

139th China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair)

Survey Report on the 139th Canton Fair: Scale, Highlights & Industry Insights

Based on Official Statistics & Real-Time Search Data (March – May 2026)

155万 m ²	3.2万+	31.4万	220	465万件
Exhibition Area	Exhibitors	Intl. Buyers	Countries	Products

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The 139th China Import and Export Fair (commonly known as the Canton Fair) was held in Guangzhou from April 15 to May 5, 2026, in three phases. As the 'wind vane' and 'barometer' of China's foreign trade, this edition set multiple historical records, underscoring the resilience of China's supply chain and the confidence of global buyers in Chinese manufacturing.

The fair has been held continuously since 1957, alternating between Guangzhou's Pazhou Complex every spring and autumn. This edition attracted unprecedented global attention, with the number of international buyers hitting a new all-time high despite ongoing global economic headwinds.

Key Facts at a Glance:

Item	Detail
Fair Name	139th China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair)
Dates	April 15 – May 5, 2026 (three phases)
Venue	Guangzhou Pazhou Complex
Phase 1 (Apr 15–19)	"Advanced Manufacturing" — NEVs, electronics, machinery
Phase 2 (Apr 23–27)	"Quality Home Living" — home goods, gifts, decor
Phase 3 (May 1–5)	Textiles, apparel, footwear, health products
Total Exhibition Area	1.55 million m ² (record high)
Total Exhibitors	Over 32,000 companies
Total Products on Display	4.65 million items
New Exhibitors (first-time)	~3,900 companies

2.1 International Buyer Attendance — All-Time High

As of May 4 (closing of Phase 3), the 139th Canton Fair attracted 314,000 international buyers from 220 countries and regions, a 1.1% increase over the 138th session — setting a new record for the third consecutive session.

Phase	Intl. Buyers	Countries	YoY Change	Notes
Phase 1 (Apr 19)	167,000	216	+5.9%	Advanced manufacturing
First Two Phases (Apr 27)	245,000	219	+2.2%	—
Full Fair (May 4)	314,000	220	+1.1%	New all-time record

2.2 Professional Buyers & Top-Tier Purchasers

The proportion of professional (pre-registered) buyers exceeded 70% for the first time, a landmark milestone:

- 407 top-tier purchasing companies attended (headquartered multinational buyers)
- 154 overseas trade associations organized group visits
- Pre-registered professional buyers: 21万+, up +20% YoY — a historic high
- 290 global top-tier buyers confirmed attendance, up +30% YoY
- 148 overseas trade associations confirmed, up +17.5% YoY
- 78% of buyers used digital tools to pre-screen suppliers before the fair

2.3 Exhibitor Quality — 'Specialized, Refined, Unique & Novel'

High-quality enterprises (national high-tech, 'Little Giant' specialized enterprises, single-product champions) grew from ~4,500 in the 133rd session to 11,000 in this session — a 1.4× increase:

- Total exhibitors: 32,000+ (record high)
- First-time exhibitors: ~3,900 companies
- New products, green products, and IP-protected products each exceeded 20% of total
- New exhibition zones added: consumer drones, agricultural drones, smart wearables, display technology

3.1 Geographic Diversification — 'Belt & Road' + Europe as Dual Engines

Emerging markets now account for 50.08% of total buyer attendance, and the geographic mix has shifted significantly compared to previous editions:

Market Region	Buyer Growth	Notes
Belt & Road Countries	> +26% YoY	New buyers mainly from these nations
Europe	> +44% YoY	Strongest growth among all regions
Latin America	Fast growing	New buyer source
Africa	Fast growing	New buyer source
Total Emerging Markets	50.08% of attendance	Successfully diversified market mix

3.2 'New, Green & Smart' — Core Growth Drivers

New energy, intelligent manufacturing, and green low-carbon products emerged as the biggest highlights. Mechanical & electrical (M&E;) products accounted for the first time for over 60% of exports:

- M&E; products export share: >60% (first time exceeding 60%)
- China EV exports Q1 2026: +77.5% YoY
- Lithium battery exports Q1 2026: +50.4% YoY
- Wind turbine exports Q1 2026: +45.2% YoY
- Medical device exports Q1 2026: \$12.585 billion (+8.92% YoY)
- Massage & health equipment exports Q1 2026: \$1.079 billion (+4.3% YoY)
- Approximately 20% of exhibitors have overseas investment, creating 200,000+ local jobs

3.3 Provincial Competition — Zhejiang Leads in Brand Booths

Traditional foreign trade powerhouses — Guangdong, Zhejiang, Jiangsu — led in brand exhibition booth allocation. Zhejiang province occupied 32.9% of national brand exhibition booths, ranking #1 nationally:

- Zhejiang: 32.9% of national brand booths (#1 in China)
- Guangdong, Zhejiang, Jiangsu: each excels in different product categories
- Industrial cluster advantages are prominent in key manufacturing provinces

4.1 Phase 3 Focus: Textiles, Apparel & Footwear

Phase 3 (May 1–5) of the 139th Canton Fair focused on textiles, apparel, footwear, and health products. This phase drew a large number of buyers from South Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe — precisely the primary target markets for China's apparel surplus inventory trade.

