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Italian Textile Machinery Orders Decline in Q1 2026 as Global Uncertainty Persists

The Italian textile machinery sector faced a challenging start to 2026, with order intake declining by 5% in the first quarter compared to the same period in 2025, according to the latest data released by ACIMIT, the Association of Italian Textile Machinery Manufacturers.

The contraction was primarily driven by weaker performance in international markets, where orders fell by 7%, while the domestic market showed a notable rebound, recording a 21% increase over the same period.

Quarter-on-Quarter Recovery Signals Emerging

Despite the year-on-year decline, the sector demonstrated signs of short-term recovery when compared to the previous quarter. Order intake in Q1 2026 increased by 18% compared to October–December 2025, indicating a gradual stabilization following a difficult end to last year.

The overall orders index for the January–March period stood at 37.3 points (base year 2021=100). Within this, the domestic index reached 35.3 points, while foreign markets slightly outperformed at 37.6 points, highlighting continued reliance on export-driven demand.

Read more: [Italian Textile Machinery Heads to Geneva for Index 2026](#)

Order Backlog Provides Temporary Stability

Industry data also shows that the current order backlog is sufficient to guarantee production activity for approximately 4.5 months, offering a limited buffer against ongoing market volatility.

From a segment perspective, weaving and other manufacturing sectors showed relatively stronger dynamics, suggesting uneven recovery patterns across different machinery categories.

factory_machine_monochrome_plastic_indonesia textile

Outlook Remains Uncertain for the Coming Months

Looking ahead to the second quarter of 2026, industry expectations remain cautious. Forecasts point to pessimism in the domestic market, while international markets are expected to maintain relative stability without significant growth.

Commenting on the latest figures, Marco Salvadè, President of ACIMIT, noted:

“It is encouraging to see the first positive sign in the domestic market, but forecasts still reveal a degree of pessimism. The difficult international context and the slow actions of government institutional representatives do not allow companies to plan investments. As an Association, we are working in close synergy with the Italian Trade Agency (ICE) to strengthen promotional activities across several strategic markets. We also look with confidence to the upcoming ITMA 2027 in Hannover, which will represent an important opportunity to relaunch the sector, stimulate new investments, and strengthen the international presence of Italian manufacturers.”

A Globally Competitive but Exposed Industry

ACIMIT represents approximately 300 companies, employing around 12,500 people, with a total production value of about €1.9 billion, of which nearly 86% is exported.

The sector remains globally competitive, supported by its reputation for innovation, sustainability, reliability, and high-quality engineering. However, the latest data highlights its continued exposure to global economic conditions and investment cycles within the textile industry.