

**TEXTILE LABELLING
REGULATIONS**

Guidance on the Textile
Products (Labelling and Fibre
Composition) Regulations 2012

MAY 2012

Guidance Notes

Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27th September 2011 on textile fibres and related labelling and marking of the fibre composition of textile products and repealing Council Directive 73/44/EEC and Directives 96/73/EC and 2008/121/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (“the EU Regulation”)

and

The Textile Products (Labelling and Fibre Composition) Regulations 2011 (SI 2012 No.1102) (“the UK Regulations”)

These guidance notes have been produced to provide guidance to business on the EU Regulation and the UK Regulations.

However, they do not carry any legal authority and should be read in conjunction with the legislation itself.

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The EU Regulation

1. A new EU Regulation (EU 1007/2011) on textile names and the related labelling of textile products was adopted by the European Union on 18 October 2011. The Regulation is directly applicable in the UK and all Member States and takes effect on 8 May 2012¹. The corresponding UK Regulations set out the enforcement methods and sanctions that will apply in relation to the EU Regulation, within the UK (see paragraphs 48-53).
2. The requirements for the labelling of textiles remain largely similar to those under the previous legislation but with the following changes:
 - There is a new requirement to clearly label the non-textile parts of animal origin in textile products.
 - The textile parts of footwear are no longer within the scope of the EU Regulation. Instead these are now dealt with by the Footwear (Indication of Composition) Labelling Regulations 1995².
3. In addition, the EU Regulation no longer applies in cases where textile products are contracted out to persons working in their own homes or to independent firms that carry out work from materials supplied to them or where customised textile products are made up by self-employed tailors.
4. The additional aim of the new EU Regulation is to provide a simplified application and approval procedure which will shorten the time between the submission of an application and the adoption of new fibre names.

The main features of the EU Regulation

5. The EU Regulation requires textile products (as defined in paragraph 6 below, and also the products listed in paragraph 7), which are made available on the market, to be labelled, marked or accompanied with commercial documents, in compliance with the EU Regulation (general requirement set out in Article 4).

The definition of a textile product

6. The EU Regulation defines a textile product as being “any raw, semi-worked, worked, semi-manufactured, manufactured, semi-made-up or made-up product which is exclusively composed of textile fibres, regardless of the mixing or assembly process employed.” (Article 3(1)(a))

¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:272:0001:0064:EN:PDF>

² <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.bis.gov.uk/files/file8165.pdf>

7. In addition a number of other products are treated as textile products (see Article 2(2) of the EU Regulation). These are:
- Products containing at least 80 % by weight of textile fibres.
 - Furniture, umbrella, and sunshade coverings containing at least 80 % by weight of textile products;
 - The textile components (provided such textile components constitute at least 80 % by weight of such upper layers or coverings) of:
 - a. the upper layer of multi-layer floor coverings;
 - b. Mattress coverings;
 - c. Coverings of camping goods
 - Products incorporating textile components and which form an integral part of the product, where the compositions should be specified.
8. Only the textile fibre names listed in Annex I to the EU Regulation shall be used on labels to describe the composition of a textile product. In order to add a new textile fibre name to the list set out in Annex I, an application must be made to the Commission, which includes a technical file as compiled in accordance with Annex II of the EU Regulation.

The expressions ‘100 %’, ‘pure’ and ‘all’

(Article 7 of the EU Regulation)

9. A textile product may be described as ‘100 %’, ‘pure’, or ‘all’ only if it is composed exclusively of one fibre type. No other similar expressions may be used. It is not, however, compulsory to use these terms when a product is so composed and, for example, a 100 % cotton garment may be described simply as ‘cotton’.
10. A textile product described by one of these terms may contain:
- up to 2 % of other fibres which are accounted for by inadvertent impurities or, in the case of a product where the final formation of fibres before spinning is determined by a carding process, 5 % of the weight of the product. (In relation to wool textiles, for example, a woollen product may be indicated as ‘100 %’, ‘pure’ or ‘all’, provided that it does not contain more than 5 % by weight of inadvertent impurities);
 - up to 2 % of other fibres which are incorporated to obtain an anti-static effect.
11. Additionally, the terms ‘100 %’, ‘pure’ or ‘all’ may be used to describe products incorporating those components (described in paragraph 26-28) which may be

composed of a different fibre but which have to be left out of account in determining the fibre percentage of a product.

