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Dear our Asian and European fellows,

As the weather has been changing in both regions where the rain and fall season start as well as the temperature becomes lower and colder, AES Jakarta is still keeping up the effort to support ASEM Education Process until the end of 2016 and in the coming 2017.

AES is pleased to inform and looking forward for the First Senior Officials' Meeting which will be held in Seoul, Republic of Korea on 8 to 10 November 2016. AES is working closely with the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea in preparing SOM1 for ASEMME6. ASEM members will gather to hear the progress of activities and cooperation in each ASEM member, to discuss the agenda and fresh plans of upcoming ASEMME6 in 2017 as well.

The Secretariat extends its appreciation to all ASEM members and stakeholders for their excellent support and contribution on activities and initiatives within the ASEM education cooperation. May we have happiness, health, great success, and strength to conclude the year 2016.

Dear readers,

Kindly find news and reports on ASEM education initiatives as well as activities between August and October 2016 when several ASEM Education events were held by ASEM members and stakeholders such as seminars and working groups.

AES has invited ASEM members and stakeholders to share their reports and news to enrich our Newsletter and Gazette.

May you all enjoy in exploring the Newsletter and happy reading!

Sampai Jumpa Lagi!

ASEM Education Secretariat

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND RECOGNITION

“2016 MQA & IQA INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON QUALITY ASSURANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION (2016 MISQAHE) PROMOTING FLEXIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION”

Contributor: [Malaysian Qualifications Agency](#)

In response to the rapid changes in technology which have affected the higher education tremendously, the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) and the Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World (IQA) jointly hosted “the 2016 MQA & IQA International Seminar on Quality Assurance of Higher Education (2016 MISQAHE)” on 17 - 18 October 2016 at Sunway Resort Hotel and Spa, Petaling Jaya.

Officiated by the Honorable Minister of Higher Education of Malaysia, the Seminar themed ‘The Millennials Education: Quality Assurance in the Age of Flexible Education’ has provide a platform for intellectual sharing on information and experiences pertaining to flexible education and its relation to quality assurance, qualifications framework and mobility of students. It was also aimed at strengthening collaboration among participating countries, which includes the Asia-Pacific, Europe, and Middle-East countries. The 2016 MISQAHE was attended by a total of 323 participants from local and international counterpart in higher education, ranging from quality assurance bodies, higher education institutions, policy makers, ministries, quality assurance networks, and other related stakeholders.

Flexible education is an imperative strategy to expand, extend and transform higher education to meet the demand for lifelong access, enhancement and mobility. Flexible learning technologies provide the platform in widening the access and enhancing learning through exciting new



pedagogies to the millennials.



©Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA)

Throughout the two-fruitful days, speakers, presenters, and participants deliberated and also shared best practices, experiences as well as impacts of flexibility in higher education, especially from the quality perspectives. Quality assurance bodies through their national qualifications frameworks, standards, guidelines, networking, and vigilance must assist in maintaining an atmosphere of trust and confidence among all stakeholders. Flexible education will be at ease with proper quality assurance and not erode learning.

For more information, please visit
<http://www.mqa.gov.my/misqahe/>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “PRACTICE OF RECOGNITION BRIDGING CONTINENTS”

Continuing the successful annual conference series, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation and the Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Education and Science (Rosobrnadzor) organized the 5th International Conference “Practice of Recognition Bridging Continents” on 14-15 October 2016 in People’s Friendship University of Russia, Moscow, Russian Federation.

Attended by members of ENIC-NARIC network, international experts from ASEM countries,



representatives of foreign educational organizations and Russian leading universities the conference discussed on current challenges and advancements related to recognition issues across the world. The three main key questions raised on the conference are:

- How to attract more foreign students?
- How to overcome bureaucratic obstacles and simplify the recognition procedures?
- How to accelerate the digitalization of the documents circulation?

Experts of education quality monitoring are from Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Latvia. Lithuania, the Netherlands, Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina also took part in this annual event.

The two-day conference was divided into substantive sessions and workshops which provided participants the opportunity to focus on specific areas from their own perspectives and national experiences.

