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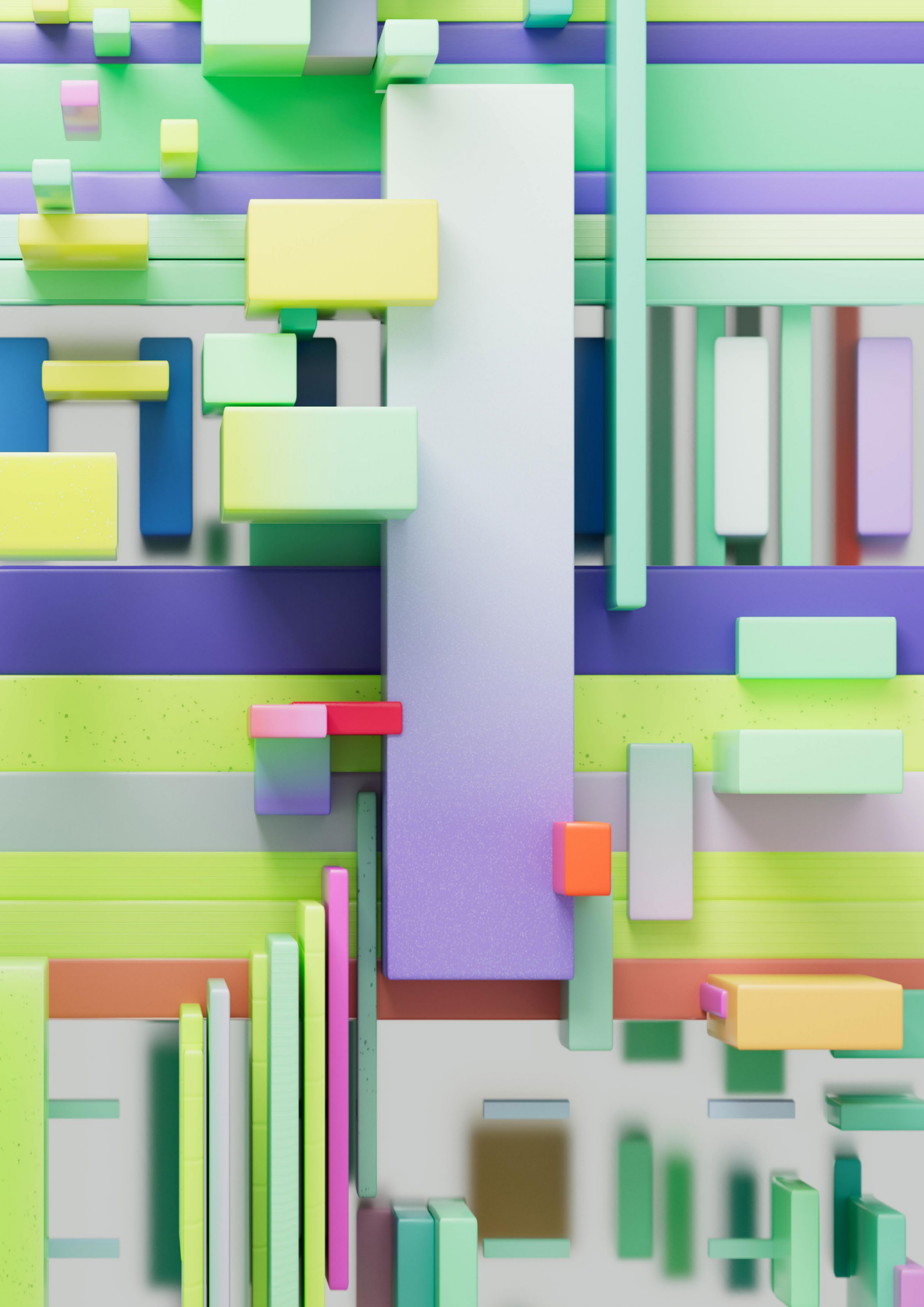
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H.E. Marielle Geraedts*
- *Interview with the National Privacy Commission Privacy Commissioner and Chairman Atty. John Henry Naga*



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European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP)

Head Office

19/F Philippine AXA Life Centre Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor.
Tindalo St., Makati City, Philippines
Tel No.: (+632) 8845 1323; (+632) 8856 0423
E-mail: info@eccp.com

Visayas Office

Regus Office 5F Park Centrale Building Jose Maria del Mar St.,
cor. Abad St., Cebu IT Park, Cebu City 6000, Philippines
Tel: (+6332) 494 9585
E-mail: visayas@eccp.com

Western Visayas Office

Regus Iloilo, 3F Festive Walk Mall, Iloilo Business Park
Mandurriao, Iloilo City
E-mail: western.visayas@eccp.com

Davao Office

ECCP Research Center, 5/F Thibault Building, Holy Cross of
Davao College, Sta. Ana Avenue cor. C. De Guzman St., Barangay
14-B, Davao City
Tel: +63 (82) 238 7500
E-mail: davao@eccp.com

Cagayan De Oro Office

Regus Centre, 12th Floor, SM CDO Downtown Tower, Claro M.
Recto Ave, Cagayan de Oro, 9000 Misamis Oriental
E-mail: cdo@eccp.com

ECCP Board of Directors

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Editorial

Dear reader,

Time flies and we are well into the first quarter as we have been deep in preparation to bring you more opportunities to network with fellow members and partners, engage in our initiatives and projects, and share your best business practices through different platforms. In this first edition of the EuroPH Connect for 2025, we focus on innovation and technology—forces driving the development of industries and economies globally. In today's fast-paced business environment, they play a crucial role in shaping market dynamics, enhancing productivity, and creating new opportunities.

For this theme, we are pleased to have Ambassador Marielle Geraedts of the Embassy of the Netherlands in Manila as she shares the growing business relations between the Netherlands and the Philippines. Additionally, the Embassy's Economic Section and Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate have provided information on the Embassy's national policy and the Dutch government's initiatives such as an established National Technology Strategy. Read more about this on page 8.

We also feature Privacy Commissioner and Chairman Atty. John Henry Naga of the National Privacy Commission as he provides insights on the agency's ongoing projects and initiatives in transforming the country's public services, improving efficiency, and investing in digital infrastructure.

We had an eventful start to the year as we kicked off with the press launch of the sixth edition of the Doing Business in the Philippines 2025 Guidebook in tripartite with Divina Law and the Philippine Board of Investments. In the same event, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed between the three parties to signify the partnership. Followed by this was the closed-door European Ambassadors' Meeting. To conclude, we held our annual New Year's Reception with members, partners, and stakeholders in attendance for a night of networking and camaraderie. We look forward to another year filled with partnerships and engagements with the business community.

In February, the Chamber held a number of committee meetings to prepare and plan for upcoming initiatives and projects this year. A



Florian Gottein
ECCP Executive Director

highlight is the conclusion of the EU-PH FTA Meeting with Chief Negotiator Dora Correia. This session provided crucial updates and identified key expectations and areas of consideration in the ongoing EU-PH FTA negotiations, fostering collaborative dialogue on enhancing economic ties. Our ECCP ICT-BPM-KPM Committee together with our Advocacy team also met with the FTA Digital Trade Chapter Negotiator Ms. Monica Cunningham.

For more highlights, check our Advocacy Corner on page 35 where we include the latest updates on our engagements with key government offices and insights from our committee meetings focused on pressing industry concerns and issues.

We welcome our new members under the New Members Corner found on page 44. Stay up to date on the Chamber activities from our branches in Manila, Cebu, Davao, Cagayan de Oro, Clark, and Iloilo. Read about this on page 24. We also feature our lineup of events and training as well as international trade fairs you might be interested in joining.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the EuroPH Connect and, as always, thank you for your continued partnership and trust. We look forward to building and developing our relationship even further this 2025.

Best regards,
Florian

European Country in Focus

Netherlands



37,391
square kilometers

POPULATION
17.9 M
approximately

CAPITAL
Amsterdam

THE NETHERLANDS TRADE AND INDUSTRY

The Netherlands, despite being geographically small, is a key center within the global business network. Its core distribution points include Rotterdam and Amsterdam Schiphol Airport. The Netherlands is the seventeenth largest economy in the world and the fifth largest in the Eurozone, with a GDP of just under \$1 trillion in 2022. It has capitalized on its location and advanced economy to become one of the top trading nations in the world, being the sixth largest exporter and the eighth largest importer in the world. Its largest foreign investor with the largest trade surplus in the country is the United States. Its economy is considered to be one of the most competitive around the world, with its outstanding performance in areas conducive to innovation and sustainable prosperity.

The top exports of the country include refined petroleum, broadcasting equipment, machinery having individual functions, packaged medicaments, and crude petroleum, which are mostly transported across its neighboring states, such as Germany, Belgium, France, UK, and Italy. On the other hand, its imports include crude petroleum, refined petroleum, petroleum gas, broadcasting equipment, and computers, which are mostly from Germany, China, US, Belgium, and UK. Despite the economic stagnation of the country in 2023, inflation has come down substantially while wages increased, which supported private consumption in going forward.

NETHERLANDS



Geographical Location: The Netherlands is a low-lying country situated in the delta of three major European rivers Rhine, IJssel and Meuse, with around 24% of the land below sea level and only about half of the land exceeds one meter above sea level.

Climate: The Netherlands' climate is considered temperate, with its winter temperature reaching about 3°C and summer temperatures reaching around 17°C.

Official Language: Dutch

Government Type: The Kingdom of the Netherlands is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. The prime minister is the head of the government and the monarch is the head of the state while the council of ministers holds the executive power.

Standard of Living: The Netherlands outperforms the average in jobs, work-life balance, education, environmental quality, social networks, civic engagement, safety and life satisfaction. The average household net-adjusted disposable income per capita is USD34 984 a year, more than the OECD average of USD 30 490 a year.

Organizations:

- United Nations (1945)
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (1949)
- European Union (1958)
- International Organization for Migration (1991)
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (1946)

Financial District

The Dutch financial sector is well-positioned in Europe with the Dutch Finance Ministry working actively to further boost the position of the Netherlands as a world financial center. One of the most important financial districts of the Netherlands is the Zuidas, also known as the "Financial Mile". It is a rapidly developing business district in Amsterdam with its favorable location relative to the historical city center and a large-scale concentration of business service providers. It is home to a large number of businesses offering financial, legal, and business services.

INTERESTING FACTS

- "Netherlands" means the lowlands and refers to the geographic features of the land being both flat and down river from higher areas. It is known as the Kingdom of the Netherlands but its local long form is Koninkrijk der Nederlanden.
- The Netherlands is the first country to legalize same-sex marriage in December 2000 when the Dutch parliament passed, by a three-to-one margin, a landmark bill allowing the practice. The legislation gave the same-sex couples the right to marry, divorce and adopt children.
- The Netherlands is the largest producer of tulip bulbs in the world, providing 4.2 billion annually and exporting half. Every year, seven million flower bulbs are planted in Keukenhof Garden in the Netherlands. When the springtime arrives, it sprouts to produce beautiful rows of reds, oranges, and yellow, including other varieties of tulips.
- With over a thousand historic windmills operating in Holland, the Netherlands is called "the land of the windmills". The first windmill in the country was built in the 13th century and then in the 17th century, the industry of Dutch windmills had experienced advanced development.

TOP 3 TOURISM DESTINATIONS



AMSTERDAM

Amsterdam is one of the most-visited cities in Europe, and is considered as one of the world's most bike-friendly destinations. It has roughly 400 km of bike paths and is still adding more. Similarly, the city is renowned for its many world-class museums and galleries like Anne Frank House, Van Gogh museum, and Rijkmuseum. Aside from the popular museums, it is also home to lots of less-crowded attractions like Museum Van Loon—a preserved 17th century canal house that offers a very intimate experience with its homey atmosphere, historic rooms, and gardens of the house.



THE HAGUE

The Hague is often referred to as the "Den Haag" by the locals. Aside from being the seat of the Dutch government, it is also the international city of Peace and Justice, home to many international organizations, including the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court and the Permanent Court of Arbitration. The Hague includes an artistic and bohemian neighborhood worth exploring. One of the most popular destinations in the Hague is the Binnenhof and Ridderzaal, which is a historic complex of buildings that houses the Dutch Parliament.



ROTTERDAM

Rotterdam is the economic capital of the Netherlands, being also the largest port in Europe, at the mouth of the Rhine river with excellent rail, road and river connections to the heart of Europe, especially Germany. It is also a popular tourist destination due to its daring and modern architecture like the cube houses, which are tipped to one side, making three sides face the ground and three face the sky. Aside from this, tourists enjoy visiting the floating farm—a micro-dairy moored in the port of Rotterdam wherein people can buy dairy products, watch milking cows, and see the milk and yogurt processing.

