

EUROPE: THE OPPORTUNITY FOR GLOBAL INVESTORS

Tuesday 10 September 2024

Singapore

Banks, private banks, retail banks, insurance companies, family offices, sovereign funds and pension funds.

Since its launch in 2021, the EU-Bond issuance programme has provided the impetus for the transformation of Europe's economy and created a new opportunity for global investors.

OMFIF, in partnership with the European Commission, is hosting a special event in Singapore for investors to better understand how EU bonds are developing into a global benchmark and safe asset in the capital markets. This is an opportunity for investors in the region to hear directly from the officials responsible for the European Union budget and its funding and disbursement programme.

This event marks the second part of the European Commission's global investor outreach, following a meeting organised by OMFIF in May 2024 in Dubai which brought together the European Commission with leading investors in the Middle East.

This is now the second time the European Commission has visited Singapore for an OMFIF-hosted event. The meetings that took place in July 2022 had a substantial impact on the funding approach of the European Commission since then.

The conference will feature high-level EU representatives – led by Johannes Hahn, European commissioner for budget and administration – with senior representatives from central banks, sovereign funds, public pension funds, international financial institutions and influential business leaders in Asia and beyond.

Non-European investors are still under-represented in the EU's investor base. However, higher interest rates and geopolitical risks mean that non-European investors are increasingly looking at euro-denominated assets, in particular, green bonds and sovereign-style debt, to diversify their investments at attractive relative returns.

By the end of 2023, the EU had outstanding bonds of more than €450bn, with a liquid curve out to 2053. With annual borrowing of roughly €150bn, EU-Bonds have quickly established themselves as a high-quality, liquid global benchmark. The European Commission continues to enhance the liquidity of its bonds, with the introduction of quoting arrangements for primary dealers and European Central Bank-eligible collateral status, and advanced plans to launch a repo facility in 2024.

The EU has also quickly become the reference global issuer of green bonds. With €50bn worth of existing green bond issuances and with plans to increase this further, the EU has established a world-leading green bond programme, along with a commitment to provide full transparency on the allocation and impact of NextGenerationEU green bonds.

Why attend?

The event in Singapore is an opportunity for leading investors to hear directly from the officials responsible for the EU budget and its funding and disbursement programme.

As well as speeches and presentations from the Commission and from VIPs representing Asia, the programme will include panel discussions with some of each region's most influential investors and policy-makers, while also allowing plenty of time for networking and bilateral conversations.

While the sessions will be of particular interest to asset owners and managers who invest in highly-rated, liquid sovereign debt, the events will also give a deeper insight into the overall economic and financial environment for investment in Europe.

The audience for the event will be strictly limited and by invitation only.

Local time

08:30 – 09:00 Light breakfast and registration

09:00 – 09:10 Welcome remarks

European Commission

John Orchard, Chief Executive Officer, OMFIF

09:10 – 09:25 Opening address

The importance of investment ties between Europe and Asia

Senior official, Government of Singapore*

09:25 – 09:45 Keynote address

How EU-Bonds are assisting in the transformation of Europe

Johannes Hahn, European Commissioner for Budget and Administration

09:45 – 10:00 Presentation

The macroeconomic situation in Europe

Declan Costello, Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs, European Commission

10:00 – 11:00 Panel session I:

Global macro challenges and opportunities

Speakers:

Declan Costello, Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs, European Commission

Neeraj Seth, Head of Asia Pacific Fundamental Fixed Income, Blackrock

Jovy Ismail, Vice President, Total Portfolio Management, KWAP

Tommy Xie, Head of Greater China Research, OCBC Bank

Moderator: John Orchard, Chief Executive Officer, OMFIF

This session will examine the outlook for the global economy and macroeconomic factors influencing the asset allocation strategies of leading investors – especially regarding their fixed income portfolios.

11:00 – 11:20 Refreshment and networking break

11:20 – 11:50 Keynote in conversation

The evolution of the EU as an issuer

Stéphanie Riso, Director-General of Budget, European Commission

Interviewed by: John Orchard, Chief Executive Officer, OMFIF

11:50 – 12:50 Panel session II:

The market for EU bonds: Creating a liquid, safe asset

Speakers:

Siegfried Ruhl, Hors Classe Adviser, Directorate General of Budget, European Commission

Liew Tzu Mi, Chief Investment Officer, Fixed Income and Multi Asset, GIC

Frances Lee, Head of Rates and Credit, Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Ioannis Rallis, Head of SSAs, Debt Capital Markets, JP Morgan

Ben Adubi, Managing Director, Head of SSAs, Global Capital Markets, Morgan Stanley

Moderator: Clive Horwood, Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Managing Editor, OMFIF

This session will analyse the steps that the EU is taking to make EU-Bonds as attractive to leading global investors as possible, including the unified funding approach, quoting arrangements on electronic platforms and active participation in the repo market.

12:50 – 13:50 Lunch break

13:50 – 14:10 Presentation

NGEU green bonds and the first allocation and impact report
Stéphanie Riso, Director-General of Budget, European Commission

14:10 – 15:00 Panel session III:

Sustainable finance: Creating an impact and establishing a global benchmark

Speakers:

Siegfried Ruhl, Hors Classe Adviser, Directorate General of Budget, European Commission

Natalia Rajewska, Global Head of Sustainable Investment, Nikko Asset Management

Moderator: Clive Horwood, Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Managing Editor, OMFIF

The EU's approach to green bond issuance has created some of the most liquid instruments in this growing market, alongside establishing market-leading commitments to reporting standards and principles. Is this a game-changer for sustainable bond investors?

15:00 – 16:00 Panel session IV:

High-level closing discussion: Finance and investment in a time of turbulence

Speakers:

Johannes Hahn, European Commissioner for Budget and Administration

Robin Hu, Asia Chair, Milken Institute and Vice Chairman, Asia, Temasek (2016-2023)

Dora Seow, Chief Executive Officer, Natixis Investment Managers

Moderator: John Orchard, Chief Executive Officer, OMFIF

Where and how can Europe and Asia deepen their financial and economic engagement and promote the global economy? What are the opportunities in digitalisation, sustainability and investment?

16:00 – 16:05 Closing remarks

Clive Horwood, Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Managing Editor, OMFIF

16:05 – 17:30 End of conference drinks and networking reception

18:30 VIP dinner