

**iTKiBHedef**

# VISION

January 2025 • Issue: 4  
Istanbul Textile and Apparel Exporters' Associations

**IFCO**  **ISTANBUL  
FASHION  
CONNECTION**

**2025 IS  
GETTING READY  
WITH AMBITION**



**SPRING/SUMMER  
2026**

**FABRIC & CLOTHING  
TRENDS**

**KOZA CONTINUES TO  
DISCOVER YOUNG TALENTS**



**TEXHIBITION  
ISTANBUL**

**THE GLOBAL  
SHOWCASE  
OF THE TEXTILE  
INDUSTRY**

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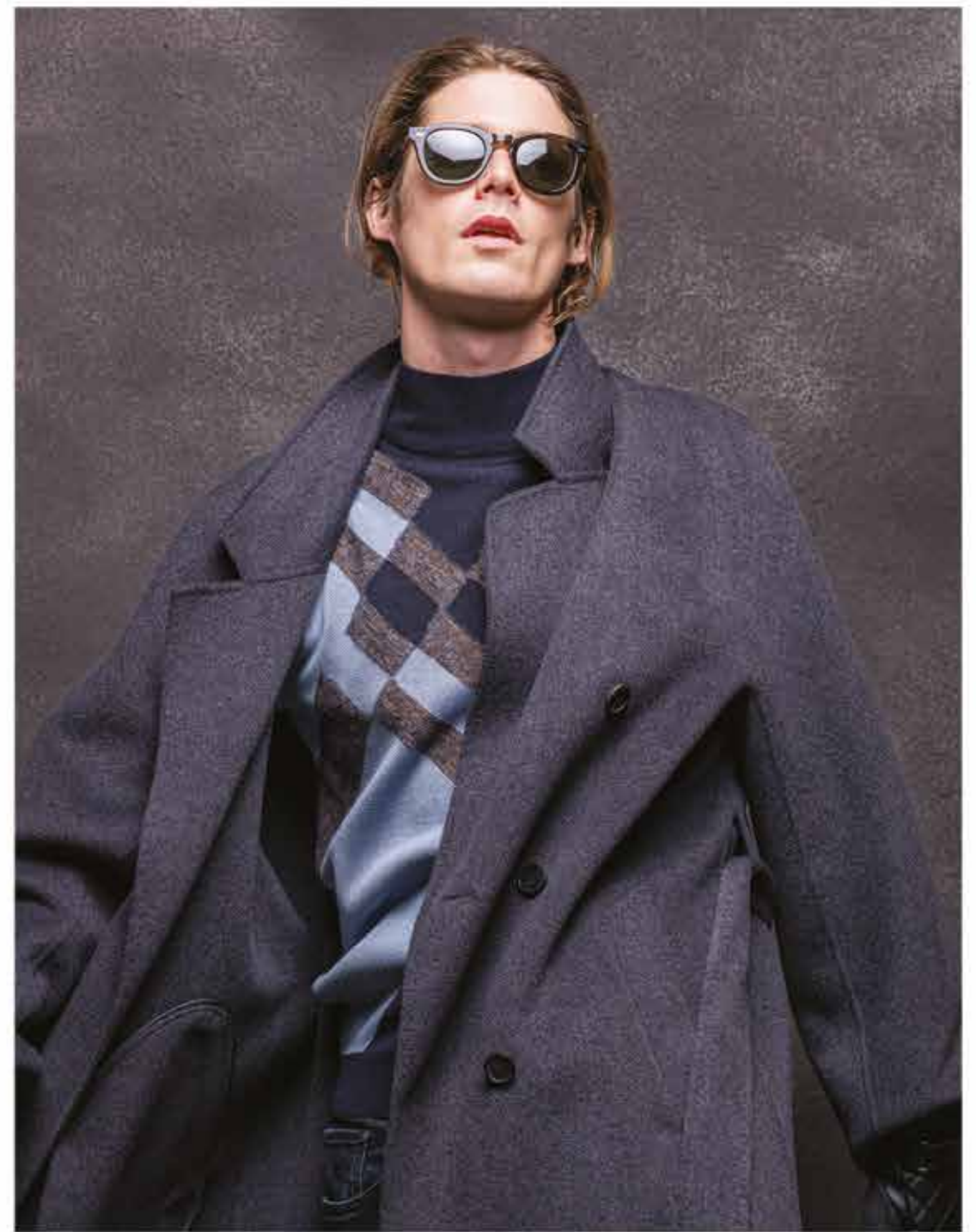
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### MANAGEMENT

Çobançeşme Mevkii Sanayi Cad.  
Dış Ticaret Kompleksi B Blok  
34530 Yenibosna - İSTANBUL  
TEL: 0212 454 02 00  
FAX: 0212 454 04 15  
WEB: www.itkib.org.tr  
e-mail: info@itkib.org.tr



### PUBLISHING TEAM

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Selda YEŞİLTAŞ

#### RESPONSIBLE EDITOR IN CHIEF

Murat ERDOĞAN

#### ART DIRECTOR

Serpil YENİHAYAT

#### EDITOR

Zeynep TÜTÜNCÜ GÜNGÖR

#### PHOTOGRAPH

Burcu GÖKNAR

#### ADVERTISING MANAGER

İlknur ULUSOY

ilknur@viyamedya.com

#### ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE

Aysima KAYA

#### CONTACT ADDRESS

RUMELİ CADDESİ RUMELİ PASAĞI YUNUS APT.

NO: 45 KAT: 3

NIŞANTAŞI - ŞİŞLİ / İSTANBUL

+90 212 236 00 50

www.viyamedya.com, viya@viyamedya.com



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PRINTING

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## TRUMP'S CAMPAIGN HATS WERE MADE IN TÜRKİYE

The "Make America Great Again" hats used in President Donald Trump's election campaign and distributed to voters were produced in Türkiye.

The U.S. presidential race, which concluded with Donald Trump's victory, increased demand for products in Türkiye's promotional goods sector. Last year, Türkiye began exporting promotional items such as hats, flags, banners, pens, mugs, and keychains to the United States. Among these exported items, the most notable was the hats worn by Trump and distributed to his supporters. A total of 100,000 "Make America Great Again" hats, produced in

Adıyaman, were sent to the U.S. to be used in Trump's campaign. Carrying the label "Made in Türkiye," these hats were exported for \$2.5 each. Workers at the Zirve Şapka Promosyon factory, located in Adıyaman's Gölbaşı Organized Industrial Zone, manufactured 100,000 hats in approximately one week. The "Made in Türkiye" hats, featuring Trump's campaign slogan "Make America Great Again," became a favorite among Trump's supporters.

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## SÖKE COTTON BECOMES THE FIRST EU-REGISTERED COTTON PRODUCT

**Türkiye continues to have its local treasures registered by the European Union (EU).** Söke Cotton has achieved the distinction of being the first cotton product to be registered in the EU, becoming Türkiye's 27<sup>th</sup> product to receive this recognition.

**T**ürkiye's rich array of local goods continues to gain added value by securing EU geographical indications. Currently, 26 Turkish products, including Gaziantep baklava, Aydın figs, Malatya apricots, Aydın chestnuts, Milas olive oil, Bayramiç white pears, Taşköprü garlic, Giresun hazelnuts, Antakya künefe, Suruç pomegranates, Çağlayancerit walnuts, Gemlik olives, Edremit olive oil, Milas brined olives, Ayaş tomatoes, Kahramanmaraş tarhana, Edremit Gulf green cracked olives, Ezine cheese, Safranbolu saffron, Aydın memecik olive oil, Araban garlic, Osmaniye peanuts, Bingöl honey, Bursa peaches, Hüyük strawberries, and Bursa black figs, are protected under EU geographical indications. In September, Söke Cotton became the 27<sup>th</sup> geographical indication for Türkiye and the first cotton product ever registered by the EU.

Commenting on the development, Minister of Industry and Technology Mehmet Fatih Kacır stated, "We continue to protect Anatolia's local treasures through geographical indications and promote them on the international stage. Söke Cotton has become our 27<sup>th</sup> EU-registered geographical indication. It is also the first cotton product recorded in the EU. I congratulate our producers and everyone involved in this wonderful achievement." Minister of Agriculture and Forestry İbrahim Yumaklı added, "Söke Cotton has become the fourth product from the fertile lands of Aydın to transcend borders. With this EU geographical indication registration, our count of registered products has risen to 27. These geographically indicated products will continue to add prosperity to the fertile soils of their regions. Congratulations to all."

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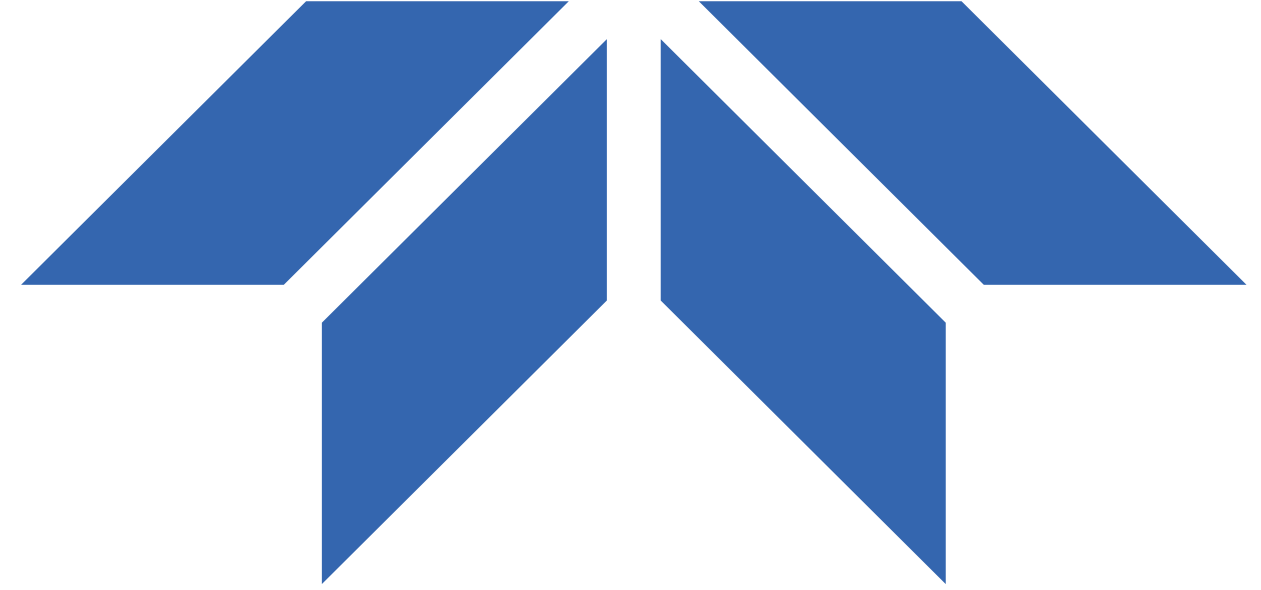


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IFCO

2025

is getting ready with ambition



The Istanbul Fashion Connection (IFCO), which has become the global showcase of Türkiye's fashion industry and the largest event of its kind in Europe, is preparing ambitiously for its next edition, scheduled for February 5–8, 2025. Don't forget to mark your calendar for this event, which will feature a rich product range and vibrant activities.



As the first apparel and fashion exhibition under the global fashion industry's radar, IFCO is intensively preparing to host even more participants and showcase fashion trends in a larger space for its seventh edition. Organized by the Istanbul Apparel Exporters' Association (İHKİB), IFCO will be held at the Istanbul

Exhibition Center. Efforts to achieve record participation and visitor numbers have already begun with domestic and international outreach. For its 2025 edition, IFCO will bring together all components of the apparel industry, featuring: Women's, men's, and children's clothing, denim and sportswear, evening dresses, bridal gowns, and

tuxedos, innerwear and socks, leather and fur apparel, and footwear. The sixth edition of IFCO, held on August 7–9, 2024, welcomed dozens of purchasing groups, as well as thousands of elite buyers from over 121 countries. The event featured nearly 300 companies across five halls, covering a total area of 30,000 square meters.





IFCO was held across five halls, covering a total area of 30,000 square meters, with the participation of approximately 300 companies.



**“We are a brand country in apparel production”**

Mustafa Gültepe, President of the Türkiye Exporters Assembly (TİM) and İHKİB, emphasized the strong interest shown by global brands in IFCO despite it being the summer season. He stated, “It was a very significant message for us that nearly 10,000 buyers from over 150 countries came to Istanbul during a time when global trade is shrinking.” Highlighting that the interest from European and U.S. brands

was no coincidence, Gültepe explained, “In the fashion industry, we are a global player and a brand country in production. Our design capabilities, speed, high-quality production, and proximity to major markets like Europe set us apart from our competitors. We have successfully turned these advantages into opportunities for our country over the years.” He continued, “The apparel sector has consistently ranked among the top three exporting

sectors. Even more importantly, apparel and apparel is a net-exporting sector. For example, in 2022, it brought \$18.6 billion in net foreign exchange earnings to our country. Our clothing brands operate in over 100 countries with more than 3,000 stores worldwide. We are planning all our strategies and action plans accordingly. As İHKİB and TİM, we guide our companies in areas such as design, innovation, branding, and green transformation.”

**“We want IFCO to be included among prestigious exhibitions”**

Highlighting that IFCO is a major success story, İHKİB Vice President Mustafa Paşahan stated that they have turned IFCO into a brand that contributes to both the sector and Türkiye. He said: “IFCO, praised by some of the world’s most successful exhibition organizers, has quickly become an important brand for Türkiye and our sector. At the sixth IFCO, companies from all product groups, including

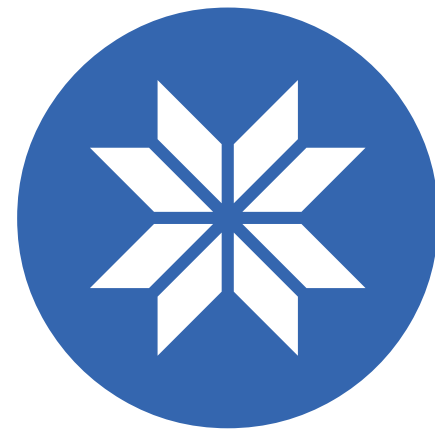
women’s, men’s, and children’s clothing; denim and sportswear; leather and fur apparel; and footwear, participated.” Paşahan continued: “In our new exhibition, product diversity will increase even further. The procurement committees we will organize in this year’s exhibitions will provide opportunities for our participants. By working harder and producing more, we will continue to be the driving force behind our exports.”





# eminars

# fashion shows



## IFCO BRINGS TOGETHER FASHION AND KNOWLEDGE THROUGH EVENTS



IFCO contributed to helping participants promote their own collections and designs to new locations and customers through buyers from all around the world. Fashion shows featuring special collections from participating companies provided enjoyable moments for visitors from both abroad and within the country. The exhibition featured trend areas, seminars, and fashion shows that brought together design, interaction, and experience, particularly focusing on digital transformation, smart clothing, technical textiles, and sustainability. Organized fashion shows, seminars that captured the pulse of the industry, B2B areas that connected

foreign buyers with participants, and many other events increased IFCO's appeal. With even more ambitious events in the upcoming season, IFCO offered its visitors a memorable exhibition experience in a different atmosphere. Seminars covering all developments in the fashion industry presented themes aligned with the latest fashion trends. Topics ranged from organic and sustainable products to technological and digital approaches, and climate-independent designs.

### The core İstanbul and the brands special area wowed visitors

At the IFCO exhibition, visitors explored The Core İstanbul area,

specially designated for Turkish fashion designers, where they had the opportunity to view the latest trend designs from Turkish designers. The Core İstanbul, which brought together Türkiye's leading fashion designers and apparel brands with international buyers, provided an opportunity to transform the collections of brands and designers into commercial success. The area attracted significant attention from visitors. This season, IFCO hosted over 20 Turkish fashion designers, including 2BE4A, A Piece Of Work, ALAII, Arzu Kaprol, Be Oz, Bianco E Nero, Denim Heads, Elara Esmer, Esin Barış, Eynaco, Helin Aydoğan, Heva, Majura by Özlem Erkan, Meltem Aybar, Meltem Özbek, Mert Erkan, Ryderact, Safarah World, Shyz Wear, Syga, Tuba Ergin, Urban Muse, and Viola & Vesper. The Fashion Designers Association (MTD), which continues its efforts to establish Türkiye's fashion design sector as a defining school in the formation of global fashion trends, reflected the trends and perspectives of world fashion at the IFCO exhibition. The special section for brands at IFCO featured established apparel companies that have built strong brands, exporting to various parts of the world, and showcasing collections that stood out in the industry.



Arzu Kaprol  
Fashion Designer

**“THE UNIFYING  
IMPACT OF  
IFCO IS VERY  
IMPORTANT”**

We had an IFCO Exhibition with a high level of interest from foreign buyers, especially from countries like Russia and the USA. This interest shows that we reached the right customer base. IFCO’s unifying impact on the Turkish fashion industry is very significant. I believe it is a highly effective exhibition in bringing international industries and nearby regions to Türkiye during this season. This is very inspiring. We participated in the exhibition with a selection from our 2025 summer collection. While receiving orders is important, our main goal here is to establish the right connections.

Ece Öney -  
Özge Yenihayat  
Fashion Designers –  
Viola & Vesper

**“IFCO IS ALWAYS  
PRODUCTIVE  
FOR US”**

This was our third time showcasing our products at the The Core area at the IFCO Exhibition. As always, we met with people from different sectors and countries. IFCO is always a productive exhibition for us. We met with buyers we believe could lead to sales, and we are currently in contact with them. We mostly interacted with people from the Middle East, the Americas, and a few European countries. We believe it is a great exhibition to increase our brand awareness and work with new sales channels and stores.

Helin Aydoğan  
Fashion Designer

**“IT WAS A VERY  
PRODUCTIVE  
EXHIBITION”**

This was my first exhibition. I had never participated in any exhibition before. From what I’ve seen, IFCO is more about establishing connections. For me, it was a great opportunity and a very productive exhibition. I was very happy to see people appreciate my designs. I had visitors asking for collection designs after liking my design line. I realized I could do more than just work on my own brand. I met with buyers from the MENA region, European countries, the UK, and Russia. B2B meetings were very productive as well. I am considering participating in future seasons of the exhibition. Based on the feedback I received here, I foresee making changes to my collections.

Batuhan Kutlu  
Gizia

**“WE GAIN NEW  
CUSTOMERS AT  
IFCO”**

We are happy to be at this exhibition as Gizia. We would like to thank İHKİB for organizing such an event. The exhibition plays a significant role in bringing our country’s brands together with international customers. Here, we are creating new networks and gaining new customers. We had visitors from our target countries such as the Gulf countries, Kazakhstan, and Russia. We can say that we had visitors from almost every nationality. We are very happy to be part of IFCO.



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# trend area

## İMA'S "ASCENSION SS-26" THEMED TREND AREA



Istanbul Fashion Academy (İMA), a leading fashion education platform for both today and the future, continues its work at the heart of the fashion and apparel industry, blending design, trends, and creativity. As a fashion hub that keeps up with the latest developments, is the first to announce and implement them, İMA has designed the trend area at the IFCO Exhibition for five seasons and continued this role in the sixth season

as well. The "Ascension SS-26" themed trend area covered four key trends. The trend area became one of the most popular spots among both domestic and international visitors throughout the exhibition. Foreign visitors were particularly focused on fabrics, and they were greatly impressed when they discovered that the locally produced fabrics they assumed were imported actually belonged to Turkish companies.

### The evening wear and wedding dress sector will display the power of design

The Fashionist area, which is the focal point of visitors' interest, will once again bring together evening wear, wedding dresses, and groom suits at the next exhibition. Fashion shows and events organized within the Fashionist area will not only offer a delightful exhibition experience for visitors but also provide industry professionals with the opportunity to explore high-quality trend products. The Turkish apparel industry, which sets the trends in evening wear fashion, will showcase its new products at IFCO, drawing inspiration from its design and production capabilities. Unique and colorful products from the evening wear sector will be displayed at IFCO Fashionist alongside visual shows. The wedding dress category, which was added to the exhibition last year, will once again bring a vibrant touch to IFCO this year.

### The elegance of women's and men's wear will brighten IFCO

The women's and men's clothing product groups of the Turkish apparel sector, which have gained significant market share in the European and U.S. markets, are preparing to open new doors to elegance at IFCO by presenting endless variety and the latest fashion trends. As in previous years, the leading companies of the Turkish apparel industry will showcase their products at the new exhibition, while also providing an opportunity for Turkish apparel to shine on the global stage.

### Leading subsectors of the global market will also be at IFCO

The Turkish lingerie sector, which holds a significant share in the country's apparel exports, will display the best examples



of product quality, design, and craftsmanship at IFCO. The exhibition, where global lingerie brands and Turkish suppliers will also participate, may open doors to new collaborations for professional buyers. Turkish hosiery industry, which is Europe's largest sock producer, will present examples of high-quality products from the global market to the visitors at IFCO.

### Children's fashion will add color to IFCO

One of IFCO's colorful events will be fashion shows reflecting children's wear. Special fashion shows featuring the latest products in children's fashion will provide visitors with delightful moments. At IFCO, you can also collaborate with leading companies in children's wear for special projects.

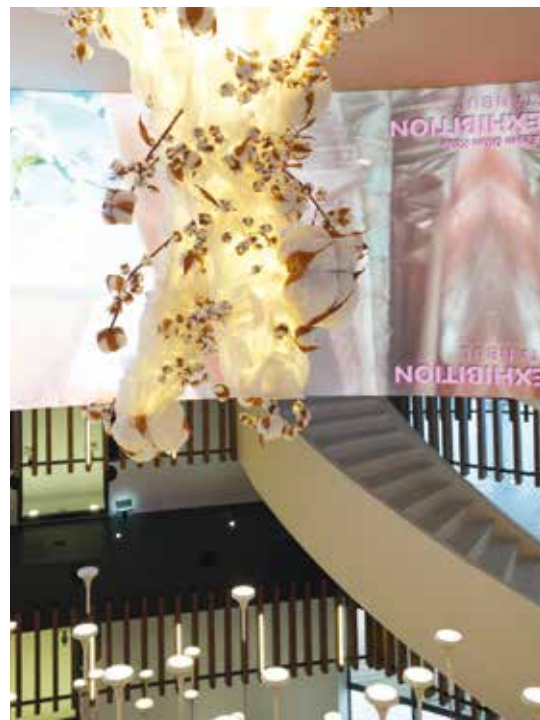




# THE GLOBAL SHOWCASE OF THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY: TEXHIBITION ISTANBUL



Texhibition Istanbul Fabric, Yarn, and Textile Accessories Exhibition, which has become an international showcase for Türkiye's textile sector, hosted 25,000 professionals from 117 countries on September 11–13. The events, seminars, and trend area organized as part of the exhibition received high praise from visitors.



Over 500 Companies Gathered at Texhibition Istanbul, Showcasing the Production Capacity and Design Power of the Turkish Textile Industry With a wide product range from woven to knitted fabrics, yarn to denim, and prints to textile accessories, over 500 companies came together at Texhibition Istanbul, highlighting the production capacity and design strength of the Turkish textile sector. The Texhibition Istanbul Exhibition, held at the Istanbul Exhibition Center from September 11-13 and attended by 25,000 professionals from over

100 countries, took visitors on an innovative journey over three days. Organized by İTKİB Fuarçılık A.Ş. on behalf of İTHİB, the exhibition has welcomed over 100,000 visitors in its previous five editions and featured 539 companies in this edition, moving one step further each time.

### Texhibition has become the new global brand of the Turkish textile industry

In his opening speech, Minister of Trade Prof. Dr. Ömer Bolat stated, "It is extremely important for the Texhibition Exhibition to

expand its scope in the coming years and gain recognition as an internationally branded exhibition, which will enhance the visibility of our country's exhibition industry and exporting companies. I am confident that it will achieve success in this regard." TIM President Mustafa Gültepe also noted that Türkiye differentiates itself from other countries in textile and apparel production with its quality, speed, and flexible production capabilities, emphasizing that our geographical proximity to Europe makes Türkiye a preferred supplier in global markets.





The importance of branding in the Turkish textile sector was emphasized once again.

The Texhibition Istanbul Fabric, Yarn, and Textile Accessories Exhibition has become a platform at the heart of the textile industry, encompassing a wide range of topics from production to quality, trends to sustainability. Offering participants and visitors an export-focused exhibition experience, Texhibition Istanbul has welcomed over 100,000 visitors in six seasons, solidifying its place among global trade ex-

hibitions. The exhibition, which showcases the most innovative and sustainable solutions in the textile sector, provides participants and visitors with opportunities to create new prospects in global markets.

