

The Singapore–Germany Strategic Partnership



A Business Perspective on Implementation and Opportunities

PartnerForTrade



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01

Foreword and Introduction



The Singapore– Germany Strategic Partnership in a Business Context

The elevation of bilateral relations between Singapore and Germany to a Strategic Partnership, formalised through the Joint Declaration signed on 18 November 2024 during the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, marks an important step in an already longstanding and close relationship. It builds on strong trade and investment ties, regular political dialogue, and broad cooperation across areas such as industry, innovation, research, and sustainability.

At a time of growing geopolitical uncertainty and shifting economic realities, this Strategic Partnership sends an important signal. It reflects a shared commitment to open markets, multilateral cooperation, and stronger engagement between Europe and Southeast Asia. For businesses in both countries, it also creates an opportunity to think more strategically about how bilateral cooperation can be further developed in practical and mutually beneficial ways.

In addition, the ongoing Singapore–Germany Year of Innovation, jointly announced in February 2026 during the visit of Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Johann Wadepful to Singapore, builds on and complements the Strategic Partnership by providing a platform for collaboration in key areas such as artificial intelligence, future and clean technologies, and start-up cooperation, while also supporting broader efforts to strengthen EU–ASEAN economic linkages.

This publication looks at the Strategic Partnership from the perspective of the Singaporean-German business community. While the political framework is important, its **lasting value will ultimately depend on how it translates into concrete initiatives, cooperation formats, and opportunities for companies**. Our intention is therefore not only to assess how the Strategic Partnership is perceived by businesses, but also to identify where companies see potential, where they encounter constraints, and which approaches could help strengthen implementation in practice.

As the Singaporean-German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (SGC), we see it as part of our role to bring these perspectives into the discussion. Through our work with companies, public institutions, and other relevant actors, we help identify areas of cooperation and support the translation of strategic objectives into practical engagement. This publication is part of that effort.

The analysis presented in this publication is based on three main sources. It draws, first, on **structured individual and group interviews** conducted between August 2025 and January 2026 with a total of 27 representatives from private and public sector organisations. Second, it incorporates **input gathered through SGC committees**, reflecting perspectives from different industries. Third, it includes **findings from a survey** conducted between February and March 2026 among SGC member companies, with 54 respondents (equalling 10% of membership), providing additional quantitative insights into how the Strategic Partnership and its thematic areas are assessed.

The publication follows a step-by-step analytical approach. Chapter 2 outlines how the Strategic Partnership is perceived by the business community and presents key findings from the survey. Chapters 3 to 6 then follow a consistent structure, separating observations from the business community from possible approaches and concrete suggestions raised by interviewees and survey participants. Within this framework, Chapter 3 examines strategic priorities, governance structures, and implementation mechanisms. Chapter 4 looks at cross-cutting framework conditions that influence cooperation in practice. Chapter 5 considers Singapore's role as a regional hub and its relevance for structuring bilateral engagement in Southeast Asia. Chapter 6 explores selected sector-specific cooperation opportunities. The final chapter brings these findings together in the form of key recommendations and an outlook for the further development of the Strategic Partnership, and an indicative set of next steps to support implementation.

We hope that this publication contributes to further strengthening the Singapore–Germany Strategic Partnership by highlighting concrete opportunities for cooperation and practical engagement. It is intended to support continued dialogue and collaboration among all partners involved, with the shared objective of translating this important political framework into meaningful initiatives and tangible outcomes.



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Business Community Perspectives on the Strategic Partnership



From the perspective of the Singaporean-German business community, the Strategic Partnership between Germany and Singapore is broadly welcomed and perceived as a logical development of an already close and well-established relationship. Companies point to strong complementarities between both countries, including high-quality standards, innovation capacity, and a rules-based business environment.

In a global environment characterised by increasing geopolitical fragmentation and declining trust between major powers, **closer engagement between Germany, Europe, and Singapore gains strategic relevance.** Strengthening cooperation with trusted partners in areas such as trade, innovation, and defence dialogue is increasingly viewed as a way to reinforce resilient economic networks and maintain open, rules-based international cooperation.

The partnership is also seen as a significant milestone in bilateral relations in light of Singapore's role as a hub for the ASEAN region. ASEAN is becoming **increasingly important for diversification strategies** related to "De-Risking" and "China Plus One" approaches. Initiatives such as the establishment of Germany Trade & Invest's (GTAI) ASEAN hub in 2024 aim to support bilateral business engagement by helping German companies access Southeast Asian markets via Singapore and by encouraging Singaporean companies to invest in Germany, thereby contributing to job creation and deeper economic exchange.

At the same time, responses suggest that the announcement of the Strategic Partnership is seen not only as a symbolic political step, but also as a framework whose **practical relevance will depend on how clearly its priorities are communicated** and how effectively it is translated into tangible cooperation opportunities.

Survey results broadly support this assessment. When asked retrospectively whether **political priorities in Singapore-Germany relations** had aligned with their company's business needs before the announcement of the Strategic Partnership, **46.3% of respondents indicated good or very good alignment**, while 20.4%

reported moderate alignment and 14.8% perceived only limited alignment or no alignment. This indicates that bilateral relations were already viewed positively by many companies, but that the degree of perceived business alignment varied across respondents.

The survey also provides an indication of how respondents assess **the relevance of the thematic areas** associated with the Strategic Partnership. **When asked to rate the major thematic areas of the Strategic Partnership on a scale from 1 (not relevant) to 10 (most relevant), respondents assigned the highest average relevance to "Trade, investment and market access" (7.2), followed by "EU-ASEAN regional cooperation" (7.1). Ranking third, "People-to-people ties" received a score of 7.0**, while "Artificial intelligence and emerging technologies" and "Transport, connectivity and sustainable infrastructure" were rated at 6.9 and 6.8 respectively. Other areas, including workforce development, research and innovation, digital economy and data governance, regulatory cooperation and economic security, dual-use technologies, climate and energy transition, and defence and cybersecurity, also received meaningful relevance scores, although at a somewhat lower level. Overall, the results point to **broad interest across a wide thematic spectrum**, with particularly strong emphasis on commercially and regionally relevant areas.



Q8 - Relevance of thematic areas: Please rate the relevance of the following thematic areas of the Singapore-Germany Strategic Partnership from your point of view.

(scale: 1 = Not relevant, 10 = Most relevant)

	Answer Choices	Average Rating Value
1	Trade, investment and market access: Conditions for bilateral trade, investment and business activity.	7.27
2	EU-ASEAN regional cooperation: Regional frameworks supporting (digital) trade, green technologies and resilient supply chains.	7.16
3	People-to-people ties: Cultural and societal exchange.	7.00
4	Artificial intelligence and emerging technologies: Cooperation on AI development, application and governance.	6.89
5	Transport, connectivity and sustainable infrastructure: Logistics, sustainable mobility and maritime cooperation.	6.80
6	Workforce development: Skills, training and talent exchange.	6.47
7	Research and innovation: Strengthen joint research grants and cooperation in DeepTech.	6.40
8	Regulatory cooperation and economic security: Standards, critical technologies and goods, economic security dialogue.	6.33
9	Digital economy and data governance: Digitalisation, data flows and digital trade cooperation.	6.24
10	Climate, green economy and energy transition: Decarbonisation, renewable energy, hydrogen and climate finance.	6.00
11	Dual-use technologies and security-relevant innovation: Cooperation on dual-use innovation, including start-ups and commercial applications.	5.85
12	Defence, security and cybersecurity: Military-to-military cooperation, civil security and cyber resilience.	5.80

In terms of **overall business relevance**, survey responses indicate a **broadly positive**, though differentiated, picture. A combined 40.8% of respondents assessed the tangible business relevance of the Strategic Partnership as high or very high, while 27.8% rated it as moderate. At the same time, 20.4% stated that they were not aware of the topics and activities under the Strategic Partnership, indicating that **awareness and visibility remain important issues for practical business engagement**. Roughly 11% assessed the relevance as limited or absent.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the Strategic Partnership is regarded positively by a substantial share of the business community and that many of its thematic areas are considered relevant from a company perspective. At the same time, the results indicate that awareness, clarity, and effective translation into business-facing activities will play an important role in strengthening the practical value of the Strategic Partnership for companies.