Interview with the Ambassador of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Republic of the Philippines

H.E. Marielle Geraedts



Since first arriving in the Philippines to take up your post as Dutch Ambassador, what have been your observations on the relations between the Netherlands and the Philippines?



The Netherlands and the Philippines have many common interests and shared values.

We are both seafaring nations for example, and vulnerable for climate change. We collaborate in several sectors such as agri-food, water management and circular economy. In the UN we jointly strive for the application of the international rule of law, be it in Ukraine or in the West-Philippine Sea. We want to protect the human rights of our peoples and work together for that aim for example in our joint fight against online sexual exploitation of children.

For the past five years, the Netherlands also has consistently been the Philippines' second-largest trading partner and export market in Europe. We also consistently rank as a large foreign direct investor (FDI) in the Philippines.

I am now in my third year as ambassador to the Philippines and my team and I are proud that our consistent efforts have further elevated our bilateral relationship. And we do it together ("sama sama" or "samem" as we say in our respective languages) with our Filipino partners, in government, civil society and business circles.

In my second year in office I was happy to welcome our minister of Foreign Affairs. Last year Her Majesty Queen Máxima, in her capacity as UN Special Advocate for financial inclusion, visited the Philippines. We are also pleased to have hosted quite a number of high level visits to the Netherlands, including the Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry, a combined visit of the Department of Agriculture and the DTI to study the Dutch Agro-logistics sector and several delegations of mayors and (vice) governors, who were particularly interested in our biking logistics and water and waste management. Recently, we hosted a high level delegation from DTI and DOF at the end of January in Amsterdam, also with special thanks to Dutch bank ING, to further promote the Philippines as an investment destination for Dutch businesses.

What do you find is the Philippines' greatest strength that would serve it best when doing business with Europe?

I would say that the Philippines still has so much potential for further growth. As a place to do business, and also for an expat to live, the Philippines has much to offer. Of course, the young labour force, the English proficiency and the open mindedness of the Filipino people make life easy. Filipinos are eager to learn, are adaptive and want to move forward.

For us as a European country, it is also important that the government is opening up the economy, by new legislation, introducing 'fast lanes' and promoting more efficiency through e-portals and digitalization. We have high hopes for the upcoming FTA between the EU and the Philippines, and I am confident that the Netherlands and the Philippines can further benefit from that.

Having said this, I also believe there is still some catching up to do compared to neighboring countries in the region, especially in terms of 'ease of doing business'. I would encourage the government to further continue to get rid of the 'red tape' and simplify procedures for foreign investors; that seems to be the major issues Dutch companies sometimes face.

What efforts have been put in place to expand Dutch companies across the Philippines? Which sectors are Dutch businesses most active in?

We have over 150 active Dutch companies established in the Philippines. Our companies are active in a wide variety of sectors, but mainly in sustainable and innovative food & agro, water management and waterworks, in the maritime sector, in renewable energy, transport and logistics and in the semi-con sector.

The Philippines has a strong focus on ensuring food-security and the Netherlands, being the second largest exporter of agricultural goods in the world, has knowledge and expertise to help the Philippines to achieve this effort. As 'the low-lands' (the literal meaning of 'the Netherlands'), we thank our very existence to our fight against water. With the increasing effects of climate change, and therefore more typhoons and floods in the Philippines, a highly relevant area for cooperation. Our water-sector is working on various projects here. For example, we are working with several local governments and Dutch companies on flood protection with the use of 'nature based solutions'. Quite innovative, more effective and cheaper than just using concrete walls.

Being both seafaring nations, Dutch companies are very active in the maritime sector: in shipbuilding, port development and through various manning agencies. Good to mention that over 15,000 seafarers from the Philippines are working on Dutch controlled vessels, representing around 40% of the total crew!

What do you envision as the future of business and trade between the Netherlands and the Philippines? How do you think both partners can work better together to achieve this vision?

I believe that our bilateral economic relation will be characterized even more by a focus on sustainability and innovation. For the growing Philippine economy, moving towards higher middle-income status, there is always the

danger of the 'middle income trap'. Lessons learned show that a focus on investment, on improving the regulatory and institutional frameworks and on innovation are essential to achieve long term growth.

The Netherlands and Europe are natural partners for the Philippines in this process. Our society and our private sector have a strong focus on sustainability and innovation – that is how we achieved our prosperity, being now one of the most advanced economies in the world. I envisage that there will be more Filipino companies that partner with Dutch enterprises for sustainable and innovative products and solutions, having an overall positive impact on society.

Curious to find out more about the strengths of the Netherlands private sector? Find your inspiration at www.nlplatform.com or contact the Netherlands Embassy at MAN-EZ@minbuza.nl.

In addition to the Ambassador's interview. ECCP requested information about the Dutch government's initiatives, the Embassy's Economic Section and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate provided responses about the Embassy's national policy.

What measures is the Dutch government taking to increase investments in research and development, and how does this align with the state's goals for sustainable growth?

We believe it is important for the Netherlands to keep up with the rapid pace of global technological developments. The Netherlands also believes it is important to think smartly about how the government can create the right conditions to encourage other public and private parties to invest. We have developed a National Technology Strategy in partnership with industry, civic organizations and knowledge institutions that could encourage and give space for innovative companies to grow, prosper and be internationally competitive.

What are the key priorities of Dutch national innovation strategy, and how does it align with international trends and best practices?

The Netherlands is good at developing new technology: our researchers and industry are at the forefront of developments in machine building, computer chips, agri-food technology, biotech and medicines.

For example, with the aim of The Netherlands being a global leader in the development and manufacture of next generation systems by 2035, we will focus on strengthening or attaining a position of technological leadership in priority technologies. We however recognize that these technologies would only be successful if they are used to have a positive impact on our society, so technologies must be designed for a real, complex context and must take account of the behavior of people and/or must fit into industrial ecosystems.

Therefore, we look at the challenges our community is facing, like climate change, energy shortage or an aging society. These challenges form the need for smart solutions, and it is our mission to support the innovators through the whole ecosystem, from the student with a smart idea, to the start-ups to the growth into a future company like ASML.



In what way is the Dutch collaborating with other countries to foster innovation, and how does this international cooperation enhance the Dutch innovation ecosystem?

The Netherlands cannot lead the way in all technologies (we are too small for that). We must continue to collaborate with our partners in Europe and beyond, preferably with like-minded countries that share our standards and values.

The Netherlands' leading technological position helps to bolster the international position of the EU as a whole. This serves the interests of both the Netherlands and Europe: European and international collaboration is essential to acquire a strong position in the technologies of the future. This will ultimately improve our international competitiveness, national security and allow us to make better use of technology to tackle the challenges we face as a society.

How does the Netherlands leverage societal challenges to drive innovation, and can you provide examples of successful initiatives that have emerged from this approach?

The Smart Cities strategy was introduced in 2017 by several large and smaller cities in the Netherlands. The strategy aims to improve the quality of life in Dutch cities, such as Amsterdam to foster innovative solutions, and enhance international competitiveness. This initiative serves in bringing together innovation professionals from government, civil society, businesses, and research institutions and focuses on shaping the future by addressing various themes such as energy, mobility, and the circular economy.

How does the Dutch government support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in adopting new technologies, particularly in the context of digital transformation and industry?

We recognize that special attention should be given to the challenges faced by startups, scaleups and innovative SMEs as they can be the foundation for the Netherlands' future earning potential.

However as technology development is capital and R&D intensive as well as high-risk, The Netherlands also needs to identify technological niches, or combinations thereof, where we can excel. These niches stem from our knowledge position, our infrastructure, including digital infrastructure, and public-private partnerships. We also depend on our servicesector, legislation and regulations and international relations to help us acquire high-value positions in value chains.

For example by developing a good knowledge position, achieving sufficient economic scale, developing international standards or guaranteeing the supply of

critical raw materials. We support innovators in different manners through the process. Sometimes we help by subsidizing (like testing facilities), sometimes through the use of our network or missions, and sometimes with advice. This all to avoid the so-called 'valley of death' of a promising innovation.

How is the Netherlands positioning itself as a digital frontrunner, and what initiatives are in place to support the digital transformation of businesses, particularly small enterprises?

The Netherlands is in a good position to host a biomolecular and cell technologies ecosystem that can be amongst the best in the world. However it is essential that a state-of-the-art public-private research infrastructure is available for both fundamental and applied research to support startups and SMEs that often have limited access to existing facilities due to the high costs.

The Netherlands is presently studying the opportunities to open research and test facilities for the three areas of application, namely: health, biochemical and agrifood industries that would enable multiple research disciplines and stakeholders to work together in these accessible and shared research test facilities.

What do you see as the main challenges facing the Dutch innovation system in the coming years, and how is the government planning to address these challenges?

The Netherlands is particularly concerned about geopolitical tensions. Not all players play the game fairly. In addition, if a single country acquires a leading position in a particular technology, we may become disproportionately dependent on a single party for that technology. That may make us vulnerable, for example if we lose access to that technology.

This particularly applies to technologies of great strategic importance, such as computer chips and artificial intelligence. If we wish the Netherlands and Europe to remain relevant, we must invest in strategic technologies, human resources, facilities and support the companies that develop them.

How does the Dutch government support smart cities and the startup ecosystem to promote innovation and the development of digital skills?

In 2017, the Netherlands rolled-out its National Smart City Strategy to improve the quality of life in Dutch cities and to introduce innovative solutions to increase their international competitive strength, which was participated in by the country's largest five cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht and Eindhoven) together with the G32 of middle to large size Dutch towns.

These Dutch towns and cities agreed that investments in smart technology are necessary to respond to major social challenges, such as expanding pressure on public amenities and infrastructure, urbanization, climate change, employment, digitization and mobility.

Together, the public and private parties as well as the academic institutes innovative solutions were introduced to improve the digitalization of Dutch cities. Among which include mobility and accessibility of cities, sustainable and low-energy homes and building, improvements of air quality

and smart, healthy urbanization.

These initiatives will require the set-up of cross-sector partnerships and active participation from both residents and businesses, focusing on cybersecurity, privacy, interoperability, hyperconnectivity, open source digital infrastructure, standardization and finance.

In support of promoting technology and innovation, the Dutch Government established a National Technology Strategy that provides building blocks that identifies key enabling technologies where Dutch knowledge and industry can make a positive impact and where the Netherlands can develop a unique position. Among these are: Optical systems and integrated photonics; Quantum technologies; Process technology, including process intensification; Biomolecular and cell technologies; Imaging technologies; Mechatronics and optomechanics; Artificial intelligence and data science; Energy materials; Semiconductor technologies and Cybersecurity technologies.

This Strategy is likewise aligned with the policy of European Commission, which has identified ten critical technologies that are important for the security of the EU. The National Technology Strategy employs a broader assessment framework than the Commission, as it considers not only national security but also the impact on earning potential, the challenges faced by our society and the areas where the Netherlands already has a strong knowledge position.

Overview of the Netherlands' National Technology Strategy

- The Netherlands has established a National Technology Strategy providing the building blocks for a strategic technology policy by identifying key enabling technologies where Dutch knowledge and industry can make a positive impact and where the Netherlands can develop a unique position. These technologies are: Optical systems and integrated photonics; Quantum technologies; Process technology, including process intensification; Biomolecular and cell technologies; Imaging technologies; Mechatronics and optomechanics; Artificial intelligence and data science; Energy materials; Semiconductor technologies and Cybersecurity technologies. Each of these technologies are expected to have concrete action agenda's (where, how, when and with which partners) at the end of this year.
- The National Technology Strategy is aligned with the policy of the European Commission, which has identified ten critical technologies that are important for the security of the EU. The National Technology Strategy employs a broader assessment framework than the Commission, as it considers not only national security but also the impact on earning potential, the challenges faced by our society and the areas where the Netherlands already has a strong knowledge position.

Interview with the National Privacy Commission
Privacy Commissioner and Chairman

Atty. John Henry Naga



How is the Philippine government leveraging digital technologies to transform public services and improve efficiency?

During my first year as the Privacy Commissioner, I emphasized the importance of adopting emerging and interoperable information and communications technologies (ICTs). Thus, in 2022, we launched the Data Breach Notification Management System or the DNBMS, which is our user-friendly platform that facilitates easy submission and tracking of Personal Data Breach Notifications and Annual Security Incident Reports.

We also launched the NPC Registration System, or the NPCRS, which is an online platform that provides a secure and seamless portal for both government and private organizations to register their data protection officers and data processing systems with the Commission.

We are proud to say that the Philippines is among the Data Privacy Authorities that propel innovation by creating first-of-its-kind systems and mechanisms for compliance, such as the DNBMS and NPCRS.

Through these measures, the NPC reinforces public trust in digital governance by ensuring that as digital services grow, and privacy and security remain top priorities.

How is the Philippine government investing in digital infrastructure, such as broadband connectivity and data centers, to bridge the digital divide and ensure inclusive access to technology?

