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Dear ASEM colleagues,

After having a joyful and pleasant holiday, we hope we are all be ready for an exciting and successful 2017. AES also strives to support even more ASEM Education process in years to come.

A gentle reminder, ASEM members and stakeholders will be meeting again in May 2017 in Seoul, Republic of Korea at the Second Senior Official's Meeting 2 for ASEMME 6 (SOM2 ASEMME6) back to back with ASEMME 6. I believe all members and stakeholders are excited to share their ideas and suggestions at this momentous event.

This latest edition enables you to keeping tabs on ASEM education activities and initiatives held during January and February 2017. It also serves you with gentle reminder of the upcoming programme for the calender events of 2017 such as AEI-ASEM Summer School and the 4th Working Group on ASEM on Innovative Competences and Entrepreneurship. Further, articles on publications in the two regions and press review from ASEM member countries are also presented.

AES highly appreciates all ASEM members and stakeholders for the continuous participation and support on ASEM Education process, especially in ensuring our Newsletter to be published on time with quality. Once again, AES cordially invites you to share more with fresh ideas and lesson learned for better education.

Happy reading!

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QUALITY ASSURANCE AND RECOGNITION



THE 1st ASEAN UNIVERSITY NETWORK QUALITY ASSURANCE ASSESSMENT AT INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL



©Vietnam National University of Science

University of Science at Vietnam National University in Hanoi hosted the 1st ASEAN University Network Quality Assurance Assessment at Institutional Level on 15 to 20 January 2017. It is the first time such event for quality assurance assessment at university level in the South East Asia organised by AUN, a subsidiary body of Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN).

AUN-QA was established in 1998 with vision to promote quality assurance and the quality of higher education for universities in ASEAN through activities and events. Since the beginning of 2007, AUN Quality Assurance (AUN-QA) assessments were initially started at programme level. There were two hundred and twenty three programmes at universities in eight ASEAN countries which have been assessed.

At institutional level, AUN-QA attempts to assists the university to continue the improvement of education standard through implementation of

peer assessment, fostering the outcome-based education as well as to holistically uplift and increase efficiency of the operation of university. The assessment process is documented in the "Guide for AUN-QA Assessment at Institutional Level" that is available in English as well as in Vietnamese in order to implement AUN-QA System and Mechanisms inclusively. AUN believes that higher education can be developed and enhanced to provide significant contribution to the community in terms social and economy.

ASEAN University Network (AUN) Executive Director, Associate Professor Dr. Nantana Gajasen emphasizes that through assessment, all stakeholders of the university will be involved, the overall quality and achievements of university are the function of all relevant stakeholders. In her opening remarks, AUN Director added that the success and sustainability of a university are contributed by all stakeholders.

AUN-QA's new initiative sees the quality assurance from strategic, systemic, and functional aspects as the core drivers for overall quality of education, research, and service at university level. There were six AUN-QA Assessors from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore. This event was held in six days that consisted of programme such as interview with stakeholders, desktop assessment, document review, inspection on university facilities, and site-visit.

The framework for this assessment is in line with the ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework (AQAF) as well as European Higher Education Area and also Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework. It validates the quality of higher education and paves the way for further recognition of other accrediting agencies.

For read more please visit:

http://www.aun-qa.org/views/front/images/E-News-Jan-2017_For_AUN_QA_first-page.jpg

BALANCED MOBILITY



HARMONISING HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR IN ASEAN REGION

Contributor: SHARE-ASEAN

EU Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region" (EU SHARE) kicked off 2017 by delivering national workshops, holding a Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting, publishing a fourth Policy Brief and mobilising the second batch of SHARE scholarship programme.

At the beginning of the year, SHARE conducted its Second Credit Transfer System Workshop in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The workshop was attended by the representatives of four Cambodian universities participating in SHARE (the National University of Management, Phnom Peng International University, the University of Phnom Penh, and the University of Cambodia), as well as representatives from AUN-ACTS, SEAMEO-RIHED, and the Embassy of France in Cambodia. This was part of a series of workshops that provide a unique chance to put together different practitioners and experts in sharing perspectives and experiences. It was also an opportunity to build institutional capacity in implementing SHARE's mobility tools and the SHARE Online Platform for effective and robust mobility and exploit its potential.

Furthermore, in support of ASEAN's vision to build an inclusive and sustainable student mobility scheme for students in the ASEAN region, on the 1st February 2017, the SHARE Scholarship scheme announced 134 ASEAN undergraduate students from 29 ASEAN Universities in 8 ASEAN Member States, to receive a fully-funded scholarship for one semester of study abroad in another ASEAN

country. Inspired by the European Bologna Process and the EU's Erasmus Scholarship, SHARE has established the scholarship scheme to support the region's graduates and regional leaders of tomorrow. On behalf of ASEAN, 500 scholarships are to be made available through four batches, with 400 allocated for inner-ASEAN mobility and another 100 for ASEAN students to study in the EU.



