Domestic retail trade grew over the past year by 10.8 percent, not forgetting Internet sales — this sector increased by more than 40 percent in China.

Labor and energy costs influence the Chinese market heavily. However, thanks to its sheer size, China is still the most important global market. Some Chinese manufacturers already have reacted to changing conditions, and now invest heavily in foreign countries to get cheaper labor costs and stay competitive on the global markets. It is well known that China is by far the largest man-made fiber producer in the world, and there are plans to add capacity. Also, there are still many millions of tons of cotton in stock.

**Italy The Biggest Exhibitor Country**

Some 30 percent of the total exhibition space at this year’s ITMA has been reserved by machinery manufacturers from Italy. In numbers, 430 companies will occupy 31,000 m² of space. According to the Association of Italian Textile Machinery Manufacturers (ACIMIT), textile machinery sales in 2014 were totalled 2.3 billion euros ($2.7 billion), with exports accounting for around 1.94 million euros ($2.1 million). Exports to Asia amounted to 41 percent in 2014 and those to Europe totaled 40 percent, with a further 16 percent sold within Italy itself. In the first three months of 2015, sales of Italian machinery within Europe increased by 9 percent, with those to France up 29 percent, those to Germany up 23 percent and those to Portugal up by 100 percent.