

Mountains of Clothes with No Way Out: Caritas' Challenge Amid the Fast Fashion Tsunami

More than 70,000 kilos of used clothing arrive at Caritas warehouses every day, where each garment is analyzed and meticulously sorted. Part of it is distributed directly to families in vulnerable situations; another portion, after a rigorous process of selection and recycling, is sent to the second-hand shops of the Moda re- project. However, the avalanche of garments is so massive that many end up piling up with no clear destination.

In the Madrid warehouse alone, more than a million kilos of clothing are waiting to be classified. This bottleneck is not only due to volume but also to the poor quality of many garments, a result of the consumer model driven by fast fashion.

"People are donating more clothes than ever, but of lower quality, which makes reuse impossible," Caritas explains.

Economic Challenges

The problem is not just logistical — it's also economic. Collecting, sorting, and managing one kilo of clothing costs an average of 46 cents, while its sale generates barely 27 cents of revenue. Added to this is the decline in exports: whereas in the past up to 40 trailers of used clothes were shipped weekly to Africa, now only 12 leave, due to market closures and a global glut of textile waste.

Moda re-

Caritas has been working for over 30 years in the charitable management of clothing, but it was in 2017 that Moda re- was born — a circular and social economy project aimed at creating employment opportunities and giving second chances both to garments and to people.

Today, it has collected over 47 million kilos of clothing through 8,900 collection points across Spain. It is also a source of employment, having created 1,600 jobs, more than half of them for people at risk of social exclusion.

The initiative also runs 172 shops in 100 cities, and its environmental impact is significant: more than 400 million cubic meters of water saved thanks to textile reuse and recycling.

Growing Challenges

Caritas warehouses are filled with metal cages, each containing up to 350 kilos of used clothing. In the coming days, with the change of season, donations are expected to rise even further, worsening the saturation.

The Moda re- project not only seeks to relieve this overload but also to raise awareness about the need for more responsible textile consumption. Choosing quality garments, reusing,

repairing, and buying from second-hand stores is not just an act of solidarity — it's a commitment to the planet.

Caritas issues an urgent appeal to citizens:

donate clothing, but thoughtfully; avoid impulsive purchases; and consider the full life cycle of each garment. Only then will it be possible to reverse the situation of these “mountains of clothes” that, for now, have nowhere to go.

Translated from the [original article](#) in Spanish in Antena 3.