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NEW TRENDS IN THE GLOBAL AND EUROPEAN UNION RAW SILK TRADE IN THE PERIOD 2013-2022

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to identify the main tendencies in raw silk trade at the global level and in the EU main producing and trading countries like China and India in Asia, and Italy, France, Romania, Germany and Spain in the EU. To attain this goal, the data referred to the last decade divided into two sub-periods 2013-2017 and 2018-2022 for allowing the comparison and quantification of the differences. The methodological procedures included the use of fixed basis indices, absolute and relative differences among sub-periods, comparison, trend regression equations and R square served as statistical tools to process the data from ITC and OEC World. The results pointed out the decline by 43.2% in world raw silk production which attained 91 thousand MT in 2022 vs 2013. The global raw silk export decreased from USD 3.12 Billion in 2013 to USD 1.91 Billion in 2022 (-38.8%), while the import went down by 38.8% from USD 2.41 Billion to USD 1.65 Billion (-31.54%). In consequence, trade balance remained positive at USD 0.26 Billion in 2022, but being 2.5 times smaller than in 2013. In the EU, in 2022, raw silk export was USD 0.46 Billion (-46.5% lower vs 2013), while import value attained USD 0.62 Billion (-37.4% vs 2013), resulting a negative balance of - USD 0.16 Billion. China maintained its top position as a silk producer and exporter, with a positive trade balance, but negative in 2020-2022. The Asian competitors India, Uzbekistan and Vietnam increased production and their trade as well. The EU is a very important raw silk importer, so that its trade balance is negative (-USD 0.16 Billion in 2022). Italy is a remarkable top silk importer in the world, and France, Romania, Germany and Spain are also representatives. Silk textiles remain of high attraction for fashion industry, a reason to expect as production and commerce to flourish in the future, as in the EU is a new orientation to reduce the wastes caused by fast fashion based on synthetic fibers and to encourage the production of healthier and environment friendly natural fibers like silk which has to sustain fashion, textile and apparel industries.

Key words*: *silk, export, import, trade balance, trends, world and EU, main trading countries

INTRODUCTION

Global production of fibers destined to fashion, textile and apparel industries has rapidly grown in the last two decades. In the year 2022 it reached 116 million tonnes being 2.32 times higher than in the year 2000 when it accounted for 50 million tonnes. Taking into account the population and the growth rate of the average consumption per capita, in the year 2030, it is expected to attain 147 million tonnes [22].

The high share of the synthetic fibers has a significant negative impact on the environment quality in terms of high water consumption, carbon dioxide footprint, pesticide consumption, micro plastic elimination increasing wastes in landfills, polluting the ocean and sea waters and disturbing the ecosystems [3, 5].

The global synthetic fibers market reached USD 77 million in 2022 and it is predicted to increase to USD 116 million by 2030 [27].

In the competition among the textile fibers, the synthetic fibers (polyester, rayon, spandex, acryl, microfibers) won the highest share as they are easier to be produced, production cost is smaller, their aspect perfectly imitates the natural fabrics, they are resistant to water and spots, the offer of clothes is of a large diversity and price enough low which led to the so called "fast fashion" agreed by consumers [4].

In 2022, the natural fibers market accounted for USD 4.9 million and it is expected to grow at USD 9.91 million CAGR of 7.3 % by 2032 [23].

According to the European Environment Agency, in 2020, the average annual textile consumption per person was 26 kg, of which 11 kg textiles are thrown [24].

The high consumption of synthetic textiles has increased wastes, diminished water resources and spread million tonnes of microplastics in the oceans, affecting human health, animals and ecosystems.

That is why the EU and not only proposed to diminish the quantity of synthetic wastes and according to the circular economy, the textile industry has to be more oriented to achieve products with a longer life cycle and which could be also recycled [19].

More than this, consumers have to adopt a new behaviour meaning to buy less clothes, but of higher quality, which means a new trend to "slow fashion" and also to purchase more sustainable clothes, made of natural fibers which are environmentally friendly, healthy for human body in any season, and also very resistant [20].

Silk and wool are the natural fibers of animal origin widely produced at the global level [2, 16].

Grace to its special features, silk is "the queen" of the natural fibers destined for high quality and luxury products (clothes and not only) of a large variety and multiple uses.

Silk special fineness, pleasant touch, unique shining and elegance determined the demand to grow continuously and production of fabrics and clothes as well [17].

