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China's robotic lawnmower industry sets its sights on EU amid bare domestic market

Once a niche market, sales of robot mowers in Europe have more than doubled in the past five years

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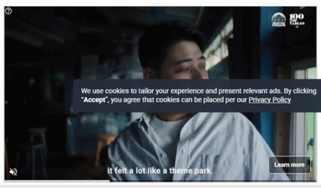


Huizhao Huang in Berlin
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At least nine Chinese brands launched new robotic lawnmowers at this year's IFA, Europe's largest consumer electronics show, as the industry commits to continued expansion in the EU, despite an ongoing anti-dumping investigation by Brussels against their products.

Chinese lawnmower makers turned one hall at IFA in Berlin – which ran from Friday to Tuesday – into a patchwork of artificial gardens, with brands setting up demonstrations on their respective turfs.

"Everyone came in over the past two years," said Ryan Kong, Segway Navimow's general manager for Europe. Robotic lawnmowers, a category with almost no market in China, have become a new export frontier for Chinese makers.



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China is no longer just the world's factory. It's the HQ

Manufacturing capacity is moving overseas but China, as a global hub for innovation and development, remains the 'industrial brain'

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Djoomart Otorbaev
Djoomart Otorbaev is a former prime minister of the Kyrgyz Republic (2014-2015).
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The global electronics industry is entering a structural transition. For over two decades, China served as the dominant manufacturing centre, with an unmatched concentration of suppliers, skilled labour, infrastructure, logistics and engineering capabilities. That concentration is being diluted. But interpreting this as the decline of Chinese manufacturing would be a mistake.

China is exporting parts of its manufacturing process while retaining the industrial capabilities that matter most.

According to the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), since 2017, the share of electronics manufacturers from China – Taiwan, Hong Kong and the mainland – with overseas production has risen to 56 per cent from 12 per cent. BCG based its analysis on 942 publicly traded companies with annual revenues above US$500 million, including 314 headquartered in China. This transformation is remarkable.