**Participation rate in Texhibition on the rise**

Emphasizing the great importance of the exhibition in ensuring the permanent flow of the

global supply chain to Türkiye, İTHİB President Ahmet Öksüz stated, "During the exhibition, we brought together approximately 43,000 square meters of space with 527 participating companies and over 28,000 visitors from more than 100 countries. While leading textile exhibitions around the world are experiencing declines of up to 50% in 2024, the strong crowd at our exhibition truly summarizes everything. Our exhibition, which has hosted over 100,000 visitors in its previous five editions and continues to move one step further each time, contributes significantly not only to the acceleration of the wheels in our textile sector but also to the promotion of Istanbul and the Turkish economy. Texhibition and IFCO exhibitions, which are among the largest in our country and Europe, have quickly entered the international exhibition calendar with their momentum of success. They stand out as export-focused exhibitions with foreign buyer rates ranging from 30% to 50%. We firmly believe that by integrating our exhibition into the calendars of international exhibitions, it will become one of the most important exhibitions in the sector in the near future."

**"We showed the strength of our sector once again"**

Pointing out that Türkiye is the fifth largest textile exporter in the world, İTHİB Vice Chairman and Texhibition Executive Board Chairman M. Fatih Bilici

"We have full confidence that by adding our exhibition to the calendar of international fairs, it will become one of the most important fairs in the sector in the near future."

expressed their satisfaction in bringing together the Turkish textile sector with the world's most important buyers on the same platform. He noted that Turkish fabric producers are blending environmentally friendly production processes with the latest technology, making them pioneers in sustainable production. Bilici stated, "Texhibition Istanbul not only provided a platform for establishing commercial connections but also offered a significant opportunity to showcase Türkiye's innovations and creative solutions in the textile field to the world. We have once again

demonstrated the strength of Turkish textiles to buyers from all over the world and taken them on a magnificent journey in the textile universe. Our Texhibition Istanbul exhibition will continue to contribute to sustainable growth in the textile sector in the upcoming period and attract buyers from around the globe to Türkiye."

**Trend & innovation areas attracted great interest**

Türkiye's largest fabric exhibition, Texhibition, offered a fresh perspective to the textile sector this season with its Innovation Hub, Blue & Black Texhibition,

and creative trend areas. Designed by creative directors, these areas served as a valuable guide for participants exploring product groups influenced by thematic stories and inspiring architectural concepts for the upcoming season.

**Events addressing industry issues draw attention**

In its 6<sup>th</sup> season, Texhibition Istanbul Exhibition stood out with its seminar programs featuring industry experts as speakers. Seminars focused on new trends and sustainability shed light on the future of the sector.

539

Participating companies

25,000

Visitor count





# trend



## & innovation areas



The Innovation Hub trend area, designed under the creative direction of Innovation Designer Arzu Kaprol and coordinated by Filiz Tunca, showcased sustainable, technological, and innovative products, becoming one of the most captivating sections of the Texhibition Istanbul.

The Innovation Hub trend area at the Texhibition Exhibition was designed under the creative direction of Human Innovation Designer Arzu Kaprol and coordinated by Filiz Tunca. By bringing together sustainability and technology, the Innovation Hub inspires the industry and hosts pioneering products for global textiles. The area showcases sustainable, technological, and innovative products that will shape the future of textiles, including denim, yarn, color-changing technologies, electronic textiles, sensor-equipped fabrics, and light-emitting garments. In specialized spaces themed around Denim Area, Yarn Area, Accessory Area, and Paradox Parlor, visitors can closely examine the latest trends and technologies. Experiential exhibits such as fiber optic dresses, sound-responsive garments, carbon-heated pillows and ponchos, and biologically scented fabrics provide visitors with an insight into the future of the textile industry.

### Blue&Black: An intelligent product at Texhibition!

The Texhibition held from September 11-13 in Istanbul garnered great appreciation from visitors with its events and created spaces. One of these areas was Blue&Black Texhibition. The trend area in the Blue&Black Texhibition section was prepared by ALLDENIMS founders Gönül Altunışık and Selvi Yiğci. The product showcased in this area, designed with artificial intelli-



gence, reflected the power of AI. This creation, made entirely from denim and coated denim fabrics using artificial intelligence algorithms, featured striking rope and mirror details, presenting a remarkable blend of technology and craftsmanship. The work redefined the boundaries of denim material, adding a futuristic touch to the design through its coated surfaces. The aesthetic and innovative design illuminated the understanding of future fashion. The second piece, created through human design, is described as a masterpiece that challenges the limits of human creativity. Each of the four iron arms of the piece is adorned with eye-catching mirror fragments. The visual spectacle created by the movement of the rotating arms was among the most striking details of the

exhibition. This impressive mechanism showcased the extraordinary combination of technology and design. The headpiece made of gravity-defying gray denim and the body-hugging outfit added a modern texture, giving the design a futuristic vibe. This area invites visitors to step into a world where the digital revolution and innovation converge, revealing how transformation profoundly impacts the fashion industry. In the reshaped fashion world influenced by digitalization, the physical textures of the past merge with modern techniques to offer a completely new aesthetic. Fabrics evolve from mere materials into masterpieces. Garments inherited from the past are mechanically redesigned to meet the demands of the modern world.





TEXHIBITION  
ISTANBUL

# seminars



## SEMINARS SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE FUTURE OF THE INDUSTRY

Texhibition Istanbul brought together not only the fashion world but also futurists and professional managers. Experts in their fields connected the current topics of the industry to the future.

Company executives and visitors attending Texhibition Istanbul had the opportunity to experience expectations for the future of the industry by participating in seminars held over three days. On the first day of the exhibition, Cécile Rosenstrauch, Global Creative Director of Nelly Rodi, conducted a trend seminar titled “Spring/Summer 2026 Clothing and Fabric Trends.” Textile artist Gül Bolulu met with participants in her seminar, “Three-Dimensional Textiles: Nature’s Hidden Fibers.” In the Blue & Black Texhibition area, Gönül Altunışık and Selvi Yiğci, Founders and Creative Directors of ALLDEN-IMS, organized a seminar on denim trends and Indigo AI. Özkan Çokaygil, Group Manager of Sales and Business Development at Trendyol, was the speaker for the seminar titled “New Opportunities in Textile Exports: E-Export.” On the second day of the exhibition, a seminar titled “Digital Product Passport” was held, moderated by Besim Özek, a board member of İTHİB and Director of Strategy and Business Development at BOSSA. The speakers for the seminar were Arzu Konyalı, Global Sustainability Director of LCW, and Özlem Güneş, Deputy Secretary-General of İTKİB. The seminar titled “Training the Textile Designers of the Future: Inclusive Education and Development with Artificial Intelligence” was moderated by Gül Bolulu, President of



the Textile Designers Association, and featured speakers including textile designer Büşra Balota, Prof. Dr. Günay Atalayer from Marmara University Fine Arts University, and AI educator Özgecan Üstgöl. Ebru Debbağ conducted a seminar titled “The Impact of Marketing on the Changing and Evolving Dynamics of the Denim Sector,” which included examples from Pakistan and Bangladesh. On the third day of the exhibition, a seminar titled “Be Prepared for Sustainability Regulations; Time is Running Out” featured a speech

by Marwa Zamaray, European Climate Pact Ambassador. Bikem Kanık, Board Member of Orbit Consulting, moderated the seminar titled “Cyclical Value Chains in the Fashion Industry.” Speakers included Jyotsna Gopinath, Innovation Analyst at Fashion For Good, Kadir Cesur, Circular Business Development Manager at Circulose, Özgür Alper Güler, Sales and Marketing Director at Kipaş Textile, Rui Pereira, Vice President of Sales at Smartex, and Serkan Bayır, Business Modeling and Development Manager at Ekoten.”

**Bossa**  
Hande Yıldırım

**“WE ARE VERY SATISFIED WITH BLUE & BLACK TEXHIBITION”**

We are quite satisfied with the fair; it went well for us. The participation rate is at a good level. I believe that with further efforts to reach the target customer base, even better results can be achieved. We are especially pleased with the special section dedicated to denim. The Blue & Black Texhibition area reflects the exhibition style that denim companies are accustomed to. Similar denim-specific sections are present in the fairs we attend abroad. In this sense, the easy accessibility provides advantages for both denim companies and visitors. Looking at the progress from the first day of the exhibition to today, it's impressive. Each season, it is developed by building on the previous one. I also think the organization is very successful.

**Iskur Denim**  
Ceren Başak Bozeli

**“TEXHIBITION FAIR IS AN EXCITING EXPERIENCE”**

The first day of the exhibition was particularly busy. The fair de exhibition is an exciting experience. We mostly interacted with buyers from Russia, and there were also customers from the domestic market. We are very pleased with the special section allocated for denim, which started last season. This section is also a sign that denim is a special area in Türkiye. We plan to participate in the upcoming seasons of the Texhibition Fair.

**Maritaş**  
Simge Korucu

**“THE CUSTOMER BASE CONSISTS OF CONSCIOUS BUYERS”**

The exhibition was held with a high level of participation. We observed that the customer base consisted of conscious buyers. Since denim is a special area, having a dedicated section at the exhibition benefits us. Considering that Türkiye is a competitive country in denim, we believe such a section was necessary. We interacted primarily with buyers from Russia. We think the exhibition will be much more productive with increased participation from buyers in the USA, China, and Europe. We intend to participate in future seasons of the The fair de exhibition .

**Bahariye**  
Caner Erbaş

**“WE ACHIEVED BETTER RESULTS THAN EXPECTED”**

We have been participating in the The fair de exhibition since it started. We observe an increase in both participants and visitors with each season. This situation reflects positively on us. This season was also very good and productive; we achieved better results than expected. We are optimistic about the exhibition and think it will continue to improve over time. We connected with many buyers from the Middle East and Russia. We have also begun to see European customers more frequently. As a company focused on Europe, we achieve significant results from the fair. We plan to participate in future seasons of the The fair de exhibition .

**Karafiber Tekstil**  
Gökhan Çerikan

**“TEXHIBITION IS BECOMING AN ALTERNATIVE TO PREMIER VISION”**

We believe the The fair de exhibition will become much more productive as the number of foreign customers increases. We mostly hosted buyers from the Middle East. Overall, it is very important for Turkish textiles that such an exhibition brings together the entire industry under one roof in Türkiye, especially in Istanbul. The The fair de exhibition has started to become an alternative to the Premier Vision Fair. People now prefer to attend this fair, and the participating companies are also very good. The industry has been experiencing a slowdown lately, and this is reflected in the fair. We established contact with many new customers during the fair.

**Kipaş**  
Nurdan Kaynarca

**“THE FAIR HAS SHOWN GREAT DEVELOPMENT”**

The exhibition was generally busy for us. As a company that has been participating in the The fair de exhibition from the beginning, we can say that it has shown great development. We met buyers from countries such as Russia, Spain, China, Denmark, and Iran. We believe that having an exhibition like Texhibition in Istanbul is of great importance for the Turkish textile industry. Istanbul is a significant attraction center. We think it would be beneficial to move the fair's timing forward a bit to make it more international. If visitors are systematically reviewed before being admitted, the exhibition could become even more productive.

**BTD**  
Hikmetcan Bilici

**“CREATED SERIOUS COMPETITION WITH INTERNATIONAL FAIRS”**

The The fair de exhibition went very well. All the customers we expected were there. We observed a busy crowd, and it was a beneficial exhibition for us. As a company that has participated since the beginning, we believe that innovations like the Innovation Hub and Blue & Black Texhibition have improved the fair. We are quite satisfied. We hosted buyers not only from the domestic market but also from the USA, Spain, the UK, and various other countries. We think Texhibition has created serious competition, especially with international fairs like Premiere Vision. There was a gap for such an exhibition in Istanbul, and we can say that this fair, which appeals to everyone, has been very beneficial. We will continue to participate.

**Can Tekstil**  
Hakan Tunç

**“WE GAINED MANY NEW CUSTOMERS”**

The exhibition was busy just like in March. We interacted with buyers from countries such as Russia, Germany, Poland, and the UK. We continued to take orders throughout the exhibition and also gained many new customers. We even started preparing collections with our new contacts. The fact that an exhibition like this is held in Istanbul is a significant advantage, especially for foreign customers. The fair de exhibition allows them to visit Istanbul and see all the components of the textile industry under one roof in a geography close to Europe. We plan to participate in future seasons of the fair.



texhibition shed light on

# spring/summer

# 2026

## fabric & clothing

## trends

Nelly Rodi Global Creative Director Cécile Rosenstrauch gave a seminar on "Spring/Summer 2026 Fabric & Apparel Trends" at the Texhibition exhibition held on September 11-13.

► Zeynep Tütüncü Güngör



Cécile Rosenstrauch, the Global Creative Director at Nelly Rodi, presented a seminar on 'Spring/Summer 2026 Fabric & Clothing Trends'. The main trend, Challenge, focuses on embracing and overcoming difficulties. In a time when everything has become dull and cautious, taking creativity a step further, accepting challenges, taking risks, and stepping outside of comfort zones to surpass classic pieces gain importance. The sub-themes of the Challenge trend

include Mischief, Oxygenation, Unsacred, and Communion. While different shades of yellow, the main color of the trend, will continue to dominate the season, lighter yellows will be seen more in casual clothing, while darker yellows will appear in elegant outfits. Spring/Summer 2026 is expected to be a provocative and daring season, drawing inspiration from the yellow color that evokes acid and sourness. This color, focusing on challenge, will create a striking





## mischief



**T**he Mischief theme, which emphasizes sensuality, signals a feminist season. Mischief, a feminine theme, represents a trend that diverges from tradition. Patterns used on objects such as chairs, furniture, and carpets are expected to be reinterpreted in clothing. Bolder pieces are presented with a romantic touch. The theme, which will feature plenty of floral and flower patterns, especially targets a younger audience. This forward-looking theme draws attention to classic pieces being adorned with disturbing or even defiant details. New techniques are used and incorporated into the style in a modern way. The theme features an elegant color palette of milky shades,

which are also combined with more muted tones. In this color palette, fabric plays an important role, with textured fabrics creating different looks when paired with shiny materials. A mix of provocation and sophistication is achieved, combining chic and vulgar appearances. The looks are complemented by jewelry, and denim usage is seen to be on the rise. Shirts stand out among the key pieces, with a masculine influence dominating women's wardrobes. Shirts are reinterpreted in various ways and are often paired with skirts. With the theme, red fruits such as blueberries, strawberries, and cherries, along with red elements, will become more prevalent in our lives. The theme will frequently

incorporate erotic symbols, and materials such as satin, tulle, lace, guipure, and fabrics with an inside-out appearance will stand out. Products blended with sophisticated fabrics beyond the traditional become prominent. The details play around with textures resembling whipped cream, voluminous cuts, and checkered patterns used in everyday life. Clothing with a relaxing atmosphere revives vintage patterns with fresh colors. Three-dimensionality in fabrics gains importance, as reliefs and cottons come together, decorated with embroidery and embossing. The idea of renewing the classic is emphasized, with pastel-toned tweed fabrics taking their place in this romantic theme.

## oxygenaration



**T**he Oxygenaration theme is based on the idea of stepping outside the city while still remaining within it. In this theme, which tells a story of innovation, creating collections from breathable fabrics for outdoor use becomes essential. As new places are defined within ancient cultures, life outside the city becomes a significant factor.

This is because people are now known to bring self-care outside the city and into nature. The theme features new shapes focused on innovative fabrics and materials, with dark camouflage colors complemented by vibrant hues. A second color palette offers a fresher archive reminiscent of water and breathing. Sports and performance products

are prominent in this theme, with ropes and cords among the elements used. While strong technical materials are utilized, more natural fabrics are included in the wild and sensual theme. Nylon is also a focal point in the theme, blended with a modern look. Concepts like ergonomics and weightlessness gain importance. High-performance garments and fabrics with perforated, mesh, and decorative effects take center stage. Fluidity and space aesthetics catch the eye, with the fabrics making one feel like a superhero. Pieces inspired by outdoor sports are seen, with light and comfortable items that could flutter in the wind, often using pastel colors. The fabrics that reflect light, along with canvas, synthetic, laser-cut materials, parachute fabrics, and ultra-light recycled nylon and polyester fabrics, are among the key materials. In terms of patterns, animal and camouflage effects come into play. This theme, which speaks about breathing and returning to nature, incorporates new functions into recyclable fabrics.



# unsacred



The Unsacred theme contains a story based on the removal of sanctity, speaking of a new kind of devotion and the impacts created through critical messages rather than violence. Codes reminiscent of the status quo are reinterpreted. The idea of abandoning the use of popular and cheap materials in luxury consumption is emphasized in the desacralization process. It presents a more pop-inspired and entertaining narrative. In this theme, sportswear and casual wear are combined. In Unsacred, where being artistic gains importance, high technology appears with a vintage touch. The theme is dominated by formal looks, with acidic colors combined with more subdued tones. References to workwear are made with formal details, and exciting pockets and cuts draw attention. A sexy touch is added to formality, with the intention of making corporate life more



desirable. Recycled materials gain significance when creating luxury garments. Inspired by football and city lights, the theme features dark and vibrant colors. Through gamified collections, materials that are



not usually seen together are blended. Patchwork sweaters and luxurious sparkles used in basic pieces stand out. The theme is highlighted by prints and patterns, with flexible fabrics being utilized.

# communion



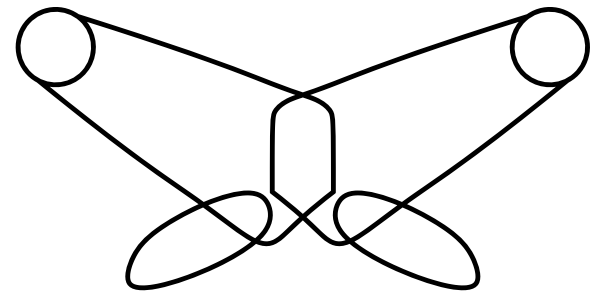
The Communion theme, defined as the new bohemian, brings printed patterns back into our lives. Reflecting the hippie and bohemian style, this theme aims to create a new alternative way of living. The pieces featured in the theme aim to enable people to achieve freedom while living within a community. It tells the esoteric story of a group that wants to live far from individualism. In this theme, where creating

more enjoyable communities has become highly important, the use of psychedelic patterns stands out. 'Freestyle' becomes a significant narrative, and the Communion theme embodies a great deal of creativity. The color palette of the theme offers a very sweet impression and connects with exotic fruits. In this palette, which is considered alongside darker colors, a silky and elegant approach is adopted. The theme is rich in embroidery, with pat-

terns and prints used together. Behind this story lie handicrafts and graphic appearances. The theme, reflecting a 'do-it-yourself' spirit, is inspired by Indian and Asian roots. Inspired by flowers, the prints and patterns reflect esoteric beliefs. Shamanism, light, rainbow colors, satin-like and more vibrant, light-reflecting fabrics are preferred. Soft and silky fabrics, checkered patterns, and jacquards are also featured within this theme.



# Koza continues to discover young talents



The 32<sup>nd</sup> Koza Young Fashion Designers Competition, organized by İHKİB this year to bring young designers into the fashion world, concluded with the awards being presented to the winners.



**T**he final of the Koza Young Fashion Designers Competition, held annually by the Istanbul Apparel Exporters' Association (İHKİB) to introduce new talents to the sector, took place on November 13 at the Raffles Hotel. The glamorous gala night was attended by prominent figures from the industry and society. Finalists, prepared under the mentorship of Belma Özdemir and Nihan Peker, showcased their collections at the gala night after a long and exciting preparation process. The 10 finalists who presented their collections were Ahmet Can Hızlı, Ece Zikguş, Gülnihal Uluçay, Lamiya Duran, Levent Tirki, Mehmet Melih Sevinç, Selçuk Durdu, Sude Keskin, Taha Erdem Ömeroğlu, and Umut Kaya.

#### A 32-year tradition

A long-standing tradition in the Turkish fashion industry, the Koza Young Fashion Designers Competition has, over the years, introduced designers such as Bahar Korçan, Hakan Yıldırım, Arzu Kaprol, Elif Cıgızoğlu, Ümit Ünal, Zeynep Tosun, Özgür Masur, Bora Aksu, Hatice Gökçe, and Zeynep Erdoğan to both the Turkish and global fashion scenes. With its 32 years of continuity, the competition serves as a valuable archive for Turkish fashion, offering promising futures to young talents again this year. İHKİB, which has undertaken numerous initiatives to boost branding in the Turkish apparel industry and position Türkiye as a hub of value-added exports and design, provides a significant

contribution to Turkish fashion through the Koza Young Fashion Designers Competition. The competition plays a pivotal role in recognizing the young designers who will shape the future of the industry, garnering acclaim through its long preparation and evaluation process, culminating in the gala night.

#### “We will take our sector to new heights through design”

Highlighting the challenges of maintaining a competition for 32 years, TİM and İHKİB President Mustafa Gültepe emphasized in his gala speech that such continuity is only possible in a well-established sector like apparel and textiles. Gültepe said, “Tonight, we watched 10 remarkable finalists. Each showcased unique and



The designs of the 10 finalists were selected by a jury consisting of academics, fashion designers and leading professionals in the industry.



captivating designs.” Stating that the textiles and apparel sectors have brought many firsts to Türkiye, Gültepe added, “We make significant contributions to industry and the national economy. Our sector, already strong in the global arena, will, in the future, reach even greater heights through design. Textiles and apparel are among Türkiye’s most crucial industries. I believe in our youth. As long as we have such talented young people, neither our sector nor our country will falter. Many of our fashion designers who emerged from Koza are

now either running their own brands or representing Türkiye abroad while working with top brands. The sector’s future is in good hands. As long as we continue these competitions, our industry will grow even stronger. We received approximately 300 applications this year, and I congratulate our jury members. All the finalists tonight are winners. This competition will significantly impact their future careers. My advice to young designer candidates is to first gain experience working with companies to understand the industry, then move on to

establishing their own brands. Currently, our Turkish apparel brands operate in over 100 countries with more than 3,000 stores worldwide, creating opportunities for designers to make their mark globally.”

**The finalists competed before a jury of esteemed names**

The designs of the 10 finalists were evaluated by a jury comprising academicians, fashion designers, and leading professionals in the industry. The competition’s jury was chaired by Nejdet Ayaydın, Head of İHKİB’s Events Committee. Other

members included innovation designer Arzu Kaprol, Assistant Chair of Selçuk University’s Fashion Design Department Ayşegül Paralı, İHKİB Board Member and Events Committee Member Barış Eraslan, İMA Director Cemal Bayazıt, fashion designers Gamze Saraçoğlu, Giray Sepin, and Hakan Yıldırım, Mavi Jeans Design Director Güney Oktar, Chair of Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University’s Textile and Fashion Design Department Kemal Can, fashion designer Mehtap Elaidi, fashion designer Murat Türkili, Chair of Yeditepe University’s Fashion

and Textile Design Department Müşerref Zeytinoğlu, editorial director Oğuz Erel, fashion designer Özlem Kaya, İC Waikiki Technical Aesthetic Design Director Yeşim Bağrıışen, Marmara University’s Textile Arts Department Chair Z. İrem Sabanuç Gönül, and GQ Türkiye Editorial Director Zeynep Üner.

**They won prestigious awards**

The finalists underwent an intensive six-month preparation period. Throughout this process, as well as during production and the fashion show, the young designer candidates gained invaluable







**“Creative portfolios, exciting projects”**

Koza 2024 mentor and fashion designer Nihan Peker expressed her excitement about encountering highly creative portfolios and inspiring students during the competition process. “I am delighted to have shared this journey with them. The portfolios we’ve seen truly inspired us. We eagerly await the results,” she said. Koza 2024 mentor and fashion designer Belma Özdemir also shared her thoughts: “As always, we embarked on a thrilling journey filled with young talents and fresh ideas. We are just as excited as the contestants. We hope to nurture new talents for the fashion world with amazing projects.” Jury Chair Nejdet Ayaydın commented, “These young designers have created beautiful designs and achieved outstanding work. Some have performed incredibly, producing results that resemble the work of seasoned designers with 30 years of experience. I congratulate all of them and extend my gratitude to the jury and mentors.”

able and instructive experiences. On the gala night, as they prepared to step into the industry, they presented their collections in highly impressive shows. The winners of the Koza Young Fashion Designers Competition, which serves as a critical milestone in the careers of aspiring designers, received cash prizes and educational opportunities. The first-place winner received 150,000 TL, the second-place winner 100,000 TL, and the third-place winner 75,000 TL. Additionally, with support from the Ministry of Commerce, the

winners earned the chance to study abroad and attend a year-long English language course in Türkiye. The top 10 finalists gained the opportunity to stage their first professional fashion shows and received material and workshop support for producing their collections. During the award ceremony following the fashion show, Sude Keskin won first place with her collection “De Pulchritudo.” Second place went to Umut Kaya with “222,” and Ahmet Can Hızlı took third place with his collection “Love Me as I Am.”



