PETITION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The polluter-pays principle in the clothing sector stops at the cost of collection

Request to close gaps in extended producer responsibility, export controls, ecodesign and reporting, and to establish an Environmental Justice Fund

Addressee	Committee on Petitions (PETI), European Parliament
Legal basis	Article 227 TFEU; Article 44 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
Petitioner	World 3.0 Foundation 26 Bolesława Chrobrego Street, 81-783 Sopot, Poland KRS 0000579053 · NIP 5851472121 · REGON 362694953 · EU PIC 864480103
Represented by	Krzysztof Okliński, Board Member (Analytical strategy and systemic operations)
Language	English

1. Summary

Since 1 January 2025, every municipality in the Union has been required to collect textiles separately. Today the cost of this obligation is borne by residents through municipal waste fees, not by the companies that place clothing on the market. Directive (EU) 2025/1892 introduces extended producer responsibility (EPR) for textiles, but national schemes need to be operational only by 17 April 2028. Moreover, Article 8a(4)(c) of Directive 2008/98/EC caps producers' financial contributions at the cost of waste management services. As a result, the polluter-pays principle covers clean-up within the EU, but not the costs of exporting waste to third countries or the environmental damage in producing countries.

The petitioner calls for five actions: (1) mandatory modulation of EPR fees targeting fast-fashion practices, minimum standards for fee levels, and full coverage of municipal collection costs; (2) a Commission-commissioned quantification of the full end-of-life costs of textiles; (3) use of existing powers to control exports of used textiles, and a narrowing of the exemptions; (4) a binding deadline for the ESPR delegated act for apparel; (5) restoration of verifiable reporting of Scope 3 emissions in supply chains. Budget revenues generated by these measures should feed an Environmental Justice Fund that lowers the cost of municipal services for residents.

2. Subject of the petition and Union competence

The petition concerns the implementation and completion of Union law in the fields of the environment and the internal market. All requests fall within the shared competence under Article 4(2)(e) TFEU and within action taken on the basis of Article 192 TFEU (environmental policy) and Article 114 TFEU (internal market). The Environmental Justice Fund clause also concerns Union finances and the own resources system (Article 311 TFEU).

The petition refers to the following acts: Directive 2008/98/EC as amended by Directive (EU) 2025/1892; Regulation (EU) 2024/1157 on shipments of waste; Regulation (EU) 2024/1781 on ecodesign for sustainable products (ESPR) and the ESPR Working Plan COM(2025) 187; Directive (EU) 2022/2464 (CSRD) as amended by Directive (EU) 2026/470 (Omnibus I); and Council Regulation (EU) 2026/382 eliminating the customs duty relief for consignments valued up to EUR 150.

The petition does not call for a new regulatory architecture where the Union already has one. Most requests concern the exercise of powers the Commission already holds and timely transposition by Member States. The petitioner proposes legislative amendments in only four narrow areas: mandatory fee modulation targeting fast-fashion practices, the cost cap on EPR fees, the exemption in Article 22d(3) of Directive 2008/98/EC, and a criterion of absorption capacity of receiving markets for exports.

3. How the matter directly affects the petitioner

The petitioner is a foundation registered in Poland. The matter affects it directly in two respects: as an organisation researching the effects of regulation of the clothing sector, and as part of the community of residents who finance the municipal waste system.

In Poland, separate collection of textiles, clothing and footwear has applied since 1 January 2025. The task has been assigned to municipalities, which accept this waste at municipal separate collection points (PSZOK). Municipal systems are financed by the municipal waste management fee paid by residents. Until a national EPR scheme is in place, clothing producers make no contribution to this system.

As of 26 November 2026, Poland had not published a draft law transposing Directive (EU) 2025/1892. In January 2026, in reply to parliamentary question No 14698, the Ministry of Climate and Environment reported that conceptual work was ongoing, and in April 2026 it held pre-consultations. The transposition deadline is 17 June 2027. Every month of delay extends the period in which residents bear the cost of collection.

4. Facts and legal background

Around 12.6 million tonnes of textile waste are generated in the Union every year (recitals of Directive (EU) 2025/1892). A Union legal framework for this waste stream exists, but each key instrument has a gap in timing, scope or enforcement. A detailed analysis is provided in the petitioner's report, annexed to this petition.