The NPC is an attached agency of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) which is responsible for formulating and implementing policies to advance the country's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) development agenda.

One of their initiatives is the eGOVPH app which provides a one-stop digital platform where Filipinos can access government services, including business registration, permit applications, and payments. To address digital inclusion, our mother agency also spearheads the BroadBand ng Masa Program (BBMP) which aims to extend free internet connectivity to underserved and geographically isolated areas. Also, the rollout of National Fiber Backbone (NFB) under the National Broadband Plan (NBP) further enhances internet speed and reliability nationwide.

On our part, the NPC remains firm in promoting awareness and educating the public, ensuring every Filipino is a responsible digital citizen through various programs such as Kabataang Digital, Privacy in the Spotlight, DPA Trainings, and Data Privacy Roadshows, among others. Aside from these, we are also committed to delivering public services in innovative ways, especially in the transition towards digitalized and modernized services consistent with the Marcos Administration's vision to fully embrace digitalization.

What are the major digital transformation initiatives currently being implemented by the NPC, and how does it impact local communities?

All services of the NPC are now fully digitized, allowing individuals to file complaints, report data breaches, request advisory opinions, and register with the NPC online. In December 2024, the Compliance and Security Monitoring Command Center was launched to oversee and enforce adherence to data privacy regulations across various sectors. This initiative ensures that NPC services remain accessible nationwide, improving public trust in data protection and privacy rights.

Recognizing the importance of public education, the NPC actively promotes data privacy awareness through digital platforms. The Privacy in the Spotlight Webcast leverages social media to educate businesses, organizations, and the public on privacy, security, and trust in the digital landscape, featuring expert discussions on data protection in everyday lives. Additionally, the Kabataang Digital campaign delivers child-friendly educational content, fostering digital literacy and responsible online behavior among youth.

What steps is the Philippine government taking to protect critical infrastructure and sensitive data from cyber threats?

The NPC regularly issues advisories and circulars that provide guidelines for protecting the personal data of data subjects. One of which is the NPC Circular 2023-06, which outlines security requirements for personal data processing in both government and private sectors. It mandates PICs and PIPs to designate and register a DPO, register data processing systems, conduct Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA), implement a Privacy Management Program, provide regular privacy training, and comply with NPC issuances. The Circular also establishes guidelines on data storage, requiring personal data to be retained only as necessary and protected using industry standards. Additionally, it enforces strict access control measures, detailing authentication protocols, authorized personnel procedures, and remote data security mechanisms.

To ensure compliance, the NPC conducts regular compliance checks, on-site visits, and privacy sweeps among PICs and PIPs, reinforcing adherence to the DPA, its IRR, and NPC.

How is the government collaborating with other countries and international organizations to share knowledge, promote technology transfer, and address global technological challenges?

The NPC has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with data protection authorities in Turkey, South Korea, Dubai, Canada, Malta, and Hong Kong to foster international cooperation on data privacy policies and cybersecurity best practices. These agreements include joint research initiatives, knowledge-sharing programs, and cross-border investigations of personal data breaches.

The NPC also serves as the first fee-funded secretariat of the Global Privacy Assembly (GPA), which provides leadership at the international level in data privacy and protection. The NPC also became a member of the Global Cooperation Arrangement for Privacy Enforcement (Global CAPE), a multilateral arrangement for Privacy Enforcement Authorities (PEAs) to collaborate and cooperate in cross-border data protection and privacy enforcement.

Furthermore, the NPC will host the 2025 Global Cross-Border Privacy Rules (CBPR) Workshop bringing together government officials, regulators, and privacy experts from over 20 jurisdictions to enhance interoperability between different data privacy regimes.

What emerging technologies is the NPC focusing on to drive innovation, and how does it plan to foster an ecosystem that supports startups and tech entrepreneurs?

The NPC issued NPC Advisory No. 2024-04 on the guidelines on the application of DPA and its IRR, and NPC's issuances to artificial intelligence systems processing personal data. It outlines the obligations of PICs and PIPs, mandating transparency, accountability, and privacy risk assessments for AI developers, and ensuring that data subject rights will be upheld.

Also, the NPC entered into an agreement with Aboitiz Data Innovation (ADI) to promote the development, adoption, experimentation, and testing of innovative privacy-enhancing technologies (PETs) upon use cases on sandbox environments. It also seeks to provide and share insights on its effectiveness, benefits, and future challenges in the field of data privacy and protection. The insights and learnings gained from this collaboration will then guide the NPC in crafting future regulatory requirements, standards, policies, guidelines, and best practices regarding PETs.

What role do public-private partnerships play in advancing the NPC's goals for innovation and technology?

The Commission recognizes the importance of public-private collaborations in driving data privacy awareness and compliance. In addition to its partnership with Aboitiz Data Innovation (ADI), the NPC signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with GCash, a mobile wallet and digital payments platform, allowing it to integrate the Commission's educational materials within the GCash application to promote privacy awareness among its users. The platform will also feature a direct link to the NPC's Registration Portal, encouraging businesses to comply with data protection regulations.

These collaborations with the private sector help amplify data privacy awareness and enhance regulatory compliance, which fosters a more secure digital environment.

What are the targeted measures of the NPC to help sustain the growth trajectory of the Philippines' digital economy?

The NPC will continue to issue and enforce policies that align with emerging technologies, ensuring data protection keeps pace with technological advancements. Likewise,

the NPC will also strengthen its awareness campaigns to equip Filipinos with the knowledge and skills needed to protect their personal data in an increasingly digital environment. By offering guidance on compliance with the law, enhancing digital literacy, and ensuring cross-border data transfer mechanisms are in place, the NPC supports a trust-based digital economy that encourages investments and innovation.

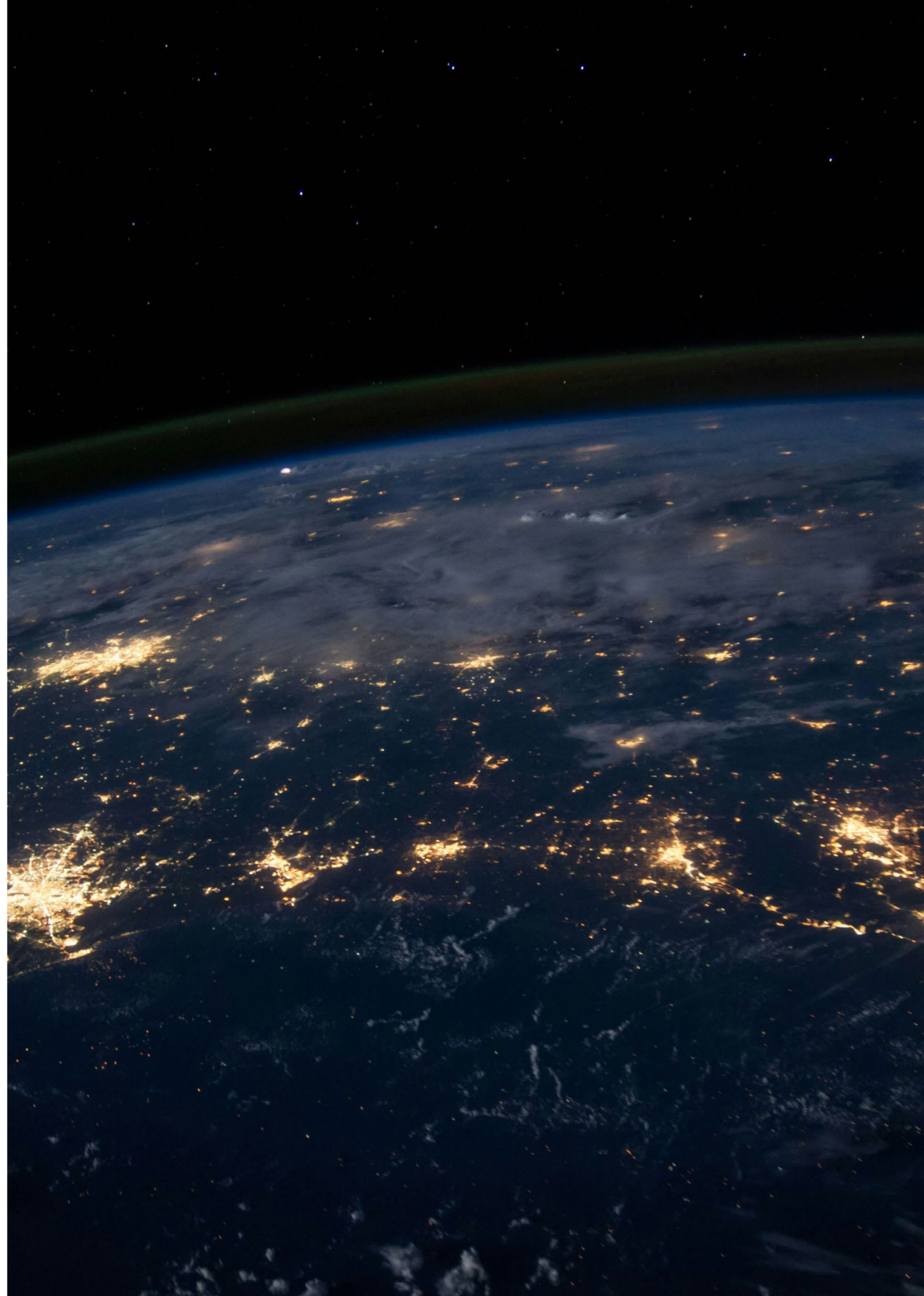
Additionally, the NPC is working with data privacy stakeholders to develop sector-specific privacy frameworks that cater to financial technology (fintech), e-commerce, and artificial intelligence, which will ensure that data-driven industries remain competitive while protecting data subject rights.

How is the government emphasizing the development of digital skills to maintain the country's skilled workforce in lieu of the advancement of Artificial Intelligence?

The government is promoting digital upskilling to ensure that Filipino workers remain competitive in the global digital landscape, and equipped with the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly automated world. Our mother agency, the DICT, offers Strengthening the Philippine workforce through the Adaptive and Responsive Digital Knowledge (SPARK) Program, which aims to strengthen the Philippine workforce by enhancing people's capacities to secure employment in ICT-related fields.

Complementing these efforts, the NPC also integrates data privacy education into digital upskilling initiatives. Recognizing that AI and automation rely heavily on personal data, the NPC ensures that digital literacy programs also emphasize responsible data handling, cybersecurity, and privacy protection. These include a dedicated episode of Privacy in the Spotlight focusing on Artificial Intelligence and its impact on data privacy. Additionally, NPC conducts training programs such as DPA Briefings, which equip DPOs and the general public with a fundamental understanding of the DPA and its application in various professional settings. Hence, the NPC ensures that Filipino professionals are both adept in emerging technologies and knowledgeable in data privacy protection and compliance.

The NPC emphasizes the importance of digital skills, data privacy awareness, and an empowered citizenry in strengthening the culture of privacy. More importantly, we aim to improve the quality of data privacy education in the Philippines. With that in mind, we issued NPC Circular No. 2023-02 or the Data Privacy Competency Program. The Program will be composed of courses on the fundamental and operational aspects of the DPA which are essential for anyone who seeks to have a better understanding of the law and its application to actual situations, and other projects.



EXCEED EXPECTATIONS

Through Innovations and Meaningful Connections

At Eastern Communications, we're more than just your connectivity provider—we're your trusted partner. With cutting-edge solutions and customer-first approach, we empower businesses to exceed expectations in the digital landscape.



Connectivity Solutions



Cyber Security Solutions



Network Solutions



Cloud & Data Center Solutions



Business Applications



Professional Services



Asian Telecom Awards 2025



Cloud Initiative of the Year & Infrastructure Initiative of the Year - Philippines

Contact an Eastern Account Manager now!



[From L to R:] Eastern Communications' (EC) AVP and Head of Marketing & Customer Experience Jed Estanislao, EC Product Manager Edwin De Jesus, EC CAN Planning & Engineering Head Rachele Roque, EC Brand Communications Head Hannah Lazatin, and Contributing Editor of Asian Business Review, Simon Hyatt.

Eastern Communications was honoured at Asian Telecom Awards 2025

The company bagged two awards for its game-changer public cloud platform, Eastern Cloud, and its PDSCN expansion project.

Eastern Communications was named the Cloud Initiative of the Year - Philippines and Infrastructure Initiative of the Year - Philippines recipient at the Asian Telecom Awards 2025, highlighting its effort in redefining cloud computing in the Philippines with Eastern Cloud and its submarine cable network providing resilience and redundancy across the country.

"Together, we strive to shape a future where technology empowers and connects everyone. On behalf of Eastern Communications, we are truly grateful for this recognition at the Asian Telecom Awards 2025, says Jed Estanislao, AVP and Head of Marketing and Customer Experience. "We share this achievement with our customers, partners, and the incredible people behind Eastern Communications, whose dedication makes everything possible."