For more information, please visit
<http://nic.gov.ru/en/intet-2016>

BALANCED MOBILITY

THE 2nd ASIA-EUROPE INSTITUTE (AEI)-ASEM SUMMER SCHOOL

Contributor: [AEI, University of Malaya](#)

Since the ASEM Ministers of Education have agreed on the Proposal of the Ministry of Education Malaysia during the 4th ASEMME in 2013 to organise “AEI-ASEM Summer School”, the pilot programme was held in 2015.

In collaboration with the Asia-Europe Institute (AEI), the two-week program discusses socio-cultural and socio-economic issues amongst students, academicians, researchers, activists, and company executives from Asia, Europe, and other parts of the world. Participants were involved in educationally oriented field trips, alongside relevant lectures to complement the outdoor

experiences.

In collaboration with the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education, the AEI, which is based in the University of Malaya, was delighted to organise the 2nd AEI-ASEM Summer School which was successfully conducted from 7th until 21st August 2016 in the context of balanced mobility.

The 2nd AEI-ASEM Summer School 2016 was officially launched by Professor Dr. Azirah Hashim, the Executive Director of AEI, on 8th August 2016. 21 participants from 9 countries made up of 1 each from Korea, Germany, Nigeria and Palestine; 6 from Thailand, 4 from Czech Republic, 3 from Japan, 2 from Indonesia and Malaysia spent two weeks at this summer school that aimed to examine “Multiculturalism and Multiethnicity in Asia and Europe”.

The participants were provided with accommodation, local transportation, and meals, save for international airfare. The committee prepared modules on the outlook of Malaysia including its role as an Islamic hub in Asia; business sector; relationship between the two continents; migration issues, and youth involvement. The Summer School provided opportunities and experiences for students to explore various cultures, races and religions, ethnic backgrounds as well as examining political, economic and socio-cultural issues through a programme of lectures, field visits, and highly interactive activities.

These included tours and talks by Putrajaya Corporation, *Halal* Industry Development Corporation, and a visit to the Putrajaya, the administrative capital of Malaysia, to experience the country’s federal administrative culture and atmosphere, Melaka as the birthplace of the Malay Sultanate, with a rich history of Asian and European influences, BoDen Edu Farm, local culture experience at Home Stay Kampung Lonek, Kuala Pilah, Teratak Za’ba, etc.

AEI-ASEM Summer School participants were also invited by Higher Education Minister YB Dato’ Seri Idris Jusoh for lunch and a dialogue at the Ministry of Higher Education of Malaysia. YB Minister of

Higher Education talked about the Malaysian Higher Education Blueprint, discussed higher education issues with the participants and encouraged everyone to be a multilingual, a skill that is vital in a globalized world. The dialogue turned out to be fruitful and enjoyable for the participants.

Throughout the two-week summer school, participants indicated that they really enjoyed this programme and gained lots of new experiences and perspectives about several aspects of multiculturalism and multiethnicity.

AEI has consistently shown its commitment to increase foreign student flow, spurring balanced mobility, and it welcomes further ASEM collaboration for future ASEM Summer Schools and other initiatives.

Parties who made the event a success included the ASEM Education Secretariat, Jakarta that endorsed the 2nd AEI-ASEM Summer School 2016, Malaysian agencies, professors and presenters. AEI extends its gratitude and appreciation for their contribution.



© Asia-Europe Institute (AEI), University of Malaya

Impressions from the participants:

“I am really enjoying everything in this summer school programme, especially about the culture sharing with other participants on the different background and culture experiences. We learn a lot from each other and we respect our differences in culture. I am also really enjoy having a good relationship with every participants. AEI-ASEM Summer School is one of the best experience in my life.”

-Kevin Abimanyu Jatmiko, Indonesia-

“Malay people are really friendly and peaceful. Malaysia have lots of nationality like Malay, Chinese and India and they respect each other even though they have different religions. It is very different from Middle East and other countries. In Malaysia, they can live harmoniously next each other without any conflicts.”