**SUDE KESKİN  
FIRST PLACE  
DE PULCHRITUDO**

The collection title “De Pulchritudo” means “The Most Beautiful” in Latin. Inspired by Oscar Wilde’s “The Picture of Dorian Gray,” which deeply influenced her during her high school years, Sude drew upon Wilde’s personality and lifestyle as a key source of inspiration. By studying Victorian-era male silhouettes, she adapted the rigid discipline and strict gender roles of that period to the modern day through unisex designs. The collection reflects societal hypocrisy and the pressures of the Victorian era, while exploring themes like hedonism, aesthetics, ethics, values, beauty, and ugliness. Using techniques such as clock imagery to symbolize the fear of aging and narcissus flower motifs to represent beauty obsession, Sude brought these concepts to life. She asked profound questions like “Is beauty subjective? Is aesthetics the essence?” and embedded her answers within unfinished details and embroidered fabrics, concealing imperfections while blending them into her designs.



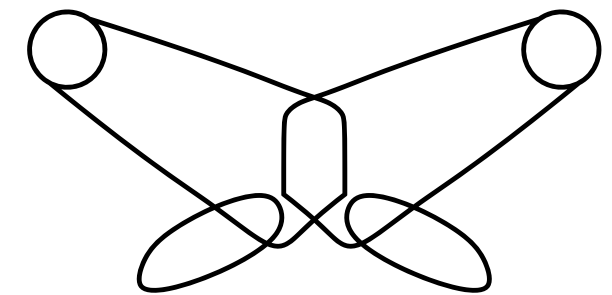
**UMUT KAYA  
SECOND PLACE  
222**

This collection narrates the iconic punk couple Sid Vicious and Nancy Spungen’s tragic love story in three stages: beginning, development, and inevitable end. Capturing their chaotic and uninhibited relationship, the designs evoke a rebellious atmosphere. Materials like leather, denim, and fur highlight the intensity of emotions and passion in the narrative. Beyond punk aesthetics, Umut fused the story with Turkish culture by incorporating traditional motifs like çintemani and kündekari, offering a localized perspective. The juxtaposition of these elements creates a deeper expression of love’s intensity and tragedy.



**AHMET CAN HIZLI  
THIRD PLACE  
LOVE ME AS I AM**

Ahmet’s collection focuses on themes of culture, subculture, and identity. Inspired by the style of arabesque music, which emerged in Türkiye in the late 1960s, “Love Me as I Am” redefines the boundaries of classical men’s fashion. The designs reflect the struggles of migrants in Istanbul’s shantytown areas, where arabesque music became a form of resistance. Large, voluminous forms symbolize the spirit of resilience while challenging traditional perceptions of masculinity. Drawing upon the emotional intensity of arabesque music, Ahmet’s collection honors its origins with a modern and innovative approach.







## THE PEAK OF TURKISH TEXTILE DESIGN: FUTURETEX İSTANBUL

The winners of the Futuretex İstanbul Fabric Design Competition have been announced. Organized for 19 years by the Istanbul Textile and Raw Materials Exporters' Association (İTHİB), the competition supports young talents, inspired by Türkiye's goals of development through value-added exports.

The winners of the Futuretex İstanbul Fabric Design Competition, organized by the Istanbul Textile and Raw Materials Exporters' Association (İTHİB) for 19 years, have been announced. The first-place winner is Aslı Aslan, with Seher Yıldırım in second place, and Seda Nur Canbolat in third. The special jury award was given to Leyla Tadzhibaeva. During the final night of the



competition, Mustafa Gültepe, Chairman of the Türkiye Exporters Assembly (TİM), stated, "Our textile industry is doing significant work to enhance its design strength. With the now-traditional Futuretex, we introduce new young talents to the sector every year. Out of 332 design centers in Türkiye, 53 are within the textile industry. This alone demonstrates the importance textile places on design. In these centers, the future of the sector is being meticulously crafted, like a rare fabric. I am aware of the immense potential in the textile and ready-to-wear industries. Türkiye is already a brand in these two sectors. Now,

The Futuretex İstanbul Fabric Design Competition supports young talents inspired by Türkiye's goals of development through value-added exports.

it is time to build the "Türkiye of brands."

### "Our designers will become a symbol"

Ahmet Öksüz, Chairman of the Istanbul Textile and Raw Materials Exporters' Association (İTHİB), emphasized that their greatest motivation in organizing the competition for 19 years has been to achieve the branding of world-renowned Turkish fabrics through design. He noted that the Futuretex İstanbul Fabric Design Competition supports young talents inspired by Türkiye's goals of development through value-added exports. Fatih Bilici, Vice Chairman of



the İTHİB Board of Directors and Chairman of the Fair Committee, chaired the competition jury. Fashion designer Özlem Süer served as the competition coach, and the jury included Kemal Özhasseki, Nejdett Ayaydın, Filiz Tunca, Neslişah Yılmaz, Ahmet Altınöz, Nesrin Türkmen, Elif Ergu Demiral, and Amor Garibovic. The first-place winner of the Futuretex İstanbul Fabric Design Competition received a cash prize of 200,000 TL, the second-place winner received 150,000 TL, and the third-place winner was awarded 100,000 TL. Additionally, a contestant selected by the jury received a

60,000 TL special honor award. It was also announced that the contestants deemed eligible by the Ministry of Trade among the top three finalists would be given the opportunity to pursue education abroad. The top three finalists were offered six months of foreign language training, an international fair visit determined by İTHİB, and scholarship courses at the Istanbul Fashion Academy. As in previous years, the special jury award winner received the "İpekyol special award." The fabric designs of the winner will be turned into clothing by Özlem Süer and sold in the most prestigious İpekyol stores.



# Winners

The first-place winner of the Futuretex İstanbul Fabric Design Competition received a cash prize of 200,000 TL, the second-place winner received 150,000 TL, and the third-place winner was awarded 100,000 TL. Additionally, a contestant selected by the jury received a 60,000 TL special honor award.



**ASLI ASLAN**  
**FIRST PLACE**  
**FOREST THERAPY**

Aslı Aslan, born in Antalya in 2001, completed her primary, middle, and high school education in Antalya before enrolling in the Textile and Fashion Design Department at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University in 2019. In 2022, she joined the Sun Design Project and completed her clothing internship. She graduated in 2024 and aims to develop herself in the textile and fashion design sector with conscious progression. The project was inspired by the concept of forest therapy. Its main aim was to reflect the soothing effects of nature on the human body through the comfort and naturalness of fabrics. This was achieved using environmentally and body-sensitive natural yarns wherever possible. Influenced by the theme, the project stood out as an experimental and carefree collection of knitted fabrics for women's clothing.



**SEHER YILDIRIM**  
**SECOND PLACE**  
**PER ASPERA AD ASTRA**

Born in Adana in 2001, Seher Yıldırım completed her associate degree in the Fashion Design Department at Çukurova University's Beyazevler Vocational School between 2020-2022. In 2022, she continued her education in the Textile and Fashion Design Department at Çukurova University's Faculty of Fine Arts. Her woven fabrics have been exhibited, and she completed an internship focused on yarn and weaving at Kivanç Tekstil. She aims to advance in the textile and fashion industry.

The project was inspired by the Latin phrase "Per Aspera Ad Astra," meaning "through difficulties to the stars." This phrase symbolizes the start of the journey to the stars when one begins striving for success. The project's color palette assigned meanings to each color: navy blue for challenges, gold for light and success, and light blue for hope. Techniques such as warp reinforcement and double-layer pleating were used to create unique patterns. The fabric was woven using a jacquard weaving technique. In the warp reinforcement method, navy and gold yarns were used in the warp threads, creating unique patterns and textures through different weaving repeats. The double-layer pleating technique aimed to create textured and three-dimensional forms.



**SEDA NUR CANBOLAT**  
**THIRD PLACE**  
**ETHEREAL TIDES**

Born in Adana in 1999, Seda Nur Canbolat graduated from the Fashion Design Department at Çukurova University in 2020-2022. She transitioned to the Textile and Fashion Design Department at Çukurova University's Faculty of Fine Arts via a vertical transfer exam. She completed her internship at Bossa Denim in Adana and aims to create sustainable designs.

The project was inspired by jellyfish, scientifically known as Scyphozoa, which have represented balance in ocean depths for centuries. Their graceful and fluid movements make them one of the aesthetic beauties of the seas and a part of the ecosystem. The delicate structures and wavy forms of Scyphozoa inspired woven fabric designs. Their dynamic and fluid appearances were expressed in soft and organic forms in the fabric patterns and textures. The color palette included natural shades of blue, purple, green, and cream. Weaving techniques conveyed the textural diversity and softness of jellyfish using various yarn types and weaving methods.



**LEYLA TADZHİBAEVA**  
**SPECIAL JURY AWARD**  
**FROM MERMAID'S EYE**

Leyla Tadzhibaeva is pursuing her undergraduate education in the Textile and Fashion Design Department at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University. During her studies, she assisted Zeynep Tosun and Oğuz Erel and collaborated with magazines such as Dry Clean Only, L'Officiel, Sober, and BeStyle. She created personal designs for celebrities like Edis, Aleya Tilki, Damla Biliç, Atiye, and Zeynep Bastık. She also worked as a designer for the German clothing brand Levitic. In 2023, she was a finalist in the 14<sup>th</sup> Bridal Design Competition and produced a collection in 2024 under the Sun Design Project. She was selected for Alexander McQueen's iMcQueenCreators project, and her works were displayed on billboards in London, Paris, Milan, and New York.

Her project, inspired by the fading colors of corals due to human-caused pollution, reflects the magical underwater world onto woven fabrics. Developed with sustainability in mind, the designs convey the perspective of marine life and the monotony brought on by environmental damage.





## WINNERS OF THE DETAY LEATHER PRODUCTS DESIGN COMPETITION ANNOUNCED

The winners of the 6<sup>th</sup> Detay Leather Products Design Competition, organized by the Istanbul Leather and Leather Products Exporters' Association (İDMİB), have been announced. Six awards were given in two categories during the ceremony.

In his speech at the event, Mustafa Gültepe, Chairman of the Board of the Turkish Exporters' Assembly (TİM), said: "We have gathered here for two award ceremonies. On one hand, there are those who add value to exports, and on the other, the designers who will shape the future of this sector. Our young colleagues, who will bring added value to the future of exports, will also make a significant contribution to competitiveness. In recent times, exporters have struggled greatly to avoid losing market share amidst the intense competition in global trade. I believe we have left behind the toughest period of the economic program implemented by our government. I am confident that after February 2025, with more supportive policies in the industry, we will move into positive territory. This is because Türkiye's remedy is exports. The more we grow and develop exports, the more Türkiye's prosperity will increase. Hopefully, in the coming period, we will come together in a more positive atmosphere with much better figures. I congratulate our successful companies once again, and I extend my heartfelt congratulations and respect to all the designers who made it to the finals of the 6<sup>th</sup>



Detay Leather Products Design Competition."

### Design is essential for value-added exports

Güven Karaca, Chairman of the Board of the Istanbul Leather and Leather Products Exporters' Association (İDMİB), stated that the Detay Leather Products and Footwear Design Competitions have been organized since 2012. He said: "To date, 1,273 participants have applied to our competitions, 67 of them have been awarded

as finalists, and 16 have earned the right to receive educational awards abroad. Today, our Leather and Leather Products sector boasts the fourth-highest export unit price in our country. We know that the solution to value-added exports lies in design. In this regard, I wholeheartedly congratulate the 12 designers who made it to the finals, and I extend my thanks to our Creative Director Gamze Saraçoğlu and our Jury Chairperson and İDMİB Board Member Emel Güven Bardız, who have contributed





The winners of the 6<sup>th</sup> Detay Leather Products Design Competition, organized by İDMİB, were announced during the awards night that recognized those who made a difference in exports.



immensely to our competition. We will continue to work with our designers until we turn this country into a design leader in the sector."

**We continue to travel for exports**  
Güven Karaca noted that the event was also an opportunity

to appreciate the efforts and achievements of 2023. He stated: "I wholeheartedly commend every individual in the sector who contributed to our success in 2023, when we achieved the second-best export performance in our history with an export value of \$1.85 billion. This country

owes its gratitude to its exporters." Highlighting the efforts of exporters of footwear, leather goods, leather and fur garments, tanneries, and shoe components, Karaca said: "Despite all the challenges, we achieved an export value of \$1.85 billion in 2023, marking the sec-

ond-highest export value in our history. By producing 502 million pairs of shoes, you elevated our country to the position of the 7<sup>th</sup> largest shoe producer in the world. As the leather goods sector, you turned countries known for their fashion and design prowess into export markets for

our nation. While Türkiye's share in global exports has barely surpassed 1%, our leather and fur garment sectors have exceeded a global share of 5%. You have achieved exports with a per-kilogram value exceeding \$200. Our tanning sector has been the backbone of these achievements,

providing the raw materials that made them possible. However, as the Leather and Leather Products sector, we ended 2023 with a 9.5% decline in exports. As we now approach the end of 2024, this year has proven to be even more challenging for our sector. In the first 10 months of 2024, our exports reached \$1.3 billion, reflecting a 20% decrease compared to the same period last year. Nevertheless, in 2024, our sector achieved a unit price of \$11.7 per kilogram, ranking as the fourth most valuable sector following jewelry, defense and aerospace, and ready-made clothing and apparel. We are aware of the value of our work, we know our goals, and we will continue to travel for exports. I believe, and I am certain, that our sector, which can respond quickly to every opportunity and threat, will once again rank among the sectors with the highest export growth, provided the investment and export environment improves. All we need is profitability and to see the light at the end of the tunnel."



# Winners of the 6<sup>th</sup> Detay Leather Products Design Competition

**MELİKE DOLAN**  
**1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE IN THE LEATHER**  
**APPAREL CATEGORY**  
**ARTISAN LEATHER**

A graduate with first-class honors from Marmara University's Faculty of Fine Arts, Textile Department, specializing in Knitting Arts. She has worked as a freelance designer in various fields of fine arts and the textile industry, aiming to develop herself within the principles of a multidisciplinary art and design approach. Her ultimate goal is to represent her country internationally as a Turkish designer.

Tulle Bi Telli reflects a fusion of the Art Deco movement of the 1920s and traces of Orientalism, inspired by Egypt's cultural heritage. Designs are handcrafted using the Bartın işi (wire embroidery) technique. Predominantly crafted in black, ecru, and pink on round-knit nets, they are adorned with gold and silver threads forming culturally unique patterns. Influenced by the geometric and modern lines of the Art Deco era, her "Artisan Leather" leather & fur collection channels this cultural legacy.

**ALEYNA MİZGİN TOPRAK**  
**2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE IN THE LEATHER**  
**APPAREL CATEGORY**  
**BURNESHA**

After graduating at the top of her class, Aleyna advanced her personal and professional development through art and design education. She is pursuing her degree at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University's Textile and Fashion Design Department. Alongside her academic journey, she shares her knowledge and experience by teaching professional design drawing at various institutions.

Burnesha explores a 500-year-old oath tradition from Albania, the "land of eagles." This practice arose from a patriarchal structure that deemed women incomplete individuals. Refusing to conform, sworn virgins chose freedom over societal norms, leaving their identities behind in stark black-and-white memories.

**SERVAN ÇETİNKAYA**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE IN THE LEATHER**  
**APPAREL CATEGORY**  
**CYCLICAL ERA**

A student at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University's Textile and Fashion Design Department, Servan is a professional art director, as well as a photographer and painter. Drawing inspiration from these disciplines, he incorporates their essence into his designs.

Since the 1960s, music and fashion have intertwined as mechanisms of rebellion, especially among youth. This fusion gave rise to a platform for expressing political beliefs, freedom, defiance, and individuality. "Rock style," born from this cultural synergy, evolved through decades: pop rock in the '60s, punk in the '70s, heavy metal in the '80s, and grunge in the '90s. Each era influenced the next, sometimes opposing, sometimes inspiring. This collection reflects the cyclical evolution of these two intertwined industries in today's world.

**GÜLŞAH SERİN SÜNBÜL**  
**1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE IN THE LEATHER**  
**GOODS CATEGORY**  
**GULLU'S BAGS**

Gülşah completed her high school education in Ankara while attending pattern-making and sewing courses. She graduated from Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University's Fashion and Textile Design Department and gained professional experience with various companies. An advocate of continuous learning and innovation, she combines utility with design to create high-value products. Her approach is rooted in heritage, which she joyfully integrates into her designs. As a child, she visited her village during holidays, pondering, "What would my village look like if it were still alive today?" This thought led her to reconstruct her village through artificial intelligence, adapting its traditional items into modern, practical bags. She transformed the güğüm into a thermos bag, the "eight-cornered cap" into a shoulder bag, the çikin into a versatile bag, and the yayık into a miniature lambskin handbag.

**EMİRHAN KARAYILAN**  
**2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE IN THE LEATHER**  
**GOODS CATEGORY**  
**VORTEXA**

A student in the Textile and Fashion Design Department at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Emirhan's creative journey is shaped by the rebellious and sarcastic undercurrents of subcultures. He challenges traditional design paradigms with avant-garde streetwear and digital prints, working across garment, accessory, and textile design. His professional experience includes roles at Orka Holding, Khela The Label, and Essin Baris. Currently, he supports various brands as a creative director and designer. The Vortexa collection is inspired by the depths of infinite darkness. Each piece rejects the mundane, aiming to redefine bag design with a vision that embodies a mesmerizing allure, gracefully floating in an unrelenting sea of cool.

**DİLAN GÜÇLÜ**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE IN THE LEATHER**  
**GOODS CATEGORY**  
**CAGE BAG**

Dilan completed her high school education in clothing production technology and graduated from Beykent University's Fashion Design Department. She is currently studying in the Footwear Design and Production Department at Selçuk University's Faculty of Architecture and Design. Her career ambitions lie in designing leather goods, shoes, bags, and clothing. Inspired by Alejandro Jodorowsky's quote, "Birds born in cages think flying is an illness," she designed a bag collection reflecting the paradox of birds being both free and confined within cages. This concept serves as a stark reminder of how our freedoms are subtly eroded in today's dystopian world.





# CARPET INDUSTRY REWARDS DESIGNERS OF THE FUTURE

The winners of the 17<sup>th</sup> National Carpet Design Competition, organized by İHİB, have been announced. During the evening, industry representatives who contributed to the carpet sector's exports in 2023 were also awarded.

**T**he Istanbul Carpet Exporters' Association (İHİB), which has been organizing the National Carpet Design Competition for 17 years, announced the winners and recognized industry representatives who contributed to the sector's exports in 2023. İnan Burhanlı won first place in the 17<sup>th</sup> National Carpet Design Competition, followed by Esma

Deniz in second and Yaren İleri in third. Awards for contributions to the carpet sector's exports in 2023 were distributed among 10 companies in categories such as machine-woven carpets, tufted carpets, velvet carpets, prayer rugs, and handmade carpets. The İHİB Special Award was given to Mine Gökbuğet Erbek, who dedicated it to Turkish women

weavers. The Carpet Person of the Year Special Award went to Erhan Ör, a veteran of Hereke carpets.

## "We must unite production with design"

At the ceremony held on December 25, 2024, hosted by İHİB President Ahmet Hayri Diler, Mustafa Gültepe highlighted the unique place of carpets in Turkish culture. He noted that looking back at 2,500 years of history, it is clear that the Turks are among the nations with the best understanding of carpet-making. He mentioned that Türkiye accounts for 16.4% of global carpet exports, stating: "Last year, we achieved \$2.8 billion in carpet exports. This year, we closed the January-November period with a 5% increase. We can predict a similar increase for 2024.

Carpets are a cultural heritage that we must preserve and develop. At the same time, it is one of the industries where we have a significant advantage globally. Therefore, we must cherish these industries. To achieve greater success in exports, we must combine production with design, innovation, and advanced technology."

## "Türkiye is a global leader"

Emphasizing that the carpet industry combines a deep cultural heritage with strong commercial potential, Ahmet Hayri Diler stated: "We are proud to bring together the leading representatives of our industry, Türkiye's talented designers, and the young people who will shape our future. The carpet industry is one of the brightest pages in Türkiye's global success

stories. Today, Türkiye is second in the world for total carpet exports and first for machine-woven carpets. This success has been achieved through the sector's solid infrastructure, innovative vision, and dedication to preserving the values of our culture. Value-added exports are the key not only to economic achievements but also to sharing our cultural richness with the world through design and technology. The 17<sup>th</sup> National Carpet Design Competition is a shining example of how innovation and creativity are the lifeblood of the sector. Our designs are not just products but guides lighting the way for the future of Turkish carpet-making. Turkish carpets are not only an economic asset but also an artistic element that deserves global recognition."





**İNAN BURHANLI**  
**FIRST PLACE**  
**RHYTHM OF NATURE**

Born in 1998 in Muş, Malazgirt, İnan Burhanlı graduated in 2022 from Sakarya University's Faculty of Arts, Design, and Architecture, Department of Traditional Turkish Arts, Carpet and Rug Design. He is pursuing a master's degree in the same field at Sakarya University's Social Sciences Institute. He has worked as a student assistant at Sakarya University and taught handloom weaving techniques at the Mardin Institute of Maturation.

The project draws inspiration from the rhythm of nature, which begins with sensing creativity in nature's movement. Nothing in nature is static; everything complements each other in motion. When motion ceases, life ends; when rhythm ceases, balance is lost, leading to chaos. The design features repeating squares in order, utilizing natural tones and traditional motifs. The natural colors symbolize balance in harmony with nature's rhythm, while the motifs reflect traces of Anatolian culture.



**ESMA DENİZ**  
**SECOND PLACE**  
**KINTSUGI**

Born in 2005 in Kırşehir, Esmâ Deniz is a second-year student at Kırşehir Ahi Evran University's Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Traditional Turkish Arts, Carpet and Rug Design, and Traditional Fabric Patterns.

Her work, Kintsugi, is inspired by a Japanese commander who sent his favorite broken tea bowl to China for repair. When it returned, repaired functionally but without aesthetic consideration, Japanese artisans sought a more artistic repair method, developing the Kintsugi technique, which uses gold-mixed urushi resin to mend cracks. This process enhanced the tea bowl's beauty beyond its original state. "Kintsugi" combines the words "Kin" (gold) and "Tsugi" (join). The design uses geometric forms to represent broken pieces, yellow tones to symbolize gold, and gaps to reflect the healing process. It was created using the punch needle embroidery technique.



**YAREN İLERİ**  
**THIRD PLACE**  
**ÇATALHÖYÜK**

Born in 2004, Yaren İleri is pursuing a bachelor's degree in the Traditional Turkish Arts Department at Dokuz Eylül University's Faculty of Fine Arts, specializing in Carpet and Rug Design and Traditional Fabric Patterns. In 2024, her works were showcased at the Turkish Painters Exhibition in Macedonia (April) and the October 29<sup>th</sup> Kastamonu Painting Exhibition (October). She completed an internship in yarn and weaving at Bürüz Design and continues personal projects using the hand-tufting technique.

Inspired by the traces of an ancient civilization and the intertwined existence with nature at Çatalhöyük, one of the earliest settlements, her design reflects the spirit of this age-old society. The composition includes bird motifs soaring freely, symbolizing freedom, life, and nature's cycle. Drawing on contemporary color trends combined with earthy tones from Çatalhöyük, the design creates an artistic bridge between past and present, bringing ancient traces to life anew.



**DAMAT | TWEEN**

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Emre Erdemođlu  
Fashion Designer



## “I WILL NEVER BE PART OF THE FAST FASHION TREND”

Fashion designer Emre Erdemođlu, who has represented Türkiye with great success at fashion weeks in Moscow and Baku, emphasizes his deep appreciation for traditional tailoring and fabric quality. He expressed his sadness about the current state of fashion today.







the “Emre Erdemoğlu” brand. With my first collection, “Sandık Lekesi,” I received many awards on international platforms. I was later invited to Italy and held my first fashion show. In 2012, my collection called “Planör” won the “Most Creative Collection” award in Italy. With my 2014 “Clark Gable” collection, I caught the attention of Vogue Italy and collaborated on a project with Turkish Leather Brand, where I held a special launch in Florence. I later expanded the sales points for my brand. Today, the Emre Erdemoğlu brand is available on platforms like Harvey Nichols, Brandroom, Galeries Lafayette Istanbul, Beymen, and Joor. For the past 13 years, we have been providing custom-made and production services in men’s fashion at our studio in Bomonti. I continue to present my collections in various countries every year.

**Your designs break away from monotony in men’s fashion, bringing a bold breeze into a traditionally conservative area. How does the interest in your unique style make you feel?**

I started designing for men in 2008. There was a significant gap in the sector. I find men more rational when it comes to shopping; they know what they want and dress to meet their own needs. Women, on the other hand, often consider others when shopping, so they may struggle to find exactly what they need and aren’t as decisive. Men are much more accepting—they know why they want to work with you. Lately, I’ve been thinking a lot about the concept of challenging gender roles, which was prominent in the 1980s. What was once innovative and bold has now become a non-issue for the millennial generation of the 2000s. Millennials believe that both genders can act however they wish, without a single “appropriate” image of “man” or “woman.” People

to draw elegantly dressed, decorated, and highly detailed human figures on the walls of my home. Those walls and the silhouettes I drew contributed greatly to my choice of career today. I had determined my future profession and the point I would reach at a young age. I graduated from Dokuz Eylül University’s Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Fashion Design. During my senior year, I established

**H**ow did your path cross with the world of fashion? Do you remember the first moment you discovered your talent in this field?

