
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2022JERI0023-000784
May 19, 2022

Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

Trade mission will showcase B.C.'s strong reputation

VICTORIA – As the next step in the StrongerBC Economic Plan and as part of bringing good-paying jobs for people and families back to British Columbia, Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation, will embark on a 10-day trade mission to Europe.

Starting May 22, the mission will see the minister meet with key public- and private-sector partners in five European countries, building on B.C.'s reputation as a leader in ESG (environmental, social, governance) standards.

“As we begin to take the next steps to emerge from the challenges of the past two years, we are entering into a new world with a fast-changing global economy,” said Kahlon. “That’s why I’m building off my recent U.S. trip and taking our StrongerBC Economic Plan to Europe to meet with emerging companies and industry leaders who are attracted to B.C.’s position as a climate leader with strong ESG credentials. This trip will help create good-paying jobs for people and families here in B.C. and put our province in a leading position to attract worldwide investment.”

The minister will meet with partners, investors and members of government in the Netherlands, England, Ireland, Germany and Finland. Topics will include mutual areas of interest, such as agri-tech, mass timber, life sciences and biomanufacturing, the emerging hydrogen sector, clean-energy solutions and new technologies to improve supply chains.

Announced in the StrongerBC Economic Plan, the new ESG Centre of Excellence will provide support to B.C. businesses to develop, promote and market their goods and services under a globally respected provincial ESG brand. The centre will help businesses increase their capacity to meet international ESG standards and reporting requirements, and to be competitive and increase business opportunities.

“It is crucial that organizations intentionally build ESG into holistic business strategies and reporting, and the ESG Centre of Excellence will help promote ESG principles within B.C.,” said Lori Mathison, president and CEO, Chartered Professional Accountants British Columbia. “As businesses strive to meet these ESG standards, our economy will be even more sustainable and resilient, and the ESG Centre of Excellence will help create a cohesive provincial strategy for international markets.”

Along with this European trip, the ministry will begin an extensive outreach program to meet with businesses, industry groups, Indigenous leaders, academics, financial institutions, non-profit organizations, regulators and others to hear how the centre can help maximize competitiveness and increase investments, commercial activity and jobs for B.C. businesses.

Interest in ESG-conscious investment is booming internationally as concerns about the climate

crisis, cyber security, corruption and systemic discrimination continue to grow. Beyond shareholder returns and revenues, markets look for investments that align with long-term global goals, such as the Paris Agreement, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and social, environmental and governance fundamentals.

The StrongerBC Economic Plan moves British Columbia forward by tackling the challenges of today while growing an economy that works for everyone. The long-term plan builds off B.C.'s strong economic recovery and works to address two long-standing challenges – inequality and climate change – by closing the skills gap, building resilient communities, and helping businesses and people transition to clean-energy solutions. The plan sets two main goals for the province – inclusive growth and clean growth – and puts forward six missions to keep B.C. on track.

Learn More:

Learn more about the StrongerBC Economic Plan: <https://strongerbc.gov.bc.ca/plan>

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