03

Strategic Priorities, Governance and Implementation



Building on this overall positive baseline, interviewees consistently emphasised that the effectiveness of the partnership will depend largely on how it is implemented in practice.

The following perspectives summarise observations and suggestions from the business community regarding the **prioritisation of cooperation topics**, the **governance structures** supporting the partnership, and mechanisms that could help **translate the Strategic Partnership into concrete initiatives** and cooperation projects.

Many of the observations from the business community point to a common theme. While the Strategic Partnership

provides a strong political framework for bilateral cooperation, its **practical impact will depend on the development of effective operational mechanisms** that turn strategic dialogue into concrete initiatives. The following sections therefore focus on key aspects of implementation that many respondents consider particularly important for creating tangible cooperation outcomes from the Strategic Partnership.

3.1. From Strategic Framework to Practical Implementation

The Strategic Partnership and its accompanying Work Plan are widely perceived as being strongly driven by high-level political engagement and leadership dialogue. Building on this strong foundation, many stakeholders now see value in further strengthening engagement at the operational and practitioner level to ensure that the partnership translates into concrete cooperation initiatives with clear delivery pathways.

In particular, stakeholders note that **responsibilities, operational leadership, and structured coordination mechanisms** for individual initiatives are **not yet sufficiently visible**. Clarifying ownership and execution pathways could help companies better understand practical entry points and how the framework will materialise into tangible benefits and business opportunities.

Against this background, **strengthening the operational dimension** of the Strategic Partnership is seen as an important priority. Translating this framework into concrete measures with clearly defined responsibilities could support more effective implementation. Structured formats that bring together government representatives, policymakers, and industry stakeholders could help identify concrete needs, clarify contributions from participating actors, and align strategic objectives with practical cooperation opportunities (see chapter 3.4). This would support a more solution-oriented exchange and contribute to moving the partnership from high-level alignment towards tangible economic cooperation.

This need for more structured and implementation-oriented cooperation formats is also reflected in the survey results. Respondents identified project-based working groups (48.2%), structured government-business dialogue formats (38.9%), and bilateral public-private pilot projects (29.6%) as particularly relevant formats for strengthening bilateral economic cooperation.

Q11 - Cooperation formats: Which formats would you consider most useful for strengthening bilateral economic and business relations between Singapore and Germany?

(Select up to three)

	Answer Choices	Responses in %	Votes
1	Project-based working groups (time-bound, task-oriented cooperation	49.09%	27
2	Structured government-business dialogue formats (regular exchange and feedback formats)	38.18%	21
3	Bilateral public-private pilot projects	29.09%	16
4	Reciprocal bilateral business missions (two-way delegations between Germany and Singapore)	27.27%	15
5	Buyer-supplier or industry matchmaking programmes	27.27%	15
6	Bilateral best-practice exchange formats	25.45%	14
7	Joint innovation challenges or calls	21.82%	12
8	Industry-led training or upskilling initiatives	21.82%	12
9	None of the above	9.09%	5
Answered			55



3.2. Governance, Steering Structures and Responsibilities

Observations from the Business Community

Several observations from the business community relate to the governance and steering structures supporting the implementation of the Strategic Partnership. While the Joint Work Plan provides a helpful and wide-ranging basis, stakeholders highlight that its activities would benefit from being complemented by clearer implementation structures to support consistent delivery.

Currently, **responsibilities, operational leadership, and coordination mechanisms** for individual initiatives are **not clearly defined**. This creates ambiguity regarding ownership and execution, and raises questions about how activities will be prioritised, advanced, and sustained over time.

In addition, the Work Plan does not clearly outline how progress will be monitored or evaluated. This may make it more **difficult to systematically track implementation** and assess the development of cooperation activities over time.

Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders

Against this background, several interviewees suggest that **clearer governance arrangements** and a more structured coordination architecture could support the effective implementation of the Strategic Partnership and the adjacent Joint Work Plan.

Establishing clearer implementation structures could help **define responsibilities** for initiating, coordinating, and monitoring cooperation initiatives. Such structures could support continuity in the development of initiatives, improve coordination between participating institutions, and strengthen accountability for the delivery of results.

It was noted that **more structured steering arrangements** would likely require dedicated resources and institutional support from both sides. Providing **funding for coordination and steering activities** could help create the administrative capacity necessary to support the development, management, and monitoring of cooperation initiatives under the Strategic Partnership. Such investment could significantly strengthen ownership of the partnership and improve its overall effectiveness.

In this context, some stakeholders suggest the possible **establishment of a bilateral coordination structure**, such as a dedicated Strategic Partnership secretariat or a similar mechanism. Such a body could support the coordination of initiatives across the different pillars, facilitate communication between relevant actors in both countries, and ensure more continuous follow up of cooperation activities under the partnership.

Strategic Level

- **Introducing steering mechanisms to guide and review the Strategic Partnership**, for example through steering committees that regularly assess progress and provide strategic direction, involving representatives from government, industry, and the research community.
- **Establishing structured monitoring and benchmarking mechanisms**, in order to track progress under the Joint Work Plan and improve transparency and accountability of implementation.

Operational Coordination

- **Considering the establishment of a bilateral coordination structure**, such as a Strategic Partnership secretariat or similar mechanism, to ensure continuous coordination and follow-up of initiatives across pillars.
- **Defining clear responsibilities and operational leadership for initiatives**, including the assignment of lead institutions for specific work packages to strengthen accountability and continuity.

Working Level Cooperation

- **Establishing joint working groups at the operational level**, involving stakeholders from government, industry, and the research community to support the development and implementation of concrete initiatives under the Strategic Partnership (see chapter 3.4).

3.3. Prioritisation and Strategic Focus

Observations from the Business Community

The Strategic Partnership framework covers a wide range of cooperation areas across its thematic pillars. While this broad scope reflects the diversity of bilateral cooperation between Germany and Singapore, most interviewees note that the absence of clearer prioritisation may make it more difficult to focus efforts on areas with the highest potential for tangible outcomes.

The broad scope of cooperation topics can also make effective steering and monitoring of the Strategic Partnership more demanding. At present, however, the **framework does not provide dedicated financial resources for coordination, steering, or monitoring activities**. This limits the capacity on both sides to systematically assess and develop a large number of potential initiatives in detail.

It was also pointed out that **some industrial sectors with strong German representation are currently not explicitly reflected** in the thematic focus of the Strategic Partnership. In particular, the areas of mechanical engineering, industrial automation, and electronics are mentioned as notable gaps, despite the fact that many German small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operate in these fields. Given the importance of these sectors for German industry and their relevance for industrial cooperation with Singapore, their limited visibility within the current framework is seen by some stakeholders as a potential missed opportunity.

Taken together, these observations highlight the importance of more clearly identifying and prioritising cooperation areas within the Strategic Partnership in order to ensure that available coordination capacities are used effectively and that cooperation topics align with areas of strong mutual interest.

Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders

The feedback emphasises the potential benefits of introducing clearer prioritisation mechanisms within the Strategic Partnership in order to concentrate efforts on areas where both partners have strong alignment and realistic prospects for progress:

- **Establishing a joint prioritisation process involving government, industry, and research representatives**, in order to ensure that selected cooperation areas reflect both strategic objectives and practical implementation potential.
- **Introducing structured prioritisation criteria for cooperation topics**, for example based on economic impact, industrial relevance, feasibility of implementation, and alignment with existing bilateral strengths.

In this context, it was suggested to **cluster cooperation activities under a limited number of clearly defined flagship initiatives** that serve as focal points for the Strategic Partnership. Rather than pursuing a broad range of loosely connected topics, cooperation could be concentrated on two to three focused initiatives aligned with high-potential industrial value chains, for example in areas such as the semiconductor ecosystem or the energy transition.



One potential example for such a flagship initiative could be cooperation related to regional energy infrastructure, such as the **ASEAN Power Grid**. Given the growing importance of cross-border energy systems for decarbonisation and energy security, this area offers a concrete opportunity to link German technological capabilities with regional infrastructure needs. In this context, Singapore could serve as a coordination platform for regional initiatives, while cooperation formats under the Strategic Partnership could support engagement with partners across ASEAN through its hub function.