Digital transformation driver

Eastern Cloud, a customisable public cloud platform powered by CloudSigma, allows businesses to purchase only the computing resources they need without being locked into fixed server sizes. This flexible, unbundled approach provides businesses with greater control, cost savings, and scalability.

The platform is designed to support organisations of all sizes, from startups to large enterprises. More than just a business success story, Eastern Cloud has also helped drive digital transformation across industries in the Philippines by enabling businesses to reduce IT infrastructure costs by up to 30%.

With a PHP4.3b investment, the Philippine Domestic Submarine Cable Network (PDSCN) project by Eastern Communications is a joint venture between Eastern Communications, Globe Group, and InfiniVAN that addresses the country's vulnerabilities in communication infrastructure.

To reduce the likelihood and frequency of network faults caused by cable cuts, the PDSCN Express Route, encompassing various points in the country, is designed to have at least 80% of cables laid submarine and less than 20% inland. Through this strategic design, Eastern Communications is able to provide better bandwidth to meet the varied needs of Filipinos, especially in disaster-prone areas.

The Asia Telecom Awards recognises exceptional accomplishments within the telecom industry in the Asia Pacific region. It also highlights the journey of telecom companies that have driven progress and ignited transformative shifts within the sector.



One Clark: Three Parts, One Future-Ready Whole

The Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) envisions One Clark as a unified, world-class economic hub that integrates New Clark City, Clark International Airport, and Clark Freeport Zone. This vision aims to create a highly sustainable, smart, and globally competitive metropolis that serves as a major economic driver in the Philippines. By leveraging Clark's strategic location, excellent infrastructure, and business-friendly environment, BCDA seeks to attract investors, generate jobs, and boost national development.

BCDA is developing Clark as a green and disaster-resilient city, incorporating smart urban planning, eco-friendly transportation, and renewable energy

sources. New Clark City, in particular, is designed as a model for sustainable urban development, featuring modern government centers, sports facilities, and mixed-use districts that promote a high quality of life. Clark International Airport is also being expanded to serve as a premier gateway, enhancing connectivity for both business and tourism. Lastly, the Clark Freeport Zone, positioned to be the center for leisure and tourism, focuses on the meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibits (MICE) market.

It's the One Clark vision, a holistic approach to developing Clark, taking the best that each part of Clark has to offer and making the whole better than the sum of its parts.


clark
GATEWAY TO THE WORLD

LEARN MORE ABOUT BCDA'S PROJECTS  SCAN THE CODE
 FOR MORE COLLECTIVE ISSUES  SCAN THE CODE



PARIS

3 WEEKLY DIRECT FLIGHTS FROM MANILA

AIRFRANCE

ELEGANCE IS A JOURNEY



Air France, pioneering Innovation and Technology in Aviation

Air France is known for its commitment to innovation and technology in its operations, and to enhance the overall customer experience.

This year, Air France will progressively roll out an ultra-high-speed Wi-Fi service for a “ground-like” experience. This new service is completely free-of-charge in all travel cabins and will be accessible to customers by logging into their Flying Blue account.



Digital transformation

Air France offers user-friendly mobile applications and websites for bookings and managing flights. When booking a flight, AI-powered chatbots assist with inquiries and virtual reality (VR) for immersive travel experiences. Customers are encouraged to use digital boarding passes and subscribe to receive real-time flight updates.

At selected airports, Air France has implemented biometric boarding systems using facial recognition technology. This helps improve the boarding process, making it faster and enhances security.

Digital analytics and insights

For operational efficiency, and to reduce cost, advanced data analytics and artificial intelligence is used to optimize flight operations, including flight planning, maintenance, and customer service.

Ultra-high-speed Wi-Fi

Air France is continuously working on improving the cabin experience for customers through innovations.

Commitment to sustainable development

Air France has been actively working on reducing its carbon footprint. This includes investing in more fuel-efficient aircraft, exploring the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) and implementing various measures to reduce waste and improve fuel efficiency.



Rail and air travel

Underlining the growing interest of travellers in combined journeys by ‘Train+Air’ to reduce their travel footprint whenever they can, Air France, as a world first, allows Flying Blue members to convert Miles into SNCF Voyageurs vouchers online in the Flying Blue Store. These vouchers, for an amount of the customer’s choice (between 25-100 euros) can be used on the entire TGV INOUI network for bookings made via SNCF Voyageurs-approved ticket offices (that accept them) and direct sales channels.



ECCP: Philippines must seize momentum to enhance competitive business environment

Makati City, Philippines – The Philippines is increasingly recognized as a beacon of economic growth and development, and further emerging as a prime destination for investment. This momentum is driven by forward-looking policy reforms and proactive initiatives in trade and investment promotion, as highlighted by the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) at a press conference on Thursday.

“Despite external uncertainties, the Philippine economy remains resilient. Driven by a dynamic, growing population and exceptional English proficiency, the Philippines continues to be one of the fastest-growing economies in the region,” highlighted ECCP President Paulo Duarte. “We are encouraged by the moderation of inflation, which averaged 3.2% in 2024—well within the government’s target range of 3% to 4%. Additionally, a strong GDP growth forecasting 6% for 2024 and robust remittances from our estimated 10 million overseas Filipino workers provide significant support to the economy.”

To maintain this trajectory, the Philippines must not lose steam in implementing policy and regulatory reforms, helping unlock the Philippines’ full potential. Recent developments include the second round of negotiations for the EU-Philippines Free Trade Agreement (FTA) set to take place in February, which opens opportunities for stronger trade and investment ties between the Philippines and Europe.

The government has also recently enacted the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises to Maximize Opportunities for Reinvigorating the Economy (CREATE MORE) Act, designed to optimize the Philippines’ tax regime, streamline business processes, reduce costs, and enhance the country’s global competitiveness. Complementing this is the signing of Executive Order (EO) No. 18, establishing Green Lanes for Strategic Investments, which further accelerates the approval processes for licenses and permits, demonstrating the government’s commitment to fostering a business-friendly environment.

“While we welcome these initiatives, more needs to be done,” stressed Duarte. “According to the 2024 World Competitiveness Report, the Philippines still ranks 52nd out of 67 countries, maintaining its position from the previous year. Despite notable improvements in government efficiency, the country experienced setbacks in crucial areas such as infrastructure and business efficiency.”

Duarte also highlighted findings of the Chamber’s 2024 Business Sentiment Survey where 53% of respondents see ease of doing business measures in the Philippines as improving, yet 75% of respondents say there are still significant amounts of barriers to investment, business activities, or overall ease of doing business in the country.

As a foreign chamber, Duarte said the ECCP remains committed to championing reforms that create a

more conducive investment climate and to bolstering collaborations with government and private sector partners in both Europe and the Philippines to maximize the country’s potential and attract a larger share of global Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

“Central to the Chamber’s agenda are initiatives to drive increased trade and investments, advocate for policies that promote economic liberalization, and enhance the ease of doing business in the Philippines,” added Duarte. “As we champion the country as a preferred investment destination, we also emphasize the integration of sustainability practices and digitalization, aligning with the Green Economy Program and the European Green Deal, among others.”

Guide to Doing Business in the Philippines

To showcase invaluable resources for businesses navigating the local landscape, the ECCP, DivinaLaw, and the Philippine Board of Investments, unveiled the latest edition of its Doing Business in the Philippines Publication alongside key government officials and heads of European diplomatic missions.

This year’s edition introduces significant updates and new features, including a reader-friendly guide to business registration and permits, complete with details on relevant regulating agencies, a dedicated chapter on fiscal and non-fiscal incentives under the recently enacted CREATE MORE Act and an expanded section on naturalization within the Immigration chapter. This year’s edition features four focus industries and specific regulations on renewable energy, financial technology, real estate, and mining.

Present at the Doing Business in the Philippines Press Launch were H.E. Massimo Santoro, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines; H.E. Christian Halaas Lyster, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Embassy of Norway; Hon. Ceferino Rodolfo, DTI Undersecretary for Industry Development and Investment Promotion Group (IPG) and Vice Chairman and Managing Head of the Board of Investments; and DivinaLaw Managing Director Atty. Nilo T. Divina.

About the 2025 Doing Business in the Philippines Guidebook

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP), in tripartite with DivinaLaw and the Board of Investments of the Philippines, is pleased to unveil its Doing Business in the Philippines 2025 publication on 23 January 2025. This publication aims to provide potential investors with a complete guidebook on the country, its laws, policies, procedures, and regulations. The guide aims to increase investor confidence and equip them to make well-informed business and investment decisions. Some of the topics include taxation, employment, immigration, and dispute resolution among others.

Inside ECCP: Manila

9th Joint Economic Briefing 16 January 2025

On 16 January, the ECCP together with the Belgian-Filipino Business Chamber (BFBC), British Chamber of Commerce Philippines, Dutch Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines Inc. - DCCP, French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the Philippines, Spanish Chamber of Commerce in The Philippines - La Cámara, German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc., Swiss Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines and Nordic Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines conducted the 9th Joint Economic Briefing at Dusit Thani, Makati.

This event presented insights into the Philippine economic situation by assessing Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) and investment opportunities for economic growth and resilience, highlighting relevant trade policies, legislation, and sustainable economic development.

Esteemed speakers and panelists included EU Ambassador to the Philippines H.E. Massimo Santoro, Office of the Special Assistant to the President for Investment and Economic Affairs (OSAPIEA) Undersecretary Hon. Ma. Angela E. Ignacio, BDO Senior Vice President and Head of Research Mr. Dante Tinga



Jr., Government Procurement Policy Board-Technical Support Office Executive Director V Ms. Rowena Candice Ruiz, DOTr Undersecretary for Planning and Project Development Hon. Timothy Batan, BOI Executive Director for Investments Promotion Service Hon. Evariste "Eries" M. Cagatan, and DOE Assistant Secretary Hon. Mylene Capongcol.

For more photos, visit <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBYnLo>.

The 9th Joint Economic Briefing was organized in partnership with Event Partners BDO, PFMTC, and Sprout Solutions, and Silver Partners CMI, MTF, and Acen Renewables.

Innovative Frontiers: Bridging Innovation Through Intellectual Property Rights 21 January 2025

To sustain a competitive business edge, establishing strong IP management protocols, educating employees, and cultivating a culture of IP awareness is imperative.

Last January 21, 2025, the ECCP and the South-East Asia IP SME Helpdesk held a joint event, entitled "Innovative Frontiers: Bridging Innovation Through Intellectual Property Rights". The event highlighted the emerging interest in intellectual property (IP) discourse, as well as new developments in the IP landscape of the Philippines.

Key presentations were delivered by the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHIL) Deputy Director General Atty. Ann Claire Credo-Cabochan, Department of Trade and Industry - Export Management Bureau (DTI-EMB) Assistant Director Atty. Kat Rivera, and EU IP-SME Helpdesk External IP Expert Atty. Edmund Baranda. The speakers discussed



a wide range of IP issues from legal perspectives to trade, exports, and artificial intelligence.

Our thanks to Atty. Reena Mitra-Ventanilla of QuisumbingTorres for being our event host and moderator, and to Colliers and Makati Commerce Tower for being our venue partner!

For official photos, please visit <https://lnkd.in/gX3D2RsB>

2025 New Year's Reception 23 January 2025

To our European-Philippine business community – thank you for celebrating with us at the 2025 New Year's Reception!

This memorable event brought together more than 300 guests and partners, including the presence of Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin, Transport Secretary Jaime Bautista, ARTA Director General Ernesto Perez, DTI Undersecretary for International Trade Group Allan Gepty, DOTr Undersecretary for Aviation and Airports Bobby Lim, Ambassador Ma. Hellen De La Vega of the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs, ARTA Deputy Director General for Operations Gerald Divinagracia, BOC Deputy Commissioner Atty. Clarence Dizon, and PEZA Deputy Director General for Operations Ms. Vivian Santos, alongside esteemed members, partners, and friends from the media.

We are deeply honored for the overwhelming support and incredible turnout at this year's celebration held at Dusit Thani Manila and overjoyed with the meaningful conversations that unfolded throughout the evening.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to our partners who made this celebration possible – Gold Partners Centre



Médicale Internationale and Ethiopian Airlines; Networking Partners Cloudstaff, Gardenia Philippines, International Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI) and Unilever Philippines; Table Top Partners The Freeport Area of Bataan, E. Zobel Foundation, FAST Logistics, Jas Ancheta Interiors and The Monarch, MR Travel, PHIVIDEC Industrial Authority, Wärtsilä Corporation, and White & Case LLP; Raffle Partners Atlantis Dive Resorts & Liveaboards, Edsa Shangri-La, Manila, Sheraton Manila Hotel, and The Alpha Suites; Beverage Partners Le Cellier French Wine Selection (Le Cellier Quality Store Corp.) and SULÀ; Media Partners Great Travel Philippines and The Manila Times, and Venue Partner Dusit Thani Manila.