The largest amount of silk is produced from silkworm cocoons, whose production is well carried out in more than 60 countries, being a field of agricultural activity with many economic, social and environment benefits for the rural population [11, 13].

The rearing of silkworms is a profitable business for small farmers, bringing them a decent profit and improving their living standard [8, 10].

Mulberry silk is the most produced and commercialized silk fiber [13, 15].

In 2022, silk market size was evaluated at USD 18.14 Billion and for 2030 it is provided to reach USD 30.29 Billion, which means a higher production and an intensified international commerce with raw silk, fabrics and clothes which have to better satisfy consumers' needs and increase profit of the businessmen dealing with silk industry [21].

Trade and especially its component export is very important to assure economic growth i any country [9].

In this context, the present study is focused on silk trade, analyzing its trends in the decade 2013-2022 for which the statistical data are available and comparing export, import and trade balance in two sub-periods: 2018-2022 versus 2013-2017 in order to identify the absolute and relative differences at the global, EU level and also in the main producing and trading countries: China and India in Asia and also in the EU in Italy, Romania, France, Germany and Spain.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study is a synthetic statistical overview based on the official data provided by International Sericicultural Commission, International Trade Centre, Silk Market Reports, European Parliament Reports, the recent literature including scientific papers published in well known research journals, handbooks on textile fibers etc.

At the beginning of this study, it is presented the dynamics of raw silk production at the world level and also in the main producing countries: China, India, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

Then, in the largest part of the study, it is approached the silk trade at the international level pointing out export, import and trade balance.

More detailed results regard silk trade of China and India, as the most representative silk producers and traders in Asia, and also in the EU: Italy, Romania, France, Germany and Spain.

The methodological aspects are referring to:

-the analysis in the period 2013-2022, and also in two sub-periods 2013-2017 and 2018-2022;

-fixed basis and structural indices were determined to interpret what happened between the level of the analyzed indicator at the end of the period compared to its level at the beginning of the interval;

-identifying the main trends using illustrative graphics which display regression equations and R square;

- the value of export, import and trade balance was highlighted both on the whole interval and also by the two sub-periods, and finally as average value;

- calculation of the absolute and relative differences between the sub-period 2018-2022 and the sub-period 2013-2017;

-the obtained results are synthetically presented in tables accompanied by corresponding comments.

The conclusions summarize the results and the authors' vision concerning the evolution of silk market.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Global raw silk production

Before analyzing raw silk trade, it is compulsory to start with the analysis of production at the world level in the main producing countries.

In the analyzed interval, global silk production has registered a decline from 160 thousand MT (metric tonnes) in 2013 to 91 thousand MT in 2022, meaning a reduction by 43.2% (Fig. 1).

Figure 1 has a wave shape reflecting an increase from the year 2013 to the peak level of 202 thousand MT silk production recorded in the year 2015, but then, the curve declines year by year to the minimum of 86 thousand MT in the year 2021 and in the final year 2022, it is noticed a slight upward trend to 91 thousand MT.

Summing the production obtained in every year In the whole decade, it resulted an amount of 1,448,143 MT of raw silk, which means an annually average of 144,814.3 MT.

The R square value 0.82 shows that the variation of silk production at the global level was determined in the largest proportion by the time changes across the selected interval for this analysis, which is a continuation of the previous studies focused on silk production and trade.

