

For immediate reporting

SINGAPORE AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA SIGN THE KOREA-SINGAPORE DIGITAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

1. Second Minister for Trade and Industry Dr Tan See Leng and the Republic of Korea (ROK) Minister for Trade Dukgeun Ahn signed the Korea-Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement (KSDPA) in Singapore today.
2. With the KSDPA, both countries will work together to establish forward looking digital trade rules and norms to promote interoperability between digital systems. This will enable more seamless cross-border data flows and build a trusted and secure digital environment for our businesses and consumers. The KSDPA will also deepen bilateral cooperation in new emerging areas such as Personal Data Protection, E-payments, Artificial Intelligence and Source Code protection.
3. Dr Tan See Leng said, "Singapore and the Republic of Korea share a deep and wide-ranging partnership, and the signing of the KSDPA marks the beginning of a stronger digital partnership between our countries, and new opportunities for our businesses and communities."
4. Both Ministers also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Implementing the Korea-Singapore Digital Economy Dialogue. The Dialogue is intended to be a platform to promote digital economy collaboration between industry players and academic experts in Singapore and ROK. The MOU is part of bilateral efforts to develop cooperative projects to implement the KSDPA.
5. Singapore and ROK enjoy strong economic ties. Singapore was ROK's 7th largest trade partner in 2021, with merchandise trade amounting to S\$56.2 billion, 26% year on year increase. As of end-2020, the ROK was Singapore's 8th largest investment destination in Asia, with about S\$9.95 billion worth of investments recorded in ROK. ROK was Singapore's 5th largest source of investments in Asia, with a cumulative direct investment of S\$28.5 billion.
6. The KSDPA is Singapore's fourth Digital Economy Agreement (DEA), following the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement with Chile and New Zealand, the Singapore-Australia DEA, and UK-Singapore DEA. These agreements are an inter-agency effort led by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Communications and Information, and the Infocomm Media Development Authority, to advance collaboration in the digital economy and enhance digital connectivity.

Annex A: Photo of Korea-Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement Signing Ceremony

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Jointly issued by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Communications and Information, and Infocomm Media Development Authority

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For media queries, please contact:

Dhivya Rani
Senior Assistant Director
Communications and Engagement Division, Ministry of Trade and Industry
Email: dhivya_rani_selvakumar@mti.gov.sg

Jaclyn Wong
Assistant Director
Communications and Engagement Division, Ministry of Communications and Information
Email: Jaclyn_wong@mci.gov.sg

Lee Wai Leng
Manager
Communications and Marketing, Infocomm Media Development Authority
Email: Lee_Wai_Leng@imda.gov.sg

Annex A: Photo of Korea-Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement Signing Ceremony



Caption: Second Minister for Trade and Industry Dr Tan See Leng and the Republic of Korea (ROK) Minister for Trade Dukgeun Ahn signed the Korea-Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement (KSDPA) in Singapore today.



Caption: Second Minister for Trade and Industry Dr Tan See Leng and the Republic of Korea (ROK) Minister for Trade Dukgeun Ahn also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Implementing the Korea-Singapore Digital Economy Dialogue.

Annex B: Key Features of the Korea-Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement

A. Highlights of Modules

i. *Facilitate end-to-end digital trade*

Electronic payments (E-payments)

1. To support the development of safe and secure cross border E-payments, Singapore and ROK will promote transparent and facilitative rules (e.g. encouraging open Application Programming Interfaces (APIs)), adopt internationally accepted standards and promote interoperability between E-payment systems.

Paperless Trading

2. To support the digitalisation and seamless exchange of key commercial documents, Singapore and ROK will accept electronic versions of trade administration documents. Both parties will also seek to collaborate on initiatives which facilitate the use and adoption of the data exchange systems for the exchange of electronic trade documents.

ii. *Enable trusted data flows*

Cross-border Data Flows (including for Financial Services)

3. Data flow is the bedrock of the digital economy. With business transactions increasingly conducted over digital platforms, and the emergence of new business models like Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), there is an unprecedented rise in volume of data moving across borders. Through the KSDPA, businesses operating in Singapore and ROK will be allowed to transfer information, including those which are generated or held by financial institutions, seamlessly across borders so as long the requisite regulations are met, with adequate personal data protection safeguards in place.

