



European Union
Delegation to Singapore



BUSINESSES AND ORGANISATIONS FROM 14 EU COUNTRIES AND SINGAPORE EXPLORE PARTNERSHIPS UNDER THE EU-SINGAPORE ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENT ON CLUSTER COOPERATION

Singapore, 23 November 2021

1 More than 100 representatives from European Union industry clusters¹ and Singapore Trade Associations and Chambers (TACs) and Centres of Innovation (COIs) connected for the first time at the EU-Singapore Cluster Matchmaking Event. The event, organised by the European Commission and Enterprise Singapore (ESG), was held on 11 and 12 November.

2 The event brought together industry representatives from 27 leading European clusters from 14 EU Member States² and Turkey as well as 19 TACs and COIs from Singapore. Five industry roundtables were convened in Advanced Manufacturing; Sustainability and Energy; Mobility; Food and Agri technology; as well as ICT, Fintech, Blockchain and Smart Cities, discussing the latest developments and possible collaboration. More than 70 one-to-one networking meetings between clusters and businesses were also arranged at the event.

4 Speaking at the opening of the event, EU's Ambassador to Singapore Iwona Piórko and Singapore's Ambassador to the EU Lim Hong Huai emphasised that Singapore and the EU are like-minded partners and well-positioned to recover from COVID-19 together, with collaboration between clusters, TACs and COIs playing an important role to spearhead private sector partnerships.

¹ Clusters are defined as a group of firms and institutions that are located near each other and have reached a sufficient scale to develop specialised expertise, services, resources, suppliers and skills.

² Clusters from the following EU Member States participated in the EU-Singapore Cluster Matchmaking Event: Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain.

5 Clusters account for around 62 million jobs, representing almost 24% of total employment in the EU. In Singapore, TACs and COIs are instrumental in supporting Singapore enterprises on their industry transformation, innovation and internationalisation journeys. Cluster to TAC/COI collaboration will play an important role in opening up pathways for EU and Singapore companies to access new markets and sectoral opportunities.

6 The networking event was held under the framework of the EU-Singapore Administrative Arrangement on Clusters Cooperation. The arrangement was signed on 3 December 2020 by the Singapore Ministry of Trade and Industry and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) on the first-year anniversary of the entry into force of the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement.

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About European Union Delegation to Singapore

The EU Delegation to Singapore promotes closer ties between the EU and Singapore. The wide-ranging relationship has strengthened over the years. In close coordination with the diplomatic missions of the EU Member States, the Delegation ensures consistency and effectiveness of the EU's external action in Singapore.

The Delegation covers a range of issues such as trade, foreign policy, climate change, environment, transport, industrial policy, research, science and technology.

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About Enterprise Singapore

Enterprise Singapore is the government agency championing enterprise development. We work with committed companies to build capabilities, innovate and internationalise.

We also support the growth of Singapore as a hub for global trading and startups, and build trust in Singapore's products and services through quality and standards.

Visit www.enterprisesg.gov.sg for more information

ANNEX

Quotes by EU Representatives

Ms Maive Rute, Deputy Director-General of DG GROW (European Commission) said "Our EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (FTA) has already lowered barriers and increased market access for our businesses. Now we want to make sure that our companies successfully harness these opportunities. With more than a hundred participants, today's matchmaking event proves that our businesses want to tap into market opportunities, knowledge, talent and finance that Singapore and the EU can offer".

Ms Iwona Piórko, EU Ambassador to Singapore, said: “Singapore is a key partner for the EU in the region as also recognised in the recently adopted EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. The EU and Singapore want to support businesses (big and small) in their green and digital transformation. Clusters organisation are a valuable/strong ally in this endeavour. International cluster collaboration can provide ideas on how to diversify and make supply and value chains more resilient, in particular at the challenging times of post pandemic recovery.”

Mr Jon Mitxelena, Technological Project Manager at Cluster GAIA said: “Singapore is a strategic hub for European companies working on Smart Cities and addressing South-East Asia. Partnering with relevant local stakeholders is fundamental to success when performing internationalization activities with third markets. Private-Public collaboration is key for the deployment of smart city solutions and Singapore is an example for this. The whole country can be identified as a living-lab to test, commercialize and develop new technological solutions. Singapore has its challenges clearly identified and they have transparent and well-structured strategies which will lead them to achieve their goals!”

Quotes by Singapore Representatives

Mr Lim Hong Huai, Singapore’s Ambassador to the EU said: “This matchmaking event builds on the success of the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement and our longstanding bilateral economic partnership. We are pleased to see the strong turnout and diversity of business sectors at this event. There are much untapped opportunities, particularly in the digital and green economy. We hope businesses will take full advantage of this event to engage your overseas partners, expand your networks, and ultimately achieve joint success.”

Mr Gabriel Lim, Permanent Secretary of the Singapore Ministry of Trade and Industry said: “The EU is a key partner for Singapore, with which we share a longstanding and robust bilateral economic relationship. Following the entry-into-force of the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement, we are keen to continue broadening and deepening our

partnership at the government and business levels. The inaugural EU-Singapore Cluster Matchmaking Event is a timely opportunity to bring our businesses together to explore and capture new growth opportunities in emerging areas such as the digital and green economies. We will continue working closely with the EU to see how best we can support our businesses to seize opportunities in these areas.”

Mr Tan Soon Kim, Assistant CEO of Enterprise Singapore said: “Singapore enjoys strong economic ties with the EU. This has strengthened even amidst COVID-19. TACs and COIs play a key role in preparing SMEs for the changing face of the global economy. Co-innovation partnerships, enhancing supply chain resilience as well as capabilities in sustainability development are key areas to boost competitiveness. EU and Singapore enterprises can complement one another in these aspects and are well-positioned to deepen their collaboration in Europe and Asia.”

Professor Tjin Swee Chuan, Chairman, LUX Photonics Consortium Singapore said: “The event was a useful platform to be introduced to EU organisations and companies, uncover potential collaboration opportunities and explore common areas of interest. LUX has built up a strong track record of collaboration with EU partners over the years. We are keen to explore discussions with new EU partners in optics and photonics for collaboration in co-innovation and commercial projects.”