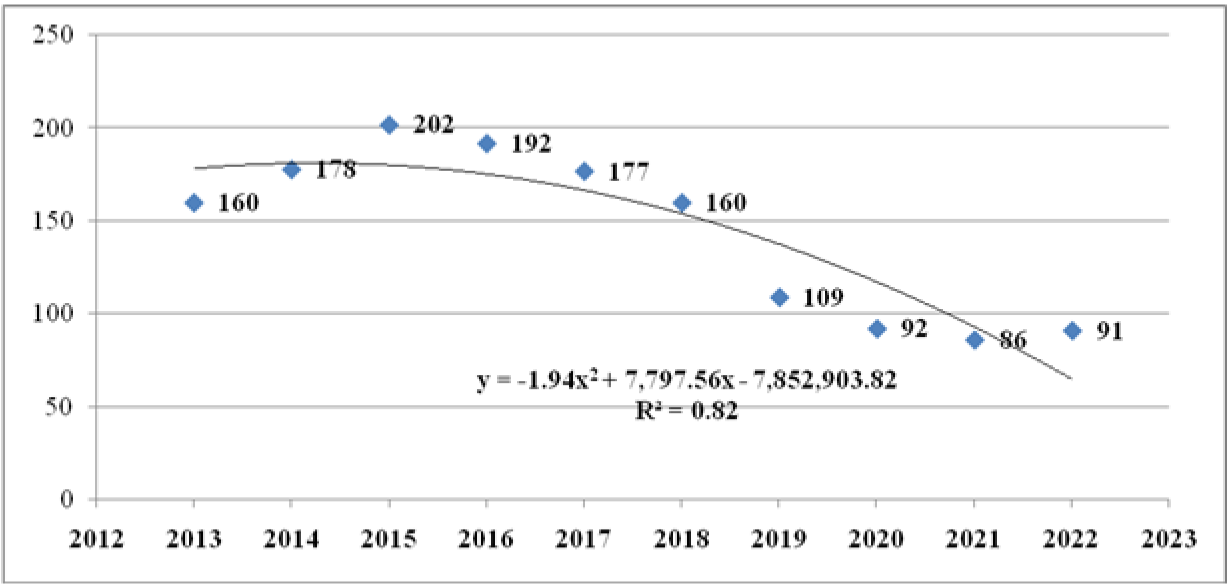

Fig. 1. Global raw silk production, 2013-2022 (Thousand Metric Tons)
Source: Own design based on the data from ISC, 2024 [6].

In the sub-period 2018-2022, at the global level, the raw silk production was by -40.9% smaller than in the sub-period 2013-2017 (Table 1).

Table 1. Global raw silk production in the interval 2013-2022 by sub-period (Metric tonnes)

Period	Specification	Production (MT)	Average annual production (MT)
2013-2017	Total	909.886	181,977.2
2018-2022	Total	538,257	107,651.4
2013-20122	Total	1,448,143	144,814.3
2018-2022 vs. 2013-2017	Absolute difference (MT)	-317,629	-44,325.8
	Relative difference (%)	-40.9	-40.9

Source: Own calculation based on the data from International Sericicultural Commission, 2020 and 2024 [6].

The level of raw silk production is sustained by the contribution of different countries, but the main contributors are China, India, Uzbekistan and Vietnam, which accounts for about 98% of the world production.

Raw mulberry silk has many destinations being utilized, first of all, for being transformed in various types of clothes like: blouses, shirts, suits, formal dresses, ties, scarves, collars, gloves, jackets, pijamas, linjerie, sundresses, kimonos. A part of comforters and sleeping bags as well as other fabric materials such as: plain silk, deluxe, satin, chiffon, chinnons, crepe, broacades, dupions could be made of mulberry silk [25].

China registered a deep decrease of the raw silk production from 130,000 MT in 2013 to 50,000 MT in 2022, meaning - 61.545. In the whole interval, the country produced 1,084,659 MT. By sub-period, the highest decline was registered in 2018-2022, being by 407,341 MT and respectively by 54% smaller than in the sub-period 2013-2017. In China, silk worms rearing contributed to the production of the mulberry silk which has the highest share among the raw silk sorts.

From antiquity, the Silk Road and Then the New silk road have sustained the China's economy. However, silk road stopped since 2015, as China's agriculture has developed faster other sub-sectors in this field.

But, China has remained the global leader in producing and exporting silk and silk products.

The other top producing countries *India, Uzbekistan and Vietnam* are in a completely different situation. In 2022, all together, produced an amount of 190,862 MT raw silk representing 56.3% of China's production.

In these three countries, raw silk production increased in the last decade 2013-2022, so that in the whole interval, India achieved 322,326 MT, Uzbekistan 15,684 MT and Vietnam 6,966, all together meaning 344,976 MT, representing 31.8% of China total production accounting for 1,094,659 MT.

In the sub-period 2018-2022, *India* carried out a surplus of 30,346 MT raw silk versus 2013-2017, meaning +20.7%.

India comes on the 2nd position after China as one of the most important of silk producer and exported in the world.

The well know Indian silk "sarees" are famous traditional, elegant and colourful clothes for women who wear them in special occasions.

But, India is well known for its silk garments, made-ups, fabrics, yarns, carpets, shawls, scarves, cushion covers and accessories [25].

Uzbekistan achieved in the same interval a surplus of 4,212 MT raw silk, meaning +73.4% compared to the sub-period 2013-2017.