-Veronika Mazankova, Czech Republic-

THE 20th ASEM SUMMER UNIVERSITY

Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process and exploring the concept of "Connectivity" between Asia and Europe, the 20th ASEM Summer University (ASEFSU20) tries to determine the role of transportation and trade in connecting Asia and Europe in the past, present, and future.

ASEFSU20 was conducted in 15th August until 3rd September 2016 across the emerging economic corridors, namely China, the Russian Federation, and Mongolia.

“Gateways to Asia and Europe: Connectivity by Land, Sea and Air” was the theme of ASEFSU20, which aims at participation from young professionals and students. It leverages on the accelerating social and economic linkages between the two dynamic continents.

The programme focused on the subthemes which are Human Connectivity, Trade and Economic Cooperation as well as Transport. Participants met with and learnt from local communities, government officials, corporations, civil society, academia such as from Harbin Institute of Technology, Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service, Irkutsk State University, and Transbaikal State University.

Further, participants took upon real-scenario challenges on road, rail, maritime, and air transportation. The programme offered a top-tier environment for professional and personal development.



© ASEF

For detailed information and results, please visit ASEF website: <http://bit.ly/1Xa6Q1C>

LLL INCLUDING TVET

ASEM FORUM ON LIFELONG LEARNING 2016: 21st CENTURY SKILLS

The ASEM LLL Hub held the biennial ASEM Forum on Lifelong Learning from 3-5 October 2016. More than 120 participants from more than 30 countries discussed lifelong learning and the future

competencies at Danish School of Education, Aarhus University with the title "21st Century Skills". Here it was established that education systems worldwide must learn students to learn throughout life.

The ASEM Forum on Lifelong Learning gave a fresh contribution to the discussion about how to define 21st century competencies. On the basis of this Forum, the ASEM LLL Hub Secretariat has made the following recommendations: 21st century competencies should enable us to master interdisciplinary approaches for creative problem solving in specific contexts.

Success thus requires respect for learning cultures. Across the ASEM countries and across different learning cultures, there appears to be an established consensus on the need for investment in ICT pedagogy, on what is adult educators core competencies, and on a concerted effort to identify which competencies future lifelong learner must be able to acquire by using digital technologies.

This contributed to the following research-informed recommendations in three main areas:

1. Recommendations for how to implement new strategies for the realization of 21st century competencies in Europe and Asia.
2. Recommendations for whether new digital "drivers" are creating major shifts for all students in the educational landscape in the 21st century.
3. Recommendations for what the differences in learning cultures in Asia and Europe mean for the formulation and implementation of 21st century competencies in relation to adult educators.

ASEM countries are challenged in making its citizens capable of living in a society characterized by constant change. This brings along an imperative that briefly is articulated by the phrase 'you must learn to change your life'. That is to say that you not only have to learn to change yourself throughout your life, but also that learning is about life and for life.

The reasons for this ever-formulated demand for change by developing competencies are different - from technological changes to global and local crises of both climate and economic nature to multicultural communities arising through migration, etc. The consequences are that the individuals, institutions and states across the world are changing and improving their educational efforts to better match the future society.

In short, education is now a question about preparing people to meet future challenges; it is not only a question about performing known and well-defined functions. But how is this done in the best way? How to formulate strategies for the competencies that are needed in the future? How to deal with technological development? And how do strategies in the best way possible take account of the difference of learning cultures when 21st century competencies are being formulated?



© ASEM LLL Hub

The recommendations can also be found on the Forum's website where you can also find all the presentations, photos, videos, and summaries: <http://asemlllhub.org/events/forum2016/>

3rd WORKING GROUP ON ASEM INNOVATIVE COMPETENCES AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

Organized by the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research of Romania and Korean Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (KRIVET), the 3rd Working Group on ASEM Innovative Competences and Entrepreneurship Education has been conducted on 26-28 October 2016 at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies in Bucharest, Romania.

Attended by representatives from committed ASEM countries of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Latvia and Romania, the meeting discussed a several issues concerning entrepreneurship education in both regions as well as reviewed the survey result of international survey “Innovative Competences and Entrepreneurship Education” which was conducted by committed countries since September 2016.

