacturers, also those not based in the EU, importers, distributors, dealers and service providers) fall under the scope of the ESPR.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The ESPR aims to improve the sustainability of products placed in the EU by improving their circularity, energy performance, recyclability and durability. It replaces the Ecodesign Directive and extends it by setting a broad range of ecodesign requirements for basically all physical products (with few exemptions). Ecodesign requirements include improving product durability, reusability, upgradability and reparability, enhancing the possibility of product maintenance and refurbishment, making products more energy and resource-efficient, addressing the presence of substances that inhibit circularity, increasing recycled content, making products easier to remanufacture and recycle, setting rules on carbon and environmental footprints, limiting the generation of waste, and improving the availability of information on product sustainability.

	The ESPR also contains new measures such as the introduction of a Digital Product Passport (DPP), rules to address and ban the destruction of unsold consumer products, and the establishment of mandatory Green Public Procurement (GPP) criteria. The Preparatory Study for Textiles currently developed by the EU Commission's Joint Research Center (JRC) and to be completed by mid-2026 shall be the basis for the preparation of the Delegated Acts and for a revision of the EU Ecolabel in line with the ESPR, this is with ecodesign requirements.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	It is not yet clear how compliance with ESPR on a product-specific level shall be ensured, this is, which data shall be collected and disclosed and which methods applied to e.g., assess the environmental impacts of a product. The Preparatory Study (PS) for Textiles currently prepared by the JRC examines the relevance of specific ecodesign requirements and product parameters for textiles, the availability of data and how an appropriate LCA/LCC model could look like (considering also the use of the Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCR) for Apparel and Footwear). Despite this uncertainty, it can be expected that many environmental criteria, product parameters and data points (such as energy and resource use and efficiency, presence of chemicals or substances of concern, carbon and environmental footprint, waste generation, etc.) are already covered by GOTS certification and that much data and information gathered during the GOTS certification process can be directly used for the Digital Product Passport. For GOTS version 8.0, Global Standard has proposed a new section on circularity principles of GOTS goods to ensure that GOTS goods are designed as per the relevant ecodesign principles.
EU ECOLABEL REGULATION 66/2010	
Status	The EU Ecolabel Regulation entered into force on February 19, 2010. The current criteria for textiles which had been adopted in 2014 are valid until December 31, 2025, and shall be revised in alignment with the ESPR.
Companies in scope	The EU Ecolabel is a **voluntary** sustainability label. It can be used by any company producing textile products which are in the scope of the Ecolabel, provided the environmental and social standards are met.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The main purpose of the EU Ecolabel is to promote products with a reduced environmental impact throughout their entire life cycle. Specifically, the EU Ecolabel aims to identify and promote products that meet high ecological standards, enable consumers to make informed and conscious choices about sustainable products, support the European Union's transition to a circular economy by encouraging sustainable production and consumption patterns, provide a trustworthy and transparent certification that helps prevent greenwashing, and boost responsible, competitive, and innovative businesses that prioritize environmental excellence.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	A comparison between GOTS and the current EU Ecolabel shows that GOTS, in many areas, sets more comprehensive and stricter criteria than the EU Ecolabel. Further revisions of the EU Ecolabel will be continuously analysed to ensure that GOTS Certified Entities also fulfil the criteria of the EU Ecolabel.