Sericiculture is an important branch of agriculture in this country which desires to develop new strategies in the silkworm rearing and silk industry and using foreign experts' experience to improve cluster system [18].

Uzbekistan produce various silk products such as: fabrics, clothes, hats, home decorations, and carpets [26].

Vietnam produced an additional amount of raw silk in the sub-period 2018-2022 of 2,190 MT, meaning +91.7% versus 2013-2017.

Even though the difference is still high between India, Uzbekistan and Vietnam, on one side, and China, on the other side, the competition in producing raw silk has become stronger and stronger (Table 2).

Table 2. Raw silk production in the top producing countries China, India, Uzbekistan and Vietnam, 2013-2022 and by sub-period (MT)

Country	Period	Specification	Production (MT)	Average annual production (MT)
China	2013-2017	Total	746,000	149,200
	2018-2022	Total	338,659	67,731.8
	2013-2022	Total	1,084,659	108,465.9
	2018-2022 vs 2013-2017	Absolute difference (MT)	-407,341	-81,468.2
		Relative difference (%)	-54.7	-54.7
India	2013-2017	Total	145,990	29,198
	2018-2022	Total	176,336	35,267.2
	2013-2022	Total	322,326	32,232.6
	2018-2022 vs 2013-2017	Absolute difference (MT)	+30,346	+6,069.2
		Relative difference (%)	+20.7	+20.7
Uzbekistan	2013-2017	Total	5,736	1,147.2
	2018-2022	Total	9,948	1,989.6
	2013-2022	Total	15,684	1,568.4
	2018-2022 vs 2013-2017	Absolute difference (MT)	+4,212	+842.4
		Relative difference (%)	+73.4	+73.4
Vietnam	2013-2017	Total	2,388	477.6
	2018-2022	Total	4,578	915.6
	2013-2022	Total	6,966	696.6
	2018-2022 vs 2013-2017	Absolute difference (MT)	+2,190	+438
		Relative difference (%)	+91.7	+91.7

Source: Own calculation based on the data from International Sericicultural Commission, 2020 and 2024 [6].

In the year 2023, a kilogram of mulberry raw silk is sold at the average price of USD 62.5 in China and at USD 54.18 in India.

Global raw silk trade

Despite that silk represents a very small fraction of the world textile fiber market, accounting for less than 0.2%, the silk and the goods made of silk are highly traded.

The high demand from the textile, cosmetics and medicinal and pharmaceutical industries are stimulating silk market growth.

Having in mind the production decline, we are expecting that raw silk trade to decrease, a fact which is confirmed by the statistical data.

Despite that both export and import value decreased, the positive aspect is that export value exceeds the import value, so that the silk trade has a positive trade balance at the global level in the analyzed interval 2013-2022.

The raw silk export value, cumulated on the ten analyzed years, accounted for USD 21.47 Billion, meaning USD 2.15 Billion per year (Table 3, Fig.2).

Table 3. Global raw silk export, import and trade balance, 2013-2022 and by sub-period (USD Billion)

Period	Specification	Export value	Import value	Trade balance
2013-2017	Total	12.64	10.15	+2.49
	Average	2.53	2.03	+0.50
2018-2022	Total	8.83	7.28	+1.55
	Average	1.77	1.46	+0.31
2013-2022	Total	21.47	17.43	+4.04
	Average	2.15	1.74	+0.41
2018-2022 vs. 2013-2017	Absolute difference	-3.81	-2.87	-0.94
	Relative difference (%)	69.85	71.72	62.24

Source: Own calculation based on the data from ITC, 2024 [7].