I believe I came into this world to do this job. I was born, I grew up, and my hands and eyes saw and touched the world differently. It was as if everything was planned. Beneath all the stories created lies incredible effort, emotion, and patience. I used

I have evolved in this direction because I place a great deal of importance on traditional tailoring craftsmanship and fabric quality.

With our excellent collaborations, we will be in many more locations.



today can wear a long sweater, tight leggings, or a boldly patterned shirt on the streets without any gender distinction. The rejection of defining gender through clothing has become an unquestionable truth in the 21st century. You can find this concept in my collections as well.

**Do you think your designs have a common language?**

I’m a person who draws inspiration

from my own essence and story. When creating my narrative, I journey through the past. I make sure to inject everything I’ve experienced into my collections. I love tradition. I cater to men who are open to innovation, inspire with their style, and find harmony between the spirit of the garment and their own soul.

**As a designer who successfully represents Türkiye’s fashion industry**

**at various international events like Moscow and Baku Fashion Weeks, you received a lot of praise with your latest collection, “Bağ.” Could you tell us about the message you wanted to convey with this collection, which redefines luxury with a rich color palette?**

In my fall/winter 2025 collection, “Bağ,” showcased at Moscow and Baku Fashion Weeks, I explored the dramatic power of unconditional





I watch with sadness as many brands almost compete with each other in a frenzy of 'How can I produce lower-quality products?'

connections in human relationships. As in every season, I incorporated military forms in all the details. I aimed to redefine the concept of luxury with a story that has a strong narrative and a rich color selection. In this collection, where leather details are prominent, cashmere coats, oversized jackets, and floor-length trench coats dominate the overall look. With a blend of military forms and street style, the collection includes oversized coats, embroidered kimonos, high-waisted pants, sharply tailored jackets with a razor-like finish. Since I worked on the 1970s era, it's a collection filled with accessories. Long leather gloves, geometric-patterned knitwear, belts with bags, and ground-length scarves are among the surprises in the collection. New cuts bring a dynamic attitude to classic menswear. The Bağ collection stays true to the strong bond between elegance and confidence. The cohesive looks that comple-

ment each other are crafted with high-quality product groups, each piece offering a sense of liberation. The collection, rich in visuals and filled with versatile options, is designed with quality details in every aspect, from fabric choices to forms. I blended inspiration from retro pilot outfits of the 1920s to 1950s with today's fashion trends. Timeless classic interpretations that unite with experimental details provide an opportunity to reimagine traditional attitudes.

**You have a unique relationship with colors. The color palette in your collections breathes an elegant spirit into your designs. What would you say about the relationship with colors in this collection?**

In the Bağ collection, I combined warm and cool colors to make the bipolar collection more striking and fun. Sky blue and indigo blue play a primary role in the main colors.

Plum, rose, dark navy, and forest green serve as supporting characters infused into the shades. But the real star is our playful white! This collection's purity is entrusted to it...

**Aside from fashion weeks, what other international efforts are you pursuing? What is your short-term strategy for the Emre Erdemoğlu brand?**

The many years we've spent in the industry have brought much to the brand. We've achieved significant success and earnings, but most importantly, we've won people's hearts. My Bağ collection is still fresh, and I'm currently excited about it. Meanwhile, I've started working on a brand new collection. I'm in the midst of a beautiful story—a deep, passionate, emotional process. Once again, I'm preparing a collection with soul. To date, I have followed a controlled path in growing the brand. I don't believe in uncontrolled growth,

Comfort is a new concept for the fashion world. Over the past few years, styles have become much looser and more comfortable.



The cohesive looks that complement each other are crafted with high-quality product groups, each piece offering a sense of liberation.

as I've seen terrifying examples that caused great damage. Moving forward, I will expand the sales and marketing side of the Emre Erdemoğlu brand. We'll be in more locations through wonderful collaborations. From the day my brand was first conceived to where it stands now, I've had many mentors and masters. We still receive various consultations and plan advertising campaigns to engage with both Generation Z and Millennials.

**Today, fashion trends change rapidly, and consumer preferences evolve just as quickly. How do you see the future of fashion?**

The digital world now occupies a significant space in our lives. With the rapid advancement of technology, we're entering an entirely different order. Alongside this, I have leaned heavily towards traditional tailoring and fabric quality, which we greatly value and miss. For me, craftsman-

ship has always been very precious. The current state of fashion deeply saddens me, which is why I've taken this on as a personal mission. I will never be part of the "fast fashion" trend and will never compromise on the quality of my products. Comfort is a new concept for the fashion world. Over the past few years, styles have become much looser and more comfortable. The time we spent at home during the pandemic taught us more comfortable dressing habits. Fabrics are lighter, stretchy, almost with a homewear feel. Refined, cool pieces that don't cling to the body now hold a place in today's trends. The combination of contrasting pieces and styling games play an important role in today's street style.

**What are your thoughts on the environmental pollution caused by the fast fashion trend?**

In a rapidly developing and changing

world, I watch with sadness as many brands in the fast fashion trend compete to see "how low-quality can I produce." In a world driven by greed for money, we all see how nature is reacting negatively to us. Everyone has a responsibility in this regard. As a society, we must put an end to rapid and unnecessary consumption and promote a culture of recycling. We should create projects that set an example for future generations by converting existing plastic waste and materials in nature. We must inform people about the water loss caused by producing a pair of jeans, the effects of factory waste, and the real causes of air pollution. In the United States, about 13 million tons of textile products are destroyed each year, and textile waste accounts for 20% of global water pollution. By raising consumer awareness, we can reduce unnecessary fast fashion shopping or encourage the adoption of secondhand clothing.



Ayhan Yetgin

The Instructor of İstanbul Moda Academy

# spring/summer 2025

## Activewear Macro Trends

The macro trends for Spring/Summer 2025 activewear were presented by Ayhan Yetgin, an instructor at İstanbul Fashion Academy (İMA).

## restorative realms

 @hight\_clothing

 @helly\_hansen\_ip


“Restorative Realms” stands as the defining theme of the Spring/Summer 2025 season, heralding a new era of transformation in design. With innovative approaches, eco-conscious material choices, and calming yet functional design features, this theme opens a fresh door to the future of fashion. In an unpredictable and uncertain world, it allows us to explore restorative realms, offering balance and tranquility while positively influencing our lifestyle. Products designed to reduce environmental impact and achieve sustainable harmony emphasize eco-friendly and human-centric approaches.

This design philosophy focuses on renewal and regeneration, exploring how design can respond to the scarcity of resources. The color palette draws inspiration from nature, merging deep, rich tones with vivid, bright hues, resulting


 @piersonshapes

in a modern and energetic update. This combination of nature's profound colors with vibrancy and dynamism aims to benefit users' psychological well-being. Silhouettes prioritize functionality with multi-layered, relaxed


 Suicoke

cuts. Low-impact dye processes and fiber blends, such as hemp and cellulosic fibers, take center stage in the material choices. Details support a modular design philosophy that enhances usability and adaptability.



# shared connections

STELLA MC CARTNEY X ADIDAS



THEASIANMAN



@ADIDAS3



SOAR RUNNING



@POSTARCHIVEFACTION



CIELEATHLETICS

celebrates both ordinariness and diversity. These products communicate with bold and honest messages, consciously celebrating complexity and differences in their designs. By emphasizing the beauty of chaotic mismatches and uncertainties, this trend shifts away from perfectionism toward an accepting attitude. It helps people express themselves freely and understand one another while supporting values of social awareness and solidarity. Through this lens, activewear goes beyond merely supporting individual physical activity to underline the strength of community and collective action. This inclusive approach fosters a culture of diversity and inclusivity within the apparel industry. The color palette combines shades of blue and green, evoking a warm and comforting atmosphere. New iterations of classic blue tones are complemented by tea-stain hues, offering alternative applications. In terms of silhouettes and styles, wearability remains the core dynamic, combining minimalistic design principles with functionality.



ADIDAS X PHARELL WILLIAMS



BRRR

The sustainability of natural resources, the functionality of hybrid surfaces, and the importance of climate adaptation have become critical focal points in the performance textile industry. Sustainable use of natural resources is crucial for reducing environmental impacts and embracing the principles of

a circular economy. Hybrid surfaces, which combine different materials, enable the development of products with enhanced performance, durability, and functionality. For instance, integrating textiles with technological materials can improve features like waterproofing, breathability, and thermal

regulation in garments. Climate adaptation has also emerged as a vital factor for the textile industry, enabling materials to withstand changing environmental conditions. Enhancing textile properties such as UV resistance, water repellency, and windproofing plays a pivotal role in addressing the impacts of climate change. This trend focuses on creating hybrid products capable of providing solutions for diverse climate conditions and user needs. In an era marked by multiple crises and unprecedented global change, consumers are increasingly concerned about their well-being. Consequently, materials that evoke a sense of security hold greater appeal. Calming tactile textiles, enchanting layered and transparent fabrics with nostalgic and hybrid aesthetics, are gaining prominence. For the Spring/Summer 2025 season, the color palette includes vibrant hues such as orange, yellow, and purple, designed to offer psychological benefits to the wearer.

“Shared Connections” highlights the significance of individuality while reflecting the power of community. This approach aims to create a more inclusive atmosphere in activewear. Adaptive designs and creative influences encourage individuals to discover and express their unique styles while fostering a sense of be-

longing and contributing to the collective. Rooted in a sense of purpose, this trend focuses on elements that can tangibly improve the world. It introduces versatile designs tailored to diverse cultures, goals, and shifting moods, addressing unique needs through personalized products. The Spring/Summer 2025 season embraces an approach that



# Textile industry's transformation towards a green & blue future

The 16<sup>th</sup> International Ekoteks Symposium, organized by Ekoteks, a subsidiary of the Istanbul Apparel Exporters' Association (İHKİB), was held in Istanbul on September 26, 2024, under the theme "Transformation to the Green and Blue Future of the Textile Industry." The event hosted discussions on the Turkish textile and apparel sectors and the sustainability steps being implemented by major.



İHKİB's efforts to strengthen sustainable production infrastructure in the fashion industry and to raise awareness within the sector continue at full speed. At this year's 16<sup>th</sup> International Ekoteks Symposium, organized by Ekoteks, İHKİB's subsidiary, bureaucrats joined international stakeholders, global brand representatives, and academics to focus on sustainable production. In his opening speech, TİM and İHKİB President Mustafa Gültepe emphasized that transformation is the only viable path not just for the Textile and Ready-to-Wear industries but for all sectors, stating, "Türkiye carries out approximately 42% of its total exports, 60% of Ready-to-Wear exports, and 37% of Textile exports to EU countries. To maintain our share in this major market, we must

achieve a green transformation. We view this with consciousness and focus on actions rather than words. We are running several projects on sustainability. In June, we launched our AI-supported GreenTİM Platform to serve our exporters. On this platform, companies can calculate and report their corporate carbon footprints. When we calculate the carbon footprint of our 150,000 exporters on the GreenTİM Platform, we anticipate savings of around \$500 million."

**37 million euro grant from the EU** Gültepe noted that the Ready-to-Wear and Textile sectors have achieved several "firsts" in both international expansion through exports and dual transformation. "Under the leadership of TİM and İHKİB, we will launch our

Carbon Footprint Monitoring and Reduction Project in June of next year, bringing together textile exporters and all stakeholders," he said. He also shared that, as of July 2024, they had qualified for grants under the European Digital Innovation Hubs Program, bringing the total EU funding İHKİB has secured to 37 million euros. "We are using these grants to advance our fashion industry, increase our digital and green production capacity, and accelerate the shift to branded production. With these projects, we are also preparing our fashion industry for the EU Digital Single Market Strategy. To raise awareness within the sector, we are conducting intensive efforts. We organize educational programs on topics like corporate carbon footprint





measurement and calculation, product life cycle, climate change, and greenhouse gas emissions. We support the transformation of factories engaged in environmentally friendly production. We have prepared introductory guides on green transformation for our companies. These efforts underscore our understanding of the importance of dual transformation, and we continue our journey resolutely and without compromise," he added. Ekoteks General Manager Nida Arslanbay also emphasized the importance of sustainable and

green production in shaping the future global economy, affirming that İHKİB and the Turkish fashion industry are continuing their science-based initiatives. The speeches at the event highlighted the importance of prioritizing social development, environmental protection, and economic growth in implementing sustainability. It was noted that consumers' expectations for green products and services are increasing, along with the importance of conscious production and the efficient use of existing resources. The concept

of sustainable design emerged as a central theme.

**Sustainability efforts from agriculture to design**

The symposium also pointed out that, within the scope of the European Green Deal, current regulations place a heavy burden on SMEs, and simplifying these regulations is on the agenda. It was noted that, in the short term, digital product passports will gain importance in the textile and ready-to-wear sectors. In Türkiye, areas such as greenwashing, extended producer responsibility, and restrictions on textile waste exports have been defined through legislation, reflecting the need for industry transformation to comply with the Green Deal. According to data from the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change, the textile sector has achieved a compliance level of approximately 75% in incorporating the Industrial Emissions Directive into national legislation, a significant milestone in the country's progress. Efforts are also underway to implement zero-waste practices in Textile and Ready-to-Wear sectors starting from the design stage. One of the significant panels at the event focused on Türkiye's sustainable cotton efforts. Türkiye is one of the few countries that produce non-GMO cotton and has a notable share in global Better Cotton production. To increase this volume, efforts are being

The Carbon Footprint Monitoring and Reduction Project, which brings together textile and apparel exporters, is set to launch in June 2025.

made to expand good agricultural practices and organic farming through enhanced control and certification systems across the country. Equivalency initiatives have been launched in collaboration with BCI and the National Cotton Council, and various support programs for producers have been introduced.

**"Türkiye has the best capacity for the EU"**

Euratex Sustainability Director Mauro Scalia, in his presentation titled "New EU Legislation on Clean Industrial Green and Textiles," shed light on the demands and expectations: "Türkiye is a key country for the EU, and next year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Customs Union. Türkiye stands out as an integrated and pivotal country in the EU's value chain. The 16 legislative changes introduced as part of the Green Deal create legally binding effects on producers. By 2026, these regulations will impact all countries seeking to trade with the EU. The new EU Commission will introduce a Clean Industry Pact, and a new Circular Economy Law focused on competitiveness and growth is also expected. The specific law for Ready-to-Wear is anticipated to be implemented by the first half of 2028. At this point, brands will require certain changes from producers, with durability, reuse, and recycling becoming essential concepts. These concepts, which

will alter production methods, also imply extra costs for companies. Products that fail to meet specific standards are expected to be excluded from the EU market. The ReHubs initiative aims to facilitate recycling investments. Türkiye, being close to the EU, has the best capacity to support this transformation process. Manufacturers, brands, and the chemical sector need to collaborate in this transformation," he said.

**Brand strategies and innovative practices evaluated**

ZDHC Türkiye Country Manager Sinem Akkocaoğlu: "A transformation is needed throughout the entire value chain. We are providing a roadmap on how to reduce hazardous chemicals and explore alternatives."

EcoWise Director Emre Yöntem: "With a digital product passport, we can have data on products at every stage of their lifecycle. Textile waste can become a raw material for the construction industry. Collaboration across different sectors should also be fostered."

The "Brand Strategies with a Focus on Transformation" session, moderated by Human Innovation Designer Arzu Kaprol, featured speakers such as H&M Türkiye Country Manager Hülya Sevinç, DeFacto Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility Unit Manager Halide Pişken, Inditex Sustainability Environment Manager Suzan Başlılar, and Penti Sustainability & Supplier Collaboration Manager Deniz Saldıran Kaya.





5<sup>TH</sup> SUSTAINABILITY TALKS ISTANBUL CALLS ON BRANDS

# BRANDS SHOULD TAKE AS MUCH RESPONSIBILITY AS MANUFACTURERS



Sustainability Talks Istanbul, held under the theme “Act Now,” brought together leaders of the textile sector, innovative ideas, and sustainable solutions.

**S**ustainability Talks Istanbul was organized on December 3, 2024, at the Hilton Istanbul Bomonti with the strategic partnership of the Istanbul Textile and Raw Materials Exporters’ Association (İTHİB). Marking its fifth year, the event has become one of the most significant gatherings in the textile industry’s sustainability and innovation landscape. This year’s theme, “Act Now,” served as a call to action for the sector’s

key players, gathering them to discuss innovative ideas and sustainable solutions. In his opening remarks, the Chairman of İTHİB, Ahmet Öksüz, said, “The textile industry holds global importance not only because of its economic size but also due to its environmental impact. The annual consumption of textile-apparel products is 62 million tons, and this figure is expected to rise to 102 million tons by 2030. In the EU, textile

waste generated annually per person amounts to 12 kilograms. The fashion industry is responsible for 10% of global carbon emissions. Of the fiber used in ready-made garments produced worldwide, 87% is either discarded or burned, while only 1% is recycled back into ready-to-wear products. Reviewing these statistics, familiar to all of us in the industry, highlights the urgency of reevaluating our priorities. To this end, we maintain close dialogue with our Ministry of Trade and other relevant ministries.”

#### Product returns by brands discourage manufacturers

Öksüz highlighted that brands often place the burden of sustainability on manufacturers, disrupting the balance in the sector. He remarked, “This imbalance affects not only production processes but also the sector’s comprehensive sustainability goals. Moreover, the confusion caused by diverse and ever-changing certification processes leaves our producers feeling that their efforts will never be enough. Unfortunately, this contributes to growing scrutiny over ‘greenwashing.’” Sharing examples from the industry, Öksüz continued, “A batch of 22,000 ready-to-wear products was returned due to a slight pilling issue stemming from the fabric texture during production, despite no compromise in product quality. In another case, a conflict arose between a brand and a manufacturer

over minor differences between fabrics made from recycled cotton and conventional cotton. When recycled cotton is used, slight variations are inevitable regardless of location. However, the demand for recycled cotton fabrics to resemble conventional materials discourages producers from using recycled materials.”

#### Returns also cause significant emissions

He also emphasized the issue of lot differences: “Due to lot differences, which can only be detected in laboratory settings, our companies often face product returns. If we want products to be sustainable, both consumers and brands need to be more accepting of such minor differences. The carbon emissions caused by the logistics of returns are substantial. These observations indicate that we are still far from truly achieving sustainability. To make sustainability sustainable, brands must share corporate social responsibility as much as producers and play an active role in this process.” The 5<sup>th</sup> Sustainability Talks Istanbul also hosted panels addressing the future of the industry. Key participants included Marwa Zamaray, European Climate Pact Ambassador; Dr. Hakan Karaosman, Lecturer at Cardiff University; Cherie Nelson, Senior Director of Buying and Sourcing at Urban Outfitters; and Patrick Vignal, Vice President of Research and Development Innovations at Lacoste.





Ahmet Öksüz highlighted that brands often place the burden of sustainability on manufacturers, disrupting the balance in the sector.

**“Brands will purchase less from producers”**

Giuseppe Gherzi from Gherzi Textile Organization AG, one of the event speakers, stated that transformation in the textile sector starts with fiber. Highlighting that 125 million tons of fiber enter the textile value chain annually, Gherzi said: “In ready-made clothing, due to reselling, we will not witness the growth of the past in the next 10-15 years. There

are 34 mega trends transforming the textile and apparel industry. Possible changes post-Trump are being discussed, and the EU continues its legislative regulations. For instance, textile products can no longer be discarded in the EU, but there isn’t enough capacity for recycling either. Traditional textile production is not expected to return to the EU, with production likely to continue in countries like Morocco, Egypt, and Tunisia. The

EU will become a hub for mechanical and chemical recycling. Brands and retailers need to rethink their business processes.”

**“First, we need to discuss working conditions in the fashion industry”**

Dr. Hakan Karaosman, a lecturer at Cardiff University, pointed out the intertwined nature of climate change and social justice, stating: “Social justice should be at the core of climate change discussions. We love talking about these topics but not spending money on them. Sustainability has been a discussion for 60 years, yet we’re clearly doing something wrong. We are not fully understanding or grounding the concepts. We must integrate social and environmental ideas. To achieve sustainability in the fashion industry, we first need to address working conditions.”

**Innovative technologies focused on sustainability**

The first panel of the event, “Innovative Technologies Focused on Sustainability,” was moderated by Brooke Roberts-Islam from Techstyler/Forbes. Burak Orhan Arifioğlu from Karacasu mentioned that the textile sector lags behind in production technology. He said: “We struggled to achieve consistent quality in dyeing lyocell fibers. By establishing an R&D center, we developed a spray-dyeing system, achieving 66% water savings, 40% savings on dyes and chemicals, and 50% energy savings. Our goal is to eliminate environmental harm during the dyeing of synthetic fibers. The sustainability approach

Sustainability Talks Istanbul brought the textile industry together in 2024 with the theme “Act Now”.



Sultan Tepe, Board Member of İTHİB, moderated the panel “Value Chain: Integration of Eco-Design into Textile Value Chains.”

ch enhances the quality of what you do. The government provides various incentives in this regard. However, the textile sector is not open enough to embracing new technologies. Sustainability might seem costly to many companies, but both consumers and producers must adapt to these costs.” Julio Perales from Archroma emphasized that they dye denim fabric without using hazardous chemicals and without requiring

machine changes. Perales explained: “We can produce colored denim and achieve 40% savings. We reduce energy used in dyeing and washing the yarn and lower the chemical load in the carbon footprint. This solution was achieved through collaboration with different companies in the sector. The quality of our product improved, making it more readily accepted in the market.” Mehmet Demir from Dupont

highlighted sustainability as a key focus while producing fibers and fabrics for protective clothing. He stated: “When producing heat-resistant protective clothing, the fabric must have a special finish. From an environmental and human health perspective, we offer a unique product. We apply this to different fabric weights and usually receive positive feedback. Our products maintain their performance even after 100 washing cycles. By extending the lifespan of the product, emissions can be reduced by 44%.”

Suraj Bahirwani from Birla Cellulose shared information about their project, which allows the tracking of products throughout their lifecycle via QR code scanning. This labeling system displays all processes the fiber goes through and is marketed as a technology aimed at consumers. Bahirwani also announced that they would open a testing center in Türkiye in February, conducting physical tests and certifying brands. Özgür Atsan from RE&UP provided details about recycling technologies, stating: “We separate polyester and cotton in products, enabling the production of colorless cotton and polyester. The industry needs multiple solutions. Of the annual 125 million tons of fiber produced, 70% consists of polyester and cotton. We have an 80,000-ton capacity. Globally, 15% of fabric in ready-made garment production becomes waste.”

**The importance of traceability and R&D**

Selda İneler from TextileGenesis emphasized the significance





As part of the Sustainability Talks Istanbul, panels were held to discuss and evaluate the future of the industry.



The fashion industry is responsible for 10% of global carbon emissions, and 87% of the fiber used in apparel production worldwide is either discarded or burned.

of traceability in the Turkish textile industry, stating: “Of the 250 brands that pledged 100% traceability by 2025, only 30% currently have traceability data, limited to production location. When it comes to raw material and fiber data, the traceability rate is 15%. Türkiye’s share in the global traceability figure of 30% in 2024 stands at just 3-4%. There was only a 1% improvement from 2023 to 2024. The outlook is not promising, and there’s a lot to be done. Rising demand for sustainable fibers highlights the importance of traceability. The number of brands demanding traceability is rapidly increasing.”

Enida Hañcer from Aksa stated: “We believe we can transform our industry. As one of the leading acrylic producers in the world, we prioritize circularity. At its core, we aim to reduce consumption, reuse, repair, and recycle. Longevity is key to this system. By reducing consumption, we can increase reuse. We’ve started gathering feedback from end-users of our fibers to learn about product durability. Intense R&D efforts were undertaken to prevent pilling and fading under sunlight, significant-

ly enhancing the durability of our products.”

**Examples of best practices**

Paula Fontell from Ethica shared insights into Finland’s circular textile system, stating: “For the past five years, we have focused on circular design. We’re running the Nordic Circular Design Program. By collaborating with comprehensive teams, we’ve implemented four different applications. We brought together all value chain players and established a research-based framework. We identified reuse opportunities for post-consumer textile products, focusing on converting them into yarn, fabric, and ready-made garments. We operate sorting facilities and apply numerous recycling technologies. Moving forward, investment and collaboration are essential.”

Julian Aisslinger from Marc O’Polo spoke about their expertise in natural fiber production and their holistic approach to sustainability, stating: “Instead of making one big innovation, sustainability plans should be developed step

by step. The Green Deal, a sensitive younger generation, innovations, value orientation, and new customer groups play an active role in advancing sustainability. We’ve introduced a new strategy called ‘2030+.’ We’ve chosen to use the term ‘preferred fiber’ instead of ‘sustainable fiber.’ Socially, we focus on exhibition and reliable working conditions, empowering women, and living wages.”

