

## **We Affirm, Resolved: The European Union should join the Belt and Road Initiative.**

The Belt and Road Initiative, or BRI, is a Chinese project dedicated to economically develop countries in the Eurasian region.

## **Our sole contention in support of the BRI concerns Redeveloping the Global Economy.**

Global economic growth is on the decline. [Kristalina Georgieva](#), director of the IMF, stated this week: [There has been] slower growth in...90 percent of the world. The global economy is now in a synchronized slowdown.

Much of this is because of a lack of European action. Thomas [Kruessman for the London School of Economics](#) explains this June: The EU's desire to jump... towards [Asia's] regional integration... [is currently] wishful thinking...In reality, the room for any...development...is determined by...China as the main actor in the...region.

## **European participation in the BRI would reconnect the global economy and bring prosperity in two ways.**

### **The first is through free trade agreements.**

Tristan [Kohl for the Cambridge Journal](#) writes this year: China...does not yet have any [effective] trade agreements...with..the European Union. [The] BRI sets out to reduce trade costs through the creation of free trade agreements. In their simplest form, FTAs reduce tariffs...which...serve as impediments to trade.

As a result, the BRI means increases in trade. Jaques [Pelkman at the Center of European Policy Studies in 2016](#) predicts: [An] EU-China FTA will increase GDP [for both countries] by 1.87%..[and trade by] \$99 billion. EU...exports to China [will] increase strongly, by 110%.

Free trade would not be limited to Europe, but spread across the world. Zakir [Ullah of the Eurasia Review in 2019](#) writes: Cooperation...in "[BRI]" will bridge the linkage between Asian and European regions, which [is a] prerequisite for...economic stability. Promoting regional cooperation...will be achieved with the assistance of [the EU] to facilitate [trade].

Hannah [Edinger of Deloitte in 2019](#) quantifies that: improving connectivity and logistics is important for promoting... exports...A 1% reduction in trade costs [such as tariffs increases] bilateral trade between [BRI countries] by 1.3%.

### **The second is through integrating Asian markets.**

The current issue with Asia is trade *policy*. [Lin of the Eurasian Development Bank](#) explains: average trade cost and time requirements for shipments [between] Europe [and] Central Asia...were about twice those expected... The principal reasons for these elevated...costs were [legal] delays...of border crossings, [and] poor logistics.

Bringing the EU in would boost Asia to the global stage. Alberto [Turkstra on the Council on European Studies](#) in 2019 explains: the EU [is crucial to]... strengthening...the regulatory and legal frameworks...needed to realize the connectivity potential of Central Asia.

Europe is already looking to do this if they join the BRI. The [European Commission](#) notes: The EU has placed regional integration...as one of its priorities for...cooperation.

Even China is on board if Europe joins. Alicia [Herrero of Bruegel](#) in 2019 explains: China is trying to use a more multilateral framework to push the BRI [such as] the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. Such [frameworks] offer room for other...countries to get involved, especially [Europe].

This would create tangible benefits for an isolated Asia. Paul [Vallely of the Brookings Institute](#) concludes: BRI investments can [increase] development [by] more than 20 percent for each of Central Asia's...economies....

### **The impact to both arguments is creating global economic growth.**

Europe is the way to go for trade. Gunther [Wiegand of the Chatham House](#) in 2017 reports: Access to the European...market has contributed to economic miracles, helping millions of people out of poverty. [Increasing] Openness to flows of goods, services...and capital [will] fuel growth...and consumer welfare [throughout the world].

Developing the BRI is crucial as the global economy falters. Vallely writes: connectivity within Central Asia would allow the region to capture...global trade...Central Asia.. [can] integrate with the global economy...[which would] boost...economic growth, spur job creation, and reduce poverty.

[Parag Khanna, in his book 'The Future is Asian](#), concludes: [Asia is] one-third of the global economy [and] two-thirds of [future] global economic growth...we cannot afford to continue to get Asia so wrong.

### **Because it's time to look at the bigger picture, we are proud to affirm.**