

How Corona affected the clothing industry

a reportage

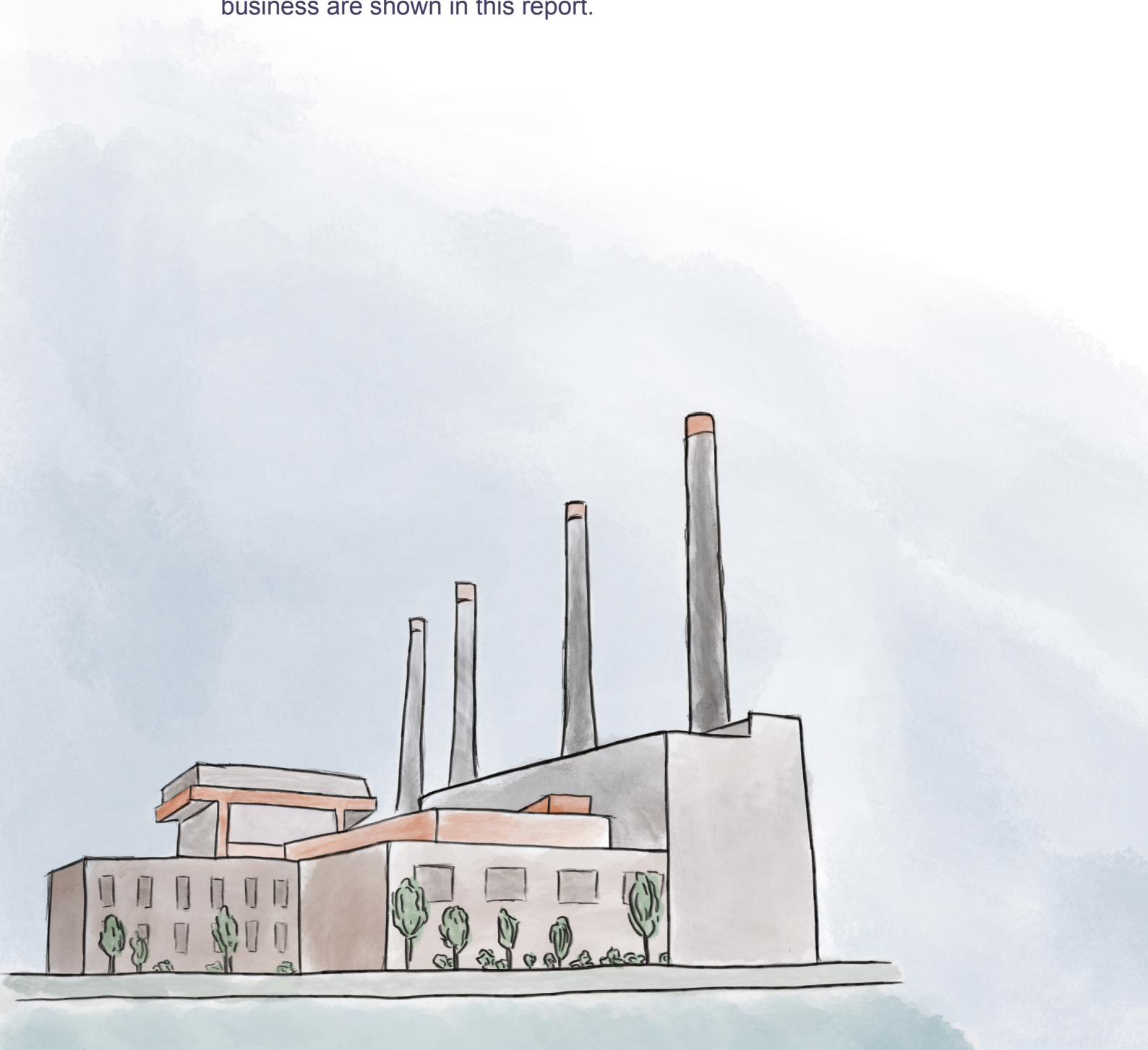


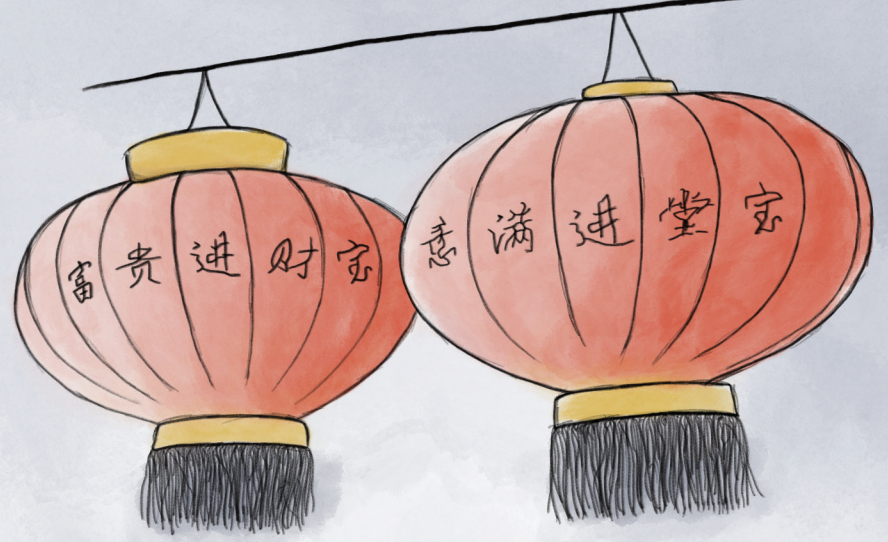
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IMPACT OF CORONA

What six months ago was considered impossible became reality for everyone in a very short time. A pandemic that affects the entire world.

There is almost no area of business that has not been affected by the Corona virus. Some were hit particularly hard, such as the clothing industry. How the last months were for the clothing industry and what consequences the virus has for this business are shown in this report.





CHINESE NEW YEAR

The Chinese New Year is the most important traditional holiday in China and usually takes 15 days. Almost all people in China have holidays on these days and use the time to visit their families - but not this year. On January 25, 2020 China registered about 2000 people who tested positive for the corona virus.

Then the Chinese government decided that the population must spend the holidays at home. However, by the end of the Chinese New Year, 8 February 2020, the number of people who tested positive was already 36,800, a serious number which led to the decision to close down large cities and to stop production in many places. As a result, factories closed their doors and an unaccustomed silence returned to China.



PANIC

For companies that had their products manufactured in China, this news was alarming. Normally, the Chinese New Year is already a challenge, as almost nothing is produced during this time, but this state of affairs was extended by the Corona crisis. So the fear came up also in the clothing industry that there might be delays in deliveries and that not everything would be in the shops on time.

The Chinese continued to work hard - but from home, with clear respect for distance and hygiene measures.