**The circularity journey: From raw materials to finished products**

Karla Magruder from Accelerating Circularity moderated the panel “Circularity: From Raw Materials to Finished Products.” Anil Noyin from Control Union discussed the link between recycling and production, emphasizing the lack of documentation regarding recycling processes. Noyin stated: “There are various dynamics involved in recycling. In the future, every sector will need a clear guide on this matter. Recycling processes must be better defined. Collaboration with the government is crucial.

If we educate generations, we won’t need to educate customers. Young people need to be trained on this issue.”

Atakan Koru from UNIFI emphasized the necessity for textile-to-textile recycling systems to be efficient and scalable, stating: “Aside from scalable and sustainable methods, we aim to ensure accountability within the sector. Quality and sustainability must coexist. Recycled polyester is the world’s most-used fiber. Recycling requires significant investment. The main challenge lies in collecting and sorting products. Success in the sector depends on collaboration, with everyone having a role within the system. End-consumers must also take the wheel.”

**Integration of eco-design into textile value chains**

Sultan Tepe, Board Member of İTHİB, moderated the panel “Value Chain: Integration of Eco-Design into Textile Value Chains.” Tepe emphasized the significant progress made by the textile industry in sustainability, stating:

“If we want to achieve progress, we need collaborations. A study by the World Bank identified the automotive and textile sectors as leading in circularity. Our work in circularity sets an example for the world. Considering that each individual produces about 26 kilograms of textile waste annually, it becomes clear that the transformation of the sector through technology is vital. By focusing on people, we must achieve a triple transformation.” Stefan Hutter from Santix Textiles shared promising results from their machine capable of producing 100% recycled cotton yarn. Hutter noted their significant partnerships in Türkiye, stating: “For four years, we’ve been producing yarn with a capacity of 300 tons through our collaboration with Kipaş Denim and Temsan Air.”

Cem Erdoğan from Temsan Air mentioned their leadership in air engineering and ongoing machine manufacturing efforts, producing both yarn and denim fabric. Emphasizing that sustainability is a culture, Erdoğan added that

the production achieved in collaboration with Santis and Kipaş satisfies all parties involved.

Cherie Nelson from Urban Outfitters highlighted their collaboration with Kipaş Denim to produce more sustainable denim, resulting in water and energy savings. Shahriar Mahmood from Spinova Oyj discussed the importance of collaborations during product development. He stated: “We produce 100% recycled denim and create value for customers in the purchasing processes.”

Mustafa Güleken from Kipaş Denim discussed their efforts to minimize environmental impacts in production processes, sharing: “In 2018, we launched a product that reduces water consumption in denim dyeing by 75%. Recycling textile waste is very challenging and requires technological advancement. To produce higher-quality recycled textile fibers, we collaborated with Santis and Temsan Air. We achieve the best values in yarn performance. We also partnered with Urban Outfitters to recycle cutting waste.”





## “TURKISH COTTON STANDS OUT IN TERMS OF QUALITY”

Noting that around 10% of production in Türkiye as of the 2022-23 season was achieved as Good Cotton, Muzaffer Kayhan, Chairman of the Good Cotton Practices Association, emphasized that the fine and long fiber structure of Turkish cotton enables the production of high-quality yarn and fabric products.

**A**s of April 2025, you will have completed your first year as the Chairman of IPUD. What kind of direction will IPUD follow with you at the helm?

As IPUD, we conduct numerous activities, including finding and supporting relevant local partners to implement the Better Cotton Standard, improving their processes for delivering services to farmers, providing

training, conducting field-level audits, and gathering data. In addition, we carry out projects and partnerships on various issues to address local sustainability challenges. Our goal is to support cotton production that is socially and environmentally conscious as well as economically sustainable. We plan to launch new projects in this regard in the upcoming period. With Better Cotton practices, we aim to bring more sustainable benefits to the environment, society, and the economy.

### How is the trajectory of Better Cotton practices developing in our country?

Significant progress has been made in recent years. As of the 2022-23 season, around 10% of cotton production in Türkiye was classified as Better Cotton. Major players in the industry are targeting to source 100% of their cotton from sustainable resources by 2025. This fosters the adoption of more environmentally friendly and ethical production methods. While important steps have been taken towards sustainable cotton production, there is still room for progress. The spread of Better Cotton in Türkiye will reduce our dependence on imports and increase the share of local raw materials in our textile and apparel exports. Globally, Better Cotton is the most widely applied standard, being implemented in 22 countries by 2.2 million farmers. According to the BC annual report, 5.4 million tons of Better Cotton

We have started efforts to align the Better Cotton Standard with the Good Agricultural Practices standards.

were produced in the 2022-23 season. In 2022, 260 brands and retailers sourced a total of 2.6 million tons of Better Cotton, representing a 7% increase from the previous year and over 10% of the world's cotton production. Global demand for sustainable cotton from spinners was 3.4 million tons in 2022-23, while demand from Turkish spinners rose from 166,000 tons in 2019 to 257,000 tons in 2022. Increased production in Türkiye is expected to drive demand for Turkish cotton further.

### Cotton, often called “white gold,” is one of Türkiye’s ancient crops grown in fertile soils. What distinguishes Turkish cotton?

Turkish cotton stands out particularly in terms of quality and is well-recognized internationally. Its fine and long fiber structure enables the production of high-quality yarn and fabric products. In addition, Türkiye holds an important position not only in Better Cotton but also in organic cotton production. With rising environmental awareness following the climate crisis and the European Green Deal, both Better Cotton and organic cotton production have become increasingly significant. Türkiye is one of the world's leading countries in organic cotton production. Turkish cotton also meets high standards for color grading and cleanliness. The success of Turkish cotton production is recognized globally not only in terms of quantity but also for its quality and sustainability. Türkiye is one of

the rare countries that produces non-GMO cotton.

### What potential do you see for Türkiye in Better Cotton production?

When we consider our target markets, we see that they include countries with high awareness of sustainability. In this context, brands and supply chains sourcing from Türkiye are inclined to procure raw materials produced through sustainable processes and may cease to purchase non-sustainable products in the near future. Therefore, it is essential that current cotton production and required increases in production adhere to sustainability standards. Otherwise, we may risk losing our current markets or increasing our dependency on other countries that produce sustainable cotton.

### What initiatives do you have for supporting farmers to achieve sustainability?

As in other countries with high-yield cotton production using advanced methods (such as the USA, Brazil, Australia, Greece, and Israel), Türkiye should establish its own national sustainable cotton standard. This national standard should be equivalent to existing international standards, and its practices should be promoted through existing local institutional infrastructures. I am pleased to announce that we have started efforts to align the Better Cotton Standard with the Good Agricultural Practices stan-

**Muzaffer Kayhan**  
Chairman of the Good Cotton Practices Association



dards. Furthermore, producers who comply with the national standard should be incentivized with additional support policies, which could accelerate the transition. We aim to encourage young farmers and establish a solid foundation for agricultural development by expanding training programs and financial support mechanisms. Together, we will continue working towards a greener, more efficient, and more sustainable agricultural sector.

### How do climate changes negatively impact cotton production processes and the cotton value chain?

Climate change has severely affected cotton production processes and the cotton value chain, with drought and access to water resources being the most pressing issues. Cotton requires a significant amount



**Harun Bayramoğlu**

Former Board Member of İHKİB

**“As our production with the BCI standard increases, so will our exports.”**

Established 10 years ago by cotton producers, ginning companies, industrialists, and exporters' associations, IPUD has contributed to improving the quality of cotton production in our country over the years. For most international buyers, how a product is produced and whether it is sustainable now takes precedence over price. Brands sourcing from Türkiye continuously revise their quality requirements, mandating certified products produced under Better Cotton practices. They have also stated that soon, they will no longer accept apparel products made from standard cotton.

IPUD performs audits and issues certifications according to BCI standards. Producing to these standards reduces water and pesticide use, benefiting our country's ecological balance. Additionally, this approach results in less waste and higher yields, eliminates potential errors during cotton baling, and prevents claims for defective products after the cotton is processed. It also ensures decent working conditions according to international standards. International brands are eager to purchase products produced with these values. By adhering to these practices, our Ready-to-Wear exports will maintain their current level, and as BCI-standard cotton production in Türkiye increases, so will our exports. This will make it easier for our cotton, yarn, fabric, and Ready-to-Wear producers to sell their highly sought-after products.



of water during its growing period. Due to climate change, reduced rainfall and rising temperatures have seriously diminished water resources in Türkiye, as in the rest of the world. This reduces cotton yields. Extreme and unexpected meteorological events also impact production. Türkiye's Southeastern Anatolia region, a key area for cotton production, has been negatively affected by climate changes. While we cannot solve the climate crisis in the short term, several preventive measures can be implemented. Efficient water use is the most crucial measure. Drip irrigation systems conserve water and ensure that plants receive adequate water even during droughts. Methods that increase the organic matter in the soil to retain moisture are also among the measures that can be taken. Educating farmers on climate change mitigation measures and supporting research in this area are also important

steps. Government policies and incentives can support farmers in adopting more resilient and sustainable agricultural practices against climate change.

**What should be done to increase cotton production in Türkiye and reduce imports?**

In the 2023 season, there was a decline in both planting areas and production yield. Production costs increased by 68% from the previous season, with the cost of one kilogram of cotton rising to 24 TL. The only solution to minimize production losses is to grow cotton through sustainable agricultural methods. Significant strides have been made in sustainable cotton production, but there is still more to accomplish. Science and technology are essential to improving sustainability and productivity in agriculture. Innovations like digital farming applications, water management, and soil health improvement can increase the

productivity of our farmers and optimize resource usage. Efficient production will reduce our losses, add value to cotton fiber and other products, and reduce our dependency on imports. This will help retain the economic benefits from exports within our country.

**What role do you see sustainable cotton practices playing for Türkiye, which aims to gain a competitive advantage in the textile sector, in the near future?**

Sustainable cotton practices aim to ensure that cotton production processes are environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable. These practices aim to minimize the impact of cotton production on natural resources, promote the economic welfare of farmers and communities, and support social equity. I would like to underline that sustainable cotton practices are, therefore, crucial for Türkiye in gaining a competitive edge in the textile sector.

Turkish cotton stands out particularly in terms of quality and is recognized in international markets.

**Zekeriya Tanrıverdi**

Board Member of İTHİB

**“Türkiye is the world's largest producer of non-GMO cotton”**

Türkiye is one of the few countries capable of producing a full range of products, from fiber and cotton to ready-made garments. In this regard, our industry has been strengthening with integrated production, providing a competitive advantage. For our industry, which produces a wide range of products, easy access to sustainable fiber is becoming increasingly important. Global buyers are highly particular about the quality of the fiber used and its alignment with sustainability standards. Compared to global competitors, our industry holds numerous advantages in terms of sustainability. Türkiye is the largest producer of non-GMO cotton in the world.

Approximately 26 million tons of cotton are produced annually worldwide, with over 90% of this production concentrated in ten countries. In the 2022/23 season, Türkiye reached a record level, producing one million tons of cotton on 573,000 hectares, thanks to increases in yield and planted area. The provinces with the largest share of cotton production include Şanlıurfa (40.1%), Diyarbakır (14.9%), Aydın (10.3%), Hatay (8.7%), İzmir (6.3%), and Adana (5.3%).

Better Cotton practices form one of the fundamental building blocks of the green transformation journey for the textile and ready-made garment sectors. For our industry, Better Cotton practices have moved beyond being an option—they are now essential. To maintain our position in global markets, it is our responsibility to enhance the standards of our cotton. To sustain trade relationships with key markets like the EU and the U.S., we must use cotton that meets the demanded quality. The fact that cotton can be produced domestically is extremely valuable for our industry. Therefore, we are making every effort to further develop Better Cotton practices. These practices promote environmentally responsible and sustainable farming methods, boosting the demand for Turkish textile products in international markets. Improvements in quality, sustainability, social responsibility, and efficiency help Turkish exporters establish a strong position on the global stage. International buyers increasingly prefer sourcing from countries that practice environmentally conscious and sustainable cotton production. Increasing the yield of Better Cotton in Türkiye not only makes Turkish textile products more attractive to these buyers but also contributes to the added value of textile exports and enhances the perception of the Türkiye brand on the global stage.



# RECYCLING IN THE TURKISH TEXTILE AND APPAREL SECTOR



Rising global population and shifting consumption habits have led to a significant increase in waste. The volume of waste produced, estimated at 2 billion tons annually worldwide, now threatens the planet and living organisms. In Türkiye, this figure has reached 32 million

tons. In response, recycling activities have intensified to address this mounting volume. Recycling products that have reached the end of their lifecycle contributes not only economically but also by preserving natural resources and reducing the need for raw materials. Recycling, as a funda-

In the realm of sustainability initiatives that have become mandatory across various sectors, recycling efforts are emerging as a key focus area. Türkiye is positioning itself as an important recycling hub within the textile and apparel industry.

egories—chemical, mechanical, and organic—depending on the type of waste.

## Textile and apparel sectors lead in recycling efforts

Globally, more than 100 billion garments are sold annually, which is 60% more than 15 years ago. The “fast fashion” trend has frequently been criticized for its environmental impact, generating considerable waste. In Europe alone, textile waste going to landfills totals 4 million tons each year, while globally this number reaches 40 million tons. If all textile and apparel waste could be collected, it is estimated that it would create an economic value of \$250 billion. In Türkiye, about 1.8 million tons of textile products are discarded annually, with 600,000 tons ending up in landfills. Through textile recycling programs, approximately 40,000 tons of clothing are collected, and 10,000 tons are estimated to be recycled each year. If all textile waste in Türkiye were collected and recycled, it could generate an added value of \$2.5 billion. The textile and apparel sectors use significant resources during production, which is why recycling has become essential. If the current production model persists, it is predicted that by 2050, the textile and apparel sector will account for 26% of the world’s total carbon emissions. In this scenario, the use of non-renewable raw materials in the sector could reach 300 million tons, while the amount of microplas-

tics in oceans could reach 22 million tons by 2050. Recycling is thus an urgent need in the sector, returning waste to the production lifecycle. By recycling textile and apparel products, the industry can reduce its reliance on processed materials, conserve energy, and decrease the demand for landfill space. The use of recycled textiles also reduces the need for natural resources, resulting in lower emissions from factories and incineration facilities. Interest in recycling has grown globally among both manufacturers and consumers, and investing in recycling enhances business reputation.

## EU mandates recycling

The European Union (EU) has introduced the “EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles” as part of the Green Deal. The strategy aims for all textile products sold in the EU by 2030 to be durable and recyclable. Accordingly, products must be free from environmentally harmful chemicals, composed largely of recycled fibers, and manufactured without causing harm to social rights or the environment. The strategy focuses on increasing capacity for innovative fiber-to-fiber recycling. By the end of 2024, mandatory textile waste separation will be implemented, and Re-HUB recycling centers are set to open in various EU regions.

## Mechanical and chemical recycling methods

Many facilities in Türkiye can





Türkiye holds an 18.6% share of the global cotton fiber recovery export market, with an export value of \$70.6 million.



The city exports regenerated yarn, knitwear, and socks derived from textile scraps to 62 countries. Nearly 70% of yarn used by global sock manufacturers is supplied by Uşak.

124 Million

Each year, 124 million tons of fiber are produced globally, but only 8,1% of this comes from recycled materials—0,5% from textile waste and 7,6% from PET bottles.

recycle textile waste using different methods, separating various types of waste by color or material type. Mechanical recycling involves manually breaking down textiles and separating them into fibers, which are then combined with other fibers for strength. Chemical recycling, on the other hand, involves dissolving fibers in textile waste using solvents, allowing the extracted fibers to be transformed into new fabric. The separated fibers can be mixed with other fibers for spinning or weaving or compressed for mat production. Recycled textiles can also be used as insulation in vehicles, ceiling felts, wall coverings, and furniture stuffing. Polyester waste undergoes a different process where it is broken down into

small pieces, granulated, and spun into new polyester fibers.

**Uşak poised to become a textile recycling Re-HUB**

Recycling investments in the textile sector are increasing worldwide, including in Türkiye. The textile recycling sector is concentrated in cities like Istanbul, Adana, Bursa, Kayseri, and Gaziantep, but Uşak stands out as the leading city in Türkiye for textile recycling. Uşak is considered the center of textile recycling in Türkiye, where 708,000 tons of textile waste are recycled annually into products such as yarn, blankets, socks, fabrics, and felts. According to the president of the Uşak Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UTSO) and TOBB Board Member Selim Kan-

demir, textile waste recycling in Uşak contributes approximately \$605.6 million in added value to the economy. Kandemir states that Uşak boasts a unique textile recycling ecosystem, with over 200 companies that do not exist anywhere else in the world. "Türkiye leads the world in cotton fiber recovery exports with a 70.6 million dollar share, accounting for 18.6% of the global market. The city exports regenerated yarn, knitwear, and socks derived from textile scraps to 62 countries. Nearly 70% of yarn used by global sock manufacturers is supplied by Uşak. We aim to establish a structure similar to the Re-HUB centers being opened in the EU, enhancing both the corporate and production quality of our

companies in the textile recycling sector."

**Uşak the central hub for Türkiye's textile recycling sector**

Uşak University's Textile Engineering faculty member, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eren Öner, highlights that Türkiye has a significant advantage in textile recycling due to naturally clustered recycling sectors. "As seen in Uşak, textile recycling companies come together in a naturally clustered structure, organizing recycling activities effectively. This presents a unique potential for our country. In contrast, textile recycling clusters in Europe are being established through funding and incentives. However, in Türkiye, this clustering has occurred organ-

ically," says Öner. He notes that Uşak recycles approximately 72% of Türkiye's textile waste, and when indirect trade is included, this figure rises to over 80%. In addition to textile recycling, Uşak is active in leather, plastic, aluminum, and rubber recycling. Through these initiatives, Uşak recycles 2,716 tons of raw materials daily, totaling 978,000 tons annually. This process reclaims waste that would otherwise pollute the environment for thousands of years, reintegrating it into the economy. The recycling sector in Uşak provides employment for 20,000 people, with 12,000 in textile recycling alone. This makes Uşak the central hub for Türkiye's textile recycling sector.



## “TÜRKİYE IS A PIONEER IN TEXTILE WASTE RECOVERY”



**Zafer Kaplan**  
Chairman of GAMA  
Recycle

“Türkiye leads in textile waste recovery by producing high-quality, fine yarns from recycled textiles.”

Türkiye is one of the countries with significant expertise in the recovery of textile waste, particularly in terms of capacity, machinery infrastructure, and experience. I deliberately chose to use the term “recovery” in this context, as there is an important distinction between “recycling” and “recovery.” Türkiye possesses significant capacity in the production of recycled fiber and yarn. More importantly, the country is a leader in textile waste recovery by producing exceptionally fine and high-quality yarns. It is evident that overcoming challenges in recycling requires robust waste management systems. For instance, approximately 700,000 tons of used textile waste are generated annually in Türkiye. Through textile waste collection bins established by municipalities via tenders, about 50,000 tons of used clothing are collected annually.

We propose that textile waste collection across Türkiye be exclusively managed by a charitable organization, such as the Turkish Red Crescent, Mehmetçik Founda-



tion, or AFAD, which involves the entire nation. This could increase the collection rate of used clothing to over 50%. Within three years, this approach could potentially transform approximately 400,000 tons of textile waste annually into resources for recycling.

As Gama Recycle, we have 30 years of experience in the recycling of used clothing, PET bottles, and garment waste recovery. We are a pioneering company in this sector with one of the largest global capacities. Our achievements include 20 patents and 15 innovations currently in the patent application process, covering production, machinery, products, and processes. Additionally, we have developed a technology that separates the components of mixed-composition clothing—such as cotton, polyester, acrylic, and elastane—along with accessories attached to garments. Once scaled industrially, this technology will revolutionize the recycling of used textiles globally. We are also on the verge of patenting a groundbreaking innovation for recycling polyester-based clothing. This process involves breaking down PET polymers into their molecular components, PTA and MEG, using a technology that operates at atmospheric pressure and low temperatures. Furthermore, we hold a patent for producing fuel from used carpets.

Through these advancements, we aim to lead the way in sustainable solutions for textile waste recovery and recycling.

## “35% OF TEXTILE AND APPAREL EXPORTS COME FROM RECYCLED MATERIALS”



**Arif Öztan**  
Vice President of  
the Turkish Union  
of Chambers  
and Commodity  
Exchanges (TOBB)  
Textile Recycling  
Sector

“We recycle around 1 million tons of textile and make around 800 thousand tons of manufacturable yarn from it.”

In Türkiye, 80% of sock production is derived from recycled yarns, with recovery accounting for 35% of the textile and apparel sector’s exports. Türkiye has invested in recycling for many years, with Uşak standing out as a leading city in this area for decades. Other cities like Gaziantep, Denizli, Kahramanmaraş, and Istanbul also have active textile recycling sectors. Uşak’s recycling industry began by collecting old hand-knitted white wool socks and turning them into wool yarn. Today, recycled yarns are used not only in socks and home textiles but also increasingly in ready-to-wear fashion. Global brands in the textile and apparel sectors have committed to incorporating 20-25% recycled materials in their products. In Türkiye, out of the 1.5 million tons of cotton consumed, 600,000-700,000 tons are sourced from recycled materials.

In 2021, Türkiye’s textile and apparel sectors, the country’s largest exporters, generated over \$33 billion in exports, with recycled materials contributing approximately \$11.6 billion, or 35%, of this total. This is a significant share; for instance, 80% of sock production uses recycled yarns. Not considering the recycled fibers and yarns, which constitute around 70% of the “intermediate goods”

produced in Uşak, leads to overlooking the nearly \$1.8 billion added value these materials contribute to the national economy.

Expanding beyond textiles and apparel, if we also consider sectors like steel, plastic, paper, and glass, we see that \$35.08 billion, or 51%, of the \$69.67 billion in exports are based on recycled materials. Although the recycling industry has yet to fully realize its potential, it already offsets \$35.08 billion of Türkiye’s current account deficit.





# HIDDEN DETAIL IN RENAISSANCE PAINTINGS: TURKISH CARPETS

Carrying the traces of Anatolian culture with its millennia-old history, Turkish carpets also inspired the Renaissance, a period symbolizing the rebirth of the West. Many renowned painters of the era created unique works by depicting Turkish carpets in their paintings.



➤ Zeynep Tütüncü Güngör



Derived from the French word “renaissance,” meaning “rebirth,” the Renaissance is known as the period from the late 14<sup>th</sup> century to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, marking a time of cultural, artistic, scientific, and intellectual revival in Europe. This era rekindled interest in the art, science, and philosophy of ancient Greek and Roman cultures. Bringing together East-

ern and Western cultures, the Renaissance fostered a new intellectual and artistic awakening by drawing from the richness of both worlds.

### Turkish carpets inspired the art of painting

For centuries, Turkish carpets held a significant place in the Western world. From the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century onwards, they became

some of the most prestigious objects in international trade, particularly in Europe. Through a trade route established by Venetian merchants between the Ottoman Empire and Venice, Turkish carpets made their way to Venice, Italy, and other European countries as luxury items. These carpets found their place in palaces, churches, and aristocratic homes thanks to Venetian

merchants. The prestige of Turkish carpets during the Renaissance can be attributed to the fact that only royalty and aristocratic families could afford them, and they were scarce in European markets. Displayed as symbols of status in royal palaces and aristocratic homes, these carpets eventually became a source of inspiration for art. As an integral part of

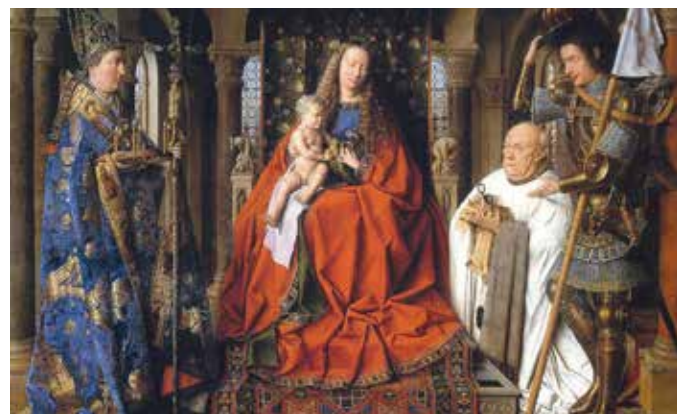
Turkish culture, carpets added significant visual richness to European artworks. The painters of the time embraced Turkish carpets as aesthetic objects, incorporating them into their paintings. The depiction of Turkish carpets in European art evolved over the centuries. Initially, they appeared in religious paintings, but later they also became featured in secular works. In religious paintings,

carpets symbolized the exalted status of the figures, while in portraits of noble families, they highlighted the family’s wealth. The portrayal of Turkish carpets in paintings by foreign artists not only increased interest in these items but also contributed to the global recognition of different aspects of Turkish art. Many renowned artists who made significant contributions





As an inseparable part of Turkish culture, these carpets added significant visual richness to artworks produced in Europe.



to world history could not resist the allure of Turkish carpet art. Artists of the period often made a habit of incorporating Turkish carpets, which carried a distinct symbolic language, into their works.

