

Uniqlo shifts

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Uniqlo shifts more production to Southeast Asia from China

Clothing chain's Vietnamese suppliers rose 40% over last disclosure

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A Uniqlo store in Tokyo's Ginza district. China is still the clothing chain's main base of suppliers, but Vietnam's importance has grown.

TOKYO -- [Fast Retailing](#), operator of casual clothing chain Uniqlo, is relying more on Southeast Asian producers as wages rise in China and the number of garment workers falls there.

Major Uniqlo suppliers in Vietnam have increased about 40% since the brand first published a list of them in February 2017, a revised version issued Friday shows.

Monthly wages in Vietnam are about half of Chinese rates, according to the Japan External Trade Organization.

Japan-based Fast Retailing still relies foremost on Chinese producers. But it considers Vietnam its No. 2 production hub, given the consistent quality of workers and stable political environment there.

Uniqlo also gained several big suppliers in Indonesia and Bangladesh. It also sources clothing from garment factories in Cambodia and Thailand, as well as in Japan.

Friday's list provides the names and addresses of 184 "core partner factories" -- 38 more than in February 2017 -- across seven countries. These long-term partners supply about 80% of Uniqlo products by value.

Fast Retailing says it is taking steps to improve working conditions and maintain product quality at overseas factories.