

Filiz Sekerden

# Status of Textile and Clothing Imports and Exports in Turkey

Department of Mechanical Engineering,  
Faculty of Engineering,  
Mustafa Kemal University  
Iskenderun, 31200 Hatay, Turkey  
E-mail: fsekerden@mku.edu.tr

## Abstract

*The textile industry is a sector which has an important place in Turkey's economy. In this paper, import and export figures of Turkish textiles between 2004 and 2008, as well as their global status are examined. It is understood that many exported textile products are imported as well, and many imported textile products can also be produced in Turkey. It is estimated that preventing the importation of those textile products which can be produced in Turkey shall decrease textile imports, which in turn shall reduce Turkey's dependence on other countries and improve Turkey's competitive power.*

**Key words:** Turkey's textile industry, import figures, export figures.

## Introduction

In 2001, the decrease in global income began. In 2001, the lowest growth rate in the global income of the previous 10 years was 2.4%. In Turkey, contrary to the decrease in global income, exports increased by 12.8% in 2001. This increase continued to a level of 15.1% in 2002, compared to 2001 figures. It is believed that the recession in domestic demand, in particular the increase in the manufacturing industry, improvements in labour efficiency, decreasing real labour costs and export connections established in 2001 were the effective reasons for this important increase [1].

*Figure 1* (see page 8) provides general import and export figures of Turkey between 2004 and 2008. From the figure it can be understood that, as years went by, both import and export figures increased in the given period.

In 2007, Turkey's exports increased by 25.3% to 107.2 billion USDs, which was the first time in history that Turkish exports increased above the 100 billion USD level, consequently its share in global exports became 0.8%. In the same year, the import figure realised was 170.1 billion USDs, whose share in global imports was 1.2% [2]. As of 2008, Turkey was 32<sup>nd</sup> in the global export ranking with 138 billion USDs, and 19<sup>th</sup> in the global import ranking with 202 billion USDs [3].

As a result of the continuous increase in national population, production and consumption, the planned period of initiating economic development plans did not bring about important changes for Turkey. During all the years under examination, both imports and exports increased, and import figures were always higher than those for export. In

this regard, Turkey's external trade shows characteristics of developing countries, which can be the result of importing many kinds of needed commodities, which, in turn, was due to the decrease in customs duty, part of inflation-decreasing policies. However, an indicator of development is the increase in export figures [4].

It can be seen in *Figure 1* that while Turkey's exports increased continuously, its imports increased as well.

Vehicle and sub-industry products were those most exported in 2008; steel and iron products ranked second, and ready-wear and clothing products ranked third. Other leading products were chemical materials and products, electrical-electronic products, machinery and their parts, textiles and textile raw materials, iron and non-iron metals [6].

## Textile and clothing export and import data for Turkey

According to World Trade Organisation (WTO) statistics for the year 2008, Turkey ranked 7<sup>th</sup> among all countries in the import and export of textiles and textile raw materials in 2008. The first three ranks were occupied by the European Union (27 members), China and the United States of America (USA). The ranking for imports was topped by the European Union (EU), the United States of America (USA) and China [5].

Turkey ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in clothing exports, whereas it is 15<sup>th</sup> in ready-wear import [3]. The first three countries in clothing exports are China, EU and Hong Kong, whereas in terms of imports, the ranking is EU, USA and Japan [5].

Between 2004 and 2008, an increase was observed in textile exports of European

Union countries and China, whereas no prominent increase was seen in the export figures of Turkey and other countries [2, 3, 5].

The first 10 countries in Turkey's textiles and clothing exports in 2008 were Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, France, Spain, the Russian Federation, the Netherlands, USA, Romania and Denmark [7]. Leather exports were not taken into consideration in this ranking.

The leading textile products imported and exported by Turkey between 2004 and 2008 are given in *Tables 1* and *2*.

When *Tables 1* and *2* are examined, it can be seen that many exported products are also imported.

It is understood from *Table 1* that from 2004 to 2008, export figures for all kinds of products improved, and exports of artificial and synthetic fibers suitable for weaving, carpets and other coverages made of materials suitable for weaving and woven tools increased by 2-3 times in 2008 compared to 2004.

