

ERASMUS MUNDUS



Succeeding in European-Asian Higher Education Cooperation

ASEMUNDUS – Good Practice Report



Erasmus
Mundus

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.
This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible
for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Article	Author	
ASEMUNDUS: A project to foster European and Asian cooperation in higher education	DAAD	4
ASEMUNDUS – a project with political impact?	Nina Scholle-Pollmann	8
10 Years of Cooperation between the Kebangsaan University, Malaysia and the University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany A Case Study of the Developments and Challenges	Axel Hunger	10
MIND as an example of developing Joint Study Programmes with Asia	Ralf Aschemann	14
Mobility programmes with Europe from the Asian viewpoint: LOTUS project case study	Hoang Huu Hanh	18
Interview with Erasmus Mundus Alumni from Asia	Chaidarun Tippawan	23
Recommendations on setting up a joint study programme	Giovanna Filippini	26
General recommendations and conclusions from the practical guidelines of EACEA of the Regional Cluster on Asia	EACEA	28
Promoting the European Higher Education Area in China: a promotional activity funded by ASEMUNDUS	Zhuyu Li, Jian Shi	30
List of European – Asian co-operation promoters	32
List of Erasmus Mundus National Structures – ASEMUNDUS project partners	34



ASEMUNDUS: A PROJECT TO FOSTER EUROPEAN AND ASIAN COOPERATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

BACKGROUND

Enabling European-Asian cooperation between higher education institutions is essential for the development of a worldwide competitive European Higher Education Area. Comparing educational procedures and standards with each other contributes to better understanding and closer cooperation. During the first Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers of Education in Berlin on May 5-6 2008 (ASEMME 1), ministers underlined the increasing demand for cooperation in higher education and mobility between the EU and Asia.

Further impetus for strengthening relations between Europe and Asia comes from the Europe 2020 strategy which declares that the EU is to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy within the decade. In respect of the increasing role of Asia in the changing global and economic arena, it is vital that Asia intensifies cooperation with Europe in education. Consequently, the European Commission launched the Erasmus Mundus programme in 2003 to expose European higher education to the wider world and vice versa.

The stated objectives of the Erasmus Mundus programme include the:

- ✓ enhancement of quality in European higher education,
- ✓ promotion of the EU as a centre of excellence around the world in respect of learning,
- ✓ extension of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries,
- ✓ development of third countries in the field of higher education.

Erasmus Mundus is a programme run by the European Commission and implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). It comprises three series of actions. These are:

1. support for specifically-identified joint study programmes at masters or doctoral levels offered by consortia of higher education institutions from at least three different European countries. Students will be expected to study in at least two of them.

2. partnerships for enhancing academic cooperation and the exchange of students and academics. This will contribute to the socio-economic development of non-EU countries targeted by the EU external cooperation policy. The consortia must include a minimum of five higher education institutions from at least three European countries and a number of higher education institutions from targeted non-European regions. Special attention will be given to disadvantaged groups and those in vulnerable situations.

3. the promotion of European higher education through measures enhancing the attractiveness of Europe as an educational destination and a centre of excellence at world level.

The consortia in Action 1 may also include higher education institutions from other parts of the world. Currently, 7.7 % of all Erasmus Mundus courses have an Asian partner or associate partner in their consortium. ASEMUNDUS was designed to increase the partners involved in Erasmus Mundus networks from different parts of Asia. The idea of the ASEMUNDUS project is to promote joint initiatives and to establish useful contacts between higher education institutions from Asia and the European Union. ASEMUNDUS focused its promotional and networking activities on three countries in Asia: Indonesia, South Korea and Thailand, with an additional focus on Japan and China. The identification of the ASEMUNDUS target countries was made through an online survey of European higher education institutions. The evaluation of all Asian networking seminars will be presented at the final conference in Germany. This will enable the dissemination of results to European stakeholders.

