

The silk road of the 21st century



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This, coupled with increasing economic and manufacturing growth in Eastern Europe and the region's further integration into global supply chains, will continue to spur the necessary infrastructure investment."

The emergence of larger, stronger economies in Eastern Europe, such as the Czech Republic and Romania, will play a key role in influencing new infrastructure and supply chains within Europe. Poland, in particular, is set to emerge as a major force as it benefits from new infrastructure, manufacturing and consumer demand growth. Growth in consumer spending will drive an increased need to direct goods to these locations. Also key is the fact that the increased size of these markets will make direct supply chains more scalable and cost efficient, and help to drive their national logistics markets. Low wage rates, strong transport links with Germany and central Europe, and independent, floating currencies will prove key in driving manufacturing growth in Eastern Europe in the short to medium-term. In the longer-term better linkages to global supply chains will help to sustain growth - providing the improvements in infrastructure continue.

Sitting as it does on the "silk road" between Europe and Asia, Turkey is set to play a key role in facilitating trade between the two continents and helping that trade to be cost effective and environmentally friendly. The development of larger ports in the North Adriatic and on the Black Sea, and the improvement of their links with the rest of Europe, will be key in making the argument against ships sailing past Gibraltar towards the main northern ports. Additionally, Turkey's rail links to the Middle East, Iran and Pakistan will allow goods to pass into Europe through both the Istanbul rail connection and the Black Sea ports. The rail routes also intersect key European rail and road corridors in Budapest, Ljubljana, Salzburg and Vienna, allowing access to markets in Central and Eastern Europe.

The proposed future expansion of the North Adriatic (NAPA) ports will increase container capacity to some six million TEU by 2020, helping to drive goods through this location into Europe. Developing road links from this location, especially those linking the area to Poland, will be vital. Tricity has the opportunity to emerge as a major container hub in keeping with Poland's growing economic status. Lodz has the opportunity to emerge as a key distribution hub of Poland given its central position, while growth will also focus on Wroclaw and Upper Silesia to support large population concentrations.

Source: Colliers International

1. European logistical hubs 2012
 2. Europe´s logistics hubs in 2020
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