

# About Us

## Our Profile

On 23 March 2018, the members of the German Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations and the Eastern Europe Business Association of Germany unanimously voted in Berlin to merge both associations and form the "Ost-Ausschuss – Osteuropaverein der Deutschen Wirtschaft e.V." (OAOEV; German Eastern Business Association). This new unified regional initiative bundles the competencies of the two traditional associations and promotes the German business in 29 countries of Central Europe, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia. German trade with the East accounts for about a fifth of Germany's total foreign trade and is therefore more significant than trade with the USA and China.

## Our Members

The German Eastern Business Association (OAOEV) comprises around 350 member companies and associations. The association is also supported by six central associations of German industry: the Federation of German Industries (BDI), The Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK), the Association of German Banks (BdB), the German Insurance Association (GDV), the Foreign Trade Association of German Retailers (AVE), the German Confederation of Skilled Crafts (ZDH) and the Federation of German Wholesale and Foreign Trade (BGA).

## Our Activities

The OAOEV is involved in around 100 events every year. For example, specialist conferences and delegation trips are organised as well as round tables with government members of our 29 partner countries. Our Association also represents the interests of its member companies in numerous bilateral economic committees. We are in close contact with the Federal German Government and actively promote the dismantling of trade barriers and the improvement of investment conditions in our partner countries.

Twelve working groups convene regularly at the OAOEV. Among them are seven working groups on countries:

Belarus, Central Eastern Europe, Russia, South Caucasus, South Eastern Europe, Ukraine and Central Asia

And five working groups on industries:

[Agriculture](#), [Digitalization](#), Healthcare, Logistics/ Transport Infrastructure, Urban Infrastructure/ Energy Efficiency

Our Association is also characterised by intensive project work and cooperation:

- An important thematic focus is the training of young specialists, including our [Internship Programme of German Business](#) for the countries of the Western Balkans.
- The [contact point for small and medium-sized enterprises](#) (SMEs) in the OAOEV, which is funded by member companies, specifically supports German SMEs in entering the market in Russia and other Eastern European countries.
- Together with the Association Supply Chain Management, Procurement and Logistics (BME), we have launched procurement initiatives for various regions that bring together German companies

and Eastern European suppliers.

- We are currently involved in the GRID (Russia) and WB6+ (Western Balkans) initiatives in the field of digitalization.
- The OAOEV further organizes the annual meeting of the Petersburg Dialogue Economy Working Group.
- In collaboration with the BMW Foundation, we organise the annual [German-Russian Dialogue Baden-Baden](#). We also support the [German-Russian Youth Exchange Foundation](#).

## Our Tradition

Our two predecessor associations have a long tradition: the German Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations is the oldest regional initiative of German business and was founded in 1952 by leading associations such as the BDI, the DIHK and the BGA. The Eastern Europe Business Association of Germany was founded in 1989 as a regional association for the promotion of economic relations and intercultural understanding between Germany and the states of Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia. It was based in Hamburg and Berlin and actively supported German SMEs and family businesses particularly in entering new markets.

## Offers for Members

As a member of the German Eastern Business Association, you have the unique opportunity to be involved in developing the Association's work priorities in various committees, to exchange views on specific sectors and regions in the working groups and to participate in many other events. Every year, we invite all members to three major meetings: the New Year's reception in January/February, the annual members' meeting in summer, and the Eastern Europe Economy Day in autumn.

We are happy to assist you in contacting Eastern European governments and company representatives, conducting market research, in addressing cases of damage or other concerns, and in introducing your wishes into our bilateral working groups.

You will also receive our expert publications free of charge: the bimonthly Information on Eastern Europe, the Central and Eastern Europe Yearbook, the magazine OstContact, country updates, policy papers and dossiers as well as our monthly newsletter. Additionally, we invite all new members to a "welcome breakfast" in our office in Berlin-Mitte.

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