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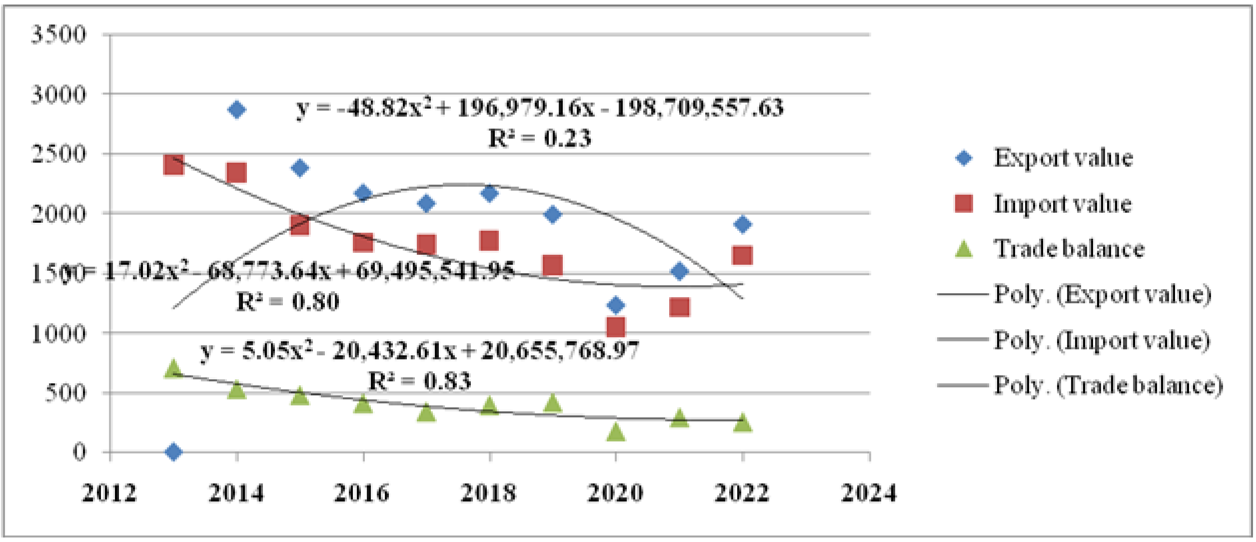

Fig. 2. Global raw silk export, import and trade balance, 2013-2022 (USD Billion)
Source: Own design based on the data from ITC, 2024 [7]..

The import value summed on the same interval reached USD 17.43 Billion, and making the difference between export and import, it resulted USD 4.04 Billion trade balance and the situation by sub-period is shown in Table 3 and Fig. 2.

Raw Silk trade value in China

China is the world leader in silk production and export. In the period 2013-2022, the cumulated value of silk exported by China accounted for USD 10.93 Billion and the cumulated value of silk import was USD 8.46 Billion, leading to a positive trade balance of USD 2.47 Billion.

In the sub-period 2013-2017, the export value was USD 6.75 Billion, while in the sub-period 2018-2022, it declined to USD 4.18 Billion.

The import value was smaller in the period 2013-2017, accounting for USD 4.02 Billion, compared to USD 4.44 Billion in the last sub-period 2018-2022 (Table 4).

Table 4. China's raw silk trade, 2013-2022 and by sub-period (USD Billion)

Period	Specification	Export value	Import value	Trade balance
2013-2017	Total	6.75	4.02	+2.73
	Average	1.35	0.90	+0.54
2018-2022	Total	4.18	4.44	-0.26
	Average	0.84	0.89	-0.05
2013-2022	Total	10.93	8.46	+2.47
	Average	1.09	0.85	+0.25
2018-2022 vs. 2013-2017	Absolute difference	-2.57	0.42	+2.47
	Relative difference (%)	-38.08	+10.44	-27.64

Source: Own calculation based on the data from ITC, 2024 [7].

Raw Silk trade value in India

India comes in force after China as a country with a high potential in producing raw silk. Its export doubled its figure in the last five years compared to the previous five years.

In 2022, its export value was USD 0.86 Billion compared to USD 0.15 Billion in 2013. In the period 2018-2022, its silk export valued USD 4.1 Billion compared to USD 2.06 Billion in the period 2013-2017.

The import value was USD 1.39 Billion in the first sub-period, but smaller, USD 0.5 Billion in the last sub-period.

In the whole decade, India's silk export accounted for USD 6.16 Billion compared to the import value which was USD 2.44 Billion, resulting a positive balance of USD 3,72 Billion (Table 5).

Table 5. India's raw silk trade, 2013-2022 and by sub-period (USD Billion)

Period	Specification	Export value	Import value	Trade balance
2013-2017	Total	2.06	1.38	+0.68
	Average	0.41	0.27	+0.14
2018-2022	Total	4.10	1.06	+3.04
	Average	0.41	0.11	+0.60
2013-2022	Total	6.16	2.44	+3.72
	Average	0.62	0.24	+0.38
2018-2022 vs. 2013-2017	Absolute difference	+2.04	-0.32	+1.72
	Relative difference (%)	+99.02	-25.19	+347.5

Source: Own calculation based on the data from ITC, 2024 [7].

