

The Belt and Road Initiative: 65 Countries and Beyond

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The Belt and Road Initiative: 65 Countries and Beyond

It has been a year since the Chinese government unveiled the official action plan¹ for the Belt and Road Initiative. With new developments emerging all the time and more information available, it is necessary to have an up-to-date wrap-up on how the Initiative has progressed. One common confusion is which countries are exactly included in the Initiative as the Chinese government has never announced an official list.

I. “China plus 64 Countries” along the Belt and Road

A Chinese report², released by the China International Trade Institute in August 2015, identified 65 countries along the Belt and Road that will be participating in the Initiative (Exhibit 1).

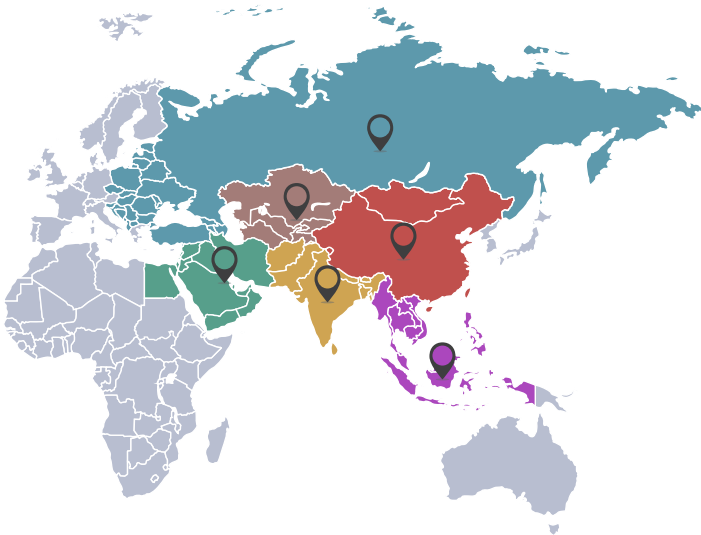


Exhibit 1. 65 Countries along the Belt and Road

Region	Country
East Asia	China, Mongolia
Southeast Asia	Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam
Central Asia	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
Middle East and North Africa	Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Yemen
South Asia	Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
Europe	Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine

¹ *Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road*, the National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China, March 2015

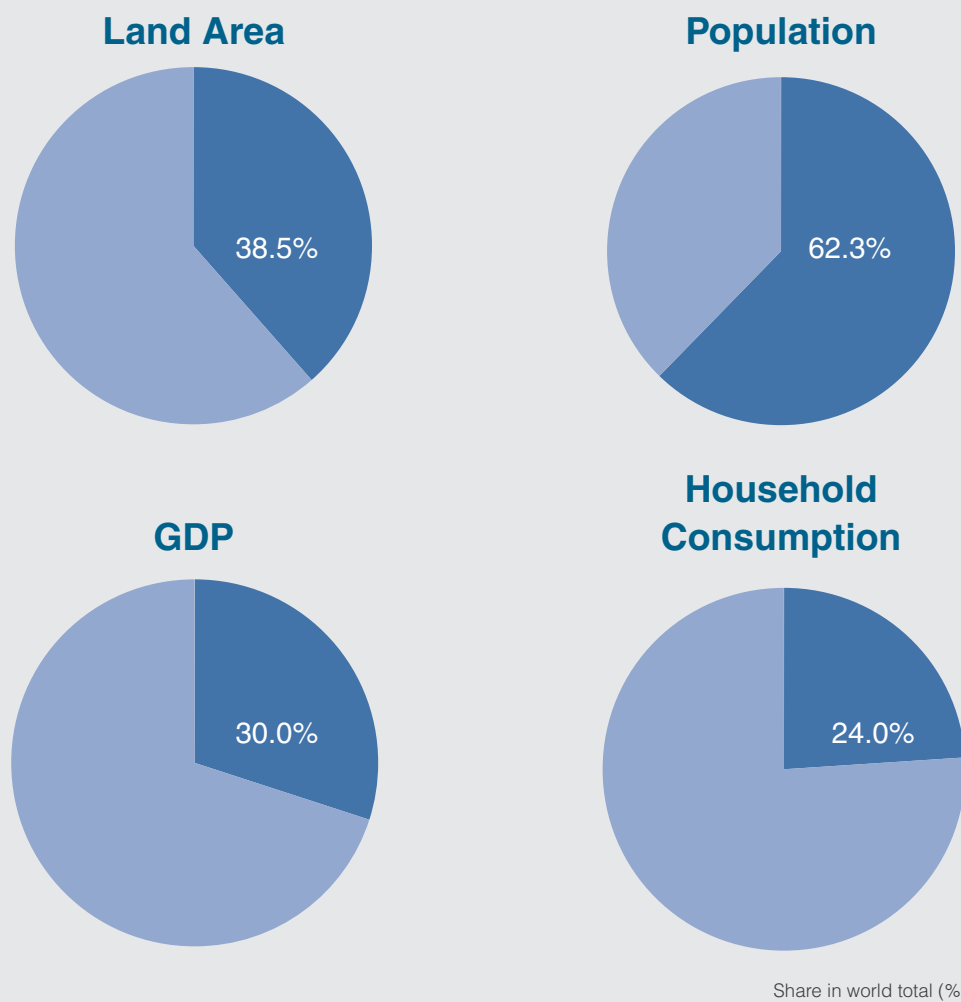
² *Industrial Cooperation between Countries along the Belt and Road* (《“一帶一路”沿線國家產業合作報告》), China International Trade Institute, August 2015