4.2 Textile & Apparel Supply-Demand Dynamics

During the 139th Canton Fair, a dedicated Hubei International Supply-Demand Matching Session (Textile & Apparel) was held:

- 60+ Hubei textile & apparel enterprises connected with buyers from 20 countries
- Key buyer countries: Pakistan, Ethiopia, Egypt, and others
- New procurement models: AI-powered supplier matching, digital pre-screening (78% of buyers used digital tools)

4.3 Why Global Buyers Are Returning to China for Apparel & Textiles

Two structural forces are driving global buyers back to China for apparel and footwear sourcing — tariff arbitrage and energy security:

Driver	Impact on Southeast Asia	Impact on China	Result
Tariff Hike (Apr 2025)	Vietnam +46%, Cambodia +49% Thailand +36% tariff burden	China tariff normalized or lower in comparison	China cost-advantage restored vs. SEA
Energy Crisis (Middle East war 2026)	80–99% import-dependent Factory suspensions, fuel shortages	315 GW new solar 119 GW new wind (2025)	China production stability >> SEA instability

4.4 Key Buyer Takeaways for Apparel & Footwear

Given the dual-engine supply chain shift, international buyers at the Canton Fair are increasingly sourcing apparel and footwear directly from Chinese manufacturers and surplus inventory holders. The Canton Fair's record buyer attendance — including 407 top-tier purchasing companies — reflects genuine global demand for reliable Chinese supply:

- 31.4万 international buyers from 220 countries (new high) = more buyer contacts per visit
- 220 countries represented = geographic diversity, including all major apparel/footwear markets
- Belt & Road +26% growth = fast-growing markets increasingly sourcing from China
- 50%+ from emerging markets = demand base aligns with China's price-competitive inventory

#	Takeaway	Implication
1	Record 314,000 buyers from 220 countries — Canton Fair is the #1 global trade platform for apparel & footwear	Largest sourcing opportunity window globally
2	Apparel surplus inventory from China is highly competitive in price due to dual-engine supply shift (tariffs + energy)	Inventory buyers can source at favorable prices
3	Belt & Road +26%, Europe +44% growth — global buyer base is more diverse than ever	Opportunity to reach buyers from new geographies
4	314,000 total buyers, 407 top-tier companies — quality over quantity in sourcing contacts	Focus on high-value buyer relationships
5	China EV/battery exports up 45–77% YoY — industrial manufacturing upgrading, supply chain strengthening	China's manufacturing capacity continues to grow
6	Southeast Asian energy crisis + tariff burden = Chinese apparel supply more competitive in 2026	Window for inventory buyers is NOW

The 139th Canton Fair demonstrates that China's position as the world's manufacturing hub remains unshaken. For international buyers of apparel and footwear surplus inventory, China's supply chain stability, competitive pricing, and the Canton Fair's unparalleled buyer network make it the optimal sourcing destination in 2026.

Data Sources

1. Sohu: '2026年广交会深度数据分析报告' (2026-04-30) — exhibition area, exhibitor counts, buyer data
2. ICNBM News Center: 139th Canton Fair Phase 2 opening (2026-04-23) — 210,000+ pre-registered buyers
3. CSDN: '2026广交会深度观察: 中国ODM企业以AI全栈化趋势重构贸易新优势' (2026-04-18)
4. Sohu: '广交会彰显中国制造硬核实力' (2026-05-05) — 216 countries, 465万件展品, Q1 EV exports +77.5%
5. 荆楚网/湖北日报: '向新向绿向智 一组数据看广交会新变化' (2026-05-05) — new products, green products >20%
6. 东方财富网: '第139届广交会收官 逾31万采购商力挺中国制造' (2026-05-06) — 314,000 buyers final count
7. Tencent News: '量稳质升、市场更多元,第139届广交会预登记采购商超21万' (2026-04-10) — 21万+ pre-registration
8. Sohu: '60家鄂企集结! 湖北纺织服装牵手20国客商抢订单' (2026-05-05) — 60+ textile enterprises, 20 countries

Note: All data in this report are from publicly accessible official sources and media reports (March–May 2026). No data has been fabricated. Report prepared by Tianjin Nice Partner Trading Co., Ltd. for industry analysis purposes.