EU DIRECTIVE AS REGARDS EMPOWERING CONSUMERS FOR THE GREEN TRANSITION 2024/825 (EMPCO)	
Status	The Directive entered into force March 27, 2024, and must be transposed by March 27, 2026. It will then be applied from September 27, 2026.
Companies in scope	EmpCo applies to all companies operating within the EU (manufacturers, retailers, service providers) that make environmental claims about their products or services.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The EmpCo Directive's aim is to fight greenwashing and early obsolescence by regulating environmental claims. An environmental claim is defined as "any message or representation which is not mandatory under Union or national law, in any form, including text, pictorial, graphic or symbolic representation, such as labels, brand names, company names or product names, in the context of a commercial communication, and which states or implies that a product, product category, brand or trader has a positive or zero impact on the environment or is less damaging to the environment than other products, product categories, brands or traders, or has improved its impact over time". Unlike the Green Claims Directive, the EmpCo Directive does not create a new regulatory regime for unfair practices around green claims but primarily amends the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive 2005/29 (UCPD) by adding the following advertising practices to Annex I, the so-called 'blacklist' of claims that are considered unfair and are therefore not permitted: displaying a sustainability label that is not based on a certification scheme or not established by public authorities; making a generic environmental claim for which the trader is not able to demonstrate recognised excellent environmental performance relevant to the claim; making an environmental claim about the entire product or the trader's entire business when it concerns only a certain aspect of the product or a specific activity of the trader's business; and claiming, based on the offsetting of greenhouse gas emissions, that a product has a neutral, reduced or positive impact on the environment in terms of greenhouse gas emissions (which means that businesses trying to achieve climate neutrality by including offsetting, are not allowed to advertise a product using terms such as 'climate neutral', 'CO2-reduced' or 'climate-positive' anymore). As to other generic environmental claims examples include 'environmentally friendly', 'eco-friendly', 'green', 'nature's friend', 'ecological', 'environmentally correct', 'climate friendly', 'gentle on the environment', 'carbon friendly', ' energy efficient', 'biodegradable', 'biobased' or similar statements that suggest or create the impression of excellent environmental performance. The EmpCo Directive furthermore amends the scope of misleading actions and omissions to expressly include circularity aspects, such as durability, reparability or recyclability, unsubstantiated claims relating to future environmental performance (e.g., "Climate neutral from 2030"), and claims such as 'conscious', 'sustainable' or 'responsible' based exclusively on environmental performance, because such claims relate to social characteristics.

	Finally, it introduces new regulations on information obligations towards consumers regarding the existence of statutory warranty rights (e.g., to remind consumers of the legal guarantee of conformity and its minimum duration of two years) and commercial durability guarantees by defining harmonized EU-wide notifications and labelling, this is, by specifying in detail (by means of implementing acts to be adopted until September 27, 2025), the form and content of this information. Overall, the EmpCo Directive, however, does not specify in detail what companies should do to substantiate their claims, which is why the Green Claims Directive was proposed. In contrast to the GCD, EmpCo is based on an 'ex-post' enforcement assessment from national market surveillance or consumer protection authorities and courts (following the existing UCDP practice).
How GOTS certification supports compliance	Making a generic environmental claim for which a company is not able to demonstrate recognised excellent environmental performance relevant to the claim will be a banned practice under the EmpCo Directive. The same applies to using environmental or sustainability labels and certification schemes not having third-party verification or not established by public authorities. For certification schemes to qualify they must be a "third-party verification scheme that certifies that a product, process or business complies with certain requirements, that allows for the use of a corresponding sustainability label, and the terms of which, including its requirements, are publicly available and meet the following criteria: (i) the scheme is open under transparent, fair, and non-discriminatory terms to all traders willing and able to comply with the scheme's requirements; (ii) the scheme's requirements are developed by the scheme owner in consultation with relevant experts and stakeholders; (iii) the scheme sets out procedures for dealing with non-compliance with the scheme's requirements and provides for the withdrawal or suspension of the use of the sustainability label by the trader in case of non-compliance with the scheme's requirements; and (iv) the monitoring of a trader's compliance with the scheme's requirements is subject to an objective procedure and is carried out by a third party whose competence and independence from both the scheme owner and the trader are based on international, Union or national standards and procedures". GOTS fulfils all these requirements which means that any (correct) use of the GOTS certificate and the GOTS logo should ensure compliance with the EmpCo Directive regarding the substantiation of claims. To further strengthen recognition, GOTS is also continuously working on an even closer alignment with EU Regulation 66/2010 (EU Ecolabel) and with important international norms such as ISO 17065 and ISO 14024 to minimize any room for interpretation.