Instrument	What applies	Gap
Directive 2008/98/EC as amended by 2025/1892	Mandatory EPR schemes for textiles, with fee modulation based on ESPR requirements (Art. 22c(5)); transposition by 17.06.2027, schemes operational by 17.04.2028	Fees capped at the cost of services (Art. 8a(4)(c)); modulation targeting fast fashion is only optional (Art. 22c(6)); costs in third countries and future damage remain outside scope
Article 22d of Directive 2008/98/EC	Collected textiles are waste upon collection; mandatory sorting; inspection of shipments suspected of being waste	Exemption in para. 3 for products assessed at the collection point as fit for re-use; obligations bind only after transposition
Regulation 2024/1157, Articles 29 and 40	Criteria distinguishing used goods from waste, applicable from 21.05.2026; from 21.05.2027 a ban on exports of waste for recovery to non-OECD countries, except those on the list (Art. 40)	Since 20.05.2024 the Commission has had the power to adopt detailed criteria (Art. 29(3)) but has not adopted them for textiles
End-of-waste criteria for textiles	Announced in recital 49 of Directive 2025/1892	Initiative in preparation, indicatively Q4 2026; criteria not adopted
ESPR (2024/1781) and Working Plan COM(2025) 187	Apparel as a priority category; from 19.07.2026 a ban on destruction of unsold apparel and footwear by large enterprises (Art. 25)	The apparel delegated act has only an indicative date (Q4 2027); until it applies there are no durability requirements and no Digital Product Passport
CSRD as amended by 2026/470 (Omnibus I)	Definition of Scope 3 emissions in ESRS E1 unchanged	Reporting obligation applies only to companies above 1,000 employees and EUR 450 million turnover; suppliers below the threshold need not provide data; verification minimal

These gaps are confirmed by an independent expert source. In an interview given to the petitioner on 11 June 2026, Prof. Ingun Grimstad Klepp (SIFO, Oslo Metropolitan University) stated that in Norway producers currently contribute nothing to the cost of textile waste:

> *"The contribution today is 0. And the government have decided on an EPR system with minimum costs."*

In her view, the fee must be substantial or modulated to have any effect on the business model at all. Her team has developed a modulation model that links the fee to quantities placed on the market and the duration of service of the product.

Prof. Klepp also pointed out that nobody knows the end fate of exported garments. In her view, exports of quantities beyond the level useful for the receiver must stop, as must the shipment of synthetics and other hazardous waste out of Europe. She noted that the end-of-life costs of textiles have not been reliably calculated. The petitioner treats this as a data gap that the Commission should close, not as a basis for its own estimates.

5. Requests

The petitioner asks the European Parliament to address the following calls to the European Commission and the Member States.

Request 1. EPR that changes the business model rather than adding a small fee

1. Directive (EU) 2025/1892 already requires fee modulation based on ecodesign requirements (Article 22c(5)(a)), but these requirements do not yet exist for apparel. Modulation counteracting fast-fashion practices, taking into account product lifetime and duration of use, is only optional (Article 22c(6)). The petitioner calls for an amendment to Article 22c(6) making this modulation mandatory and extending it to the volume placed on the market, for the adoption by the Commission of the implementing acts under Article 22c(7), and for minimum Union standards on fee levels that rule out schemes based on token fees.
2. Member States ensure that national EPR schemes fully cover the costs of separate collection carried out by municipalities. Municipalities are obliged to pass this contribution on as a reduction in the municipal fee paid by residents.
3. The Commission carries out an assessment of Article 8a(4)(c) of Directive 2008/98/EC as regards textiles. The cost cap on EPR fees means that producers pay for clean-up within the EU, but not for the costs their products generate outside it.
4. Poland and the other Member States transpose Directive (EU) 2025/1892 by 17 June 2027. In doing so, they make use of Article 22c(6) and introduce fee modulation targeting fast-fashion practices.

Request 2. Quantify the full end-of-life cost of textiles

The Commission commissions an independent study of the full end-of-life costs of textile products placed on the Union market. The study covers costs borne by municipalities per tonne and per resident, the costs of export and disposal in third countries, and the cost of environmental damage. The results are made public and serve as the basis for calibrating the fees under Request 1.

