

The ASEM Sustainable Connectivity Portal

Connectivity is a top priority for ASEM. All ASEM partners agree that connectivity is about bringing countries, people and societies closer together, and a means to foster deeper economic and people-to-people ties. It must be inclusive, mutually beneficial, and should work towards the achievement of the sustainable development goals (www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31705/annex-i.pdf).

The European Commission Joint Research Centre, together with European and Asian experts, have developed the ASEM Sustainable Connectivity Portal. This aims to provide a science-based contribution to the policy discussions within the framework of ASEM and connectivity.

The Portal is an interactive online tool, which contains a data repository to explore how connectivity relates to sustainability amongst ASEM countries.

The Portal gathers into one place a wealth of connectivity-related data from a range of international sources. It is structured on the basis of two indices, one which measures cross-border connectivity via five pillars, and the other which measures sustainability related to connectivity via three pillars.

ASEM policymakers, as well as researchers, businesses and citizens, can use the Portal to explore how their countries connect with other ASEM peers and further investigate how each country performs in terms of sustainable connectivity.



For more information on the portal ec.europa.eu/asem-sustainable-connectivity

ASEM has no permanent secretariat

Foreign ministers and their senior officials have overall coordinating responsibility for the ASEM process.

They are assisted by an informal group of coordinators:

- two from the Asian side, one each from the ASEAN and non-ASEAN group
- two from the European side, the European External Action Service (EEAS) as the permanent coordinator and the rotating EU Presidency

The ASEM Family

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), based in Singapore, is an international, not-for-profit foundation, and acts as the only permanent Institution of ASEM. ASEF is charged with promoting cultural, intellectual and people-to-people contacts between the two regions.

The Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership (ASEP) promotes cooperation between parliaments in Europe and Asia and offers parliamentarians an opportunity to influence the ASEM process.

The Asia-Europe Business Forum (AEBF) aims to enhance business-to-business dialogue and cooperation between the two regions and to provide opportunity for interaction between business and political leaders.

The Asia-Europe Peoples' Forum (AEPF) is the 'grass roots' level of ASEM and serves as an interregional network of civil society and societal movements across Asia and Europe.

The Asia-Europe Labour Forum (AELF) consists of trade union centres that engage the ASEM process to make social justice and development central in the agenda of ASEM Ministers and Heads of State.

The ASEM Cultural Festival was held in Brussels in October 2018 during the 12th ASEM Summit. Leaders welcomed the principle of having regular ASEM Cultural Festivals in connection with ASEM Summits and ASEM Foreign Minister Meetings to strengthen inter-cultural dialogue among ASEM partners.



