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The part played by textiles in Switzerland's foreign trade during 1960

The growth in Switzerland's foreign trade in 1960 once again reflects the continued high prosperity, the growth in the national income, the increase in home consumption and the continually increasing demands for Swiss goods in other countries. By comparison with 1959, imports increased 16.7 % in value and 20.5 % in quantity, whereas the upward trend in exports amounted to 11.8 % in value and 21.9 % in quantity. Thus both imports and exports represented an all time high, both in quantity and value. Here are the figures for Switzerland's balance of trade during the last three years :

	In millions of S. Fr. (1 million S. Fr. = U. S. \$ 233,000)		
	1958	1959	1960
Total imports	7,335.2	8,267.9	9,648.1
Total exports	6,648.8	7,273.8	8,130.7
Adverse balance	686.4	994.1	1,517.4

The trade coefficient (i.e. the ratio of the value of exports to that of imports is 84.3 % (as opposed to 88.0 % in 1959), which corresponds very closely to the post-war average (84 %).

Below we give the export values of the main categories of textiles for 1960. In this connection it should be pointed out that the change in customs nomenclature prevents any proper comparison of the figures for last year with those of the previous years, for in the new tariff the various products are naturally no longer listed under the same headings as before. Nevertheless, the differences for items such as schappe, footwear, millinery braid, etc. are either extremely small or non-existent, so that we feel justified, without committing ourselves in any way and merely by way of information, in quoting the corresponding figures for 1959 (in parentheses).

	1960	1959
	(in millions of S. Fr.)	
Schappe	10.7	(8.0)
Yarns of artificial textile fibres and staple fibre	167.5	(117.7)
Fabrics of natural and artificial silk	128.2	(116.3)
Ribbons in silk and other textiles	12.8	(12.8)
Woollen yarns	42.0	(41.3)
Woollen fabrics	40.2	(39.5)
Cotton yarns	66.5	(63.6)
Cotton fabrics	172.3	(167.7)
Embroideries	129.9	(121.0)
Hosiery and knitwear	54.5	(49.8)
Other articles of clothing	68.3	(69.1)
Millinery braid	27.4	(23.8)
Footwear	55.3	(47.8)
Total	1,067.6	(878.4)

In connection with what we stated above concerning the impossibility of making a proper comparison of the figures for 1959 and 1960, we wish to call attention to the apparent decrease that occurs only in the exports of ready-to-wear clothing listed under the heading « other articles of clothing », the figure having dropped, according to our table, from 69.1 to 68.3 million between 1959 and 1960, whereas in fact exports of ready-to-wear clothing proper (i.e. outer garments and underwear made of fabrics, including corsets and ties, but excluding handkerchiefs, shawls and scarves) have increased by approximately 5 to 6 % during this period. To illustrate with a practical example the changes that have occurred in customs nomenclature, let us simply mention that dresses made of embroidery, which were formerly listed under the heading « embroideries » are now no longer included in this category but are classified and totalled with the ready-to-wear. Consequently too much importance must not be attached to a comparison of the export figures for the last two years, although the increase shown in practically every one of the headings corresponds to the general trend followed by Swiss exports in 1960.

With regard to imports of textile products, it is impossible to make even a very approximate comparison, without going into the various headings of the old and new tariffs in very great detail and making a comprehensive report that would be out of place here ; we content ourselves therefore with indicating below the total figures for imports in 1960 in millions of Swiss francs (one million S. Fr. = U. S. \$ 233,000).

Swiss imports 1960

Cotton	219.154
including raw cotton	144.814
Wool	205.781
including raw wool in bulk	25.779
ditto washed, bleached and dyed	14.472
Silk	59.352
including raw silk	28.279
Linen and ramie	12.329
Short staple artificial textiles	67.711
Continuous filament artificial textiles	60.440
Clothing	106.783
Hosiery and knitwear	95.827
Carpets, ribbons, lace and embroidery	69.403
Footwear	52.397
Total (in millions of S. Fr.)	949.177

As the above figures show, Switzerland is not content with exporting textile products, she also imports considerable quantities not only of raw materials but also finished products : fabrics, garments, etc. She is therefore an interesting market for a great many countries, including in particular the European countries forming part of the Common Market.