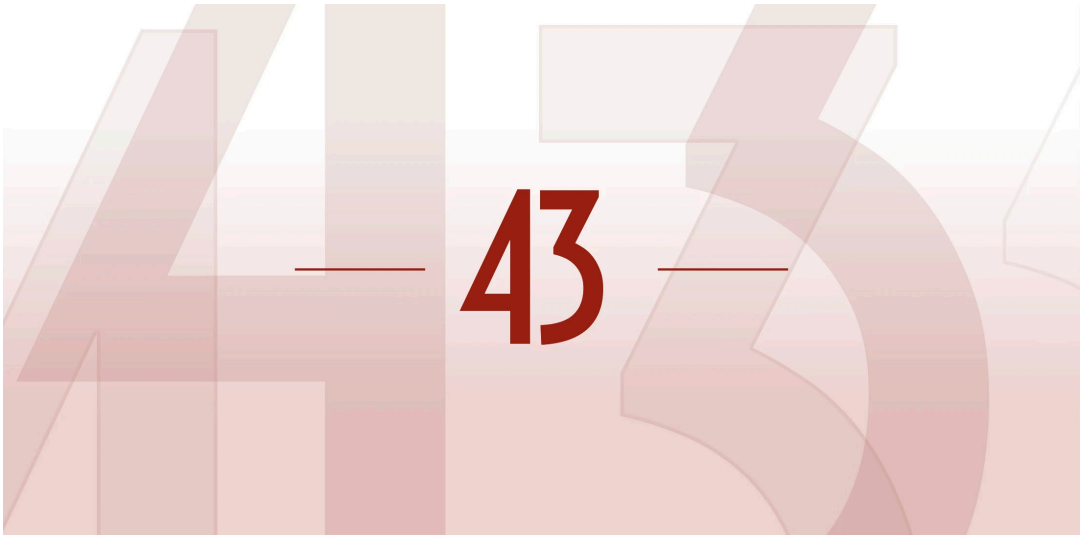


Milano Unica inaugurates its 43rd edition
July 7-8-9, 2026 – Fiera Milano Rho

THE CONFIDENCE OF THE INDUSTRY SUPPORTS THE GROWTH, INNOVATION, AND COMPETITIVENESS OF THE ITALIAN TRADE SHOW FOR HIGH-END TEXTILES AND ACCESSORIES

Milan, July 7, 2026 - The **43rd edition of Milano Unica**, the Italian trade show for high-end textiles and accessories and an international reference point for the industry, opens today at Fiera Milano Rho with the **Fall/Winter 2027-2028 collections**.

Milano Unica reflects the confidence of the international textile industry, as evidenced by an increasing number of participating exhibitors. A total of **737 exhibitors** are participating, of whom **460 Italian and 144 European exhibitors** are participating in the Ideabiella, Moda In, and Shirt Avenue exhibitions. The European exhibitors, **up 15.2%** compared to the corresponding 2025 edition, reinforce Milano Unica's profile as the leading event for **Made-in-Europe products**. In addition, **119 companies** are participating in the Special Areas. The exhibition space has also expanded, confirming the trade show's role as a key platform for dialogue among businesses, markets, and innovation.

The Opening Ceremony opened with institutional greetings from Attilio Fontana, President of the Lombardy Region; Matteo Zoppas, President of the Italian Trade Agency ICE; and Giovanni Bozzetti. Valentino Valentini, Deputy Minister for the Enterprises and Made in Italy, contributed, underscoring the value of Made in Italy and the Government's readiness to listen to the companies.

"The theme chosen for this event – "From roots to the future" - is already an operational plan for the sector. "Made in Italy" is a continuous, day-to-day process geared toward achieving and maintaining a high standard of quality. Today, as we transition from a product-based economy to a process-based economy, innovation combined with tradition is the key to maintaining competitiveness in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing international market. We need to familiarize ourselves with new tools, open new markets, and, at the same time, develop and consolidate our supply chains – the ecosystem in which our production model, consisting mainly of SMEs, best realizes its potential. And the Government is ready to listen to companies and support them," said the Deputy Minister.

The roundtable, inspired by the Opening Ceremony title - "**From Roots to the Future: Innovation in Textiles and Fashion**," addressed the role of innovation as a strategic driver of competitiveness within the industry. The Opening Ceremony, moderated by **Nicola Porro**, journalist, essayist, and television host, featured **Chiara Beghelli**, a journalist for Il Sole24Ore, who offered insights into innovation as a contemporary interpretation of the Made-in-Italy craftsmanship heritage; **Erika Andreetta**, Partner at PwC Italia and EMEA Fashion & Luxury Leader, who expanded on the role of competencies and digital transformation; **Mauro Sampellegrini**, Director of Research, Innovation, and Sustainability at Confindustria Moda, who discussed the relationship between innovation, research, and industrial policy; **Stefano Galassi**, CEO at Limitless Innovation, who spoke about the evolution of processes and models within the fashion industry; **David Pambianco**, CEO at Pambianco, who contributed insights on new competitive strategies for the sector; and **David Zdravkovic**, Partner at OC&C Strategy Consultant, CAO, who focused on international scenarios and market trends. The discussion centered on a key topic for the future of Made in Italy: the ability to transform research, expertise, manufacturing culture, and sustainability into a competitive advantage.