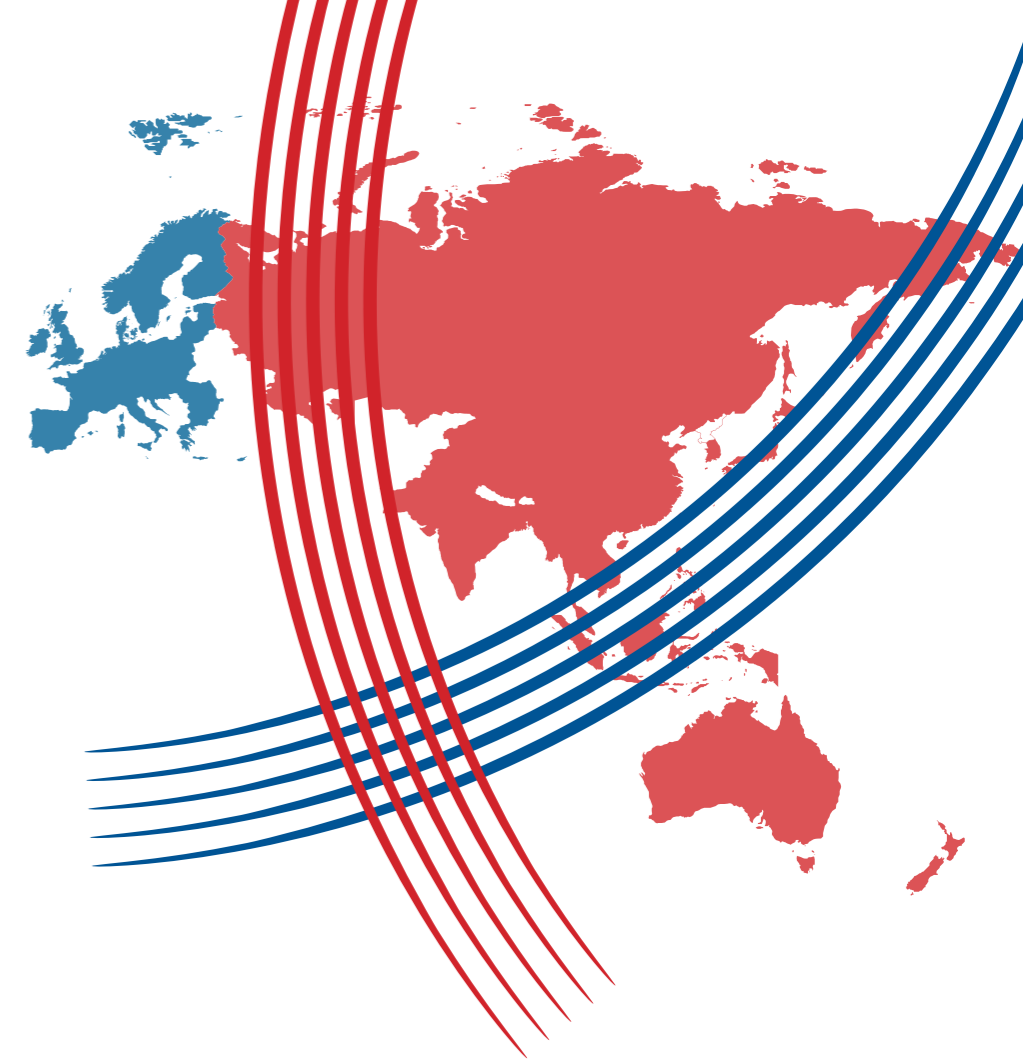
Asia-Europe Meeting

Information about ASEM

The **ASEM InfoBoard** is a one-stop-shop for everything about ASEM, gathering information about ASEM, details on all its events and meetings, as well as key partnership documents.

www.aseminfoboard.org

<http://eeas.europa.eu/asem>



ASEM: a unique informal platform for political dialogue and cooperation between **Asia** and **Europe**



ASEM: CONNECTING ASIA AND EUROPE



What is ASEM?

The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) is a unique, informal platform for dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe on the big challenges of a fast-changing world, such as connectivity, trade and investment, climate change, but also broad security challenges such as counter-terrorism, migration, maritime security and cyber issues.

Bringing together 53 partners from across Europe and Asia, ASEM is the main multilateral platform linking Europe and Asia with significant global weight: ASEM partners represent 60% of global GDP, 60% of global population, 75% of global tourism and 55% of global trade.

For more than 20 years, ASEM has been the most comprehensive partnership between Asia and Europe, crossing hands across continents.

ASEM's main purpose is to provide a platform to foster political dialogue, strengthen economic cooperation and tackle global challenges together. In many respects, recent developments in the international landscape have increased the value of ASEM as a key building block for an open, cooperative and rules-based international system.

ASEM is the most influential comprehensive partnership between Asia and Europe, boosting connectivity in all its dimensions between the two regions.

How does ASEM work?

ASEM works through meetings and activities organised at different levels.

Summits Attended by Heads of State and Government of the European and Asian countries, the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the ASEAN Secretary-General. They serve as the highest level of decision-making in the ASEM process, and are held every second year, alternating between Asia and Europe.