EU GREEN CLAIMS DIRECTIVE COM 2023/0085 (GCD)	
Status	The Green Claims Directive was proposed by the Commission in March 2023. The European Parliament adopted its first-reading position in March 2024 and the EU Council its general approach in June 2024. Trilogue negotiations started at the end of January 2025 and shall be finalized in June 2025. Once adopted, member states will have 18 months for the transposition and another 6 months to apply the Directive.
Companies in scope	The GCD shall apply to all companies that make explicit environmental claims about their products within the EU. This includes businesses of all sizes, as well as online sellers except for micro-enterprises with less than 10 employees and an annual turnover of less than EUR 2m.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The goals of the Green Claims Directive are to combat 'greenwashing' and to tackle false, misleading or unsubstantiated environmental claims[2] by ensuring that consumers receive reliable, comparable and verifiable information to enable them to make more sustainable decisions. It also aims at banning "self-certifications" by defining clear requirements for environmental or sustainability labels and certification schemes (which are not regulated by any other EU act (e.g., Regulation (EU) 2018/848 on organic products) to ensure harmonized levels of robustness, supervision and transparency and to limit the proliferation of sustainability labels and logos in the EU. Even though the GCD pursues largely the same objectives as the EmpCo Directive, it differs from it in that it is based on an 'ex ante' verification system for environmental claims. This means that member states must ensure that companies substantiate their explicit environmental claims according to the requirements outlined in the GCD before using these claims on their products, and that they must display this substantiation information in a physical or digital form.

2 A study carried out by the Commission in 2020 found out that 53.3% of the 150 environmental claims looked at provided vague, misleading or unfounded information about products' environmental characteristics across the EU and across a wide range of product categories. The study also analysed the substantiation of such claims regarding their clarity, accuracy, and the extent to which they were substantiated with evidence that can be verified. The analysis found that 40% of claims were unsubstantiated.

Articles 3 and 4 of the GCD set out in detail how explicit environmental claims and comparative explicit environmental claims shall be substantiated. To prevent explicit environmental claims from being misleading, it must be ensured the substantiation assessment relies on recognised scientific evidence and state of the art technical knowledge; demonstrates the significance of impacts, aspects and performance from a life-cycle perspective; takes into account all significant aspects and impacts to assess the performance; demonstrates whether the claim is accurate for the whole product or only for parts of it; demonstrates that the claim is not equivalent to requirements imposed by law; provides information on whether the product performs environmentally significantly better than what is common practice; identifies whether a positive achievement leads to significant worsening of another impact; requires greenhouse gas offsets to be reported in a transparent manner; and includes accurate primary or secondary information. As to the assessment of environmental impacts the Commission's proposal explicitly refrains from prescribing a single standard methodology such as PEF (considering especially the impact of microplastics release not considered in the PEFCR for Apparel and Footwear) but promotes a more flexible approach.

To monitor compliance with the GCD, member states must establish procedures to ensure the ex-ante verification of the substantiation and communication of explicit environmental claims to be carried out by a verifier (an accredited third-party conformity assessment body), issuing a 'certificate of conformity'. This 'certificate of conformity' will be recognized across the EU, and will allow companies to use the claim in their communication to consumers across the internal market. This verification procedure also applies to environmental labelling or certification schemes.

According to the GCD, environmental labelling or certification schemes in general shall comply with the following requirements: (a) information about the ownership and the decision-making bodies of the environmental labelling scheme is transparent, accessible free of charge, easy to understand and sufficiently detailed; (b) information about the objectives of the environmental labelling scheme and the requirements and procedures to monitor compliance of the environmental labelling scheme are transparent, accessible free of charge, easy to understand and sufficiently detailed; (c) the conditions for joining the environmental labelling schemes are proportionate to the size and turnover of the companies in order not to exclude small and medium enterprises; (d) the requirements for the environmental labelling scheme have been developed by experts that can ensure their scientific robustness and have been submitted for consultation to a heterogeneous group of stakeholders that has reviewed them and ensured their relevance from a societal perspective; (e) the environmental labelling scheme has a complaint and dispute resolution mechanism in place; and (f) the environmental labelling scheme sets out procedures for dealing with non-compliance and foresees the withdrawal or suspension of the environmental label in case of persistent and flagrant non-compliance with the requirements of the scheme.

