



# EU IN THE INDO-PACIFIC JEAN MONNET NETWORK

## NEWSLETTER ISSUE 7

### PROJECT UPDATE

#### IN THIS ISSUE

- Interns
- EUIP priority:  
Digital  
governance
- A new look EU  
in the Indo-  
Pacific
- Recent outputs

I am happy to report that the Delphi process for New Zealand has been completed. This process entailed members of the Australia/New Zealand Delphi workgroup engaging in rigorous discussion and debate on what the raw data collected in New Zealand says about the relevance and impact of the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy in New Zealand (and broader region). The process was completed with an online event and the subsequent drafting of a report which will be disseminated to the European External Action Service.

The Delphi process has also started for Thailand, Japan, and Australia.

In other news, the EUIP Network was delighted to have Rowan Dennett, an undergraduate student at the University of Oxford, undertake a four week internship based at the National Centre for Research on Europe at the University of Canterbury. Rowan will provide his thoughts on the EUIP in the next newsletter.

Nāku noa, nā

Nicholas Ross Smith

#### Contact Us

+6433690390

nick.smith@canterbury.ac.nz

@EUIPJMN

www.canterbury.ac.nz/ncre/



# INTERNS

The EUIP Jean Monnet Network has been fortunate enough to have had two interns so far: Cassidy Russell and Rowan Dennett. In December, Anna Doak will also start a three month internship with the Network.



## EUIP Intern: Cassidy Russell

Cassidy is an MEuro Student at the National Centre for Research on Europe. As part of her MEuro coursework, she spent three months on the EUIP project as an intern.

Cassidy completed her Bachelor of Arts in 2022 majoring in political science, international relations, and economics also at the University of Canterbury.

Her research interests include the political economy and international trade. Cassidy's thesis is on examining New Zealand's recent Free Trade Agreements with the European Union and the United Kingdom.



Rowan is a Crankstart Scholar at the University of Oxford and for the next month, an intern here at the NCRE. Back in Oxford, Rowan studies Geography, with interests in Geopolitics, Diplomacy, Environmental Governance and International Development, having recently interned at the International Whaling Commission working as a research auditor. Rowan has experience researching the validity of the 'Cold War' framing of relations between the West and China and is looking forward to further exploring the specifics of the EU as an international actor in the Indo-Pacific.



**Rowan Dennett**  
EUIP Intern

# EUIP PRIORITY: DIGITAL GOVERNANCE

The central aim of the EU's Indo-Pacific strategy is to uphold the rules-based international order and to support responsible international cooperation to facilitate the interdependent futures of the EU and the Indo-Pacific region. While much of the EU's priority areas focus on security, trade, development and prosperity, it is important to consider these targets through the increasingly important digital realm too. It is here where the EU's priority area of Digital Governance and Partnerships can be most effective, and work towards the EU's target of fostering "cooperation for a safe and secure digital space".

Digital governance and partnerships represents a critical area which the EU can make a significant difference as a leader in the field. The EU has some of the most advanced data protection laws in the world along with the experience of its member states having gone through the 'digital transformation' that many nations in the Indo-Pacific are on the brink of. In addition to providing insights into the effective development and regulation of the modern, digital state, the EU is also looking to establish digital partnerships with Indo-Pacific nations to develop safe and secure platforms for digital industries and trade. Increasing cases of cybercrimes and cybersecurity threats to the private and public sectors also represent an area of cooperation for the EU in the Indo-Pacific.

Cooperation on Digital Governance between the EU and the Indo-Pacific is not unprecedented. Following the horrific terrorist attacks on two Mosques in Christchurch in March 2019, New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern launched Christchurch Call in coordination with French President Emmanuel Macron. Christchurch Call represented a Call for collaborative efforts to remove violent, extremist and terrorist content from online platforms, with the Call adopted by multiple EU states, the EU Commission and several multinational technology companies in addition to the Indo-Pacific states of New Zealand, Indonesia, Japan, India and Australia.