Five *Universitas Diponegoro* students arrived in Mandalay University, welcomed by other SHARE Awardees from other ASEAN countries
© SHARE-ASEAN

In the area of Qualification Frameworks and Quality Assurance, SHARE, in cooperation with Indonesian Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education Indonesia, conducted its Fourth National Workshop on the impact of Qualification Frameworks (QF) and Quality Assurance Standards (QA) on Indonesia's Higher Education. This workshop held from 6-8 February 2017 in Jakarta, Indonesia, was attended by 150 participants from the ASEAN region who contributed to a highly successful fourth SHARE national workshop, this time with the focus on Indonesia.

On 22-23 February 2017, as part of SHARE's approach to provide capacity building for HEIs in the ASEAN region, SHARE conducted its third capacity building workshop for 29 universities. Focussing on the SHARE mobility programme, the workshop entitled "Managing Internationalisation and the SHARE scholarship programme" took place

in Bangkok, Thailand with participating universities of SHARE Scholarship Programme and aimed to enhance participants' knowledge and understanding of internationalization and familiarize them with the scholarship programme and the SHARE scholarship framework guidebook. It was attended by representatives from International Office Relation of the 29 universities who are SHARE's Scholarship Programme partners.

SHARE also organised its Second Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, Indonesia on 1 February 2017. This annual meeting brought together representatives of the EU Delegation to Indonesia, the ASEAN Secretariat, the Permanent Mission of Thailand to ASEAN as coordinator of ASEAN-EU relations, and the SHARE Consortium partners. The meeting reviewed SHARE's activities in 2016 and the programme's plans for 2017.

SHARE also published a further two policy briefs which are (1) the third entitled "Towards a Shared Understanding of Quality Assurance" and (2) the fourth entitled "Degree Structures and Harmonisation of Higher Education in the ASEAN region. The documents are available to download on the EU SHARE website: <http://share-asean.eu/published-materials/policy-brief/>

About SHARE:

SHARE is an EU Grant funded project with an overarching objective to strengthen regional cooperation, enhance the quality, competitiveness and internationalisation of ASEAN higher education institutions and students, contributing to an ASEAN Community in 2015 and beyond. SHARE is delivered by a consortium, led by British Council, comprising the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), EP-Nuffic (EPN), Campus France (CF), the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and the European University Association (EUA).

ASIA-EUROPE INSTITUTE (AEI) ASEM SUMMER SCHOOL 2017: CULTURAL PLURALISM IN ASIA AND EUROPE

The Asia-Europe Institute (AEI), University of Malaya will be organising a summer school programme with the theme “Cultural Pluralism in Asia and Europe”. This programme is the result of a collaboration between ASEM partner countries and the Jean Monnet Network on Challenges to Multiculturalism and Multilateralism and supported by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. It is a full time programme from 24 July to 4 August 2017 that consists of a 2 weeks programme in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and an additional 1 week from 7 August to 11 August 2017 (optional) in Brussels, Belgium which will be organised by Maastricht University.

The summer school programme brings together academicians and experts from Asia and Europe to exchange knowledge about multiculturalism and pluralism. A series of lectures and excursions will help participants to understand issues related to the theme of this summer school.

The AEI-ASEM Summer School is driven by various elective approaches that emphasise interdisciplinary learning, intercultural exchanges, cultural immersion, and appreciation to inclusiveness, cultural diversity and harmony-building in the two different regions.

For more details and registration please visit
AEI, UM website at
www.aei-asc.edu.my

**The registration for AEI ASS 2017 will
be opened until 15 May 2017**



PLACES TO VISIT

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**AEI-ASEM
SUMMER SCHOOL
2017**

24 JUL - 4 AUG 2017 (Malaysia)
7 AUG - 11 AUG 2017 (Belgium)

THEME:
**CULTURAL PLURALISM
IN ASIA AND EUROPE**

Co-organised by
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
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Learning from the success of the prior programmes, AEI-ASEM Summer Camp 2015 and 2016, the third summer school is expected to attract more participants from Asia, Europe and beyond towards promoting balanced mobility.

ASEM EVENTS

FIRST DISCUSSION ON THE HAND-OVER PROCESS OF THE ASEM EDUCATION SECRETARIAT

As part of the hand-over process, ASEM Education Secretariat (AES) Jakarta and Belgium Ministry of Education from Flemish Community and French Speaking Communities held the first discussion on the hand-over of the ASEM Education Secretariat from Indonesia to Belgium, on 23-24 February 2017 in Brussels.