When *Table 2* is examined, exports in cotton, synthetic and artificial irregular fibers, artificial and synthetic fibers suitable for weaving, wool, hair, horse hair, their thread and clothes, woven tools, saturated, rendered and covered textiles, technical tools made of such, herbal fibers suitable for weaving, paper yarn and their clothes increased; on the other hand, imports considerably increased for woven clothes and accessories, whereas the export of silk decreased by half (*Table 1*), the import of which doubled.

**Table 1.** Leading textile and clothing products exported by Turkey; (Based on data from the Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade [8]).

Textile and clothing products	1000 \$ in yarn				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Woven clothes and accessories	6.259.22	6.590.35	6.938.28	8.022.46	7.826.73
Fabric clothes and accessories	4.536.829	4.862.376	4.710.984	5.445.286	5.326.729
Other clothing made of textiles, used clothing and parts	1.856.536	1.969.748	1.920.431	2.110.210	2.097.710
Cotton	1.219.991	1.179.569	1.338.306	1.611.317	1.633.650
Artificial and synthetic fibers suitable for weaving	796.562	894.103	1.036.892	1.256.300	1.336.016
Carpets and other coverages made of materials suitable for weaving	517.543	669.989	743.093	991.984	1.158.452
Woven tools	441.763	571.082	753.162	1.011.908	1.132.497
Synthetic and artificial irregular fibers	925.406	963.201	1.033.834	1.045.084	1.035.586
Specially woven textiles, lacework, wall-coverages, and embroidery	454.059	549.688	571.503	654.101	683.473
Saturated, rendered, covered textiles, and technical tools made of such	239.060	260.767	284.153	316.063	331.663
Wool, hair, horse hair, their thread and clothes	167.572	180.202	185.033	228.992	233.043
Wadding, mat, non-woven textiles, special thread, string, and their products	166.638	178.883	172.705	205.557	221.699
Herbal fibers suitable for weaving, paper yarn and their clothes	17.585	25.092	24.596	31.317	29.472
Silk	6.091	4.557	3.337	3.280	3.395

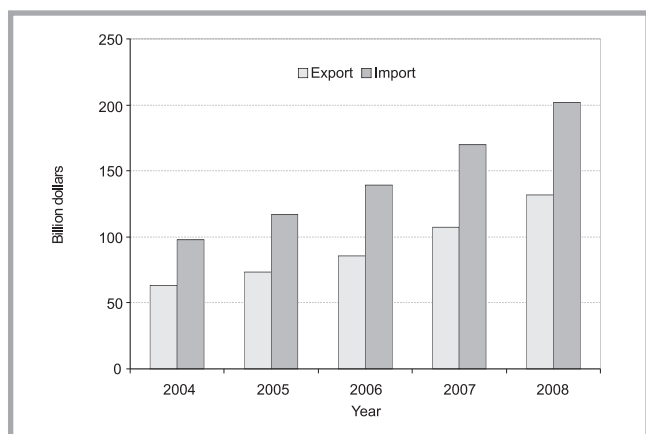
*Figure 2* shows the change in the textile import of Turkey between 2004 and 2008. When *Figure 2* was drawn, statistical data of DTM (Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade) was used. In *Figure 2*, it can be seen that while Turkey's exports increased continuously, its imports increased as well.

Tarakcioglu [9] stated that if the pace of Turkey's imports did not change, the textile and clothing industry would collapse by 2013, and competition with countries like China, India and Pakistan would become impossible for the Turkish textile and clothing industry, which keeps its production in the category of cheap and simple products.

