

JUNIOR FASHION IN 2024-2025

Notes by the Office of Economic Studies at Confindustria Moda

The preliminary balance sheet for 2024

For the junior fashion industry (understood as fabric and knit clothing for children in the 0 to 14 age range, including intimate apparel and accessories), 2023 ended with growth of +0.7%. Conversely, according to the preliminary estimates carried out by the Office of Economic Studies at Confindustria Moda, in 2024 Italy was expected to close the year in negative territory. More specifically, sector turnover was estimated to fall by -4.4%, which would bring it to around 3.1 billion euros.

Similarly, the value of production (which, it should be remembered, attempts to estimate the value of Italian production activities net of the commercialization of imported products) was expected to show a negative variation, estimated to be around -4.8%.

In 2024 junior fashion turnover was estimated to have fallen by -4.4%

Table 1 – The Italian Junior fashion industry ⁽¹⁾ (2019-2024*)

(Millions of Euros at current value)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
Fatturato	3.100	2.643	3.051	3.184	3.207	3.067
Var. %		-14,7	15,5	4,3	0,7	-4,4
Valore della produzione	930	795	929	950	944	898
Var. %		-14,5	16,8	2,2	-0,6	-4,8
Esportazioni	1.275	1.100	1.305	1.465	1.532	1.521
Var. %		-13,7	18,6	12,2	4,6	-0,7
Importazioni	2.117	1.780	1.977	2.720	2.656	2.476
Var. %		-15,9	11,1	37,5	-2,4	-6,8
Saldo commerciale	-842	-679	-672	-1.255	-1.124	-955
Consumi finali	4.105	3.361	3.853	4.030	3.881	3.822
Var. %		-18,1	14,6	4,6	-3,7	-1,5
Indicatori Strutturali (%)						
Esportazioni/Fatturato	41,1	41,6	42,8	46,0	47,8	49,6

Fonte: Confindustria Moda su dati ISTAT, Sita Ricerca, Indagini interne

(1) Abbigliamento ragazzo/a in maglia e tessuto 0-14 anni, intimo ed accessori inclusi

(*) Stime

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Looking at foreign trade, the annual average of foreign sales of junior fashion was estimated to fall by -0.7%; the value of sector exports should, therefore, drop to 1.521 million euros, accounting for 49.6% of junior fashion turnover.

Exports were expected to close the year at -0.7%...

Similarly, with regard to imports, a decrease of -6.8% was predicted, for an overall value of little more than 2.4 billion euros.

...a drop of -6.8% was also predicted for imports

The expected dynamics of the trade flows incoming and outgoing from Italy would result in a deficit in the commercial sector balance sheet of just over -900 million.

According to the forecasts of the Office of Economic Studies at Confindustria Moda, national consumption (understood as family consumption, extra-family consumption and stocks) would end 2024 in negative territory, manifesting a drop of -1.5% compared to 2023. The gap compared to 2019 would be around -5.5%.

The national market was estimated to be down by -1.5%

With regard to foreign markets, it is possible to restrict the analysis to infant clothing alone (for which it is possible to isolate the pertinent customs data and, therefore, foreign trade flows on a country-by-country basis). According to data collected by ISTAT [Italian National Institute of Statistics] for the first 9 months of 2024, exports of infant fashion which, in the same period in 2023 recorded growth of +0.6%, were down by -4.4%, dropping to 117.2 million euros. The EU and non-EU areas showed divided sector behaviors: direct exports to the EU27 post-Brexit were down by -18.6% and accounted for 43.5% of the total sector exports, whilst those to the non-EU area were up by +10.4% and it turned out to be the biggest "purchaser", absorbing 56.5%.

In the first 9 months of 2024 infant fashion exports grew by +0.6%

Taking a more detailed look, from January to September 2024, the main destination markets for infant fashion presented contrasting trends. Spain, as already verified in recent years, was confirmed as the top outlet market for the sector despite registering a double-digit drop (-15.9%). Once again, there was a very favorable performance by the United States, a strategic market for infant fashion, which was up by +39.2%, thus becoming the second destination market for the sector. It was followed by France, which was down by -14.6%. The United Arab Emirates presented a considerably positive trend, jumping to fourth position with 7.6% of infant fashion exports. This dynamic was in contrast to that of the United Kingdom and Germany (other strategic sector markets), which were both down by respectively -6.0% and -18.0%.

