

The Textile Industry in Greece

Voice-over 1:

Naoussa, in northwestern Greece, used to be nicknamed the Manchester of the Balkans, as a textile-producing centre. Since the Iron Curtain came down, though, operations have shifted ominously to Bulgaria. There were eleven factories here. Eight have closed. This threw four thousand people out of work, in a town of twenty-five thousand. Maria worked in textiles for thirty-one years. Now she's jobless. Not yet fifty, pension rights are a distant prospect.

Voice-over 2:

I started in 1975. There were between five hundred and six hundred employees. Naoussa was the biggest industrial city with its textile companies. Now it's gone from number-one city with all its factories to the poorest: a city out of work. There were blankets and other textile products; Naoussa was known for its industry, and now it's dead.

Voice-over 1:

Growing cotton needs lots of water. The Arapitsa River keeps the land of Naoussa fertile. That's one of the reasons the company Varvaressos is one of the few that haven't moved away. It has recently invested thirty million euros to produce cotton free of herbicides and pesticides, and it employs 230 people.

Voice-over 3:

We chose to stay in Naoussa because it has a long industrial tradition, for textiles especially. The inhabitants have an industrial mindset that goes back a hundred years. We rely on these people, who've always supported us. We had two factories, and we've built a third one to respond to the opportunities that a globalised market offers us.

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