THE OBJECTIVES OF ASEMUNDUS

The German National Contact Point for EU-Third Country Programmes in Higher Education, in conjunction with the National Agencies of Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, the Netherlands and Poland, launched its ASEMUNDUS project idea in 2009. The idea was selected under the Erasmus Mundus Action 3 funding scheme.¹

¹ OeAD (AT), Flemish Ministry of Education and Training (BE), the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture (CY), the Archimedes Foundation (EE), the Tempus Public Foundation (HU), State Education Development Agency (LV), NUFFIC (NL), the Foundation for the Development of the Education System (PL).

European and Asian higher education representatives attended international higher educational fairs in Indonesia, Thailand and South Korea. These fairs were linked to networking seminars offered by the ASEMUNDUS team. Consequently, participants learned about the Erasmus Mundus programme and also different education systems. Those who attended also worked on areas of possible future co-operation.

NETWORKING SEMINARS IN ASIA

The ASEMUNDUS consortium hosted its first networking seminar in Jakarta, Indonesia. It took place in October 2010. The other seminars were planned for spring and autumn 2011. However, these had to be postponed as a result of floods in Bangkok and anticipated disasters in South Korea. The seminars were rescheduled for April and May 2012. Initially, a fourth seminar was planned in China as a result of the high interest shown in the online survey. However, because the two networking seminars had to be postponed, the ASEMUNDUS consortium decided to incorporate the Chinese representatives into the seminar in Seoul. As a result, representatives from China were invited to the seminar.

Indonesia has more than 2.700 higher education institutions and approximately 3.8 million students; therefore it has enormous potential. Only one Indonesian HEI has participated in a joint master's programme with Erasmus Mundus up to now. Eleven have taken part in a mobility network in Erasmus Mundus Action 2. A total of 315 master students, seven PhD students and 16 scholars from Indonesia have already received funds from the European Union. Indonesia now ranks tenth in respect of receipt of funding - behind China, India, Brazil, Ethiopia, Russia, Mexico, USA, Pakistan and Bangladesh in the Erasmus Mundus statistics.

In comparison with Indonesia, Thailand – with approximately 2,5 million students – is institutionally more active in Erasmus Mundus. Three Thai universities have been involved in Erasmus Mundus courses since 2004, 19 are members of an Action 2 mobility partnership and 252 masters' students have obtained scholarships. These figures are relatively high but there is still room for improvement. This is especially true concerning the PhD programmes, where between 2009 and 2012 three people obtained a doctorate scholarship. South Korea is different in respect of Action 2 partnerships because the republic

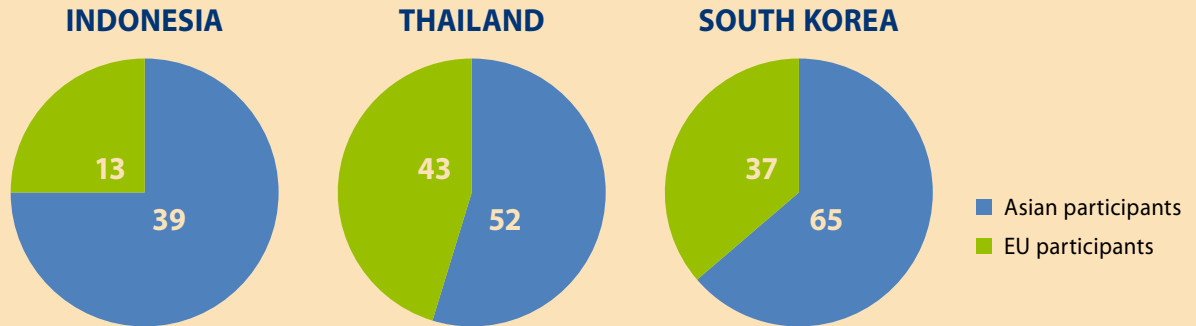
“Overall, the ASEMUNDUS contact seminar gave us the opportunity to strengthen the ties with existing partners on the one hand, enabled us to set up new partnerships and to discuss and try to find solutions for current problems on the other.”



