



Indo-Pacific-European Hub  
for Digital Partnerships

ヨーロッパとインド太平洋のための  
デジタルパートナーシップ強化

디지털 파트너십 강화  
유럽 및 인도 태평양의 경우

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## Summary of activities with policymakers

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES... ..</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1TWG 1: Policy Dialogues .....	9
2.2TWG 2: Standardisation.....	9
2.3TWG 3: Joint Programming.....	12
2.4TWG 4 : Digital Education and Skills.....	13
<b>CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>14</b>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The deliverable **D2.1 Summary of Activities with policymakers (initial)** provides an initial overview of the activities by WP 2 during the first 21 months of the INPACE project involving policymakers. The WP 2 (“Policy Cluster”) was established to bridge the research and policy communities, ensuring that expert outputs contribute directly to the Digital Partnerships (DPs) between the European Union (EU) and Singapore, Japan, and the Republic of Korea (ROK), as well as to the Trade and Technology Council (TTC) with India.

**TWG 1 on Standardisation** has coordinated with the EU Delegation to Japan to organise policy-relevant workshops on trusted data exchanges during the EU-Japan Digital Week 2025, ensuring alignment with the strategic objectives of the EU-Japan Digital Partnership.

**TWG 2 on Policy Dialogues** has organised high-level closed-door policy workshops in Korea and Japan, bringing together government representatives, EU delegation officials, and policy practitioners. These exchanges have produced targeted policy briefs and facilitated dialogue between European and Indo-Pacific policymakers on digital technologies, cybersecurity, and strategic infrastructure. The TWG lead has engaged directly with the European Parliament, EU Domestic Advisory Groups, and government ministries.

**TWG 3 on Joint Programming** has engaged with the EU Delegations in partner countries, particularly the EUDEL to ROK, to address policy priorities around facilitating access to EU research funding programmes and fostering joint research initiatives that align with DP strategic objectives.

**TWG 4 on Digital Education and Skills** has conducted consultations with the European Commission to align its activities with DP priorities and has prepared policy recommendations based on cross-country expert consultations that will feed directly into broader policy dialogue.

These activities represent foundational steps in building structured policy dialogue and preparing concrete policy-relevant initiatives to support the implementation of DPs and the TTC.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>BSoG</b>	Brussels School of Governance
<b>CSDS</b>	Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy
<b>DP</b>	Digital Partnership
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>EEAS</b>	European External Action Service
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUDEL</b>	Delegation of the European Union
<b>IOG</b>	Institute of Geoeconomics
<b>KIEP</b>	Korea Institute for International Economic Policy
<b>METI</b>	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry
<b>NUS</b>	National University of Singapore
<b>ROK</b>	Republic of Korea
<b>TTC</b>	Trade and Technology Council
<b>TWG</b>	Thematic Working Group
<b>UNIDIR</b>	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
<b>VUB</b>	Vrije Universiteit Brussel
<b>WP</b>	Work Package

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The success of the EU's Digital Partnerships in the Indo-Pacific hinges on active and continuous policy dialogue. Engaging policymakers is essential to foster the necessary **political will and institutional support** to translate digital strategies into actionable projects in line with the objectives set out by the respective Digital Partnership Agreements (DPAs). At the same time, it allows to ensure alignment on regulatory frameworks, promote interoperability, and enhance cooperation on critical issues such as cybersecurity, data governance, and digital skills development.

Within the INPACE project, activities covered by WP2 are designed to facilitate communication, feed research findings and outcomes into the European Union (EU)'s official Policy Dialogues with partner countries; making sure the focus of the technical working groups reflect the strategic priorities, agendas and objectives of the EU and its partner-countries; and promoting public awareness and create understanding of the context regarding Digital Partnerships (DPs) and Trade and Technology Council (TTC) with India.

This deliverable focuses specifically on **activities with policymakers**—including government officials, EU delegation personnel, European Commission representatives, parliamentary representatives, and other policy practitioners directly involved in shaping and implementing digital partnership policies.

## 2 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

### 2.1 TWG 1: STANDARDISATION

#### Policy Coordination with EU Delegation to Japan

During the **EU-Japan Digital Week 2025** (March 31 - April 7, 2025), TWG 1 organised a dedicated workshop titled "**Trusted Data Exchanges: From Standards to Pilots in a Changing World**". This workshop was held as part of the broader EU-Japan Digital Partnership initiative and focused on regulatory and ethical considerations for data sharing, emphasizing trust, standardisation, and governance of data flows between EU and Japanese data spaces.