Source: *Industrial Cooperation between Countries along the Belt and Road*, China International Trade Institute. The countries are grouped based on World Bank's classification by region.

Together, the countries along the Belt and Road will create an “economic cooperation area” that stretches from the Western Pacific to the Baltic Sea. According to our computation, these 65 countries jointly account for 62.3%, 30.0%

and 24.0% of the world’s population, GDP and household consumption, respectively, today (Exhibit 2). For details of the computation, please refer to Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 2. Economic Significance of the Belt and Road Countries



Source: World Bank database, compiled by the Fung Business Intelligence Centre.

Exhibit 3. 65 Countries along the Belt and Road

Region	Country	Land area (sq.km thousand, 2014)	Population (million, 2014)	GDP (current US\$ billion, 2014)	Household consumption (current US\$ billion, 2013)
East Asia	China	9,388.2	1,364.3	10,354.8	3,424.7
	Mongolia	1,553.6	2.9	12.0	7.0
Southeast Asia	Brunei	5.3	0.4	17.1	3.6
	Cambodia	176.5	15.3	16.8	12.0
	Indonesia	1,811.6	254.5	888.5	521.6
	Laos	230.8	6.7	12.0	7.3
	Malaysia	328.6	29.9	338.1	167.5
	Myanmar	653.1	53.4	64.3	N/A
	Philippines	298.2	99.1	284.8	199.4
	Singapore	0.7	5.5	307.9	110.8
	Timor-Leste	14.9	1.2	1.4	1.1
	Thailand	510.9	67.7	404.8	218.7
	Vietnam	310.1	90.7	186.2	112.1
South Asia	Afghanistan	652.9	31.6	20.0	16.4
	Bangladesh	130.2	159.1	172.9	109.3
	Bhutan	38.1	0.8	2.0	1.1
	India	2,973.2	1,295.3	2,048.5	1,111.3
	Maldives	0.3	0.4	3.1	N/A
	Nepal	143.4	28.2	19.8	15.1
	Pakistan	770.9	185.0	243.6	186.7
	Sri Lanka	62.7	20.6	78.8	N/A
Central Asia	Kazakhstan	2,699.7	17.3	217.9	117.5
	Kyrgyzstan	191.8	5.8	7.4	7.1
	Tajikistan	140.0	8.3	9.2	9.5
	Turkmenistan	469.9	5.3	47.9	N/A
	Uzbekistan	425.4	30.8	62.6	21.6
Middle East and North Africa	Bahrain	0.8	1.4	33.9	13.3
	Egypt	995.5	89.6	286.5	219.9
	Iran	1,628.6	78.1	425.3	254.7
	Iraq	434.3	34.8	223.5	N/A
	Israel	21.6	8.2	305.7	162.4
	Jordan	88.8	6.6	35.8	27.5
	Kuwait	17.8	3.8	163.6	43.8
	Lebanon	10.2	4.5	45.7	37.5
	Oman	309.5	4.2	81.8	23.7
	Palestine	6.0	4.3	12.7	11.1
	Qatar	11.6	2.2	210.1	28.0
	Saudi Arabia	2,149.7	30.9	746.2	223.7
	Syria	183.6	22.2	N/A	N/A
	United Arab Emirates	83.6	9.1	399.5	176.0
Yemen	528.0	26.2	N/A	N/A	

