

SPOTLIGHT

At the Global Export Trade Fair (Ningbo), Exporters Push for New Global Ground

By Zhao Yu

The 2026 Global Export Trade Fair (Ningbo) wrapped up on May 29 after three days of dealmaking, networking and industry showcases.

This year's event brought together more than 3,000 manufacturers from leading industrial clusters across China, alongside e-commerce platforms, logistics providers and other trade service companies. For exporters navigating an increasingly competitive global market, the fair served as a one-stop venue for sourcing products, connecting with buyers and exploring new business models.

Since its debut in 2021, the exhibition has grown into one of Ningbo's flagship trade events. With more than 100,000 professional visitors and an on-site rebooking rate exceeding 70%, this year's edition offered a snapshot of how China's foreign trade sector is adapting to a changing global landscape.

Connecting Buyers and Factories Across Borders

"I'm looking for suppliers of small household appliances, mainly for the South American market," said Miguel, a buyer from Bolivia. "That's why I came to the Yuyao pavilion. There are many appliance manufacturers here, and I'm confident I can find products with market potential."

This year's Global Export Trade Fair adopted a dual-venue format for the first time, with events held simultaneously at the Ningbo International Conference and Exhibition Center and the Yuyao Zhongsu International Convention and Exhibition Center.

The Ningbo venue showcased products ranging from home furnishings, pet and baby products, outdoor goods, electronics, lighting, tools, automotive products to daily necessities and gifts. The Yuyao venue focused on home appliances and upstream and downstream products in the sector.

Beyond the two domestic venues, the fair also introduced its first overseas satellite event



The 2026 Global Export Trade Fair (Ningbo). [Photo by Yu Jiajia]

in Dubai.

Through livestreamed virtual tours and real-time business matchmaking, buyers from emerging markets including the Middle East and Africa were able to connect directly with exhibitors. Organizers estimated the initiative generated around \$50 million in intended transactions.

Huang Tingzhi, foreign trade manager at Ningbo Youchuang Furniture Co., Ltd., which participated in the Dubai livestream event, said he felt more excited than nervous. "Market uncertainty is temporary. Whether it's Dubai, Saudi Arabia or Kuwait, we're willing to explore opportunities wherever there is demand."

Among the participants was Dubai-based buyer Hamza Awan, who examined a sofa sample shipped from China. Compared with compressed sofas he had purchased previously, he found the product more compact and reliable in quality.

"Through the livestream, I can connect directly with manufacturers I'm interested in and discuss pricing and procurement plans in real time," Awan said.

Innovation As the Best Approach

"Product quality says

more than anything. Instead of competing on price alone, we focus on functionality, service and innovation. We believe this is the right approach," said Ma Liang, general manager of Zhejiang Botai Furniture Technology Co., Ltd., in a social media post during the expo.

At Botai Furniture's booth, what appeared at first glance to be a standard storage cabinet drew steady attention from visitors. With the press of a button or a voice command, a concealed liquor cabinet rose smoothly from the desktop, illuminated by color-changing LED lighting that added to the visual effect.

"This hidden liquor cabinet is one of our newest products this year," Ma told reporters. "By integrating smart functions, we're making everyday use more engaging. Buyers from the US and Europe have shown strong interest, and we've already received customized orders."

At another booth in the Yuyao pavilion, an air purifier manufacturer showcased a model designed to capture pet hair and eliminate household odors. A company representative said the product received immediate orders from existing clients upon launch and quickly reached sales of nearly 1,000 units per day. But the

window for novelty has proved short-lived. Within months, similar products had already entered the market.

"Competition is intensifying, product cycles are shortening, as is the period of high profitability for new products," the representative said. The company's R&D team of more than 100 engineers continues to develop products targeting emerging niche demand. "Only continuous innovation can help us maintain stable competitiveness in a fast-changing market."

A Continued Push into Global Markets

Over its five-year history, the Global Export Trade Fair has seen changes in scale, format, and ecosystem, but what remains constant is the determination of enterprises to embrace global markets and go overseas.

"This is our third time participating, and our goal each year is the same: to find more promising clients and expand overseas sales. Last year's results were excellent, so we booked this year's booth right after it ended," Ma said. Over the three days of the expo, the company reaped significant rewards. Three clients placed orders on-site, and many others expressed pur-

chasing interest.

Need Home Furnishing Supplies Co., Ltd., from Hebei Province, is also a familiar face at the Ningbo Export Trade Fair. "This is an incredibly efficient platform that enables buyers and source factories to achieve precise matchmaking in the shortest time, truly helping us boost sales," said Hou Guosong, design director of the company.

