



ITFA CEE REGIONAL COMMITTEE AND WOLF THEISS EVENT "DIGITAL FINANCE – BALANCING INNOVATION WITH RISK MANAGEMENT", SOFIA, April 2025

Contributed by Paola Zgurova, Legal Trainee at Wolf Theiss.

The first joint event by ITFA and Wolf Theiss in Bulgaria brought together on 17 March 2025 top industry experts to discuss the digital transformation of financial services and the evolving role of trade finance in international transactions. The strong turnout and lively discussions showed just how important these topics are for banks, fintechs, and businesses alike.

Held at the Wolf Theiss office in Sofia, the event attracted leading banks from the region, including Raiffeisen Bank International AG, NLB d.d., and OTP Bank Magyarország, as well as many representatives from the Bulgarian banking sector.

The event kicked off with a macroeconomic update from Dilyana Miteva, Head of Strategy at DSK Bank, covering Bulgaria's progress toward adopting the Euro and its impact on trade. This was followed by a panel on key regulatory changes, where Katerina Kraeva, Partner, Rudolf Pfeffer, Counsel, and Irina Dekova, Consultant, from Wolf Theiss broke down the latest developments in eIDAS 2.0, the Digital Operational Resilience Act (DORA), and the AI Regulation, explaining what financial institutions should expect.

Beyond regulations, the discussion turned to how banks and fintechs can work together to drive innovation. Experts such as Georgi Penev, Head of Sales & Business Development at VSG Bulgaria, Mihael Mihaylov, COO of IRIS Solutions, Matthias Verbeke, Co-founder of Complidata, and Teodora Terzieva, Chief Business Officer of VECTOR labs, LLC, shared their thoughts on bridging the gap between traditional banking and new financial technologies.

Another highlight of the event was a deep dive into trade finance, led by Filip Genov, Co-founder & CEO of F27 AD&CFN. The panel included Evgeniya Sharkova, Head of Trade Finance Sales for Raiffeisen Bank International AG, Kamelia Popova, Country Manager at Allianz Trade Bulgaria, and Georgi Koynov, CFO of Oliva AD, who explored the opportunities and challenges in trade finance across Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and South-Eastern Europe (SEE).

The event was also supported by ITFA CEE Board members, including Mag. Semih Özcan MA, Elitza Kavrakova, Viktor Nagy, Helena Belingar, and Dr. Maria Mogilnaya. Their contributions reinforced ITFA's commitment to guiding financial professionals through the fast-changing landscape of trade finance, regulation, and technology.

With the active participation of the Wolf Theiss Banking & Finance team, this event strengthened discussions around the future of trade finance in the region. ITFA and its partners remain dedicated to creating more opportunities for learning, networking, and collaboration.

If you're interested in staying ahead of industry trends, meeting like-minded professionals, and gaining valuable insights, consider joining ITFA and attending future events. We look forward to seeing you there!



International Trade
and Forfeiting Association

itfa.org
info@itfa.org

