

ESITH
SPECIAL REPORT
thebusiness|year

thebusinessyear

In partnership with:



2 Mohamed Lahlou, President of the Board, Higher School of Textile and Clothing Industries (ESITH)
• Interview

4 The fabric that holds Morocco together • Focus: ESITH

6 The employability of graduates: A priority at ESITH • Forum



Moulay Hafid El Alamy, the parent minister of ESITH, speaks at the graduation ceremony of ESITH class 2018



Mohamed Lahlou, President of the Board at ESITH (second from left), at the graduation ceremony for ESITH class of 2018 with Moulay Hafid El Alamy, Moroccan Minister of Industry, Trade and Green and Digital Economy (second from right).

Regional Director
Carlos Martinez
Country Manager
Myriem Dahlab

Chief Executive Officer
Ayşe Hazır Valentin

Editor-in-Chief
Peter Howson

Senior Editor
Terry Whitlam

Writer/Editor
Evan Pfeiffer

Associate Editor
Liz Colavita

Chief Sub-Editor
Shireen Nisha

Sub-Editors
Kabir Ahmad, Alia Kiran

Editorial Coordinator
Belemir Ece Çolak

Web Editor
Aidan McMahon

Web Assistant & Social Media Coordinator
Ahsen Durukan

Web Developer
Volkan Görmüş

Assistant Web Developer
Zişan Yalçinkaya

Analytics Assistant
Sena Özcanlı

Art Director
Emily Zier-Ünlü

Junior Art Director
Emre Boduç

Senior Motion Graphic Designer
Serkan Yıldırım

Motion Graphic Designers
Yiğit Yeşillik, Ahmet Emir Korur

Senior Graphic Designers
Bilge Saka, Şule Kocakavak

HR Manager
Merve Yıldırım

PR Manager
Şölen Cenberoğlu

Operations Manager
Öznur Yıldız

Operations Assistant
Can Ünşan

Office Coordinator
Gamze Zorlu

Finance Director
Serpil Yaltalier

Accounting Manager
Quenie Ann Gonzales

Office & Finance Assistant
Lovely Mae Jesalva

Read more at thebusinessyear.com/morocco

The Business Year is published by The Business Year International, Trident Chambers, P.O. Box 146, Road Town, Tortola, British Virgin Islands. Printed by Uniprint Basım San. Tic. A.Ş., Ömerli Mah. Hadımköy - İstanbul Cad. No:159 Hadımköy Arnavutköy 34555 İstanbul/Türkiye. The Business Year is a registered trademark of The Business Year International. Copyright The Business Year International Inc. 2020. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrievable system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopied, recorded, or otherwise without prior permission of The Business Year International Inc. The Business Year International Inc. has made every effort to ensure that the content of this publication is accurate at the time of printing. The Business Year International Inc. makes no warranty, representation, or undertaking, whether expressed or implied, nor does it assume any legal liability, direct or indirect, or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information contained in this publication. The paper used in the production of this publication comes from well-managed sources.

INTERVIEW



Mohamed Lahlou
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD,
HIGHER SCHOOL OF TEXTILE
AND CLOTHING INDUSTRIES
(ESITH)

A STITCH *in time*

ESITH has been crucial in helping the local textiles sector grow more competitive and better face international competition.

ESITH was established as a result of a pioneering PPP that has been replicated at other schools. What have been the main milestones of ESITH in the last 24 years?

The textile and clothing sector around the 1980s represented a real social and economic force and was represented by a dynamic association, AMITH, which sought to create a school of textile engineers to strengthen the supervision of companies and their competitive capacities to better face international competition. From the beginning, AMITH defended that the mission of the school must be completely different from other conventional engineering schools. The school is organized around three cycles of engineering training, specialized master's, and professional bachelor's. This has allowed the development of new sectors, which has resulted in a real diversification of training and, by the same, a real opening of all industrial and service sectors. 2007 represented an extremely significant milestone due to the creation of an R&D department composed of two laboratories: research laboratory on textile materials (REMTEX) and center of excellence in logistics (CELOG). Since its creation, this department has established solid relationships with various Moroccan, European, and Canadian research centers resulting in more than a dozen applied research projects, the publication of more than 100 scientific articles, and 24 patents at the national and international levels. In parallel to research and development, ESITH paid particular attention to the establishment and development of the Laboratory of Expertise and Control (LEC), which represents a profit center serving businesses in all industrial sectors supporting their quality approach. Throughout this period, ESITH had to carry out important operations; one example is the creation of the higher school of creation and fashion (Casa Moda Academy) and the training and support of the human resources of international companies during their establishment in Morocco.