Region	Country	Land area (sq.km thousand, 2014)	Population (million, 2014)	GDP (current US\$ billion, 2014)	Household consumption (current US\$ billion, 2013)
Europe	Albania	27.4	2.9	13.2	10.0
	Armenia	28.5	3.0	11.6	9.7
	Azerbaijan	82.7	9.5	75.2	30.8
	Belarus	202.9	9.5	76.1	36.3
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	51.2	3.8	18.3	15.3
	Bulgaria	108.6	7.2	56.7	34.8
	Czech	77.2	10.5	205.3	103.7
	Croatia	56.0	4.2	57.1	34.9
	Estonia	42.4	1.3	26.5	12.9
	Georgia	69.5	4.5	16.5	11.5
	Hungary	90.5	9.9	138.3	70.3
	Latvia	62.2	2.0	31.3	18.6
	Lithuania	62.7	2.9	48.4	29.2
	Macedonia	25.2	2.1	11.3	7.7
	Moldova	32.9	3.6	8.0	7.4
	Montenegro	13.5	0.6	4.6	3.6
	Poland	306.2	38.0	545.0	319.1
	Romania	230.0	19.9	199.0	118.7
	Russia	16,376.9	143.8	1,860.6	1,097.4
	Serbia	87.5	7.1	43.9	34.3
Slovakia	48.1	5.4	100.2	55.5	
Slovenia	20.1	2.1	49.5	26.2	
Turkey	769.6	75.9	798.4	582.9	
Ukraine	579.3	45.4	131.8	130.6	
B&R countries total		49,901.2	4,521.4	23,319.9	10,404.0
Share of B&R countries in world total		38.5%	62.3%	30.0%	24.0%

Source: World Bank database, accessed on 27 January 2016, compiled by the Fung Business Intelligence Centre. The countries are grouped based on World Bank's classification by region.

II. For Other Countries: It is an Open Platform

It is worth noting that, the Initiative should be taken as an open platform for all parties that are willing to contribute to global connectivity. As the official action plan for the Belt and Road puts it, “the Initiative is open for cooperation. It covers, but is not limited to, the area of the ancient Silk Road. It is open to all countries, and international and regional organizations for engagement...” And Chinese President Xi Jinping has reiterated in many official occasions that the Initiative is an open, diversified and win-win project poised to

bring huge opportunities for the development of China and many other countries.

The Fung Business Intelligence Centre has in the past year collected a list of those other countries that have participated or have showed interest in the Initiative, through joining the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), developing transport infrastructure in collaboration with China, or through many other forms of cooperation. In this way, we have identified 48 such countries (Exhibit 4) which are not covered in the 65-country list above but are likely to become active participants in the Belt and Road in the future.

Exhibit 4. List of Countries that have Participated/Shown Interest in the Belt and Road Initiative