The survey is aims to obtain the opinions from policymakers, students, teachers, and employers on introducing entrepreneurship education and innovative competences in the education processes. Moreover, the result of survey will analyze the traits each ASEM nation has with regards to policies and general concepts on entrepreneurship education for innovative competences which will contribute in fostering innovative competences for young students in this fact-changing world of work. The final results including analysis of the survey will be reported in the 6th ASEM Education Ministers’ Meeting (ASEMME6) in Seoul, Korea, 2017.

During the meeting, participants invited to visit two Romanian Schools which implementing an innovative competences and entrepreneurship education namely *Ion Ghica* High School and *Nicolae Kretzulescu* High School.

REGIONAL EVENTS

SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS DEVELOP AN INTEGRATED EDUCATION SYSTEM

To achieve a unified ASEAN identity, each government of the ASEAN member states are striving to develop an integrated education system for the youth. ASEAN Secretariat, in cooperation with the Mission of the People’s Republic of China to ASEAN and the United Nations Development Programme, hosted a Symposium on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development “Leave No One Behind” on 19th September 2016 in Jakarta.

Education plays an important role in establishing the ASEAN Community integration process through people-to-people form of integration and connectivity. For that reason, education should be enhanced by realizing youth engagement, student mobility across member nations as well as encouraging tolerance across the region. The objective is not just increasing the number of children in school but improving the quality of education and extending schooling to tertiary levels to ensure a skilled youth force for the future.

On the other side, China will synergise its development strategies, further enhance the strategic partnership, and work closely together with ASEAN on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda towards the common prosperity and development of South East Asia.

The symposium recommended priority actions for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and ASEAN Vision 2025 in the areas of education, poverty eradication, environmental sustainability, investment, partnerships, health as well as gender and vulnerable groups.

The ASEAN Secretariat hoped the ASEAN Vision 2025 will be matched with the UN Agenda 2030 particularly UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



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Read more at the ASEAN Secretariat website:
<http://bit.ly/2edguTQ>

CELEBRATE THE EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES 2016

The European Day of Languages is celebrated every year on 26 September. It is a day to encourage language learning for young and old. The 2016 European Language Day is also an opportunity to highlight the huge value of Europe's cultural diversity. European nations are always at their strongest and most prosperous when they are open and outward-facing, willing to embrace other ways of life, and when they welcome those who can contribute to the societies.



Throughout Europe, 800 million Europeans represented in the Council of Europe's 47 member states are encouraged to learn more languages, at any age, in and out of school. Being convinced that linguistic diversity is a tool for achieving greater intercultural understanding and a key element in

the rich cultural heritage of the continent. The Council of Europe promotes *plurilingualism* in the whole of Europe.

By pausing to celebrate the dozens of languages spoken across communities, it may send a powerful message that Europe is a place where all backgrounds are welcome and individuals of every heritage can feel at home. Hundreds of events such as exhibitions, conferences, and concerts have been organized by schools, universities and cultural establishments to mark the day in Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

Read more at European Commission website:
<http://bit.ly/2cy9zpa>

ASIA-EUROPE FOUNDATION

ASEF'S INVOLVEMENT IN ASEM11

Taking place in the year marking the 20th anniversary of the ASEM Process, ASEM11 was attended by the Heads of State and Government or their high-level government representatives from 51 Asian and European countries, as well as the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary-General of ASEAN.

Together with its partners, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) organised side events prior to the 11th ASEM Summit (ASEM11) held on 15-16 July 2016 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. The events are:

- The 7th Model ASEM;
- The 8th ASEF Editors' Roundtable;
- The ASEF Photo Exhibition "On the Go"; and
- The launch of the ASEF Outlook Report 2016/2017 "CONNECTIVITY: Facts and Perspectives".

Earlier during the ASEM Senior Official's Meeting, ASEF distributed a special publication in

conjunction to the 20th Anniversary of ASEM titled “20 Years of Asia-Europe Relations”.