The outbreak of COVID-19 has disrupted many economies and sectors worldwide. How do you foresee the Moroccan textile sector being affected in the medium term?

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted the textile and clothing industry in terms of orders, both nationally and internationally. Indeed, the sector suddenly found itself in a confused and almost chaotic situation, though most industrialists within the framework of their AMITH association sought to carry out serious initiatives. Very quickly, the production of masks and gowns for both the general public and medical staff opened up entirely new and potentially important niches. The mobilization of industrialists was impressive in terms of the reconversion of industrial potential to manufacture new products, producing, after four weeks, 3 million masks per day and now more than 10 million per day. This exemplary mobilization shows that, as in the past, the textile and clothing sector displays resilience and has been able to adapt, finding ways and means to continue to be present in a competitive exporting sector. Given the geopolitical position of Morocco, we remain optimistic about the future of the textile and clothing sector. The mobilization of industrialists and the appropriate support from public authorities could generate real momentum by the long-awaited deployment of the upstream sector and technical textiles, which represent a major source of development.

How did ESITH adapt its operations to the current situation, and what is your main focus during this crisis?

Faced with the exceptional situation and the general lockdown decided by the government, ESITH had to face two major concerns: the continuity of student training and supporting industrialists in their retraining to manufacture masks and gowns. In terms of initial training, our response was extremely reactive. We set up two crisis units, one to manage the operation of human resources,

BIO

Mohamed Lahlou is the President of the Board at ESITH. Previously, he was CEO at MANATEX and also held a senior position at WAFABANK. He is honorary president of the Moroccan Association of Textile and Clothing Industries and the National Council for Foreign Trade, a former vice president of CGEM and ASMEX, and founder and honorary president of the Moroccan Technical Textiles Cluster.

administration, and school infrastructure, and another entirely dedicated to guaranteeing educational continuity and overseeing distance learning. This upheaval in the pedagogical approach is so significant that it will open up new hybrid training methods post COVID-19. In terms of support for companies, ESITH has been extremely responsive. LEC, its laboratory, actively participated in developing the standards and technical specifications of face masks with the Ministry of Industry (IMANOR). At the same time, ESITH, thanks to a team of experienced engineers and technicians, developed and shared innovative methods to optimize the production of masks. In addition, we have launched three free online training cycles to improve the management skills of companies and hospitals to better cope with this crisis.

The sector is headed toward several areas such as Industry 4.0, waste reduction, and digitalization/automation. How well prepared is the textile industry in Morocco for this shift?

The textile and clothing sector, made up of more than 1,000 companies, comprises 90% SMEs and SMIs, and clothing companies represent around 80% of the total and upstream textiles 20%. Upstream companies are more capital intensive, use fewer people per million dirhams invested, and are fairly well organized. Those in the clothing industry are much more disparate, due to the fact that some work 100% in subcontracting, others in co-contracting, others in a hybrid subcontracting and co-contracting, and others in finished product. Each of these groups of companies represents approximately a certain type of organization and management mode that predisposes if they are receptive to the fields of Industry 4.0, waste reduction, digitalization, and automation. Waste reduction should normally be of interest to all companies, because it is part of the obligation to reduce the manufacturing cost. Ecological specifications are also increasingly used by prime contractors, and national regulations also represent great means of awareness and pressure for reducing waste. In terms of

finishing, we are witnessing an acceleration in the use of digital printing, which is more flexible and more ecological. For Industry 4.0, we find multiple applications and varying degrees at the level of large textile and clothing companies that have the financial and human resources to implement production processes of intelligent technologies, monitoring software, or collecting information for better production management. The digitalization of machines to varying degrees is becoming increasingly conventional, and most equipment suppliers have integrated it into the designs of their machines.

Since ESITH was founded, how has the importance of the textile industry evolved from the government's point of view?

The textiles and clothing sector has always represented a particular importance in terms of employment and exports, with more than 180,000 jobs and USD3.8 billion in exports while covering a good part of the needs of the national consumption that is about USD5 billion. It is true that Morocco has opted for an open liberal economy, and most of its free trade agreements are loss-making for various reasons. Healthy competition is welcome because it forces manufacturers to watch over their competitiveness and the quality of their products; however, when this competition becomes unfair, a reaction to the revision of the conditions of the agreements is needed to find the bases of a win-win agreement. Four ministries (industry, finance, higher education and vocational training) are part of the supervisory board of ESITH, and since its creation ESITH has always received the support it needs for the development of the sector. The textile industry is fairly cyclical for various reasons, and AMITH has always negotiated appropriate solutions to support and revive the sector. The COVID-19 situation will weaken hundreds of businesses, and the government is gradually putting in place support measures to get through this serious crisis without much loss. The government with AMITH must find the panoply of measures to allow, beyond the crisis, companies to move upmarket and in added value with a stronger integration of the sector. Likewise, mobilization

is necessary to discover new markets and attract FDI and national investors.

