



What is The Evian Group?

The Evian Group, founded at a meeting in April 1995 in Evian-les-Bains, France, is a coalition of industry, government and opinion leaders, primarily, but not exclusively, from Asia and Europe, strongly committed to fostering an open, integrated and equitable global market economy in a robust multilateral institutional framework.

Registered as a not-for-profit association in Lausanne, Switzerland, The Evian Group (www.eviangroup.org) undertakes four key inter-related activities: it acts as a forum for dialogue, a think tank, an umbrella for advocacy, and a centre of education through its association with IMD (one of the world's leading business schools), where The Evian Group is based and its director is Professor of International Political Economy. This portfolio enables the Evian Group to tackle key issues in the current global economic policy environment, assess future challenges, threats and opportunities and engage policy-makers.

The Evian Group has been described by Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Director General of the WTO, as "a birthplace of ideas", and by Farooq Sobhan, President of the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute & Former Foreign Secretary, as a "bridge between North and South". The Evian Group is committed to continuing to provide a unique platform for ideas and to further developing its existing advocacy tools by strengthening and expanding its already extensive network.

In this century, a robust framework is all the more vital in light of the very welcome, but inevitably turbulent, end of the Cold War era and emergence of new economic powers in the global arena, notably China and India. The Evian Group believes an open global market economy based on a solid institutional framework is the only means of generating sustainable long-term growth. However, efforts at the international policy level can only be effective if good governance, and sound economic, social and environmentally sustainable policies are secured at national and regional levels. The Evian Group believes the business community plays a pivotal role and that it must be responsive to current and future needs of global society in order to create real, long-term wealth.

Robust and growth-inducing global trade and governance are all the more urgent in view of the great demographic challenges that lie ahead: as the populations in the North age and stagnate, those in many parts of the developing world are young and booming. But these young people need jobs. In the course of the next two decades a billion jobs need to be created. Success could mean harnessing this vitality to fuel the global economy in this century; failure could be a source of possible global explosion. As Ernesto Zedillo, former president of Mexico, has stated: "The pacific consequences of trade should never be overlooked, least of all in this era of new threats to security".

Members of The Evian Group seek to play a dynamic role in shaping tomorrow's world. Membership in The Evian Group entails being part of a dynamic and creative community whose vision is to contribute to fostering a global trade and investment environment that will promote prosperity and a constructive dialogue between key global stakeholders across continents, cultures, constituencies and communities.

Members of The Evian Group benefit from: information tools, including a quarterly Webletter, policy briefs and recommendations; an extensive international network of persons actively committed to fostering an open global, integrated and equitable market, based on a sense of global community; a forum for dialogue on issues and challenges of global governance between government, industry and opinion leaders from both North and South; and participation in collective vision and leadership in influencing the global policy process and the construction of a solid, prosperous, dynamic and culturally enriching global environment.