



11th ASEAN-EU Business Summit
24th September 2025, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Concept Note and Programme

The EU-ASEAN Business Council (EU-ABC) is the pre-eminent voice for European businesses operating in Southeast Asia. Established to promote and facilitate stronger economic ties between the EU and ASEAN, the EU-ABC acts as a bridge to facilitate dialogue, collaboration, and partnerships between businesses and policymakers across both regions. The EU-ABC is proud to represent major European multinational corporations with a common interest in ASEAN, and provides critical insights into trade, investment, and regulatory issues that have an impact on their Members in this dynamic region.

The ASEAN-EU Business Summit, first started in 2011, has become a premier platform for engagement between government leaders, policymakers, and the private sector. Over the years, it has served as a venue to discuss pressing economic and trade matters, showcasing the mutual commitment of the EU and ASEAN to enhance their longstanding partnership. Each year, the Summit focuses on addressing key issues of the day, advancing initiatives, and exploring opportunities that benefit both regions. Now in its 11th iteration, the Summit continues to work to strengthen the relationship by fostering dialogue and cooperation on *free trade agreements*, *sustainable growth*, and *digital transformation*.

Proposed Programme¹

13:00	Opening & welcome remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chairperson, EU-ASEAN Business Council
13:05	Opening keynote address <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - YAB Dato’ Seri Haji Anwar bin Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia (<i>to be invited</i>)
13:25	Platinum sponsor’s speech
13:40	<p>Fireside chat: Malaysia-EU FTA, and the future of EU-ASEAN trade and investment relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - YB Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz, Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Malaysia (<i>to be invited</i>) - H.E. Maros Sefcovic, European Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security, and Interinstitutional Relations and Transparency (<i>to be invited</i>) <p>This Fireside Chat between the two trade leaders will focus on the resumption of negotiations for the Malaysia-EU Free Trade Agreement (MEUFTA) and assess its broader implications on EU-ASEAN trade and investment relations. With Malaysia’s pivotal role in ASEAN, this discussion will explore the progress made on bilateral FTAs between the EU and ASEAN countries such as Singapore and</p>

¹ Subject to change. Please note that all speakers are yet to be confirmed and are currently proposed as suggestions.

	<p>Vietnam, and look at the ongoing negotiations with other ASEAN Member States namely Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines.</p> <p>A key focus will be on the dream of many of achieving a region-to-region FTA between the EU and ASEAN – whether this will ever be possible or will remain a long-term objective as the levels of ambition between the two dynamic regions are too wide to be bridged. Could alternatives to such an FTA be explored, such as sector-specific agreements like the ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement (AE-CATA), or potential partnerships in the digital space, especially as ASEAN is now negotiating its landmark Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA)?</p> <p>This Fireside Chat will explore these key issues, shed light on how they view the future of EU-ASEAN trade could evolve, and what policy shifts may be necessary to address the economic realities of the two regions.</p>
14:25	<p>Panel 1: Powering ASEAN’s green economic growth</p> <p>Proposed panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HSBC - ASEAN Centre for Energy - EIB - Renewable energy company <p>This Panel will focus on how ASEAN can turn its regional power grid integration ambition into reality, and how private-sector financing and investments can play a role in supporting its development.</p> <p>The ASEAN Power Grid has long been regarded as a critical infrastructure project for regional energy integration, but its development has faced challenges including technical difficulties, regulatory hurdles, financing gaps, and political complexities across ASEAN’s diverse member states. Malaysia as ASEAN’s 2025 Chair has made the APG a priority area, a move welcomed by many. The discussion on this panel will critically look at how to overcome the barriers hindering the development of a seamless and efficient cross-border electricity network, as well as financing and investment strategies that are needed to move the APG forward. Case studies from other regions that have successfully integrated cross-border energy grids, particularly the EU, can also offer insights into best practices that ASEAN could adapt to its unique context.</p> <p>This Panel aims to identify actionable solutions to unlock the potential of the APG, which would significantly boost the region’s green energy transition and in turn attract investments.</p>
15:10	Coffee break

15:30	<p>In conversation with ASEAN Economic Ministers: Advancing ASEAN’s economic integration post-2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministers of Trade of the incoming ASEAN Chairs (the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand) <i>(to be invited)</i> <p>This Fireside Chat will bring together ASEAN economic ministers from incoming ASEAN Chairs to discuss the region’s future in the face of ongoing geopolitical shifts, and the evolving landscape of regional integration. The conversation will explore ASEAN’s internal challenges, including shifting alliances like the growing influence of BRICS. In this context, the role of economic integration will be examined as a factor in maintaining ASEAN’s relevance on the global stage. With the growing geopolitical rivalry between the US and China, it is hoped that the Ministers will offer their insights into how ASEAN can navigate these tensions while pursuing economic cohesion.</p> <p>Further, it is hoped that the Ministers will share their visions for advancing economic integration within the region as they take on the ASEAN Chairmanship from 2026 onwards. Not only is this a timely discussion, but it will also help define the strategic direction of ASEAN’s economic landscape post-2025. The Fireside Chat will explore how ASEAN can continue to drive its economic growth and enhance its collective power in a rapidly changing global environment.</p>
16:15	Gold sponsor’s speech
16:25	<p>Panel 2: Digital technologies as game changers – Reshaping jobs, sustainability, and growth in ASEAN</p> <p>Proposed panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.E. Satvinder Singh, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN <i>(to be invited)</i> - Verena Siow, President Southeast Asia, SAP - ASEAN unicorn - Academia <p>This Panel will explore the transformative power of digital technologies in shaping ASEAN’s future, focusing on how digital innovations are creating new growth opportunities and reshaping industries and people in the region.</p> <p>As ASEAN continues to make progress with its Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA), the panel will discuss progress of the negotiations, its implications for the private sector – both for multinational companies and MSMEs – and what it means for ASEAN citizens. If implemented to its full potential, DEFA promises to create a unified digital economy in ASEAN, but challenges including disparities in digital readiness could hinder the agreement’s success. This Panel will cover the necessary investments in infrastructure, policy alignment, and regional collaboration that will be required for DEFA to fulfil its potential.</p> <p>The Panel will also highlight the importance of artificial intelligence (AI) as a driving force of digital transformation in ASEAN. AI is expected to reshape entire</p>



	<p>industries, create new business models, and address critical challenges – but also disrupt. There is an urgent need for ASEAN to ensure that it is fully prepared to capitalise on the opportunities that AI presents, and to face the problems that it will also inevitably bring.</p> <p>Panellists will aim to provide concrete recommendations on how to harness the power of digital transformation while ensuring that the benefits are shared equitably across the region.</p>
17:10	<p>Closing speech</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- H.E. Dr Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN (<i>to be invited</i>)
17:20	<p>Closing remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Chairperson, EU-ASEAN Business Council/EuroCham Malaysia
17:30	<p>Ends</p>