Prohibiting Data Localisation

4. Data localisation requirements are an unnecessary barrier to trade and may drive up the cost of storing data for all businesses. Singapore and ROK will put in place disciplines against requirements for data localisation and allow businesses to choose where their data is stored, processed, and their cloud technology of choice.

Open Government Data

5. To encourage innovation in this new data driven age, both countries shall endeavour to ensure that government data that has been made publicly available will be in a machine readable and open format, with easy to use and freely available APIs.

iii. Facilitate trust in digital systems and participation in the Digital Economy

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

6. To facilitate cross-border opportunities for business innovation; and promote the adoption of AI governance and ethics frameworks that support the trusted, safe and responsible use of AI-based technologies.

Cryptography

7. To ensure that companies using cryptography can trust the market within which they operate, encourage innovation, and ensure that private keys and related technologies used are protected, neither country will require the transfer of, or access to, the above as a condition of market access.

Source Code Protection

8. To ensure software developers can trust the market within which they operate, encourage innovation and ensure that source code used by companies are protected, neither country will require the transfer of, or access to, source code as a condition of market access. This includes algorithm expressed in the source code.

Online Consumer Protection

9. To enhance consumer welfare, both countries will adopt or maintain laws and regulations that guard against fraudulent, misleading or deceptive conduct that causes harm to consumers engaged in online commercial activities.

Small and Medium Enterprises Cooperation

10. SMEs play a special role in enhancing competitiveness and maintaining dynamism in the economy. Singapore and ROK seek to cooperate to promote jobs and growth for SMEs, as well as encourage their participation in platforms that help link them with international suppliers, buyers, and other potential business partners.

Digital Identities

11. In the digital world, secure and trusted digital identities enable greater and easier access to services for both individuals and companies. Singapore and the ROK seek to cooperate to promote interoperability between the respective digital identity regimes, which can bring benefits such as more reliable identity verification and faster processing of applications. This would in turn reduce barriers in cross-border trade and enable businesses and individuals to navigate the international digital economy with greater ease, confidence, and security.

Annex C: Korea-Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement Infographic



Highlights of Modules

E-payments

Adopt transparent and facilitative rules to promote secure cross-border E-payments.



Open Government Information

Encourage innovation by making Government information open and accessible.



Paperless Trading

Accept electronic versions of trade administration documents for efficient cargo clearance and facilitate cross-border supply chain digitalisation.



Cryptography

Remove access and transfer of private keys and related technologies, as a condition of market access.



Cross-border Data Flows

Enable the trusted flow of data across borders to support digitally-enabled activities, including for Financial Services.



Source Code Protection

Remove access and transfer of source codes, including algorithms expressed within, as a condition of market access.



Prohibiting Data Localisation

Establish rules against data localisation requirements so that businesses in Singapore and the Republic of Korea can choose where their data is stored, processed, and their cloud technology of choice.



Online Consumer Protection

Guard against fraudulent or misleading conduct online through regulations.



Artificial Intelligence

Identify cross-border opportunities to facilitate business innovation and collaborations on AI ethics and governance.



SME Cooperation

Promote jobs for SMEs and facilitate their connection with suppliers, buyers and business partners.



Digital Identities

Promote interoperability of digital identity regimes, enabling businesses and consumers to navigate the digital economy with greater ease and security.



For the latest updates on Singapore's economy and the steps we are taking to progressively reopen, subscribe to our Telegram channel: <https://t.me/MTISingapore>

Annex D: Quotes from companies on the Korea-Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement

Sector	Company	Quote & Spokesperson
Trade Technology	GUUD Pte Ltd	<p>“GUUD congratulates both governments on establishing the Digital Partnership Agreement, and we look forward to working closely with the government, trade associations and businesses in streamlining digital trade processes through our digital platforms, improving cross-border trade flows in the areas of e-payments, paperless trade and cross border data exchange. With the KSDPA in place, we are confident that both countries will see improved trade and business relations, and GUUD is excited to partner with more associations and businesses in South Korea in bringing greater opportunities for improved cross-border merchandise trade flows.”</p> <p>Desmond Tay, CEO, GUUD Pte Ltd</p> <p><i>GUUD, a new digital way to trade globally, is a technology platform and group of businesses. The GUUD group references the UN/CEFACT Buy-Ship-Pay model to cover all aspects of trade facilitation, bypassing long-standing barriers to trade, and digitally transforming trade processes so they become simpler, more efficient and more inclusive. Led by a strong team of industry and IT professionals, GUUD aspires to help anyone and everyone, especially micro, small and medium enterprises, to become a player in global trade and to export and import from any part of the world. Our mission is to Trade for Good, and guided by UN’s sustainable development goals, we pursue what is good for people, businesses and economies, helping improve livelihoods, generating prosperity and creating technological efficiencies and improvements everywhere we go.</i></p>
Port Operations & Supply Chain Management	PSA International	<p>“The importance of supply chain management has been highlighted in recent years especially in the wake of widespread disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and geopolitical tensions. An integrated flow of logistics information and data will help to facilitate more efficient supply chains. South Korea is reputed for its leading information and communication technologies while Singapore is ranked as Asia’s top logistics hub and financial center. I believe the digital partnership between the two countries will create positive synergy, expand digital trade and contribute towards improving supply chain</p>

		<p>resilience, agility and sustainability. We welcome the Digital Partnership Agreement and look forward to enhanced collaboration with our customers, partners and the authorities to co-create an Internet of Logistics.”</p> <p>Lee Seok, Head of Korea, PSA International</p> <p><i>PSA International (PSA) is a leading port group and trusted partner to cargo stakeholders. With flagship operations in Singapore and Antwerp, PSA’s global network encompasses 160 locations in 42 countries around the world. The Group’s portfolio comprises over 60 deepsea, rail and inland terminals, as well as affiliated businesses in supply chain management, logistics, marine and digital services. Drawing on the deep expertise and experience from a diverse global team, PSA actively collaborates with its customers and partners to deliver world-class port services alongside, develop innovative cargo solutions and co-create an Internet of Logistics. As the partner of choice in the global supply chain, PSA is “The World’s Port of Call”. Visit us at www.globalpsa.com, or follow us on LinkedIn and Facebook (@globalpsa).</i></p>
Trade, Technology	Proxtera	<p>“Proxtera is excited for the Korea-Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement (KSDPA) and the opportunities it provides to align both countries on trade and data information flows. This is essential to facilitate trust between SMEs seeking to grow their cross-border trade activities.</p> <p>Evolving from the Business sans Borders (BSB) initiative, Proxtera is excited to work with SMEs to build their digital footprint and creating trusted credentials based on which the service providers from both countries can offer financing and/or payment settlement options for their global cross border business.”</p> <p>Saurav Bhattacharyya, CEO, Proxtera</p> <p><i>Proxtera is creating the global open digital ecosystem of MSME’s (micro small and medium enterprises) with trusted credentials that help them gain access to trade financing for a global business.</i></p> <p><i>Proxtera’s mission is to transform business to business trade using technology to make marketplaces efficient and discoverable globally, to enable holistic cross border</i></p>

		<p><i>trade through services for financing and fulfilment, empowerment, and financial trust building.</i></p> <p><i>Proxtera was launched in 2020 as the commercialization of the Business sans Borders (BSB) initiative by MAS and the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA). BSB seeks to develop a global digital infrastructure that would help to increase cross-border trade opportunities and enhance digital and financial inclusivity for SMEs in the underserved global B2B e-commerce market space.</i></p>
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Annex E: Factsheet on the Memorandum of Understanding on Implementing the Korea-Singapore Digital Economy Dialogue

1 The Ministry of Trade and Industry of the Republic of Singapore and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy of the Republic of Korea (ROK) will sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Implementing the Korea-Singapore Digital Economy Dialogue on 21 November 2022.

2 The MOU aims to advance the implementation of the Korea-Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement (KSDPA) by establishing a Korea-Singapore Digital Economy Dialogue, a platform to promote digital economy collaboration between Singapore and the ROK.

3 The Dialogue aims to facilitate discussion on digital trade and strengthen the international competitiveness of Singaporean and Korean digital industries, and to encourage relevant stakeholders from both sides to explore mutually beneficial business opportunities in Singapore, the ROK, and other markets. Both sides may organise webinars, forums, workshops and roundtables to expand opportunities for inter-industry exchanges.

4. The signing of the MOU reaffirms the close working relationship between Singapore and the ROK and demonstrates the strong commitment from both sides in implementing the KSDPA to strengthen academic and industry exchanges to benefit our people and businesses.