As also described in Article 8, setting up new publicly owned labelling schemes would be prohibited from the date of transposition of the Directive. New private labelling schemes set up in the EU and in third countries would have to be approved by member states, taking account of their added value in terms of their environmental ambition and ability to support SMEs' green transition, compared to existing

	schemes. A list of officially recognized environmental labels permitted for use on the EU market will be published. Against the background of the amendments to the proposal introduced by the European Parliament and the EU Council the trilogue negotiations are expected to mainly focus on the following topics: • introduction of a „simplified procedure" which would allow certain types of explicit environmental claims (e.g., claims based on certification) to be exempt from third-party verification. Instead, companies could prove compliance by completing a technical document before using the claim, • requirements for climate-related, so-called "offset claims" (i.e., explicit environmental claims related to climate regarding balancing out emissions by purchasing carbon credits), • introduction of a deadline for the 'ex-ante' verification.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	GOTS complies with all the requirements for environmental labelling or certification schemes as defined in the GCD, which is why it should qualify for being an officially recognized environmental label permitted for use on the EU market. Compliance with the GCD, however, must be demonstrated through a 'certificate of conformity' issued by an accredited third-party conformity assessment body or verifier. The selection of verifiers will be decided by the competent authorities designated by each EU Member State. These authorities will be responsible for ensuring that the verifiers meet the necessary criteria and standards to perform their duties effectively and impartially. Independently of this verification process within the framework of the GCD, GOTS is also continuously working on an even closer alignment with important international norms such as ISO 17065 and ISO 14024 to minimize any room for interpretation.
EU MICROPLASTICS REGULATION 2023/2055	
Status	The Regulation 2023/2055 came into force on October 17, 2023. Its application deadlines vary depending on the type of product and range from October 2027 to October 2035. For textiles the application date is October 17, 2031.
Companies in scope	The Regulation applies to all companies that manufacture, import, or use products containing intentionally added synthetic polymer microparticles (microplastics) in the EU.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The Regulation addresses the intentional use of microplastics in products. Textiles are in scope insofar as the sale of non-biodegradable, insoluble plastic glitter for textiles purposes is banned when glittered articles serve purely or primarily a decorative function, and the glitter can detach from the article under normal use.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	For GOTS version 8.0, Global Standard has proposed to include intentionally added microplastics and decorative accessories with intentionally added synthetic polymer microparticles (including plastic glitter, plastic beads) that hold risks to shed during normal use in the list of prohibited materials used for Accessories.