Region	Country	Form of participation/ cooperation	Remark
East Asia	South Korea	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
Middle East and North Africa	Algeria	Deepening bilateral cooperation with China under B&R; Transport infrastructure cooperation	http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/zzjg_663340/xybfs_663590/xwlb_663592/t1260832.shtml http://english.cscec.com/art/2016/1/27/art_3533_257123.html
	Djibouti	Welcomed by China to join B&R	http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-12/04/c_134882658.htm
	Malta	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Morocco	Deepening bilateral cooperation with China under B&R	http://www.scio.gov.cn/ztk/wh/slx/31200/Document/1461917/1461917.htm
	Tunisia	Deepening bilateral cooperation with China under B&R	http://www.scio.gov.cn/ztk/wh/slx/31200/Document/1461917/1461917.htm
Europe	Austria	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Belgium	Deepening bilateral cooperation with China under B&R	http://www.scio.gov.cn/ztk/wh/slx/31208/Document/1442633/1442633.htm
	Cyprus	Expressed interest in deepening cooperation with China under B&R	http://www.scio.gov.cn/ztk/wh/slx/31200/Document/1459905/1459905.htm
	Denmark	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Finland	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	France	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Germany	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Greece	Expressed interest in deepening cooperation with China under B&R	http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/silkroad/2015-07/13/content_21269856.htm
	Iceland	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Italy	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Luxembourg	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Netherlands	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Norway	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Portugal	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Spain	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Sweden	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Switzerland	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
United Kingdom	AIIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/	

Region	Country	Form of participation/ cooperation	Remark
Sub-Saharan Africa	Burundi	Transport infrastructure cooperation	http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27368877
	Comoros	Expressed interest in deepening cooperation with China under B&R	http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-12/05/c_134886820.htm
	Ethiopia	Deepening bilateral cooperation with China under B&R	http://news.xinhuanet.com/world/2015-10/28/c_1116970612.htm
	Guinea	Transport infrastructure cooperation	http://www.moc.gov.cn/xinxilb/xxlb_fabu/fbpd_shandong/201504/t20150416_1803201.html
	Kenya	Transport infrastructure cooperation	http://www.bhi.com.cn/ydyl/gwdt/14677.html
	Madagascar	Expressed interest in deepening cooperation with China under B&R	http://mt.sohu.com/20150619/n415334230.shtml
	Mauritania	Deepening bilateral cooperation with China under B&R	http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-09/14/c_134623383.htm
	Mauritius	Deepening bilateral cooperation with China under B&R	http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/m/qingdao/2015-05/22/content_20789485.htm
	Mozambique	Transport infrastructure cooperation	http://en.ccccltd.cn/pub/ccccltd/xwzx/ydyl/201510/t20151015_41944.html
	Rwanda	Transport infrastructure cooperation	http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27368877
	Seychelles	Deepening bilateral cooperation with China under B&R	http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/m/qingdao/2015-05/22/content_20789485.htm
	Somalia	Expressed interest in deepening cooperation with China under B&R	http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-12/05/c_134886747.htm
	South Africa	AiIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	South Sudan	Transport infrastructure cooperation	http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27368877
	Sudan	Expressed interest in deepening cooperation with China under B&R	http://zh.apdnews.com/msr/dongtai/236741.html
	Tanzania	Transport infrastructure cooperation	http://www.tanzaniainvest.com/transport/china-to-build-tanzania-high-speed-railway-by-2018
	Uganda	Transport infrastructure cooperation	http://news.hexun.com/2015-05-23/176082225.html
Zambia	Deepening bilateral cooperation with China under B&R	http://www.zambia-invest.com/industry/zambia-launches-one-belt-one-road-industrial-park	
Zimbabwe	Infrastructure cooperation	http://www.scio.gov.cn/ztk/wh/slxy/31200/Document/1460952/1460952.htm	
Oceania	Australia	AiIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	New Zealand	AiIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
Latin America	Argentina	Expressed interest in deepening cooperation with China under B&R	http://news.163.com/15/0618/21/ASE3QPUV00014JB5.html
	Brazil	AiIB signatory	http://www.aiib.org/html/aboutus/introduction/Membership/
	Peru	Expressed interest in deepening cooperation with China under B&R	http://www.scio.gov.cn/ztk/wh/slxy/31200/Document/1460907/1460907.htm

Source: Various sources from news and official websites, compiled by the Fung business Intelligence Centre. The countries are grouped based on World Bank's classification by region.

