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ACIMIT focuses on innovation, sustainability, and global expansion in textile machinery



Giorgio Calculi, Director of ACIMIT and Salvatore Parano, Trade Commissioner at the Italian Trade Agency

In an interview with TEXtalks, **Giorgio Calculi, Director of ACIMIT (Association of Italian Textile Machinery Manufacturers)**, shares valuable insights into the Italian textile machinery sector's strategy for innovation, sustainability, and strengthening global partnerships, particularly in emerging markets like Pakistan. ACIMIT is a private, non-profit organization that has been promoting the Italian textile machinery industry globally for 80 years. It supports

manufacturers through trade promotion, international exhibitions, and strategic initiatives aimed at growing exports and showcasing Italian innovation.

TEXtalks: How many Italian companies are currently exhibiting at IGATEX this year?

Giorgio Calculi: There are many Italian companies exhibiting at IGATEX 2025. While I don't have the final count, I estimate there are more than 50 companies

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present. Out of these, 11 are exhibiting through official Italian Pavilions, which are organized and supported by the Italian Trade Agency (ITA). This strong presence highlights the importance Italy places on the South Asian market, especially Pakistan.

TEXtalks: What advancements do you see shaping the future of textile machinery over the next 5 to 10 years?

Giorgio Calculi: The future of textile machinery will be shaped by Industry 4.0 technologies. Italian companies are leading in the integration of IoT, artificial intelligence, and automation to enhance machine performance, energy efficiency, and production control. Alongside technology, sustainability is becoming a primary focus. New machinery is being designed to significantly reduce water and energy consumption and to support eco-friendly materials and sustainable production.

TEXtalks: How do you envision maintaining Italy's leadership in this evolving global market?

Giorgio Calculi: Global competition is becoming increasingly price-focused, but Italian companies can maintain their leadership through innovation. The key to staying ahead lies in continuously upgrading and enhancing the technological value of our machines. Rather than competing on price, our manufacturers compete by offering cutting-edge, high-performance, and energy-efficient solutions.

TEXtalks: How are current trade tariffs and global duties affecting Italian machinery exports?

Giorgio Calculi: Right now, the U.S. policies on tariffs are not fully defined, so we will need a few

more months to understand their full impact. However, I believe the consequences for Italian machinery manufacturers will be more indirect. Tariffs on textile exporters in countries like the U.S. and Italy may reduce their willingness to invest in new technologies, potentially slowing down machinery sales in those regions.

TEXtalks: How important are international partnerships for ACIMIT, and how do you plan to strengthen Italy's presence in emerging markets?

Giorgio Calculi: Creating global business opportunities is one of ACIMIT's core missions. We participate in major international exhibitions like IGATEX to connect with potential buyers and partners. Additionally, we invite international entrepreneurs and decision-makers to Italy to meet our member companies and explore their solutions firsthand. These interactions are crucial for building trust, expanding our footprint, and promoting the strengths of Italian manufacturing.

TEXtalks: What are some of the biggest challenges and opportunities facing the Italian textile machinery industry today?

Giorgio Calculi: One of the major challenges our companies face is the industry-wide shift toward sustainability and circularity. Italian manufacturers must rise to this challenge by developing solutions that enable more responsible, environmentally friendly textile production. At the same time, this is a major opportunity to lead the transformation toward a greener industry. Our companies are well-equipped to play a central role in this transition by offering machinery that supports eco-friendly processes and materials. ■ ■

The Italian Trade Agency's 99 years of promoting Italian excellence to the world with devotion



Salvatore Parano, Italian Trade Agency, discusses initiatives in promoting trade and strengthening bilateral relations

For nearly a century, the Italian Trade Agency (ITA) has been at the forefront of championing Italy's

industrial and technological excellence across international markets. Combining a rich heritage with

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cutting-edge strategies, ITA empowers Italian businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, to navigate complex global trade environments and seize new opportunities. Through targeted trade exhibitions, high-level international missions, and comprehensive support services, ITA fosters meaningful connections between Italian innovators and global buyers. At IGATEX 2025, the agency reaffirmed its commitment to sustainable growth and bilateral collaboration. In an interview with TEXtalks, **Salvatore Parano, Trade Commissioner at the Italian Trade Agency**, shared valuable insights into how Italy continues to lead through innovation, partnerships, and adaptability in a rapidly evolving world.

TEXtalks: How is the Italian Trade Agency advancing the global presence of Italian technology?

Salvatore Parano: Our approach focuses on creating meaningful global connections that highlight Italy's cutting-edge technological expertise, particularly in the textile machinery sector. At events like IGATEX, we not only showcase innovative Italian solutions but also provide a platform for direct engagement between Italian manufacturers and international buyers.

Beyond exhibitions, we organize exclusive business missions that bring leading entrepreneurs from key markets such as Pakistan, Japan, and Brazil to Italy. This hands-on experience allows them to build strong partnerships and gain first-hand insight into the latest Italian technologies. Additionally, we conduct targeted seminars and workshops designed to deepen the understanding of Italy's technological strengths, enabling international clients to fully capitalize on these innovations for improved efficiency and competitiveness.

TEXtalks: How does the Italian Trade Agency collaborate with Pakistani partners to promote sustainability?

Salvatore Parano: Italy's journey through the energy crisis of the 1970s fundamentally shaped our approach to energy efficiency. When energy prices surged by 300%, Italian industries adapted by innovating energy-saving technologies and sustainable production methods. This experience uniquely positions Italy to assist Pakistan, where rising energy costs are now a critical concern for businesses. We support Italian companies in identifying and seizing sustainable business opportunities in Pakistan's growing market. Energy efficiency is no longer just an environmental priority; it is crucial for the competitiveness and long-term viability of businesses. By fostering technology

exchange and collaboration, we help Pakistani industries reduce costs, minimize environmental impact, and enhance their global competitiveness.

TEXtalks: What are the main challenges Italian textile companies face when expanding internationally?

Salvatore Parano: A key challenge lies in the size of Italian companies. In the textile machinery sector alone, Italy has around 300 specialized companies covering every niche of textile and garment production. While their expertise is world-class, many are small to medium-sized firms, which limits their ability to operate directly in foreign markets. Unlike large multinationals, these companies depend heavily on reliable local partners to establish a market presence. Finding the right distributors or agents is essential for entering new markets and building sustainable business relationships. At ITA, we actively assist Italian firms in identifying trustworthy local partners who can champion their products and support long-term growth.

TEXtalks: How would you characterize the current trade relations between Italy and Pakistan, especially in textiles?

Salvatore Parano: The trade relationship between Italy and Pakistan is strong and longstanding, but there is ample room for growth. Last year, bilateral trade reached around €1.5 billion, with Pakistan maintaining a substantial trade surplus, exporting approximately €1.1 billion worth of goods to Italy, while Italy exported €400 million in technology and machinery. This dynamic underscores Pakistan's role as a major producer of finished textile products and Italy's position as a leading supplier of advanced machinery and technology. Italian innovations help enhance Pakistan's textile industry competitiveness, while Italy remains a critical platform for Pakistani producers to present their products at major events like Lineapelle and EICMA.

TEXtalks: What has been the response from visitors and participants at IGATEX this year?

Salvatore Parano: The initial feedback from IGATEX has been very encouraging. Although it is too early to judge the full impact since closing deals often takes time, we have observed an optimistic mood among Italian exhibitors. There is a tangible sense that the market is recovering, and Italian companies are increasingly confident about Pakistan's textile sector prospects. This optimism, paired with the quality of connections made at IGATEX, bodes well for stronger bilateral trade and deeper collaboration soon. ■ ■