

SINGAPORE LEADS THE WAY IN NEW DIGITAL ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH CHILE AND NEW ZEALAND

1. Singapore, Chile and New Zealand launched trilateral talks on the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA) today, on the sidelines of the APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT) Meeting in Viña del Mar, Chile, from 17 to 18 May 2019.

2. Digitalisation has transformed business models and trade. This has opened up unparalleled opportunities and choices for businesses and consumers if the challenges of fragmented digital frameworks, standards and systems can be addressed. The extent of cross-border interoperability will determine how far companies and citizens can realise the potential of trade in the digital economy.

3. The DEPA, initiated by Singapore, is an opportunity for Singapore, Chile and New Zealand to set forward-looking standards on digital trade, and establish new international approaches to support the digital economy and trade in the digital era.

4. Minister for Trade and Industry Chan Chun Sing who announced the DEPA together with his Chile and New Zealand counterparts said, “Digital trade is a key source of our economic growth. Businesses that are able to navigate and tap on international markets in the new digital environment will have a competitive advantage. Singapore is a strong proponent of an integrated, global digital economy. We are glad to champion this new Agreement with Chile and New Zealand. It complements Singapore’s network of free trade agreements as well as our efforts as co-convenor of the World Trade Organization Joint Statement Initiative on E-Commerce to develop baseline digital trade rules.”

5. The DEPA aims to address emerging issues that impact the digital economy, such as governance for artificial intelligence, e-payments, e-invoicing and digital identities. It will set high standards, and provide a benchmark for international trade rules that benefit businesses and support SMEs’ digitalisation and internationalisation efforts. As a trilateral agreement, the DEPA will increase digital connectivity and strengthen economic ties between Singapore, Chile and New Zealand.

6. The DEPA is an inter-agency effort led by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Communications and Information and the Infocomm Media Development Authority. It also involves relevant agencies such as the Smart Nation and Digital Government Office, the Monetary Authority of Singapore and the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore.

Annex A: Photos and Captions

Annex B: Joint Ministerial Statement on the launch of DEPA negotiations

Annex C: Quotes from companies on potential benefits of DEPA

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For media queries, please contact:

Janice Ong
Senior Assistant Director
Corporate Communications Division, Ministry of Trade and Industry
Tel: 6332 8613
HP: 9755 1597
Email: Janice_ONG@mti.gov.sg

Joanne Lim
Senior Manager
Corporate Communications Division, Ministry of Communications and
Information
Tel: 6837 9842
Email: joanne_lim@mci.gov.sg

Eugene Neubronner
Manager
Corporate and Marketing Division, Infocomm Media Development Authority
Tel: 6221 1182
Email: Eugene_NEUBRONNER@imda.gov.sg

Annex A: Photo and Caption



Caption: Minister for Trade and Industry Chan Chun Sing at the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement Press Conference.

Annex B: Joint Ministerial Statement on the launch of DEPA negotiations

1. We, the Ministers responsible for trade of Chile, New Zealand and Singapore, met in Vina del Mar, Chile, on the 17th of May and discussed ways to maximize the contributions that digitalization can provide to our economies and how to take advantage of the opportunities offered by trade in the digital era.
2. We recognize that the digital transformation of our economies can be an important driver of inclusive economic growth and play a significant role in achieving sustainable development, enhancing productivity of existing industries, and fostering new markets and businesses.
3. We also recognize that a free, open, global and secure Internet can facilitate connectivity, promote innovation and competition, and foster economic growth. We are committed to preserving a free, open, global and secure Internet as essential for the digital economy and beneficial for everyone.
4. We also affirm efforts by governments and the private sector to address the issue of terrorist and violent extremist online content.
5. Digitalization has also transformed the nature of trade. We are all small, outward facing, trade dependant countries, and we share a common objective of advancing trade in the digital era to support our businesses and consumers to take advantage of the numerous opportunities offered by the digital economy.
6. In the context of this shared vision, today we are launching negotiations to establish a first-of-its-kind and forward-looking Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (“**DEPA**”). The DEPA seeks to deepen and strengthen cooperation in digital areas, establish new international approaches for digital trade issues, and explore new frontiers in the digital economy, such as digital identities, e-payments, cross-border data flows and artificial intelligence.
7. The DEPA complements the ongoing WTO Joint Statement Initiative negotiations on e-commerce as well as digital economy work streams within APEC and other international fora.

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Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chile, Hon Roberto Ampuero  
Minister for Trade and Export Growth, New Zealand, Hon David Parker  
Minister of Trade and Industry, Singapore, Hon Chan Chun Sing

### Annex C: Quotes from companies on potential benefits of DEPA

| Company      | Sector                    | Media Contact                                                                              | Spokesperson                                                       | Quote                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grab         | Technology                | Xiuxing Aw<br><br>xiuxing.aw@grab.com<br>91550433                                          | Annabella Ng,<br>Head of<br>Government Affairs                     | Grab is supportive of efforts that facilitate cross-border digital flows and transactions, while ensuring security, privacy and accountability. We are encouraged by the lead taken by the Singapore and Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA) partner governments to develop a common rules-based framework that can help businesses fully tap into the potential of the digital economy. We hope that the DEPA can eventually serve as a basis for other governments in the CPTPP and across ASEAN to consider adopting rules that support interoperability and innovation by businesses, and which facilitate the flow of data and information across borders. |
| Lazada Group | E-Commerce/<br>Technology | Jermyn Chow, Senior<br>Communications<br>Manager<br><br>jermyn.chow@lazada.com<br>94572589 | Gladys Chun,<br>General Counsel &<br>Head of<br>Government Affairs | The Digital Economy Partnership Agreement will help promote cross border trade. It is heartening to see Singapore making a push for this agreement and we hope to see such agreements being developed with countries in Southeast Asia to advance the growth of e-commerce across borders.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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| Mastercard | Financial Services    | Barkha Patel, Vice-President, Communications<br><br>Barkha.Patel@mastercard.com<br>81883180                   | Ari Sarker, Co-President, Asia Pacific     | The ability for data to flow across borders is foundational to the digital economy, and partnerships such as the proposed Digital Economy Partnership Agreement, will contribute to further cooperation in establishing efficient, innovative and trusted digital trade corridors.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Shopee     | E-commerce/Technology | Elissa Young, Marketing/Public Relations/<br>Influencer Management<br><br>elissa.young@shopee.com<br>92264022 | Zhou Junjie, Chief Commercial Officer      | Shopee understands the challenges businesses face in the digital economy, especially when it concerns cross-border trade. The Digital Economy Partnership Agreement is another step in the right direction as it facilitates greater transparency and simplifies processes in digital trade, enabling businesses in Singapore to reach customers across the region more easily and freely. This lays the foundation for future-proof frameworks to create commercial certainty, as well as a secure and integrated digital trade ecosystem across the region. |
| Xero       | Internet/Technology   | Semantha Tan, Communications Lead, Asia<br><br>Semantha.tan@xero.com<br>82004296                              | Kevin Fitzgerald, Regional Director - Asia | We see the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA) as a practicable next step following calls from the Singapore government for local businesses to venture beyond its shores to increase competitiveness. With the rise of a digital economy, we are witnessing increasing globalisation as previous geographical boundaries are blurred or                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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|  |  |  |  | <p>broken down. However, the existence of differing local regulations and compliance serve as a natural barrier for SMEs that might encounter challenges when penetrating new markets. The introduction of DEPA would hopefully establish a common set of standards and compliance to facilitate secure and smooth transactions and movement of funds that ultimately drives digital trade.</p> |
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