Jakarta, Indonesia (7-8 October, 2010)



**Allocation of seminar participants from European and Asian countries
in the respective networking seminar**



is considered as a high-income country. However, their participation in Erasmus Mundus Action 1 is still low: only one university is a partner in an Erasmus Mundus Master Course consortium. Also only 52 have gained a scholarship for a master’s programme since 2004 and only 3 PhD and 8 other students out of a total of 3.2 million South Korean students. Based on these figures, there is considerable room for the expansion of work with the Republic of Korea.²

ASEMUNDUS SEMINAR INSIGHTS

All three networking seminars were intended to provide information on the Erasmus Mundus programmes, as well as on joint study and mobility programmes between Asian and European

universities. The ASEMUNDUS consortium workshops also created a platform for European higher education institution representatives interested in meeting and collaborating with colleagues from Asian countries.

The programmes of the seminars were structured into specific sections over two days. Participants were first given an overview of the policy context of the European Unions’ higher education programmes. They were also given information on the educational system of the host country. The speakers from European or national institutions focused on the policy objectives of Erasmus Mundus and other cooperation programmes. The second part consisted of examples of Erasmus Mundus Actions 1

² Numbers regarding Erasmus Mundus participation in the respective countries:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/results_compendia/statistics_en.php



and 2. Presenters demonstrated the advantages and difficulties of coordinating international programmes when deciding to collaborate with Asian or European colleagues. Workshops were also held on specific topics such as the development of a joint curriculum or the improvement in student mobility. Recommendations on how to support student and staff mobility and building up a joint curriculum can be found on the ASEMUNDUS webpage: www.asem-education-secretariat.org/asemundus.

The most important part, however, were the networking opportunities. As a result of the lack of balance between European and Asian participants at the seminar in Jakarta, the ASEMUNDUS consortium decided to grant European higher education representatives financial support for their travel and accommodation expenses through Euro-Asia.net which is an additional EU-funded project. Consequently, interested European HEI representatives applied for funding through a call for proposal by briefly describing their project proposal and were reimbursed of 80% of travel costs if successful. All project proposals made by European beneficiaries were compiled into a project compendium and this provided the material for a seminar. As a result of a survey done during the registration procedure, Asian participants could also have their project idea published in the compendium. All the project presenters had the opportunity to present and also find future potential partners.

The ASEMUNDUS team selected ASEMUNDUS promoters to promote the idea of Erasmus Mundus. Representatives of higher education institutions, university associations, ministries, EU centres or other relevant organizations could be nominated as promoters. Selection was made by the ASEMUNDUS project team in collaboration with the European Commission. In total, 23 promoters from Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, South Korea, China and Japan were selected.³ The ASEMUNDUS team provided all promoters with the following information:

- ✓ examples of good practice of on-going joint study programmes at Masters level,
- ✓ examples of good practice of on-going joint mobility projects,
- ✓ recommendations for setting-up joint study programmes or a mobility project,
- ✓ overview of European higher education system,
- ✓ presentation of the actors involved in successful projects,
- ✓ background on funding options/programmes available at the European level,
- ✓ contact for European Union delegations in Asia and Erasmus Mundus National Structures in Europe.

The selected promoters were expected to act as a focal point within their institution and beyond – to set up higher education cooperation projects with European partners or to set up joint study

³ The contact list of all promoters can be found on page 32



Seoul, Korea (15-16 May, 2012)



programmes. Eight promoters applied successfully for financial support for setting up local information events/training on European-Asian cooperation projects. These were invited to disseminate their experiences at the final conference in Berlin.

ASEMUNDUS ACHIEVEMENTS

The most important achievement was to raise awareness of Erasmus Mundus and its objectives among Asian countries. All seminar participants had time to establish new contacts and to strengthen already-existing collaborations. As there were no new calls for proposals from the European Commission regarding Erasmus Mundus Action 1 projects, the achievements of ASEMUNDUS cannot be shown in numbers. However, many participants appreciated the opportunity to visit potential Asian partners and to exchange experiences

with other higher education representatives from Europe and Asia: "Because of the presentations, the short introductions and the opportunities to meet representatives of dozens of Asian and European Universities, I really felt that the seminar was uniquely useful and I could gain a lot of new knowledge I can disseminate both in my university and in my country."