During the first day of the meeting, to make sure the transfer knowledge, both parties conferred on the organisational of the ASEM Education Secretariat including the arrangements for support to the Secretariat, the AES' tasks, the involvement of AES in different ASEM activities and AES' relationship with other international organisations.

On the second day of the meeting, the discussion focused on how ASEM on Education being acknowledged in the ASEM Summit level and the relationship between the two. The meeting was also attended by representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium and Indonesia.



© AES

Back to back with the meeting, a discussion on the progress of the ASEM Work Placement Programme-Pilot Project, an initiative between the two countries, was held as well. Belgium will send its seconded staff at AES Jakarta on March 6 to 10, 2017.



© AES



ASEF CAPTURES THE VIEWS OF THE ASEM YOUTH ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND CONNECTIVITY

Contributor: ASEF

With a thematic focus on *Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment* as well as the subject of *Connectivity* across its portfolio of projects, the Education Department (ASEFEdu) of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) conducted 3 ASEM-wide youth surveys between 2015 and 2016. A total of 17,343 young people between the ages of 18 and 30 were participated. The surveys, linked to the Open Calls for Participation process, captured a youth perspective for 3 ASEFEdu projects on the following topics:

- 1) *Entrepreneurship, youth employment and leadership* for the ASEF Young Leaders Summit (ASEFYLS),
- 2) *Role of universities in helping students find employment* for the 5th ASEM Rectors' Conference and Students' Forum (ARC5)
- 3) *Transportation links between Asia and Europe* for the 20th ASEF Summer University (ASEFSU20).

The first survey looked at perceptions of all 5,988 applicants of the inaugural ASEF Young Leaders Summit. In keeping with the project's theme, the primary aim was to understand what youth think about entrepreneurship, youth employment and leadership. While broad in its scope, the survey results exposed some interesting outlooks. Most notably, while 38.5% of respondents wanted to use their entrepreneurial spirit to realise a social goal, 24.1% would prefer to hold an influential position in an international organisation compared to 19.6% who would rather work in a start-up. To understand further the motivations, aspirations and reflections of the young people surveyed. Please visit:

http://www.asef.org/images/docs/151030_ASEFYLS_ParticipantsBooklet.pdf



Students airing their views at ARC5 ©ASEF

Focusing on the role of universities in helping students find employment, the findings of the 5th ASEM Rectors' Conference and Students' Forum (ARC5) survey were equally interesting. On the subject of direct professional opportunities, a staggering 72.7% of the 3,133 applicants highlighted that their universities arranged internships for them, while 60.7% were involved in part-time work. Considering the skills required attaining their ideal form of employment, 21% expressed a desire to have training in public speaking and pitching. A more in-depth presentation of this project's survey results can be viewed at:

http://www.asef.org/images/docs/ARC5_Survey.pdf

With a project theme, *Gateways to Asia and Europe: Connectivity by Land, Sea and Air*, the third survey explored the level of connectivity, in particular the role of transportation and trade in connecting Asia and Europe. Completed by the 8,222 applicants of the 20th ASEF Summer University, the survey showed that the majority believed that rail transportation had the most potential to boost economic development between Asia and Europe. Additionally, 37.65% believed that local communities benefitted the most from transportation infrastructure investments because they provided easy access to jobs, education and services. The entire ASEFSU20 survey results can be viewed at

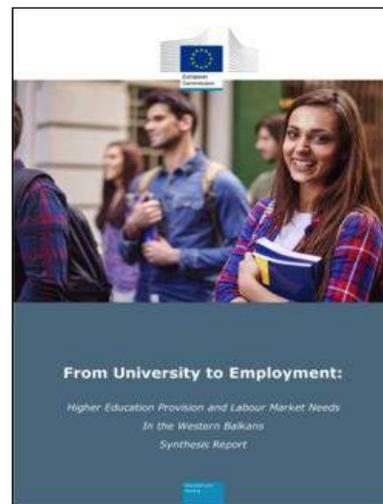
http://asef.org/images/docs/ASEFSU20_Surveys.pdf

These surveys did not only form a solid basis for ASEF's thematic project planning, but also gave ASEF senior leaders and policy-makers a valuable insight into the issues affecting the ASEM youth. As Open Calls for applications begin for ASEF's education projects during 2017 (Please visit: <http://www.asef.org/projects/themes/education>).

ASEM stakeholders will be given the opportunity to understand what young people in Asia and Europe believe to be the most pressing issues in relation to ASEFEdu's new thematic focus on *Access to Education and Youth Employment*.