For official photos, please visit <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBZ67J>.

2025 Doing Business in the Philippines Guidebook Launch 23 January 2025

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP), in tripartite with DivinaLaw and the Philippine Board of Investments, is pleased to unveil its 2025 Doing Business in the Philippines guidebook!

Presented at a press event, the latest edition of the publication includes a guide to business registration and permits, a dedicated chapter on fiscal and non-fiscal incentives under the recently enacted CREATE MORE Act, and sections on the key industries of renewable energy, financial technology, real estate, and mining.

ECCP President Paulo Duarte emphasized the chamber's commitment to reforms that enhance the investment climate with the aim of boosting the Philippines' share of global Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). "Central to the Chamber's agenda are initiatives to drive increased trade and investments, advocate for policies that promote economic liberalization, and enhance the ease of doing business in the Philippines," Duarte stated.

Trade Undersecretary and BOI Managing Head Ceferino Rodolfo shared updates on investment promotion strategies and praised the ECCP's efforts to elevate the Philippines' economic profile among European investors. Meanwhile, Atty. Nilo Divina offered a legal perspective on doing business in the Philippines.

Moreover, H.E. Massimo Santoro, Ambassador of the European Union in the Philippines, and H.E. Christian



Halaas Lyster, Ambassador of The Royal Norwegian Embassy in Manila, provided updates on EU-Philippines Trade and Investments and the EFTA-Philippines FTA, respectively.

The event was attended by partners from media, guests and lawyers from DivinaLaw, BOI staff, publication partners from Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), Crimson Resort and Spa Mactan, Crown Asia Chemicals Corporation, Deloitte, Electro Premier Venture Intl. Inc., Mövenpick Resort & Spa Boracay, The Ascott Limited, TIEZA - Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority, as well as publication supporters Air France-KLM, bai Hotel Cebu, B. Braun Avitum Philippines, Centre Médicale Internationale, DEDON, Guard-All Electronic Security Systems, Inc., RISE, and Sterling Pacific Ventures Corp.

We hope this book serves as an instrumental guide for investors looking to do business in the country and to the entire European-Philippine Business Community!

For official photos, please visit <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBZ5ZQ>.

Inside ECCP: Cebu

27th DOHE Start Up Mixer 15 January 2025

The ECCP is proud to have supported the 27th DOHE Startup Mixer, an event that showcased the best of Cebu's innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit! The evening featured insightful presentations from Butch Carungay and Allen Arvin Tan which provided valuable perspectives for the region's growing startup ecosystem. The mixer also facilitated meaningful networking, further strengthening the connections between Cebu's startup and creative communities and setting a promising tone for the year ahead. We extend our sincere thanks to all who participated, shared their expertise, and contributed to the success of the event. Your involvement plays a critical role in advancing Cebu's startup ecosystem, and we are honored to support this ongoing growth!

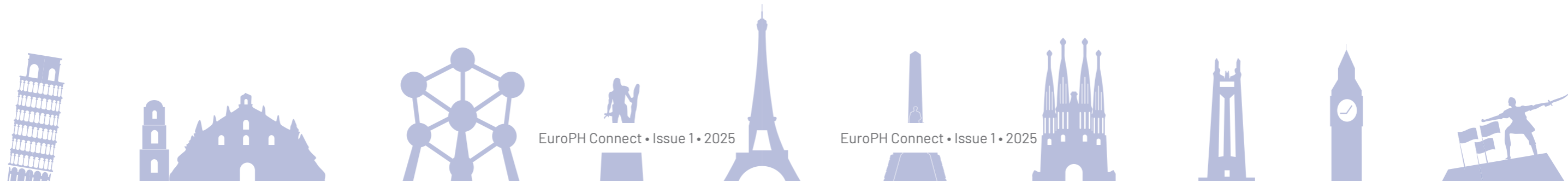


RE3 Conference & ECCP x PCEI MOU Signing 17-18 January 2025

Last January 17-18, ECCP Cebu, represented by Ms. Jillian Sitchon, officially led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Philippine Center for Energy Inc. (PCEI), represented by its President, Engr-Jedder N. De Castro at Cebu Grand Hotel during the RE3 Conference.

This significant partnership formalizes the terms and understanding between PCEI and the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines to establish an ex-deal membership that will foster mutual benefit and collaboration. Both organizations recognize the immense value in cultivating a strong, sustainable partnership that aims to enhance the business environment, drive economic growth, and support shared interests in the energy sector and the European business communities in the Philippines.

We look forward to the opportunities this collaboration will bring and the positive impact it will have on both industries!



European Honorary Consuls' Meeting

24 January 2025

Last January 24, ECCP Cebu held the first European Honorary Consuls' Meeting for 2025 at the Citadines Cebu City. This meeting is participated by Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines H.E. Massimo Santoro, Executive Director of the EU-ASEAN Business Council Mr. Chris Humphrey, Presidential Assistant for the Visayas Spokesperson of the Office of the Presidential Assistant for the Visayas Atty. Kaye Almeida Yap, Assistant Regional Director, Department of Trade and Industry Region VII Ms. Esperanza Melgar, and the respected Honorary Consuls in the Visayas and Mindanao.

The agenda focused on strengthening international cooperation in key areas including Insights on the Global Gateway Program and Prospects for the EU-Philippines Free Trade Agreement, Business Outlook for 2025, DTI Region VII's Strategic Response to One NIR and Focus on Smart City Collaboration in the Visayas. Consuls representing EU nations engaged in productive discussions, sharing insights and best practices to enhance consular services and promote stronger ties between their respective countries. The meeting underscored the importance of multilateralism and the commitment of participating nations to work together towards common goals.



The ECCP Cebu extends its heartfelt gratitude to all the guests and participants of the 2025 European Consuls Meeting held last January 24, 2025. We also acknowledge our esteemed partners for their invaluable support:

Events & Venue Partner: Cebu Landmasters Inc.

Hotel Partner: Citadines Cebu City

Media Partner: Grangetin Productions

Logistics Partner: Island Fleet PH

Transportation Partner: Fast Autoworld Philippines Corporation

Token Partner: The Chocolate Chamber

Your presence and enthusiasm made the event truly memorable. We look forward to strengthening our connections and exploring even greater opportunities in the future!

2025 Kick-Off Reception

24 January 2025

The 2025 Kick-Off Reception marked a dynamic start to the year, bringing together leaders, partners, and innovators for an evening of meaningful connections and forward-looking conversations. It was an excellent opportunity to reflect on the past year's achievements and discuss the exciting opportunities that lie ahead. As we embark on this new year, we are energized and ready to collaborate for continued growth, innovation, and success.

Surrounded by a lavish buffet and delightful refreshments, attendees spent the evening networking, engaging in insightful discussions, and exploring potential partnership opportunities.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our partners for their invaluable support:

Events & Venue Partner: Cebu Landmasters Inc

Hotel Partner: Citadines Cebu City

Silver Partner: Eastern Communications

Bronze Partner: Shang Properties Realty Corporation*, Jeg Realty Corporation



Raffle Partners: Atlantis Philippines Dive Resort and Liveaboards, Belmont Hotel Mactan, La Joya Farm Resort & Spa, Responsible Internet Sustainability Effort Inc., and a consolation prize from Mr. Rafael Castellano

Media Partner: Grangetin Productions

Beverage Partner: Bauhinia Brewery Cebu

Transportation Partner: Fast Autoworld Philippines Corporation

Logistics Partner: Island Fleet PH

We look forward to hosting more events that foster stronger connections and drive economic growth!

Courtesy Visit at Run Sardine Run & Goa Nights Restaurant

30 January 2025

The European Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines (ECCP) Cebu recently paid a courtesy visit to Run Sardine Run and Goa Nights Restaurants, owned by Indian Restaurant Management Company Limited. During the meeting with Director Gagan Sethi and COO Gwen Trott, discussions centered on connecting and exploring strategic partnerships for upcoming chamber events.

A key highlight of the meeting was the shared commitment to bolstering the presence of Portuguese cuisine in the Visayas. This collaboration signifies the growing trust within the Food & Beverage sector in ECCP Cebu's network and the region's aim of promoting Portuguese and other European cultures.

By introducing authentic Portuguese culinary experiences, this partnership aims to further enrich Cebu's vibrant tourism landscape and solidify the city's position as a melting pot of diverse cultures and flavors.



Courtesy Visit & Alignment Meeting with CLEAR Leadership Consulting Inc.

30 January 2025

ECCP Cebu courtesy visit and alignment meeting with CLEAR Leadership Consulting Inc.

ECCP Cebu recently met with Coach Ms. Chyrrelle Pagaduan from CLEAR Leadership Consulting Inc. to discuss potential collaborations. ECCP Cebu Branch Officer Jillian Sitchon and Assistant Branch Officer Sheridan Tan explored membership opportunities, strategic partnerships for leadership training and management development programs, and business development opportunities in the Visayas region.

The meeting underscored a mutual vision to enhance leadership capabilities and drive positive change in organizations throughout the region.



24th Startup Ecosystem Builders (SEB) Meeting

4 February 2025

On February 4, the 24th Startup Ecosystem Builders (SEB) Meeting took place at the Department of Science and Technology VII Innovation Hub, gathering key stakeholders to strengthen their commitment to advancing regional startups. The event highlighted the importance of aligning resources, support, and opportunities from various enablers, ensuring a dynamic and inclusive startup ecosystem.

Through enhanced collaboration, the community is driving an environment where entrepreneurship, innovation, and creativity can thrive. With 2025 underway, stakeholders are poised to deliver more impactful partnerships, initiatives, and programs, propelling the region's startup ecosystem to new heights of success and growth.



Courtesy Call and Alignment Meeting with Mata Technology Inc.

6 February 2025

ECCP Cebu Branch Officer Jillian Sitchon and Assistant Branch Officer Sheridan Tan had an insightful Courtesy Call and Alignment meeting with Mr. Ryan Tan Yu the CEO of Mata Technology Inc., The meeting focused on discussing the range of services offered by ECCP and how they could be customized to support Mata Technology's growth and future development. Specific services were explored to ensure they aligned with the company's evolving needs.

The meeting also addressed an inquiry regarding Mr. Ryan's potential appointment as Vice-Chair of the Business Council, evaluating the advantages and responsibilities associated with the position. The discussion also delved into the importance of fostering young talent within the organization, with an emphasis on cultivating a dynamic and innovative creative sector. The conversation highlighted a shared commitment to nurturing the next generation of professionals, ensuring a vibrant and sustainable future for the industry.



Inside ECCP: CDO

ECCP NorthMin Conducts the Mindanao Economic Outlook: 2025 Forecast

28 January 2025

The Mindanao Economic Outlook: 2025 Forecast webinar, held on January 28, 2025, offered valuable insights into Mindanao's economic future. Organized by the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) Northern Mindanao Branch, the virtual event brought together industry experts, policymakers, and stakeholders to discuss economic forecasts, opportunities, and strategic priorities. Key highlights included presentations on GDP growth, infrastructure investments, renewable energy initiatives, and investment trends. The discussions emphasized the importance of innovation, technology adoption, and stronger collaboration between government and private sectors to address challenges and foster sustainable growth. The event underscored the importance of renewable energy investments for long-term economic stability and set the stage for future initiatives to support regional development.



Northern Mindanao Welcomed the Year with the 2025 Launch: New Year, New Connections

31 January 2025

Cagayan de Oro City ushered in 2025 with excitement and optimism at the "2025 Launch: New Year, New Connections" event, hosted by the ECCP at Hamersons Hotel on January 31, 2025. The gathering brought together business leaders, government officials, and industry stakeholders from Northern Mindanao. The event was marked by the presence of the Honorable Mayor of Iligan City, highlighting strong ties with local government units, and featured speeches from ECCP leadership, emphasizing the importance of connections and partnerships for regional growth. Joanne Natindim, ECCP-CDO Branch Officer, shared insights into the Chamber's mission and goals,



offering a preview of initiatives for the year. The event fostered networking and camaraderie, strengthening relationships and setting the stage for a year of progress and collaboration in Northern Mindanao. This event is made possible with the support and partnership of ECCP Premium Members Nestle Philippines and PHIVIDEC Industrial Authority.

ECCP Northern Mindanao Partners with USTP-TPCO in its 1st Technology Transfer Conference

7 February 2025

On February 7, 2025, ECCP Northern Mindanao Branch Officer Joanne Natindim played a pivotal role as the host and emcee of the first-ever Technology Transfer Conference held by the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines-Technology Promotion and Coordination Office (USTP-TPCO) at Chali Beach Resort and Conference Center. This landmark event brought together innovators, industry experts, researchers, and stakeholders to explore the vital role of technology transfer in driving regional development. The event marked a significant step in strengthening the region's capacity for innovation and technological advancement, with ECCP's role in enhancing the overall impact and effectiveness of the conference.