3.3. EU LEGISLATION ON WASTE

EU PACKAGING AND PACKAGING WASTE REGULATION 2025/40 (PPWR)	
Status	The Regulation entered into force on February 11, 2025, and will apply from August 12, 2026.
Companies in scope	All EU manufacturers and importers into the EU (whether they are incorporated in the EU or not) as well as any suppliers of packaging or packaging materials fall under the scope of the PPWR.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The PPWR aims at reducing packaging waste by setting ambitious targets and promoting reusable and refillable packaging solutions, making all packaging recyclable in an economically viable way by 2030, harmonizing packaging rules on labeling, void space, and mandatory recycled content to ensure a level playing field across all member states, setting strict guidelines for environmental marketing, allowing claims only when products exceed the regulation's minimum requirements, harmonizing at digitalizing EPR systems, making producers more accountable for the entire lifecycle of their packaging, mandating clear sorting labels on all consumer packaging, and introducing a Digital Product Passport to track packaging information. Companies in scope must make sure to use packaging and packaging materials that meet the new recyclability and sustainability standards by e.g., transitioning to mono-material designs and integrating recycled content. Robust tracking and reporting systems will be required to ensure compliance. Companies using non-recyclable or environmentally harmful materials might face high costs under Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	GOTS stipulates in detail which packaging materials may be used for B2B and B2C trade of GOTS goods. It asks, for example, that synthetic packaging material shall not contain chlorinated plastics (e.g. PVC), prohibits the single use of virgin plastic hangers and describes requirements for bioplastic, paper, cardboard or textile materials used for packaging.
EU WASTE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE COM 2023/420 - REVISION	
Status	The Waste Framework Directive 2008/98 came into force end 2008. In July 2023 the legislative process for its revision started and on February 18, 2025, a provisional agreement between the EU Council and the EU Parliament has been reached. Once adopted, member states will have until December 31, 2026, to transpose it into their national laws and to apply it 18 months later.
Companies in scope	All manufacturers and importers of products as well as all companies related to waste management or waste treatment in the EU.

Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The so-called “targeted” revision of the WFD focuses on food and textile waste. It builds on the obligation of EU member states to separately collect textiles on their respective territories, which entered into force on January 1, 2025. The revision seeks to introduce compulsory and harmonized Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes applying eco-modulated fees for textiles and footwear to be set up by each member state, and to tackle illegal textile waste exports. Once implemented, it is expected that the revised WFD will significantly increase transparency, shift costs from governments to producers and consumers thus encouraging them to design and buy longer-lasting textile products that are easier to be reused, repaired and recycled, and to increase collection and recovery rates.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	Although the criteria and parameters for the eco-modulation of fees to be paid by producers are not clear yet, it can be expected that GOTS certified products will be among the textile products with the least negative social and environmental impact. In addition, the GOTS certification process will support the reporting of product specifications required to eco-modulate fees. For GOTS version 8.0, Global Standard has proposed additional requirements regarding waste management to ensure that GOTS Certified Entities e.g., maintain a waste inventory system, and refrain from unsustainable waste disposal practices. It is also foreseen to add the obligation for GOTS Certified Entities to assess the shedding of microfibres and microplastics and take measures to prevent it.

3.4. TIMELINE FOR BINDING EU REGULATIONS AND EU DIRECTIVES

EU Regulation / EU Directive	Before 2025	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	After 2028
CSRD *	◆◆◆	◆	◆	◆		◆
CSDDD *	◆◆		◆	◆	◆	◆
Omnibus Package **		◆ ◆◆		◆		
FLR	◆◆					
TLR – Revision **		◆ ◆	◆			
ESPR **	◆◆		◆◆ 1) ◆ 2)		◆ 2)	
EmpCo	◆◆		◆ ◆			
GCD **	◆	◆		◆ ◆		
Microplastics Reg.	◆◆					◆
PPWR	◆	◆	◆			
WFD – Revision	◆	◆		◆	◆	

◆ Proposal published ◆ Regulation / Directive in force ◆ Directive transposed ◆ Delegated Act in effect ◆ Regulation / Directive to be applied

* Legal requirements take effect on a staggered basis depending on defined thresholds

** Estimation – no timeline published yet

1) Refers to the prohibition to destroy unsold consumer goods (to be applied by SMEs only in 2030)

