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India overtakes China as Italy's top textile machinery export market

India has overtaken China as the top export market for Italy's textile machinery industry, highlighting a broader shift in global demand toward Asia. Despite a challenging market, Italian manufacturers are betting on innovation, quality and ITMA 2027 to reinforce their global position

India has become the leading export market for Italy's textile machinery industry, overtaking China as Asian demand reshapes the sector's global trade flows.

Why it matters: The shift underscores India's growing role in textile manufacturing and comes as Italian manufacturers seek growth abroad despite a difficult market environment.

The big picture: Italy remains the world's fourth-largest exporter of textile machinery, behind China, Germany and Japan, according to industry association Acimit.

- Global textile machinery trade is expected to reach €26.5 billion in 2025, up 3.4% after two years of decline, with Asia continuing to drive demand.

Zoom in: The change. India has emerged as the leading destination for Italian textile machinery exports, overtaking China as manufacturers increasingly target fast-growing Asian markets.

- According to Acimit, the shift reflects broader changes in global demand rather than a short-term cycle. Asia continues to drive investment in textile production and remains the world's largest market for machinery imports.

Between the lines: While the U.S. remains the largest single importing country, Asia has consolidated its position as the world's textile manufacturing hub, accounting for more than half of global machinery imports.

- Industry executives expect 2026 to remain challenging following last year's production slowdown, with attention already turning to ITMA 2027, the world's leading textile machinery exhibition, which Italy will host.

The bottom line: For Italy's textile machinery makers, India's rise is becoming the defining export story. The industry's strategy remains centered on technology and high-value manufacturing rather than price competition, as companies position themselves for a recovery expected around ITMA 2027.