ECCP Northern Mindanao Conducts 1st Business Council Meeting for 2025

12 February 2025

On February 12, 2025, the ECCP Northern Mindanao Business Council held a productive meeting at the University Boardroom, USTP CDO, gathering industry leaders, business professionals, and key stakeholders to discuss strategies for enhancing the region's business environment. During the meeting, 10 influential stakeholders shared valuable insights on topics ranging from innovation and investment opportunities to regional policy developments. The council is focused on an ambitious agenda for 2025, with a strong emphasis on creating new opportunities, fostering collaborations, and stimulating sustainable growth throughout Northern Mindanao. By leveraging the collective expertise of the council members,



the meeting aimed to set a clear path for addressing the region's challenges and maximizing its potential for economic development in the coming year. The council leaders also aim to push for more agriculture graduates to support Mindanao as the country's food basket and to leverage on the startup ecosystem as we aim for more innovation fostering collaboration among the industry, government and the academe.

Inside ECCP: Davao

Collaboration Meeting Between Project SARAI and EU BAEP-CRESCENT Project

10 February 2025

Last February 10, 2025, the EU BAEP-CRESCENT Project held a collaboration meeting with Project SARAI and private sector representatives at Café Julieta, Davao City, bringing together key stakeholders to explore agribusiness investment opportunities and the role of climate-smart tools in sustaining investments in BARMM and Mindanao. Mr. Gerry Constantino introduced the BAEP-CRESCENT Project and its engagement with the Agriculture Committee and Project SARAI representatives. Mr. Tony Peralta discussed Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) as a key implementation strategy for private sector locators. Prof. Vicky Espaldon provided an overview of Project SARAI, highlighting its components and the value it offers to private sector participants. Engr. Moises Dorado, representing SARAI's tech team, led a walkthrough of the Community-Level SARAI Enhanced Agricultural Monitoring System (CL-SEAMS),



showcasing its potential for enhancing agricultural sustainability. A networking session followed, where private sector stakeholders in Southern Mindanao engaged in discussions on potential collaborations, investment opportunities, and ways to integrate climate-smart technologies into agribusiness operations. The session fostered connections between prospect investors, agricultural experts, and project implementers, paving the way for future partnerships. The discussion emphasized synergies between both initiatives, reinforcing a shared commitment to driving sustainable agribusiness investments in the region.

Courtesy Visits to ECCP SMBC members of the Education Advocacy Committee

10-14 February 2025

The Honorary Consulate of Finland in Mindanao, through the ECCP Southern Mindanao, recently donated copies of the book "100 Innovations from Finland" to member Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of the ECCP Education Advocacy Committee. This initiative, led by Honorary Consul Antonio Peralta and ECCP Davao Branch Officer Sam Gura, was conducted on behalf of the Embassy of Finland, highlighting Finland's best practices in governance, sustainability, equality, and innovation. Facilitated through courtesy visits to ECCP's partner schools, the discussions focused on strengthening international collaboration, enhancing industry-academe partnerships, and promoting global learning experiences. These engagements provided a platform to explore joint programs, research initiatives, and exchange opportunities, aiming to equip Filipino students and educators with valuable



insights from Finland's world-renowned education system. The ECCP looks forward to fostering deeper collaborations with its member institutions and advancing internationalization efforts in the Philippine education sector.

Introductory Meeting with the new management of Biogrow Substrates Philippines

14 February 2025

ECCP member BioGrow Substrates Philippines visits ECCP Davao and EU Project Office in Matina, Davao City.

During the visit, Mr. Yannick Pitiot was introduced as the new lead for the French company, succeeding Managing Director Clement Jacquot. This meeting also served as a personal introduction to ECCP SMBC Chairman Antonio Peralta and Branch Officer Sam Gura, who will continue collaborating with BioGrow in Mindanao. ECCP fully supports this management transition and is committed to aiding BioGrow's business and advocacy initiatives through the ECCP Southern Mindanao Business Council and its Agriculture Committee, where the company holds the Vice Chairmanship title. Thank you for the kind visit and we look forward to continued collaboration and growth, BioGrow!



Advocacy Corner

AmCham Legislative Committee Meeting: EPIRA Law Amendments

16 January 2025

The ECCP participated in the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines' (AmCham) Legislative Committee Meeting on EPIRA Law Amendments last 16 January at the Corinthian Plaza Building in Makati City.

The lineup of speakers for this event included the Department of Energy Usec. Sharon Garin, who discussed the role of DOE in shaping energy policy and improving energy security and affordability in the country; Atty. Noel Baga, Co-Convenor of the Center for Energy Research and Policy, who provided insights into the proposed amendments and their implications for addressing energy security and electricity affordability in the Philippines; and Mr. Frank Thiel, Managing Director of Quezon Power, who tackled the challenges and opportunities in the Philippine power sector. Present at the meeting was ECCP Advocacy Officer Joaquin Reloj.

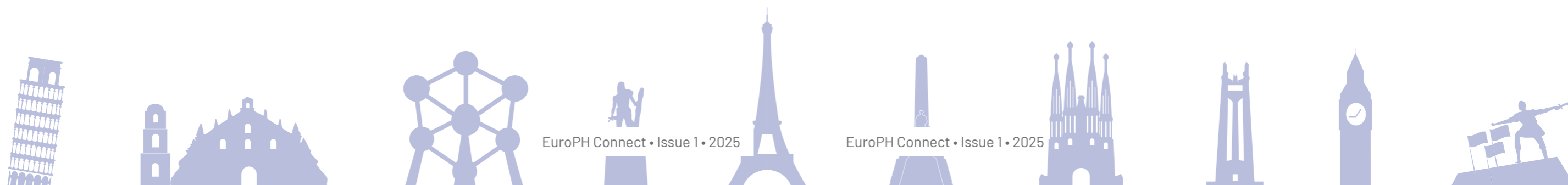


Finland-Philippines Labor Mobility Connect 2025

16 January 2025

Last 16 January, the ECCP participated in the Finland-Philippines Labour Mobility Connect 2025 held at Shangri-La The Fort, BGC. The event spotlighted labor mobility opportunities for Filipino workers aiming to build careers in Finland.

Key presentations from TESDA and CHED outlined training frameworks and employment tools designed to support aspiring overseas workers in their migration journey. The gathering underscored the shared commitment of both countries to fostering skills development and facilitating international employment pathways. In attendance from the ECCP was Advocacy Officer, Kyla Uy.



2025 European Ambassadors' Meeting 23 January 2025

On 23 January, the ECCP hosted the 2025 European Ambassadors' Meeting together with the European Heads of Mission, members of the diplomatic corps, distinguished speakers, and partners.

The afternoon session featured an in-depth discussion on the 2025 economic outlook from both #Philippine and #ASEAN perspectives. It explored the potential impact of the upcoming midterm elections on the Philippines' investment and business climate, strategies to enhance diplomatic and economic relations between Europe and the Philippines, as well as the United Kingdom and the country.

Additionally, the session provided valuable updates and insights into the prospects for the EU-Philippines Free Trade Agreement (#FTA) and the EFTA-Philippines FTA.

Presenting and speaking at the session were Mr. Marco Co, Head of Global Emerging Markets Trading at Deutsche Bank AG - Manila; Prof. Victor Andres C. Manhit, President of Stratbase ADR Institute Institute;



Mr. Chris Humphrey, Executive Director of the EU-ASEAN Business Council; H.E. Massimo Santoro, Ambassador of the European Union in the Philippines; Ms. Lindsey Gilbert-Crouch, Director of Trade and Investment at the British Embassy Manila; and Ambassador Nicolas Brühl of the Embassy of the Swiss Confederation to the Philippines. Atty. Tony Abad of TradeLawyers moderated the panel discussions.

Welcoming remarks were delivered by ECCP President Mr. Paulo Duarte and with ECCP Executive Director Mr. Florian Gottein hosting the discussion.

For official photos, please visit <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBZbyT>

1st National Stakeholder Consultation on Philippine Taxonomy Development Phase 2: Circular Economy Objective 30 January 2025

The ECCP took part in the National Stakeholder Consultation on Philippine Taxonomy Development Phase 2: Circular Economy Objective, a key initiative under the EU-funded Green Economy Programme in the Philippines, held on 30 January 2025 in Conrad Manila. This program is jointly implemented by Expertise France and the Global Green Growth Institute, with support from the Department of Finance, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Department of Trade and Industry.

The consultation served as a platform to bring together key stakeholders, experts, and policymakers to advance the development of a Circular Economy Taxonomy, extending the Philippines' Sustainable Finance Taxonomy Guidelines. As the first country-specific taxonomy focused on the circular economy, this initiative aims to establish a clear framework to



guide sustainable investments, promote resource efficiency, and foster inclusive green growth across various sectors.

Representing the Chamber were ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein, ICT-BPM-KPM Committee Co-Chairperson Karl Bantiling, Fairs & More, Inc. General Manager Dawn Cabigon, Events Manager Arci Catalan, and Industry and Government Affairs Manager Chin Nethercott.

Launch of the Joint Programme on Inclusive, Competitive, and Responsible Digital Philippines 31 January 2025

ECCP President Paulo Duarte participated as a panelist in the Launch of the Joint Programme on Inclusive, Competitive, and Responsible Digital Philippines on 31 January at Shangri-La The Fort, Taguig. He joined the "Fireside Chat on Igniting Digital Transformation: Empowering MSMEs through Inclusive Digitalization in the Philippines," where key stakeholders from Digital-PINAS explored the transformative potential of digital tools, services, and policies in fostering inclusive growth and resilience for MSMEs. The discussion



highlighted insights, successes, and challenges in the digitalization journey while outlining a roadmap toward building a more inclusive digital economy in the Philippines.

ARTA-World Bank Business-Ready Forum 3 February 2025

On 3 February 2025, the ECCP participated in the event "New Insights on the Philippine Business Environment: Exploring the World Bank's Business Ready (B-READY) Report," hosted by the Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) and the World Bank Group in Quezon City and via MS Teams.

World Bank Group Director of the Global Indicators Group Mr. Norman Loayza presented the findings of the B-READY Report, which replaces the former Doing Business report. This enhanced framework examines 1,200 indicators across 10 key areas—from business location and financial services to taxation, market competition, and international trade—offering a more comprehensive look at the global business landscape.



The event also featured insights from ARTA Director General Ernesto Perez, Undersecretary Gerald G. Divinagracia, Department of Finance (DOF) Assistant Secretary Neil Adrian S. Cabiles, and other key stakeholders.

Joint Foreign Chambers Meeting with DOT Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco 4 February 2025

The ECCP, represented by Executive Director Florian Gottein and Aviation Committee Co-Chairperson Atty. Manolito Manalo, joined fellow representatives of the Joint Foreign Chambers of the Philippines (JFC) in a meeting with Department of Tourism (DOT) Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco earlier today at the Secretary's Office in Makati City.

Discussions covered key policy priorities of the DOT and legislative measures critical to the growth of the aviation, tourism, and related industries. These include the Blue Economy Bill, Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) Charter amendments, the creation of the Philippine Airports Authority and the Philippine Transportation Safety Board, as well as reforms to the



Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) Charter/strengthening of MARINA.

The meeting also explored potential partnerships between JFC and DOT. Initiatives to promote medical tourism were likewise covered, further positioning the Philippines as a regional tourism hub.

ECCP Healthcare Committee Meeting 5 February 2025

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Healthcare Committee held its first meeting of the year on 05 February via Zoom. Chaired by Committee Chairperson Dr. Teng Dioko, the session's goal was to review its priorities for the year. During the session, committee members provided insights on key issues as well as recommended committee activities for 2025. Initial planning has also begun for the upcoming ECCP Healthcare Forum slated for May 2025.

To join or inquire about the Healthcare Committee, please reach out to advocacy@eccp.com

Meeting with SAPIEA Secretary Frederick Go on Aviation Summit 5 February 2025

The ECCP, together with Aviation Summit co-organizer AsBAA as well as key partners DOTr and CIAC, met with Special Assistant to the President for Investment and Economic Affairs of the Philippines (SAPIEA) Frederick Go to discuss key developments in the aviation sector. The meeting covered potential collaborations to support government aviation initiatives, and aligning priorities for the upcoming 3rd installment of the Aviation Summit happening on 8-9 October 2025 at Marriott Hotel Manila.

ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein also handed over the 2025 Doing Business in the Philippines Guidebook, reinforcing our commitment to fostering a more competitive and enabling environment for the country.

