DPA Event Summary - EU & Singapore Connecting Digital Economies. Feb 22, 2024

Digital Partnerships in Action
Funded by the European Union

DPA areas of collaboration:

Policy:
Interoperability, regulatory frameworks, legislation, standards, ethics, values.

Trade:
Facilitating digital trade, principles building on G7 equivalent and WTO e-commerce negotiations, policy dialogues and regulatory cooperation on matters such as Supply Chains Resilience, Digital IDs, e-Invoicing Standards, Paperless Trading, Data Flows, Data Localisation and Privacy.

Emerging Technologies:
Artificial Intelligence (AI), Semiconductors (AI Chips), Automation, IoT, Digital Trust (DFFT), eID, Cybersecurity, Quantum & HPC, Big Data, 5G/6G Telecom, Web 3, Blockchain, SMART Submarine Cables, Digital Platforms.

R&D:
Facilitate the connections between academia, industry, business and startups, digital skills.

On 22 February 2024, in the framework of the EU-Singapore Digital Partnership, a workshop was held on Connecting Digital Economies - Interoperability, Digital Identity and Digital Trade where stakeholders explored use cases featuring the EU Digital Wallet and SingPass.

The Workshop brought together over 50 experts, and representatives of relevant European Commission's Services (DG Connect, DG Digital Services and GROW, the EU Delegation in Singapore) and the Singapore Government (Ministry of Trade and Industry, Government Technology Agency, the Infocomm Media and Development Authority) as well as selected experts from government and industry.

The presentations demonstrated convergence between the EU and Singapore in the area of digital identity and the value of working towards mutual recognition of digital signatures. There are great opportunities and benefits of cooperating in specific areas through pilot projects for ensuring interoperable trust ecosystems between partner institutions in the public and private sector. This will greatly improve digital trade among industry and facilitate citizens' access to digital government and other services across the EU, Singapore and beyond.

The event started with opening remarks by **Thibaut Kleiner, Director for Policy Strategy and Outreach, DG Connect, European Commission,** and **Chua Shun Loong, Director of Europe & Central Asia, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Singapore,** stating that eID is more than just a digital identity, it is the key to a 21st century globalised economy and society built on trust between citizens, governments, business, and academia opening up entirely new opportunities for the world of online digital markets and public sector interaction. By 2030, 100% of citizens in the EU should have access to digital identity and be able to use it. It was announced that the EU Digital Identity Wallet (EUDIW) is slated to be accessible by 2026 and is now being put up for a vote in Parliament. In turn, Singapore shared that its National Digital Identity, Singpass, was now one of the most pervasively adopted national digital identity systems in the world, providing convenient and secure access to over 1,700 services by more than 460 government and private sector organisations. It was also highlighted that the cooperation between the EU and Singapore can show the way forward for other countries and regions to join.

https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/partnerships
https://www.linkedin.com/company/digital-partnerships-in-action
https://twitter.com/digital_in88360

The workshop consisted of two sessions presenting several use cases of possible cooperation between Singapore and the EU as part of the activities to be implemented in the context of the EU-Singapore Digital Partnership. This included possible cooperation in the area of digital identity schemes, technological frameworks and standards as well as legislative aspects and interoperability for integrating eID access to eGov services, bank accounts, travel and transport, supply-chain and logistics, digital trade, SIM eRegistration, mobile driving license, qualified electronic signature and ePrescription in health care services:

Session 1. EU Digital Identity Wallet and Singapore's Singpass was moderated by Bogdan Stefan, Head of Legal sector DG CNECT/H4, European Commission. It included the following presentations:

- **Daryl Low** and **Malcolm Kuang, GovTech Singapore**, talked about Singapore's National Digital Identity – Singpass and gave us an overview of Digital Identity Schemes around the world, the background, history, and future strategy of Singapore's national digital identity for its architecture and ecosystem.

- **Paolo De Rosa, European Commission, DG CNECT/H4**, talked about the bottom-up innovation of the EUDIW (EU Digital Identity Wallet) and the vision that in 2030, 100 % of EU citizens should have access to secure electronic identification (eID) means that are recognised throughout the Union, enabling them to have full control over identity transactions and shared personal data, and how it will become a game changer in the interaction between public and private sector and citizens. Mr. De Rosa emphasized how the EU and Singapore are aligned and have many commonalities in their approach, values, visions, missions and technology, though data protection measures may differ.

- **Elisabeth Grießel, POTENTIAL**, presented a use case on eID for a mobile driving license and how it is being developed with a user driven, agile approach. It is a citizen-oriented wallet with a user centric way of thinking to ensure user friendliness and a smooth "user journey" in eID applications for eGov services, bank accounts, SIM eRegistration, mobile driving license, qualified electronic signature and ePrescription in health care services etc.

- **Stephen Haartman, Gen,** presented the European Wallet Consortium, a large scale pilot consortium currently involving 80+ public and private organisations; how 500+ million European users will use this wallet and the use case of travel credentials.

Session 2. Interoperability in Digital Trade was moderated by Geok Seong Wah, Director E-invoicing, IMDA Singapore, and included the following presentations:

- **Kay Ren Yuh, IMDA, Singapore**, who talked about identity in trade digitalisation with TradeTrust - a decentralised approach to digital identity. Mr. Ren Yuh presented how IMDA work as architects of Singapore's digital future, transforming Singapore's economy and facilitating international trade via collaboration through digital enterprises and digital innovation.

- **Apostolos Apladas, European Commission, DG Digital Services**, talked about the EU Mutual Recognition agreement mechanisms, the Third Countries Trust List (TCTL) Programme, including the eIDAS Dashboard, and how this is beneficial for education (digital diplomas and online enrolment to a university campus), health (ePrescriptions and medical records' exchange among hospitals in a fast and secure way), business (eInvoicing, contract signing, faster recruitment) and trade (online certificates, elimination of red tape).

Both sessions ended with panel discussions and interventions related to use cases for international cooperation featuring **Elisabeth Grießel, Stephen Haartman, Daryl Low and Malcolm Kuang, Herbert Leitold, Director-General of Secure Information Technology, Centre Austria A-SIT; Sin Yong Loh, Director for Trade; Bill Xiao (Deputy Director E-invoicing, IMDA Singapore), Irena Rivière-Osipov, Policy Officer in charge of eInvoicing, European Commission DG GROW** and **Daryl Low.**

Both sides showed great interest, openness, and enthusiasm for further collaboration and stated that the very strong convergence helps the collaboration and mechanisms for interoperability. The workshop accentuated the value of bringing the right people together and validated the EU Singapore Digital Partnership's cooperative framework.

Two strands of work can be identified for further cooperation:

1. On Digital Identity Wallet frameworks, the workshop demonstrated the opportunity for both sides to continue exchanges on technical specifications and prototypes and test interoperability of the use cases discussed.

2. On Digital Signatures, the EU and Singapore could continue working towards a Mutual Recognition Agreement. To that end, the European Commission could invite Singapore to join its third countries trusted list programme.