Such flagship initiatives could combine structured working formats with pilot projects and implementation activities, bringing together companies, research institutions, and public actors to identify concrete collaboration opportunities and translate them into commercially relevant projects. **Rather than being conceived as short-term or one-off efforts, these initiatives could be designed as continuous cooperation frameworks spanning longer time horizons, thereby strengthening continuity, consolidating foreign trade promotion activities, and improving coherence across bilateral engagement formats.**



By focusing political attention, institutional coordination, and industry participation on a limited number of such initiatives, the Strategic Partnership could gain clearer strategic direction and increase the likelihood of delivering tangible economic outcomes. At the same time, successful implementation could generate reference projects that provide orientation for the business community and can be further developed or replicated in other areas of cooperation.

3.4. Cooperation Platforms and Participation

Observations from the Business Community

Several stakeholders refer to the dialogue formats and exchange platforms envisaged under the Strategic Partnership and its accompanying Joint Work Plan. Some of these formats explicitly provide for the inclusion of private sector participants. Against this background, the discussion does not only concern whether such platforms should exist, but also how they should be designed in practice in order to support meaningful cooperation and generate tangible outcomes.

In this context, several stakeholders emphasise that the practical value of these platforms will depend on their structure, objectives, and follow-up. In particular, questions are raised regarding how participation should be organised, who should be involved, how priorities should be identified, and how the activities and outcomes of such platforms should be linked to the broader objectives of the Strategic Partnership.

There is also a view that dialogue formats should not remain limited to broad exchange at a general level. Without a clear concept, defined goals, and structured follow-up, there is a risk that such platforms may generate discussion without sufficiently contributing to the development of concrete cooperation initiatives.

Several interviewees also suggest that such formats should serve not only as forums for exchange but also as mechanisms for identifying needs, connecting relevant actors, and supporting the development of more concrete cooperation opportunities. In this way, dialogue platforms could help link strategic objectives under the Strategic Partnership with practical collaboration between stakeholders on both sides. If structured and supported appropriately, such formats could therefore play an important role in converting strategic dialogue into concrete cooperation initiatives.

Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders

- **Making access to dialogue platforms transparent and participation procedures straightforward and low-effort**, for relevant representatives.
- **Achieving balanced representation across stakeholder groups**, including government, industry, and research institutions, with participation from both SMEs and larger companies as well as gender balanced and diverse perspectives.
- **Involving participants with operational expertise and, where possible, decision-making authority**, within their respective organisations.
- **Defining clearer objectives, expected outputs, and more specific goals**, for individual dialogue formats.
- **Focusing dialogue platforms on concrete problem solving and the development of practical cooperation initiatives**, rather than purely discussion-oriented exchange.
- **Linking dialogue formats more closely to the identification and development of cooperation initiatives**, including practical follow up activities.
- **Maintaining continuity between meetings through structured follow-up and clearly assigned responsibilities**, for advancing identified initiatives.
- **Providing effective moderation and facilitation for dialogue platforms**, to guide discussions, structure exchanges, and translate dialogue into actionable outcomes.



3.5. Analytical Capacity for Project Development

Observations from the Business Community

While the Strategic Partnership framework outlines a broad range of cooperation areas, translating these themes into concrete initiatives often requires more detailed analysis of technological capabilities, industry needs, and potential areas of mutual interest. Without such analytical preparation, it can be difficult to identify cooperation topics that are both strategically relevant and practically feasible.

In particular, stakeholders note that **identifying suitable cooperation opportunities** frequently requires a structured process that connects Singaporean policy priorities, industrial needs, and technological challenges with German industrial capabilities, research strengths, and technological solutions. Without systematic analytical work to connect these elements, potentially promising areas of cooperation may remain underexplored.

Several interviewees therefore point to the **importance of strengthening analytical capacities** that support the identification and preparation of cooperation initiatives. In particular, there is a view that institutions already involved in bilateral economic cooperation, such as Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI) and the Singaporean-German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (SGC) could play an important role in supporting the analytical groundwork necessary to identify and further develop concrete cooperation opportunities.

Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders

- **Strengthening analytical capacities within institutions engaged in bilateral economic cooperation**, such as GTAI and SGC, to support the identification and preparation of cooperation initiatives.
- **Exploring the involvement of universities and research institutions in analytical work**, for example through student projects, master's theses, or doctoral research that analyse possible cooperation areas and develop concrete project ideas.
- **Establishing more systematic processes for analysing cooperation opportunities**, including assessments that match Singaporean policy priorities and technological needs with German industrial and research capabilities.
- **Using dialogue platforms and working groups as mechanisms for project development**, ensuring that formats under the Strategic Partnership support not only exchange but also the identification and further development of concrete cooperation opportunities.



04

Framework Conditions for Business and Cooperation



This chapter focuses on cross-cutting framework conditions that affect the practical implementation of cooperation between Germany and Singapore. While the Strategic Partnership outlines thematic areas of cooperation, stakeholders emphasise that regulatory conditions, access to talent, availability of information, and financing and compliance requirements play an important role in determining how companies can engage in practice.

The following sections summarise observations from the business community and outline possible approaches related to these framework conditions.

4.1. Regulation, Compliance and Market Access

Observations from the Business Community

Companies operating between Germany and Singapore report a number of practical challenges related to cross border regulatory interaction, compliance procedures, and market access. These challenges have direct implications for the wider business community, as they can affect access to financing, the establishment of banking relationships, and the overall ease of conducting cross-border business activities.

A central issue concerns the **absence of regulatory equivalence or mutual recognition** between Singaporean and German or European supervisory frameworks. As a result, financial institutions operating across jurisdictions are required to comply with duplicative and overlapping regulatory requirements. This increases administrative effort, raises compliance costs, and can limit the efficiency of cross-border activities.

In addition to structural differences between regulatory frameworks, stakeholders also highlight differences in supervisory practice. In particular, the regulatory framework in Singapore is perceived as **lacking a proportionality principle**. Smaller institutions are often subject to the same requirements as significantly larger entities, resulting in comparatively higher compliance burdens for mid-sized financial actors and potentially affecting their ability to compete and expand activities.

Beyond these structural and supervisory aspects, companies also report practical barriers related to market entry and day-to-day operations. While registering a new company in

Singapore is generally a fast and straightforward process, **opening a bank account** for newly established foreign companies can be more **complex and time-consuming**. While these challenges are not necessarily rooted in formal regulation, they are closely linked to compliance practices, including due diligence procedures, limited information on new market entrants, and differences in identification systems.

Additional constraints arise in sectors that are perceived as higher risk from a compliance perspective. Companies active in areas such as **dual-use technologies or other sensitive sectors may face increased scrutiny** in “Know Your Customer” (KYC) and transaction monitoring processes. In practice, such activities may be treated as high risk by default, which can lead to delays or reluctance by financial institutions to provide services. These **challenges tend to disproportionately affect smaller companies** that do not have the same level of visibility or established relationships as large multinational firms.

Taken together, these observations indicate that **challenges arise not only from differences in regulatory frameworks, but also from the way compliance requirements are applied** in practice. Addressing both structural and operational aspects is therefore important for improving market access and enabling cross-border business activities.

Companies also highlight that **access to regulatory and standard-setting processes** can be limited in practice. In certain cases, technical standards and regulatory frameworks are developed within relatively narrow consultation formats, which may not fully reflect the range of available industry expertise. This can reduce opportunities for companies, including German firms, to contribute their technical knowledge to regulatory developments in areas that are directly relevant to cooperation under the Strategic Partnership.

Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders

- **Strengthening regulatory dialogue between Singaporean and German or European supervisory authorities**, to address duplicative and overlapping regulatory requirements for financial institutions operating across jurisdictions.
- **Establishing sandbox-style pilot approaches for regulatory equivalence and cooperation**, allowing selected German and Singaporean banks operating in each other's jurisdictions to test mutual recognition or streamlined compliance procedures in a controlled setting.
- **Advancing dialogue on supervisory practices related to proportionality**, drawing on Germany's experience with risk-based or size-adjusted supervision and considering pilot or sandbox formats in Singapore to assess practical application.
- **Facilitating dialogue between financial institutions, regulators, and relevant agencies on onboarding challenges**, including due diligence procedures and risk assessments that may delay or complicate the establishment of banking relationships for newly established foreign companies.
- **Assessing the introduction of trusted partner or greenlisting approaches**, allowing financial institutions to rely on due diligence conducted in the partner country in order to reduce duplication in KYC and compliance procedures.
- **Developing trusted partner mechanisms in financial compliance for dual-use technologies**, drawing on the concept of trusted jurisdictions to enable differentiated risk categorisation and more proportionate KYC procedures while maintaining appropriate safeguards.
- **Exploring mechanisms for trusted introductions and verification processes**, enabling public institutions or trade promotion agencies to support connections between companies and financial institutions and reduce perceived onboarding risks.
- **Promoting bilateral exchange on standard-setting practices**, for example through sharing experiences from both German and Singaporean approaches to technical norm development, thereby facilitating more inclusive dialogue formats that allow a broader range of industry representatives to contribute to the development of technical standards and regulatory frameworks. This could enhance transparency, improve the quality and applicability of standards, and ensure that a wider set of industrial perspectives is reflected.



4.2. Talent Mobility, Skills and Workforce Development

Observations from the Business Community

Talent availability and mobility are identified as important enabling factors for business operations and bilateral cooperation between Germany and Singapore. Companies highlight both structural constraints and untapped potential in this area.

Several interviewees point to **challenges related to hiring international talent** in Singapore. While the country remains an attractive destination for skilled professionals, companies report that existing frameworks can make it more difficult to recruit foreign employees in certain cases. This can affect the ability of firms to scale operations, particularly in highly specialised fields.

In this context, it was emphasised that Singapore's value proposition as a regional headquarters and business hub is closely linked to its ability to attract and deploy talent across the wider region. Limitations in regional talent mobility are therefore seen as a potential constraint, as companies rely on flexible movement of personnel between Singapore and other ASEAN markets to manage regional operations effectively.

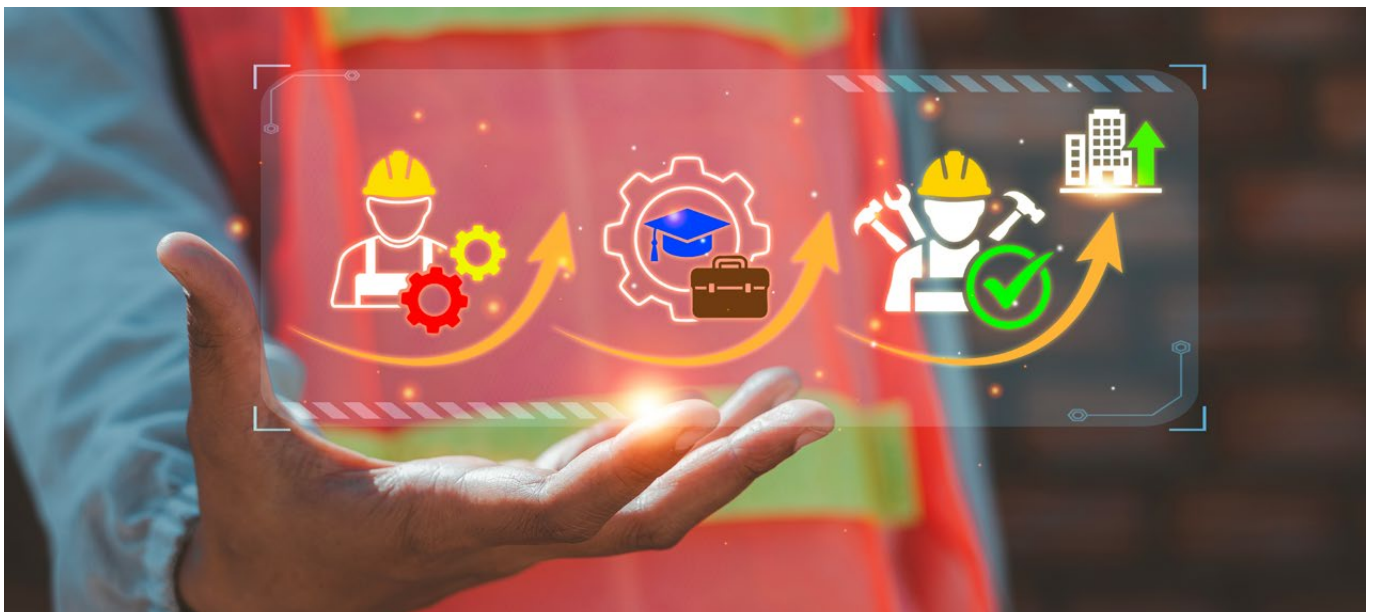
In addition, **skills shortages are observed in specific sectors**. For example, in logistics, companies report a mismatch between available qualifications and practical industry needs. While Singapore's education system emphasises academic supply chain management degrees, more practice-oriented vocational training for operational logistics roles is perceived as limited. As a result, companies highlight **difficulties in recruiting personnel with**

hands-on technical skills, while at the same time observing a tendency towards academic overqualification among job applicants.

Similarly, several companies highlight that the practical application of **sustainable finance** frameworks requires stronger capabilities across both financial institutions and industry. While regulatory frameworks are evolving and becoming more standardised, companies often face challenges in translating these requirements into concrete financing structures and investment decisions. As a result, stakeholders point to the need for targeted knowledge transfer and skills development formats that support financial sector professionals and companies in applying these frameworks in practice.

At the same time, feedback from the business community highlighted the importance of **international talent mobility for research**, innovation, and knowledge transfer. While individual exchange opportunities exist, there is potential to further develop more structured and accessible formats that facilitate the temporary placement of young professionals between Germany and Singapore, thereby strengthening practical collaboration and skills exchange.

Companies also note that **access to specialised research talent** and the ability to build dedicated R&D capacity are important factors for expanding higher-value activities in Singapore. Although some collaboration formats are already in place, more structured mechanisms that connect companies with universities and research institutions could help strengthen the availability of applied research talent and support longer-term innovation activities.



Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders



- **Establishing structured German-Singaporean postgraduate research programmes linked to university-industry collaboration**, for example through jointly funded doctoral or postgraduate positions embedded in applied research projects involving companies, universities, and research institutions in both countries. Such programmes could create a structured pipeline of joint research projects aligned with the priority areas of the Strategic Partnership, with universities providing postgraduate researchers who work directly with companies, particularly SMEs, in both company-specific and pre-competitive collaboration formats, thereby strengthening talent exchange, deepening industry-research cooperation, and supporting the development of long-term innovation partnerships.
- **Exploring the development and piloting of structured bilateral mobility programmes**, facilitating the temporary placement of young professionals, trainees, or graduates between Germany and Singapore in a business context, drawing on existing international models such as the French “Volontariat International (VIE)”.
- **Introducing more practice-oriented vocational training formats in Singapore**, drawing on elements of the German dual education system, particularly in sectors such as logistics where companies report a mismatch between academic qualifications and operational skill requirements.
- **Developing specialised training formats, such as short professional courses or micro-credentials on sustainable finance**, targeting both financial sector professionals and companies in other industries that increasingly need to apply sustainable finance frameworks in practice.
- **Strengthening dialogue between government authorities and industry stakeholders on talent mobility**, addressing practical constraints related to hiring international talent and improving the alignment of talent frameworks with business needs.

4.3. Information Access, Investment Visibility and Market Awareness

Observations from the Business Community

Bilateral investment flows play an important role in shaping economic cooperation between Germany and Singapore. Investment decisions influence where technologies are deployed, where infrastructure projects are developed, and how innovation ecosystems evolve.

Germany is widely recognised for its technological capabilities, while Singapore hosts a highly developed financial ecosystem with globally active **investors and family offices** seeking opportunities in advanced technologies and infrastructure. These complementary characteristics create a strong foundation for closer cooperation between technology developers, infrastructure operators, and investors in both countries.