Use of the term ‘wool’

(Article 8 and Annex III of the EU Regulation)

12. The fibre name ‘wool’ can be used to describe either fibre obtained from sheep’s or lambs’ fleeces or a mixture of such fibres and certain fine animal hairs (*viz* alpaca, llama, camel, cashmere, mohair, angora, vicuna, yak, guanaco, beaver, otter). The indication ‘100 % wool’ may describe a mixture of, say, fibre from sheep’s or lambs’ fleeces and cashmere, though if the cashmere accounted for the greater percentage by weight of the product, it would make sense for the higher quality and more expensive cashmere fibre to be named separately, eg ‘60 % cashmere, 40 % wool’ and ‘100 % wool’ are equally permissible.

Wool products

Expressions ‘fleece wool’ or virgin wool’

13. Indications of fibre composition, wool products may be described as ‘fleece wool’ or ‘virgin wool’ only if they are composed exclusively of wool fibre which has not previously been incorporated in a finished product, and which has not been subjected to any spinning and/or felting processes other than those required in the manufacture of that product, nor to any process or use which has damaged the fibre other than a process or use required by the manufacture of the product. A product which is described as ‘fleece wool’ or ‘virgin wool’ may, however, contain up to 0.3 % by weight of fibrous impurities: up to 7 % by weight of fibres intended purely to produce a decorative effect which is visible and distinct; and up to 2 % by weight of fibres incorporated to obtain an anti-static effect (Article 10 of the EU Regulation).
14. The expressions above may also be used in an indication of fibre composition of a textile product which contains other textile fibres, if:
 - all the wool contained in the product satisfies the requirements set out above; and
 - the wool content accounts for not less than 25 % of the total weight of the product; and
 - in the case of a scribbled mixture, the wool is mixed with only one other fibre.
15. If the terms ‘fleece wool’ and ‘virgin wool’ are used in such cases, it is necessary to give the percentage weight of *each* fibre in the mixture which, excepting for scribbled mixtures, may vary by up to 3 % between the actual and indicated percentage.

Pure new wool

16. In the UK the terms ‘fleece wool’ and ‘virgin wool’ are not as widely used as the term ‘new wool’. In particular the term ‘pure new wool’ (normally associated with the

Woolmark which is a Certification Trade Mark registered with the Intellectual Property Office for use only under license available from the International Wool Secretariat) has gained wide acceptance in the UK. Although not specifically mentioned in the Regulations, the term 'pure new wool' may continue to be used in the way in which it has been used hitherto. Other terms currently in general use to describe wool products, eg Shetland wool, botany wool, and lambswool, may also continue to be used.

Mixtures containing fine animal hairs

17. Products containing a mixture of fibres from sheep's or lambs' fleeces and certain fine animal hairs (*viz* alpaca, llama, camel, cashmere, mohair, angora, vicuna, yak, guanaco, beaver, otter) may either be described as 'wool' or the exact nature of such fine animal hairs may be specified.

Textile products containing non-textile parts of animal origin

18. The presence of non-textile parts of animal origin in textile products (Article 12) must be clearly labelled or marked in such a way that is not misleading and that the consumer can easily understand. The label or marking of products containing such parts, shall be indicated using the phrase "*Contains non-textile parts of animal origin*" whenever they are made available on the market.

Other common descriptions

19. Apart from the wool products, descriptions which have been used to describe the characteristics of products may continue to be used where such descriptions are consistent with fair trade practices in the UK. These descriptions would include, for example, mercerised cotton, Sea Island cotton, Irish Linen, Axminster and Tweed.