III. An Update on the AIIB

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) was proposed by China in 2013, and the initiative of establishing the bank was launched in October 2014 when representatives from 22 countries signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). By the deadline of 31 March 2015 for submission of membership applications, 57 countries have submitted their applications and have become the founding members of the AIIB. (Exhibit 5) Of

the 57 founding members, 37 are from Asia and Oceania, and the rest are from Europe, Africa and Latin America. As of 31 December 2015, all these 57 countries signed the Articles of Agreement that form the legal basis for the bank, marking the official establishment of the AIIB. Headquartered in Beijing, the AIIB was open for business on 16 January 2016.

Exhibit 5. The 57 AIIB Signatories

Australia	Austria	Azerbaijan	Bangladesh
Brazil	Brunei	Cambodia	China
Denmark	Egypt	Finland	France
Georgia	Germany	Iceland	India
Indonesia	Iran	Israel	Italy
Jordan	Kazakhstan	Kuwait	Kyrgyzstan
Laos	Luxembourg	Malaysia	Maldives
Malta	Mongolia	Myanmar	Nepal
Netherlands	New Zealand	Norway	Oman
Pakistan	Philippines	Poland	Portugal
Qatar	Russia	Saudi Arabia	Singapore
South Africa	South Korea	Spain	Sri Lanka
Sweden	Switzerland	Tajikistan	Thailand
Turkey	United Arab Emirates	United Kingdom	Uzbekistan
Vietnam			

The Official Action Plan for the Belt and Road

On 28 March 2015, during the Boao Forum for Asia, China's National Development and Reform Commission, in conjunction with China's Foreign Ministry and Commerce Ministry, issued an action plan for the Belt and Road, titled the *Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road*.

Basic Goals

The official document lays out the basic goals of the Belt and Road Initiative: "It is aimed at promoting orderly and free flow of economic factors, highly efficient allocation of resources and deep integration of markets; encouraging the countries along the Belt and Road to achieve economic policy coordination and carry out broader and more in-depth regional cooperation of higher standards; and jointly creating an open, inclusive and balanced

regional economic cooperation architecture that benefits all."

Geographic Coverage

According to the action plan, the Belt will have three routes and the Road will have two routes:

The Silk Road Economic Belt:

- China—Central Asia—Russia—Europe (the Baltic)
- China—Central Asia—West Asia—Persian Gulf—Mediterranean Sea
- China—Southeast Asia—South Asia—Indian Ocean

The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road:

- Coastal China—South China Sea—Indian Ocean—Europe
- Coastal China—South China Sea—South Pacific

Exhibit 6. Geographic Coverage of the Belt and Road



Source: Compiled by the Fung Business Intelligence Centre based on the FRAMEWORK chapter of the *Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road*

The Official Action Plan for the Belt and Road (Cont')

On the same day that the official action plan of the Initiative was announced, China's President Xi also revealed in his speech that around 60 countries along the routes have shown interest in taking part in the development of the Belt and Road.

Regional and Provincial Positioning

The action plan also specifies the positioning of various regions and provinces in China in the Initiative. (Exhibit 7)