**This workshop was organised in close consultation with the Delegation of the European Union to Japan** to ensure alignment with shared priorities of both regions and the strategic objectives of the EU-Japan Digital Partnership. The focus on trusted data exchanges reflected policy priorities around secure, standardised data sharing mechanisms in international digital cooperation, requiring coordination between regulatory frameworks.

The consultation process with EUDEL to Japan involved agenda-setting, identification of policy priorities, and ensuring that workshop outcomes would feed into official EU-Japan DP policy dialogue channels.

### 2.2 TWG 2: POLICY DIALOGUES

The TWG 2 on Policy Dialogues facilitates policy exchanges between the EU and the four partner countries covered by the INPACE project. Led by the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS) at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), which has established itself as a leading policy research institution focusing extensively on Indo-Pacific security and the EU's engagement in the region, TWG 2 leaders are regularly solicited for their expertise and network among the policy community in Europe and Asia.

#### 3.2.1. Closed-Door Policy Workshops

During the first reporting period of the INPACE project, TWG 2 has organised two closed-door policy workshops, bringing together **government representatives, EU delegation officials, and policy practitioners** from Europe and the respective target countries. The objective of the Policy Dialogues is to evaluate the progress of the EU's DPs in the Indo-Pacific, take stock of their achievements, identify bottlenecks, loopholes and challenges in their implementation, suggest possible ways for improvements, and formulate recommendations for a most constructive way forward.

To stimulate frank, open and fruitful discussion, the meetings are held under the Chatham House rule and in a **closed-door (or by-invitation-only) format**, ensuring a balanced representation between European and regional participants.

Topics of the agenda are selected based on the priorities of the "EU+X" DP, bearing in mind the latest geopolitical developments, country-specific preferences, and the EU's main strategic objectives. In all stages of the process, from early planning, agenda-setting, the event proper, and until post-event reporting, the organisers are involved in **close and regular consultation with the relevant personnel of the Delegation of the European Union (EUDEL)** to the partner country.

### 3.2.1.1 Republic of Korea

#### Expert Workshop: The EU - ROK Digital Partnership: from Policy to Practice

The closed-door workshop was held as part of the INPACE first integrative conference in Seoul, on 21 October 2024. The Workshop discussed the progress, challenges, and future directions for EU-ROK Digital Partnership bilateral cooperation. Participants addressed critical questions on how the EU and ROK can harmonise their policy and regulatory frameworks to facilitate collaboration in emerging digital technologies such as AI, quantum, and 6G; what policy and strategic initiatives are necessary to enhance the cybersecurity posture of both regions and ensure mutual trust in digital infrastructure; and how to address the challenges of supply chain resilience and security in the context of the global semiconductor market. The workshop brought together government officials, notably **M Rainer Wessely**, Digital Counsellor at the EUDEL to ROK, and a former EU Ambassador to the ROK, **Prof Michael Reiterer**. Together with think tank experts, and policy advisors, it discussed strategic priorities for the EU-ROK Digital Partnership, with direct input feeding into subsequent policy recommendations.

### 3.1.1.2 Japan

#### Expert Workshop: The EU - Japan Digital Partnership: Going Forward

The closed-door workshop was held on 2 April 2025 at the International House of Japan, Tokyo, co-organised and hosted by the Institute of Geoeconomics (IOG), headed by a renowned expert on economic security, **Prof Kazuto Suzuki**. The event brought together over 60 participants from academia, industry and government institutions to address future avenues for the EU - Japan Digital Partnership. Keynote speeches were delivered by **H.E. Taro Kono, Japan's former Minister for Digital Transformation (2022-2024)** and **H.E. Jean-Eric Paquet, the Ambassador of the EU to Japan**. The first session focused on policy alignment in emerging and new technologies, exploring how the EU and Japan can align research priorities, foster innovation ecosystems, and build resilient supply chains. Special attention was given to the importance of sharing best practices and mutual support, with an eye on balancing economic security, competitiveness, and ethical imperatives. This session included direct participation from Japanese government officials from METI, **Kazumi Nishikawa, Principal Director, Trade and Economic Security Bureau**. The second session focused on digital connectivity, examining the role of cutting-edge initiatives, including space-based networks and submarine cable systems, in driving sustainable growth and fortifying digital infrastructures. Experts unpacked the strategic, regulatory, and technical dimensions necessary for safeguarding critical digital infrastructures while promoting seamless global digital integration and open, free, interoperable and secure digital connectivity.