Describing a textile product composed of two or more fibres

20. Textile products containing two or more textile components of two or more different textile fibres must bear a label stating the fibre composition of each component.
21. Textile products containing two or more components (Article 11 of the EU Regulation) do not need to be labelled as above if;
 - The components are not main linings;
 - Components represent less than 30 % of the total weight of the textile product.
22. Where two or more textile products have the same fibre content and normally form a single unit, they may bear only one label.
23. If there are fibres which separately account for no more than 5 % or collectively no

more than 15 % of the total weight of a product, they may all be described as 'other fibres', followed by their total percentage by weight (Article 9(2)). However, where the generic name of a fibre which accounts for less than 15 % of the total weight of a product is specified, the full percentage composition of that product shall be given: e.g. A fabric containing 55 % wool, 21 % viscose, 14 % acrylic and 10 % nylon, might also be described as '55 % wool, 21 % viscose, acrylic, nylon'. An unusual mixture of, say, 30 % cotton, 20 % polyester, 14 % nylon, 11 % elastane, 9 % wool, 8 % acrylic, 8 % jute might also be described as: '30 % cotton, 20 % polyester, nylon, elastane, other fibres 25 %.

Textile products whose fibre composition is difficult to determine

24. The EU Regulation allows the expression 'mixed fibres' and 'unspecified textile composition' to be used in relation to any product or part of any product whose fibre composition is difficult to determine at the time of manufacture (Article 9(4)). The time of manufacture may be any stage in the manufacturing process, eg at the yarn stage, fabric stage or garment making-up stage etc. This means that where, due to the nature of the product or the production process, information about fibre composition cannot be obtained from a previous supplier and it would be demonstrably impracticable to undertake the testing necessary to determine precise fibre composition, the terms 'mixed fibres' or 'unspecified textile composition' may be used. These terms may not be used if random testing would enable the fibre composition of a whole batch to be determined.
25. Examples of cases where the terms 'mixed fibres' or 'unspecified textile composition' may be used are in substandard and job lots, eg scrap yarn mixtures. The exact fibre composition of such yarns can only be determined by fibre analysis which would be impracticable on grounds of cost. In such cases it is permissible to describe the product as 'mixed fibres' or 'unspecified textile composition', or alternatively, where it is possible to determine a minimum percentage of the main fibre, for example cotton, to describe the product as 'mixed fibres, 45 % cotton'. A similar method may be used to describe products made from reconstituted fabrics. Where it is possible to determine the minimum percentages of the main fibres in such fabrics, the names of these fibres and their minimum percentages may be specified, eg 40 % wool, 35 % polyester, 25 % mixed fibres.

Textile products with two or more units or textile components

(Article 11 of the EU Regulation)

[Excluding brassieres, corsets, corselets and other articles of corsetry for which separate

requirements are stipulated (see paragraph 29 and the products mentioned in paragraphs 30-34)]

26. There are a number of textile products which are made from two or more fabrics with different fibre composition. Such products include, for example, suits in which the jacket is of different material from that of the trousers; dresses where the fibre composition of the bodice or top is different from that of the skirt; jerkins where the sleeves differ from the main body; and fabric to fabric bonded cloth. In these cases where any component accounts for 30 %³ or more of the weight of the product it will be necessary to provide a *separate* indication of its fibre composition, either on one label or by separate labels or tickets for each component. To take the first example of a suit, a typical description might be 'jacket: wool: trousers: polyester'.
27. Although the EU Regulation prescribes the labelling of components only where they account for 30 % or more of the overall weight of the product, 'component labelling' obviously has its attractions in cases where varying sizes and uncertainties in manufacturing processes make it difficult to determine what percentage each fibre represents in relation to the whole product. In the case of a blouse with nylon sleeves and polyester bodice where, for example, the nylon sleeves account for less than 30 %, it would be more informative to label the product 'bodice: polyester; sleeves: nylon'.
28. In the case of two or more textile products which have the same fibre composition and normally form a single unit, e.g. two or three-piece suits, a single indication of fibre composition is sufficient.