Hong Kong registered a very lively performance, acquiring a quota of 4.1% of exports, even overtaking China which, after the considerable increase recorded in the same period the previous year, showed a loss of -35.1%. Portugal was also down again (-22.8%), while Russia recorded growth of +4.1%. The negative dynamic of Switzerland - the traditional logistical-



distribution hub for fashion – should be highlighted as it continued to show a decrease. In the reference period it was down -67.3% compared to the first nine months of 2023, dropping to 2.9 million euros and slipping down to twelfth position.

Referring again to infant clothing alone, foreign imports to Italy which, from January to September 2023 had registered a fall of -4.5%, continued to present a negative variation in the first nine months of 2024 and were down by -5.4% in this period. As has been noted, imports for this segment were particularly concentrated, given that the top six suppliers accounted for 78.7% of the total. Spain witnessed a positive variation of +4.3% and was confirmed in first place with an incidence of 26.6% on the total imported by the sector. However, China, once again in second position, recorded a fall of -5.6%, with 16.8% of the total. Imports from Bangladesh were down by -8.3%, registering a quota of 11.9%. There were also negative dynamics for supplies from the Netherlands and France which were respectively down by -1.6% and -13.3%. India was in sixth place in the table of suppliers with a rise of +0.6%, reaching 15.7 million euros. Imports from Poland also grew a lot, albeit with a modest quota of 1.3%.

From January to September 2024 infant fashion imports fell by -5.4%; Spain was confirmed in first place

The main results on the Italian market for Fall/Winter 2023-2024

From a demographic viewpoint, on 1st January 2024 the Italian junior clothing market consisted of 7,184,837 individuals aged between 0 and 14 years, 51.5% of which were male. From January to September 2024, based on the (provisional) ISTAT figures available today, the number of births registered was 273,177, a decrease of 6,827 newborns compared to the first nine months of 2023 (-2.4%). Similar to the 0–14-year age range, male newborns represented 51.4% of the total.

According to ISTAT, in the first nine months of 2024, just over 273,000 babies were born in Italy, a drop of -2.4% compared to the same period in 2023

With these premises in mind and focusing on junior fashion consumption in Italy, the latest data regarding winter sell-out refer to the Fall/Winter 2023-24 season. Based on the figures collected by Sita Ricerca on behalf of Confindustria Moda, all Textiles-Clothing products experienced a fall in sell-out both in terms of current spending (-3.8%), as well as volume (-4.7%).

In this context, junior fashion recorded a lower result compared to the average for Textiles-Clothing: in fact, it showed a negative variation of -5.6% in value, and of -5.2% in volume. From a temporal viewpoint, the season began with the September-October bimester that registered a double-figure fall of -11.6% in value and of -10.5% in volume. The season's other two bimesters experienced negative dynamics which were more contained: November-December lost -3.3% in value and -3.0% in volume; similarly, in January-February there were drops of -3.1% in value and of -2.6% in volume.

In F/W 2023-24 the sell-out of junior fashion recorded a negative variation of -5.6% in value and -5.2% in volume



The season studied presented a quite uniform situation for the various segments. The “girl” segment (which covers 47.9% of the sector sell-out) was down by -5.0%, while the “boy” segment experienced a negative variation of -5.9%. Conversely, “newborns” recorded the biggest fall (-6.6%), accounting for 13.5% of the market. At the same time, in terms of volume, “boys” lost -5.2% compared to the previous F/W season, and “girls” -4.8%; finally, “newborns” dropped by -6.9%.

Moving on to an analysis of the distribution panorama, the leadership of chains was once again confirmed for junior fashion with a 48.3% market quota. In the period monitored, sell-out intermediated by this format was down by -6.2%; this performance was mainly affected by the dynamics of the “newborn” segment (-7.7%), followed by “boys” and “girls”, which both fell by around -5.9%.

Large-scale distribution lost -4.2% but still accounted for 29.9% of the junior market; large department stores alone intermediated 15.5% of the total and experienced a decrease of -4.3% in the F/W 2023-24 season. The results were also negative for Food (-11.5%) and Large Surface areas which contained the fall to -1.8%, thus performing better than the sector average. With regard to the segments, Large-scale distribution registered a negative dynamic especially for the “newborn” and “boys” segments which decreased by respectively -6.9% and -6.6%; whereas “girls” was down by -0.9%.