The networking seminars increased the awareness that studying and/or working in Europe or Asia is feasible and definitely worthwhile. Those willing to develop a joint programme between Asia and Europe obtained a thorough understanding of the advantages and pitfalls. This helped to pave the way towards more cooperation between Europe and Asia in the field of higher education. Approximately 88% of the seminar participants were encouraged to participate in a joint cooperation project.

ASEMUNDUS – A PROJECT WITH POLITICAL IMPACT?



Nina Scholle-Pollmann,

*Deputy Director ASEM Education Secretariat
Head of the Third-Country Programmes Unit in Higher Education of the EU
German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)*

It can be easily seen that the project named 'ASEMUNDUS' was formed by combining two terms: 'ASEM' is the acronym for the Asia-Europe Meeting founded in the mid-1990s as an informal platform for dialogue between the two regions; 'Mundus' is the second word in the 'Erasmus Mundus' programme name; this is an excellence and cooperation programme launched by the European Commission in 2004.

The heads of state and government of ASEM members¹ have met every two years since 1996. Moreover, since 2008, regular meetings have also been held between those education ministers under the 'ASEM umbrella'. Issues related to mobility enhancement, quality assurance and structural cooperation between both regions in the area of education are among those discussed here.

The Erasmus Mundus programme constitutes a key component in cooperating within the ASEM dialogue on education. In the country reports of European and several Asian ASEM member states compiled in preparation for the meeting of ministers, Erasmus Mundus has repeatedly served as an example of good practice in terms of structured, international academic cooperation. The linking of institutional cooperation and mobility, and the associated automatic recognition of study credits obtained abroad provide answers to questions frequently raised during the ASEM dialogue on education. As a consequence, the ministers explicitly recommended the following at the 2nd ASEM Education Meeting of ministers (ASEMME2) held in Hanoi:

"To provide more support to transnational initiatives and activities aimed at enhancing the accessibility, profile, image and visibility of, and access to, Asian and European higher education in the world. Also, to welcome the proposal of DAAD for a project **on promoting joint programmes and mobility between ASEM countries.**"

¹ 27 EU Member States and the European Commission, 10 ASEAN countries and the ASEAN Secretariat; Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.



“As a general impression, it seemed that a joint programme would be hard to sustain through EU funding and industrial sponsorship. It would appear more realistic to have longer term cooperation infrastructure that would support secondary actions - R&D, mobility etc. - between at least some of the partners involved.”

This initiative launched by nine European National Structures² was thus brought into life – a project that should accommodate the desire of ministers “to promote all kinds of structural education cooperation among ASEM partners”.

In its three years of funding, project participants planned to increase the visibility of the education systems and institutions of both regions by improving information and stimulating joint programmes in numerous Asian states³. During networking seminars, various different Erasmus Mundus masters degree courses, doctoral programmes and mobility networks were presented and potential partners brought together to determine whether a shared future in the form of a structured programme was possible. These seminars were held within the scope of international higher education fairs.

The Erasmus Mundus programme financed by the European Commission, with 1.3 billion Euros for a total period of ten years, is not restricted to cooperation with third countries in the ASEM region – rather structured cooperation between European higher education institutions and higher education institutions in all countries around the globe is required. The proportion of Erasmus Mundus

partnerships between European and Asian higher education institutions is relatively small compared with the total number of Erasmus Mundus partnerships.

While this may be partly a result of the fact that the administration costs for a structured international degree course are relatively high, a further aspect should not be neglected: trust. A study commissioned by the European Commission within the scope of the Asian Cluster project established that all Erasmus Mundus degree courses with Asian participation could have happened as a result of existing ‘loose’ partnerships. Projects requiring transparency and an understanding of different higher education systems on the one hand and creating a platform to bring together interested representatives from higher education institutions on the other could be developed further.

It would be presumptuous to claim that a small project such as ASEMUNDUS has a significant political impact. Despite this, it is nonetheless hoped that projects such as ASEMUNDUS will be deemed worth repeating and that ministers would welcome further similar initiatives at the 2013 meeting of ministers in Kuala Lumpur (ASEMME4).