During the summit, the Chairperson highly praised how ASEF built linkage between Asia and Europe especially between their governments, civil societies, and people complement the government-led ASEM Process with its programmes, projects, and activities as well as to support and contribute to the Summit.

Moreover, the role of ASEF in enhancing the visibility of ASEM and aligning its activities with the ASEM priorities need to be strengthened, according to ASEM Leaders who also will support ASEF in the days to come.

As a result, for the first time since 1997, the Summit recognised the contributions of ASEF in constructing opportunities for broader people-to-people connections into the Ulaanbaatar Declaration. A list of selected ASEF projects and activities has been included as an annex to the Chair’s Statement.

AES takes this opportunity to congratulate ASEF for its effort and contribution for the greater ASEM as well as its continuing support to AES.



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PUBLICATIONS

OUTLOOK REPORT 2016/2017

Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) launches an Outlook Report during the ASEM Summit. The first report was launched in 2012. The biannual report focuses on Asia-Europe relations and their implications on the ASEM process through quantitative and qualitative analyses. It is expected to strengthen ties between the ASEM process and the work of ASEF by developing recommendations for the future direction of ASEM.

This year, the 3rd report was launched on 7 July during the 11th ASEM Summit in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

“The ASEF Outlook Report 2016/2017—CONNECTIVITY: Facts and Perspectives” provides valuable insights into the compelling topic of connectivity.

The report assesses the level of Asia-Europe connectivity and acts as a useful reference for stakeholders active in both regions. Furthermore, it recommends on how different sectors can contribute to making Asia-Europe connectivity stronger and sustainable.

The Report tells us the past, present, and future developments of Asia-Europe connectivity which discuss over the digital connectivity, the economics of connectivity, and connectivity in the media, culture, education as well as governance. It comprises of two volumes namely Volume I: Data on Connectivity, which presents data illustrating the level of connectivity between Asia and Europe and Volume II: Connecting Asia and Europe.

On the education sector, the Report so called “Connectivity through Education” is divided into two sub themes: “Academic Mobility for Enhancing Asia-Europe Connectivity: Why and How?” and “Towards an Open Education Area between Asia and Europe.” The first sub-theme discusses the following topics:

- (a) Academic mobility and Asia-Europe connectivity;
- (b) Education policy making: a value-laden process;
- (c) Changing rationales of Asia-Europe academic mobility;
- (d) ASEM education process and academic mobility; and
- (e) Academic mobility and brain circulation.

The Report suggests that the ASEM higher education process should prioritise collaboration and innovation for intellectual advancement and equity, rather than paving the way for gaining bigger market shares of international students. Further, the challenge is how policies can be turned into actions. It is also recommended the establishment of special ASEM expert working group on mobility with experience and expertise from both Asia and Europe that could critically reviews the current initiatives in all ASEMME chair's conclusions, utilise research on mobility, and propose priorities to concentrate resources on a few viable projects in a coordinated manner.

The Second sub theme is Towards an Open Education Area between Asia and Europe. It features:

- (a) Open education;
- (b) Barriers and interventions to open education and collaboration; and
- (c) Policy and operational recommendations.

There are some policy recommendations such as governmental support, reinforcing the development of strategies and policies on Open Educational Resources, fostering strategic alliances for Open Educational Resources, encouraging the open licensing of educational materials produced with public funds, encouraging the development and adaptation of Open Educational Resources in a variety languages and cultural contexts as well as research on Open Educational Resources.

Whereas, the organisational recommendations are to foster awareness and the use of Open Educational Resources, to develop organisational Open Education Strategies, to recognise Open

Educational Resources development in assessment for tenure and promotional procedures, to support capacity building for the sustainable development of quality learning materials, and to build organisational partnerships and use existing partnerships for Open Educational collaborations.

Lastly, there are also individual recommendations, namely promote collaborative course and material development, facilitate finding, retrieving and sharing of Open Educational Resources, provide collaboration tools instead of repositories, and develop a pool of Open Educational Resources experts.



