



Trade Digest

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OECD supports Thailand with its renowned Country Program

The Department of International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), recently organized a conference on “Maximizing the Benefits of Investment in Thailand”. Held on 17-18 September 2018 at Anantara Riverside Bangkok Resort, Bangkok, the conference also included an update meeting on the plan and framework of the OECD-Thailand Country Program, a cooperation between Thailand and the OECD aimed at improving the well-being of Thai citizens.

In pursuing its Country Program initiative, the OECD works with its partner countries on capacity building and driving domestic reforms. Signed into agreement on 31 May 2018 during the 2018 OECD Ministerial Council Paris, the Country Program for Thailand covers a three-year period from 2018-2020. This program aims to upgrade the country’s governance and competitiveness to meet international standards.

Thailand’s Country Program comprises 16 projects drawing from Thailand’s four key strategic pillars: good governance and transparency, business climate and competitiveness, “Thailand 4.0” and inclusive growth. Ten government agencies are involved, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) jointly serving as coordinators. The activities planned under the projects include a review of Thailand’s policy by international experts; the participation of Thai agencies and officials in OECD projects as members or observers to share experiences and practices; the provision of training for agencies in Thailand; OECD certification of the legal instrument to upgrade Thailand’s law standard to an international level; and the development of Thai government personnel by sending them to work temporarily at the OECD Secretariat.

It is expected that this program will support Thailand in overcoming the middle-income trap, promoting social and structural reform, enabling participation in the world’s trade and investment policy design, and strengthening the country’s economic credibility.

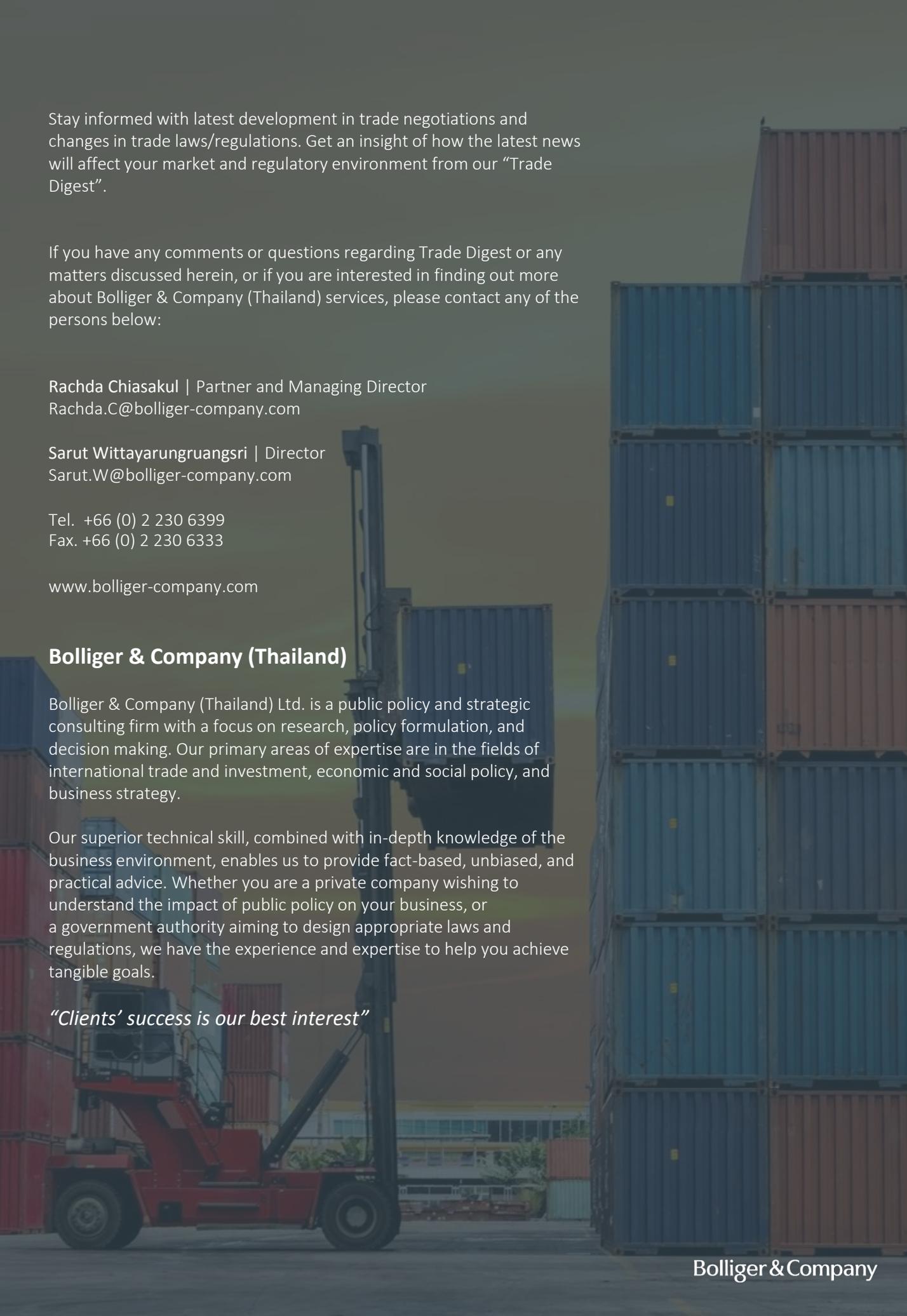
Digital Identity Platform gets closer to take-off

Anticipated since 2017, the Digital Identity Platform is edging closer to becoming a reality. Intended to provide a flexible and highly secure method of self-identification for Thai citizens, the platform keeps records of identification authentication and utilizes reliable form of identity the user is currently holding. Reliable identity includes, for example, citizen ID cards, bank accounts, passport, tax ID, and biometric data.

The Digital Identity Platform is expected to support a wide range of authentication methods and reduce the need to submit paper copies of ID when contacting government agencies for services. The system will also help to prevent identity document forgery. It will enable the government to collect identification authentication information and allow government agencies and the courts to use this information for prosecution in cases of an offence or of posing a threat to the government’s system.

The creation of the Digital Identity Platform has gathered pace following the approval in principle given by the cabinet to the draft Digital Identification Bill on 11 September 2018. The role of the Digital ID bill in supporting the platform is to specify the criteria, means, and conditions for its use businesses, and for data protection by consumers. The bill, therefore, stands as an underlying basis for the official formulation of the Digital Identity Platform in practice.

The setting up of the Digital Identity Platform is considered an essential step in the transition into a digital economy. At the same time, the design of the Digital ID bill is crucial in term of addressing concerns regarding privacy violation and cybersecurity risk as the platform will involve wide coverage of identification authentication. As a consequence, the principle of taking care of people’s digital identification on the established platform should be focused on the personal data protection measure.



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