2 National Structures for Erasmus Mundus from Austria (OeAD), Belgium – the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training, Cyprus – the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture, Estonia – the Archimedes Foundation, Germany – DAAD, Hungary – the Tempus Public Foundation, Latvia – the State Education Development Agency, Poland – the Foundation for the Development of the Education System and the Netherlands – NUFFIC.

3 Indonesia, Thailand and Korea.



10 YEARS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE KEBANGSAAN UNIVERSITY, MALAYSIA AND THE UNIVERSITY OF DUISBURG-ESSEN, GERMANY

A CASE STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Axel Hunger

The Faculty of Engineering, University of Duisburg-Essen, 47057 Duisburg, Germany

1. THE FIRST STEPS – HOW IT ALL STARTED – THE STRATEGIC GOALS

The long-lasting partnership started in 2000. It began when a summer school was organised at Kebangsaan University (UKM) in Malaysia. The other partner was the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Duisburg-Essen (UDE). The school was funded by DAAD – the German Academic Exchange Service. This was an exploratory event, but it soon developed into the nucleus of cooperation between UKM and UDE. Towards the end of 2000, a partnership between the two universities was established with strategic objectives.

Both universities were of a similar age and size and this was a good basis for development; in addition, both faculties of engineering are similar in structure, combining departments of electrical & electronics, mechanical & material and civil engineering but with some additional specialties in each university. This structure is not common in engineering faculties but provides a great deal of power for the faculty. This is so because it enables interdisciplinary research and teaching and also acts as a source of influence within the respective universities because of a large budget, a large number of students and graduates as well as a high degree of recognition in research and development.

The early phase of development of collaboration faced several challenges, including funding requirements, differences in the educational, cultural, language, socio-economic and political systems between Malaysia and Germany. However project funding was not a major issue in the development of collaboration between UKM and UDE. This collaboration was initiated at the time when the German government had started to open up its educational system, encouraging German institutions to seek international partners for collaboration, particularly the development of programmes for student mobility. UKM was a willing partner and the UDE-UKM collaboration project was

well-funded by the DAAD and the European Union (EU), as well as by the Mercator Foundation. However, the pioneers of the programme in both countries encountered severe challenges such as differences in educational, cultural, linguistic, socio-economic and political systems. An average of four to six exchange visits from both sides took place from 2001 to 2003, during which series of meetings, workshops and discussions were held. The collaboration was initially met with scepticism from faculty members from both institutions. However, as a result of strong commitment, collaboration between individuals in UDE and UKM produced several joint educational initiatives and research projects began. These provided benefits and increased reputations for both parties.

2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION

The information below highlights the stages of development of the partnership:

- 1998 – 2006: development of international degree courses at UDE
- 2001 – now: development of double degree programmes at UDE and UKM
- 2001 – 2006: institutionalisation through the establishment of the Mercator Office and the Multimedia Laboratory at UKM to support the partnership as well as establishing joint teaching and research
- 2007 – now: further development of the Mercator Office from its own funds
- 2010: establishment of the UKM International Office at UDE
- 2010 – now: double degree PhD programmes at UDE and UKM
- 2012: founding of Mercator Science and Education Sdn. Bhd. as an independent company in Malaysia to fund joint study programmes and partnership between universities and industry.

“Outcomes:

- ✓ *learnt about dual and joint programmes,*
- ✓ *learnt about handling joint programmes with many international partners,*
- ✓ *learnt that universities have different strategies from ours,*
- ✓ *discovered that industries don't work together.”*

These developments were facilitated primarily by faculty members of the engineering departments of both partners. Members of the Faculty of Economics, the Faculty of Science and Technology, the Faculty of Social Sciences have become involved in the partnership and have introduced specific activities in recent years. Today, they look forward to the establishment of double degree programmes, exchange programmes, double degree PhD programmes and joint research projects.