Looking to the future, and once the current crisis is behind us, what are your main goals for ESITH?

Since its creation 25 years ago, ESITH has always tried to anticipate the needs of the textile and clothing sector. Although our school is focused on textiles and clothing, it will continue to provide general and multi-disciplinary training. Our 2021-2025 strategy, which is currently being finalized, is based on our four pillars: initial training, business service, research and development, and our LEC expertise and control laboratory. Our ambition is to integrate the digitalization of processes at all levels and for the expert teaching staff, support staff, and students absorb our leitmotifs "learning to learn" and "learning to innovate and share." We will ensure that our expertise and know-how remain at the cutting edge of progress by enriching our network of partnerships on a national and international scale, taking care to implement the disciplines of the future and acquiring equipment and tools that will allow the school to remain a locomotive for the textile, clothing, and other industrial and service sectors. The transformation of the industrial sectors requires more seasoned, agile, curious, and reactive skills. ESITH will mobilize to meet its qualitative needs and contribute quantitatively from 1,200 students in initial training to 1,800 and 200 masters in continuing education to 800 in 2025. The direction of studies and research and development must be in line with the support of the school authorities to ensure the skills expected from our future graduates. The industrial fabric of the country, made up of more than 95% of SMEs and SMIs, awaits serious support for its survival and future development. All the resources of the school will be made available to meet these challenges. These commitments may seem too ambitious but they are essential and achievable with the support of the ministries concerned. ✖

FOCUS
ESITH

THE FABRIC THAT HOLDS MOROCCO TOGETHER

ESITH not only trains capable textile engineers ready for the competitive global textile trade, but also works together with manufacturers to respond to industry crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

MOROCCO'S TEXTILE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY has long been a pillar of the country's economy; according to the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and the Digital Economy, the sector accounts for 7% all industrial added value and 5% of all industrial production, employing around 165,000 people or 27% of all industrial employment. And, like any other industry, it relies on a slew of experts to keep the industry on its toes and ready for competition. The Higher School of Textile and Clothing Industries (ESITH) is a learning institution dedicated to producing expert textile engineers for a stronger Moroccan textile industry in the face of increasing international competition.

ESITH was established as a public-private partnership in 1996 through a collaboration between the government and l'Association Marocaine des Industries du Textile et de l'Habillement (AMITH). The school is dedicated to the formation of textile engineers and professionals able to navigate Morocco's burgeoning textile industry through a future of intense international competition. With Europe established as its main trading partner, Morocco has long exported its textiles to the continent. However, as the bloc increased the number of free trade agreements with other countries specializing in the textile industry (notably Egypt and Turkey), Moroccan textile leaders, unions, and the government together realized the importance of preparing industry leaders, managers, and workers who could ensure best practices would be used in Moroccan factories, keeping Morocco ahead of its competition.

To ensure it not only produces capable engineers but also innovation in the industry, ESITH offers three cycles of engineering training, specialized master's, and professional bachelor's. This, according to its President of the Board Mohamed Lahlou has resulted in a "real diversification of training and ... a real opening of all industrial and service sectors." To further students' ideas, its R&D department, created in 2007, features two labs: a research lab specializing in textile materials (known as REMTEX) and a center specializing in logistics (known as CELOG). With the labs has come the arrival of both national and international partnerships with various Moroccan, European, and Canadian research centers and 24

patents registered nationally and internationally. The institution's international ties have only grown with its International Conference on Intelligent Textile and Mass Customization (ITMC) made in tandem with ENSAIT France. The biannual fair now has three new partners—Ghent University, Shinshu University, and the CTT Group—and will be held in Canada in 2021 and Japan in 2023.

