

## FI-MEDIA Project's CII Support Strategy for Enhancing C2C Partnership:

### Participation in CII Global SME Summit 2016

#### Background and interactions with the Global SME Business Summit

**2016, 22-23 November 2016.** In June, 2016, Mr. Abhishek Sharma, MD Beyond Evolution Tech Solutions Pvt Ltd, FI-MEDIA partner and a full member of the [Confederation of Indian Industry \(CII\)](http://www.cii.in/)<sup>1</sup>, became aware



Confederation of Indian Industry

from management of CII about the dates and scope of their annual Global SME Business Summit 2016. With a sub-theme of *Global SME Partnerships for Sustained Growth and Equitable Development*, the event was being held on 22-23<sup>rd</sup> November 2016, in New Delhi. According to Mr. Sharma, “Since CII is a body of Industry Association whose primary objective is to help create suitable environment and conditions that can support the growth of business for its industry members, FI-MEDIA can associate itself with CII with the help of the CII membership of one of the FI-MEDIA partner. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization, works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering industry,



Government, and civil society, through advisory and consultative processes”. Furthermore, due to his role as a Partner in the EU-India FI-MEDIA project, which is funded by the Delegation of the European Union to India, Mr. Sharma was engaged to help in the organisation and recruitment efforts for a dedicated session on EU-India cooperation. Following this

approach, Mr. Sharma offered to assist in the recruitment of speakers/panellists for the Europe session of the event, including attendees from the EU and a large number of other delegates from the industry. The overall attendance at the event was 500+ and more details on the event can be found at <http://www.ciisme.in/>. A summary of the EU-related session organised with the assistance of the EU-India FI-MEDIA project is provided below.

**The panel session entitled Breakout Regional Session II: Scope for SME Partnerships with Europe**, had the following panellists:

- a. Mr. Thomas Hundt, Director, Germany Trade & Invest;
- b. Mr. Indranil Chaudhary, Co-Chair, Sub Group on Ease of Doing Business, CII National MSME Council;

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.cii.in/>

- c. Dr. Francesco Pensabene, Trade Commissioner, Embassy of Italy;
- d. Marika Jakas, Head, Trade & Commerce, Delegation of the European Union to India, New Delhi, India;
- e. James Clarke, Waterford Institute of Technology, EU-India FI-MEDIA coordinator, Ireland;
- f. Mr. Bernardo Theotonio Pereira, Portuguese Business Agency.



Figure 1 - From Left to right: Thomas Hundt (Germany), Indranil Chaudhary (Session Chair - India), Francesco Pensabene (Italy), Marika Jakas (Delegation of EU to India), James Clarke (Ireland), Bernardo Theotonio Perei (Portugal)

The presentations and discussions in the panel session revolved around the following:

- **Scope of strengthening SME Partnership between India and Europe - Ms. Marika Jakas:** Ms. Jakas shared the status of EU related SME initiatives and their contribution in European Trade & Economy, where the fact that about 99% of the total number of Industries in Europe are SMEs was emphasised. Hence, there is a wide scope of partnership in every possible field of interest for Indian and EU SMEs. A number of initiatives were outlined, including the Investment plan for Europe, where 200.000 SMEs and start-ups got loans, to improve the framework of SMEs to operate and to encourage SMEs from EU Member States to internationalise. The Small business

act was outlined, with the objective to create a common framework for SME initiatives and implement the "Think Small First" principle. It includes a package of concrete measures; both legislative and non-legislative. The "Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs" (COSME) programme, which supports internationalisation of European SMEs, was outlined by Ms. Jakas. This is important as studies indicate that 90% of growth in the coming years is expected to be outside of the EU, while at the same time, only 13% of EU SMEs are exporting beyond EU's borders. Some of the areas helped by the programme include analysing new potential markets and finding new partners, which is quite difficult for SMEs to carry out on their own. The Enterprise Europe network was outlined, which is present in 60 countries including the EU, with 4,500 experts in internationalisation both in the EU and outside. The Gateway initiative, financed by the EU, is another example to help EU companies to establish long-lasting business collaborations in Asia (S. Korea, South East Asia and China). This programme offers SMEs the possibility to participate in a one week business mission to the targeted countries. IPR helpdesks and EU Business Centres have been set up in some countries to assist companies. In addition, SME provisions will be included in the EU's future Free Trade Agreements. The EU-India summit, held in Belgium in May, 2016, served to strengthen the EU – India dialogue in key areas with potentially great impact, such as: Climate Change and Environment, Research and innovation, ICT, Transport and Space. A number of areas in which there is already cooperation partnerships happening were highlighted, including: Water, Clean Energy and Climate change, Energy efficiency, urbanisation partnerships, and ICT, which includes two projects funded by the Delegation of the European Union to India<sup>2</sup>. The two ICT projects are EU-INDIA **FI-MEDIA**<sup>3</sup> (EU-India clustering related to Future Internet), and **REACH**<sup>4</sup> (EU-India clustering related to TV whitespaces). The Start-Up Europe initiative was outlined by Ms. Jakas, which hosted an event in October, 2016, supported by EU Member States with the involvement of over 300 delegates. Ms. Jakas concluded by announcing a recent launch of an EU-funded project supporting EU-India cooperation on ICT related standardization, policy and legislation (launched 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2016). The broad objective of this project is to promote close EU-India alignment regarding future ICT standards. This will also focus on standardizing the exchange of statistical data. This cooperation can facilitate trade, increase interoperability and ease of doing business, and strengthen European and Indian ICT standardization efforts at a global level.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india_en)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.bic-fimedia.eu/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.eu-india.net/>