PUBLICATIONS

FROM UNIVERSITY TO EMPLOYMENT: MAPPING HIGHER EDUCATION PROVISION AND LABOUR MARKET NEEDS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS



The Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training was launched in 2012; this is the EU's initiative for cooperation in education with Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina,

the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia. It aims to construct common priorities, policy, and reform process as well as to decide on topics for regional cooperation with EU assistance.

Recently, the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training has released its latest study so called "From University to Employment: mapping

higher education provision and labour market needs in the Western Balkans". It is the first study in the region on higher education provision and labour market needs in the Western Balkans.

This publication offers concrete data for policy reform in both higher education and labour sectors as well as a set of concrete recommendations to tackle the identified issues. Further it accumulates a unique higher education database that includes details of virtually all study programmes offered by all higher education institutions in the region in recent years.

Get the publication here:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/20161216-western-balkans-higher-education-employment_en

AEI INSIGHTS: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ASIA-EUROPE RELATIONS

This international journal published once in a year serves the relation between the two continents: Asia and Europe in various topics such as social, politics, economy, security, and international relations. The

current edition is volume 3 no. 1 published in January 2017 by Asia-Europe Institute, University of Malaya, Malaysia. It contains sixty seven pages with four writings and an opinion.

On this edition, there are six contributors, they are Naila Maier-Knapp from Albert-Ludwigs University Freiburg, Germany who wrote on "Managing Cross-Border Crises in Southeast Asia at Multiple Levels of Governance: Complementary or Competitive Institutional Development at the National, ASEAN

Regional, and EU-ASEAN Inter-Regional Levels?" While Fumitaka Furuoka from Asia-Europe Institute, University of Malaya, Malaysia focused on "the Impact of Exports on Malaysian Economic Development: a Comparative Study between Japan and Germany".

"Shinzo Abe's Security Policy: a Departure from Defensive Posture?" was studied by Balazs Szanto from the Department of International and Strategic Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia. Further, Andreas Stoffers and Benno Fuchs from University of Applied Languages/SDI Munich, Germany examined "Contribution to Sustainable Development in ASEAN: German FDI in Vietnam's Energy Sector" and Qi Lin from Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University, USA voiced her opinion on "the Sino-US Relations: Recalibration or Repetition?"

Get the publication here:

<https://www.um.edu.my/docs/librariesprovider12/default-document-library/aei-insights-2017-full.pdf?sfvrsn=2>



ASEM ACTIVITIES TO COME - SAVE THE DATE

4th WORKING GROUP ON ASEM INNOVATIVE COMPETENCES AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

The 4th Working Group on ASEM on Innovative Competences and Entrepreneurship will be organised by Ministry of Education Malaysia on 14-16 March 2017 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The fourth working group meeting shall elaborate the joint report for the 6th ASEM Education Ministers' meeting (ASEMME6) that will be held on 9-10 May 2017 in Seoul, Republic of Korea. The meeting will discuss the policy recommendation for fostering innovative competences or entrepreneurship education and finalising the report.

The working group meeting in Kuala Lumpur will include visitation on the Malaysian education programmes, where innovative competences and



entrepreneurship are part of the education strategy.

ASEM-DUO FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME: DUO-WALLONIA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME DUO-FLANDERS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

DUO-Flanders Fellowship Programme

The Belgium-Flanders government is pleased to announce the Call of 2017 ASEM DUO-Belgium/Flanders Fellowship Programme. Applications for the programme are called until 31 March 2017. The programme for 2017 will start from August 2017 and end before September 2018

The programme requires two pairs exchange students from undergraduate (bachelor) and graduate (master) who are currently enrolled in universities or university colleagues in Flanders or one of the four Asian Countries (China, India, South Korea, and Vietnam).

DUO-Wallonia Fellowship Programme

The call for application of ASEM DUO-Wallonia Fellowship Programme for 2017-2018 academic years is open.

The programme is a pair exchanged between Professor, researcher or lecturer in higher education institution from Wallonia Brussels and Asia. The list of partner countries are: Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

The deadline for the submission of application is on 15 April 2017.

For more information about ASEM-DUO Flanders and Wallonia Fellowship Programme please visit <http://www.asemduo.org/>

PEER LEARNING ACTIVITY ON QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS IN RELATION TO QUALITY ASSURANCE AND RECOGNITION AND THE SECOND EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON INTERREGIONAL CREDIT TRANSFER MECHANISMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES.

Contributor: Magalie Soenen, Ministry of Education and Training, Flanders.

The Ministries of Education of the Flemish and French Communities of Belgium will host the Peer Learning Activity on Qualifications Frameworks in relation to Quality Assurance and Recognition and the second Expert Group meeting on Interregional Credit Transfer Mechanisms and Learning Outcomes, in **Ghent (Belgium) from 26-28 April 2017**. Both initiatives will be integrated into one joint meeting, as the topics are closely interrelated.

