

For business editors
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Press release

Road of opportunity: Commerzbank hosts first Belt & Road Initiative workshop for clients

- **Frankfurt event explored the opportunities and considerations for the Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) in Europe and China**
- **Over 200 attendees gathered for an open discussion on the BRI**
- **Roland Boehm, Head of Corporates International at Commerzbank: “Investment in BRI may eventually reach US\$1tn, and the potential impact to global trade and financing will be important for our Mittelstand clients as well as our multinational clients.”**
- **Nikolaus Giesbert, Head of Trade Finance & Cash Management at Commerzbank: “Commerzbank’s strong trade finance capabilities will add value for our clients as they navigate business opportunities along the BRI trading corridors.”**

Today, at Commerzbank’s first Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) workshop, Michael Reuther, Member of the Board of Managing Directors responsible for Corporate Clients, opened the event commenting: “We want to enable our clients to gain better access to the opportunities BRI provides.”

The event aimed to lift the lid on BRI as it continues apace; creating new trade and investment links between China and countries along the route. The necessary capital of BRI comes from diverse sources – some is Chinese foreign investment, but more and more is contributed as international co-financing. Commerzbank’s economic research team expects Chinese-led direct investment in BRI projects to exceed US\$80bn by 2025, doubling the amount of 2018. It is also projected that new construction contracts related to BRI projects will be more than USD\$150bn every year from now until 2025.

Hosted after Commerzbank’s flagship event, the Global Economy & Capital Markets Forum, the BRI workshop held in Frankfurt welcomed over 200 attendees and the following panellists:

- Roland Boehm, Divisional Board Member Corporates International, Commerzbank AG
- Tobias Dennehy, Senior Director Government Affairs Asia Pacific / Head of Siemens Belt and Road Task Force
- Dr Darren Chong, CEE/Eurasia/Russia China Business Group Leader, PWC

- Jinny Yan, China Chief Economist, ICBC Standard Bank
- Prof Yu Zhang, CEO, China Communications Holding and Publisher of “China und Deutschland: 5.0”

Roland Boehm, Head of Corporates International at Commerzbank and panellist at the event, commented: “With global growth predicted to remain muted we have, as a market leader in foreign trade financing, a role to play in educating and highlighting opportunities to our clients. Investment in BRI may eventually reach US\$1tn, and the potential impact to global trade and financing will be important for our Mittelstand clients as well as our multinational clients. BRI is a mega trend, and we want all clients to have access to services which will support their BRI business ambitions.”

“As the German market leader in foreign trade we support our corporate and institutional clients in their investment ventures abroad. Commerzbank’s strong trade finance capabilities will add value for our clients as they navigate business opportunities along the BRI trading corridors. Building on our international presence and our global Financial Institutions network we are the bank at the side of our clients when going abroad,” said Nikolaus Giesbert, Head of Trade Finance & Cash Management at Commerzbank.

Commerzbank has been accompanying and financing global trade since 1870 and has been present in Asia for more than 50 years, with the first representative office in Beijing opening over 30 years ago. The Bank settles approximately 30% of Germany’s foreign trade business.

In 2018, Commerzbank signed a memorandum of understanding with the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China to support projects linked to the BRI.

[Read more about BRI.](#)

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About Commerzbank

Commerzbank is a leading international commercial bank with branches and offices in almost 50 countries. In the two business segments Private and Small-Business Customers and Corporate Clients, the Bank offers a comprehensive portfolio of financial services which is precisely aligned to its clients’ needs. Commerzbank finances

approximately 30% of Germany's foreign trade and is the leading finance provider for corporate clients in Germany. Due to its in-depth sector know-how in the German economy, the Bank is a leading provider of capital market products. Its subsidiaries Comdirect in Germany and mBank in Poland are two of the world's most innovative online banks. With approximately 1,000 branches, Commerzbank has one of the densest branch networks among German private banks. In total, Commerzbank serves more than 18 million private and small business customers, as well as more than 70,000 corporate clients, multinationals, financial service providers, and institutional clients worldwide. In 2018, it generated gross revenues of €8.6 billion with approximately 49,000 employees.