Request 3. Control of exports of used textiles

From 21 May 2027, Article 40 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1157 prohibits exports of non-hazardous waste for recovery to non-OECD countries. The only exception concerns countries on a list adopted by delegated act. The classification of an item as used goods or waste therefore determines whether a shipment falls under the ban. Without detailed criteria and inspections, the ban can be circumvented by declaring waste as second-hand clothing.

1. The Commission adopts an implementing act under Article 29(3) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1157 laying down criteria to distinguish used goods from waste for textiles and footwear. The Commission also adopts, on schedule, end-of-waste criteria for textiles under Article 6 of Directive 2008/98/EC.
2. Member States transpose Article 22d(7) to (10) of Directive 2008/98/EC on time and ensure effective inspection of shipments, with inspection costs charged to the organisers of shipments or to producers.
3. The Commission prepares a legislative proposal under Article 192 TFEU that narrows the exemption in Article 22d(3) and assesses the introduction of a criterion of documented absorption capacity of receiving markets. The current criteria concern individual items, not the scale of exports.

Request 4. A deadline for apparel under the ESPR

The Commission sets a binding deadline of 31 December 2027 for the adoption of the ESPR delegated act for apparel, with application by 1 July 2029, covering requirements on durability, reparability and recycled content, as well as the Digital Product Passport. The Commission also publishes annual data on enforcement of the ban on destruction of unsold apparel and footwear under Article 25 ESPR, including data disclosed under Article 24.

Request 5. Verifiable data on supply chain emissions

In its review of the CSRD and ESRS, the Commission assesses the effects of Directive (EU) 2026/470 on Scope 3 emissions data in the clothing sector, where the supply chain accounts for most of the carbon footprint. The petitioner calls for restoring the requirement for these data to be assured by an auditor, and for emissions data to flow from suppliers to reporting undertakings, at least in high-emission sectors.

6. Request for integration with the Environmental Justice Fund (EJF)

Request for integration with the Environmental Justice Fund (EJF): We request that all budget revenues (taxes, customs duties, compensatory charges) generated by the implementation of the above regulations be redirected in full to the Environmental Justice Fund (EJF). The Fund is intended to legally oblige local and regional authorities to use these resources for the direct reduction of the cost of municipal services for residents, serving as a mechanism for repaying the environmental debt incurred by the sector concerned.

For the clothing sector, budget revenues include in particular customs duties on consignments valued up to EUR 150, including the transitional duty of EUR 3 per item applied from 1 July 2026 under Council Regulation (EU) 2026/382, penalties imposed for misleading environmental claims, and any future charges on overproduction, in line with the EJF funding definition. EPR fees are not budget revenue: under Article 8a of Directive 2008/98/EC they finance the collection and treatment system. Their role in relieving residents is set out in Request 1, point 2.

Customs duties, including the duty under Regulation 2026/382, are traditional own resources of the Union (Article 2(1)(a) of Council Decision (EU, Euratom) 2020/2053). Member States make them available to the Union budget after retaining 25% as collection costs. The petitioner therefore calls for two solutions: in the Union budget, an EJF budget line corresponding to revenue from duties on low-value consignments, if necessary through an amendment of the Own Resources Decision; and in the Member States, allocation to the EJF of the share retained as collection costs.

EJF resources are allocated to municipalities according to indicators of the burden imposed by the sector: the mass of textiles collected separately in the municipal system and the cost of that collection, and the number of e-commerce parcels handled by local logistics hubs. Since the separate collection obligation covers every municipality in the Union, the cost of the clothing sector is borne by all local communities, in proportion to the waste stream collected.

7. Annexes

1. World 3.0 report summary: Regulatory gaps and hidden costs (legal status 25 November 2026)
2. Interview with Prof. Ingun Grimstad Klepp (SIFO, Oslo Metropolitan University), 11 June 2026, original in English
3. List of legal acts and data sources referred to in the petition

Sopot, 26 November 2026

Krzysztof Okliński
Board Member · Analytical strategy and systemic operations
on behalf of World 3.0 Foundation