At the same time, these complementarities are not yet fully utilised. German companies, particularly in the Mittelstand and technology sectors, do not always consider Singaporean or Asian investors when seeking growth capital. Conversely, Singaporean investors do not consistently include Germany in their international investment focus, despite strong interest in advanced technologies. In this context, interviewees also note that **access to large institutional investors**, including sovereign wealth funds, can be difficult to establish in practice. While high-level contact may exist, structured and accessible channels for engagement are not always visible to companies, particularly for SMEs.

Beyond investment flows, similar patterns are observed in relation to **funding programmes**, research initiatives, and other cooperation formats. Although a range of instruments already exists, awareness among companies remains limited. This is particularly the case for SMEs, which often lack the internal capacity to identify relevant programmes and potential partners. As a result, companies may face **difficulties in identifying concrete entry points** for collaboration, even where initiatives are formally open to them.

In the area of **climate finance**, some companies note that while large-scale investment opportunities in infrastructure and the energy transition are expected in Singapore and across Southeast Asia, **access to structured information on upcoming projects remains limited** in practice. At the same time, financing decisions can be affected by differing risk-return expectations, with some financial institutions perceived as more cautious in project participation. This may reduce the ability of German and Singaporean actors to engage early in joint high-potential projects.

Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders

- **Expanding targeted matchmaking and engagement formats**, such as investor delegations, curated roundtables, and briefings, that connect Singaporean investors with German technology companies and startups, while increasing awareness among German firms of investment interest from Singaporean institutions.
- **Creating a regular bilateral investor forum with governmental backing**, bringing together German companies, relevant public agencies, and Singaporean institutional investors, including sovereign wealth funds, to create structured and recurring access points for investment dialogue and project development.
- **Enhancing targeted awareness-building formats in Germany**, such as roadshows, industry dialogues, or briefings involving Singaporean stakeholders, to improve understanding of market opportunities and economic developments in Singapore and the wider Asian region.
- **Developing more centralised and user-oriented information channels or platforms**, consolidating information on funding programmes, cooperation formats, and partnership opportunities to allow companies to access relevant information through a single interface.
- **Establishing structured matchmaking platforms or intermediary mechanisms for R&D cooperation**, supporting companies in identifying suitable programmes and collaboration partners and lowering participation barriers, particularly for SMEs with limited internal resources.
- **Implementing targeted dialogue formats that bring together German and Singaporean banks, infrastructure operators, utilities, and project developers**, to provide greater transparency on upcoming infrastructure and energy transition investments and support earlier-stage joint assessment of financing opportunities.

4.4. Digital Administration and Trade Facilitation

Observations from the Business Community

Digital public administration and trade facilitation are identified as relevant framework conditions for business operations and cross-border cooperation between Germany and Singapore. In this context, companies point in particular to differences in the degree of digitalisation and administrative integration between both countries.

Singapore is well regarded as having a highly digitalised and integrated public administration. Systems such as **digital identity platforms and electronic government services** allow companies to complete administrative procedures in a streamlined and efficient manner. In comparison, administrative processes in Germany are often described as less digitalised and streamlined, with continued reliance on paper-based procedures in certain areas.

These differences are also visible in **trade-related processes**. In Singapore, digital platforms enable the electronic handling of trade documentation and procedures, contributing to faster processing times and reduced administrative burden. In contrast, it was noted that the limited use of respective digital processes and electronic systems in Germany can create inefficiencies, particularly in areas such as logistics and air cargo operations.

Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders

- **Enabling more targeted learning missions, study visits or even temporary placements** for relevant German policymakers such as the Federal Ministry for Digital Transformation and Government Modernisation and related administrative stakeholders, to gain practical insights into Singapore's digital government systems and trade facilitation platforms, such as **Singpass, Corppass, TradeNet and TradeTrust**.



05

Singapore as a Regional Hub for ASEAN Engagement



Observations from the Business Community

Singapore is widely acknowledged as a strategic regional hub for ASEAN operations and central platform for coordinating and scaling business activities across Southeast Asia. At the same time, this perspective is not explicitly reflected in the current activities and work packages of the Strategic Partnership.

Companies highlight Singapore's role as a base for regional headquarters, coordination functions, and higher-value activities. Its institutional environment, connectivity, and regional integration make it a natural anchor point for managing operations across Southeast Asia.

In practice, companies often operate according to a **"Singapore-plus-one"** model, in which Singapore serves as a coordination and control centre while more operational or cost-sensitive activities are located in other Southeast Asian markets. This reflects both Singapore's structural strengths and its cost profile. However, this regional operating model is not yet systematically reflected in the design of cooperation formats under the Strategic Partnership, particularly in terms of linking Singapore-based activities to broader regional value chains and supporting engagement with ASEAN markets.

Interviewees also emphasise that **competitive dynamics in Southeast Asia** are increasingly shaped by the expanding presence of Chinese companies across industrial sectors and value chains. Southeast Asia is becoming a primary growth market for Chinese firms, affecting pricing structures, production models, and competitive positioning. In sectors such as the chemical industry, this development is described as a structural challenge affecting both European and Asian markets.

Singapore is also seen as a platform for the **implementation and scaling of innovations**. Its regulatory environment, infrastructure, and close integration with regional markets provide favourable conditions for the testing and deployment of new solutions. This creates opportunities for German companies to deploy and scale innovations for the wider Asian market from a Singapore base.

At the same time, some feedback pointed to **practical constraints** that affect the ability to fully utilise Singapore in this role. In particular, limitations in access to highly specialised international talent can affect companies' ability to anchor regional coordination, research, and regulatory functions in Singapore. In some cases, companies report relocating specific functions to other countries when required expertise cannot be secured locally.

Taken together, these observations suggest that while Singapore's function as a regional hub and execution platform is widely recognised by companies, it is not yet systematically integrated into the conceptual and operational design of the Strategic Partnership.

General Recommendations Mentioned by Stakeholders:

- **Strengthen the recognition of Singapore as a regional hub within the Strategic Partnership** by more explicitly reflecting its function as a headquarters location, coordination centre, and gateway to ASEAN in the design of cooperation initiatives. Aligning bilateral activities with regional operating models could help connect Singapore-based activities with wider value chains across Southeast Asia.
- **Leverage the Strategic Partnership to address regional competitive dynamics** by strengthening dialogue and exchange on industrial developments and value chain shifts in Southeast Asia, including the growing role of Chinese companies. Such exchanges could support a better understanding of regional market conditions and inform more effective positioning of German companies in ASEAN markets.
- **Promote Singapore as an execution and scaling platform for innovation** by developing cooperation formats that enable German companies to deploy, test, and scale technologies in Singapore for the wider Asian market.
- **Facilitate the mobility of specialised talent required for regional hub functions** by addressing constraints related to the recruitment of highly qualified international professionals.



06

Sectoral Cooperation Opportunities



This chapter focuses on selected sectoral and thematic areas that are considered particularly relevant for bilateral cooperation between Germany and Singapore.

While the Strategic Partnership outlines a broad range of cooperation topics, feedback from the business community highlights specific sectors where complementarities are most pronounced and where practical collaboration could be further developed.

6.1. Decarbonisation and Industrial Transformation

Decarbonisation and the energy transition are seen as important areas for bilateral cooperation between Germany and Singapore. At the same time, observations from the business community indicate that the current framing of the Strategic Partnership does not sufficiently reflect the role of energy infrastructure and system-level requirements as enabling factors, while perspectives differ regarding the prioritisation and practical relevance of specific technologies and approaches.

Several interviewees point out that advancing the energy transition requires an integrated perspective that considers the interdependencies between energy generation, distribution, and consumption. In this context, a number of cooperation areas outlined under the Strategic Partnership Work Plan are seen as dependent on **underlying energy infrastructure adjustments** and coordinated system development. Infrastructure-related aspects such as grid capacity, stability, and (high-load) charging infrastructure are therefore identified as critical enabling factors that are not yet sufficiently reflected in the current framing of cooperation areas under the Strategic Partnership.

Hydrogen and its derivatives, particularly ammonia, are identified by some stakeholders as essential technologies for achieving long-term decarbonisation, especially in maritime transport. Particularly ammonia-related activities and technologies have been acknowledged as a relevant field for bilateral cooperation. As the Strategic Partnership already refers to cooperation on green shipping fuels, it was pointed out that many of the necessary operational standards and procedures are still under development. Initial handling procedures for ammonia during bunkering and onboard operations exist in both ports due to pilot



activities, but these are not yet finalised or standardised. In addition, important elements of the wider value chain still require further technical and regulatory clarification, including onboard fuel handling procedures, bunkering via barges, and storage infrastructure such as tank storage facilities. Because these issues involve multiple regulatory authorities, port operators, and technical actors, the development of coordinated standards is seen as particularly complex.

