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Progress of business in 2017: upturn in the textile industry

For the first time since the Swiss franc-euro exchange rate peg was abolished three years ago, the Swiss textile processing sector has returned to growth. Exports of technical textiles have been particularly successful. Despite high goods return rates in the online trade, garment exports are also reporting strong growth.

Last year the textile and garments industry created added value of one billion Swiss francs. For the first time in two years the textile processing sector has grown by 0.8%. The industry benefited in particular from stronger demand for technical textiles, especially from China and the USA. Exports in this particular branch grew by 5.8% to reach 578 million francs. Examples of technical textile uses include artificial sinews or ligaments in medicine, kinetic facades in architecture as well as carpets and seat coverings for the aircraft industry. The upturn was preceded by challenging years. "Companies have had to take tough fitness measures. To keep up with the competition, orders and production had to be outsourced to other countries", Swiss Textiles Director Peter Flückiger points out. That is also confirmed by direct investments which rose by 75.3% in 2016. Investments were mainly made in Europe.

Goods returns cost billions

Despite further high goods return rates to online traders, garment exports rose in the EU area. These exports were worth CHF 790 million, equivalent to a gain of 8.4%. The recovering currency situation and strong global economy helped garment exports to gain ground. Goods returns to online traders alone were worth 1.3 billion francs, an increase of 57.4% on the previous year.

The EU remains the key sales market for both textiles and garments with 70.2% and 62.2% respectively.

You will find all the figures for the progress of business of the Swiss textile and garments industry in 2017 in the [Annual Report for 2017](#).

Swiss Textiles	Swiss Textiles represents the interests of 200 companies in the textile and garments industry in Switzerland. The Association plays an active role in shaping economic policy opinion. In 2017 the branch created added value of one billion Swiss francs. Three-quarters of all products are exported.
Information	www.swisstextiles.ch
Contact	Peter Flückiger, Director T +41 44 289 79 79, peter.flueckiger@swisstextiles.ch
