

FIRST READER THESIS REVIEW FORM

Name of the Student	Lucy Anna Obadia
Date of Submission	July 31, 2023
Title of the Thesis	Mitigating Greenwashing Practices in the Fashion Industry: Assessing the Effectiveness of the New EU Green Claims Directive A Case Study of Primark
Reviewer Name / Affiliation	Magdalena Fiřtová/ Charles University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of International Studies

PLAGIARISM STATEMENT

The Turnitin check did not reveal any elements of plagiarism.

KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review)

The defended thesis delves into the issue of addressing greenwashing practices among traders in the fashion industry. Through a case study of Primark, it aims to analyze the effectiveness of the recently proposed EU Green Claims Directive. It addresses a highly timely and important issue. Lucy's adopted goal was both innovative and ambitious. The goal was to assess the relationship between the legal proposal and the practical execution of intricate and advanced greenwashing claims. By combining scholarly resources with relevant materials drafted by NGOs, it offers a comprehensive overview of the public and academic discourse surrounding the prevalent aspects of greenwashing.

ANALYSIS

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources)

Methodologically, the thesis appropriately employs a case study approach. It endeavors to pinpoint the implementation challenges posed by the recently proposed Directive for the specific company. This is a task that, to a greater extent, all fashion traders will need to undertake once the Directive is ratified. The quantity of information the author managed to gather significantly restricts the depth of the analysis.

The core analytical section, Chapter 4, exhibits several deficiencies that have significantly undermined the thesis's overall potential, resulting in a noticeable decline in the level of analytical rigor. In the initial subchapters, the thesis adeptly presents the findings derived from empirical data and field research concerning Primark's key claims in a structured manner. The following part attempts to apply the GCD to the Primark case study (Articles 1-5). In the analysis of Articles 6-8, the text falls short by solely concentrating on the development and interpretation of Directive-related concepts. Regrettably, this is achieved without furnishing additional contextualization or practical implementation, both within the specific case study and/or more broadly.

Moreover, this segment lacks a critical engagement with alternative perspectives. A constructive approach would involve juxtaposing the outcomes of the analysis with those identified in the literature review. Worth noting is that the author relies solely on TerraChoice's classification of the Seven Greenwashing Sins. Nevertheless, crucial matters like self-regulation and the potential risk of inadvertently stifling environmental advertising merit consideration, particularly given that the GCD maintains the voluntary nature of environmental labels on products.

Furthermore, critics have expressed reservations concerning the GCD's absence of a standardized methodology and its provision of an extensive margin of maneuver to member states and their auditors/verifiers. This situation potentially curtails the effectiveness of Articles 6-8.

CONCLUSIONS

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives)

The conclusion, while appropriately acknowledging the study's limitations and skillfully outlining a future pathway for improved consumer orientation, falls short in offering substantial conclusions or summarizing the analytical and theoretical components. It starkly asserts that the "EU Green Claims Directive is a positive step" without providing any further substantiation. It leaves the reader with the sense that analysis is lax in a compelling argument.

FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout)

The text of the thesis is readable and comprehensible, however the work requires much more careful editing process, as it contains a number of typos and stylistic flaws. Strangely, Lucy converted the originally used APA in-text citation to footnotes, which would necessitate a different referencing approach, such as the Chicago Manual of Style.

The analysis presented in Chapter 4, especially section 4.2.1, should be more meticulously checked for references. Many times, the author refers to Article 3a-j, but in fact, it should have referred to Article 3.1.a-j.

SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

(strong and weak points of the thesis, other issues)

The dissertation presents a good effort in testing the capacity of the new EU Green Claims Directive proposal to address very concrete greenwashing practices. It has effectively accomplished a solid and comprehensive historical and theoretical analysis of EU policies in this domain. Regrettably, the potential of the analytical part remains unrealized due to inconsistent academic rigor and a lack of alternative views.

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FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

(for example, word count)

Formal requirements have been fulfilled.
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(See below for grading scheme and grading descriptor)

Grade (1 – 10)	7.5
Date	Reviewer Signature
31. 8. 2023	

2 – 3 SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR THESIS DEFENCE

1.	How would you compare the EU Green Claims Directive (GCD) Proposal to France’s new anti-greenwashing legislation (2021 Climate and Resilience Act) ?
2.	In your defense, address the critical perspectives on the GCD.
3.	In reference to the recent court decisions in Germany concerning the carbon neutrality claims, how is this problem addressed in the GCD proposal?

