



Swiss Textile Machinery sector shows growth through innovative ideas and developments

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The Swiss are known for innovation, quality and precision in this ever-changing fast-paced world of manufacturing technology. Over the years, Swiss companies have introduced ideas and developments that have changed the industrial environment in the country.

Of late, Swiss-based industries like mechanical and electrical have flourished worldwide, making Swiss-made products a well-known brand. As the country's economy grew, so did the need for a strong system to cater to the needs of various sectors. This saw the emergence

of two associations – the Swiss Association of Machinery Manufacturers (VSM) and the Association of Swiss Engineering Employees (ASM). Both of them are over a 100 years old. Since 1999, the two were merged under one name, which saw the inception of Swissmem.

Switzerland is a small landlocked country. It is a world famous textile machinery production power. Due to the excellent quality of textile machinery and textile testing instrument, Swiss innovative potential is famous all over the world.

Table 1: Exports of Swiss Textile Machinery

Year	Value (CHF million)
2013	1229.3
2014	1,339.3
2015	1,064.3
2016	685.1
2017	792.9
2018	821.4

Source: Swissmem.

The rapid pace of technological innovations taking place in the textile machinery market resulted in the production of more efficient machines at lower prices. Traditional textile machinery relies on cheap labor and hence even though the textile volumes sold are high, the quality of the cloth suffers.

Demand for sophisticated machines that produce high quality cloth with fewer defects is increasing. Swiss textile machinery holdings employ well over 28,000 people in over 100 companies and branch units around the world. In recent years, Swiss entrepreneurs have been able to extend their financial and technological share of the textile machinery industry.

Openness to global trade and investment has enabled Switzerland to become one of the world's most



The board of the Swiss textile machinery group (from left): Robert Reimann, Ernesto Maurer, Norbert Klapper, Urban Germann and Ralph von Arx.

Table 2: Exports of Swiss Textile Machinery (January - December, 2018)

Country	Rank	Exports Mio. CHF	Exports ± CHF%	Exports Share CHF
World		821.4	-6.8%	100.0%
China	1	115.1	-8.4%	14.0%
Turkey	2	98.8	-8.2%	12.0%
Germany	3	60.7	-9.9%	8.5%
USA	4	57.0	+21.0%	6.9%
India	5	54.2	+33.0%	6.6%
Italy	6	42.5	-25.1%	6.0%
Bangladesh	7	40.9	-7.9%	5.0%
Uzbekistan	8	29.2	+0.6%	3.6%
Vietnam	9	28.0	+34.0%	3.4%
Pakistan	10	26.8	-31.6%	3.3%

Source: Swissmem. Note: Above figures in CHF Swiss Francs while in Table 3 are in Euros

competitive and innovative economies. Subsidiaries in India, China and other Asian countries became very important for Swiss textile machine manufacturers, taking them inside the world's leading textile-producing regions.

World textile machinery manufacturers face challenges in the days ahead, including fluctuations in demand and increased competitive pressure. The growing demand for environmentally friendly fibres is expected to push demand for textile machinery and equipment that employ eco-friendly textile processes.

Today, Swissmem comprises 26 sub-associations, each catering to mechanical, electrical and metal industries. The textile division of Swissmem is one such association representing the entire spectrum of the textile industry of Switzerland. It is also the oldest sub-division within Swissmem that is to celebrate 75 years in 2015.

Swiss Textile machine manufacturers are masters of their speciality and supply the machines themselves as well as the measuring, regulating and process software. Swiss companies are at their best in making the equipment that could meet meticulous requirements of their customers. Today, the producers of machines and components and service providers in Swiss Textile Machinery sustain that heritage by a commitment to ongoing innovation that will influence the textile industry worldwide in the future. Many Swiss textile machinery companies



Cornelia Buchwalder, Secretary General, Swissmem.

have a history dating back over a century – and some are still family-owned. The tradition of innovation evolved naturally over decades for the Swiss textile machinery manufacturers, component producers, and service providers.

Table 3: Exports of Swiss textile machinery to Pakistan

Year	Exports Mio. EUR	Exports ±EUR%
2013	15.3	-3.5%
2014	30.3	+97.6%
2015	37.3	+22.9%
2016	24.4	-34.5%
2017	35.5	+45.5%
2018	24.3	-31.6%

Source: Swissmem.

The Swiss textile machinery industry is comprised of suppliers of machinery manufacturers for spinning, weaving, knitting, dyers, printers, finishing, packaging and special machines for technical textile applications.

The Swiss textile machinery industry is strongly export-oriented and has a presence with its own companies, sales and service organizations in all the world's key markets.

Exports of Swiss textile machinery registered good growth in the last two years. According to Swissmem, total exports of Swiss textile machinery have increased by 3.5% to CHF 821.4 million in 2018 as compared to CHF 792.9 million in 2017. Exports of Swiss textile machinery are given in **Table 1**.

Some 87% of all textile machinery exported from Switzerland went to customers in those regions. Over a third of Swiss produced textile machinery is exported to Asian markets. By applying a forward looking strategy, the Swiss textile machinery industry has successfully met the challenges and has been able to consolidate or even expand in global its market share. Swiss Textile Machinery members will continue to introduce innovations which will influence the worldwide textile industry in future.

Top export markets during 2018 for the Swiss textile manufacturers are China, Turkey, Germany, USA, India, Italy and Bangladesh. Country-wise exports of Swiss textile machinery are given in **Table 2**.

The most important market for Swiss textile machinery in 2018 was China with an export volume of CHF 115.1 million with a share of 14.0% of the whole export volume. While China continues to be the most important market Swiss textile machines, it is emerging as an increasingly strong competitor as well. Imports of textile machinery from Switzerland to Pakistan are given in **Table 3**.

References

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