That is not to say the institution's reach has been limited to countries other than Morocco. ESITH has always found partners in local companies, especially through students, who spend 1,400 days of their education gaining on-site work experience. ESITH's strong ties to its community made itself even more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic: the institution immediately organized its resources to support industrialists in their retraining to manufacture masks and gowns. In conjunction with the Ministry of Industry (IMANOR), its LEC laboratory actively participated in developing mask standards and technical specifications. As mask-making was new to most companies, ESITH created educational courses explaining the technical characteristics of the materials and methods of manufacturing barrier masks according to IMANOR standards, making it available to all local manufacturers. While developing and sharing innovative methods to optimize the production of masks, ESITH, through its R&D department, created new tissue functionalization processes to meet the stringent requirements of barrier masks. This was in addition to free online training cycles to equip companies and hospitals with better crisis management skills.

As Morocco moves past crisis mode, its textile industry will need to adapt yet again to the world's changing demands and innovations, especially as Industry 4.0 threatens to change the entire face of the industry through increasing digitalization and automation. But with ESITH by its side, Morocco's textile industry has nothing to fear from the future. Indeed, with optimism, Lahlou told TBY, "The mobilization of industrialists and the appropriate support from public authorities could generate real momentum by the long-awaited deployment of the upstream sector and technical textiles, which represent a major source of development." ✕

AN INTERNATIONAL ANGLE

ESITH was established in 1996 to support the local textiles sector. This is a snapshot of its research achievements.



Three training cycles:

◆ ENGINEER ◆ SPECIALIZED MASTER'S ◆ PROFESSIONAL LICENSE

13 courses in initial training and **6** in master's education cycle

1,200 students in training at school during 2019/2020

1,400 days of on-site work experience each year

10,000 laboratory tests each year for the benefit of customers of the Expertise and Control Laboratory

40 scientific publications in 2019 in indexed journals

4 patents filed in 2019

22 patents registered nationally and internationally since 2013

THE EMPLOYABILITY OF GRADUATES: A PRIORITY AT ESITH

The employability strategy at ESITH is based on two pillars: the quality of training and openness to companies. Students and graduates receive support during their academic careers and after graduation through the services of the ESITH Career Center. The ESITH Job Fair attracts around 50 companies from the industry and service sectors each year. ESITH's 5,200 graduates in the job market currently hold positions of responsibility in industries known as the global trades of Morocco, in particular textiles, automobile, aeronautics, the food industry, and pharmaceuticals.



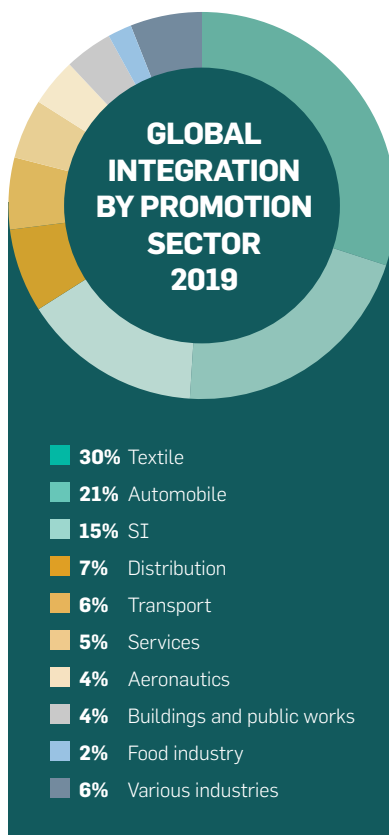
Saad Jdira
MANAGING DIRECTOR,
PANG TAI GROUP - CHINA



Nous El Houda Ahdida
PROGRAM MANAGER,
HEXCEL CORPORATION -
CASABLANCA

I GRADUATED FROM ESITH with a professional bachelor's in supply chain management in 2010 (with a top-in-class) and a state engineer diploma, option product manager in 2013. After visiting China in 2013, I started learning Chinese as a business trainer. I started my entrepreneurial adventure with Moroccan clients, before expanding my network and working with several nationalities (US, Canadian, Saudi, Mexican, Tunisian, and Filipino). An opportunity arose with the inauguration of a micro-factory in Tianjin, China, with my North American partners. Thanks to my mastery of English, Spanish, and Chinese, in addition to my training as an ESITH engineer, I quickly launched into other industries, especially heavy industry and natural gas, before being ultimately appointed general manager of Pang Tai Group in Tianjin. My main mission is to support my clients in order to change from one commercial activity to another industrial one. For my associative commitment, I am ambassador of the Moroccan Association of Business Leaders in China.

