

Supporting Local Enterprises and SMEs along China's Belt and Road Initiative in
South Eastern Europe
Teatro Verdi, Trieste, Italy
19 May 2016

DRAFT PROGRAMME
As of 03 May 2016

08:30 – 09:00 **Registration**

09:00 – 09:15 **Welcome**

- Ambassador Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri, Secretary General, Central European Initiative (*confirmed*)
- Roberto Cosolini, Mayor of Trieste (*confirmed*)
- Debora Serracchiani, President, Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia (*confirmed*)

Part I: High Level Discussions

09:15 – 10:15 **High Level Session**

Chair: *Alain Pilloux, Acting Vice President, Policy and Partnerships, EBRD (confirmed)*

Keynotes

- Senior Representative, European Commission (*to be confirmed*)
- Graziano Delrio, Minister for Transport and Infrastructure of Italy (*confirmed*)
- Denis Zvizdić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2016 CEI Presidency (*confirmed*)
- Wang Yanzhi, President, Silk Road Fund (*confirmed*)
- Gian Maria Gros-Pietro, Chairman of the Board, Intesa Sanpaolo (*confirmed*)

10:15 – 11:30 **Session I: Working together to bridge the infrastructure gap: Chinese, EU and IFI Financing**

Chair: *Alessandro Plateroti, Vice Editor, "Il SOLE 24 Ore" (confirmed)*

Existing European Commission infrastructure plans for the SEE region are to be complemented by China's comprehensive investment plans as part of the Belt and Road Initiative, which includes road, railway, and ports infrastructure. Several Chinese institutions will participate in the funding of the BRI and multilateral institutions will also play an important role, particularly in terms of leveraging further private investments in the project.

Key questions:

- ❖ What are the infrastructure gaps in South Eastern Europe and how should they be addressed?
- ❖ What kind of financing models should be applied and how will they work?
- ❖ How will existing infrastructure plans and investments in the region be complemented by the BRI?

- ❖ How can financing from China, the EU, and IFIs, such as the EBRD and the World Bank, help bridge the gaps?

Panellists:

- Thomas Maier, Managing Director, Infrastructure, EBRD (*confirmed*)
- Edmond Haxhinasto, Albanian Minister for Transport and Infrastructure (*confirmed*)
- Alain Baron, Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE), European Commission (*confirmed*)
- Zhang Jianping, Director of the Department of International Economic Cooperation, Institute for International Economic Research, National Development and Reform Commission of P.R. China (NDRC) (*confirmed*)
- Matthias Woitok, Head of Division, Structured Finance & Joint Initiatives – North, Central and South East Europe, European Investment Bank
- Claudio de Eccher, Rizzani de Eccher (*confirmed*)

Questions and Answers

11:30 – 12:00 **Coffee Break**

12:00 – 13:15 **Session II: The Potential Impact of the SEE Belt and Road Infrastructure Corridor on Domestic Economies: Encouraging and Promoting Local Enterprises and SMEs**

Chair: To be confirmed

Investments along the Belt and Road Initiative could have a significant impact on SEE economies by creating new opportunities through increased connectivity and opening up to new markets. Connecting markets within the region and to the rest of Europe will lead to stronger trade integration, encouraging economic growth. Increasing the competitiveness of local enterprises and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) will be important for the local economies to benefit from these opportunities.

Key questions:

- ❖ How can local enterprises and SMEs benefit, both directly and indirectly, from the opportunities created by the Belt and Road Initiative?
- ❖ What have we learnt about how local enterprises and SMEs have benefited from previous large infrastructure investments? In what sectors will local enterprises and SMEs benefit most?
- ❖ What can local enterprises and SMEs do to become more competitive?
- ❖ How can IFIs help prepare local enterprises and SMEs to tap such opportunities?
- ❖ What obstacles and policy barriers exist and how can they be removed?

Panellists:

- Claudio Viezzoli, Managing Director, SME Finance, EBRD (*confirmed*)
- Min Tang, Counsellor of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (*confirmed*)
- Dušan Vujović, Minister of Finance of Serbia (*confirmed*)
- Svetozar Janevski, Chairman of the Board, Tikves Winery (*confirmed*)
- Wang Wei, Director General, Institute of Market Economy, Development Research Center of the State Council of P.R. China (*confirmed*)

Questions and Answers

13:15 – 14:30 **Lunch**

Part II: Business panels

14:30– 16:00 *Discussions in two parallel breakout sessions*

Breakout I: Small Business Support – Improving Standards and Skills

Chair: *Charlotte Ruhe, Director of the Small Business Support Programme, EBRD (confirmed)*

Key questions:

- ❖ What can SMEs in the region do to become more competitive within the context of the opportunities opened by the Belt and Road Initiative?
- ❖ What kind of policy framework would be beneficial to improve the business environment for SMEs?
- ❖ How can IFIs and the EU help boost the competitiveness of SMEs?
- ❖ How can Chinese partners support such efforts?

Panellists:

- Ljiljana Belada, Montenegro Coordinator for the European Information and Innovation Centre and Deputy Director of Montenegro Directorate for Development of SMEs *(confirmed)*
- Fulvio Capurso, Programme Manager, SME and Private Sector Development, DG NEAR, European Commission *(confirmed)*
- Ivan Franičević, CEO, Rasco *(confirmed)*
- Agon Gashi, CEO, Meridian Express *(confirmed)*
- Ellen Goldstein, Country Director for Southeast Europe, Europe and Central Asia, The World Bank *(tentatively confirmed)*
- Sun Xuezheng, Division Director, Department of Western Region Development, National Development and Reform Commission of P.R. China (NDRC) *(confirmed)*

Breakout II: Improving Access to Finance for SMEs

Chair: *Holger Muent, Director for Western Balkans, EBRD (confirmed)*

Key questions:

- ❖ What kind of new and innovative financing products could help close the SME financing gap?
- ❖ How can the EU and IFIs help SMEs gain better access to finance?
- ❖ How can local banks help with obstacles facing SMEs in gaining access to finance?
- ❖ What kind of government policies would be conducive to improving access to finance and encouraging foreign investment?
- ❖ What role can Chinese investors play?

Panellists:

- Tony Myron, Associate Director of Financial Institutions for Serbia, Kosovo & Albania, EBRD *(confirmed)*
- Ignacio Jaquotot, Head of International Subsidiary Banks Division, Intesa Sanpaolo *(confirmed)*
- Marko Loncarevic, Member of the Board, Luka Ploče *(confirmed)*
- Kire Dimanoski, Member of Management Board and Director of Passenger Transport, Macedonian Railways Transport JSC *(confirmed)*
- Representative from OECD *(tentatively confirmed)*
- Chuanzhan Tian, Deputy General Manager of SME Department, Bank of China *(tentatively confirmed)*

16:00 – 17:00 **Concluding Remarks**

- Igor Crnadak, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina *(confirmed)*