**Turkish carpet influence in many museums**

In Italian painting, carpets were depicted until the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century in significant settings such as in front of an important figure's podium, during religious ceremonies, or on the floor beneath or near the Virgin Mary's throne.

Figures in these paintings were shown standing, kneeling, or sitting on the carpets, emphasizing their elevated status. From the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Turkish carpets appeared in artworks not only depicting Jesus, Mary, and saints or members of royal families but also as stand-alone artistic objects, often shown elevated from the ground. Today, many of these paintings featuring Turkish carpets as symbols of status can be found in various museums and art centers. One such institution is the National Gallery in London. The

paintings demonstrate how Turkish carpets were initially depicted in religious scenes and later in portraits of wealthy individuals. For instance, Carlo Crivelli's 1486 work "The Annunciation, with Saint Emidius," commissioned to celebrate the granting of autonomy to the town of Ascoli Piceno by the Pope in 1482, includes carpets draped from balconies. Similarly, a painting by the Master of Saint Giles, thought to have worked in Paris around the 1500s, features a Turkish carpet depicted on the ground in red and green. In Davide Ghirlandaio's painting

Through the international trade route established by Venetian merchants between the Ottoman Empire and Venice, Turkish carpets entered Venice as luxury goods, and subsequently made their way to Italy and other European countries.



"The Virgin and Child with Saint John," a Turkish carpet is placed under the feet of the Christ Child. Known as "Ghirlandaio carpets," these feature curvilinear patterns and a diamond-shaped central motif. In Quinten Massys' work "The Virgin Enthroned with the Child and Four Angels," an unusually placed carpet is seen extending from the throne's base, with meticulously detailed patterns on a red and brown background.

**A tradition reflected in numerous works**

Turkish carpets have been

depicted in many forms: draped over tables, in sacred scenes, under the feet of nobles, hanging from balconies, placed on chairs, spread on the floor, or hung on walls. Examples include Venetian painter Sebastiano del Piombo's "Cardinal Bandinello Sauli, His Secretary, and Two Geographers," Flemish painter Gerard David's "The Virgin and Child" at the Louvre, Flemish painter Otto van Veen's "The Last Supper," Austrian painter Rudolf Ernst-Weisse's "Praying in a Mosque," American painter Giulio Rosati's "Reception of New Arrivals," and

French painter Benjamin Constant's "The Market." German painter Daniel Mytens' "Charles Howard, 1st Earl of Nottingham," Italian painter Andrea Previtali's "The Annunciation," and Dutch painter Jan Vermeer's "The Music Lesson" also feature Turkish carpet representations.

**Carpets named after painters**

Although woven in Turkish lands, these styles of carpets depicted in paintings are often referred to by the names of the painters, a practice that became part of the artistic literature.





Paintings depicting Turkish carpets as symbols of status are now displayed in many art centers and museums.

When Western scholars studied the history of Islamic carpets, they began naming several carpet types after the European painters who traditionally depicted them. This classification effort was led by Kurt Erdmann, a prominent carpet scholar of the time. While the origin of some carpets depicted in paintings remains unclear, detailed

analyses often reveal that they originated from regions like Uşak, Bergama, or Konya in Anatolia. Notable types include Holbein carpets, Lotto carpets, Bellini carpets, and Crivelli carpets. A group of Anatolian carpets appeared in the works of Flemish painter Hans Memling between 1465 and 1494, leading to the

term “Memling carpets.” These carpets featured square fields filled with octagons, surrounded by stepped and hooked designs. However, today some experts argue that naming Turkish carpets this way is inappropriate, as it may overshadow the authentic cultural heritage and actual weavers behind these creations.

**Turkish carpets as Hallmarks for Holbein and Lotto**

In European paintings, carpets were often depicted draped over furniture or architectural elements, indicating the increasing importance attributed to them. In the famous painting “The Ambassadors” by German painter Hans Holbein, created in 1533 in London, a Turkish carpet covers a table with ambassadors standing on either side. The carpet displays a rhythmic geometric design on a red background and has since been known as a “Holbein carpet.”

In 16<sup>th</sup>-century Northern Italy, particularly in Florence and Rome, Italians commissioned portraits featuring valuable carpets laid over tables as symbols of wealth, status, and taste. One such example is Italian painter Lorenzo Lotto’s portrait of Giovanni della Volta and his family, gathered around a table draped with a Turkish carpet. Known as “Lotto carpets,” these feature stylized arabesque

One of the main reasons for the prestige of Turkish carpets during the Renaissance was that only royal and aristocratic families could own them, and they were available in very limited quantities in the European market.

motifs in yellow on a red background, with blue and white borders derived from a script-like style known as Kufic.

**Contribution to the recognition of Turkish carpets in Europe**

Turkish carpets became known not only through their use by Europeans but also through their prominent presence in Renaissance paintings, which significantly contributed to their fame. The artists’ depictions of these carpets inspired many renowned painters. The first examples of geometric-patterned carpets depicted by Florentine painters appeared in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and gradually spread. By the 15<sup>th</sup> century, their depiction in European paintings had cemented their fame. The various styles of carpets woven in Anatolia, distinguished by stylized floral motifs, were widely referred to as Holbein or Lotto carpets for centuries. Even before these names were established, Renaissance artists from Italy, Portugal, Northern Europe, and England had already incorporated these prized carpets into their works, thus restoring their deserved prominence in art history.

The depictions of Turkish carpets in Renaissance paintings have, in some cases, survived longer than the actual carpets themselves, ensuring the preservation of this artistic heritage.





# Atatürk's Italian dresser dresses global stars



► Zeynep Titüncü Güngör

The story of the Kordonciyan family, who dressed British agents and Italian mafia in Hollywood, begins with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Türkiye, and extends over time to the White House.



Fascinated by the style of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Türkiye, renowned actor Sean Connery traced the origins of this elegance, leading him to Sultanhamam, Istanbul. After hearing the story of the Kordonciyan family, Connery donned tuxedos crafted by master tailor Leons, who inherited the craft from his father, for the "James Bond" film. Later, tuxedos for Al Pacino and other actors in The Godfather were also tailored by Leons. The story of the Kordonciyan family, who went from dressing British spies and Italian mafiosos in Hollywood to reaching the White House, is truly remarkable. The Kordonciyan family's journey began in Rize Çamlıhemşin

when jeweler İskender Bey decided to move to Istanbul in the late 1800s. Of his 10 children, nine were apprenticed to jewelers in the Grand Bazaar, while his son Levon was sent to apprentice with a Greek tailor. Levon Kordonciyan's path crossed with Atatürk's, making him one of the most prominent tailors of the Republic. Today, the Kordonciyan family continues their tailoring legacy through the fourth generation. Levon Kordonciyan, who shares his great-grandfather's name, still crafts garments for global celebrities. Tuxedos and tailcoats became widespread in Türkiye in the 1920s following the proclamation of the Republic, coinciding with the beginning of the Kor-



**Levon Kordonciyan**  
The Fourth-Generation Representative of the Kordonciyan Family





Meeting Mustafa Kemal Atatürk marked a turning point in Master Levon's life.

donciniyan family's story. While Levon Kordonciyan was becoming a skilled tailor, he met Atatürk. This meeting marked the beginning of both Atatürk's leadership in fashion and the Kordonciyan family's rise to prominence. Believing that education was a key element in elevating the nation to contemporary civilization levels, Atatürk sent promising young individuals abroad for specialized training in various fields. While researching skilled tailors in Istanbul, Atatürk came across the name "Kordonciyan." Levon Kordonciyan became one of six individuals sent to France for fashion training. At a time when tailoring largely relied on apprenticeships, having formal training, particularly in France, propelled Levon Kordonciyan into the spotlight. After five years of studying and interning at E.J. Malle Academy

in France, Levon returned to Türkiye, opening a shop in Havuzlu Han with his son to craft elegant suits and tuxedos. The Kordonciyan family soon moved their business to Sultanhamam, then known as the "school of tailoring" and now called the "heart of textiles." Initially focusing on suits, Levon Usta gained fame in tuxedos and tailcoats as they became more popular. His tools, including scissors, a shoulder balance, and a coal-heated iron, remain in the workshop to this day, standing as a testament to the passage of time.

**"Atatürk, a stylish and tasteful leader"**

During those years, foreign businessmen, ambassadors, and merchants became regular customers of the Kordonciyan family. But their most distinguished

client was, of course, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Levon Kordonciyan began crafting frock coats, morning coats, tailcoats, and tuxedos for Atatürk and his cabinet members. Levon Kordonciyan's great-grandson, also named Levon, who continues the family tradition, describes Atatürk as a "very stylish and tasteful leader." He recalls his great-grandfather tailoring tailcoats for Atatürk, who personally attended fittings despite his busy schedule, staying only briefly before leaving. "101 years ago, Levon Kordonciyan pursued his craft with respect and dedication. As the Kordonciyan family, we continue to approach our work with the same meticulousness. Out of respect for our country and Atatürk, we uphold our standards and strive to introduce

The fourth-generation Levon Kordonciyan continues to work with world-renowned figures, including Russell Crowe, Samuel L. Jackson, Hugh Jackman, Robert De Niro, George Clooney, Steve Martin, Barack Obama, and André Rieu.



Turkish men's fashion to the world," says Levon Kordonciyan.

**A century-long legacy across four generations**

The Kordonciyan family has preserved their craftsmanship as a family legacy for over 100 years. After Sultanhamam, they opened a store in Beyoğlu, investing their savings to expand. Levon was succeeded by his son Leons and grandson İskender Kordonciyan, who continued the tradition under the name "İskender Butik." In 1998, as Beyoğlu became overcrowded and lost its charm, they moved to their current location in Kurtuluş. The latest generation, Levon Kordonciyan, who has been immersed in the family business since the age of eight, attributes their renown to the emotional connections they establish with their clients. "Some of our clients

fly in for fittings and leave the same day. They've become like family to us. Preserving and continuing this invaluable craft introduced by Atatürk is a great honor for our family," he says.

**From Al Pacino to Barack Obama**

The fame of the Kordonciyan brand transcends Türkiye's borders. The Kordonciyans do not only craft tuxedos for their Turkish clients but also fulfill international orders. Sean Connery, captivated by Atatürk's style, came across the names Levon and his son Leons Kordonciyan during his research. While filming James Bond, Connery traveled to Sultanhamam to meet Leons, the second-generation master of the family. In the movie, Connery wore tuxedos crafted by Leons. Shortly after, Leons also tailored tuxedos for Al Pacino and the other cast members of The Godfather.

The film's sponsor, Frank Sinatra, also became a client, followed by Clint Eastwood for The Good, the Bad and the Ugly. Meanwhile, the third generation of the family, Master İskender, crafted costumes for Bruce Willis in Moonlighting and Harrison Ford in Indiana Jones. The fourth-generation Levon Kordonciyan continues to work with world-renowned figures, including Russell Crowe, Samuel L. Jackson, Hugh Jackman, Robert De Niro, George Clooney, Steve Martin, Barack Obama, and André Rieu. For the casino scenes in James Bond: Casino Royale, Levon designed tuxedos as well as special tear-away suits for fight scenes, delivering 28 suits within a week. The film crew praised his work. Brad Pitt also donned a Kordonciyan tuxedo in Inglourious Basterds.





Ömer Özpehlivan

Chairman of the Board of EMR-Next Group



## STRATEGIC MOVES OF EMR-NEXT ACQUIRING GERMAN OPTI

Ömer Özpehlivan, Chairman of EMR-Next Group, who acquired the German brand Opti last year, said, "Acquiring the production facility and brand usage rights of Opti, one of the most respected brands in the global zipper industry, has not only excited us but also created great enthusiasm in the sector."

**T**ürkiye's nearly 40-year-old apparel accessories manufacturer, EMR-Next Group, has acquired Opti, a German-based supplier of zippers for major luxury brands worldwide. We spoke with Ömer Özpehlivan, Chairman of EMR-Next Group, about the future strategy behind this acquisition.

### Can you tell us more about EMR-Next Group before the acquisition of Opti?

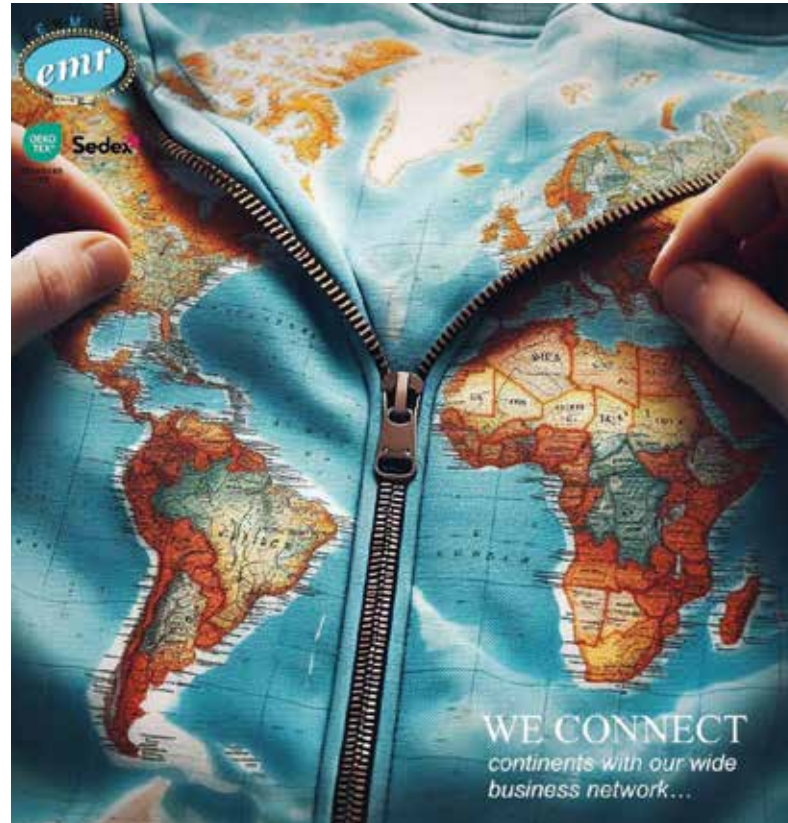
EMR-Next Group has been active in the zipper and textile accessories sector, meeting customer demands with innovative products since 1986. We have expanded with production investments in Istanbul, Edirne, Haskovo-Bulgaria, and Bursa.

Our business attracted global interest, providing services through our overseas production facilities, stores, warehouses, and offices. In a short time, our Next brand gained recognition, especially in metal accessories like snaps, buttons, and eyelets, becoming an approved supplier for various global brands. We are among the few companies worldwide capable of manufacturing zippers, metal accessories, velcro, leather labels, and narrow woven products.

### You recently acquired the German zipper brand Opti, which was preparing to exit the Turkish market. Can you share insights into this process?

Opti is a well-established global





The localization of Opti, a symbol of German technology's advancement in zippers, will add momentum to Türkiye's apparel accessories industry.

brand supplying zippers to luxury brands, known for its specialized zippers for fashion, automotive, home textiles, leather, footwear, and defense industries. The brand's facilities in Türkiye and other countries reflect German technology's advanced achievements in zippers. When we acquired Opti's brand rights and factory, our goal was to add a valuable asset to Türkiye's apparel accessories industry, a goal we are delighted to have achieved. The acquisition has excited us and represents a significant benefit to Türkiye's fashion sector, ensuring the continued presence of this respected brand.

**How has EMR-Next Group's capacity been impacted by**

**acquiring Opti? What message does this acquisition send about the strength of Türkiye's apparel accessories industry?**

Our production capacity has tripled with the acquisition. More importantly, our ability to manufacture high-quality zippers has significantly increased. Opti's expertise in producing specialized zippers for sectors such as defense, home textiles, footwear, fashion, and health-care will boost our capacity for high-value products. Combining Opti's brand reputation with our innovative infrastructure creates a powerful synergy. The acquisition not only provides a morale boost for our industry but also contributes significantly to our exports and manufacturing. It

also enhances Türkiye's image as a global player in textile accessories.

**How will this acquisition benefit Türkiye's zipper industry and exports of high-value-added products?**

We believe branding is the key to advancing Türkiye's apparel and apparel industry. The processes of gaining approval and recognition are costly and time-consuming, often taking decades. The best way to overcome these barriers is by acquiring global brands and leveraging their expertise to grow together. With the acquisition of such a strong brand, coupled with Türkiye's well-established textile and fashion infrastructure, we are confident that we can achieve our high-value-added export targets both locally and globally.

**Can you elaborate on your production plans after the acquisition and provide details about the new facility in Bursa?**

After acquiring Opti, we initiated plans for our new facility. Our factory, located in Bursa-Demirtaş OSB, spans 10,000 square meters and will initially employ around 150 people, with plans to increase that by 50% in the coming years. With this expansion, we aim to rapidly increase our sales of specialized products for niche sectors in both domestic and export markets.

"Türkiye's apparel accessories industry is well-equipped with the ability to create collections, design products, and leverage advanced technical and technological expertise."

The brand's recognition, coupled with our enhanced capabilities in technical zipper production, will soon boost our visibility and influence in the global zipper industry.

**What distinguishes Türkiye's apparel accessories industry from its global competitors? Could you share EMR-Next Group's sustainability initiatives?**

Our sector is characterized by its ability to create collections, develop designs, and leverage advanced technical and technological expertise gained through nearly a century of collaboration with Türkiye's apparel industry. It is crucial to recognize our industry as strategic. The apparel accessories industry has grown alongside apparel, becoming a critical force in Türkiye's garment exports. Our manufacturers are renowned for their adherence to sustainability, recycling initiatives, compliance with international social standards, and certifications. Since our inception, sustainability has been a core value at EMR-Next Group. This focus has attracted global brands to us. We base our operations on sustainability and a commitment to leaving a livable world for future generations. We actively support environmental conservation through recycling initiatives, playing a significant role in sustainable production in our sector.



**Türkiye's Apparel Accessories Sector Strengthened Global Competitiveness in Apparel**

EMR-Next Group Chairman Ömer Özpehlivan describes the transformation of the Turkish apparel accessories industry over the past 50 years: "The sector has undergone a major transformation in the last 50 years, evolving from a narrow market with local-scale producers and buyers to a large industry integrated with the world, featuring industrialists and buyers who can compete in global markets. It has become a strategic sector that makes significant contributions to apparel production and exports. Our growing and developing businesses have succeeded in becoming an industrial field that can prepare its own collections in the apparel accessories sector, with advanced technological investments and infrastructure, extensive knowledge, and experience, serving as a model worldwide. In its development years, the apparel industry supported the apparel accessories sector, but over time, our expanding and evolving sector has become one of the most important strengths of the apparel industry. We are one of the strongest assets in Turkish apparel exports. Easily accessible apparel accessories with a fast and competitive structure have made us much more effective in apparel production and exports. As a result, our fashion industry has developed and managed to surpass its global competitors. Our growing apparel accessories industry has paved the way for the international recognition of our fashion and design world."



# Türkiye

## the world's

### largest textile exporter

According to global textile and raw material foreign trade data, the Turkish textile sector ranked as the world's 5<sup>th</sup> largest textile exporter in 2023, with exports worth \$11.7 billion.



The Turkish textile industry is the second-largest textile supplier to the European Union.

**T**he 2023 evaluation of the Global Textile and Raw Materials Sector Foreign Trade Report has been announced. According to the report, global textile and raw material exports decreased by 10% in 2023, amounting to \$344 billion. This figure was observed as \$332.9 billion in 2019, \$349.5 billion in 2020, \$381.6 billion in 2021, and \$384.3 billion in 2022.

When looking at the leading countries in global textile and raw material exports, China holds the position of the world's largest textile exporter with a 39.2% share. China's textile exports in 2023 decreased by 9% to reach \$134.7 billion. In global textile

exports, EU countries ranked second with a 20.6% share and exports worth \$70.8 billion. The United States came third with a 5.7% share and \$19.5 billion in exports, while India ranked fourth with a 5.2% share and \$17.9 billion in exports. Türkiye ranked as the world's fifth-largest exporter with a 3.4% share and exports worth \$11.7 billion in the global textile sector. The ranking was followed by Vietnam, Pakistan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. Among the top 10 exporting countries, those with the most significant declines in exports were Taiwan (24.8%), the United States (18.3%), and South Korea (13.9%). Türkiye's exports shrank by 9.5%.

#### **The most exported sub-product Group: Technical textiles**

When examining global textile and raw material exports based on sub-product groups, technical textiles were observed as the most exported sub-product group in 2023, with exports worth \$116.6 billion. Global technical textile exports decreased by 5.8% in 2023, reaching an export volume of \$116.6 billion. Woven fabrics, with a 21.4% share, were the second most exported sub-product group. Woven fabric exports decreased by 10.2%, amounting to \$73.5 billion. Home textiles, which saw a 5.7% decline in exports, ranked as the third most exported sub-product group. Home textile





Türkiye became the ninth largest exporter of technical textiles in the world.



exports reached a value of \$59.1 billion. The ranking was followed by yarns, with a decline of 11.2% to \$46.6 billion, and fiber products, which decreased by 15.3% to \$37.9 billion. Knitted fabric exports decreased by 12.9% to \$37.3 billion.

**Türkiye's share in woven fabric exports is increasing**

In global technical textile exports, EU countries ranked first with a 33.9% share and a volume of \$39.5 billion. China's technical textile exports decreased by 10.5%, falling to \$31.9 billion, while the U.S. recorded exports worth \$8.3 billion with a 1.3% decrease. Türkiye's technical textile exports in 2023 decreased by 6.1%, amounting to \$2.3 billion. Türkiye became the ninth-largest technical textile-exporting country in the world. In global woven fabric exports, China ranked first with a 53.8% share. China's woven fabric ex-

ports decreased by 8.4%, reaching a value of \$39.5 billion. The ranking was followed by EU countries with \$12.8 billion and India with \$3.7 billion. Türkiye's woven fabric exports decreased by 5.5% to \$2.4 billion. In 2023, Türkiye's share in global woven fabric exports was recorded at 3.2%, and its ranking rose from fifth to fourth globally.

**Türkiye's share in global home textiles: 3.4%**

China ranked first in global home textile exports with a 52.6% share. China's exports in 2023 decreased by 2.3%, reaching a value of \$31.1 billion. EU countries ranked second with a 17.2% share and exports worth \$10.1 billion, while India ranked third with a 7.7% share and \$4.5 billion in exports. Türkiye ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in global home textile exports with a 3.4% share and exports worth \$2 billion. Türkiye's home textile exports

decreased by 13.5% in 2023. In yarn exports, China ranked first with a 29.4% share. China's yarn exports decreased by 8.8%, falling to \$13.7 billion. The ranking was followed by EU countries with \$8.2 billion and India with \$5.3 billion. Türkiye's yarn exports in 2023 decreased by 17.9%, amounting to \$2.1 billion. Türkiye maintained its sixth position in global yarn exports with a 4.5% share. In knitted fabric exports, China ranked first with a 57.7% share. China's knitted fabric exports decreased by 9.7%, amounting to \$21.6 billion. EU countries ranked second with an 11.3% share and exports worth \$4.2 billion. Türkiye ranked third in global knitted fabric exports with a 5.2% share and exports worth \$1.9 billion. Türkiye's knitted fabric exports shrank by 6.1% in 2023. In fiber exports, the United States ranked first with a 19.2% share.

The U.S.'s fiber exports decreased by 28.5%, falling to \$7.3 billion. The ranking was followed by EU countries with \$5.7 billion and Australia with \$4.9 billion. Türkiye's fiber exports in 2023 increased by 16.6%, amounting to \$891 million. Türkiye ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in global fiber exports with a 2.3% share in 2023.

**The EU is the leading importer of technical textiles and woven fabrics**

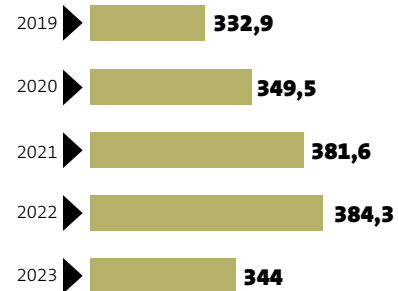
EU countries rank as the world's largest importer of technical textiles with a 34.7% share. EU countries' technical textile imports decreased by 5.1%, amounting to approximately \$37.9 billion. The ranking was followed by the U.S. and Japan, while Türkiye ranked 11<sup>th</sup> with \$1.8 billion in technical textile imports. In global woven fabric imports, EU countries ranked first with \$11 billion in imports, followed

by Vietnam and Bangladesh. Türkiye's woven fabric imports decreased by 18%, falling to \$1.5 billion. Türkiye ranked as the world's 10<sup>th</sup> largest woven fabric importer with a 2.3% share. In home textile imports, EU countries ranked first with a 30.7% share. The EU's home textile imports in 2023 decreased by 12.1%, amounting to \$14.9 billion. The U.S. ranked second, followed by Japan. Türkiye ranked 59<sup>th</sup> in home textile imports with \$96 million. Türkiye's home textile imports increased significantly by 35.6% in 2023.