Numerous partnerships with foreign higher education institutions have already been established in Malaysia. However, the strong, decade-long partnership between UKM and UDE is unique as it involves personal cooperation. UKM is recognised as a research university and receives considerable support from the Malaysian government. At an educational level, mutual acceptance is provided and documented by Memorandums of Understanding and running programmes. Areas of common interest, where UKM and UDE can combine their strengths, have been identified in research. Research and development has been initiated in diverse fields of joint interest. Several projects have already been implemented in these areas. One recent project seeks to institutionalise mutual cooperation on environmental issues and serve as a centre of excellence in South East Asia.

The UKM-UDE partnership has achieved stability and has forged links between numerous people and institutions. The partnership remains open to new joint activities. This long-lasting, mutual cooperation can attract bright, new scientists to become partners in the project. Developments have been achieved gradually, bearing in mind the needs of both partners and the opportunities available. The building blocks of this development are described in the following text.

2.1 Double Degree Programme at first degree level and exchange programmes

The teaching activities at the first degree and masters levels are

- double degree bachelor programmes in several fields of engineering. Presently, these fields include:
 - Electrical Engineering (2 profiles)
 - Mechanical Engineering (1 profile)
 - Civil Engineering (2 profiles)
- student exchanges at first degree and masters levels
- regular guest professorship exchanges
- visits by professors and researchers to each institution

The number of students of the double degree programmes has fluctuated since its inception. After some improvements in the structure of the programmes, the number stabilised to more than 12 students per year. Recently, however, more than 20 students have travelled from UKM to UDE each year. 112 double degree UKM students have travelled to UDE for their final year of study and for graduation from both universities. The number of exchange students from UDE has also varied significantly over the years. In recent years, more than 20 students per year from UDE have been to UKM for one semester. Over the years, 60 students from UDE have stayed at UKM for one semester.

Another development has involved the creation of various tools to facilitate the smooth creation and operation of the double degree and exchange programmes. These tools have provided assistance in the design and maintenance of the programmes as well as the databases and platforms for mobile students. Most of these tools are web-based; this enables participating institutions in both partner universities to support the mobility of students based on the collection and use of all relevant data from both sides. Also, students in both partner universities have been able to access all the necessary information easily.



2.2 Double Degree Programme for joint PhD/Dr.-Ing.

The bi-national PhD programme between UKM and UDE was launched in December 2010 to increase research-related cooperation. This programme, entitled 'PromISE', offers doctoral candidates the unique opportunity to obtain a double degree as a PhD, conduct research in an international scientific environment and become familiar with different cultures. The programme is designed as a research project for 3 to 4 years, accompanied by courses and colloquia.

The research projects are interdisciplinary, combining different fields of science within faculties. All projects are supervised by two professors, one from each university. Research is carried out in both universities following a sandwich scheme. All arrangements are specified in a *Cotutelle* Agreement.

2.3 Research

Research and development projects have been jointly carried out at different levels, namely:

- a) subjects in engineering through several members of the cooperating engineering departments, and
- b) international cooperation on related issues.

Some partnerships with industries have been established in engineering subjects.

Teams from UKM and UDE have acted as main partners in a collaborative project funded by the European Community Intercultural Communication under Asia-Link in some research issues involving teaching and co-operation. Apart from the projects mentioned above, UKM has also sponsored an important project to support a mobility scheme in engineering. Its title is 'The Integration of Intercultural Communication in Engineering Education: Preparing for Educational and Professional Mobility between Malaysia and Germany.' This project was followed by more UKM-funded projects related to the partnership and its different facets.

These activities affirm the understanding between UKM and UDE that universities can always apply the key principle of unity in teaching and research. This is particularly important for those engineering sciences which have to combine the transfer of knowledge with the creation of innovative solutions to practical issues.

2.4 Institutionalisation through mutual Liaison Offices

The UKM-Mercator Office and the Multimedia Lab (UKM-MO) were established in 2002 and funded by Stiftung Mercator GmbH, Essen for a period of five years. UKM-MO operates as a liaison office, supporting double degree and exchange programmes and their researchers and helping to establish joint research projects. The laboratory is also meant to improve cooperation among industries of different locations, especially in Europe and Southeast Asia.

