



Speakers at the NRWInvest event: Dirk Brüggge, Vice County Governor, Rhein-Sieg-N Kreis, Germany; Richard Muir, Deputy Chief Executive, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce; Dagmar Wilkowitz, NRW Invest Düsseldorf; Michael Kembs, NRW Invest Düsseldorf; Dr Theisten Volz, Pörsner Maxens Germany LLP Düsseldorf and Andrew Harfoot, NRW Invest London

Business opportunities in Germany

Building on Glasgow Chamber's existing links with Germany, we recently worked in partnership with colleagues at Scottish Development International (SDI) and Scottish Enterprise (SE) to host an event which explored the opportunities of doing business in the North Rhine and Westphalia (NRW) region of Germany. Representatives from NRWInvest, the principal business support organisation for the area, presented to more than 30 delegates who were interested in exploring what the region had to offer.

Some amazing statistics emerged from the presentation. NRW is the most populous state in Germany with a population of 17.9 million. At around 670 billion Euros, NRW generates more than a fifth of the total German gross domestic product. Some 160 million people live within a radius of 500 km of the state capital, Düsseldorf. No other European metropolitan region possesses such purchasing power.

More than 1,500 UK companies are already located in NRW and

Lynne Zhangeer,
Sales and Export
Director, LINIAN



Germany is the first choice for UK firms looking to establish a foothold in mainland Europe representing sectors such as chemicals, advanced engineering, automotive, ICT, healthcare and energy.

At the end of the event we were also fortunate to hear from Lynne Zhangeer, Sales and Export Director of Glasgow company, LINIAN, on her experience of doing business in Germany.

"In July last year I was delighted to represent LINIAN on a cross-sector market visit to Berlin, Nuremberg and Munich supported by SDI/SE, Glasgow and Edinburgh Chambers of Commerce and their counterparts in Germany. This opportunity was not only vital to our strategic development plan for internationalisation, but it also helped us to capture a well-rounded picture of what exporting to the German market would really look like.

"In advance of the trip we were able to tap into the research teams and the field office representatives who could not have been more helpful. We tailored a detailed brief of our 'asks' for the market which included introductions to potential clients and more specific market sector information which

helped us tailor our value proposition. We were advised that the German market liked businesses to be very well prepared and we took that very seriously.

"We were able to attend several workshops in advance of the visit and understanding the culture, expectations and how to conduct ourselves meant that we really were fully prepared. We had identified two potential distributors within the region and met them while we were there.

"As our exporting journey begins, we are very excited to be dealing with the German market. The similarities between doing business in Germany and in Scotland are startling and something that we may not have been able to understand first-hand in this manner without the support of the market visit and 'in-country' experience. It is refreshing to deal with businesses that share many of the same values, ethics and with aligned strategies. We look forward to seeing what this market brings for these partnerships that we have."

If you are interested in finding out more about our business connections in Germany and other countries, or participating on future business visits, please contact Elaine Rodger on elaine.rodger@glasgowchamberofcommerce.com or call 0141 204 8332.