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ASEM ACTIVITIES TO COME - SAVE THE DATE

THE 1st ASEM EDUCATION SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING FOR THE 6th ASEM EDUCATION MINISTERS' MEETING

As a preparation toward the 6th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea will host the First ASEM Education Senior Officials' Meeting on 9 to 10 November 2016 at Hotel Shilla, Seoul, the Republic of Korea, for the 6th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEMME6)

For more information about the meeting please visit www.aseemme.kr

ASEM LLL HUB CONFERENCE: LIFELONG LEARNING AND RESILIENCE IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Taking place in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, the 2016 ASEM LLL Hub Conference, Lifelong Learning and Resilience in Disaster Management: Asian and European Perspective will be held on 8-10 November 2016. The conference is organised by the Danish School of Education, Aarhus University (ASEM LLL Hub) in cooperation with the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the Ministry for Children, Education and Gender Quality, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), and the South East Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Lifelong Learning (SEAMEO LLL).

The meeting invites representatives of the ASEM member countries from various sectors including researchers, policy makers, and practitioners to deliberate the contemporary possibilities which address issues of lifelong learning and resilience in disaster management through the key concepts for policies and practices in Asia and Europe.

For more information about the meeting, please visit <http://asemlllhub.org/events/vietnam2016/>

BRIDGING THE CONTINENTS—FOSTERING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR ASEM HIGHER EDUCATION

The conference of “Bridging the Continents—Fostering International Cooperation for ASEM Higher Education” will be conducted by German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) on 23-24 November 2016 in Berlin, Germany.

The conference will promote the cooperation between European and Asian Higher Education Institutions and other stakeholders, the characteristics of the ASEM Education Process, specific role of Erasmus+, and its funding opportunities to strengthen the intercontinental cooperation. More than 60 German and Asian Higher Education representatives as well as

interested experts and political stakeholder are expected to join the conference.

More information can be found at DAAD website: <http://bit.ly/2edexGO>

4th EXPERT GROUP ON ASEM JOINT CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY AND 4th EXPERT GROUP ON ASEM WORK PLACEMENT PROGRAMME

Back to back with the conference of “Bridging the Continents—Fostering International Cooperation for ASEM Higher Education”, the 4th Expert Group on ASEM Joint Curriculum and ASEM Work Placement Programme will be held on 25 November 2016 in Berlin, Germany.

Organized by German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the meeting will discuss the progress implementation as well as future plan of both programmes.

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Press Review

Regional

Europe

EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES LOOKING FOR COLLABORATION: 7 October 2016

The League of European Research Universities (LERU) consist of twenty one universities in Western Europe have agreed with seven research universities in Central and Eastern Europe in Prague, Czech Republic on 8 October 2016. The agreement consents on key challenges facing the EU's Horizon 2020 programme as well as improving research conditions.

The seven research universities include University of Belgrade (Serbia), University of Eötvös Loránd (Hungary), University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), Charles University in Prague (Czech Republic), University of Tartu (Estonia), University of Warsaw (Poland) and University of Zagreb (Croatia). Chair ad interim of the LERU board and rector magnificus of Utrecht University in the Netherlands, Professor Bert van der Zwaan is very pleased for this joint initiative and they believe that universities demonstrate united and bonded across Europe.

In the area of education there are common EU-level challenges, for example, in the area of student mobility, online learning, and skills development for students. LERU tries to introduce its joint views and agreed solutions such as the European Research Area platform and the Open Science Policy Platform. The initiative will also enable exchange of information and joint development of policy positions to improve the framework conditions for research and education.

Analysis shows that universities in regions with a more intensive and a less intensive research system can successfully undertake initiatives like joint PhDs, collaborative research projects and

teams, student exchange, mobility of teachers, researchers and administrative staff, joint conferences and evaluation systems. The present initiative could also fit in with the European Parliament project so called Stairways to Excellence, centred on assistance to the 13 countries which became members of the European Union in 2004 and subsequent years, with the aim of closing the research gap in Europe.

Read more at:

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20161007123502317>

Asia

STRENGTHENING EDUCATION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN AND YOUTH: 3 October 2016

In September 2016, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) signed its Declaration on Strengthening Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth. The Declaration intends to keep its commitment to the spirit of United Nations Sustainable Development—Goal number 4, which is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by the year 2030.