In the season studied independent retail accounted for 12.2% of consumption and was down by -1.1%, thus recording a better dynamic than the sector average. The negative trend was due to the “girls” segment, which was down by -5.6%; conversely, the other two “boys” and “newborn” segments showed increases (the former grew by +0.8% and the latter by +10.1%), although they were unable to improve the channel’s performance.

In the F/W 2023-24 season, mobile stores and outlets/stockists showed opposing dynamics: while mobile stores were down by -11.4%, outlets/stockists were the only format to show growth (+6.0%). The share of both formats was modest however, with a quota of 1.9% for the former and of 0.7% for the latter.

Following the double-digit growth of +10.4% recorded in the F/W 2023-24 season, e-commerce was down by -9.8%, causing the market quota to fall to 6.3%. For this format, focusing on the trends for the individual segments, a dynamic of -13.1% was registered for the “girls” segment, followed by “boys” (-6.5%) and “newborns” (-4.5%).

In F/W 2023-24 chains accounted for just over 48% of the junior market in Italy, despite sell-out registering a drop of -6.2%

All the other distribution channels also recorded falls, except for outlets/stockists which displayed growth

In the season analyzed, sell-out intermediated by digital channels was also down

Figure 1 –Junior Fashion: consumption and distribution on the Italian market (*)
(Fall/Winter 2023-2024 Season)

Fig. 1.1 – Sell-out trend:
Analysis by stylistic area

Fig. 1.2 – Sell-out structure
Analysis by stylistic area



(% var. of consumption in value in each sector)

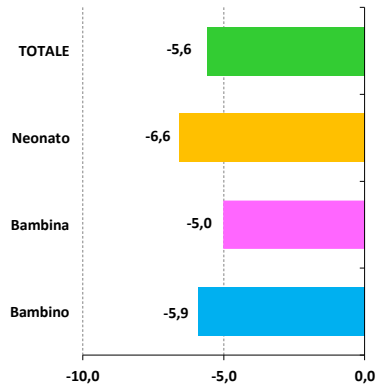
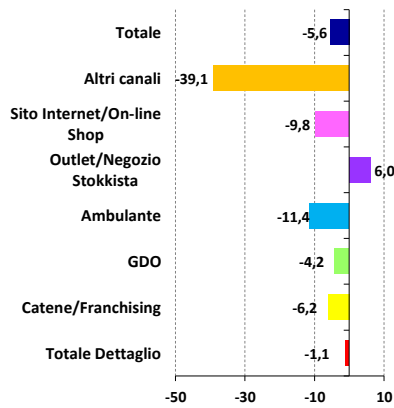


Fig. 1.3 – Sell-out trend: analysis by distribution channel

(tendential % variation of consumption in value in each channel)



Source: Confindustria Moda on Sita Ricerca data

(*) the data refer only to the purchases of Italian families, excluding stocks and extra-family consumption

Beyond the results for the F/W season, the sell-out of junior fashion in Italy for the first ten months of 2024 was down by -1.6%. The gap was bigger (-9.3%) when compared to the corresponding value for 2019. From January to October 2024 the sell-out of the “boys” and “girls” sectors was down by respectively -1.6% and -1.2% compared to the same period in 2023, while “newborns” recorded a greater loss (-2.7%).

(% on overall consumption in value)

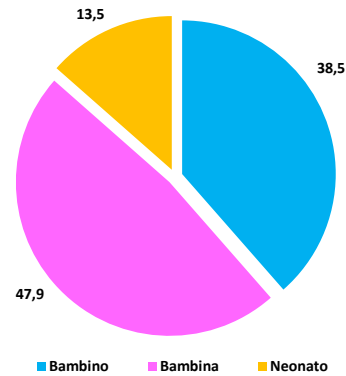
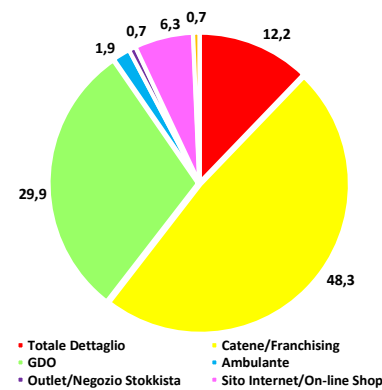


Fig. 1.4 – The distribution structure: analysis by channel

(% on overall consumption in value)



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