This joint meeting will start with a presentation of the state of affairs in European and Asian context and which tools already exist. We will continue with a discussion on the key elements in the academic infrastructure to realize a common and shared understanding of those elements (degree structure, qualification frameworks, quality assurance, but also learning outcomes, credit transfer etc.). Furthermore, we will discuss to what degree coherence/convergence/harmonization is desired to facilitate the academic collaboration and how all these elements are translated into day-to-day professional academic practice. Moreover, we aim



to find ways for enhancing the comparability and compatibility of these key structural elements.

Finally, we would like to identify future innovative projects that can further support the development of the common academic infrastructure.

The meeting targets a wide range of participants:

- the members of the Expert group on Interregional Credit Transfer Mechanisms;
- public authorities;
- higher education institutions (senior management and programme directors);
- quality assurance agencies;
- students.

We would like to recommend that each delegation would include a representative of a national body (public authority, quality assurance agency, etc) and a representative of a higher education institution.

If you would like to participate in the meeting, please contact the ASEM contact point of the Flemish Community for more information: Magalie Soenen

(Magalie.Soenen@ond.vlaanderen.be)

2nd ASEF YOUNG LEADERS SUMMIT

Contributor: ASEF

The Education Department of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) will host the 2nd edition of the ASEF Young Leaders Summit (ASEFYL2) from 4 - 8 May 2017 in Seoul, Korea, in conjunction with the 6th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEM ME6). ASEFYL2 is an arena for debate and action on education and employment, where young professionals meet ASEM Education Ministers, as well as thought and business leaders, to develop a vision for a sustainable future across Asia and Europe.



Participants at the Inaugural ASEFYL2 ©ASEF

As referenced in the conclusions of the Chair at the 5th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEM ME5) and the agenda of ASEM ME6, given the unprecedented number of young people entering the labour market, societies across Asia and Europe must adapt to equip them with the education and skills necessary to have financial independence and a life of dignity. Themed *Access to Youth Employment*, ASEFYL2 will tackle the subjects of job-creation and inclusion from 8 thematic angles linked to: 1) age, 2) education, 3) disability, 4) finance, 5) gender, 6) location, 7) social backgrounds, and 8) technology.

Comprising a combination of trainings and study-visits, as well as a form of leadership exchange between the ASEM Education Ministers and Leaders and the youth leaders, ASEFYL2 will culminate in a youth intervention at ASEM ME6. ASEFYL2 meaningfully brings a closer collaboration and exchange of perspectives on relevant issues linked to education and youth employment between young citizens and ASEM Leaders. In addition to contributing to the ASEM Education Priorities, the project's outcomes will also support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular goal 4 (on education), 5 (on gender equality), and 8 (on decent work).

ASEFYL2 kick-starts a series of ASEF education projects focusing on the theme of *Access to Education and Youth Employment* over the next two years; for more information about ASEF's portfolio of education projects, [please visit our website](#).

Press Review

Australia

Completion Study Rate in Australia: 18 January 2017

Universities in Australia were placed on the-third highest of completion rates for bachelor degree in OECD which is 82%. However, there were still students who did not complete their studies within six years. That case caused by a variety of reasons like they made the wrong choices about what to study and did not realize there were other entry pathways. This will effect their time and money.

There was comparison data about completion rates in nine years after the 2006 cohort commenced their studies. The data showed decreased from 73.6% in 2005 became 73.5% in 2006. The study had compared the completion rate between Charles Darwin University (CDU) and Melbourne University where fewer than 42% of student graduated in four years in CDU compared to 88% in Melbourne University. In addition, the big difference both university was affected by cohort who were taking study part time like in CDU where they completed their studies for a long time and the most mature-age took it 10 years to accomplish a three years degree.

To surmount the problem, Australia Government will make university information to become easily accessed, through committment of an additional A\$ 8.1 M to develop Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) a detail website providing indicators about university performance. QILT will also make university entry system more transparent and become big resources of universities in Australia which could access by all students who wants to enrol to university. By establishing QILT, students could look for feedback on the reputation of the university they want to study, well-known they are particular course, and they could know about satisfied current students with the resource and teachers on offer and the employment outcomes of graduates from those universities and courses. In addition, QILT will help support them in finding the job or improve their skill related the course after graduate.

Read more:

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=2017011815161418>

Austria

“Plan A” for Advancement Austrian Higher Education: 19 January 2017

Austrian Chancellor, Christian Kern stated that higher education funding in Austria must be based on the enrolment and performance agreements. As the impact of that policy, the entry restrictions would be appeared in the necessary situation although tuition fees are the secondary aspect. He ensured the increase of higher education budget to the amount of 2% from Austrian Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This growth is intended to extend the capacities in the field of higher education, improve the ratio of student-teacher, and enhance the quality of Austrian higher education. All of those policies are contained in the programme that called with “Plan A”.

