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GINETEX Barometer 2023: What are the textile care habits in Europe?

GINETEX has unveiled the results of its 4th Barometer for Textile Care, carried out in partnership with IPSOS. This new issue sheds light on the habits of Europeans (Germans, Italians, Spaniards, Swedish, British, Czech and French).

“This barometer is a powerful learning tool that allows us, every two years, to follow the trends in care practices adopted by consumers in Europe. While environmental considerations are still as important, the economic situation is more likely to influence consumers’ habits in how they care for their clothes,” comments Thomas Lange, President of GINETEX.

THE ECONOMIC FACTOR, THE MAIN REASON FOR THE CHANGE IN TEXTILE CARE HABITS

The current economic situation and environmental problems are at the heart of French concerns and contribute to the trends in textile care practices among consumers. In Europe, financial reasons have also been given greater priority than environmental concerns: 54% of the European population is driven by financial reasons when caring for its textiles (up 8 points since 2021), while 46% of the population is motivated by environmental concerns (down 8 points since 2021).

Therefore, **9 out of 10 Europeans are careful about the temperature at which they wash their textiles, a little more than half of them for financial reasons.**



In detail, some regional variations remain in Europe:

- The **Czech Republic** is the country in which the population is influenced most by the economic factor. 58% of its population chooses low temperature washing cycles for financial reasons compared with an average of 46% in Europe. The **United Kingdom**, particularly impacted by the rise in prices, also stands out, with 50% of its population making this choice.
- On the other hand, eco-responsive behaviour is well established in the mentalities in **Germany and France**, even if almost 40% of them clean their laundry at low temperatures for financial reasons.

Drying practices

- Drying in the open air remains the most common practice for a very large majority of respondents: 79% of Europeans use this practice, regardless of their reasons (financial and environmental).
- In Europe, in 2021, 46% of respondents favoured drying in the open air for purely financial reasons. This figure was down significantly (down 7 points) in 2023. The decrease can be seen in all European countries investigated, except in France and Sweden.

BUYING HABITS IN EUROPE

While the health crisis of 2019 slowed down consumer buying frequencies, the share of Europeans who bought clothes in the last 6 months has returned to its pre-COVID level (97%, 39% of whom every month in 2023 versus 35% in 2019). In detail, buying frequencies are higher in Spain (50% of regular buyers¹) and Italy (52%), while they are lower in France (32%), Sweden (32%) and the Czech Republic (27%).

Certain criteria are becoming increasingly important to consumers during their purchasing process: if price remains the first criterion for Europeans, 59% of whom take it into account when they do their shopping; 51% of them want to buy comfortable clothes, while 20% of them prefer clothes that are easy to wash. Finally, a new criterion has emerged in the survey: the “eco-friendly” origin of textiles, which 10% of Europeans take into account. This figure rises to 18% for Germans.

THE INCREASING ROLE OF CARE LABELS IN THE TEXTILE PURCHASING PROCESS

The **role of care instructions in the purchase decision has increased** over the years, with more than 6 out of 10 Europeans caring about it (up 5% in Europe compared with 2019), with a significant increase in Germany (72%) and Italy (73%).

Therefore, **72% of Europeans rarely (or never) buy clothes without care instructions on their labels.** However, the share of consumers doing so regularly has increased slightly in recent years (up 3 points compared with 2019).



These figures are not surprising when **73% of Europeans follow the care instructions** and **83% of them find labels and symbols useful** when caring for their textiles.

The two main reasons why European consumers follow textile care guidelines are:

- To avoid washing-related problems
- To maintain clothing.

¹ Buying clothes at least once a month or even once a week

In addition to the size, which remains the most important information for 95% of Europeans, care instructions and composition are the essential information to be found on labels. 80% of the European population believes that this information must appear on the label, a figure that is even higher in Italy, where 73% of the population finds this information important when buying clothes.

Another significant lesson is the importance of the brand that continues to evolve. 45% of European consumers are now mindful of this – up to 4 points compared with 2021 and particularly significant compared with 2019, up 9 points). These figures rise to 48% for the French, 56% for the United Kingdom, and 55% for the Italians.

Finally, the clothing's country of origin is gradually becoming part of the mentalities: half of the French are mindful of this, as are the Italians (58%) and the Germans (43%), well above the European average (38%).

CARE HABITS AROUND THE WORLD

The IPSOS barometer for GINETEX also looked at three new countries: **Brazil, Australia and Japan**. Here are the key lessons learned:

Care instructions on labels

Care instructions are considered important in many countries. The IPSOS barometer reveals that 74% of Australians, 86% of Brazilians and 77% of Japanese want these instructions to appear on their clothes' care label.

Using the right amount of detergent

- While 42% of Europeans use the right amount of laundry **for financial reasons**, this figure rises to 49% for the Japanese and Australians.
- 47% of Europeans also follow this habit, but this time **for environmental reasons** while this figure rises to 55% for Brazilians.

Buying habits

While 39% of Europeans buy clothes at least once a month, this figure rises to 57% in Brazil! The Japanese are less regular purchasers, as only one quarter of the population makes purchases every month.

About GINETEX:

Established in Paris in 1963, GINETEX (International Textile Care Labelling Group) is behind an international textile care labelling system designed to inform textile companies, as well as consumers, about the best ways to care for their textile garments. The care symbols used are equally registered trademarks of GINETEX and COFREET. The group promotes these symbols and coordinates its technical content, which is essential for the definition and application of the care labelling code, at international level. Today, GINETEX has 22 member countries.

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