

Concept and Programme**Workshop
&
Introduction of a new working group****Global Economy and Multinational Enterprises (GEME)****on Wednesday, 9th Octobre 2024
at the University of Zurich**

The German economy shows a high degree of openness in all relevant statistical measures: The export-to-GDP-ratio levels at 40 per cent, the trade-to-GDP-ratio has levelled above 70 per cent for decades. One fourth of domestic employment depends on exports. Export surplus exceeds 200 bn Euro each year. Large German corporations, like Volkswagen, Bosch, Siemens, BASF or Merck, gain 80 per cent or more of its revenues abroad. FDI transactions from Germany have stood at 170 bn Euro over the last years, FDI stock has accumulated to 1,500 bn Euro, equalling 5 per cent of total global FDI.

Though the German economy is highly globally entangled – an aspect that increasingly raises concerns among German politicians and businesspeople – and the global entanglement has already started in the 19th century, German business history contributes little to vivid international research on Multinationals, global business, global trade and finance. The establishment of a new working group under the roof of the Society for Business History Germany (Gesellschaft für Unternehmensgeschichte - GUG) aims at intensifying the interaction between international research and the knowledge on German corporate internationalisation. The working group provides a forum in which the extensive knowledge on the international activities of German corporations, which is often only available within the German community, can be injected into international research. German researchers, on the other hand, can profit from approaches, theories and methods that scholars have applied so fruitfully to business history research over the last years and not least from hints to archival materials abroad.

The first meeting of the working group is scheduled for 9th Octobre at the University of Zurich. It will be dedicated to the topic «Business and the European Integration» and a discussion on the working group's work-programme for the next years. If you are interested in joining the working group, have any questions and/or would like to participate in the workshop, you are cordially invited to contact the office of the Society for Business History Germany by e-mail at info@unternehmensgeschichte.de.

The working group has been initiated by Jan-Otmar Hesse (University of Bayreuth / Society for Business History), Christian Marx (Leibniz History for Contemporary History) und Sabine Pitteloud (UniDistance Suisse).

Programme

«Business and the European Integration»

- 14:00 **Welcome address**
Jan-Otmar Hesse, University of Bayreuth / Society for Business History Germany
- 14:15 **Keynote**
Business and European Integration
Grace Ballor, Bocconi University
- 15:00 **Comment**
Christian Kleinschmidt, Philipps University of Marburg
- 15:15 **Discussion**
- 16:00 **Coffee Break**
- 16.30 **Panel discussion**
A neglect of the International in German Business History?
Grace Ballor, Bocconi University
Christina Lubinski, Copenhagen Business School
Christian Marx, Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History
Sabine Pitteloud, UniDistance Suisse
- 18:00 On the work-programme of the study group Global Economy and Multinational Enterprises (GEME)