AGREED FINAL GRADE

(To be completed *after* both readers have read and marked the thesis independently)

Grade (1 – 10 <i>and</i> A-F)		
Date	Reviewer 1 Signature	Reviewer 2 Signature

LEIDEN UNIVERSITY GRADING SCHEME

Theses can receive a grade between 0-10, with the exception of grades *between* 5.0 and 6.0— e.g., a grade of 5 or 6 is permitted, while a grade of 5.1, 5.5, or 5.9 is not.

GRADE DESCRIPTOR FOR MA EPS THESIS

<p>8.0 – 10 (A)</p>	<p>All elements of the thesis are combined in an effective and convincing form. The case for the research question and/or hypothesis is well-made and grounded in a significant and topical issue, whether derived from the literature or empirics. The thesis delivers excellent, powerful engagement with the literature, suggesting full mastery of academic and/or empirical debates. The thesis conveys an excellent understanding of how to design and conduct research. The selected method aligns with the research question/hypothesis, and the student evidences a full understanding of it, both at the abstract and applied level. The thesis offers an original answer based on an outstanding analysis of relevant sources, primary as well as secondary where appropriate, that advances our understanding of the matter. It is well-structured and shows excellent awareness of the need to account for the audience. Additionally, the thesis must demonstrate a full understanding of and compliance with academic conventions, including but not limited to the presentation, referencing and use of footnotes. A thesis performing at this level should be considered to be exceptional, indicative of a student ready to begin doctoral research or high-level professional work.</p>
<p>7.5 – 7.9 (B)</p>	<p>The thesis covers all the issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above but does not meet the exceptional standard above. It will be excellent, at least in part, with relatively minor deficiencies that do not compromise the research design and the relevance of the answer. The research question and/or hypothesis will be of significance, and the student will deliver an original contribution to knowledge by answering it. The thesis will be grounded in a very good or excellent evaluation of an appropriate body of literature, discussing key concepts and debates maturely and convincingly. The student will demonstrate a very good facility with the demands of good research design. The selected method will align with the research question/hypothesis and the student evidence a good understanding of it, both at the abstract and applied levels. The thesis offers an original answer based on a very good analysis of relevant sources, primary as well as secondary where appropriate, that goes some way to advance our understanding of the matter. Additionally, the thesis must demonstrate a full understanding of and compliance with academic conventions, including but not limited to the presentation, referencing and use of footnotes.</p>
<p>7.0 – 7.4 (C)</p>	<p>The thesis covers all the issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above but with some significant deficiencies. The research question and any corresponding hypotheses are developed according to academic standards and linked to the scholarly literature but do not appear entirely convincing. The answer offered is not fully persuasive but offers relevant insight into the topic. The thesis will be referring to an adequate amount of literature, but the reference and the contribution to the academic debate are not really insightful. The research methods show interesting and innovative ideas, but there are some doubts about their development. The thesis still demonstrates knowledge and application of academic conventions (including, but not limited to the presentation, referencing and the use of footnotes), but there are apparent issues with their employment and/or a lack of attention to detail.</p>
<p>6.4 – 6.9 (D)</p>	<p>The thesis covers most issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above, but it is relatively pedestrian, particularly in relation to the embedding of the research question. There is some engagement with the literature, identification of the method and operationalisation of that method to the research. The analysis is present but not fully developed. The selected research method may be of dubious utility, suggesting the student has an imperfect understanding of research design. The question and/or hypothesis is answered/tested but not in a very compelling fashion. The thesis is vulnerable to criticism that it is derivative and</p>

	descriptive, with opportunities for delivering critical analysis not exploited. Peripheral but important issues such as presentation and referencing are problematic, and the student does not always comply with other forms of academic convention.
6 – 6.3 (E)	The thesis does not cover all the issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above but offers a structured piece of relevant analysis that is embedded in the literature and provides an answer to a research question. The method of analysis is explained, albeit not fully developed and persuasive. The thesis is pedestrian, descriptive and unoriginal in form.
5.1 – 5.9	<i>We do not issue grades in this area</i>
1 – 5.0 (F)	The thesis does not represent a piece of independent research as far as it does not formulate a straightforward research question and/or lacks engagement with the literature and/or the method of inquiry and/or does not provide an answer based on a critical analysis of primary and secondary sources.