The poor circumstance of the student-teacher ratio in the higher education is one of the reasons Plan A appeared. Equipping study places and other supporting factors are requirements in the purpose to heal the Austrian ratio's problem in the higher education. Considering to the amount of the annual enrolment student has been progressing. The Chancellor said Austria requires an additional 5,000 study places especially for the “forward-looking subject” such as mathematics, informatics, and engineering.

Plan A is purposed to gain the goal of three Austria Universities to be into top 100 world-wide. Chancellor Kern considered grouping of the bachelor study programmes; the funding will be decided by public authority. General structural improvement in the body of Austrian universities and Enrolment-Driven Funding is needed in order to realise Plan A works successfully. Plan A is believed will give the stimulus to minimising of students dropout from higher education, shortening study time for students, and increasing in the number of graduates from Austrian higher education. It is also consider as the dynamic and visionary approach and emphasise in the future development.

However, there are some of criticisms on this, one of the criticisms came from the member of Association of Socialist Students of Austria who said Plan A will be able to breach with the rights of free and open access.

Read more:

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20170119180259453>



China

Sixteen World-Class Universities by 2030: 18 January 2017

A guideline issued by the State Council of China in 2015 says a certain number of universities and majors should be rated as world-class by 2020 and China would basically become a nation with strong higher education by 2050. Twenty one provincial regions in China will have a famous university by 2030 except Beijing and Shanghai as planned on five to ten-year Higher Education Blueprints of China.

Further there are sixteen universities which ten of them will be rated world-class by 2020 and the entire universities by 2030. According to the Blueprints also, more than 110 high-level universities will be established in those regions.

There are eleven provincial regions have also come up with financial support with the total amount raised close to 40 billion RMB. For example, Shandong province would rise up to 5 billion RMB while Hubei province pledged an annual investment of 1 to 2 billion RMB. Heavy investment can help to attract talent and purchase cutting-edge equipment to improve the educational environment.

Read more: http://www.china.org.cn/china/2017-01/18/content_40126204.htm

Greece

A Private Higher Education: 3 February 2017

According to Article 16 of the Greek Constitution states private sector cannot manage a university. This policy was created during the 1967-74 military juntas to prevent communists creating private universities. Higher education institutions have always been state owned entities in Greece.

Therefore there has been debate over the possibility that private sector runs university. The discussions were ignited when opposition leader seized the occasion of a parliamentary debate on constitutional reform in October 2016. A poll conducted late last year for the Athens Chamber of Commerce found 49% of respondents to be in favour of granting university status to private institutions with degrees equivalent to those of their public counterparts.

There are twenty-eight private institutions, or colleges, offering undergraduate and graduate degrees in Greece. Twenty-two of these colleges, such as the British Hellenic College and the Business College of Athens, are predominantly affiliated with UK universities, while six are American, the American College of Greece being the largest in Greece and the oldest American college in Europe. Around 15,000 students attend these private colleges 11,000 of who are at British affiliated colleges, according to the UK's Quality Assurance Agency.

Almost half a million young professionals have left Greece since 2008 and 36,000 Greeks currently study abroad, a third of whom are in the UK, according to the latest data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. The introduction of domestic private universities will cause a turnaround in Greek higher education, the high mobility costs would be reduced for families. Competition with high quality private universities is needed in order to improve public higher education services. They could help in combating the effects of brain drain. Further, according numbers given on the websites of the ACG and the Hellenic American College, around 20-25% of students are non-Greek nationals –significantly more than the 2.5% at public universities.

Read more:

<https://thepienews.com/analysis/will-greece-ever-embrace-private-higher-education/>

India

Ensuring the Freedom of Thinking: 21 January 2017

The people and government should protect India from the threat of neo-nationalism across the world, the tendency to pander to populism as well as direct hatred against backward classes and minorities. Former Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Singh says that Indian academics should be independent on how their thinking and also apply the free of expression. Further he suggests that every university must give its students the freedom to pursue knowledge. Universities have a rightful role to play in this regard, students and citizens are encouraged to think and speak freely and where dissent is encouraged.

On the other hand, authorities should protect all academicians' autonomy and students' right to express disagreement. It must make every effort to protect the autonomy of universities. Recent attempts to interfere with free expression of the student community are

particular concern. Political interference in university curriculum and academic appointment is highly short-sighted. Attempts to suppress peaceful dissent are not only inimical to learning, they are also undemocratic.

To conclude he quotes India's Jawaharlal Nehru words which is "a university stands for humanism, for tolerance, for reason, for progress, for the adventures of ideas and for the search for truth. It stands for the onward march of the human race towards even higher objectives..."