"The trust that Italian and international exhibitors continue to place in Milano Unica is the most important recognition of the work carried out over the years and, at the same time, a responsibility toward the entire supply chain. This is why we decided to dedicate the Opening Ceremony to innovation, addressing the topic in its broadest sense. Innovation certainly means investing in research and new technologies, but it also implies reinforcing the Italian manufacturing legacy, developing new competencies, strengthening the dialogue between companies and institutions, and, last but not least, leveraging sustainability as a driver of competitiveness. Milano Unica is ideally the best place where these themes come together and are discussed, giving rise to a shared vision. Data from Confindustria Moda's Office of Economic and Statistical Studies confirm a constantly evolving international landscape, characterized by differing trends across markets and geographic regions. This is why we believe it is essential to carefully analyze these changes so they can be translated

into new opportunities for businesses," said **Simone Canclini**, President of Milano Unica.

An analysis by Confindustria Moda's Office of Economic and Statistical Studies shows that the first quarter of 2026 remains challenging for the textile sector, following a year that ended below expectations for revenue and exports. The ISTAT index of industrial production for textiles recorded a 1.3% decline, while total exports amounted to Euro 729 million, down 3.4% from the same period last year. The overall picture shows divergent trends across products and destination markets. Exports of silk fabrics (+7.5%), cotton fabrics (+2.2%), and wool fabrics (+1.2%) are growing, while the overall result reflects the sharp decline in knits (-13.2%). An analysis of exports by destination market reveals an evolving landscape: exports to strategic countries such as France (+8.5%), China (+7.8%), and Poland (+19.6%) are increasing, while the United States (-10.7%), Tunisia (-9.1%), Spain (-5.1%), and Germany (-0.8%) are declining. Concurrently, Germany has become the third-largest source country for Made-in-Italy textiles, with a 47.2% increase, after only Turkey and China. In this context, new patterns of international demand seem to be emerging. Increased imports of Made-in-Italy textiles into China were accompanied by a sharp decline in exports to Hong Kong, altering a long-established pattern that had seen China and Hong Kong at the top of the list of major import countries for Made-in-Italy textiles. New markets in the Global South are also emerging, showing growing interest in high-end Italian products. Although these figures refer only to the first quarter of 2026 and are therefore subject to change over the course of the year, they represent signals that deserve close attention because they help guide corporate strategies and enable companies to promptly adapt to shifts in international markets. In this respect, Milano Unica reinforces its ability to interpret the needs of international buyers and the entire value chain.

"The textile industry is the first link in the fashion value chain, distinguished by research into new materials, innovation in fabrics, and the ability of Italian companies to anticipate trends. Milano Unica is where a significant share of the world's future fashion collections takes shape. This edition is being held against a particularly challenging international backdrop, with global demand down by 8%, a decline that is also affecting Italian exports. The entire sector is facing growing competitive pressure from rivals in the South. Nevertheless, Italy remains the world's fifth-largest exporter, with a slightly increased share of the global market. This confirms the Italian textile industry's resilience in defending its position, even in the most challenging circumstances, by focusing on quality, innovation, and creativity rather than on price. In this context, the support provided by the Italian Trade Agency ICE is more strategic than ever. For this edition, we expect to welcome 232 buyers and 15 representatives of the international press, alongside an intensive program of matchmaking activities and targeted promotional initiatives in key markets," commented **Matteo Zoppas**, President of the Italian Trade Agency ICE.

"The growing number of exhibitors confirms Milano Unica's leading role in attracting qualified exhibitors and buyers from around the world. This result was made possible thanks to the unfailing support of the ***Italian Trade Agency ICE*** *and the* ***Italian Ministry of***

***Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation**, which have always stood alongside our industry in its journey toward internationalization. Our priority is to provide our companies with the best conditions to build strong relationships with international buyers and to tackle market challenges with the most effective tools. Milano Unica is constantly evolving as an international platform where business, innovation, sustainability, culture, and digital services come together to offer an increasingly sophisticated experience to industry professionals,"* said **Massimo Mosiello**, General Manager of Milano Unica.

In addition to the institutional areas and those dedicated to innovation, sustainability, and new projects in the supply chain, the 43rd edition of Milano Unica features two renowned international Observatories. **The Japan Observatory**, developed in collaboration with JFW and JETRO, has been a point of reference for Japanese textile excellence for over a decade. The **Korea Observatory** further enhances the event's international profile, consolidating dialogue with one of Asia's most dynamic markets.

Milano Unica is not only a business platform but also confirms its role as a hub for culture, research, and experimentation through a series of special initiatives that complement the trade show experience.
One of the cultural highlights of the 43rd edition of Milano Unica is "**The Radical Elegance**," an exhibition dedicated to **Gian Paolo Barbieri**, a leading figure in international fashion photography. Held within the **MU Tendenze Sostenibilità** area, the exhibition takes visitors on a journey through the artist's most iconic images, in dialogue with the **Fall/ Winter 2027-2028 collections**, creating a bridge among visual culture, creative research, and textile innovation.

Another example is **AquiLANA**, which, by reinforcing the themes of the Opening Ceremony, demonstrates that innovation also stems from the contemporary revival of ancient knowledge. The project illustrates how innovation can arise from the revival and contemporary reinterpretation of Made-in-Italy heritage, highlighting wool and the manufacturing skills that continue to embody a legacy of excellence and offer an opportunity for future industry growth. Last but not least, **The Cube Archive: Punk is all around** is a project that once again confirms the value Milano Unica places on research and on the dialogue between craftsmanship and experimentation.

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