Brassières, corsets, corselets or other articles of corsetry⁴

(Annex IV of the EU Regulation paragraph 2)

29. The indication of fibre composition of any of the following may be given by a single indication in respect of the whole product, or if preferred, by separate indications of specified components:
 - *Brassières*: the outside and inside fabric of the cups and back;
 - *Corsets*: the front, rear and side stiffening panels;
 - *Corselets*: the outside and inside fabrics of the cups, the front and rear stiffening panels and side panels;
 - *Other articles of corsetry*: all components which account for more than 10 % of the weight of the product.

Etch-printed and embroidered fabrics

³ See paragraph 36 for components which shall be left out of account when determining the percentage content of a fibre.

⁴ Detail contained in Annex IV of the EU Regulations

(Annex IV of the EU Regulation paragraphs 4 and 5)

30. The indication of fibre composition in any etch-printed or embroidered fabric may be given by separate indications of fibre composition of the base fabric and of the etched parts or of the embroidery yarns, in which cases those components shall be mentioned by name. An indication of the fibre composition of the embroidery yarns is not required when the embroidered parts do not exceed 10 % of the surface area of the product.

Velvet or plush fabrics

(Annex IV of the EU Regulation paragraph 7)

31. If the backing of any velvet or plush fabric is distinct from, and does not have the same fibre composition as, the use-surface, a separate indication of fibre composition may be given for the backing and the use-surface, in which case those components have to be mentioned by name.

Carpets and floor-coverings

(Annex IV of the EU Regulation paragraph 8)

32. Where the backing has a different fibre composition from that of the use-surface, only the use-surface, which must be mentioned by name, requires an indication of fibre composition.

Yarns with core and cover

(Annex IV of the EU Regulation paragraph 6)

33. In the case of yarns which have a core and a cover of different fibre composition which are supplied or offered for supply as yarn, the indication of fibre composition may be given by separate indications of the fibre composition of the core and of the cover eg 'polyester core, cotton outer' or 'cotton covered polyester'.

Main linings

(Article 11(2) of the EU Regulation)

34. The fibre composition of a main lining of a textile product must be indicated *whether or not* it represents 30 % of the weight of the product. Main linings are generally taken to be the linings of curtains etc and the main parts of the outer-garments such as jackets, skirts and coats. As with component labelling, the indication should state which fibre description applies to which part, eg 'pure new wool; lining: viscose'. It is not necessary to specify the fibre composition of linings of undergarments, nightwear (including dressing gowns), hats, trousers and slacks, the sleeve linings of coats if these are different from the main lining, or ties. The linings of coats made of non-textile materials, eg leather, pvc, sheepskin, do not require labelling unless there is a specific reference to the fact that the goods are lined with a textile material. There is

no need to show the fibre composition of interlinings.

Fibres and product parts to be ignored when calculating fibre composition

35. The following *fibres* shall be ignored in determining the fibre composition of a textile product (Article 20 of the EU Regulation):
- Inadvertent impurities arising during manufacture provided they do not exceed 2 % of the weight of the product, or, in the case of a product which has been produced by a manufacturing process in which the final formation of fibres before spinning is determined by a carding process, 5 % of the weight of the product. This allowance may only be added to the 3 % manufacturing tolerance between stated and actual content if the inadvertent impurities which are to be left out of account are of the same chemical type as any of the fibres names in the indication of fibre composition;
 - Fibres which are intended purely to produce a decorative effect, and which are visible and distinct, provided they do not exceed 7 % of the weight of the product;
 - Fibres which are added to produce an anti-static effect and which do not constitute more than 2 % of the weight of the product;
 - Up to 0.3 % of fibrous impurities in a fibre described as 'fleece wool' or 'virgin wool' (Article 8(3) of the EU Regulation).
36. In determining fibre composition there shall also be left out of account the following *product parts* (see Annex VII of the EU Regulation):
- non-textile parts, selvages, labels and badges, and edgings and trimmings which are not an integral part of the product;
 - buttons and buckles which are covered with textile materials, accessories, decorations, non-elastic ribbons, elastic threads and bands which are added at specific and limited points of the product;
 - in the case of floor-coverings and carpets, all components other than the use-surface;
 - in the case of upholstery fabrics, binding and filling warps and wefts which do not form part of the use-surface, and in the case of fabrics and hangings and curtains, those which do not form part of the right side of the fabric;
 - in the case of textile products other than those referred to in (ii) and (iv), base or underlying fabrics which do not serve as a backing for the use-surface,

stiffenings and reinforcements, interlinings and canvas backings,

- stitching and assembly threads which do not replace the warp or weft of the fabric, fillings which do not have an insulating function and linings other than main linings (see paragraph 34).
- Fatty substance, binders, weightings, sizings and dressings, impregnating products, additional dyeing and printing products and other textile processing products.

