**Spanish Fashion**

Fashion has always been important to the Spanish but until recently they haven’t had a home-grown fashion industry and have imported most of their clothing. All that is now changing, however. The Spanish government is busily promoting the clothing and fashion sectors of the textile industry. Their ultimate goal is to make their fashion products so well regarded on the international market, because of their quality, that this success will spread to other product areas and export markets.

Spain is starting from scratch when you compare it with fashionable competitors like Italy and France. But there is activity everywhere. The government has set up organisations to support the fashion industry, organising projects such as combined efforts between fashion designers and people in business. The country holds fashion fairs twice a year, the Cibeles in Madrid, and the Gaudi in Barcelona. There is also a children’s fair in Valencia which further demonstrates Spaniards’ creative progress to international fashion buyers.

The government is trying to create an environment where fashion and textile designers have an opportunity to prosper. Talented companies and designers can succeed in Spain but although there is much creativity, there is a lack of managerial experience. Some people still do not believe enough is being done, and point to Italy where they believe there are far better chances for designers to succeed. One highly regarded Spanish designer is now manufacturing her entire line of clothing in partnership with an Italian company. The problem, as some see it, is that the amount of money being provided by the Spanish government is still not enough.

Nevertheless, much progress is being made. While the exclusive salons are in the larger cities, studios and boutiques are opening throughout Spain and many Spaniards are already involved in exporting their clothes. Through their own efforts, designers are beginning to open shops in France, Italy and Japan. But most fashion houses are quite small, and they are finding it difficult to create the industrial and financial links needed for growth and expansion. Many designer products are hard to make, expensive to market and sometimes difficult to sell. But they create a better image for the industry, and you end up with higher quality products in general. One international critic thinks that the relative youth of the Spanish designers could create fresh and lively fashions, well able to compete with the industries in France and Italy.

1. **The Spanish government’s ultimate aim is that**

A all Spanish products will be considered to be of high quality.

B there will be an increase in imported clothing.

C there will be an increase in clothing sales.

D the textile industry will improve its manufacturing ability.

1. **The French and Italians are**

A more up to date than the Spanish.

B setting up support organisations.

C ahead in terms of fashion design.

D starting businesses everywhere.

1. T**o show their advances in fashion, the Spanish are**

A holding regular fashion exhibitions and shows.

B sending designers to work abroad.

C sending buyers abroad to buy designer clothes.

D teaching business people how to design.

1. **The Spanish fashion industry is lacking in**

A creative talent. C business expertise.

B exciting designs. D government support.

1. **Some people insist that Italy**

A offers more opportunities for designers.

B is the world’s most successful fashion centre.

C cooperate more with Spanish designers.

D needs to improve its fashion image.

1. **Some fashion designers have managed to**

A find work in Spanish boutiques.

B sell their work in Spanish shops.

C find financial support.

D establish shops in other countries.

1. **The majority of fashion houses are at a disadvantage because**

A they tend to be very small businesses.

B their clothes are too expensive.

C it is a very competitive field.

D there are too few industries wanting to expand.

1. **One fashion commentator thinks that**

A the Spanish fashion industry needs a better image.

B Spain should never compete with the French.

C the young Spanish designers are very talented.

D the end products are of high quality.