2) Refers to Ecodesign Criteria and Digital Product Passport

4. SELECTED LEGISLATION ON NATIONAL LEVEL

GERMAN DUE DILIGENCE IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN ACT	
Status	The German Due Diligence in the Supply Chain Act (Lieferkettensorgfaltspflichtengesetz (LkSG)) entered into force on January 1, 2023, being applicable for companies with more than 3,000 employees in Germany from this date. As of January 1, 2024, the Act also applies to companies with more than 1,000 employees in Germany.
Companies in scope	All companies with more than 1,000 employees with head office, principal place of business, administrative headquarters, registered office, or branch office in Germany. This includes retail outlets of foreign companies if registered in Germany.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The Act aims at improving the human rights situation and environmental protection by defining nine due diligence (DD) obligations companies in scope must observe in their entire supply chain. Companies must introduce effective risk management to identify, minimize and prevent violations of human rights, define internal responsibilities, carry out regular risk analyses, issue a policy statement, establish preventive measures, take remedial action, set up a complaints procedure, make sure that DD obligations are implemented for both direct and indirect suppliers, document and report. Focus areas include child labor, forced labor and discrimination, land grabbing and violations of environmental law; occupational health and safety, right to fair wages and to form trade unions. Companies are obliged to report to the Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (Bundesamt für Wirtschaft und Ausfuhrkontrolle (BAFA) on an annual basis and no later than four months after the end of the Financial Year.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	GOTS provides a structured roadmap guiding companies to mitigate potential harm to human rights and the environment. As also stated by BAFA[3], the use of standards such as GOTS enhances the robustness and credibility of human rights and environmental due diligence frameworks. Standards therefore are important supplementary tools for responsible business conduct.

3 BAFA – Homepage – Standards, Audits und Zertifizierungen als Instrumente im Sorgfaltsprozess

NORWEGIAN TRANSPARENCY ACT	
Status	The Norwegian 'Act relating to enterprises' transparency and work on fundamental human rights and decent working conditions', in short Transparency Act, came into force on July 1, 2022, and must be applied since that date.
Companies in scope	The Act applies to larger enterprises that are resident in Norway and that offer goods or services in or outside Norway and to those parts of larger foreign enterprises that are domiciled in Norway and offer goods and services in Norway, and that are liable to tax to Norway pursuant to Norwegian legislation. A company is covered by the Transparency Act, if it is liable to account pursuant to the Norwegian Accounting Act (which excludes many public sector institutions but may include non-profit organisations, foundations or other types of non-commercial enterprises). Companies are considered 'large' if they exceed the threshold for two of the following three conditions: sales revenue at least NOK 70m, balance sheet total at least NOK 35m and average number of employees in the Financial Year of at least 50 FTE (full-time equivalents). Companies not included in the scope may still be affected indirectly as companies in scope may place demands or expectations on their suppliers or business partners in their due diligence processes.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The Act aims at promoting respect for fundamental human rights and decent working conditions in connection with the production of goods and provision of services. Companies in scope must carry out due diligence throughout their supply chains in accordance with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct (but limited to fundamental human rights and decent working conditions) and publish an annual account of due diligence (based on detailed guidance published by the Norwegian Consumer Authority) to provide insight into the company's key findings and measures implemented to address adverse impacts. The account must be made easily accessible on the company's website by June 30 of each year and otherwise updated in case of significant changes to the company's risk assessment. Finally, all companies in scope must provide information on request, whereby any person has the right to request information regarding how the company addresses actual and potential adverse impacts on fundamental human rights and decent working conditions.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	GOTS provides a structured roadmap guiding companies to implement due diligence and mitigate potential harm to human rights including working conditions and the environment. GOTS' due diligence requirements have been developed based on the OECD Due Diligence Guidelines for Responsible Business Conduct, and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights thus enabling companies to also comply with the Norwegian Transparency Act. Global Standard offers trainings on Responsible Business Conduct and DD for GOTS Certified Entities and Certifying Bodies and has developed and published the following two handbooks for guidance: • GOTS Due Diligence Handbook for Certified Entities • GOTS Due Diligence Handbook for Auditors

