

Lisbon Vladivostok

Thursday, 20 June 2019

Venue: the Hive, Schneider Electric headquarters
35 Rue Joseph Monier, 92500 Rueil-Malmaison
Paris

Common Economic Space from Lisbon to Vladivostok

We are glad to invite you to a Morning Round Table and an update on the business Initiative Common Economic Space from Lisbon to Vladivostok.

The Initiative aims to accelerate trade relations. Its members ask political actors in all countries of the European Union (EU) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) to give their supranational bodies the mandate to start an official dialogue to harmonize regulations.

We invite leading French companies to join the mission!

09.30 am

Coffee & Networking

09.45 - 11.45 am

Round Table Lisbon-Vladivostok

- Opportunities and challenges for business in Russia and the countries of the EAEU
- Introduction to the Initiative Lisbon-Vladivostok
- Update on political and economic developments between the EU and EAEU

11.45 am - 12:30 pm

Tour of Schneider Electric Innovation Hub



Johan Vanderplaetse
Chairman of the Board,
Association of European Businesses (AEB);
Schneider Electric Senior Vice-President,
Zone President Russia/CIS



Ulf Schneider
Co-Chairman
Working Group Lisbon-Vladivostok
and Publisher



Géraldine Lemblé
Deputy CEO,
MEDEF International

Information & Registration:

Miriam Danne
initiative@lisbon-vladivostok.pro
+7 495 956 5557 ext. 4618

www.lisbon-vladivostok.pro

Partners



2019

Lisbon Vladivostok

Initiative for the creation of a
common economic space

Contact Ulf Schneider
Miriam Danne

Web www.lisbon-vladivostok.pro

E-Mail initiative@lisbon-vladivostok.pro
Phone Moscow +7 495 956 5557 ext. 4618
Phone Berlin +49 30 615 089 10

About the Working Group

The working group “Common Economic Space from Lisbon to Vladivostok” was founded in 2015 on the initiative of Ulf Schneider and Alexander Rahr, together with the German-Russian Forum (DRF). Since then around 60 business associations and leading companies from Europe and the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) have joined the initiative, among them blue chips such as Siemens, Allianz, Schneider Electric or Severstal.

The working group brings business people from several countries between Vladivostok and Lisbon together with policy makers and influencers. Businesses have long been transnational, and now it is time that the approach of policy makers reflects this fact. The creation of a Common Economic Space, uniting all countries between Vladivostok and Lisbon, is an important step towards the elimination of both old and new obstacles and to the joint solution of the political problems that have recently arisen in this area. It is the economy’s contribution to peaceful cooperation. The initiative sees itself as an open circle including all countries from West to East to create a movement that goes beyond the current set-ups and escapes bilateral dominances.

Kazakhstan is at the origins of the idea of a Common Economic Space and a driver of the EEU today.

Kazakhstan thus seems a natural partner of the initiative, which is eager for deeper cooperation. The core aspect of a Common Economic Space is a multi-level partnership between the EU and the EEU. It is crucial to understand that cooperation between the EU and the EEU is beneficial for all sides. Despite the different powers of the EU and the EEU, a dialogue between them should be led both on a political and on an economic level. This should be done through creating lasting networks between officials of the two commissions and by setting up a permanent dialogue.

Besides establishing a free trade zone in the longrun, there are many regulatory and technical areas where we can already start working together, such as:

- product certification and technical standards;
- simplified tax regulation for facilitation international trade and cross-border services;
- mutual recognition of official documents;
- facilitation of visa regimes

Three task forces are working on practical policy recommendations inspired by industries’ real experience in the form of White Papers.

In recent times, both the EU and national governments have taken steps towards establishing a common understanding on a possible harmonization of technical standards between the EU and the EEU.

The Initiative wants to achieve:

- a constant and productive, respectful dialogue between the supranational bodies (EU and EEU) and all countries in between;
- a result-oriented discussion platform for business and politics, where problems are addressed and ideas developed.

The following further steps are planned in order to move the initiative forward:

- Become a real pan-European Initiative by involving businesses especially from Italy, France, Kazakhstan and the Baltics;
- Extension of task force work to new topical areas such as digitalization and energy cooperation;
- Counterbalancing the harmful trends of protectionism and trade wars by further strengthening the idea of a common economic space on the political agenda of the EU and the member states bringing to the table the possibility of a free trade agreement between the EU and the EEU.

The working group is a project, driven and financed by members and supporters, which aims to articulate the support of business for equal cooperation as a tool for trade, prosperity and peace.

Memorandum

on a Common Economic Space from Lisbon to Vladivostok

We, the signatories, share the vision of a Common Economic Space from Lisbon to Vladivostok. In order to achieve this, we ask the political actors in all countries of the EU and the EEU to give the European Commission and the Eurasian Economic Commission respectively the mandate to start an official dialogue on the harmonization of regulations. This dialogue should also respect the interests of all countries in Europe, which are trading partners of both economic areas. We see this commitment to a Common Economic Space as a clear statement against protectionism, a statement, which we believe is more important now than ever before.

Economic benefits:

- A dialogue on a far-reaching congruent application of customs procedures, common rules of certification, common technical standards, visa free travel and capital movement would contribute towards an economic upswing and increase the competitiveness of Europe and Eurasia.
- Simplified tax regulations, recognition of official documents and the harmonization of relevant jurisdictions could open the door to a common judicial area.
- Our Common Economic Space brings together countries with considerable raw material resources and countries with highly innovative enterprises. It also combines Western engineering knowledge and experience with the outstanding IT skills in the East, thus enhancing the “fourth industrial revolution” in the EU, EEU and in the countries in-between.
- An important factor for stronger economic cooperation is a common infrastructure. The East-West corridor needs to be developed further with common investments directed at strengthening connectivity. Simultaneously, an improvement of the conditions of transit would allow the EEU to function as a link between the EU and China, similar to China’s concept of its new Silk Road.

- Talks on a Common Economic Space shall eventually lead towards a free trade zone of more than 700 Million people in Europe and Eurasia.
- Analytical studies, for instance those of the Munich ifo-institute or the Vienna IIASA-institute, have already shed light on the distribution of economic advantages for the West as well as the East.

Political benefits:

- We believe that the proposed talks on a supranational level between the European Commission, representing 28 countries, and the Eurasian Economic Commission, representing five countries, is in the interest of all parties.
- The importance of a common space from Lisbon to Vladivostok goes beyond the economic facets. Built on the principles of the international law and OECD, a common humanitarian space, where people can travel without bureaucratic hindrances, creates peace and plays an important role to give new impulses to the current situation and further economic development.
- We believe in initiating steps that can already be taken now, in the short run, which will be useful to all countries involved and pave the way for the development of this mutually beneficial project.

Let’s talk now!

First signed in April 2017.

Signed by 59 business associations and companies by April 2019.

Selection of Members



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The Foreign Trade Magazine

“Let’s talk” says EAEU Minister Tatyana Valovaya “It takes two to tango” claims EU Ambassador to Russia Markus Ederer “The more integration, the better” argues Belarusian Ambassador to Germany, Denis Sidorenko

EAEU

from Lisbon to Vladivostok:
Transformations and Perspectives

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