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Spanish textile companies are turning to foreign markets

Spanish exports of textiles and clothing have broken a new record, closing 2011 with a figure of 9,500 million €, representing an increase of 11% over the previous year.

This evolution reflects the strategy of companies which have turned to foreign markets because of the plight of the Spanish market: hampered by low economic growth, less than 1% in 2011; high unemployment, and households severely in debt, affecting very negatively textile products consumption.

Exports to emerging countries are the fastest growing, increasing by 15%, reflecting the dynamism of these markets. However, Europeans are the ones who receive the largest share of exports (2 / 3 of total), highlighting their importance: France, Portugal, Italy and Germany. Outside the EU, we must highlight the Mediterranean countries (Turkey and Morocco) and Asia and South America.

This strategic orientation towards the exterior is based on improving the competitiveness of the Spanish textile companies which have increased their offered product design, quality and service, although improvements have also been implemented outside the business establishment, through centres, trade and logistics, either directly or through partnerships, joint ventures, etc...

This international effort already begun in the nineties was a major boost from the year 2000 onwards, due to the increasing liberalization of international textile trade, the emergence of China and Asian countries in the world textile market, and so on. In this way, companies have had to make major changes in their organization and operation to adapt to the new global industrial framework.

The outlook for the coming year is uncertain due to economic stagnation in the euro-zone, our main customer, the financial turmoil that is impeding a return to normal levels of demand. Neither can one expect the Spanish market to make a positive contribution, hampered as it is by the sharp reduction in government deficits and the high unemployment rate.