US UYGHUR FORCED LABOR PREVENTION ACT (UFLPA)	
Status	The UFLPA came into force on June 21, 2022. This date also marks the beginning of its enforcement by US Customs and Border Protection (CBP).
Companies in scope	The UFLPA applies to a wide range of companies involved in placing goods on the US market, such as importers, manufacturers, retailers, suppliers or logistics and shipping companies.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The goal of the UFLPA is to prohibit the importation of goods produced wholly or in part in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) of China, or by entities on the UFLPA Entity List, unless proven otherwise (thus establishing a so-called "rebuttable presumption"). It also aims at holding individuals or entities responsible for forced labor practices accountable through sanctions, and at promoting human rights and ethical business practices by ensuring that American entities are not complicit in forced labor. In case products are detained by CBP, the company affected may request an applicability review to be conducted by CBP. For this, companies must provide detailed supply chain mapping and comprehensive documentation to demonstrate the country or region of origin, that transactions have occurred both physically and financially, and that no forced labor was used at any stage of production. CBP's Operational Guidance for Importers provides a detailed list of documentation required by importers.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	GOTS is dedicated to eliminating forced labour in the textile sector and upholds a zero-tolerance policy regarding any cases of forced labour. In October 2021, GOTS implemented a requirement to specify the region of origin of the raw material in transaction certificates, allowing buyers to perform their due diligence. GOTS strictly prohibits forced labour throughout the value chain and provides comprehensive tools and guidance for GOTS Certified Entities to meet due diligence requirements, including the ban on forced labour, particularly in high-risk areas. It also offers auditors tools to evaluate the due diligence measures implemented by GOTS Certified Entities concerning forced labour and supplies auditing techniques for identifying potential human rights abuses related to forced labour. In the event an entity to be certified is included on the UFLPA Entity list, Certification Bodies shall carry out desktop research and background checks on the relevant entity. Based on the findings, the Certification Body may decide not to proceed with certification or to decline certification services. Furthermore, GOTS can support Certified Entities in obtaining or producing the documentation required by CBP for an eventual applicability review.

FRENCH LABELLING DECREE (2022-748)	
Status	The Decree came into effect on January 1, 2023. It was implemented on a staggered basis with companies with an annual turnover of more than EUR 50m and placing at least 25,000 articles on the French market having to comply immediately, companies with an annual turnover exceeding EUR 20m and placing at least 10,000 articles on the French market since January 1, 2024, and companies with an annual turnover exceeding EUR 10m and placing at least 10,000 articles on the French market since January 1, 2025.
Companies in scope	The Decree applies to manufacturers and importers with a minimum annual turnover of EUR 10m which place at least 10,000 articles on the French market.
Purpose of the legislation / main topics addressed	The French Labelling Decree (Décret n° 2022-748 relatif à l'information des consommateurs sur les qualités et caractéristiques environnementales des produits générateurs de déchets) mandates that companies in scope provide detailed environmental information about their products, including aspects like recyclability, compostability, and the presence of harmful substances. It aims at enhancing transparency and promoting sustainable practices by ensuring consumers have access to accurate environmental information about the products they purchase. To comply with the requirements of the Decree, companies must create a dedicated product sheet ('fiche produit relative aux qualités et caractéristiques environnementales'). They also must make the environmental information available electronically (ideally using QR codes). Generic environmental claims like "eco-friendly" or "biodegradable" are banned unless backed by verifiable evidence. To substantiate such claims, companies can use certifications approved by recognized authorities (e.g., COFRAC). To calculate the environmental footprint of a product, France is favoring a method called "Ecobalyse" which produces a single score based on an aggregated indicator. On February 13, 2025, the French government notified the European Commission of its intention to adopt the Ecobalyse as the key tool to substantiate green claims for textile products sold in France. The Commission now has until May 14 to either approve or reject this methodology.
How GOTS certification supports compliance	Although GOTS fulfils the requirements usually defined for recognized certification schemes with third-party verification, it is, as of today, not officially approved by COFRAC. It can, however, be expected that much data and information gathered during the GOTS certification process can be used for substantiating any claims under the Decree. To further strengthen recognition and alignment, GOTS is continuously working on an even closer alignment with important international norms such as ISO 17065 and ISO 14024 to minimize any room for interpretation.

GLOBAL ORGANIC TEXTILE STANDARD
ECOLOGY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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