

Delivering a Successful 4th China-Central and Eastern European Countries Expo & International Consumer Goods Fair for Stronger Partnerships

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Co-hosted by the Zhejiang Provincial People's Government and the Ministry of Commerce, the China-Central and Eastern European Countries Expo & International Consumer Goods Fair (referred to as the China-CEEC Expo) is the only national-level institutional expo dedicated to China-CEEC cooperation. In 2021, President Xi Jinping sent a congratulatory message to the 2nd China-CEEC Expo that encouraged all participants to tap into the potential of collaboration and open up new prospects for cooperation, thus providing guiding principles for Zhejiang and Ningbo to successfully host future editions of the Expo.

With the theme "New Visions for the Future", the 4th China-CEEC Expo will take place from May 22 to 25 in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province. Guided by President Xi Jinping's congratulatory message, the CPC Zhejiang Provincial Committee and Zhejiang Provincial People's Government are working to deliver a successful, distinctive, and streamlined Expo with fruitful outcomes through diverse programs.

At this year's Expo, the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic will be the guest countries of honor, while Heilongjiang Province will be the guest province of honor. Senior officials and diplomats from Central and Eastern European countries, as well as representatives of international business associations, business leaders, and delegates from numerous Chinese provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) are anticipated to attend.



Press conference.

The 4th China-CEEC Expo stands out with three key features:

First, strong appeal of Central and Eastern Europe. The CEE exhibition area will span 20,000 square meters with over 400 exhibitors, setting new records. More than 8,000 CEE specialty products, including Czech beer, Slovenian honey, Hungarian down products, and Slovenian ski gear, will be showcased. The event is expected to attract 15,000 professional visitors. A new exhibition zone, "Charming Central and Eastern Europe", featuring five sections: Books, Art, Paintings, Seal-Carving, and Tourism, will highlight the cultural richness of CEE countries. The Books section, for instance, will showcase titles jointly published by China and CEE countries, while the Tourism section will present the most iconic landmarks from 14 CEE countries.

Second, well-organized programs. The Expo will feature a number of business matchmaking events and government exchanges organized under the "11+4+N" format. The "11" refers to 11 major activities, including the Opening Ceremony, CEEC products procurement session, and investment promotion sessions. The "4" represents four events: the 9th Meeting of the China-CEEC Business Council, the 7th China-CEEC Dialogue on Customs, Inspection and Quarantine Cooperation, the China-CEEC Mayors Forum, and the China-CEEC International Regatta. The "N" refers to over 50 industry-specific and country-specific matchmaking sessions. Despite a cut-down on the total amount of activities this year, the number of smaller dedicated matchmaking events

has increased from 14 to more than 50, emphasizing a more targeted and practical approach.

Third, extensive international participation. In addition to exhibitors from the 14 CEE countries, this year's Expo will showcase products from nine other countries—including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain—with eight making their debut and Austria joining the event for a second time. International organizations such as the World Bank, business associations such as the China-EU Chamber of Commerce, and prominent global companies including Sanofi, Novartis, and Morgan Stanley will also attend, significantly boosting the Expo's international profile.

In preparation for the 4th China-CEEC Expo, Ningbo has drawn on its experience of hosting the previous three Expos and events such as the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou to ensure quality and success.

First, refined execution. Focusing on key locations including the two primary venues, two major transport hubs, and over 30 designated hotels, efforts have been made to ensure smooth venue operation, seamless traffic coordination, and reinforced safety to create a welcoming environment for participants.

Second, enhanced service delivery. As there will be more small-scale engagements this year, organizers are providing tailored and specialized support across exhibition setup, presentations, and business matchmaking in response to the diverse requests of delegates and exhibitors.

Third, strengthened coordination. A total of 45 government departments in Ningbo are working together to deliver comprehensive support, improve the urban environment, provide volunteer services, and promote the Expo, fostering a strong sense of pride and hospitality among local people.

Over the years, Ningbo has been driving practical cooperation with CEECs under the principles of openness, cooperation, and mutual benefit, with the China-CEEC Business Cooperation Demonstration Zone in the city yielding new outcomes.

First, closer trade relations. Since the launch of the Demonstration Zone in 2018, the annual growth rate of trade between Ningbo and CEECs has averaged 18.3%, reaching 56.13 billion yuan in 2024, three times the amount of that in 2017. In the first quarter of 2025, Ningbo's total import and export volume with CEECs reached 15.29 billion yuan, up 19.8% year-on-year.

Second, broader cooperation. Ningbo has 19 sister cities in CEECs and has established cooperation platforms such as the China-CEEC Innovation Cooperation Research Center and the China-CEEC Alliance of TVET Institutions for Industry-Education Collaboration. The city has hosted the China-CEEC Week, Digital Trade Cooperation Forum, and Innovation China Tour, deepening cooperation in education, technology, culture, tourism, and beyond.

Third, greater influence. With the upgrading of the CEEC Products Permanent Pavilion and the China-CEEC International Industrial Cooperation Park, the Demonstration Zone has become a pivotal platform for enhancing business cooperation with CEECs and further boosted the development of six provincial-level synergistic areas, including Hangzhou's Binjiang District and Wenzhou's Ouhai District.

We look forward to seeing you at the Expo in Zhejiang later this month!

Source: Ningbo Times