In the coming years, China will become teh main supplier of garments enlarging the world market, while India will become the main source for apparel market.

Raw silk trade in the European Union

The EU is an important producer of silk textiles, fabrics and apparel, but especially elegant and luxury clothes produced by fashion industry. For realizing these products, it needs raw silk which is usually imported from the Asian countries.

In the whole analyzed period, the silk export value of the EU accounted for USD 5.59 Billion, while the import value was USD 7.03 Billion, leading to -USD 1.44 Billion trade balance.

By sub-period, it was noticed a reduction in the 2nd period 2018-2022, both in case of export and import (Table 6).

Table 6. The EU silk trade, 2013-2022 and by sub-period (USD Billion)

Period	Specification	Export value	Import value	Trade balance
2013-2017	Total	3.34	4.10	-0.76
	Average	0.67	0.83	-0.15
2018-2022	Total	2.25	2.93	-0.68
	Average	0.45	0.59	-0.14
2013-2022	Total	5.59	7.03	-1.44
	Average	0.56	0.70	-0.14
2018-2022 vs. 2013-2017	Absolute difference	-1.09	-1.17	-0.08
	Relative difference (%)	-36.64	-38.54	-10.53

Source: Own calculation based on the data from ITC, 2024 [7].

Italy's silk trade

Italy is the major importer of raw silk which is process in high value silk products which are successfully exported.

Its imports of Chinese blouses accounts for about 80% of China's exports and also silk garments are required by Italy from the same Asian supplier.

Italy is recognized as the most important player in buying silk to transform it in special luxury clothes (dresses, coats, suits, ties, scarves, collars, gloves etc) using a high developed processing industry finishing, dyeing and printing silk fabrics.

In the whole period 2013-2022, Italy imported raw silk in value of USD 3.36 Billion and its export value was USD 2.81 Billion, leading to a negative trade balance of USD 0.55 Billion.

In the sub period 2018-2022, both the export and import had smaller values than in the sub-period 2013-2017 (Table 7).

In 2022, Italy came on the 2nd position after China based on the silk export value.

The share of the top silk exporting countries in the total silk export value is: China 49%, Italy 12%, Vietnam 7.5%, India 5%, Uzbekistan 4.9%.

Italy imports raw silk especially from China, Romania, France, Germany, Brazil and Slovenia.

The main beneficiaries of Italian silk products are: France, Romania, Tunisia, USA and Germany.

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Table 7. Italy's silk trade, 2013-2022 and by sub-period (USD Billion)

Period	Specification	Export value	Import value	Trade balance
2013-2017	Total	1.60	1.89	-0.29
	Average	0.32	0.38	-0.06
2018-2022	Total	1.21	1.47	-0.26
	Average	0.24	0.29	-0.05
2013-2022	Total	2.81	3.36	-0.55
	Average	0.28	0.34	-0.06
2018-2022 vs. 2013-2017	Absolute difference	-0.39	-0.42	-0.03
	Relative difference (%)	-24.38	-22.2	-10.35

Source: Own calculation based on the data from ITC, 2024 [7].

Romania's silk trade

Romania comes on the 2nd position in the EU for its import of raw silk after Italy, being followed by France, Germany and Spain. But, it is also an exporting country at the world level, but its export value is lower than the import value [14].

With a long tradition in silkworm rearing, Romania process mulberry cocoons into silk fibers for producing handicrafts, silk blouses, house decorations, brooches. Its exported products made of silk are especially raw silk, silk yarn and woven fabrics. However, analyzing by sub-period, it may notice that in the first sub-period 2013-2017, Romania's export value as well as the import value had higher levels than in the sub-period 2018-2022 (Table 8).

Table 8. Romania's silk export, import and trade balance, 2013-2022 and by sub-period (USD Billion)

Period	Specification	Export value	Import value	Trade balance
2013-2017	Total	0.46	0.51	-0.05
	Average	0.09	0.10	-0.01
2018-2022	Total	0.39	0.46	-0.07
	Average	0.08	0.09	-0.01
2013-2022	Total	0.85	0.97	-0.12
	Average	0.08	0.10	-0.02
2018-2022 vs. 2013-2017	Absolute difference	-0.07	-0.05	-0.02
	Relative difference (%)	-15.22	-9.81	+40.0

Source: Own calculation based on the data from ITC, 2024 [7].

