

different aspects, especially achieving climate neutrality and the transition to a circular economy. The textile industry is among those industries that will be impacted by European legislation and regulation.

In March 2022, the EU-Commission presented to the European Parliament the “EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles”. Some of the regulation the EU-Commission proposed are:

- Eco Design Regulation (ESPR)
- Product Environmental Footprint (PEF)
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)
- Due Diligence
- Digital Product Passport

Also, textile producers that are exporting to the EU will have to meet these far-reaching requirements. The individual challenge is to actually measure all sorts of production processes. The challenge will be to develop standards that make results comparable.

In expectations of this legislation leading brands and retailers have started numerous initiatives to identify ways and means to reduce their own carbon footprint as well as of their suppliers. IKEA, the large Swedish furniture and home textile producer for example is requesting its suppliers to end onsite energy production with fossil fuels by 2025. By 2030 all IKEA's suppliers' energy need to come from renewable resources.

As for circularity, many presentations delivered in Davos at the ITMF Annual Conference 2022 focused on recycling and circularity. In the last 10 years many start-ups have worked on ideas how to make more and better use of textile waste. The ideas vary from reusing garments as much as possible in second-hand shops, to reducing waste in the first place and to recycling as much as possible. More and more business models are based on these principles. For example, at the ITMF 2022 Davos five companies delivered presentations about mechanical and

chemical recycling of both pre- and post-consumer textile waste. Instead of incinerating or landfilling textile waste it would be ideal to recycle it. The global share of textile-to-textile recycling is only around 1%, leaving an enormous potential for textile-to-textile recycling. The Swedish company Renewcell for example has opened at the end of 2022 the production of its large-scale chemical recycling facility. In a first phase Renewcell will produce 60'000 tons of pulp made of cotton-rich textiles like denim.

There is no single solution to reduce a company's carbon footprint. Each company must analyse its situation and draw conclusions. What is important is to start this process. But before companies can act, they must know where to start from. This requires reliable data. Therefore, it is important that companies digitize their production processes as much as possible. It is also important that they cooperate with partners and that they invest in inhouse and, whenever necessary, also external expertise.

The pandemic had revealed that many brands/retailers are making use of unsustainable purchasing practices. Many brands/retailers cancelled or delayed orders, sometimes even orders that were already produced and shipped. In 2022, such purchasing practices have not disappeared. Whenever there is a sudden economic slowdown, many brands/retailers are often putting their burden on their suppliers by cancelling or delaying orders, by unilaterally reducing unit prices, delaying payments, etc. As a result, several Asian textile association organized in the STAR-network and with the support of GIZ and the International Apparel Federation (IAF) put down in a white paper what acceptable and non-acceptable sustainable purchasing practices are from suppliers' perspective. In 2023, these findings will be discussed with buyers that have to realize that their behavior is an enormous burden on

social compliance.

The global textile industry has undergone a real rollercoaster since the start of the pandemic in 2020. The industry has learned that the supply chains have become more fragile and that they must become more resilient. I wish all companies in the long textile supply chains the necessary resilience and innovation capability to turn challenges into opportunities.



**Mr. Alex Zucchi**  
**President of ACIMIT -**  
**Association of Italian**  
**Textile Machinery**  
**Manufacturers**

I wish you a Happy New Year! The last year was still conditioned by negative factors, i.e. Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, making difficult our day-by-day business. The considerable increase in the cost of raw materials and shipping, the scarcity of electronic components, etc. are still being felt. Despite this situation even in 2022 the upward trend of Italian textile machinery industry went on. Indeed, according to preliminary data in 2022, the value of Italian machinery production exceeded 2.5 billion euros, up about 10% on the previous

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year. Exports account for more than 85 percent of this value.

2023 will still be a year of deep uncertainty for the global textile industry. However I remain hopeful and optimistic. Over the years we have faced financial and economic crises but, over time, we have always recovered and resumed our activities with more enthusiasm. It will be so on this occasion as well.

Strategies to meet the market's continuing challenges pivot on digitization and sustainability. Italian textile machinery manufacturers have long been committed to offering sustainable solutions to their customers. Their commitment is well testified by the ACIMIT Sustainable Technologies project, including more than 40 members companies. The saving of raw materials, water

and chemicals in the textile sector is becoming more and more urgent and Italian technologies are at the forefront to enable customers to optimize their production processes in term of economical, environmental and social sustainability.

The pandemic has accelerated the transformation in the textile supply chain too. The digitisation of the business operations is already underway. Italian manufacturers have realised the urgency of enacting a digital transformation of their business. That's why ACIMIT has realized the DIGITAL READY project for the digital certification of Italian textile machines, that adopt a common set of data, in order to more easily integrate with the operating systems of their client businesses (ERP, MES, CRM, etc.). We are sure

that in the future the demand for more interconnected machines will grow. This development will enable textile companies to face the future crises with more suitable technologies.

Let me close by reminding that in 2023 ITMA will take place from 8 to 14 June in Milan. ITMA 2023 will be the largest ITMA ever, with about 1500 companies all over the world and 380 Italian exhibitors. ITMA will be a unique and not-to-be-missed opportunity to show the whole world the uniqueness of our technologies and the Italian creativity.

Looking forward to welcoming all JSN International readers in June 2023 for ITMA Milan, I renew my personal wishes and those of the Italian textile machinery manufacturers for a healthy and profitable 2023.

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