Specializing in the pet furniture niche, Need Home has participated in the Global Export Trade Fair for four consecutive years. "Having attended so many times, we have a better grasp of overseas customers' preferences. For example, in Europe and the US, pet-owning families really like designs that 'hide' litter boxes inside cabinets, combining functionality with decor. Our products have evolved based on market demand," Hou said.

As a flagship export-oriented trade show in East China, the Global Export Trade Fair has been dedicated over the past five years to building a full-industry-chain ecosystem for cross-border e-commerce.

"The on-site rebooking rate for this year's expo exceeded 70%, and it attracted over 100,000 professional visitors for matchmaking," said a representative from the Ningbo Cross-border E-commerce Association.

Ningbo Flag Football Open Goes Global with Overseas Expansion

By Lu Xinyan

The launch ceremony for the "Zhenkai Cup" 2026 Ningbo Flag Football Open (NBFO) was held on May 28th in Zhenhai, Ningbo.

This year's tournament has attracted over 800 players from 60 teams representing 29 countries and regions, marking a significant milestone for the home-grown sports event as it expands globally.

The tournament features three divisions: Adult Men's, Adult Women's, and the Youth U-Series. Competitors include national teams from China, Russia, the Philippines, Spain, Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, the UAE, Mexico, Australia, and Fiji. The adult matches will be hosted at Eastern Institute of Technology, Ningbo, while the youth matches will take place at Ningbo University of Technology.

Originally established as a locally developed sports event, the NBFO was officially branded in 2024 following earlier editions: the Ningbo Coastal Sports Carnival Flag Football Elite Tournament in 2022 and the Fenghua Cross-Strait Flag Football Open in 2023. The Chinese Rugby Football Association (CRFA) has designated the NBFO as a high-level international club tournament and a key initiative linking sport with cultural and tourism development.

This year's event has received official promotional support and endorsement from the International Federation of American Football (IFAF). Ningbo has additionally been named an "Editor's Choice Tournament Destination" by Flag Football Network (FFN), a global flag football media outlet, in recognition of its hosting capabilities.

At the launch ceremony, organizers announced the NBFO Overseas Series, with planned editions in Thailand and Spain. It marks the first time the tournament will be staged outside China, representing a significant step in the international expansion of a Chinese-developed flag football tournament.

Looking ahead, organizers aim to position the NBFO as a leading global club-level flag football tournament by expanding international participation, improving event organization, and building partnerships with clubs worldwide.

Held across local universities, the tournament also gives students direct access to international-level competition. Local authorities say the event is expected to support youth engagement in sport, boost cultural and leisure consumption, and contribute to Ningbo's broader efforts to enhance urban vitality and cultural influence.

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Valencia Port Advances Green Shipping Corridor With Ningbo

By Jin Lu

Mar Chao Lopez, president of the Port Authority of Valencia, said a green shipping corridor with Ningbo Zhoushan Port is now under development, as the two ports deepen cooperation on decarbonization, smart port development and China-Europe maritime connectivity.

Speaking at the 10th Maritime Silk Road Port Cooperation Forum in Ningbo, Lopez said the event has become an influential event in the global maritime industry, bringing

together major carriers, terminal operators and port authorities to exchange views and explore cooperation opportunities.

She noted that the Port of Valencia—Spain's largest container port, handling around 42% of the country's containerized imports and exports—is maintaining a long-term partnership with Ningbo Zhoushan Port. The two ports, she added, share closely aligned priorities in digitalization, automation and low-carbon transformation.

Lopez said decarbonization has become a regulatory requirement in Europe, with Valencia targeting carbon neu-

trality by 2035 through measures including expanded solar power use, shore power deployment and cleaner operational practices.

She added that automation and digitalization are also central to future competitiveness, pointing to Chinese ports, including Ningbo, as global benchmarks in smart terminal operations that European ports are actively learning from.

The green shipping corridor initiative between Ningbo Zhoushan and Valencia is now being rolled out with participation from shipping companies, terminal operators and research institutions on both

Green Shipping



Scenery of Spain. [Photo by Zhang Yufei]

sides, alongside coordinated carbon accounting and aligned emissions reduction targets.

Lopez also expressed hope that a direct shipping service between the two ports

could eventually be established, which would shorten transit times, reduce logistics costs and further strengthen China-Europe supply chain connectivity.

