

PPWR: What fashion and footwear brands should be doing now

At a glance

The EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) has introduced new requirements for businesses placing packaged products on the EU market. For textile, fashion and footwear brands, the regulation affects how packaging is designed, identified, labelled and managed throughout its lifecycle.

Key points

- PPWR applies directly across all EU Member States and impacts any brand selling packaged products within the EU market.
- The first major compliance deadline was 12th August 2026, when packaging identification requirements come into effect.
- Additional obligations relating to labelling, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), recycled content and recyclability will be introduced progressively over the coming years.
- Brands should be prepared now to ensure compliance and reduce the risk of costly packaging changes later.

What is PPWR?

The Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) came into force on 11th February 2025 and started applying 18 months later on 12th August 2026. Unlike previous packaging legislation, it is a regulation rather than a directive, meaning the same rules apply across all EU countries without requiring separate national legislation.

The regulation has been introduced to create a more consistent approach to packaging across Europe while supporting the transition towards a circular economy and reducing packaging waste.

Its objectives include:

- Ensuring packaging placed on the EU market is designed to be recyclable by 2030.
- Increasing the use of recycled materials in packaging products.
- Reducing dependence on virgin raw materials/single use plastics.
- Limiting unnecessary and avoidable packaging waste.
- Supporting circularity and sustainability initiatives.
- Improving packaging traceability and compliance reporting.
- Introducing more consistent consumer sorting and disposal information across EU markets.

Who is affected?

PPWR applies to any organisation placing packaged products on the EU market, regardless of where the business is based.

For textile, fashion and footwear brands, this may include:

- Polybags and protective packaging
- Garment bags
- Footwear boxes
- Apparel boxes
- Hangtags and packaging accessories
- E-commerce packaging
- Secondary and transit packaging
- Hangers and related packaging components

If packaging is used to contain, protect, transport, present or deliver a product, it is likely to fall within the scope of the regulation.

Understanding the PPWR roadmap

PPWR is being implemented in stages rather than through a single compliance date.

New requirements will be introduced over the coming years, with further obligations extending well into the next decade. As implementation progresses, brands can expect increased expectations around packaging data, product identification, labelling, reporting and material transparency.

It is also important to note that some technical guidance and secondary legislation are still being developed. As a result, certain requirements may continue to evolve as additional clarification is published by the European Commission.

For brands, this creates a balance between meeting immediate obligations and making packaging decisions that are robust enough to support future requirements.

What brands need to do now

The first significant compliance milestone arrived on 12th August 2026.

From this date, packaging must be identifiable through information such as:

- A batch number
- Serial number
- Product code

- Other appropriate identification reference

Where the size or nature of the packaging prevents this information from being displayed directly, it may instead be supplied within accompanying documentation.

Producer identification requirements

Packaging must also contain information that identifies the responsible business. This information can be printed directly on the packaging or provided digitally, for example through a QR code.

Required information may include:

- Company name
- Registered trade name or trademark
- Postal address or contact point
- Electronic contact details, where available

Existing packaging stock

Packaging that was already placed on the EU market before 12th August 2026 does not need to be retrospectively updated to include responsible economic operator details or a unique identifier.

For packaging inventory that remains in stock after this date, brands should take a practical and proportionate approach. In many cases, allowing existing stock to be used through normal depletion may be preferable to undertaking unnecessary rework, particularly for short-term volumes.

Where appropriate, digital tools such as QR codes can be used to provide supporting information, helping to strengthen traceability while minimising waste.

For all new packaging developments, as well as future production runs of existing packaging, brands should ensure that responsible economic operator information and unique identification references are incorporated into artwork specifications from the outset. Taking these steps early can help avoid future disruptions, support compliance efforts and reduce the need for corrective changes later in the supply chain.

This is for general informational purposes only and should not be considered legal or regulatory advice.

What happens next?

Additional PPWR obligations will include requirements relating to:

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) from February 2027

Packaging will need to indicate its participation in applicable EPR schemes, subject to final implementation requirements.

Sorting and disposal information from August 2028

Future labelling requirements are expected to provide clearer guidance on:

- Material composition
- Recyclability
- Compostability, where relevant
- Appropriate disposal methods

The goal is to improve sorting consistency and recycling outcomes across the EU.

Is everything finalised?

Not yet.

While PPWR is now in force, some implementation details remain under development. Areas where further guidance is expected include:

- The extent of the packaging data requirements
- Labelling and traceability technical specifications
- Future compliance dates for certain requirements

As additional guidance is published, businesses may need to review and adapt their packaging strategies accordingly.

How Weavabel can help

Preparing for PPWR is about more than meeting a single deadline. It requires a long-term approach to packaging design, compliance, traceability and sustainability.

At Weavabel, we work with brands to review existing packaging, identify potential compliance considerations and develop solutions that support both current and future regulatory requirements.

Whether you're assessing packaging specifications, exploring material alternatives or planning for increased traceability, our team can help you navigate the changes with confidence.

Get in touch to discuss your packaging requirements and PPWR readiness.

+44 (0)113 239 1122
sales@weavabel.com
www.weavabel.com

