

Transforming the World of Textiles: efficient – digital – circular



Interviewee: Dr. Harald Weber, since January 2023 Managing Director, VDMA Textile Machinery Association, Germany.

1) Present Status of German Textile Machinery?

Most of 2022 was a good year for the German textile machinery sector. The overall exports of textile machinery and accessories summed up to approx. 3 billion euros, which was slightly above the good year 2021. But from autumn on, incoming orders have slowed down and there have been some cancellations. The latest turnover forecast of the VDMA assumes a minus of 7 percent for our industry in 2023/2022 (coming from high numbers in 2022/2021: plus 19 percent).

2) Role of VDMA in Promotion of GERMAN Textile Machinery?

On the promotion side, our focus this year is logically on ITMA in Milan. But also ITMA ASIA + CITME in November in Shanghai is round the corner. With regard to India, I would like to mention an event that was initiated by VDMA and which is officially supported by the German government: From December 4 – 8, a business mission of German manufacturers of textile and garment machinery as well as accessories will take place in Ahmedabad und Coimbatore. Our member companies are looking forward to deepening existing business relations with Indian customers and to building new ones on this occasion.

3) What is the share of GERMAN Textile Machinery for the year 2022 in International Textile Machinery Market? Has Demand picked up to pre-pandemic levels?

See question 1

4) Which are major markets for GERMAN Textile Machinery?

The biggest markets in terms of exports in 2022 have been: China, 707 million euros, India, 351 million, Turkey 345 million and the USA 270 million euros.

5) What Challenges GERMAN Textile Machinery Industry encounters?

A reluctance to invest can be observed throughout some parts of the textile chain. Causes include faltering private consumption in China, Europe and North America. Inventories are high, with stocks e.g. at sporting goods manufacturers alone doubling. The situation is better in the technical textiles sector.

6) Which upcoming technology is expected to show high growth potential in the future, and what are the factors driving the growth of such technology?

Innovations have been made in the fields of digitalisation and automation. And this will continue in future. An increasing level of automation and remote services characterizes the textile industry. Serving these markets, VDMA member companies see themselves not only as machine suppliers but also as competent partners on the technological aspects of digitalisation and the processes of their customers. Another aspect is recycling. The machine manufacturers are working on advanced technology to create high quality textiles from recycled material. But for creating a circular economy, also design for recycling is very important. This has impact on the used materials so that hard-to-recycle material mixtures need to be substituted with other materials achieving the same functionality.

7) How do you see GERMAN Textile Machinery Industry at ITMA 2023?

“Transforming the World of Textiles: efficient – digital – circular”. Under this heading, VDMA technology providers will present their solutions along the value chain in Milan. In the run-up to ITMA, VDMA will carry out a “Way2ITMA” Webtalk series, where attendees can get first impressions. More information on the scheduled technology Webtalks can be found at the VDMA Textile Machinery customer portal www.industryarena.com/m4t.