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Switzerland's foreign trade and textiles in 1957

Switzerland's economic situation remained highly satisfactory in 1957, in spite of a certain slowing up in the second half of the year. Foreign trade once again broke new records with regard not only to volume but also to value, in the case of both imports and exports, and the country's adverse balance of trade was greater than ever before. During the second half of the year, however, particularly November and December, the deficit in the trade balance became less marked. The figures for the last three years are as follows :

	1955	1956	1957
	In millions of Swiss francs		
Total imports	6,401.2	7,597.0	8,447.1
Total exports	5,622.2	6,203.5	6,713.9

Let us add that the value of exports amounted to 79.5 % of that of imports while the figure for the previous year was 81.7 % as compared with only 69 % during the second five-year period before the war.

With regard to value, the increase in Switzerland's exports during 1957 over the figures for 1956 concerned three main groups of goods (raw materials — foodstuffs, beverages and animal feeding stuffs — manufactured products), manufactured products showing the biggest advance. However, the part played by exports of finished products in the whole of Switzerland's sales abroad remained practically the same as the previous year (91.9 as opposed to 90.9 %).

Below we give the figures for the values of Switzerland's main textile exports during the last three years :

	1955	1956	1957
	In millions of Swiss francs		
Cotton yarns	55.9	69.3	76.8
Cotton fabrics	170.9	178.2	176.8
Embroideries	118.5	120.7	134.4
Schappe	9.3	11.6	11.4
Yarns of artificial fibres	100.8	101.6	100.6
Silk and rayon fabrics	98.6	90.5	91.7
Silk and rayon ribbons	11.9	11.8	12.9
Woollen yarns	28.1	39.6	33.1
Woollen fabrics	36.2	40.0	45.1
Hosiery and knitted wear	40.6	46.2	51.2
Ready-to-wear clothing	58.7	64.0	69.2
Millinery braid	33.4	34.1	31.7
Footwear	37.0	43.7	46.2

It should be noted that exports of embroideries showed a remarkable increase as compared with 1956, the highest figures being recorded during the second half of the year. Exports of cotton yarns, ready-to-wear clothing, woollen fabrics, hosiery and knitwear also rose appreciably. Ex-

ports of cotton fabrics, which represent the most important item of Switzerland's sales of textiles abroad, fell off slightly by comparison with 1956 ; the same is true of schappe, yarns of artificial fibres, woollen yarns and millinery braid.

It will be interesting now to consider Swiss imports of textile products, which totalled almost 987 million Swiss francs in value in 1957 (814 million in 1956). Below we give the main items, indicating in each case the most important suppliers ; all the figures quoted represent millions of Swiss francs, the corresponding figures for 1956 being given in brackets.

Cotton 288 (238) ; raw cotton 180 (165) : United States 81 (38), Peru 36 (37), Egypt 25 (45), Mexico 22 (22) ; printed fabrics 13.4 (9.8) : German Federal Republic 4.8 (3.7), the Netherlands 1.9 (0.9), France 1.8 (1.7), Austria 1.2 (0.9) ; velvet fabrics 9.2 (9.6) : Italy 4 (4.5), German Federal Republic 2.9 (3.0) ; hand embroideries 1.2 (0.5) : China 1.0 (0.4).

Silk 135.7 (116.3) ; raw silk 19 (22) : Japan 11 (9), China 8 (12) ; fabrics in artificial and synthetic fibres, filament 15.4 (13.2) : United States 10.7 (9.5), German Federal Republic 2.4 (1.7) ; fabrics in silk or schappe 15.3 (12) : China 9.4 (7), Italy 9 (1.8), Japan 5 (1.4), France 2 (1.38).

Wool 336 (283.7) ; worsted tops 80 (62) : France 42 (31.5), Uruguay 15.9 (17.2) ; fabrics 49 (39) : Great Britain 13.7 (12), Italy 13 (9.5), German Federal Republic 7.5 (6.3), France 5.2 (4.5) ; carpets 40 (36.6) : Iran 12 (12), Belgium-Luxembourg Union 8.6 (8) ; washed wool, dyed 27 (31.5) : Belgium-Luxembourg Union 5.3 (5.5), Commonwealth of Australia 6.5 (4.2), France 2.2 (3.3), Uruguay 1.6 (4.4) ; raw wool 38 (28) : Commonwealth of Australia 20.8 (13), South Africa 8 (9), Chile 4.4 (1.1), Argentina 2.4 (3).

Ready-to-wear clothing 172.7 (130) ; woollen knitwear and jersey garments, except gloves and stockings 28.3 (20) : Italy 9.2 (6.5), Great Britain 7 (5), German Federal Republic 5 (4.3), France 2.4 (2.1) ; woollen garments for women and girls 19 (18) : the Netherlands 7 (6.3), German Federal Republic 4.3 (4.9), Great Britain 3.9 (3.9), France 1.5 (1.4) ; knitwear in silk, rayon, nylon, etc., except gloves and stockings 15.4 (6.9) : United States 6.3 (2.5), German Federal Republic 5.3 (3.0), France 1.1 (0.5) ; stockings in artificial and synthetic fibres, filament 14.2 (14) : United States 5.7 (7), Italy 2.1 (1.2), German Federal Republic 1.9 (1.4), Austria 1.7 (1.7), France 0.89 (1) ; woollen garments for men and boys 13.2 (8.2) : German Federal Republic 7.4 (3.4), Great Britain 1.9 (1.7), the Netherlands 1.7 (1.3), Italy 1.3 (0.9).