The workshop format facilitated direct exchanges between European and Japanese policymakers on strategic infrastructure and regulatory frameworks, with outcomes informing policy brief recommendations.

### 2.1.2 Policy Analysis and Briefs for Policymakers

Members of the TWG engage in continuous research and analysis of geopolitical, technological, and geoeconomic trends and developments related to the EU's DPs in the Indo-Pacific. Rigorous background research, combined with insights from regional experts and findings from discussions during the in-person Expert Workshops with policymakers are turned into Policy Briefs, which include a critical analysis of the DPs and formulate concrete recommendations for policymakers.

#### Published:

- Csernaton R. & Pejsova, E. (2025) *From Policy to Action: The Way Ahead for EU-ROK Digital Partnership*, CSDS Policy Brief, <https://csds.vub.be/publication/from-policy-to-action-the-way-ahead-for-the-eu-republic-of-korea-digital-partnership/>

This policy brief formulates concrete recommendations for policymakers based on the closed-door workshop in Seoul and ongoing policy analysis.

#### Forthcoming:

- Csernaton, R. & Pejsova, E. *EU-Japan Digital Partnership: Towards a Robust Alliance for an Uncertain Geopolitical Era*, CSDS Policy Brief (to be published in October 2025)

This forthcoming policy brief will present policy recommendations based on the Tokyo workshop and consultations with EU and Japanese government representatives.

### 2.1.3 Direct Outreach and Policy Engagement

The co-lead of TWG 2, **Prof Raluca Csernaton**, regularly contributes to high-level policy forums and engages directly with policymakers and government institutions. Below are notable recent contributions specifically involving policymaker engagement:

- **24 June 2025** - Speaker in the **EU Domestic Advisory Group for Japan**, a workshop on "AI's Impact on the Workplace and Employment and as a Driver for Growth and Competitiveness". This forum involves official EU-Japan dialogue mechanisms under the Digital Partnership framework.
- **12 June 2025** - Tabletop exercise with Dr Alicia Wanless on "Shielding Democracy and Building the Resilience of the European Information Ecosystem in the Age of AI". This roundtable was organised **with the support of the European Union in the context of the EU Cyber Direct Initiative**, involving policy practitioners and government cybersecurity officials.
- **6 March 2025** - Speaker during a **European Parliament DKOR meeting** to present work on GenAI, democracy, and cybersecurity in the context of the EU-Republic of Korea Digital Partnership. This involved direct engagement with Members of the European Parliament and parliamentary staff responsible for EU-Korea relations.

- **10 September 2025** - Keynote remarks for the TRANSCEND Horizon Europe Final Summit, focusing on "Why Citizens' Engagement Matters for Security Research and Innovation", addressing policy challenges spanning cyber and hybrid threats, AI-powered disinformation, and cognitive warfare. This event included European Commission representatives and national security policymakers.

These activities demonstrate sustained engagement with EU institutions (European Parliament, European Commission), government officials from partner countries, and policy dialogue mechanisms established under the Digital Partnerships.

## 2.3 TWG 3: JOINT PROGRAMMING

The work of TWG 3 on Joint Programming has involved direct **engagement with EU Delegations** to address policy priorities around research funding and collaborative innovation.

### Republic of Korea:

On the request by the EUDEL to the ROK, TWG 3 focused on facilitating Korean researchers' and innovators' access to Horizon Europe programme by organising **information sessions on opportunities to participate in EU funding** in the frame of the 1st INPACE Symposium in Seoul, ROK, in October 2024. This activity directly responded to a policy priority communicated by the EUDEL to ROK, addressing a strategic objective of the EU-ROK Digital Partnership related to research collaboration and capacity building.

### India:

Through associated partner IIT Guwahati, INPACE connected to the newly established **ANRF (Anusandhan National Research Foundation)** to create awareness of opportunities for collaboration. On **March 31, 2025**, the coordinator and several TWG and Cluster leaders of INPACE **met with the Chairman of ANRF and other leading members** to discuss areas of possible joint projects, in particular related to AI and semiconductors. This high-level meeting with the Chairman of India's national research foundation represented direct engagement with Indian government research policy officials to explore alignment between EU and Indian research priorities under the TTC framework.