- **Doing Business in Europe-An overview of industry Trends and Outlook with Focus on Germany- Mr. Thomas Hundt:** Mr. Hundt’s talk highlighted the technology as key driver for business partnership with a special punch calling it “Industry 4.0” with emphasis on Internet of Things(IoT) as the most potential area for working together between EU and Indian industry groups and SMEs;
- **Potential for SME Trade and Investment Partnerships between India and Italy- DR. Francesco Pensabene:** Dr. Pensabene shared in detail the present technological and economic environment in Italy, focusing on Italian Industrial Clusters, comprised of nearly 200 clusters of local systems with a manufacturing concentration, in which there was a large concentration of SMEs. Relating to the strong history of many India – Italy business partnership, Dr. Pensabene also suggested a healthy prospect of India- Italy business partnerships in area related to Information Communications Technologies (ICT);
- **Emerging SME Partnership Opportunities with Portugal- Mr. Bernardo Theotonio Pereira:** Mr. Pereira talked a lot about the emerging business opportunities for EU and India. Quoting history in Portuguese association with India and admiring India’s huge contribution and strengths in the field of Information Technology, Mr. Pereira shared that a lot of business entities with lots of available funds are quite keen to invest in India;
- **Joining Forces-Leveraging SME Partnerships for Mutual Economic Growth and Development- Mr James Clarke:** Mr. Clarke presented an overview of the [EU-INDIA FI-MEDIA project](#)<sup>5</sup>, which is funded by the Delegation of the European Union to India, and shared its objectives of facilitating the Cluster to Cluster (C2C) partnership between Indian and EU clusters. Mr. Clarke elaborated upon the huge potential of such C2C partnerships for SMEs participating in CII working in areas related to Future Internet, Internet of Things (IoT), Smart cities and Electronic Media and shared the supporting role that the project can play. Mr. Clarke invited the attending delegates to sign up for an Expression of Interest (Eoi), which would be helpful in motivating the EU industry for appropriate C2C partnerships in the suitable topics of the ICT domain. As a consequence of the talks by the panellists of the session and, in particular, the projection of FI-MEDIA objectives and initiative to facilitate C2C by Mr. Clarke, a large number of delegates came forward to sign up the Expression of Interest (Eois). A total of 21 companies signed up the Eoi during the session. Mr. Clarke explained the FI-MEDIA project’s overall support strategy towards working with platforms like CII, which emanates from the core objective of the FI-MEDIA project, which is to

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<sup>5</sup><http://www.bic-fimedia.eu/>

facilitate Cluster to Cluster(C2C) partnerships between EU & Indian Clusters. As explained by Mr. Clarke, a Cluster is defined as “a group of one or more research institutes getting into partnership with one or more industry elements, preferably SMEs, working on a commonly identified topic of innovative technology within ICT domain (particularly in the Future Internet and Electronic Media space) which can be taken to the society/ market commercially”. Since the end objective of the C2C partnership is to promote business activities between EU and India which are evolved through the platform of innovative researches on a range of topics within Future Internet (IoT) and Electronic Media domain, the best way to achieve these objective is that the FI-MEDIA focuses on organizing or participating in such events that are of a hybrid nature, where both the research orientation as well as industry orientation are equally represented. This effort, however, would require a mechanism and platform where the range of topics within the given space of FI-MEDIA are showcased and the research institute and the industry elements are able to view, study and analyze the offered range of topics and appreciate the nature and usability of the same and finally identify partners who would agree to come together and work on the topics to meet above stated objectives of cluster formation and C2C partnership. Therefore, the partners of the project have developed an ongoing outreach strategy to seek regular help and support of large scale platforms like CII with its vast reach to the Indian industry element. Clarke stated, “Through CII organized events such as this one, this will indeed achieve visibility of the FI-MEDIA Project before the large gathering of Industry elements -both SMEs and corporate- and enable it to explain its objectives and carry out recruitment to its activities. Then it will be possible to motivate them to join the cluster to cluster partnerships with a suitable EU cluster through the FI-MEDIA C2C programme”. In going forward, Mr. Clarke explained that *“FI-MEDIA will align itself with a CII-like industry body of Europe (almost like a cluster of clusters) and seek its support to participate in a similar event in Europe. At such event or events, FI-MEDIA will be forcefully presented and its objective projected along with clarity on topics within the scope of FI-MEDIA for which C2C is expected. “We believe that this effort, duly supported by the Eols obtained in India, would certainly motivate the participating companies to come forward for the partnership. Even if a small percentage of companies come forward for C2C partnership, it would be a good success”,* concluded Mr. Clarke.

**Notes by Abhishek Sharma and James Clarke, EU-India FI-MEDIA project, November, 2016**