Read more:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/ensure-free-thinking-singh-tells-varsities/articleshow/56695018.cms>

Indonesia

International Publication for Every Professor and Lecturer: 3 January 2017

Starting 2017, every professor who receives a research grant must publish an international publication. Minister of Research, Technology, and Higher Education, of the Republic of Indonesia, wants to evaluate the government's research grant scheme for professor if they do not publish at least one international publication annually.

International research publications are important, especially for State University. Although currently there are 6,000 professors and 31,000 head lecturers, they have only produced about 9,500 publications. If each of them publish their academic writings, eventually number of publications will be increased. The figure of international publications from Indonesia has reportedly increased, with 9,475 being published in 2016. However, that number is still insignificant compared to the output of other Southeast Asian countries.

There are numerous challenges for professors towards this plan, such as hectic schedule that does not always guarantee undivided attention for research and writing. The duties of a professor does not only cover research, but also teaching, research supervision, become a university senate member as well as programme head or dean and also attending seminars or government-organised events.

If the government insists on journals as the medium of publication, internationalising Indonesian journals would be a way to ease researchers' burden. Although it would take a considerably long time, the government should push for local journals to attain international

accreditation. Time can also render the one-year target unrealistic in some disciplines. For example, an anthropological research project needs at least two years to complete, considering the substantial field research and literature review.

Read more: <http://jakartaglobe.id/news/ministers-plan-boost-research-productivity-faces-setbacks/>

Japan

Internationalization on Japanese Higher Education Institutions: 27 January 2017

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) located in *Beppu* establishes a global campus in 2000. APU has 6,000 students half of them are from overseas, a ratio way above the average of 10% foreign students in Japanese universities. Since the 2016 fall semester for the first time that the number of international students has exceeded 50%.

Almost all the foreign students are on four-year undergraduate degree programmes rather than short courses or exchanges, students come from around 60 countries. This diversity and high-achieving student body are among its best selling points. Further, APU has become attractive to Japanese youth because of its diversity.

Some APU foreign students are fluent in Japanese and are familiar with the culture it made local companies wants to recruit them. They also speak other languages and have a wide international network. At APU the largest groups of foreign students are from South Korea and Vietnam, each representing 17% of the student body. Meanwhile Chinese students are 15.5% and Indonesians 12%. Foreign students apply on the basis of English or Japanese as the main language of study and must have sufficient fluency to follow lectures and active discussions in either of the two.

A business federation in Japan has been keen to support and invest on the internationalisation of the country's workforce and that is why it cooperates with APU. Impressively, some 90% of its foreign graduates find employment in Japanese companies, as well as overseas. In 2014, according to survey only 34.5% of the 11, 556 foreign graduates of Japanese universities found their jobs.

There are signs that international students are changing



their focus in choosing Japan. Historically, international students have been more interested in a business degree however recently it seems there is growing interest in subjects such as environment and development, international relations, and peace studies.

Read more:

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20170124202453458>

Norway

High Education: Quality Culture Improvement: 4 February 2017

The Ministry of Education and Research of Norway has adopted a new policy that was written in White Paper titled "Culture for Quality in Higher Education". It aims to improve quality in higher education by raising standards for instance on improving teaching, and on introducing practical training, and compulsory international collaboration in all study programmes.

One main objective is highlighted that higher education should ensure the relevant to the needs of society and prepares for the challenges of structural changes in working life that will be the consequence of increased digitalisation. Nowadays every third employee in the world of work will be affected in the near future. To enhance the quality culture the government is proposed extensive and includes:

1. Strengthening work with especially gifted students through dedicated talent programmes.
2. Developing the career tracks of lecturers prioritising teaching.
3. Developing a 'national arena' for competition for resources to improve teaching.
4. Allowing study programmes to decide on admission criteria.
5. Developing more study programmes in collaboration with industry and business.
6. Producing better guidelines on how to evaluate examinations, to counterbalance differences between institutions.
7. Demanding pedagogical training for all teaching positions, with higher demands for higher positions.
8. Investigating the option of having specific professor positions with competence in praxis, in order to

recruit more university staff from industry and business.

9. If such positions are established, they could include representatives from working life and the unions in the planning stage.
10. International cooperation should be a compulsory part of all study programmes – internationalisation is a pre-condition for quality.

On the other hand, some people see that it was not a correct priority to invest heavily in and prioritise the segment of top-talented students when the drop-out rate was around 40% at the bachelor level. Much of the challenge in the quality White Paper is that it is instructing higher education institutions.