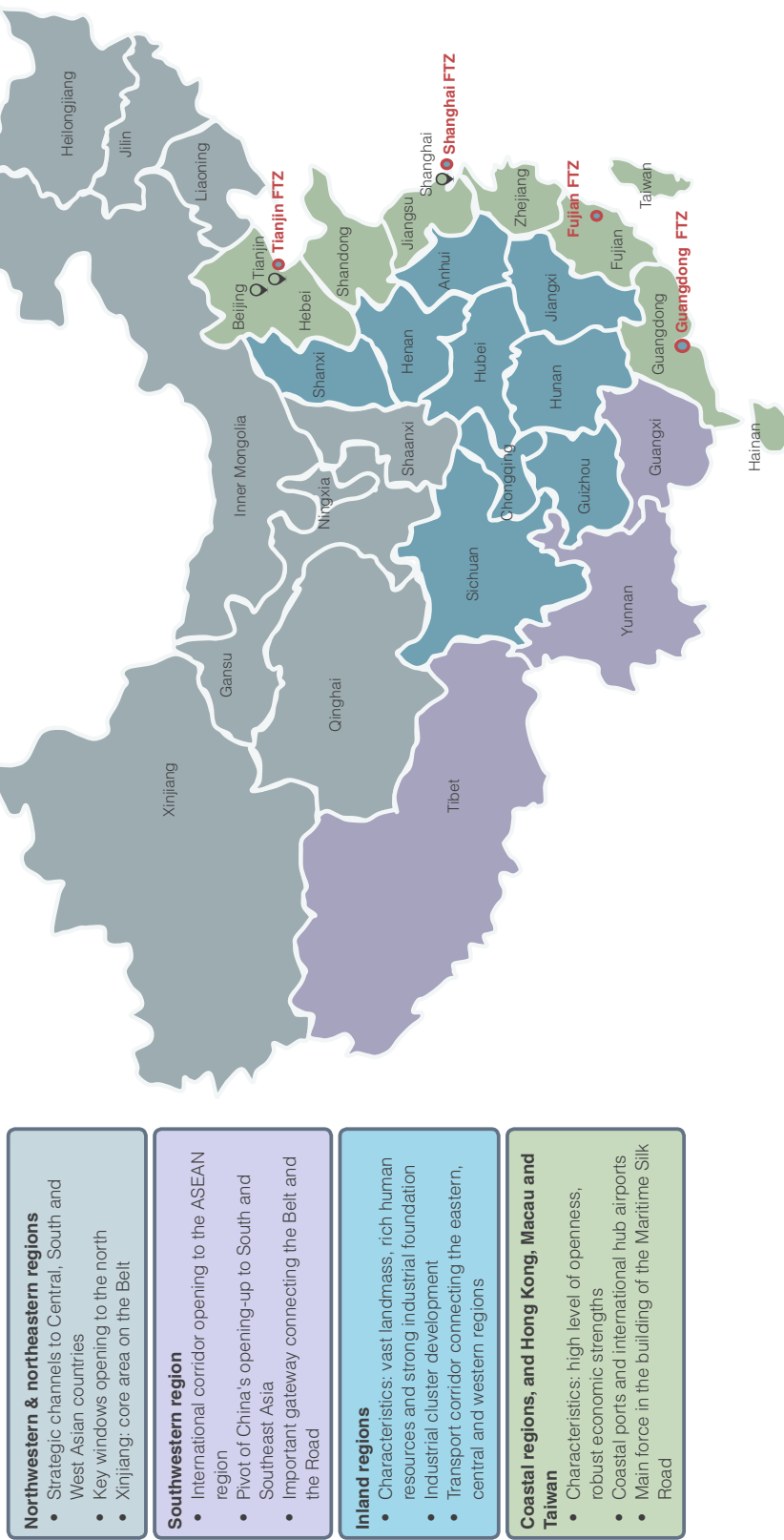
Vision

The vision of the Belt and Road Initiative is to realize the "Five Links", which refer to linkages in policies, infrastructure, trade, finance and people.

- Policy coordination
- Capacity building
- Liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment
- Financial cooperation

(The contents in this box are excerpted from *The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road* report published by the Fung Business Intelligence Centre in May 2015)

Exhibit 7. Regions & Provinces in China: Positioning in the Belt and Road Initiative



- Northwestern & northeastern regions**
 - Strategic channels to Central, South and West Asian countries
 - Key windows opening to the north
 - Xinjiang: core area on the Belt
- Southwestern region**
 - International corridor opening to the ASEAN region
 - Pivot of China's opening-up to South and Southeast Asia
 - Important gateway connecting the Belt and the Road
- Inland regions**
 - Characteristics: vast landmass, rich human resources and strong industrial foundation
 - Industrial cluster development
 - Transport corridor connecting the eastern, central and western regions
- Coastal regions, and Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan**
 - Characteristics: high level of openness, robust economic strengths
 - Coastal ports and international hub airports
 - Main force in the building of the Maritime Silk Road

Source: *Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road*, compiled by the Fung Business Intelligence Centre

THE FUNG BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE CENTRE

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The Fung Business Intelligence Centre (FBIC) collects and analyses market data on sourcing, supply chains, distribution and retail. It also provides thought leadership on technology and other key issues shaping their future. Headquartered in Hong Kong, the FBIC leverages unique relationships and information networks to track and report on trends and developments in China and other Asian countries.

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