Joining Secretary Go from OSAPIEA were Assistant Secretary Ferdinand Pallera and Executive Assistant

Joint Foreign Chambers of the Philippines (JFC) Meeting hosted by PAMURI 11 February 2025

ECCP President Paulo Duarte, Executive Director Florian Gottein, and Industry and Government Affairs Manager Chin Nethercott actively took part in the JFC meeting hosted by the Philippine Association of Multinational Companies Regional Headquarters Inc. (PAMURI) earlier today at the Manila House Private Club.

The group discussed industry developments including the pending legislation on wage hike and the recent issuance of the Joint Administrative Order (JAO) No. 001-2025 on the guidelines for Administrative Order No. 23, s. 2024 on pre-border technical verification and customs electronic invoicing. The participants also



Althea Santos, DOTr Office of the Undersecretary for Aviation and Airports OIC/Assistant Secretary Director Joel Laguerta and Consultant Junard Cruz were also present at the meeting along with CIAC President Joseph "Joijt" Alcazar. Additionally, AsBAA Board of Governors Member Maximilian Motschmann and COO for Southeast Asia Penny Lim took part in the session together with AsBAA Philippine Chapter and ECCP Aviation Committee Co-Chairperson Atty. Manolito Manalo. Industry and Government Affairs Manager Chienie Nethercott also represented the ECCP with Mr. Gottein.



shared updates on select JFC priorities, including the bills on the Accelerated and Reformed Right-of-Way (ARROW) Act, mining fiscal regime, Capital Markets Efficiency Promotion Act, and Konektadong Pinoy Act, as well as the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the CREATE MORE Act.

EU-PH FTA Meeting with Chief Negotiator Dora Correia 12 February 2025

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) successfully concluded the meeting with the European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Chief Negotiator, Ms. Dora Correia, on 12 February 2025 at Dusit Thani Manila. Following the first engagement of the group with Ms. Correia last June 2024, this pivotal session provided crucial updates and identified key expectations and areas of consideration in the ongoing EU-PH FTA negotiations, fostering collaborative dialogue on enhancing economic ties.

The meeting covered relevant topics, including Rules of Origin, Customs, and Trade Facilitation presented by ECCP Tax and Financial Services Vice Chairperson and SGV Tax Principal Atty. Alden Labagu and Customs and Logistics Committee Co-Chairperson and Royal Cargo Group CEO Michael Raeuber; Intellectual Property Rights by IPR Committee Chairperson Atty. Reena Mitra-Ventanilla; and cross-sector matters such as Government Procurement, Competition, and Legal & Institutional Issues discussed by FTA Committee Chairperson and TradeAdvisors CEO Atty. Anthony Abad.

The sector presentations shed light on industry-specific concerns, challenges, and opportunities. The following representatives shared their insights for each sector:

- Agriculture - ECCP Director and Alaska Milk Managing Director Tarang Gupta
- Automotive - Peter Rankl of Continental Regional ASEAN Automotive and Autohub Group Presidential Management Officer Yeale Frokjaer
- Aviation - Lufthansa Technik Philippines CFO Rubi Pioquinto
- Energy - ECCP RE&EE Committee Co-Chairperson and Upgrade Energy Philippines Inc. President Ruth Yu-Owen
- Financial Institutions/Trade in services - ING Bank Head of Corporate Sector Coverage and Financial Institutions Lenin Duenas
- Food and Beverage - ECCP Food and Beverages Committee Chairperson and Charmant Ingredients Corporation and Managing Director Helen Grace Baisa
- Healthcare - Sanofi Public Affairs Manager Dr. Constante Caluya and Novo Nordisk VP & General Manager Wei Sun
- Infrastructure - Acciona Regional Director for Southeast Asia Ruben Camba



Fabien Gehl, Deputy Chief Negotiator; Mikkel Sejberg, Policy Officer for the Philippines/Negotiation Coordinator; and Philipp Dupuis, Therese Yosucio, and Monica De Guzman of the EU Delegation joined Ms. Correia. Other representatives from the European-Philippine business community and national chambers also took part in the high-level session.

We thank Ms. Dora Correia and all our esteemed presenters for their valuable insights, as well as our participants for their active engagement. This meeting reaffirms ECCP's commitment to advancing EU-PH trade relations and fostering collaborative discussions on critical economic issues.

Interested in shaping the EU businesses' advocacies on the EU-Philippines FTA? Join our ECCP FTA Committee by emailing advocacy@eccp.com.

To view more photos please visit this link: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjC2huo>

ECCP side meetings on EU-PH FTA 13-14 February 2025

Following our meeting with Chief Negotiator, Ms. Dora Correia, the ECCP also held separate meetings from 13-14 February at the ECCP Office and via Zoom to cover specific chapters of the proposed EU-PH FTA particularly on Digital Trade, Automotive, and Customs.

On 13 February, FTA Digital Trade Chapter Negotiator Ms. Monica Cunningham met with representatives from the ECCP ICT-BPM-KPM Committee at the ECCP Office in Makati City to discuss potential barriers and identify key areas to foster an enabling environment for digital trade. The meeting highlighted sector-specific concerns namely, (1) customs duties on electronic transmissions, (2) data localization and cross-border data flows, and (3) disclosures and accessibility to source code.

Present at this meeting were Ms. Monique De Guzman from the EU Delegation to the Philippines, ECCP ICT-BPM-KPM Co-chairperson and Global Process Manager Inc. President Mr. Erik Nielsen, ECCP ICT-BPM-KPM Co-chairperson and Trends & Concepts Executive Director for Communications & Investor Relations Mr. Karl Bantiling, FTA Committee Chairperson and TradeAdvisors CEO Atty. Tony Abad, ECCP Senior Advocacy Officer Joaquin Reloj, SAP Vice President and Head of Government Affairs for Southeast Asia Mr. Austin Menyasz, Techne SSI Corporate Relations Lead Mr. Mark Joseph Escay, and Atos GDC Philippines Country Head and CEO Mr. Jennire Torres.

Simultaneously, the automotive aspect of the EU-PH FTA was discussed in a separate virtual session with European Commission, DG TRADE Policy Officer Thomas Kuchtik and International Relations Officer Cecilia Rovelli, as well as EU Delegation to the Philippines Minister Counsellor and Head of Economic and Trade Section Philipp Dupuis. ECCP President and Bosch Philippines Managing Director Paulo Duarte; Continental Automotive ASEAN President Peter Rankl;



Autohub Group Presidential Management Officer Yeale Frokjaer; and ECCP Industry and Government Affairs Manager Chienie Nethercott provided insights on the Philippine automotive industry's trade and investment climate.

Earlier today at the ECCP Board Room, European Union representatives Spilios Michalopoulos, Thomas McKeown, and Monique De Guzman had an in-depth discussion with the ECCP on customs, rules of origin, and other trade facilitation concerns. Joining the session were Tax and Financial Services Vice Chairperson; Atty. Alden Labagu; Customs and Logistics Committee Co-Chairperson Michael Raeuber; Royal Cargo Assistant Vice President for Customs Clearance & Brokerage Mary Ann Jangas; and ECCP Senior Advocacy Officer Austin Sy.



Autohub meets ChargeEuropa 11 February 2025

ECCP Automotive Committee Co-Chairperson and Autohub Group President Willy Tee Ten met with ChargeEuropa through the Polish Investment and Trade Agency last 11 February 2025 in Taguig City. The group discussed the opportunities and challenges within the electric vehicle (EV) industry in the Philippines and explored potential areas of collaboration to advance the country's EV market.

Joining Mr. Tee Ten were ChargeEuropa CEO Matt Tymowski and local representative Jeric Cabrerros, as well as Polish Investment and Trade Agency Business Development Manager Miguel Santos.

ECCP Human Capital Committee Meeting 11 February 2025

Last 11 February 2025, the ECCP Human Capital Committee held their first Committee Meeting of the year to discuss relevant human capital issues, emerging national policies, and important topics to monitor. The committee members had the chance to raise their concerns and recommendations to be taken into account for the drafting of ECCP's 2025 Advocacy Papers. The meeting was led by ECCP Human Capital Committee Chairperson, Atty. Jon Zuñiga.

For more information or to join the Human Capital Committee, you may send an email to advocacy@eccp.com.



ECCP Agriculture Committee Meeting 13 February 2025

The ECCP Agriculture Committee held their first Committee Meeting on 13 February 2024. The committee had an extensive discussion on key issues concerning its three sub-committees: High-Value Crops, Livestock & Poultry, and Fisheries. With the goal of strengthening partnerships, the German Agency for International Cooperation or GIZ presented their Agri-Public Projects and ways to collaborate to the committee members.

Lastly, the committee has also opened the floor for partnerships for the upcoming 2025 Sustainable Agriculture Forum, happening on 30 April 2025 from 1:00 to 5:00 PM at the Raffles and Fairmont Makati. If interested to have your company take the center stage of agriculture, please email events@eccp.com for partnership opportunities.

For more information or to join the Agriculture Committee, you may send an email to advocacy@eccp.com.



ECCP Tax and Financial Services Committee Meeting

18 February 2025

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Tax and Financial Services Committee held its first meeting of the year on 18 February at the ECCP Office in Makati City. Chaired by Committee Chairperson Atty. Maria Concepcion Simundac-Delos Santos, Co-Chair Atty. Benedicta Du-Baladad, and Vice Chair Atty. Alden Labaguís, the session's goal was to review its priorities for the year. During the discussion, members shared insights on key issues and concerns as well as industry updates including the signing of the CREATE MORE ACT IRR, the application of RMC No. 5-2024, among others.

To join or inquire about the Tax and Financial Services Committee, please reach out to advocacy@eccp.com.



ECCP Customs and Logistics Committee Meeting

19 February 2025

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) Customs and Logistics Committee held its first meeting of the year on 19 February at the ECCP Office in Makati City. Chaired by Committee Chairperson Atty. Mark Anthony Tamayo and Co-Chair Mr. Michael Kurt Raeuber, the session's goal was to update the committee on recent industry developments as well as review its priorities for the year. During the session, updates on Administrative Order No. 23(AO 23) entitled "Implementing a Digital and Integrated System for the Pre-Border Technical Verification and Cross-Border Electronic Invoicing of All Import Commodities" as well as the recently issued Joint Administrative Order 001-2025 outlining the implementing guidelines for AO 23 were presented.

To join or inquire about the Customs and Logistics Committee, please reach out to advocacy@eccp.com.



ECCP ICT-BPM-KPM Committee Meeting

19 February 2025

On 19 February, the ECCP ICT-BPM-KPM Committee convened at the ECCP Office in Makati City with some committee members dialing-in via Zoom. During the meeting, the body discussed the ICT-BPM-KPM committee-led initiatives in 2024 and planned activities for 2025.

The group also identified the committee's key priorities to be tackled throughout the year, namely, upskilling of the workforce in line with digital skills, data localization, AI framework development, cybersecurity, and e-governance, among others.

To join or inquire about the ICT-BPM-KPM Committee, please reach out to advocacy@eccp.com.



ECCP Automotive Committee Meeting

20 February 2025

The ECCP Automotive Committee held its first meeting of the year last 20 February at the Autohub Group Conference Room in Ford Global City, Taguig City. The meeting provided committee members with updates on the Chamber's recent engagements with key government stakeholders in line with industry developments. Among the topics covered include House Bill No. 11293, the DOE's Vehicle Fuel Economy Labeling Program (VFELP) System, and the Electric Vehicles industry.

During the meeting, the group also identified the Automotive Committee's priority topics such as the improvement of EV infrastructure, following up on the DTI-BPS regarding mandatory certifications of automotive products, and continuing to improve the ease of doing business in the Philippines, particularly in the automotive sector.

To join or inquire about the Automotive Committee, please reach out to advocacy@eccp.com.



New Members Corner

Premium Member



Mondelēz

At Mondelēz Philippines, our purpose is to empower people to snack right. We will lead the future of snacking around the world by offering the right snack, for the right moment, made the right way. That means delivering a broader range of delicious, high-quality snacks that nourish life's moments, made with sustainable ingredients and packaging that consumers can feel good about.

Regular Members



Ambasáid na hÉireann
Embassy of Ireland

Embassy of Ireland in the Philippines

The Embassy of Ireland in the Philippines represents the Irish Government and promotes Ireland's interests in the Philippines and the Pacific region. Established to strengthen diplomatic ties, the embassy focuses on key areas such as political relations, trade, development cooperation, cultural promotion, and services for Irish citizens.



Philippines Urban Living Solutions Inc.

Philippines Urban Living Solutions, Inc. (PULS) is a leading owner, developer, and manager of purpose-built young professional housing in the Philippines.

PULS, established in 2012, specializes in the development of rental housing communities under the MyTown brand at walking distance from the central business districts of Metro Manila, in which young professionals can live, play, and walk to work.

We take pride in elevating the lives of the Filipino workforce by providing a new, high quality lifestyle concept and creating savings on transportation time and cost.



Kuehne + Nagel Global Services Inc.