Some definitions

37. The following definitions bear the same meaning as described under the previous regime and appear in the Annexes of the EU Regulation:

- ‘*edgings and trimmings*’ not forming an integral part of the product are those which are sewn or applied to the textile article (eg fringes on curtains, bedspreads etc).
- ‘*elastic threads and bands*’ are, for example, easily isolated elastic threads in the tops of socks, stockings etc and elastic bands around the waist of underpants, briefs etc.
- ‘*base or underlying fabrics*’ include in particular those in articles of clothing (eg in jacket and coat collars etc); these overlap to some extent with stiffenings and reinforcements.
- ‘*stiffenings and reinforcements*’ mean the yarn or material added at specific and limited points of the textile product to strengthen it or to give it stiffness or thickness eg those applied to jacket elbows, to riding breeches, inside ties and tops of socks etc.

Methods of indicating fibre composition

38. Textiles should be labelled or marked indicating fibre composition whenever they are made available on the market and should be durable, easily legible, visible and accessible.
39. The main purpose of the EU Regulation is to ensure that consumers, when purchasing textile products, are given an accurate indication of their fibre composition.
40. As with the previous Textile Labelling regime, it is not necessary, however, to provide a sewn-in label or to print directly on to the textile product. Swing tickets or gummed labels are adequate; and if the products are offered for sale in packaging (i.e. pre-packed) it is sufficient to indicate the fibre composition on the packaging only. In

addition, if a piece of cloth is being supplied from a roll, it is sufficient to indicate fibre composition on the roll only, provide the indication is easily accessible to the consumer.

41. Where textile products bearing an indication of fibre composition are offered for sale in transparent wrapping and provided that the indication is clearly visible or accessible to the consumer at the time of purchase, the wrapping itself need not bear an indication of the fibre composition.

Abbreviations

42. Although generally abbreviations should not be used to convey fibre composition information, as with the previous regime, a Mechanical Processing Abbreviation Code (Article 14 (3)) can be used when indicating products in commercial documents (but *not* when offering or advertising products for sale to the end consumer). If such a code is used, the abbreviations must be explained in the same document. Mechanical Processing Abbreviation Code are drawn up and approved by Euratex (the European textile trade association).
43. There are certain textile products whose fibre composition is important but for which, because of their relatively small size or low cost, it would be inconvenient or uneconomic to provide fibre descriptions on each individual item. These products are listed in Annex VI of the EU Regulations. In such cases it is sufficient to provide a single indication of fibre composition which may relate to a number of similar products. This means that if handkerchiefs of similar fibre composition are being sold to members of the public from, for example, a box or counter tray, it is sufficient to mark the fibre composition description outside of the container only – provided, of course, that the description is clearly visible to the consumer at the time of making the purchase.

Other commercial transactions

44. In the normal course of business, distributors of textile products look to manufacturers to determine and to specify fibre composition. For this reason manufacturers are obliged when supplying their customers (including public bodies and Government Departments⁵) to indicate the fibre composition of the goods they are supplying, either by marking or labelling the products or the packaging, or by stating the fibre composition in the commercial documents accompanying the goods (Article 14 (2)). The important thing is that the customer should be able to determine which descriptions apply to the products being supplied. This obligation extends to wholesalers and others supplying the retail trade. The general rule is that although the retailer is responsible for ensuring that there is an indication of fibre composition on the products he is selling, he should look to the supplier for the information he needs. In the case of textile products which are subject to several stages of manufacture, eg fibre-spun yarn-cloth-garments, the manufacturers at each stage will be responsible for informing their customers of the respectable fibre compositions of

⁵ Article 1 of Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts

the products they each supply (Article 17 (5)). Where textile products are obtained from suppliers outside the EU, it is the responsibility of the first importing agent to verify the accuracy of the fibre composition indication given.