**Türkiye's fiber imports are declining**

In global yarn imports, EU countries ranked first with a decrease of 11.5% and imports worth \$10.6 billion. China and Türkiye followed. With a 6.2% share, Türkiye ranked as the world's third-largest yarn importer. Türkiye's yarn imports decreased by 29.3%, amounting to \$2.9 billion. China ranked first in fiber imports with a 23% share. China's fiber imports in 2023 decreased by 11.2%, falling to \$8.9 billion. China was followed by EU countries and Vietnam. Türkiye ranked fourth in global fiber imports with \$2.9 billion. Türkiye's fiber imports decreased by 40.1% in 2023. Vietnam ranked first in knitted fabric imports with a 20.7% share. Vietnam's imports increased by 6.6%, amounting to \$6.7 billion. Vietnam was followed by EU countries and Cambodia. Türkiye's knitted fabric imports in 2023 increased by 7.4%, amounting to \$560 million. Türkiye ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in global knitted fabric imports with a 1.7% share.

**Global Textile and Raw Material Exports Over the Years (Billion dollar)**





# THE LARGEST MARKET FOR TURKISH OUTERWEAR EXPORTS: EU COUNTRIES

Türkiye, the 16<sup>th</sup> largest outerwear exporter in the world, lists Germany, France, Italy, and the Netherlands among its top export markets.



**I**HKİB has published the Türkiye Outerwear Export Report covering the January-June period of 2019-2024. According to the report, Türkiye exported \$19.3 billion worth of apparel and clothing products in 2023. Of this, outerwear products accounted for \$481.6 million, representing 2.5% of the total exports. Türkiye's apparel and clothing exports decreased by 8.9% in 2023 compared to the previous year, while outerwear exports fell by 7.2%. Outerwear exports were recorded as \$519.1 million in 2022 and \$550.3 million in 2021. The product group achieved \$1.2 billion in exports in 2020 and \$323.1 million in 2019. In the first half of 2024, outerwear exports dropped by 39.6% compared to the same period of the previous year, totaling \$94.8 million.

## Woven outerwear products for men and boys are the most exported

Between 2019 and 2024, Türkiye's top exported outerwear product group was woven outerwear for men and boys, followed by woven outerwear for women and girls. Outerwear made from fabrics such as plastic, rubber, coated, or laminated materials ranked third. Türkiye's most exported outerwear product was woven anoraks made of synthetic or artificial fibers for men and boys. In the January-June 2024 period, exports of this product decreased by 44.5%, amounting to \$10.8 million. This was followed by woven anorak items for women and girls, with a 34.7% decrease and exports worth \$6.4 million. Ranking third were other apparel items







Türkiye ranks as the 16<sup>th</sup> largest outerwear exporter in the world, with a 1% share.

for women and girls, which saw a 5.6% decline to \$3.1 million.

#### The Netherlands is the most important market for outerwear

The Netherlands emerged as Türkiye's largest market for outerwear exports. In the first half of 2024, exports to the Netherlands fell by 23.1% to \$11 million compared to the previous year. Germany, ranked second, saw

a 48.3% decrease in exports totaling \$10 million, while Italy, ranked third, experienced a 10.8% decrease to \$6 million. Other leading markets included France, Kazakhstan, the UK, Spain, Iraq, Poland, and Austria.

#### Türkiye ranks 16<sup>th</sup> in outerwear exports

In 2023, global outerwear imports amounted to \$55.9

billion. The largest outerwear importers were the USA, Germany, France, Italy, and Japan. The USA, with a 15% share, was the world's largest outerwear importer, but its imports decreased by 18.2% in 2023 compared to the previous year, reaching \$8.4 billion. Globally, outerwear exports in 2023 totaled \$59.8 billion, with China leading as the largest exporter with a 29.1% share and \$17.4 billion in exports. Türkiye, with a 1% share, ranked as the 16<sup>th</sup> largest outerwear exporter in the world.

#### Exports to Germany increased by 79.6%

Among the USA's suppliers, the top three countries were China, Vietnam, and Bangladesh. Between 2019 and 2023, the USA's outerwear imports decreased by 24.4% from China, 16.7% from Vietnam, and 16.2% from Bangladesh. Türkiye accounted for 0.4% of the USA's outerwear imports and ranked 22nd among its suppliers. Türkiye's outerwear exports to the USA fell by 11.2% during the 2019-2023 period. Germany's top suppliers were China with a 37.7% share, Bangladesh with 11.3%, and Vietnam with 11.1%. Türkiye exported \$154 million worth of outerwear to Germany in 2023, achieving a 79.6% increase compared to the previous year and capturing a 2.8% market share. With a 1.5% share, Türkiye ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in France's outer-

Türkiye increased outerwear exports to Germany by 79.6% and to France by 38.8% in 2023.

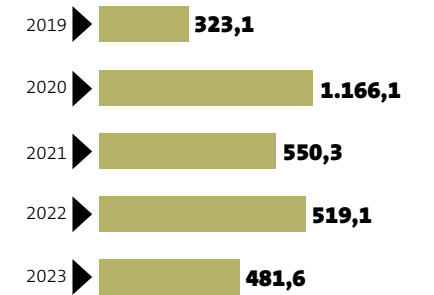
wear imports, where its exports grew by 38.8% over the past year. In 2023, Türkiye became the 17<sup>th</sup> largest outerwear exporter to Italy with a 1% share, increasing its exports to \$32 million—a 16.7% growth over five years. Among Japan's suppliers, Türkiye ranked 22nd with a 0.2% share. Türkiye's outerwear exports to Japan grew by 10.6% between 2019 and 2023, reaching \$7 million.

#### Türkiye's outerwear competitors analyzed

Among Türkiye's competitors, Italy stood out for exporting outerwear for men and boys made of coated, laminated, or covered textiles. The product group with the highest export growth between 2022 and 2023 was woven coats, jackets, vests, capes, and anoraks made of wool or fine animal hair for women and girls, increasing by 20.3%. Germany, the fourth-largest outerwear exporter globally, focused on synthetic or artificial fiber woven coats, jackets, vests, capes, and anoraks for women and girls as its most exported product group, which grew by 7.8% between 2022 and 2023. The second most exported group, synthetic or artificial fiber woven coats for men and boys, grew by 7.7%. Bangladesh's total outerwear exports declined by 12.1% in 2023 to \$3.7 million. The most exported group was synthetic woven coats and jackets for

men and boys, which accounted for 26.9% of total exports, amounting to \$1 billion. Exports of synthetic woven coats for women and girls declined by 6.1% to \$754 million, representing 20.2% of total exports. Significant declines were also seen in cotton outerwear. Bangladesh's overall apparel and clothing exports dropped by 18.9% in 2023 to \$48.7 million, with outerwear accounting for 7.7% of total exports.

#### Türkiye's outerwear exports (million dollar)





# IRAQ LOVES TURKISH SHOES



Although European Union countries are the most important market for the Turkish footwear sector, the recent increase in shoe exports to Iraq has caught attention. In the January-September period of 2024, shoe exports to Iraq rose by 24.5%.

**T**he total exports of the leather and leather products sector decreased by 21.3% to \$1.167 billion in the January-September period of 2024. The sector's most important product group, with a share of 59.1%, was shoes. Shoe exports during the same period decreased by 25.8%, reaching \$689.8 million. The countries to which Türkiye exported the most shoes in this period were Iraq, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland, Romania, Spain, France, the United States, and Kazakhstan, in that order.

The increase in shoe exports to Iraq during this period was particularly noteworthy. Exports of shoes to Iraq rose by 24.5%, reaching \$72.3 million. This figure was \$58.1 million during the same period last year.

#### Increase in exports for six months

In the February-September period, Iraq consistently ranked as the top destination for Türkiye's shoe exports, except for January, when it dropped to second place. In January, Türkiye's shoe exports to

In the first nine months of the year, shoe exports to Iraq only declined in three months, with significant increases in the remaining six months.

Iraq increased by 26.9%, reaching \$5.5 million. In February, exports to Iraq rose by 49.3% to \$9.6 million, in March they grew by 25% to \$12.3 million, and in April they declined by 28.8% to \$5.6 million. In May, exports to Iraq decreased by 0.9%, reaching \$8.5 million, and in June, there was a decline of 11.4%, bringing exports down to \$6.4 million. In July, exports increased by 32.4% to \$7.2 million, and in August, they rose by 29.4% to \$8.2 million. In September, exports to Iraq grew by 30.2%, reaching \$8.6 million. Over the first nine months, exports to Iraq decreased in only three months, while they increased significantly in the remaining six months.

#### Most exports in leather shoes

When looking at shoe exports by product group, the largest share (47.2%) was in shoes with leather uppers and rubber, plastic, natural or synthetic leather soles. The export of this group decreased by 27.6%, totaling \$325.5 million. Exports of shoes with rubber or plastic soles and uppers, accounting for 29.6% of the total, shrank by 15.9% to \$203.9 million. Exports of shoes with textile uppers and rubber or plastic soles, which make up 12.3%, dropped by 34% to \$84.7 million. The ranking is followed by other shoes (5.3%), shoe components (4.5%), and waterproof shoes with rubber or plastic uppers and soles (1.2%). Exports of other shoes decreased by 32.5% to \$36.3 million, while shoe component exports fell by 32.3% to \$30.8 million. Exports of waterproof shoes decreased by 14.2% to \$8.5 million.

#### Iraq remains the key market for leather shoes

In terms of leather shoes exports, the leading countries for Türkiye were Iraq, the United Kingdom, and Germany. Exports to Iraq increased by 30.6%, reaching \$1.3 million. For rubber or plastic sole and upper shoes, the key markets were Iraq, Germany, and Saudi Arabia, with exports to Iraq rising by 43.5% to \$46.6 million. For shoes with textile uppers and rubber or plastic soles, the leading countries were Iraq, Germany, and Ukraine. Exports to Iraq decreased by 1.7%, totaling \$15.7 million.

#### Continued growth in exports to Iraq in 2023

In 2023, Türkiye's leather and

leather products exports decreased by 9.5%, totaling \$1.857 billion. The largest share of the sector's exports was still shoes, with a 60.6% share. Shoe exports fell by 7.6% to \$1.124 billion. The leading countries for Turkish shoe exports in 2023 were Germany, Iraq, Italy, Romania, the United Kingdom, Poland, Spain, Libya, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. Iraq, the second-largest destination for Turkish shoe exports, saw a 7.1% increase in exports, reaching \$74.1 million. In 2023, Iraq was the largest importer of shoes with rubber or plastic soles and uppers, other rubber or plastic shoes, and textile uppers with rubber or plastic soles.

**Iraq, which accounts for 10.5% of Türkiye's shoe exports, received \$72.3 million worth of shoes.**







Safa Şahin

Balmain Sneakers Head Designer



## THE GLOBAL FOOTPRINTS OF TURKISH TALENT

Safa Şahin, a Turkish shoe designer who succeeded in moving from a small town in Anatolia to the world's fashion capitals, has attracted significant attention in recent years with the 'Saww' collection born from his collaboration with FILA. We discussed the designer's works and his thoughts on the Turkish footwear industry.

**W**ith your remarkable rise and unique designs, you represent Türkiye at some of fashion's most important brands. How do you view your career journey, and which brands are you currently working with?

I love designing shoes, dedicating time to my work, and doing my job as perfectly as possible. When I work at a company, I complete every project to the best of my ability, from its story to the box design. When a project succeeds, it brings the next one. That's how my ascent happened, I can say. When I entered a competition, I worked day and night for a month and a

half. I believe the work I produce reflects me. Factors like existing budgets or the extreme uniqueness of a design sometimes prevent me from achieving 100% of what I envision. However, I'm satisfied if I reach around 80% of what I wanted.

Currently, we are working on a project with the American brand Under Armour. We also launched our collaboration with FILA last year in China, where we received very positive feedback and signed a new contract right afterward. This year, we'll have two more shoe projects. I continue working with Balmain and provide freelance services to a few smaller brands.





It's essential to value design, to have a designer within the company, and to create a story.

**My dream is to create my own brand**

Of course, this is my dream, and I would love to see it come true. But my confidence in this goal has diminished somewhat. This isn't something I can accomplish on my own. It requires an excellent factory system and strong marketing networks. It's a team effort, and it's impossible for the designer to handle it all. I'm actually waiting for the right team to come together for such success. In the past, some investors have reached out to me. I'm trying to understand how things work in other countries. No matter how beautiful a design is, you can't take a step forward without marketing or production. Still, my dreams remain.

**You also spent some time working in education with young people at universities. What would you say about that experience?**

I wanted to guide the students, hoping they wouldn't struggle as I did. My story attracts them—they sweep me as a designer with all the opportunities, living in Paris, the heart of fashion. They see someone from Sorgun, Yozgat, pursuing their dreams and creating their path. They find my success inspiring and feel that if I could do it, other students in Türkiye can too. It was a rewarding experience for me.

**How do you view the Turkish footwear industry? How do you think the industry has developed in recent years?**

I can't follow the industry closely,

but we always talk about the importance of building brands. Prioritizing design, having a designer within the company, and creating a story are crucial. Every brand has its DNA, and instead of just manufacturing for others, we should focus on strengthening that DNA. We need to increase and support start-up brands. For Türkiye to be a global player in this field, we must place more importance on design. Large brands often avoid risks due to commercial concerns, while newer brands embrace differences to express themselves. Incorporating a designer and reflecting their story onto the brand, combined with marketing, is essential. We want immediate results, which hinders our success. If we can't compete in large production volumes, perhaps we could stand out with design. We should identify market gaps or even create a new style. Whether it's comfort, material quality, design, leather quality, or low cost, we should choose one area and aim to be the best.

**Your designs feel like they're from the future. Unique shapes, innovative designs, and creative details set you apart from competitors. How would you describe your style, and what inspires you in your designs?**

I don't usually have a specific inspiration. A game or a trend can influence me. Sometimes, I combine several influences. This style is known as experiential design. In education, there are

I dream of producing with my own brand in Türkiye, but this isn't something I can accomplish on my own.

courses encouraging students to experiment without fear, pushing for more creative and original ideas. I also experiment with designs through research and trial and error. I stop when I achieve a complete aesthetic, like cooking a meal. I have a more maximalist style—adding some EVA, some rubber, some leather, some shiny metals, and when I feel it's "just right," I stop.

**Today, sustainability has become essential for all industries. We see innovations in your designs in this direction too. What does sustainability mean to you?**

Sustainability enables us to leave a more livable world for future generations. It feels good to work in this direction. I've done project-based sustainable work and prioritize recycling. One of the challenges of sustainability in the footwear industry is that parts can't be separated. We use strong chemical adhesives. To allow for future recycling, we need compact, detachable designs. I have many designs in this area, but there isn't a project available for them. When I worked at Nike, sustainability was always a priority. We worked with materials that were both recycled and easy to disassemble. I also created sustainable designs for Balmain and other brands. I view sustainability as an identity; some brands focus exclusively on this. Combining sustainability with aesthetics could open up a whole new dimension. Türkiye could be a leader in this untapped area.

**Your recent collaboration with FILA led to the highly acclaimed FILA x Safa Şahin "Saww" collection. What inspired you in this project?**

This project has actually been ongoing for two years. I designed two shoes for FILA. The first was launched, and I believe the second will be launched around November. We started with a story, which was essential. The inspiration behind the story is vital because it shapes everything. In FILA's story, my inspiration was the saw. I associated my sharp lines with the saw. From the invitations to the product packaging and the paper inside the box, all marketing was built around the saw theme. The large pop-up store

we designed was also inspired by the saw.

**Was this collaboration solely aimed at the Chinese market?**

Yes, FILA is one of the largest and most luxurious brands in China. Due to FILA's presence, Nike and Adidas, for instance, cannot enter this market. FILA has 2,000 stores across China. Founded in 1911, FILA has more experience than other sports brands. Its popularity and revenue in China are significant, and their budget was very supportive for the project. Sometimes I struggle to find enough budget to bring my designs to life, but in this project, even the pop-up store I designed was realized. They provided strong marketing support as well.

For FILA's story, my inspiration was a saw. I connected my sharp lines with the saw.





# TÜRKİYE'S ROLE AS A SUPPLIER STRENGTHENS

Misleading data in the textile and apparel industries, despite bold commitments to reduce their environmental impact, stands in the way of building a sustainable industry.



Labor strikes and low standards in Far East countries offering cheap labor are causing global brands to exit these nations, and the trend of sourcing from friendly and allied countries is strengthening Türkiye's role in the global supply chain.

**G**lobal fashion brands are currently grappling with issues related to their suppliers in Far East countries. Ongoing labor strikes in Bangladesh, challenges in managing operations in Myanmar following the coup, and Vietnam's preparations to increase taxes have raised concerns that these countries, considered as alternatives to China, may not offer viable solutions.

In November, labor strikes in Bangladesh, the world's second-largest clothing exporter, garnered international attention. The main reason for the unrest was the government's proposal to increase the monthly minimum wage by 56.25%, reaching 12,500 taka, or 104 euros. The unions opposed this proposal and

demanded a further increase in the minimum wage to 195 euros. With no compromise reached, workers took to the streets, leading to clashes with the police. In a country with around 3,500 textile and apparel garment factories, hundreds of factories closed down. The textile and apparel garment sector, which provides job opportunities for around four million people, constitutes 85% of the country's annual \$55 billion foreign trade.

#### **Brands are starting to withdraw from Asia**

Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Myanmar were considered as alternative supplier countries for global brands looking for alternatives to China in the post-COVID era. However, numerous







During the period when China was closed, European countries shifted their orders to Türkiye, which is closer in proximity, shortening the supply chain.



Increasing security concerns are elevating the importance of approaches like ally shoring and friend shoring.

reports from humanitarian organizations about working conditions in these countries have left Western brands in a dilemma. Swedish fashion giant H&M Group announced its decision to gradually halt operations in Myanmar in 2021, citing difficulties in conducting operations in Myanmar following the coup and aligning them with H&M standards.

In a recent report by the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC), various criteria were listed among the human rights violations in Myanmar, including low wages, wage theft, unfair dismissals, inhumane working conditions, forced overtime, harassment, and intimidation. Several brands, including Inditex in June, Lidl, C&A, Mango, Primark, Marks & Spencer, Tesco, Uniqlo's owner Fast Retailing, and Muji's parent company Ryohin Keikaku, have either withdrawn or are in the process of withdrawing from

Myanmar. A number of brands, including Adidas and Bestseller, have expressed their commitment to intensify efforts to ensure compliance. Next is also among the brands considering withdrawing from Myanmar.

#### **Vietnam increases taxes for foreign companies**

Some U.S. fashion companies are expressing concerns about the risks of forced labor associated with purchasing from Vietnam. Currently on the agenda for brands producing or planning to produce in Vietnam is a decision proposing an increase in the tax rate applied to foreign companies to 15%. Vietnam is preparing to implement a new tax decision that will directly affect 122 global companies investing in the country. The plan is to raise the tax rate for foreign-owned companies from 5% to 15%. The current tax rate for domestic companies in Vietnam is 20%.

#### **Decreasing income of Cambodian workers puts pressure on sportswear brands**

The "Stitched Under Strain" report published by ActionAid reveals that global sportswear brands are leaving Cambodian garment workers below the poverty line. According to the survey results conducted in collaboration with the Cambodian Alliance of Trade Unions and involving more than 300 workers in the sector, workers' wages have been decreasing for the past few years. The report indicates that the majority of the 800,000 workers, mostly women, in this sector saw their average monthly additional income drop from \$36 before the pandemic to an average of \$12 in 2023. As Cambodia begins minimum wage negotiations for 2024, worker activists express doubts about whether the legal minimum wage will adequately meet the needs of the workers.

#### **US fashion brands moving away from China**

According to a recent study by the United States Fashion Industry Association (USFIA), there seems to be no slowdown in US fashion companies moving away from China; however, surveys show that the situation could change in the future. While 80% of the participants in the survey emphasized their plans to reduce sourcing from China in the next two years, it is noted that companies that source from China and have more than 1,000 employees are the most eager to minimize the risk. However, the research also indicates that in 2019, US apparel companies imported 20% of their goods from China, a figure that has increased to 30% in 2022. The study also reveals that by 2023, the share of companies whose largest supplier is not China has reached 61%. More than 70% of the respondents

stated that they currently source yarn, fabric, and textile accessories from China because there are 'no other practical alternatives.' Regarding the question of whether there could be new supplier countries for brands after the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement, 30% of the participants stated that they have started giving more than 10% of their orders to CAFTA-DR members, while 40% said they plan to give their orders to CAFTA-DR members in the next two years.

#### **New investment approaches favor Türkiye**

During the period when China was closed, European countries shifted their orders to Türkiye, which is closer in proximity, shortening the supply chain. Türkiye has successfully passed the test of prioritizing produc-

tion to prevent disruptions in the supply chain. Increasing security concerns are elevating the importance of approaches like ally shoring and friend shoring. Investors are inclined to increase the weight of ally and friendly countries in their supply chains to enhance their security and flexibility. International direct investment data for 2022 highlights the shift in the direction of international direct investments. In the post-COVID-19 era, there has been a decrease in investments in China, especially in greenfield investments, making countries like Türkiye more attractive with new investment approaches such as ally shoring and friend shoring. These approaches play a significant role, particularly in attracting new international direct investments. The impact of these trends on shaping investment strategies and the country's competitiveness is crucial.



## “MANUFACTURING IN NON-STANDARD COUNTRIES CREATES A PARADOX”



**Mustafa Paşahan**  
IHKIB Vice President

“We foresee that in the future, price will no longer be the sole determinant, and brands will feel increased pressure to comply with ESG standards.”

**A**wareness among consumers in the fashion industry grows each year. This increasing consciousness pushes global brands to act more transparently and responsibly in their supply chains. Particularly regarding working conditions, environmental impacts, and social compliance, they carefully evaluate their suppliers' practices. This shift strengthens the tendency to work with suppliers adhering to sustainability and ethical production standards.

Türkiye, with its strong history and infrastructure in textile and apparel production, stands out due to its quality, flexible production capacity, short delivery times, and proximity to Europe. When we evaluate Türkiye's standing in terms of working conditions, we have always considered our high compatibility with universal social compliance codes an advantage compared to rival countries. This advantage largely stems from our national legislation aligning with EU standards and universal labor codes due to the Customs Union Agreement.

The overlapping audits employed by global brands to verify compliance with these codes, as well as their additional demands, impose significant auditing fatigue and investment burdens on our exporters. However, Turkish suppliers draw attention through their improvements in ethical production, respect for worker rights, and environmental sustainability.

The demand from global brands

for Turkish suppliers to adhere to ESG standards underscores the growing importance of sustainable and ethical production. However, the continued manufacturing by some brands in countries that do not meet these standards creates a paradox. This situation arises from the cost factor still being a major determinant and the complexity of global supply chains. This issue must be questioned from a long-term sustainability perspective.

### “Turkish exporters can lead in green production”

The EU and the US stand out as the leading buyers in apparel. Together, they account for 49% of global apparel purchases (27% EU and 22% US). In 2023, due to recessions, significant declines occurred in both regions' imports. Both the EU and the US have taken significant steps to improve working conditions and promote sustainable production practices through legal regulations, directives, and certification systems. Although rising labor costs pose a significant challenge for Turkish exporters in terms of competitiveness, they can become leaders in green and ethical production by employing environmentally friendly production methods and sustainable materials. This would provide a competitive advantage, especially in markets with a high awareness of environmental and social responsibility.

## “UNFAIR COMPETITION PUTS US PRODUCERS UNDER PRESSURE”



**Sultan Tepe**  
ITHIB Board Member  
and Sustainability  
Committee Chair

“Global brands are continuously raising the bar for environmental and social compliance, yet a clear solution for financing these expectations has not been established.”

**T**ürkiye has developed significant capabilities in producing sustainable products and has become one of the leading countries in environmentally compatible production. In the journey toward sustainability and green transformation, Türkiye enjoys a favorable position compared to its competitors. This advantage stems from the textile industry's responsiveness to global public demand, which often goes beyond international norms.

Given that the EU countries are our largest export markets, their standards play a critical role. Since the Customs Union Agreement, our sector has been manufacturing in line with EU norms. Along this journey, combating “greenwashing” and setting achievable goals in collaboration with global brands are necessary steps.