### Singapore:

As part of the INPACE's "EU-Indo-Pacific Digital Partnership Conference" in Singapore in October 2025, TWG 3 plans to have an **exchange between persons responsible for research strategies and the INPACE consortium and the EU Delegation about areas of interest and bottlenecks for joint funding**. This planned activity involves policy coordination with the EU Delegation to Singapore on research funding priorities and mechanisms for joint EU-Singapore research initiatives.

## 2.4 TWG 4: DIGITAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS

### 3.4.1 Coordination with the European Commission

TWG 4 on Digital Education and Skills has been established to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange across the four partner countries, **guided by the European Commission and aligned with the priorities of the digital partnerships**. Based on consultations with the European Commission and reflecting the thematic priorities of the digital partnerships, TWG 4 has aligned its country focus and thematic priorities with policy objectives communicated by the Commission.

TWG4 took part in the **Digital Skills Summit on November 27th, 2024**, which united policymakers, industry leaders, and educators to tackle Europe's advanced digital skills gap. While the summit focused on building a digitally resilient and competitive Europe, and spotlighted strategies to secure EU position as a global tech leader, INPACE has improved its understanding of Europe's direction for discussions with the Asian partners. Furthermore, we have increased our stakeholder network and gained very interesting names as potential experts and speakers for INPACE events.

### 3.4.2 Engagement with EU Delegation to Japan

While the annual country focus rotates, TWG 4 maintains close engagement with Japan through its expert representative. **At the request of the EU Delegation in Japan**, TWG 4 has explored opportunities for practical cooperation, notably by identifying potential partners for a **pilot project on mutual micro-credential recognition**. Should this initiative move forward, it would serve as a significant step toward facilitating the cross-border recognition of skills and qualifications—a policy priority identified by the EU Delegation.

### 3.4.3 Policy Recommendations Development

Looking forward, TWG 4 will develop **policy recommendations**, which will draw primarily on the outcomes of group discussions and the findings of the AI Skills Survey. **These recommendations will feed directly into the broader policy dialogue under the EU's digital partnerships**. The group maintains coordination to ensure that its work addresses immediate national policy contexts while contributing to the long-term advancement of digital partnership policy objectives as defined by the European Commission and partner country governments.

### 3 CONCLUSION

This initial report highlights the progress achieved in establishing sustained policy dialogue and engagement under the EU's Digital Partnerships in the Indo-Pacific. The activities documented represent direct engagement with policymakers across multiple levels:

**TWG 1 on Standardisation** has coordinated closely with the EU Delegation to Japan to organize policy-relevant workshops that address regulatory and governance priorities for trusted data exchanges, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives of the EU-Japan Digital Partnership.

**TWG 2 on Policy Dialogues** has successfully organised closed-door workshops bringing together government officials, EU delegation representatives, and policy practitioners from Korea and Japan. The TWG lead has engaged directly with the European Parliament, EU Domestic Advisory Groups, and ministerial-level officials from partner countries. Policy briefs produced by the TWG provide concrete recommendations for policymakers based on these exchanges.

**TWG 3 on Joint Programming** has responded to specific policy priorities communicated by EU Delegations, particularly the EUDEL to ROK, regarding facilitation of access to EU research funding. High-level meetings with the Chairman of India's ANRF demonstrate engagement with national research policy authorities.

**TWG 4 on Digital Education and Skills** has aligned its activities based on consultations with the European Commission and has responded to specific requests from the EU Delegation to Japan regarding pilot projects on micro-credential recognition. The TWG is developing policy recommendations that will feed directly into DP policy dialogue mechanisms.

As this is the first reporting stage, the activities documented here represent the beginning of sustained policymaker engagement. Many initiatives are designed to evolve further, including additional closed-door policy workshops, policy briefs, and consultations with EU delegations and partner country government officials. Planned events in the coming months, including the Singapore symposium in October 2025 and further policy engagements with India and Japan, will deepen these efforts and strengthen alignment between expert analysis and policy implementation.

The Policy Cluster has confirmed its value as a bridge between expert communities and policy authorities, setting a solid basis for deeper policymaker engagement and tangible policy outcomes in subsequent project phases.