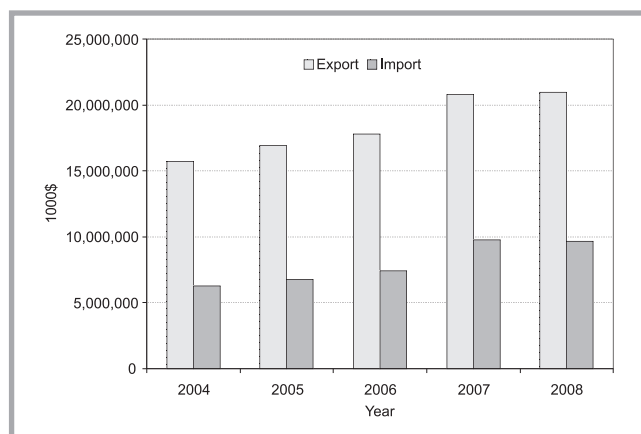
Kayihan [10] argued that Turkey become a textile importer country due to lack of any obstacles for imports and due to the low exchange rates which made imports more attractive, and that almost all of imported products could be produced in Turkey.

## Conclusion and recommendations

The textile industry is a locomotive sector which has an important place in Turkey's economy. When the general export and import figures of Turkey are examined, it can be seen that import figures are higher than those for export. In the textile industry, the reverse is true: export figures are higher than import figures.



**Figure 1.** Turkey's general export and import figures [2, 3, 5].



**Figure 2.** Textile and clothing imports and exports of Turkey (Based on data from the Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade [8]).

**Table 2.** Leading textile and clothing products imported by Turkey; (Based on data from the Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade [8]).

Textile and clothing products	1000 \$				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Cotton	1.982.197	2.079.291	2.090.189	2.829.539	2.331.906
Synthetic and artificial irregular fibers	1.173.892	1.137.661	1.348.999	1.879.114	1.695.924
Artificial and synthetic fibers suitable for weaving	1.008.240	1.119.551	1.205.762	1.576.328	1.494.492
Woven clothes and accessories	352.600	433.390	579.701	857.974	1.230.924
Fabric clothes and accessories	224.454	252.711	374.778	539.045	761.127
Wool, hair, horse hair, their thread and clothes	417.438	410.379	420.055	472.748	456.322
Wadding, mat, non-woven textiles, special thread, string, and their products	214.930	264.359	296.954	378.723	416.588
Woven tools	178.372	170.596	178.090	223.453	239.282
Saturated, rendered and covered textiles, and technical tools made of such	166.613	205.836	184.743	221.790	253.841
Carpets and other coverages made of materials suitable for weaving	114.084	144.698	167.540	192.767	210.302
Specially woven textiles, lacework, wall-coverages, and embroidery	219.305	235.568	273.976	230.072	186.693
Herbal fibers suitable for weaving, paper yarn and their clothes	164.816	181.002	192.825	188.511	181.819
Other clothing made of textiles, used clothing and parts	45.520	65.044	85.494	123.552	130.475
Silk	21.344	29.207	30.634	39.480	44.539

It can be seen that many exported products are also imported. However, it is true that as imports increase, the dependency of Turkey on foreign countries also rises, along with a decline in its competitive power. For example, in 2008, 1.633.650 \$ worth of cotton was exported, whereas 2.331.906 \$ worth was imported.

Most of the textile products imported by Turkey can also be produced in it. It is believed that if the importation of textile

products which are able to be produced in Turkey can be prevented, and it can be ensured that imported textile products would be those which cannot be produced in Turkey, textile import costs can be reduced.

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## XVII Seminar and Workshop on 'New Aspects of the Chemistry and Applications of Chitin and its Derivatives'

### INVITATION

On behalf of the Board of the Polish Chitin Society I have both a pleasure and an honour to invite you to participate in the **XVII Seminar and Workshop on "New Aspects of the Chemistry and Applications of Chitin and its Derivatives"** which will be held in **Warsaw, Poland, September 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011.**

The aim of the conference is to present the results of recent research, development and applications of chitin and chitosan. It is also our intention to give the conference participants working in different fields an opportunity to meet and exchange their experiences in a relaxing environment.



Best regards  
Dr Malgorzata M. Jaworska

More information:

CONFERENCE SECRETARY  
M. Skłodowskiej-Curie 19/27, 90-570 Łódź, Poland  
tel. (+48) 42 638 03 339, fax (+48) 42 637 62 14,  
e-mail: ptchit@ibwch.lodz.pl www.ptchit.lodz.pl