Read more:

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20170204095749569>

Switzerland

Higher Education Arrangement for Refugees: 24 January 2017

The Swiss Students' Union urges the federal and cantonal authorities to revise the regulation on higher education so that refugees are able to access the Swiss university system. That is why education should be available to everyone who has the interest and the capabilities because to have an education is also human rights.

Many refugees have pursued or finished tertiary studies in their home country before arriving in Switzerland however their qualifications do not qualify them to access the Swiss job market. On the other hand, university in Swiss demand that refugees speak the local language to C1 level. Meanwhile, social services will only fund refugees for language courses up to A2 or B1 level, and most refugees do not have the money to fund further study. Therefore they must pursue a recognized Swiss university course or training.

Many problems found that refugees' linguistic knowledge is not taken account when they are allocated to a canton, meaning a French speaker could be sent to live in a German-speaking canton. Therefore the Union is calling for publicly-funded courses to be reintroduced and also to offer grants to cover the costs of living. Consequently it is needed an integration system to be prepared to support refugees who having already



studied or having an interest in studying otherwise Switzerland is wasting potential and missing a chance to train qualified workers.

Read more:

<http://www.thelocal.ch/20170124/switzerland-must-make-it-easier-for-refugees-to-go-to-university>

Thailand

Ministry for University Affairs is Setting Up: 27 January 2017

The Education Ministry of Thailand has proposed to set up its Office of Higher Education Commission into a Ministry of Higher Education in order to lift university standards and to turn Thai universities into research and innovation authority as well as to provide highly skilled and qualified workforces who are in line with the 20-year national strategy and the Thailand 4.0 vision.

The government is serious to tackle this issue. According to the Times Higher Education University Rankings 2016, Thailand had only one university among the top 100 universities in Asia and none in the world's top 400. Dilemma has occurred for instance, many university graduates being incompetent in their fields, a surplus of graduates in social sciences, and also a lack of qualified graduates in technology and vocational fields.

The Education Ministry does not have the full power to intervene in the administration of universities because they all have their own University Act that stems from the interest for decentralisation. However, if the new ministry is set up some regulations, it will ensure that such problems will not be avoided. In addition, the process of establishing the new ministry may take at least a year.

Read more:

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/learning/advanced/1187936/wanted-a-ministry-of-university-affairs>

United Kingdom

University Can Cooperate with International Partners: 19 January 2017

After Brexit the UK Government has decided its position on science and innovation sector including research and technology. UK Prime Minister, Theresa May says in the

parliament that UK will continue to collaborate with other European partners on those initiatives. The European University Association (EUA) looks as a positive policy that might be UK will take part in the programme namely "Horizon 2020" and "Erasmus+".

Further, the UK would welcome agreement to continue collaborating with European partners on major initiatives in science, research, and technology and also did not exclude paying into European programmes. In response to this, Universities in the U are encouraged and would like to see the country continues to play a role in certain EU programmes. It will ensure the international strength of university system and the importance of continuing to collaborate in cutting-edge research and innovation as well as to remain open to international talent.

The government should ensure universities can continue to attract, recruit and retain highly-skilled staffs and students will be critical to supporting excellent research, innovation and education across the UK. There are currently nearly half a million international students at UK universities, with over 125,000 of them from EU countries. 16% of academic staffs at UK universities are from EU countries, while 12% are from non-EU countries. The UK university system's world-leading position was due to a great extent to its ability to attract talented students and staff from around the world and the world-class research it produces with international partners.

Meanwhile other experts see PM May statement as a willingness to work more closely with the EU to build up Europe's science infrastructure.

Read more:

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=-201701191301122>

Viet Nam

New Requirements for PHD Candidates: 17 January 2017

The Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam has revised its procedure on requirements and management for Doctorates programme. This new regulations will improve the quality and hopefully up to the regional level.

First, having foreign language skills standard will be a compulsory requirement for postgraduates, because they are a necessary tool that assists study. They have to



prove that they have skills good enough to read foreign documents. Second, postgraduates also have to show their capability for scientific research through published research, scientific activities and technology transfer before registering to attend exams to become postgraduates.

Third, it requires postgraduates to have scientific articles published in prestigious scientific journals before their doctoral dissertations are defended. Fourth, international publications are the requirement set by all training establishments. This aims to ensure that scientific research results can be discussed and recognized by scientists. Fifth, international statistical institute (ISI) articles are an important measure to evaluate the quality of doctoral theses. Nowadays graduate students must have at least two ISI articles published, because only ISI articles can ensure reliability and prove the research new.

Scholars also think that setting up higher requirements on foreign language skills is a must, not only English, Chinese, Russian, and French, but Korean, Japanese and Thai skills will also be useful.

Read more:

<http://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/education/171044/vietnam-sets-new-requirements-for-doctoral-training-programmes.html>