AS A PROGRAM MANAGER, I open lines between customers and businesses to get projects done successfully. With over 10 years in both industrial and service fields, I have experience in operational excellence, organization capabilities building, partnership development, and corporate vision implementation through strategic plan deployment. I had the opportunity to manage projects in Carrefour France, Safran Group, Attijariwafa Bank, and Hexcel Corporate, where I am currently a member of the board. I know that self-development is a constant requirement for my career. After three fantastic years at ESITH, I acquired my engineering degree in international logistics. Then, I headed to France, where I spent a year at École Centrale Paris to get my specialized master of industrial management, project, and supply chain. Most recently, I completed my global executive MBA from Ponts Business School and am currently preparing for my PMP certification. Raised by parents who are in the legal and teaching fields, it was the perfect combination to have an education full of values such as integrity, team spirit, and continuing to learn and grow. These are values that I will maintain in my future achievements.





Marouane El Boukili
SUPPLY CHAIN DIRECTOR,
PRELCO GROUP - CANADA

AFTER TECHNICAL TRAINING in electronic engineering at university, my interest turned to the field of supply chain/logistics, hence my choice for the master's degree in e-logistics at ESITH. From there, I had the opportunity to meet experts in the field, in particular professors from ESITH and Laval University, who informed me of the possibility of continuing my studies at Laval University in which I obtained a master's degree in industrial engineering. I then entered the Canadian labor market as supply coordinator at Vallée Inc, manufacturer of forklifts, and was hired by the Prelco Group, a North American leader in the manufacturing of value-added glass, where I currently hold the position of director of supply chain. This position involves several strategic challenges, in particular the establishment and maintenance of procedures aimed at controlling costs in an agile manner, while maintaining visibility in a context of globalization. These challenges become a daily pleasure when we work for a company with values corresponding to ours, putting the health and safety of its employees, the environment, operational excellence, and customer service at the heart of its interest.



Sabrina Battal
PHD, QHSE MANAGER,
MASCIR - RABAT

I STARTED MY UNIVERSITY COURSE with a professional bachelor's in production management at ESITH, an experience that was as enriching from a personal point of view as it was in terms of teaching and learning. We benefited from training according to a competence-based approach, and it was thanks to this course that I was able to obtain a master's degree in Quality, Hygiene, Safety, Environment (QHSE) from Hassan II University. I chose to push my studies in parallel with my professional path, an effort that was crowned by obtaining a doctorate focused on integrated quality, professional and psychosocial risks from the same university. My professional career started just after obtaining my master's degree by joining the NGO GERES as quality manager and distribution monitoring for its Moroccan branch. Following this, I was able to integrate, as a quality, safety, and environment engineer, the Moroccan Foundation for Advanced Science, Innovation and Research (MAScIR), a foundation where the quality of deliverables and the preservation of the health of employees and stakeholders are at the center of all thinking. Today, I have evolved into the position of manager of the quality, safety, and environment department.



Anas Moundib
COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR,
SOFT GROUP & PRESIDENT,
AIESITH

I EARNED A STATE ENGINEER DEGREE IN THE TEXTILES AND CLOTHING INDUSTRY in 2002 and since then have been active in the Moroccan textile industry by occupying various management positions (technical or commercial) in leading companies on the national market. The quality of the training instilled in us during our studies at ESITH allowed me to climb the ladder quickly and become, like all the engineering graduates of our school, a sure bet for the Moroccan textile clothing sector. The resilience of the Moroccan clothing industry owes a lot to the commitment, ingenuity, and creativity of the engineers from ESITH. It is in this spirit that we are trying to capitalize on these achievements at the level of the association of engineers of the Higher School of the Textile and Clothing Industries (AIESITH), for which I assumed the presidency in 2018. Since then, we have succeeded thanks to the engagement of a team willing to revitalize this structure, which has become an essential platform for sharing, exchanging, and mutual assistance between the 1,700 engineers of our school.

HERE TO SUPPORT YOU AS YOU DEVELOP

esith
Constructeur de compétences

Accredited training & certification programs

- Specialized master's
- Skills certificates
- Specialized bachelor's in production management

Assistance and accompaniment

- Industrial management, purchasing and sourcing, QHSE
- Lean management, maintenance, HR, marketing
- Accounting and finance, supply chain and logistics
- IT, management and personal development

Laboratory-research and development

- Laboratory controls
- Expertise and audit
- Waste recovery
- Clothing branding
- Technical assistance and accreditation

ESITH apprenticeship center

- Consultation
- Assistance for creating apprenticeship centers
- Technical and pedagogical assistance



Route El Jadida km 8 BP: 7731 Oulfa
Laymoune Casablanca – Maroc



T. +212 5 22 23 41 24 / 52
F. +212 5 22 23 15 85



esith@esith.ac.ma
www.esith.ac.ma