### “We do not find this double standard sustainable”

Each brand has over 40 social compliance and environmental certification processes as part of their inspections. Yet, we do not find it sustainable for production to continue in countries that fail to meet these criteria. Especially with changes in consumer demands and increasing social awareness regarding sustainability, we foresee that brands will prioritize these standards for every supplier in the future.

Issues such as audit fatigue, greenwashing, and the energy crisis

challenge the textile industry's sustainability efforts. Greenwashing not only misleads consumers but also creates an unfair competitive environment that pressures producers like us. While global brands are pushing environmental and social compliance forward, there remains no clear solution for financing these expectations.

A circular economy requires collective action from stakeholders such as manufacturers, suppliers, brands, governments, and universities. If all stakeholders move together in this area, more effective results can be achieved. The Turkish textile sector, with its rich heritage and strong collective action capabilities, is more effective compared to other industries in this regard.

With a modern production infrastructure and integrated manufacturing capabilities, the Turkish textile sector is among the leading nations worldwide. We hold strong production and export networks across all sub-product groups. Türkiye is the fifth-largest textile supplier globally and the second-largest in Europe. However, maintaining our competitive edge against rivals requires implementing policies that benefit national interests. In a time when many countries adopt more nationalistic approaches in global markets, we must act cautiously to protect our interests.



## “PRICE PRIORITY INCREASES PRESSURE ON SUPPLIERS MEETING ESG STANDARDS”



Oğuz Inner  
IDMIB Vice President

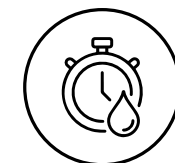
“The continuation of production in countries that do not meet ESG standards, while price remains the primary criterion, creates a significant paradox during this transformation process.”

The leather and leather products sectors, including footwear, leather goods, and leather apparel, are integral to the fashion industry. In these labor-intensive sectors, growing consumer awareness about working conditions has significantly influenced global brands' supplier choices. Brands now consider not only price and quality but also the environmental and social impacts of production processes. This evolving approach presents new opportunities for production centers like Türkiye while also introducing challenges. Türkiye has long been recognized for its skilled craftsmanship and deep-rooted leather production heritage. Investments in environmental and social responsibility have made Türkiye an even more attractive supplier. However, there are still instances where producers in Türkiye, like elsewhere, do not fully comply with international environmental and social standards, causing some brands to hesitate in choosing Türkiye as a supplier. Stricter legal requirements concerning standards in Türkiye are needed.

**“Brands’ double standards spark widespread debate in the sector”**  
Sustainability criteria for leather and leather products, footwear, and leather goods brands are becoming increasingly important. ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) standards stand out as decisive factors in brands' supplier selections. Demands for Turkish suppliers to meet these stringent standards are shaping the sector's transformation and future expectations. However, the continuation of produc-

tion in countries that do not meet ESG standards, while price remains the primary criterion, creates a paradox in this transformation process. Turkish suppliers' adherence to ESG standards enhances Türkiye's competitiveness in the fashion industry. Sustainability raises brand value and better addresses consumer demands. Yet, the persistence of price as the primary consideration increases pressure on ESG-compliant suppliers, particularly in developing countries, creating cost and competitiveness challenges. The double standards exhibited by fashion industry brands in balancing ESG compliance with price-focused supplier selection have become a topic of widespread debate in the sector. These standards highlight the need for a balance between sustainability and cost-effectiveness. The US and EU have taken significant steps to improve global working conditions. Both economic powers have adopted policies of imposing sanctions on brands producing in countries with poor labor conditions, particularly in the leather and leather products, footwear, and leather goods sectors. While these sanctions have had positive effects in improving global labor standards, a more comprehensive and consistent application strategy is necessary to enhance their effectiveness and sufficiency. These sanctions should be seen not merely as a pressure tool but as an opportunity to improve the sector and achieve global production standards.

# KNIT SHIRTING COLLECTION



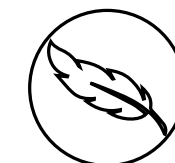
QUICK-DRY



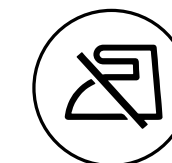
BREATHABLE



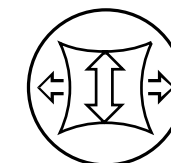
DURABLE



SOFT



NON-IRON



STRETCH



## “Where comfort meets elegance”

As an experienced company in the intricate world of knit fabrics, we have established our presence in the knit shirt fabric sector. Merging our expertise in fabric design with advanced technology, our knit shirt fabrics stand out with both functional and stylish designs. Knit shirt fabrics, inherently more durable by nature, provide users with comfort throughout the day due to their wrinkle-resistant and non-iron characteristics.





## “WE EXPECT BRANDS TO MANAGE SUPPLY CHAINS IN LINE WITH ESG”



Ahmet Hayri Diler  
IHİB President

“Unfortunately, while some brands demand ESG criteria from Turkish suppliers, they continue to produce in countries that do not meet these conditions at lower costs.”

ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) has become increasingly important for consumers and stakeholders. As the Turkish carpet sector, we make great efforts to produce and export in compliance with these criteria. Turkish carpets hold a well-deserved position worldwide with their quality, variety, design, and cultural richness. With \$2.75 billion in exports in 2023, we are among the world's leading carpet exporters.

However, to sustain this success, it is essential to comply with ESG criteria. Brands demand that suppliers meet these requirements, compelling us to engage in environmentally and socially responsible production.

Unfortunately, some brands demand ESG compliance from Turkish suppliers while continuing to produce in countries that do not meet these criteria at lower costs. This creates an unfair competitive environment and harms the sustainable carpet sector.

As a sector, we aim to compete on quality, design, and innovation rather than price. Therefore, we expect brands to manage their supply chains in compliance with ESG criteria and reduce collaborations with countries that fail to meet these standards.

**“Carpet manufacturers in our country respect workers' rights”**

In recent years, the US and EU

have placed great importance on improving working conditions, demonstrating a tendency to impose sanctions on companies operating in countries with poor labor conditions. As a sector, we closely follow these developments and shape our export strategies accordingly.

Carpet manufacturers in our country adopt a production approach that respects workers' rights, is environmentally conscious, and has a high sense of social responsibility. This makes us a preferred supplier in the global market while ensuring compliance with the high standards set by the US and EU. While sanctions on poor labor conditions are generally effective, they are not always sufficient due to variability in application and monitoring across countries and sectors. Rather than viewing these sanctions as a pressure tool, we see them as an opportunity to improve our sector and achieve global standards.

By focusing on continuous improvement of working conditions in production processes, we aim to advance further. To achieve this, increasing international collaboration and dialogue is critical.

In the new era, Turkish exporters need to adopt various strategies to reduce labor costs and increase efficiency.

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TÜRKİYE



# TÜRKİYE'S MEDIUM-TERM PROGRAM TO STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMY

The dollar exchange rate for 2025, which was previously expected to be 43.9 TL in the earlier OVP, has been revised down to 42 TL in the updated OVP.



The Medium-Term Program (OVP), which outlines Türkiye's three-year targets and policies for the period 2025-2027, aims to strengthen financial stability, maintain fiscal discipline, and reduce inflation to single digits to ensure price stability.

**A**ligned with the objectives of the 12<sup>th</sup> Development Plan (2024-2028), the OVP aims to strengthen macroeconomic and financial stability, preserve fiscal discipline, and achieve price stability by reducing inflation to single digits in the medium term. Additionally, the plan focuses on sustainable

growth by enhancing R&D and innovation capacity, driving technological transformation in the context of green and digital economies, strengthening human capital, improving the labor market's efficiency, improving the business and investment environment, and reducing informality in the economy. The

OVP presents policies and measures to be implemented in the first year of the program based on macroeconomic targets set in light of global, regional, and national developments. This will help strengthen predictability for both the public and private sectors. The program will be detailed in the 2025 Presidential

Annual Program. The updated program, covering the period from 2025 to 2027, was prepared with a comprehensive approach. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, commenting on the updated OVP, stated: "While fighting inflation resolutely, we aim to prioritize investment, production, employment, exports, and

growth; strengthen agriculture, industry, high technology, tourism, and many different sectors with the OVP. Our confidence and support for this program are full. As the government, we will continue to work tirelessly to achieve the targets set within the OVP, aiming to increase the well-being of our citizens while ensuring the sustainability of our economy based on solid foundations for future generations."

## Key macroeconomic indicators in the OVP

Key Macroeconomic Indicators in the OVP The Ministry of Treasury and Finance and the Strategy and Budget Directorate prepared the OVP for the period 2025-2027, setting out the key economic targets. The growth forecast for Türkiye's economy is 3.5% for this year. It is expected to grow by 4% in 2025, 4.5% in 2026, and 5% in 2027. Inflation is expected to be 41.5% at the end of this year, with a target of 17.5% for next year. Inflation is expected to decrease to 9.7% in 2026 and 7% in 2027. The budget deficit-to-GDP ratio is forecast to be 3.1% in 2025 and 2.5% in 2027. The unemployment rate is expected to be 9.3% at the end of this year. The target is 9.6% in 2025, 9.2% in 2026, and 8.8% in 2027. According to the OVP, Türkiye's exports are expected to reach





The economy is projected to grow by 4% in 2025, 4.5% in 2026, and 5% in 2027.

\$264 billion by the end of 2024. Exports are forecast to be \$279.6 billion in 2025, \$296.1 billion in 2026, and \$319.6 billion by the end of the program. Imports are expected to reach \$345 billion by the end of this year, with projections of \$369 billion in 2025, \$390.6 billion in 2026, and \$417.5 billion in 2027.

**Dollar rate for 2025: 42 TL**

Exports and Dollar Targets Revised Downwards When compared with the OVP announced in 2023 for the 2023-2026 period, it is observed that Türkiye's export targets for 2024 and 2026 have been revised downwards by a total of \$13 billion. In the OVP announced in 2023, the expected exchange rate for the dollar in 2024 was 36.8 TL. In the updated OVP, this was revised to 33.2 TL. The new OVP suggests that the 9.8% loss in the exchange rate of the dollar in 2024 will continue. In the previous OVP, the average dollar rate for 2025 was projected to be 43.9 TL, but the updated OVP revised this to 42 TL. The 2026 projection, which was 47.8

Years	Growth (%)	Inflation (%)	Exports (billion dollars)	Dollar/TL
2024	3,5 (4)	41,5 (33)	264 (267)	33,2 (36,8)
<b>2025</b>	<b>4 (4,5)</b>	<b>17,5 (15,2)</b>	<b>279,6 (283,6)</b>	<b>42 (43,9)</b>
2026	4,5 (5)	9,7 (8,5)	296,1 (302,2)	44,6 (47,8)
<b>2027</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>319,6</b>	<b>46,9</b>

INFO OVP Forecasts (values in parentheses are from the 2023 OVP forecasts)

TL previously, has been lowered to 44 TL.

**“The new OVP is extremely important for our exports.”**

“The New OVP is Extremely Important for Our Exports” Mustafa Gültepe, President of the Türkiye Exporters Assembly (TİM) and the Istanbul Apparel Exporters Association (İHKİB), emphasized the great importance of the OVP for Türkiye's development. He noted that TİM had presented its opinions and suggestions during the prepara-

tion of the OVP. He said, “In our projections, we had repeatedly stated that our export expectation was around \$264 billion. Indeed, our new target has been revised accordingly. The export target for 2025 is \$279.6 billion, \$296.1 billion for 2026, and \$319.6 billion for 2027. We always raise the issues faced by our exporters in every platform. Compared to the previous OVP, there is a \$13 billion reduction in the total export target over the next three years. This is not the desired scenario. These figures

clearly indicate the issues our exporters are facing, and we believe we need to analyze these figures carefully. On the other hand, the program foresees a significant improvement in the trade deficit. The expected decrease in imports is over \$71 billion compared to the previous OVP. The total trade volume is also revised negatively in this regard. While the growth target is somewhat lower, inflation expectations have increased. There is an improvement in unemployment rates. In terms of macroeconomic indicators and policy tools, the focus on product and market diversification, effective trade diplomacy, trade facilitation, export financing, reducing import dependency, developing service exports, and emphasizing green and digital transformation in exports is very important. The new OVP continues to focus on exports. We eagerly await new steps to be taken in these areas and wish that the announced program will be beneficial for our country.”



## “Blending Industrial Design with Accessories”

With a vision of becoming a digitally-focused brand, Mlouye exports its specially crafted bags and shoes to numerous countries worldwide. Mlouye’s founder, Mebrure Seyman, attributes the brand’s rapid growth to its differentiation in design.

A graduate of the Industrial Design Department at Middle East Technical University, Seyman’s career took shape when she established her own design studio. Her project involving a seating unit developed by recycling silk textile waste used in the production of saris, traditional garments of Indian women, earned her the “Best Seating Unit of the Year” award at Decor’s EDITA awards. This marked the beginning of her transition from industrial design to accessories.

“I can say that I have been deeply inspired by fashion throughout my work. I grew up surrounded by sewing machines, patterns, molds, and fabrics,” Seyman states, adding that her greatest interest has always been in accessories.

Seyman explained that Mlouye started as an “online-only” brand, but they eventually began receiving bulk order requests from department stores:

“With these requests, we decided to establish a physical presence in select locations to make the quality we are proud of more tangible. Our customers can now find our products in about 20 stores across Europe and Asia, including Galeries Lafayette, Harvey Nichols, La Samaritaine, Globus, and Rinascente. Our goal is to open our own stores to meet our customers in spaces we’ve designed ourselves and



offer a comprehensive brand experience. The first step in this direction was opening our first store in Italy. This was significant for us because Milan is the capital of both fashion and industrial design, and it’s also a key meeting point for our customer base. Strategically, it was a very smart move.”

### “All production is exported”

Currently producing two main product groups, bags and shoes, Seyman noted:

“At the core of our brand are our bags. Any product category we expand into in the future will also revolve around bags. We



While a significant part of our production is still outsourced, 100% of what we produce is exported. Forty percent of our exports go to Asian countries, another 40% to the U.S.



operate outside the traditional fashion calendar. Instead of launching large seasonal collections, we release smaller capsule collections at shorter intervals, consisting of one or a few pieces. This allows us to focus on each product individually.”

She also mentioned that they established an R&D center to dedicate more time to product development:

“This enables us to test our efficiency and costs. The center also speeds up our sampling processes. While a significant part of our production is still outsourced, 100% of what we produce is exported. Forty percent of our

exports go to Asian countries, another 40% to the U.S., and the remaining 20% is split between EU countries and the United Arab Emirates.”

### “Design is everything”

“Since our founding, we’ve experienced nearly 100% growth every year. Even during the pandemic, when we had the opportunity to expand our product range, we managed to sustain growth,” Seyman remarked, highlighting the benefits of taking bold steps during challenging times. She explained the keys to their success as follows:

“We create our biggest differ-

entiation through our products and designs. I can confidently say that added value equals design. Design is a discipline that encompasses everything related to a product, from materials to production, production efficiency to costs, and user experience. For us, designing and producing longer-lasting products with minimal environmental impact is almost a reflex. This approach is also critical to our branding journey. What makes our product or production valuable is our success in this area. Thanks to our long-lasting products, customers who choose us once tend to remain Mlouye customers.”



## Manu Atelier: On the Path to Becoming a Global Brand

The handbags designed by two young sisters, Merve and Beste Manastır, who have built upon their father's 50-plus years of craftsmanship experience, are among the choices of Kate Middleton.

**W**hile the journey of the Manu Atelier brand began 12 years ago, it is backed by a rich history. The brand's founders, the Manastır sisters, describe its formation as follows: "Our father, Adnan Manastır, a leather bag craftsman, began his apprenticeship at the age of 11 under a German leather bag master. He later worked with many Greek and Armenian masters and eventually started his own workshop at a young age. Having spent a lot of time in the workshop since childhood, we were familiar with the craft. Even at that age, we would make bags by combining leftover leather pieces. Our father being a highly skilled craftsman and designer was a great advantage for us. This talent inspired us to showcase his work on a global platform, and thus, the journey of Manu Atelier began. We founded the brand with a capital of around 10,000 TL and even created our website ourselves. We launched our first collection in our mother's small shop, introducing our creations to the market."

### The brand that graced the cover of the times

The global journey of Manu Atelier began when their products were made available in Vakko stores. Merve Manastır explains how international media recog-



nized the brand even before local Turkish media: "Our first feature was in British Vogue, and this publication changed Manu Atelier's trajectory globally. A British online shopping platform expressed interest in our products and wanted to examine them. We sent them a sample model, originally designed by our father 30 years ago and repeatedly renovated by us. They were impressed by the craftsmanship, quality, and design and decided to visit Türkiye to see all of our products. They visited our first workshop in Beyoğlu and were greatly

influenced by our brand. Following this, they invited us to the UK and began selling our products in their retail locations. When this platform was eventually sold, we met its new owner, a Portuguese-British woman, who wanted to introduce our brand to global markets. One of her most notable traits was her meticulous approach, which aligned perfectly with our vision. She trusted our brand's vision. Today, without any special campaigns, our strongest markets are China and the U.S., while we've also reached a wide customer base in Europe. We made the

The foreign press wrote about Manu Atelier before the Turkish press. We were first featured in Vogue England. This publication was what changed the global course of Manu Atelier.

cover of The Times, which was a proud moment for us. One of our pieces was also featured in an exhibition at London's Victoria & Albert Museum. Additionally, we were honored with the 'Best Emerging Exporter Award' by İDMİB."

### Manu Atelier bags: Quietly sophisticated

Describing the style of Manu Atelier as "retro-futuristic," the Manastır sisters imagine the Manu woman as someone independent, with a unique stance and strength. They elaborate: "We tried to define every aspect of this woman, from what she wears and eats to what kind of music she listens to. The reason behind this effort was our desire to create a brand that does not compromise its values. We also defined the kind of woman we don't appeal to: for instance, someone who defines herself by carrying a branded bag is not our target audience. Our first collection consisted of eight pieces, each reflecting the character of the categorically defined Manu woman. Manu Atelier bags are 'the kind that speaks softly but leaves an impression.'"

### "We've started working on apparel"

Discussing the transition to production, the sisters share: "Our designs are ours, while the patterns are crafted by our fa-



ther. We also have a design team. In our London office, we have shoe designers and design assistants. On the production side, we work with four craftsmen. Initially, we managed production with a small team. When our products became available in Vakko, there were waiting lists, and we faced immense demand. The fact that Turkish people embraced our brand so strongly made us proud and motivated us further. Later, we brought together some of the industry's producers who were known for their quality, long-term collaboration with our



father, and high standards. We established a production facility for them, bringing them under one roof. Essentially, we created a company that unified their production under our brand. Our production center in Bayrampaşa also houses our warehouse and quality control department. In the short term, our goal is to increase our export figures and strengthen Manu Atelier's global positioning. We aspire to become a fully-fledged brand, which is why we're also looking to enter the apparel sector. We've been working in this field for some time now."



**“We will Transform MANC into a Global Brand”**

Driven by their passion for “quality products” and “craftsmanship” in the leather goods sector, Naz Koral and Çiçek Varuy founded MANC in 2018, aiming to establish it as a globally recognized brand.

**N**az Koral, emphasizing the invaluable knowledge and skills they gained from prior experiences in various areas of the fashion industry before establishing MANC, shared that MANC was born in New York in 2018, with its foundations rooted in Istanbul:

“Our primary goal is to design handmade leather accessories, blending superior craftsmanship and high-quality work to present them to the world. While many brands have belts as accessories, there wasn’t a brand specializing in belts. We decided to fill this gap. MANC was born out of our passion for leather and our awareness of the demand for high-quality leather goods. Although we initially focused solely on leather belt production, we decided to expand our product range based on customer demands. We first began producing bags, which quickly gained great popularity among a large audience. Over time, we expanded our bag collections. Later, we added other leather accessories, such as shoes, wallets, key holders, and cardholders, to our portfolio.” Çiçek Varuy added that MANC products are available both online through their website and in select retail stores worldwide:

“The fact that a Turkish brand is becoming recognized in global markets enhances our country’s image and export potential. What we envision for our brand’s



future is to continually grow and become a globally recognized brand. At the same time, we aim to grow in alignment with sustainability and social responsibility principles. Through environmentally friendly production processes, exhibition trade practices, and contributions to community-benefiting projects, we will work to preserve and enhance our brand values.”

**A new collection made of vegan leather**

The founders of the brand highlighted that sustainability is a highly significant value for MANC: “In the production



The vegetable-tanned leathers we started using this season bring us closer to the concept of sustainability.



process, we use environmentally friendly materials and techniques. This season, we began using vegetable-tanned leathers, bringing us closer to the concept of sustainability. These leathers are processed using plant-based substances instead of chemicals during tanning, and their waste can also be recycled. Chemical-free leathers offer longer-lasting and healthier use. Compared to other leather products, these are far less harmful to the environment. Every day, we continue to seek new approaches aligned with the concept of sustainability, which is increasingly vital

today. Our latest Mancy collection is entirely made of vegan leather.”

The co-founders, who have developed strategies for digital marketing and brand awareness to expand MANC’s reach, mentioned creating digital tools to enhance the brand’s presence: “For example, we designed an app to provide consumers with an easier shopping experience. Additionally, we launched another app called MANC Check. Through this app, our customers can scan the QR codes on their bags to register in our database and verify the authenticity of their products.”





# İTKİB CONTINUES ITS ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE EXPORTS



İTKİB continues its activities to develop trade by collecting and disseminating all kinds of trade-related information to its members.



As of 2009, 61 Exporters associations are operating in 27 different sectors/sub-sectors in Türkiye.

**E**xporters Associations are organizations that have been providing services in various sectors in various cities of Türkiye since 1937, aiming to increase, support, and coordinate exports to contribute to economic development. The İstanbul Textile and Apparel Exporters' Associations General Secretariat (İTKİB), which represents the Apparel, Textile, Leather, and Carpet sectors, supports its members in increasing value-added exports and also

assists foreign companies in finding the right manufacturers and products in Türkiye. İTKİB continues its activities to develop trade by collecting and disseminating all kinds of trade-related information to its members. It informs its members about collaboration opportunities with foreign companies and import demands. It organizes national participation in international fairs related to the Apparel, Textile, Leather, and Carpet sectors. It supports the

participation of its members in international fairs and organizes over 31 international exhibition participations, 24 trade delegation and 10 procurement delegation annually. İTKİB organizes trade delegations to foreign countries and buying missions in Türkiye to develop relationships between domestic and foreign companies. It prepares market research reports, sector analyses, and country profiles to provide its members with valuable information.



## CONTACT INFORMATION TO REACH TURKISH EXPORTERS

### THE MINISTRY OF TRADE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE

**Address:** Dumlupınar Bulvarı No: 151 Eskişehir Yolu 9. Km 06800  
Çankaya / Ankara

**Ministry Switchboard:** + 90 312 449 10 00

**Ministry General Correspondence Fax:** +90 312 449 18 18



### İSTANBUL TEXTILE AND APPAREL EXPORTERS' ASSOCIATIONS (İTKİB)

**Address:** Dış Ticaret Kompleksi B-Blok Çobançeşme Mevkii Sanayi Cad.  
Yenibosna / İstanbul

**Phone:** 0 212 454 02 00

**Fax:** 0 212 454 02 01

**e-mail:** info@itkib.org.tr



### EXPORTERS ASSOCIATIONS

Istanbul Apparel Exporters' Association



Istanbul Textile and Raw Materials Exporters' Association



Istanbul Leather and Leather Products Exporters' Association



Istanbul Carpet Exporters' Association



### FOREIGN REPRESENTATIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF TRADE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE



+90 212 219 4141

INFO@ISTANBULMODAAKADEMISI.COM

WWW.ISTANBULMODAAKADEMISI.COM



# İMA IS RAISING FUTURE FASHION PIONEERS FOR THE INDUSTRY

Istanbul Moda Academy (İMA) is the world-wide acclaimed, most proficient fashion school and a fashion education platform for young fashion designers and fashion sector professionals in Turkey, offering an innovative and modern education in the field of fashion and all relevant branches.

As a board member of the International Association of Fashion Schools (IFFTI) and a strategic partner with the University of the Arts London, London College of Fashion in the academic field, aspiring to provide an education of the utmost international standards, İMA passionately embraces an internationally-oriented educational approach, addressing all aspects of fashion in its journey to raise creative, innovative, and risk-taking fashion professionals to contribute to the industry's global competitive landscape.

While rooted in local insight yet globally dynamic in action, İMA effortlessly navigates the digitalizing era as an educational institution in its pioneering approach to education.

With cutting-edge training programmes as Clo and Browzwear, where the three-dimensional digital design concept comes to life, İMA continues to train the future's design professionals, aligning with the progress of information and communication technologies in the field of design.

Harnessing its wealth of expertise in Türkiye's essential industries of textile, ready-to-wear, and garment, the Academy wholeheartedly empowers and supports companies to strength their positions in the industry, to elevate their global competitiveness and increase ready-to-wear exports through strategic partnerships and impactful consultancy services.

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