Foreign Ministers Meetings Attended by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, ministers of Foreign Affairs of the European and Asian countries and the ASEAN Secretary-General. They have the responsibility for the overall coordination of the ASEM process and are a driving force of the ASEM political dialogue.

Ministerial Meetings Economic, Finance, Environment, Culture, Transport, Labour and Employment, Education, Science and Technology, ICT, Small and Medium Enterprises ministers meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of mutual concern. Additional ministerial conferences are held irregularly on specific issues and areas that are not covered by the main ministerial meetings.

Senior Officials' Meetings bring together high-level civil servants from the Foreign Ministries of all ASEM partners for the overall coordination of the ASEM process. Sectoral SOMs are also held in preparation of the various Ministerial meetings.

Regular dialogues e.g. Customs General Directors' Meeting; Conference of General Directors of Immigration; Informal Seminar on Human Rights; Rectors' Conference; Mayors and Governors Meeting. Ad Hoc activities on sustainable development, nuclear safety, disaster relief, biodiversity, youth, employment, etc.

Activities and initiatives are organised by ASEM partners on a wide range of issues of mutual interest. A full overview of all ASEM meetings can be found on the ASEM InfoBoard.

ASEM is...

Informal ASEM provides an open forum for policy makers and officials to discuss political, economic or socio-cultural issues of common interest, complementing the work already being carried out in other bilateral and multilateral fora.

Equal partnership ASEM offers a platform to enhance understanding and awareness amongst its partners, through dialogue and cooperation on topics of mutual interest on the basis of equal partnership, mutual respect and benefit.

Open and evolutionary ASEM moves with the times, both in terms of issues addressed and with regard to membership.

Multi-dimensional ASEM covers a wide spectrum of topics between the two regions and devotes equal attention to political, economic and socio-cultural dimensions.

High-level and people-focused ASEM provides a platform for meetings of Heads of State and Government, ministers and senior officials. However, ASEM also fosters people-to-people contacts between the two regions, such as exchanges between civil society representatives, youth representatives, experts in various domains, etc.

ASEM covers...

ASEM covers a wide range of topics of common interest to Asia and Europe:

- Global and regional challenges of common concern
- Globalisation, competitiveness and structural changes in the global economy - including finance, employment, education and human resource development
- Connectivity: infrastructure and people-to-people links between the two regions
- Two-way trade and investment, business-to-business dialogue and cooperation in priority industrial sectors
- Sustainable development
- Climate change
- Environmental protection, water, energy and food security
- Intercultural dialogue
- Human rights
- Non-proliferation, counterterrorism and cyber-security
- Migration
- Culture and education
- Dialogue among parliaments and civil society

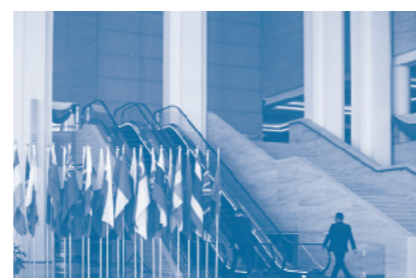


ASEM Milestones



1994
Singapore and France propose that an EU-Asia summit meeting be held, to consider how to build a new partnership between the two regions.

1996
The first ASEM Summit is held in Bangkok in March 1996, with 15 EU member states and 10 Asian countries participating, as well as the European Commission. Since then, the ASEM family has continued to grow through successive rounds of enlargement to 53 ASEM Partners today.



2006
ASEM celebrates its 10th anniversary by adopting the 'Helsinki Declaration on the Future of ASEM', reasserting ASEM's role as a catalyst in EU-Asia relations.

2016
ASEM marks its 20th anniversary Summit in Mongolia, looking forward to the challenges of the 21st century.

2018
On 18-19 October 2018, the EU hosts the 12th ASEM Summit under the title 'Global Partners for Global Challenges' aiming to chart a common response to pressing global challenges.