There are about 3.2 million children out of school in ASEAN, yielding enormous societal economic cost, approximately 26 billion US dollars, in lost opportunities.

For example, in Thailand there are 380,000 children which is more than 200,000 are primary school children. According to UNESCO, the societal cost to Thailand stands at 6.5 billion US Dollars. This means if the children had gone through school and graduated, they would have had better employment opportunities, contributing this amount to the economy.

This problem happens more in socio-economically depressed areas, which in Thailand refer to the Western border provinces and Northeast Thailand. They also tend to come from ethnic minority communities, for example *Thai Karen* and *Thai*



Khmer. However, it should be noted that in Thailand, the majority of out-of-school children are those from families of migrant workers, mainly from Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos.

Therefore, the ASEAN Declaration is so important because out-of-school children are a largely trans-boundary phenomenon. The challenges are therefore multiple, affecting the entire region, and are recognised to include migration, status and statelessness. The first principle is inclusivity; it means education is a human right. The second is equity; education should target the most marginalised and reduce disparities in educational attainment.

Third is accessibility, it means education must be for all children and youth irrespective of gender, nationality, ethnicity, disability, geographic location, religion, belief, culture, social origin and other origins. The fourth principle is continuity, meaning low truancy and drop-out rates. Fifth is quality. Sixth is flexibility, emphasises lifelong learning, non-formal education, vocational education and adult education for those with no primary education. Lastly, the seventh principle is sustainability. Education should be a cornerstone for human development, encourage respect for the planet, and aid in the quest for prosperity, peace and partnership.

There is some homework for the community such as developing programmes and policies, devising mechanisms and capacity building initiatives, creating information and monitoring systems, dedicating material, and coordinating the ASEAN effort.

Moreover, gathering political will and commitment helps solving multiple regional education problems, especially the education of ethnic minority children. In every ASEAN country, this implies dual language programmes teaching both the mother tongue and the national language, one of the key recommendations of the recently completed UNICEF Language and Education for Social Cohesion project.

Read more at:

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/opinion/opinion/1100893/tackling-economic-cost-of-poor-education>

Bangladesh

BANGLADESH PASSED ACCREDITATION COUNCIL ACT: 10 October 2016

The government of Bangladesh announced the Accreditation Council Act for University following regular Cabinet meeting headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Earlier this year, in March, the Cabinet provisionally endorsed the draft of the law.

The Council has an authorization to bring public and private institutions on an even level. The higher education institutions will be evaluated and certified in the light of the Council statutes. All universities will come under its purview.

The Council will consist of 13 members, led by a chairman, four full-time members and eight part-time members the council. Currently, Bangladesh has 38 public and 92 private universities.

Read more at:

<http://bdnews24.com/education/2016/10/10/government-clears-law-to-form-accreditation-council-for-bangladesh-universities>

Japan

IMPROVING ENGLISH EDUCATION FOR CONVERSATION SKILLS IN JAPAN: 1 August 2016

The Education Ministry of Japan wants to put more conversation skills in its English curriculum draft. While conventional English classes in Japan have been emphasizing on grammar and vocabulary for better skills in speaking English, the new curriculum draft includes listening, reading, writing, speaking, conversation, and presentation in a balanced manner.

The new curriculum draft calls for earlier introduction of English. At the third and fourth grade levels, students are going to be introduced to English, whereas at fifth and sixth grade levels, English will be a regular subject with additional reading and writing.

Despite the noble goals of this new curriculum draft, there are clear challenges in implementing it. The availability of teachers who can teach English in a balanced manner between grammar and pronunciation may be limited. The government plans to improve training courses for teachers, hence increasing their number.

These new curriculum guidelines are planned to be implemented for elementary schools in 2020, junior high schools in 2021, and high schools in 2022 or later. Usually, school curriculum guidelines are reviewed every 10 years, following societal changes.