At the same time, interviewees commented that hydrogen technologies, particularly green hydrogen, remain at an early stage of commercial maturity. High production costs, uncertain demand, and long development timelines are cited as key constraints. From this perspective, large-scale deployment is considered unlikely in the near-term, and hydrogen is expected to remain primarily a topic for research, pilot projects, and longer-term development. As a result, the current prioritisation of hydrogen within the Strategic Partnership is viewed critically by some, who suggest that **greater emphasis could be placed on technologies and approaches that offer clearer prospects for economic viability** and near-term industrial application.

Alongside hydrogen, alternative or **complementary approaches to decarbonisation** are highlighted. These include improvements in **energy efficiency**, as well as the potential use of other energy sources such as **biogas produced from biomass** in neighbouring countries. **Carbon capture and utilisation** is also identified as a relevant area for cooperation, with interest in developing projects in this field. For both approaches, progress could be supported by the development of appropriate cross-border regulatory frameworks, particularly in relation to carbon accounting and access to recognised **carbon credit mechanisms**. As these areas are already recognised within the Strategic Partnership work plan, this could create synergies and provide a basis for more coordinated implementation.

In the chemical sector, **green chemistry** is recognised as relevant, particularly in the context of manufacturing and research activities in Europe. However, it is noted that core research and development capabilities in green chemistry are primarily located in R&D hubs in Europe, North America, and Japan, and that its **relevance for practical industrial cooperation and economic impact in Singapore may be limited**. At the same time, it was commented that the role of the chemical industry as an enabler of sustainability solutions across multiple sectors is often under-recognised. This includes contributions through advanced materials, industrial decarbonisation technologies, and process innovations that improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions in downstream industries.

In this context, it was pointed out that **cooperation in the chemical sector may offer greater potential when linked to high-value technology ecosystems**, such as semiconductors, advanced materials, and specialised manufacturing processes, rather than focusing narrowly on green chemistry research.

Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders

- **Placing greater emphasis on decarbonisation approaches with clearer near-term industrial applicability**, including energy efficiency measures and application-oriented solutions.
- **Exploring cooperation formats related to alternative energy pathways**, including the use of biogas from regional biomass sources and its integration into existing energy systems.
- **Advancing bilateral cooperation on ammonia bunkering standards and operational procedures**, by bringing together port authorities, regulators, industry actors, and research institutions to jointly develop practical standards across the ammonia value chain, including bunkering safety procedures, onboard fuel handling, barge-based processes, and storage and landside infrastructure.
- **Focusing hydrogen related cooperation on pilot projects and applied research activities**, aligned with current levels of technological maturity.
- **Supporting the development of bilateral or multilateral frameworks for carbon credit cooperation**, for example under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, in order to enable the recognition and transfer of emissions reductions.
- **Strengthening cooperation on energy infrastructure and system integration**, including grid capacity, stability, and charging infrastructure, as enabling conditions for many of the activities outlined under the Strategic Partnership.
- **Prioritising research and innovation cooperation in the chemical sector on high-value technology ecosystems**, such as semiconductors, advanced materials, and specialised manufacturing processes, where stronger industrial relevance and economic impact are expected.



6.2. Advanced Manufacturing and Semiconductors

Observations from the Business Community

Advanced manufacturing and industrial innovation are widely seen as core areas of complementarity between Germany and Singapore. Both economies are characterised by strong industrial capabilities, high levels of technological expertise, and a focus on high-value production.

At the same time, industry representatives note that key industrial sectors with strong relevance for German companies are not explicitly reflected in the Strategic Partnership. In particular, **mechanical engineering, industrial automation, and electronics are highlighted as notable gaps, despite their high relevance for bilateral economic and business relations.**

Singapore is broadly recognised as a platform for the implementation, scaling, and regional deployment of advanced technologies, enabling companies to test, adapt, and commercialise solutions for Southeast Asian markets. In this context, complementarities arise between German technological capabilities, particularly in specialised equipment, materials, and upstream technologies, and Singapore's strengths in manufacturing, system integration, and regional coordination. These complementarities are particularly evident in the **semiconductor sector**, where cooperation across different segments of the value chain is seen as promising. In this context, opportunities also arise at the interface between chemistry, materials science, advanced manufacturing, and the specialised machinery and equipment required along these value chains. This includes areas such as advanced materials and specialised chemical inputs, for example in fields like polysilicon, where both countries possess relevant capabilities. More broadly, industrial collaboration is considered most effective in areas characterised by high technological intensity and strong value creation.

At the same time, identifying concrete collaboration opportunities in these fields can be complex. Cooperation often requires a high degree of specialisation and alignment, and companies, particularly smaller firms, may lack visibility of relevant partners, capabilities, or entry points into existing ecosystems.

Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders

- **Incorporating key industrial sectors into the Strategic Partnership**, in particular mechanical engineering, industrial automation, and electronics, for example through dedicated workstreams or cooperation formats linked to concrete industrial use cases and market applications.
- **Building on the concept of industrial flagship initiatives, developing a concrete initiative along the semiconductor value chain**, integrating advanced manufacturing, materials science, specialised chemical inputs, and energy efficiency solutions. Such an initiative could combine targeted R&D collaboration formats, specialised matchmaking between companies, research institutions, and system integrators, as well as pilot projects in Singapore. Successful pilot implementations could serve as reference cases for subsequent commercial deployment and regional rollout across Southeast Asia.



6.3. Healthcare and Life Sciences

Observations from the Business Community

Healthcare and life sciences are widely regarded by stakeholders as important areas for bilateral cooperation between Germany and Singapore. Cooperation potential is identified across research, regulation, and application, with opportunities to strengthen collaboration along the value chain.

Singapore is seen as a **regional frontrunner in regulatory development and institutional agility**, particularly through agencies such as the Health Sciences Authority (HSA), which are perceived as benchmarks within ASEAN. This creates a favourable environment for regulatory dialogue and benchmarking with respective German or European frameworks, especially in areas such as MedTech approval processes, compliance, and innovation governance.

Singapore's role as a regional hub offers important advantages for **clinical research and market access**. Its position as a centre for clinical trials enables access to diverse patient populations across Southeast Asia, complementing German research efforts and supporting the testing and validation of new therapies. This is particularly important in areas such as oncology and other diseases with higher prevalence in Asian populations, where clinical insights from regional cohorts can expand the clinical relevance and potential market reach of new treatments.

For German start-ups and smaller companies developing new therapies, this also addresses a structural constraint, as the available patient population in Germany or Europe alone may be insufficient in certain cases, for example in the context of rare diseases. Access to larger and more diverse cohorts across Asia can therefore support both clinical validation and the development of viable business cases.

Beyond clinical research, cooperation potential is also identified in areas such as **drug discovery, genomics, and data-driven healthcare innovation**. Singapore's ecosystem of research institutions, start-ups, and venture networks provides access to emerging technologies and innovation-driven companies, which can complement the capabilities of German pharmaceutical and life sciences firms.

In parallel, **artificial intelligence and automation** are expected to significantly transform research and development processes in the healthcare sector. Applications such as AI-supported data analysis, laboratory automation, and digital diagnostics have the potential to accelerate research cycles, improve efficiency, and reduce manual workloads in laboratory and testing environments. However, these application areas are not yet prominently reflected in the current framing of the Strategic Partnership.

Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders

- **Strengthening bilateral clinical research and market-oriented R&D collaboration**, by leveraging Singapore's role as a regional clinical trial hub, for example through structured formats that connect German companies, start-ups, research institutions, and public actors with clinical trial networks in Southeast Asia. This could be supported by dedicated structures and funding mechanisms, including co-funded programmes or platform approaches in collaboration with venture labs or innovation hubs, as well as by building on existing bilateral instruments such as BMBF-A*STAR cooperation formats. Such approaches would enable earlier integration of Asian patient cohorts and regional clinical pathways into product development strategies, particularly benefiting start-ups and smaller companies in areas such as rare diseases where European patient populations alone may be insufficient to support viable business cases
- **Expanding thematic cooperation in drug discovery, genomics, and data-driven healthcare innovation**, for example through joint research initiatives, partnerships with Singapore-based research institutions, and targeted collaboration with innovation-driven technology providers across the healthcare ecosystem.
- **Intensifying regulatory dialogue and practical cooperation in MedTech and healthcare innovation**, for example through structured exchange formats between regulatory authorities and industry stakeholders focusing on approval processes, compliance frameworks, and innovation governance.
- **Promoting the application of AI and automation in research and laboratory environments**, for example through joint pilot projects, collaboration with specialised start-ups, and exchange formats focused on AI-enabled laboratory processes, diagnostics, and data analysis.

6.4. Logistics, Mobility and Infrastructure



Observations from the Business Community

Logistics, mobility, and infrastructure systems are widely seen as highly relevant areas for bilateral cooperation between Germany and Singapore. While both countries already possess highly developed logistics infrastructure overall, targeted gaps remain in specific areas, alongside further potential to advance digitalisation and automation in logistics systems.

In a regional context, **regulatory fragmentation across ASEAN** markets has been repeatedly identified as a significant barrier to cross-border operations. This is particularly evident in the **automotive sector**, where emissions standards are not coherent across the region and safety certification and homologation procedures differ between countries. As a result, vehicles approved in one market cannot easily be sold in another, limiting the ability of companies to leverage regional production and distribution networks. More broadly, such differences in standards and certification procedures can constrain cross-border trade and investment and reduce the efficiency of regional supply chains.

While the Strategic Partnership addresses logistics cooperation, its current focus is perceived as being predominantly on maritime logistics. Other modes of transport, particularly air freight and land transport, receive comparatively limited attention. At the same time, **challenges in logistics are often not only related to individual modes of transport**, but also to the interplay between them.

Building on this, constraints are also observed in the **integration of logistics systems** across different transport

modes. While infrastructure across sea, land, and air transport is generally well developed, coordination between these modes remains complex. In particular, existing systems are not always optimally equipped to ensure seamless communication and data exchange across transport modes, which can lead to inefficiencies in the coordination of goods flows, particularly due to limited use of interoperable telematics and digital tracking systems to provide visibility on shipment timing, location, and volumes.

The transition towards more **sustainable transport systems** is identified as an important area for further development. Electrification in the heavy-duty vehicle segment is seen as a relevant pathway, but challenges remain in relation to charging infrastructure, grid capacity, and overall economic viability. In addition, procurement decisions are often perceived as being strongly driven by upfront costs, which can limit the adoption of more sustainable solutions, while lifecycle costs and long-term value creation are not always sufficiently taken into account.

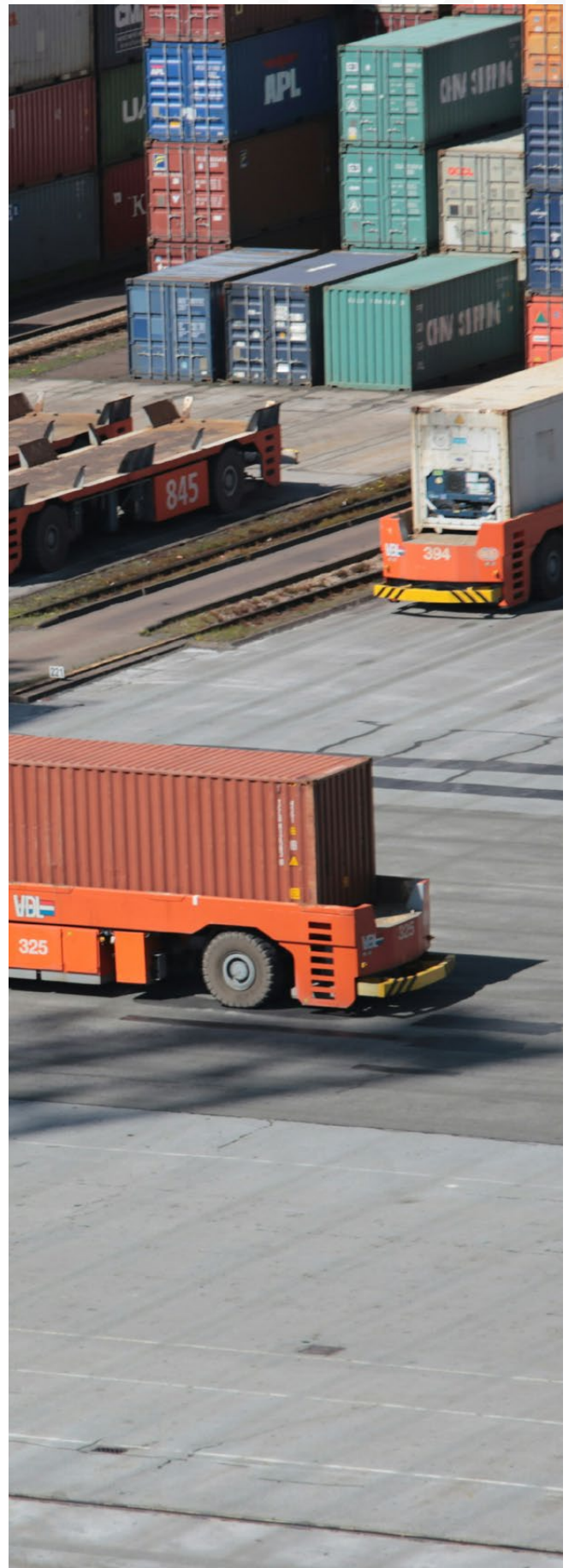
In the field of **pharmaceutical and chemical logistics**, limitations in cold chain infrastructure are identified as a practical challenge in Singapore. In particular, it was noted that dedicated cold storage capacity and specialised handling facilities at airport logistics hubs could be improved to optimally manage temperature-sensitive shipments.

The **absence of a clear regulatory framework for autonomous vehicles** in Singapore currently prevents the implementation of pilot projects in logistics. At the same time, testing of autonomous mobility in both Singapore and Germany still focuses primarily on passenger transport, while cargo and logistics applications outside controlled environments remain underdeveloped.

Overall, logistics and infrastructure systems are seen as critical enablers of economic activity, with cooperation opportunities particularly in areas that combine technological innovation, system integration, and practical implementation.

Possible Approaches Mentioned by Stakeholders

- **Supporting regulatory convergence and standardisation efforts within ASEAN**, for example by consolidating German and Singaporean expertise and jointly contributing to initiatives aimed at aligning standards, certification procedures, and regulatory frameworks, particularly in sectors such as automotive and transport systems, in order to facilitate regional market integration.
- **Strengthening the integration of multimodal logistics systems**, for example through best practice exchange and bilateral pilot projects aimed at improving communication standards and interoperability between sea, land, and air transport, including the use of telematics and digital tracking technologies to provide real-time visibility on shipment timing, location, and volumes across transport modes.
- **Incorporating the electrification of heavy-duty logistics operations into cooperation on e-mobility and energy infrastructure**, for example by integrating freight-specific requirements into infrastructure planning, grid development, and policy frameworks, particularly in logistics-intensive areas such as airport cargo zones, where significantly higher grid capacity is required.
- **Initiating cooperation in cold chain logistics**, for example by enabling structured exchange between airport operators and logistics providers, including best-practice sharing on infrastructure design, operational procedures, and temperature-controlled supply chain management.
- **Advancing collaboration on autonomous logistics solutions**, for example through joint pilot initiatives and regulatory dialogue focusing on cargo and logistics applications beyond warehouse environments. As both countries face similar regulatory and implementation challenges, bilateral cooperation could contribute to the development of regulatory frameworks and test cases for autonomous cargo transport, for example in airport logistics environments, generating practical insights for both sides.



07

Recommendations and Outlook



7.1. Recommendations

The findings of this publication show that the Singapore-Germany Strategic Partnership is broadly welcomed by the business community and is regarded as a relevant and timely framework for deepening bilateral cooperation. Building on the breadth of its formal agenda, stakeholders emphasise that the partnership's **practical value can be further strengthened through clearer priorities, effective implementation structures, and an increased focus on concrete and visible outcomes** for companies.