45. Information other than that related to fibre composition such as size and washing instructions must be displayed separately to the fibre composition description, although they do not necessarily have to be given on a separate label. Any trademark or name of an undertaking that contains, on its own or as a root or as an adjective, one of the textile fibre names listed in Annex 1, however must be displayed either immediately before or after the fibre composition description. This is optional for any other trademark or name of an undertaking.
46. Generally, the indication of fibre composition must be given in the English language whether or not it is also given in any of the other Member State languages. However, when the descriptions are so similar that the consumer can easily comprehend the fibre name, eg acrylique (Fr)/acrylic (Eng), such small language differences may be unobjectionable. Additionally, bobbins, reels, skeins, balls and any other small quantity of sewing, mending, embroidery yarn may bear an indication of fibre composition in the languages of any Member State. If however, the product is intended for export and sale outside the UK then labelling or marking shall be provided in the official language or languages of the Member State on the territory of which the textile products are made available to the consumer, unless otherwise specified by the Member State concerned (Article 16(3)).

Methods of analysing fibre mixtures

47. Details on the methods of analysis of fibre mixtures can be found at Annex VIII and IX of the EU Regulation. These are intended to be the standard methods of test if there are cases of dispute about the fibre composition of a certain textile product. When establishing and testing fibre percentages it is necessary to apply the relevant agreed allowances set out in Annex IX to the anhydrous mass of each type of fibre.

The UK Regulations

48. The UK Regulations set out the sanctions and enforcement for failing to comply with the provisions of the EU Regulation within the UK. Regulation 2(1) revokes all the previous UK Regulations on textile product labelling which had implemented the previous EU Directives. They are:
 - Textile Products (Indications of Fibre Content) Regulations 1986 SI 1986/26
 - Textile Products (Indications of Fibre Content) (Amendment) Regulations 1988 SI 1998/1169
 - Textile Products (Indications of Fibre Content) (Amendment) Regulations 1994 SI 1994/450
 - Textile Products (Determination of Composition) Regulations 2008 SI

2008/15

- Textile Products (Indications of Fibre Content) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 SI 2008/6
- Textile Products (Indications of Fibre Content) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations 2009 SI 2009/1034

49. Regulation 2 provides a transitional provision which states that no offence will be committed in relation to products placed on the UK Market before 8th May 2012, which complied with the previous UK Regulations, and which continue to be made available on the UK Market until 9th November 2014.
50. Regulation 4 appoints Local weights and measure authorities in Great Britain and the Department of Enterprise and Trade and Investment in Northern Ireland as the market surveillance authorities for the purposes of the EU Regulation. They are tasked not just with enforcing the UK Regulations, but also with carrying out the market surveillance checks under the EU Regulation.
51. Regulation 5 creates an offence for a person to place a textile product, as defined in the EU Regulation, on the market, in breach of the EU Regulation. The offence does not apply to the persons listed in Regulation 5(2).
52. The penalty for the offence is on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum and on conviction on indictment to a fine. The previous penalty of imprisonment on conviction on indictment is removed.
53. The remaining Regulations (7 to 18) set out the provisions related to the offence, including the defence of due diligence and the investigation powers of the enforcement authorities. These largely reflect the enforcement provisions which previously applied to the textile labelling regime which were set out in the Trade Descriptions Act 1968. However, the language has been updated, to reflect the language of the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008. In addition, a number of provisions have been inserted to safeguard human rights, in particular the new requirement to give notice before exercising a power of entry (regulation 14) and the requirement to provide evidence of identification and authority before exercising the powers in Regulation 13.

Enquiries

54. Enquiries about these guidelines and any other aspects of the fibre composition regulations may be addressed to:

Consumer and Competition Policy
Department for Business Innovation and Skills
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET

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