Read more at:

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/08/01/national/education-ministry-wants-emphasis-english-conversation-skills/#.V86l4Zh942w>

Korea

FOREIGN STUDENTS IN KOREA INCREASED: 3 September 2016

The Education Ministry of Korea states there are 104,262 foreign students currently studying at universities and colleges in Korea, up 14.2 percent from last year. It is for the first time that the number of foreigners studying in Korea surpassed 100,000, and the number keeps increasing.

Some view this increase as a sign that Korea is growing its global row. However, others criticize that universities are recruiting international students merely due to the substantially higher tuition fee for foreigners. Academic and language standards of these international students can be set quite low by some institutions.

Most foreign students currently studying in Korea are Chinese (61.7 percent), followed by Vietnamese (5.5 percent), Mongolians (3.6 percent), Americans (2.5 percent) and Japanese (2.5 percent) often with some Korean background. From the data, 62 percent of foreign students study to Bachelor degree, 27 percent take Master's courses, and 11 percent for Doctoral courses.

Read more at:

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2016/09/03/2016090300318.html

The Netherlands

Frisian Language and Culture Online Course: 9 August 2016

The University of Groningen offers an online course on Frisian language and culture. Frisian is an indigenous language from the Friesland province in the Netherlands.

The three-week long course is taught through the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC). The course starts in September 2016, and there is no charge for this course. It consists of vocabulary, numbers, spelling, phrases, sentences, greetings, and grammar. All courses are taught in English.

There are 3,000 people from all over the world who have signed for this programme coming from Colombia, Japan, Albania, Russia, and Venezuela. The course also attracts Canadians and Americans who have Frisian descent.

Read more at:

<http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2016/08/3000-sign-up-to-learn-frisian-online-groningen-course-a-global-hit/>

United Kingdom

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INNOVATION AND REFORM: 22 October 2016



Department for International Development (DFID) of United Kingdom will be funded research projects so called Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR). It will be managed by a consortium comprised of the British Council, PricewaterhouseCoopers and Universities UK International.

DFID launched an open call for proposals for an initiative catalysing innovation and reform in higher education systems in developing countries, including fragile and conflict-affected states. The target countries include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal and Pakistan in Asia, Yemen and Occupied Palestinian Territories and 17 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The target countries do not include India and South Africa, which are considered middle-income countries, as beneficiaries, although they could be involved in partnerships as contributors.

The initiative aimed at transforming higher education systems, represents a new direction for DFID, which has previously focused its education funding on basic and primary education in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The aim of the project is to form collaborative partnerships. The objective is to achieve systemic change through either the design and delivery of degree programmes and-or via enhancing higher education systems and institutions by changing the culture and practices that affect the performance of public or private universities.

Read more at:

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20161022005407984>

Viet Nam

BUILDING A START-UP NATION: 17 October 2016

The Prime Minister of Viet Nam, Nguyen Xuan Phuc launched a programme encouraging youth involvement in creating start-ups in Ha Noi with the participation of more than 1,000 young people. He stressed the education quality needs to head toward the start-up target.

The PM endorses Vietnam National University-Hanoi (VNU) to take the lead in building Viet Nam into a start-up nation. The university should promote ideas and research projects ahead of technological and socio-economic trends in Asia.

In line with its ambition to become a research-oriented university by 2030, Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc asked the university to bring knowledge into practice in order to match real demands and start-ups. He urged the university to consider start-ups as measurements of training quality, noting that research findings must satisfy the demand of businesses, develop the economy and serve socio-economic development.

Viet Nam is now achieving industrialisation, modernisation, and national development targets by proactively providing high-quality human resources through education and training, which have continually been prioritised. Nowadays, tertiary education in Viet Nam has yet to meet the real demand of businesses and the economy. There are 225,000 unemployed graduates nationwide.

VNU is a State-owned tertiary education establishment, housing multiple universities and institutes, including seven colleges and five faculties. VNU has proven to be the top institution in the national tertiary education system, which now comprises of 412 universities and junior colleges. The university has been applauded for its education and research that have both won national and international awards.

Read more at:

<http://vietnamnews.vn/society/344536/building-vn-into-start-up-nation-pm.html#UXCW12C9JoZDvz6s.99>