Kuehne Nagel Global Services Inc is a new services export provider of IT and administrative support services.

Associate Members



Navegar

Based in Manila, Navegar is a leading private equity firm that invests capital and lends expertise to fast-growing Philippine companies. With over \$300M under management, the firm partners with entrepreneurs and helps their companies overcome the challenges of scaling in the Philippines and beyond.



Ausland Cebu Construction Inc.

Ausland Cebu Construction Incorporated (ACCI) was established to carry all the Construction and Development Projects of customers in Asia particularly in the Philippines. Young Architects and Engineers with experienced working foreign and domestic projects were the prime pillars of the Organization. The ACCI team brought together all its common goal, to build and provide high quality structures for its clients. ACCI ensures the quality of work and the delivery time of every project.



Tangub City Global College

Tangub City Global College (TCGC) is a local college in Tangub City, Misamis Occidental. Established in 1984, TCGC stands as a beacon of hope to the local residents, as well as to its neighboring cities and municipalities towards access to free quality higher education. With TCGC's pursuit to meet international standards, the management headed by Dr. Nueva, the College President, aims to foster national and global partnerships to elevate the level of education and services of the College.



Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority

The Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority (APECO) is a government-owned and controlled corporation (GOCC) established under Republic Act No. 9490, as amended by RA 10083. Located in Casiguran, Aurora, APECO manages a 13,000-hectare economic zone strategically situated along the Philippine Pacific Eastern Seaboard. Its proximity to the Philippine Rise and the Sierra Madre's natural barrier makes it ideal for industries aligned on Food Security, Energy Security and National Security.

APECO's mandate centers on promoting economic growth, sustainable development, and supporting the local community by facilitating partnerships aimed at encouraging the establishment of infrastructure for defense industries, renewable energy projects, and tourism initiatives. Current priorities include enabling revenue-generating opportunities such as construction of ready-for-occupancy facilities, establishment of commercial hubs, and logistics centers, which positions the zone as a key destination for innovation and economic activity in the region through the offer of tax incentives and very competitive lease rates.



MAQResearch Inc.

MAQResearch Inc. is a provider of comprehensive background checking solutions designed to support businesses in making informed decisions when hiring employees, contractors, or partners. With a strong focus on integrity, accuracy, and confidentiality, MAQResearch Inc. offers a wide array of verification services to ensure that organizations can trust the credentials and history of individuals within their workforce.

Associate Members



Astoria Hotels and Resorts

The Key Attributes of Astoria Hotels and Resorts

#Address #Ambience #Amenities #Appetite
#Attention #Appeal

You deserve meaningful vacations in the best Philippine destinations. From Manila down to Palawan, expect no less than luxurious accommodations, indulgent food, and heartfelt service when you choose to stay at Astoria. Always your home... #AlwaysAstoria



BAYO Manila Inc.

Bayo is a homegrown fashion brand that takes pride in being Filipino. It offers a variety of locally-made, ready-to-wear apparel from comfortable basics to stylish yet classy pieces. Bayo guarantees clothing of great quality at affordable prices.

The brand encourages Philippine made items and works toward empowering women of vibrant lifestyles while catering to her ever-changing fashion persona. No one else celebrates the accomplished Filipina like Bayo. Bayo's corporate commitment is to be able to generate local employment and to raise the local retail industry to higher levels through showcasing products of high quality.



JE Hydro & Bio-Energy Corp.

Water Treatment - We have achieved outstanding technical and management expertise after over a decade of progressive mastery. We are proud to present our bulk water treatment solutions, meticulously designed to address high turbidity levels while minimizing operational costs.

Water Distribution - We operate level-III water distribution systems. Currently deployed in Cagayan de Oro City, these features geo-tagged meters and our client management system for easy reading, billing and collection.

Wastewater Treatment - We provide wastewater technologies and solutions to treat domestic and industrial wastewater so that effluents can be safely discharged to the environment or can be treated further for re-use.



Philippine Center for Energy Inc. (PCEI)

The Philippine Center for Energy Inc. (PCEI) is a premier institution dedicated to advancing sustainable energy solutions and capacity building in the Philippines. As a DOE-recognized training center, PCEI focuses on enhancing the skills of energy professionals, promoting energy efficiency, and driving innovation in energy management and renewable technologies. The organization works closely with government, industry, and local communities to promote clean energy, improve energy infrastructure, and ensure equitable access to resources. By 2030, PCEI aims to lead sustainable energy development, with 20% of new energy projects utilizing renewable sources by 2025, empowering communities and supporting long-term economic growth while preserving the environment.



Bernales Group of Companies, Inc.

Bernales Group of Companies is a One-Person Corporation composed of two Hardware Businesses, Gasoline Station, and a Swimming Pool Resort.



Crimson Resort & Spa Boracay

Crimson Resort and Spa, Boracay is the third Crimson property under the management of Chroma Hospitality, Inc. The property is cloistered in the exclusive location that is Station Zero - one of the newest destinations in Boracay. The resort prides itself with a warm and bold ambiance of elegant contemporary landscape and architecture enveloped in Filipino island living's exquisite charm. All 192 rooms are designed with a distinct style and equipped with modern facilities, breathtaking views, restaurants offering an array of local and international cuisine, one of a kind and high-ceiling Events venues, and 5,000 sq.m. of pristine white sand beach, crystal clear waters with zero distractions. Experience the island in a different level of luxury by staying at Crimson Resort and Spa, Boracay.



Shang Properties Inc

Shang Properties, Inc. (SPI) has been involved in property investment and development in the Philippines since 1987 and was listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) in 1991. Shang Properties' core businesses are office and retail leasing and residential development, as guided by its vision to be the leading developer and manager of prime properties in the Philippines.

SPI owns and operates the upscale Shangri-La Plaza Mall, one of the country's most established lifestyle destinations. It also holds a 70% share in KSA Realty Corporation, which in turn, owns The Enterprise Center, one of the most prestigious office buildings located in the country's premier financial district.

SPI entered the residential condominium market in 2002 and has since expanded its residential portfolio with high-rise condominium projects in prime locations.



Convido Corporate Apartments International Manila, Inc.

At Convido, we specialize in providing extended-stay accommodations in premium, secure residential buildings across central business districts in Manila and Cebu. We offer our guests the flexibility to choose the location that best meets their needs.

Our accommodations are comparable to hotel services, with rates that include all utilities, weekly housekeeping, maintenance, and a 24/7 customer care line to ensure your comfort throughout your stay.

Foreign-Based Members



DELIVER

DELIVER Asia is the leading event connecting retailers, supply chain solution providers, and industry experts across the Asia-Pacific region. With over 10 years of experience in Europe and America, DELIVER Asia provides a unique platform for businesses to innovate, collaborate, and grow. Through its exclusive one-to-one matchmaking programme, attendees can engage in pre-qualified meetings, explore the latest trends in ecommerce, supply chain technology, and sustainability, and forge strategic partnerships that will future-proof their businesses in Asia's rapidly evolving market.



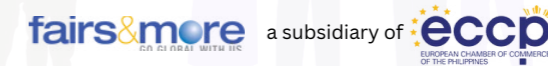
Kering South East Asia Ptd Ltd

Kering is a French company established in 1962 with diversified business globally. It focus on distribution of renowned luxury fashion and jewelry products and owned at 11 + Maisons. Kering is also very committed to sustainability and women empowerment. More information: www.kering.com

2025 International Trade Fairs

Month	Fair Name	Category	Location	Star
FEB	ISM COLOGNE	Sweet & Snacks	2-5 Cologne, Germany	
	SOURCE HOME & GIFT AT SPRING FAIR	Gift & Home	2 - 5 Birmingham, England	
	F.R.EE	Travel & Leisure	19-23 Munich, Germany	
	SOURCE FASHION	Fashion	9-11 London, England	
MARCH	THAIFEX HOREC ASIA	Hotels, restaurants and cafes	5-7 Bangkok, Thailand	
	INDIAN CERAMICS ASIA	Ceramics & Bricks	5-7 Gandhinagar (Gujarat), India	
	H+H COLOGNE	Handicraft	7-9 Cologne Germany	
APRIL	ANUGA SELECT BRAZIL	Food and Beverages	8-10 Sao Paulo, Brazil	
	BAUMA	Construction & Machinery	7-13 Munich, Germany	★
	ISM JAPAN & ANUGA SELECT JAPAN	Sweets, Confectioneries & Snacks; Food and Beverages	15-17 Tokyo, Japan	★
APRIL	ELECTRONICA CHINA	Technologies	15-17 Shanghai, China	
	IEXPO	Technology Solutions	21-23 Shanghai China	
MAY	INTERNATIONAL HARDWARE FAIR ITALY	Tools & Hardwares	8-9 Milan, Italy	
	IBA	Bakery, Confectionary & Snacks	18-22 Düsseldorf, Germany	★
MAY	INTERZUM	Furniture & Interior Design	20-23 Cologne Germany	
	VITAFOODS EUROPE	Nutraceuticals	22-24 Geneva, Switzerland	
MAY	THAIFEX ANUGA ASIA	Food & Beverage	27-31 Bangkok, Thailand	★
	SPOGA+GAFA	Garden & BBQ	22-24 Cologne, Germany	
JULY	SOURCE FASHION	Fashion	London, England	★
	ANUGA SELECT CHINA AND SIGEP CHINA	Food and Beverages	24-26 Shenzhen, China	
APRIL	IFAT BRASIL	Environmental Technologies	25-27 Sao Paulo, Brazil	
	GAMESCOM	Games & Entertainment	21-25 Cologne, Germany	
AUG	SOURCE HOME & GIFT AT AUTUMN FAIR	Gift & Home	Birmingham, ENgland	
	ISM MIDDLE EAST	Sweets & Snacks	15 - 17 Dubai, UAE	★
SEPT	DRINKTEC	Beverage and liquid food	15-19 Munich, Germany	★
	ANUGA	Food and Beverages	4-8 Cologne, Germany	★
OCT	EXPO REAL	Real Estate	6-8 Munich, Germany	★
	GAMESCOM ASIA	Games & Entertainment	Oct. 30 - Nov. 2 Thailand	★
NOV	ART COLOGNE	Art	6 - 9 Cologne, Germany	
	PRODUCTRONICA	Electronics' production and improvement.	18-21 Munich, Germany	

For more information reach us at <https://fairsandmoreph.com> or team@fairsandmoreph.com



Official Representative of



MARCH



NETWORKING EVENT

05 ECCP LUNCHEON MEETING WITH ANTI-RED TAPE AUTHORITY

11:00 AM - 02:00 PM | Dusit Thani Makati

NETWORKING EVENT

11 SHE MEANS BUSINESS: ACCELERATING VISION INTO ACTION

01:00 PM - 06:00 PM | Spaces Makati City

TRAINING SESSION

12 NEXT-LEVEL EVENT MANAGEMENT: ADVANCED MANAGEMENT SKILLS TRAINING

01:00 PM - 04:00 PM | ZOOM

NETWORKING EVENT

12 ARAW NG DABAW MIXER

4:00 PM - 7:00 PM | Davao City (TBA)

TRAINING SESSION

14 CONQUERING CONFUSABLES: AN INTRODUCTION COMMON GRAMMAR CONFUSABLES

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM | ZOOM

TRAINING SESSION

19 NEGOTIATION SKILLS WORKSHOP

09:00 AM - 05:00 PM | Makati City (TBA)

TRAINING SESSION

19 BUILDING A GREENER BOTTOM LINE: SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS FOR ENHANCED VALUE

02:00 PM - 05:00 PM | ZOOM

TRAINING SESSION

20 EFFECTIVE BUSINESS WRITING: PROFESSIONALIZING YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

09:00 AM - 04:00 PM | ZOOM

MARCH



NETWORKING EVENT

21 BEYOND CAPITAL: HOW PRIVATE EQUITY BUILDS BUSINESSES THAT LAST

12:00 NN - 2:30 PM | Makati Shangri-La

NETWORKING EVENT

21 INVESTING IN PEOPLE: THE KEY TO BACOLOD'S SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

01:00 PM - 7:00 PM | Bacolod City (TBA)

TRAINING SESSION

24 THE INSIGHT REVOLUTION DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS FOR SUCCESS

24-25 March | 08:00 AM - 12:00 NN | ZOOM

TRAINING SESSION

24 DIGITAL LITERACY FOR FILIPINOS FIGHTING MIS-/DISINFORMATION AND EMPOWERING THE SELF IN CYBERSPACE

24-25 March | 01:00 PM - 05:00 PM | ZOOM

TRAINING SESSION

27 MS EXCEL ADVANCED SKILLS FOR BUSINESS

09:00 AM - 04:00 PM | ZOOM

NETWORKING EVENT

27 ECCP COMMUNITY CONNECT

03:00 PM - 05:00 PM | The Show Flat, 30F,
Makati Commerce Tower

