

## What not to wear?



There are many projects ongoing to raise awareness of chemicals used in textiles and clothing. ECHA Newsletter looked into two of these projects.

### Demanding safer colours

The aim of the Madeincolours project is to inform consumers about the benefits of the stricter EU regulations on chemicals and what impact it can have on consumer health and the environment. It wants to encourage consumers to buy products coloured within the European Union. "We want to explain to consumers what 'dyeing in Europe' means and what benefits they can get by purchasing dyed products with a European origin," says *Ms Michela Kahlberg*, who leads the project.

The project was first presented in September 2014 in Prato, an important textile district in Italy. "We are now trying to group all the companies that are at the beginning of the production chain and try to encourage them to finance an aggressive and widespread information campaign aimed at the general public," Ms Kahlberg explains. She wishes to reach dyeing houses, tanneries, printing houses, paper mills, furniture factories, wool mills, footwear factories and companies producing yarn.

Since Italy is a country with lots of textile and leather manufacturing, it was a logical place to start the project. However, the aim is to make the project European-wide. "Our goal is to start introducing the project in different EU countries during 2015. For this, we will need help from the European associations for the textiles and leather industries as well as downstream users," Ms Kahlberg emphasises.

One of the concrete actions of the project is to create an information label for products showing that they are dyed in Europe. "This label would track the production chain of the dyed product, show the different phases of the production and tell which companies have been part of this chain. The label would include a QR-code that gives consumers direct access to the information through their mobile phones and refers them to relevant web pages," Ms Kahlberg explains. However, it depends on the companies in the production chain if and when it is possible to get this label in use.

The main message of Madeincolours is to show consumers that it is worth paying more for a product dyed with registered substances in the EU instead of choosing a low-cost product manufactured outside the EU with no knowledge of how it is produced.