France 's silk trade

France has a long tradition in processing silk in fabrics and nowadays especially in garments. curtains, bed spreads, wall coverings and upholstery are very much required for internal house or hotels decorations. France is both an important importer of raw silk and also an exporting country of ready-made goods, but import value is higher than export, which results in a negative trade balance.

In the sub-period 2013-2017, France recorded a higher export and import value and the trade balance was smaller than in the second sub-period 2018-2022 (Table 9).

Table 9. Romania's silk export, import and trade balance, 2013-2022 and by sub-period (USD Billion)

Period	Specification	Export value	Import value	Trade balance
2013-2017	Total	0.41	0.59	-0.18
	Average	0.08	0.12	-0.04
2018-2022	Total	0.24	0.5	-0.26
	Average	0.05	0.1	-0.05
2013-2022	Total	0.65	1.09	-0.44
	Average	0.06	0.11	-0.04
2018-2022 vs. 2013-2017	Absolute difference	-0.17	-0.09	-0.08
	Relative difference (%)	-41.47	-0.16	+44.4

Source: Own calculation based on the data from ITC, 2024 [7].

Germany's silk trade

One of the largest European market of textiles and garments is in Germany. Also, a large range of silk clothes, accessories and materials for interior decorations are imported by Germany from its main supplier, China.

This country could be cited as among the top producer of silk products in the EU like Italy, Romania and France, even though its silk export and import values have smaller levels than in the other countries.

If in the sub-period 2013-2017, the export value was about 2.5 times higher than in the sub-period 2018-2022, in case of import, its value was doubled in the period 2028-2022 versus 2013-2017 (Table 10).

Table 10. Germany's silk export, import and trade balance, 2013-2022 and by sub-period (USD Billion)

Period	Specification	Export value	Import value	Trade balance
2013-2017	Total	0.33	0.40	-0.07
	Average	0.06	0.08	-0.02
2018-2022	Total	0.16	0.82	-0.66
	Average	0.03	0.16	-0.13
2013-2022	Total	0.49	1.22	-0.73
	Average	0.05	0.12	-0.07
2018-2022 vs. 2013-2017	Absolute difference	-0.17	0.42	+0.59
	Relative difference (%)	-51.52	+105.0	+842.6

Source: Own calculation based on the data from ITC, 2024 [7].

Spain's silk trade

Spain was many years known as a producer of silk and also as an exporter, silk stock exchange being in Valencia.

At present, it has a balanced export and import, the differences being not significant. However, by sub-period, the export value was by USD 0.08 Billion higher in the period 2013-2017 than in the period 2018-2022.

Regarding the import value, it was also a little higher, the difference between the two sub-periods being only USD 0.04 Billion.

For this reason, for the whole period the trade balance is zero, the export value being similar with the import value (Table 11).

Table 11. Spain's silk export, import and trade balance, 2013-2022 and by sub-period (USD Billion)

Period	Specification	Export value	Import value	Trade balance
2013-2017	Total	0.12	0.09	+0.03
	Average	0.02	0.02	0
2018-2022	Total	0.03	0.05	-0.02
	Average	0.006	0.01	-0.004
2013-2022	Total	0.15	0.14	+0.01
	Average	0.01	0.01	0
2018-2022 vs. 2013-2017	Absolute difference	-0.09	-0.04	-0.05
	Relative difference (%)	-75.00	-44.45	-43.35

Source: Own calculation based on the data from ITC, 2024 [7].

But, along the analyzed period, a positive trade balance was achieved in 2015, 2016 and on the whole sub-period 2013-2017, while in the other years of the first sub-period and in the whole 2nd sub-period, the trade balance was negative (Table 11).

CONCLUSIONS

Natural fibers are more and more requested as the future will belong to healthy products especially in clothes and fashion industry, but also in textile and cosmetics industry and medical sector.

However the development of silk market will impose a higher production cost for assuring new technologies to produce long life cycle and recycling goods which have also to be environmentally friendly for sustaining the development of the silk sector.

Also, a high silk demand will be justified not only by the new orientation in silk production and processing, but also by rising consumers' purchasing power.

China and India will remain the major growth drivers of the world silk market. China will continue to be specialized in silk blouses and clothes and India in garments.

In the EU, Italy will preserve its status of global leader in silk imports being followed by other important players in the EU silk market like Romania, France, Germany and Spain.

Silk worm rearing has to be stimulated to increase production and also new technologies have to be used for processing and transforming silk in high value products destine to better satisfy consumers.

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