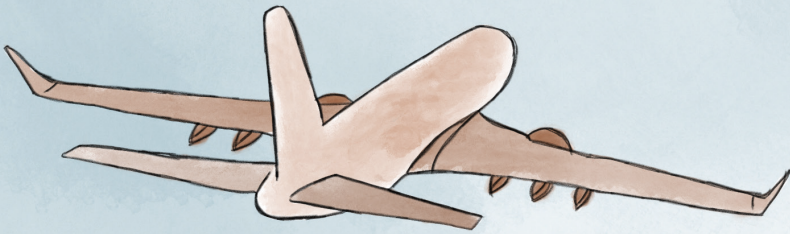


SILENCE

Meanwhile, the situation also became worse in Europe. On 25 February, the first person in Switzerland tested positive for corona positive. Just three days later, a banning of events with more than 1000 participants was imposed, followed by a lockdown in Switzerland on 16 March 2020.

All schools, shops and leisure activities had to close - a scenario that was hardly conceivable two months before. The following weeks were characterized by empty streets and silence.





FULL STORAGE

China continued production after a few weeks. Often with a lower capacity utilization, but they were fast and continued to supply the customers. For many clothing brands in Switzerland, the goods were storing up - clothes that were supposed to be distributed in the shops. However, as these were closed, all the boxes had to be stored somewhere until a reopening was in sight.

The lockdown in Switzerland has been extended for another 2 weeks. Then the government informed that only in a later step clothes shops may be opened again.





THE DECISION

Many brands had to decide how to proceed with the accumulated goods. Should the goods be brought to the shop as quickly as possible and then sold cheaply? Or store the clothes and sell them a year later?

Some brands decided on the second, sustainable option. However, there is a risk that in a year the clothes may no longer be in trend, people may prefer to buy in another store and, of course, there will be less work for all employees.

It was not an easy decision for companies who decided to do so. However, it is a sign of sustainability and a step against the consuming obsession that existed over Europe until the pandemic. The corona virus may therefore also be an opportunity for the environment. Now, however, we must wait and see how people react after the corona crisis.