From a business perspective, the further development of the Strategic Partnership should therefore focus on translating its strategic objectives into specific cooperation formats and measurable outcomes. In particular, stakeholders emphasise the importance of strengthening the operational dimension of the partnership in a way that enables companies to engage more directly in bilateral and regional cooperation.

The following recommendations summarise the main directions emerging from the business community.

01

Strengthen Implementation and Operational Ownership



A recurring finding across the interviews and committee discussions is that the Strategic Partnership benefits from strong momentum at the level of political dialogue. To build on this and turn strategic intent into tangible cooperation outcomes, many stakeholders suggest that the next phase should focus on strengthening operational structures and day-to-day implementation mechanisms.

This includes defining responsibilities for individual initiatives more clearly, improving coordination across participating institutions, and establishing systematic processes for monitoring progress under the Joint Work Plan. More structured steering arrangements could help ensure continuity, strengthen accountability, and improve the ability to advance initiatives over time. In this context, the possible establishment of a bilateral coordination mechanism, such as a dedicated secretariat or comparable structure with appropriate funding, could provide sustained follow-up and coordination across thematic areas.

02

Prioritise High-Impact Cooperation Areas



The current framework of the Strategic Partnership covers a broad range of topics. While this reflects the depth and diversity of bilateral relations, stakeholders note that the absence of clearer prioritisation may make it more difficult to concentrate resources and political attention on areas with the greatest potential for tangible outcomes.

A more selective and strategically aligned approach to prioritisation would therefore be beneficial. This could include the development of joint prioritisation criteria and structured processes involving public institutions, industry, and research actors, ensuring that selected cooperation areas reflect both strategic objectives and practical implementation potential.

Rather than pursuing a wide range of loosely connected activities, the Strategic Partnership could focus more explicitly on a limited number of clearly defined flagship initiatives linked to areas of strong bilateral complementarity, for instance on topics such as the ASEAN Power Grid or the semiconductor value-chain. Such an approach could improve coherence, strengthen visibility, and increase the likelihood of delivering concrete results.

03

Ensure Representation of Core Industrial Sectors



It was highlighted that certain industrial sectors with strong relevance for bilateral economic relations are not explicitly reflected in the current thematic focus of the Strategic Partnership. In particular, areas such as mechanical engineering, industrial automation, and electronics are identified as important gaps, despite their central role in Germany's industrial base and their relevance for cooperation with Singapore.

Ensuring that these sectors are more clearly reflected in the Strategic Partnership could strengthen its alignment with existing business activity and industrial cooperation. This could include integrating these sectors more explicitly into cooperation formats, workstreams, or flagship initiatives, thereby improving the practical relevance of the Strategic Partnership for a broader range of companies.

04

Expand Implementation-Oriented Cooperation Formats



The business community places strong emphasis on formats that support practical cooperation rather than exchange alone. This is reflected both in the qualitative findings and in the survey, where respondents identified project-based working groups, structured government-business dialogue formats, and bilateral public-private pilot projects as particularly relevant for strengthening bilateral economic cooperation.

This suggests that future implementation of the Strategic Partnership should give greater weight to structured and outcome-oriented formats that support the identification, development, and advancement of concrete initiatives. Dialogue platforms can play an important role in this regard, but their effectiveness will depend on clear objectives, appropriate composition, strong moderation, and structured follow-up. More broadly, working groups, pilot projects, and other task-oriented formats can help connect strategic priorities with practical collaboration between relevant actors on both sides and ensure that companies can effectively engage with available formats.

05

Reflect Singapore's Regional Hub Function



The analysis highlights that Singapore is not only relevant as a bilateral partner in its own right, but also as a regional platform for business operations, innovation deployment, and access to Southeast Asian markets. This function is widely recognised by companies, yet it is not always sufficiently reflected in the current framing and design of cooperation under the Strategic Partnership.

A stronger recognition of Singapore's role as a regional headquarters location, coordination centre, and gateway to ASEAN could improve the strategic fit of bilateral initiatives. This includes linking Singapore-based cooperation more systematically to broader regional value chains, market access strategies, and regional infrastructure and regulatory developments. It also includes recognising Singapore's role as a platform for piloting, testing, and scaling solutions for wider deployment in Southeast Asia.

06

Address Framework Conditions More Systematically



Many of the practical constraints identified by stakeholders do not relate to sector-specific cooperation alone, but to broader enabling conditions. These include regulatory interaction and compliance burdens, talent mobility, access to information, and the effectiveness of public administration and trade facilitation systems.

Improving these framework conditions would not only benefit existing business activity, but also strengthen the feasibility of future cooperation initiatives under the Strategic Partnership. This includes more targeted regulatory dialogue, stronger support for talent and skills development, improved access to relevant cooperation mechanisms, and continued learning from more digitalised administrative and trade facilitation systems. In this sense, framework conditions should be understood not as a separate issue from thematic cooperation, but as a core determinant of whether cooperation can be implemented successfully in practice.

7.2. Next Steps for Implementation

Building on the recommendations outlined above, a structured and phased approach to implementation could support the translation of the Strategic Partnership into more concrete and visible outcomes. The following indicative steps reflect key priorities identified by the business community and may serve as a basis for further discussion among relevant actors.

**0–12
months**

Short term priorities (Governance, Prioritisation, Setup, and Initial Activities)

- Defining governance and steering arrangements for the Strategic Partnership, including the identification of lead institutions, coordination responsibilities, and appropriate coordination mechanisms and assess funding options for steering structure to ensure continuity, follow-up, and regular review across thematic areas
- Sharpening the thematic focus of the Strategic Partnership by prioritising selected cooperation areas and industry topics according to their economic relevance and implementation potential
- Identifying and developing potential topics for flagship initiatives, aligned with areas of strong bilateral complementarity and concrete project opportunities, such as the ASEAN Power Grid and the Semiconductor value chain
- Initiating a limited number of structured dialogue and working formats with a clear focus on concrete outcomes, including project-based working groups or targeted public-private exchanges
- Launching selected early-stage cooperation activities, such as additional matchmaking initiatives or investor engagement formats, to generate early and visible results

**1-3
years**

Medium term priorities (1–3 years: implementation and projects)

- Establishing and operationalising selected flagship initiatives and dedicated working structures in prioritised areas
- Developing and implementing pilot projects in relation to flagship initiatives, for example in energy-related infrastructure or semiconductor-related value chain
- Strengthening analytical support and project development capacities within relevant institutions, in order to facilitate the identification and preparation of cooperation opportunities
- Expanding structured formats for talent mobility, training, and knowledge exchange between Germany and Singapore
- Institutionalising monitoring and review mechanisms to assess progress and support the continuous development of the Strategic Partnership

**3+
years**

Longer term priorities (3+ years: scaling, integration, and system-level improvements)

- Evaluating and scaling successful pilot initiatives and cooperation formats, with a view to broader implementation and replication
- Strengthening the integration of bilateral cooperation with regional value chains and ASEAN-level developments, building on Singapore's role as a regional hub
- Further developing regulatory dialogue and cooperation mechanisms in areas where practical barriers to cross-border activity persist

7.3. Outlook



The Singapore-Germany Strategic Partnership has the potential to become an even more substantial framework for bilateral and regional cooperation. The findings of this publication suggest that the basis for such development is clearly present: there is broad goodwill, a strong perception of complementarity, and a wide range of possible cooperation areas. Building on this, many stakeholders view the next phase as an opportunity to sharpen priorities and further strengthen the structures and resources that support implementation.

This can be supported through clearer priorities, effective governance, strong implementation mechanisms, and

close alignment with the needs and operating realities of companies. Maintaining a balance between broad strategic ambition and focused, practical delivery will remain important. Stakeholders also point to the value of adequate financial and administrative resources to support coordination, steering, and monitoring activities, including potential dedicated structures such as a bilateral secretariat.

If these conditions are addressed, the Strategic Partnership can evolve from a high-level bilateral framework into a more effective instrument for economic cooperation, innovation-oriented collaboration, and regional engagement.

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