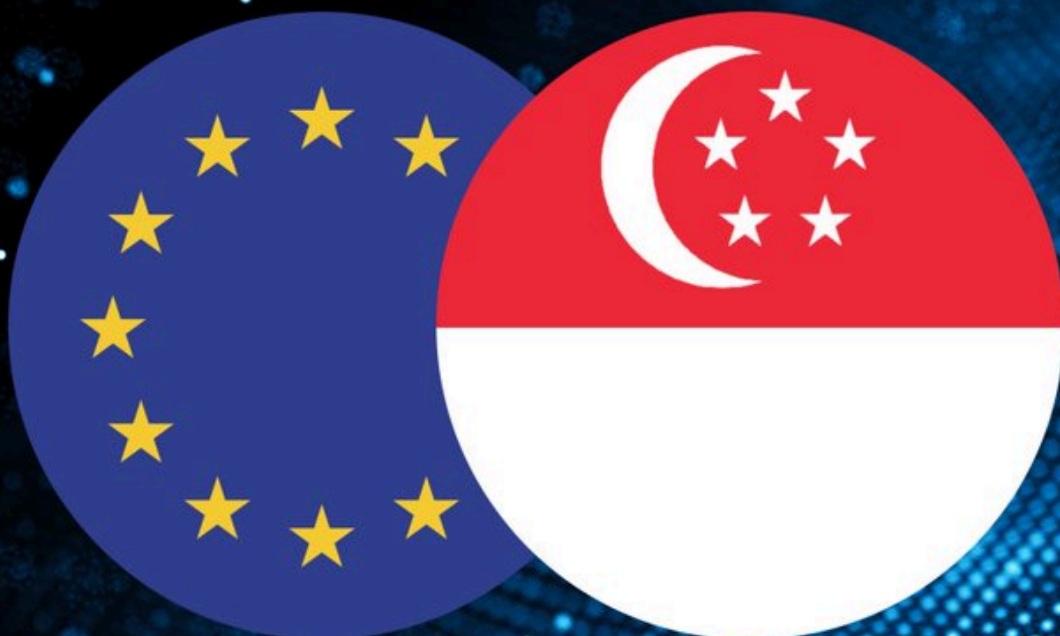


# DIGITAL GOVERNANCE IN PRACTICE: EU-SINGAPORE DTA

On the 25th July 2024 the EU and Singapore concluded negotiations for a Digital Trade Agreement (DTA) to complement the 2019 Free Trade Agreement, with each party now working towards confirmation and legal ratification. The DTA stands to:

- **Promote digital trade** in goods and services between the EU and Singapore, building upon the €43 billion trade of digital services between the two parties in 2022
- **Remove unjustified trade barriers** to facilitate cross-border data flows while respecting consumer rights
- **Set a global standard** for digital trade rules
- **Unlock new economic opportunities** through enhancing predictability, consumer trust and legal certainty

This DTA builds upon previous digital trade chapters to other EU trade agreements with the UK, Chile, and New Zealand, with the EU pursuing similar agreements and partnerships on cross-border data flows with Japan and ROK.





# A NEW LOOK EU IN 2025



## **Kaja Kallas**

Nominee for the EU's High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Nationality: Estonian

Kallas brings with her a reputation of being a strong foreign policy operator. Kallas, who was the first female prime minister of Estonia, has won significant praise for standing up to Putin but, also, her courage has also led many to fear that her appointment might raise tensions further between the EU and Russia. The nomination of an Eastern European for the High Representative role is also seen as the sign that the newer member states are taking being given a more fundamental role in the EU's foreign policy.



## **Antonio Costa**

Elected as the new President of European Council

Nationality: Portuguese

Antonio Costa, who was the prime minister of Portugal from 2015 to 2024, has a strong socialist bend to his politics. Although he has faced a notable scandal in the last year, the 'Operation Influencer' scandal, he is seen as a strong and capable politician. Costa is known for his negotiation skills and steeliness under pressure, especially as his nine years in power in Portugal were marred by numerous scandals within his government. Costa has also been outspoken on Russia's invasion of Ukraine and has expressed a desire for the EU to admit Ukraine as a member.

# THE EU IN THE INDO-PACIFIC IN 2025

The question of how the change in the High Representative and the European Council President will affect the EU's Indo-Pacific action is an intriguing one.

When the EU released its Indo-Pacific strategy in 2021, it was clear that the EU wanted to make the Indo-Pacific its number one foreign policy objective. This was affirmed by France's Council presidency in early 2022, which was slated to be about centering the Indo-Pacific in the EU's external outlook. However, this aim was undermined by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Since then, although the Indo-Pacific has remained a clear focus, the issue of Russia is undoubtedly a more pressing and sensitive topic for the EU.

With the appointment of Kallas as the High Representative, it is likely that dealing with Russia will remain the top priority for the EU's foreign policy in the foreseeable future. However, this does not mean that the Indo-Pacific will not receive significant attention. Kallas is likely to take an approach that views the security challenges of the Euro-Atlantic area as being inseparable with the security challenges of the Indo-Pacific area.

Indeed, at the NATO Summit in Washington in July 2024, Kallas stated that democratic partners across the globe cannot “forget the increasing cooperation between Russia and China. We need to stand together against it and together, we also need to take the message to Beijing that China's support for Russia's war against Ukraine has an impact on our relations.”

Costa has been less outspoken on the Indo-Pacific and the challenge of China, but, during his time as prime minister of Portugal, has shown a keen interest in India (given he is of Indian descent) and, in particular, the need for the EU to solidify ties with India as a way of strengthening its role in the Indo-Pacific.



# RECENT OUTPUTS FROM PROJECT MEMBERS

## Journal articles

Smith, Nicholas Ross and Lauren Bland. 2024. "The AUKUS debate in New Zealand misses the big picture". *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 78(5).

## Book chapters

Kelly, Serena. 2024. "Market access and fostering closer relations?: Understanding the European Union-New Zealand agreement" in J. Pérez and L. de Castro (eds.) *Acuerdos comerciales de nueva generación de la Unión Europea II* (Madrid: Aranzadi).

Smith, Nicholas Ross and Martin Holland. 2024. "The EU and New Zealand amidst the changing geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific" in Y. Joshi, I Nishida and D. Chaturvedi (eds), *The European Union as a Security Actor in the Indo-Pacific* (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan).

## Commentaries

Smith, Nicholas Ross. 2024. "The United States and its allies need to avoid caricaturing China in their foreign policies". *Global Policy*.

## FUTURE EVENTS



## Call for Papers

for the 17th Biennial AACaPS and ANZSA Conference:

**‘Changing Divisions in Europe and the Asia-Pacific:  
A New Cold War?’**

hosted by the National Centre for Research on Europe, Faculty of Arts at the University of Canterbury's Ilam campus, Christchurch, New Zealand

**30 - 31 January 2025**



**NCRE**  
NATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
RESEARCH ON EUROPE



**Funded by  
the European Union**