UKM opened its liaison office at UDE in 2010. It is known as the UKM International Office at UDE, completing a mutual scheme of liaison offices. This office mainly provides support to students and visiting scholars from UKM. Linking UKM and UDE via liaison offices has proved to be a good investment. Modern forms of Internet-based media are widely available and are both cheap and versatile. However, modern media cannot replace face-to-face meetings and discussions. The distance between Malaysia and Europe is approximately 10,000 km; consequently liaison offices with permanent staff have proved to be the most effective method of communication.

“As a result of the presentations, the introductions and the chance to meet representatives of many Asian and European universities, I really felt that the seminar was absolutely useful and I could gain a lot of new knowledge that I could disseminate in my university and country.”



3. LESSONS LEARNT

The partnership between UKM and UDE has experienced numerous ups and some downs. However, it has shown permanent growth and development. One of the challenges faced in earlier times was the cultural differences between Malaysia and Germany. These differences required the partners to learn and adapt. At first, the educational system, academic structure and the operation and style of teaching appeared similar. However, after longer and deeper collaboration, many differences became obvious. Nevertheless, the ever-growing understanding led to understanding and cooperation and this motivated partners to come up with new joint activities.

The close collaboration described above needed time to develop; this is an important idea that has developed from our joint experience. The continuing close international collaboration on a close basis demands constant discussions and agreement on common goals. Naturally, setbacks occur, but if both parties are clear regarding their goals, then they can discuss, adapt and reach higher levels of academic quality. Therefore, the most important elements in a partnership are the commitment of the academics involved from both sides and enough time to learn and develop the partnership.

The major challenge in a partnership is the achievement of success. The growth in the number of mobile students in both countries has forced the partners to look for more funding and to extend the roles of their liaison offices. However, this challenge was welcomed because it demonstrated that all developments were on the right track. Consequently, attracting more and more students and academic staff.

4. SUMMARY

The partnership between UKM and UDE, public universities from South East Asia and Europe, has been discussed in this paper. Its sustainability has been demonstrated in the following ways:

- **tools and processes:** different tools for the development of double degree programmes have been used for the operation and development of joint study programmes. Procedures for transparent and efficient service have been developed between the partners and their liaison offices.
- **experience and adjustments:** based on the experience gained during more than 10 years operation of the double degree study courses, adjustments have been made. As a result of these adjustments, the double degree courses have developed and have become attractive for students. This demonstrates the quality of the partnership between UKM and UDE.
- **institutionalisation:** the opportunities for joint study are widely appreciated in both countries. The physical and metaphorical bridges that have been built by liaison offices and dedicated staff have proved to be strong pillars for the growth of the partnership.
- **quality management:** as a result of a combination of feedback based on results and the monitoring of procedures improvements are being made on a continuous basis. Consequently, quality management is improving constantly.
- **finance:** funding for the implementation of the programmes is provided by the two partners, UKM and UDE, and through projects and support from third parties.



MIND AS AN EXAMPLE OF DEVELOPING JOINT STUDY PROGRAMMES WITH ASIA



Ralf Aschemann,
professor and academic co-ordinator, University of Graz, Austria

INTRODUCTION

The Erasmus Mundus **M**aster’s Programme in **I**ndustrial Ecology (MIND) was launched in the winter term of 2011/2012. It brought together seven universities, four from Europe, one from the USA and two from Asia. This paper will analyse the development of MIND as a joint study programme between Europe and Asia from a European viewpoint. It will complement the paper by Huang Huh Han, who focused on the Asian perspective when exploring the LOTUS programme. First, the reader will be provided with basic information on MIND. Second, this paper will deal with both the benefits and challenges which occur when working with Asian universities. Finally, the paper will conclude with some recommendations.

THE MIND PROGRAMME

The MIND consortium consists of seven universities from three continents, namely

- the Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden
- the Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands
- the Leiden University, the Netherlands
- the University of Graz, Austria which worked as co-ordinator

- the Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand
- the Waseda University, Japan
- the Rochester Institute of Technology, U.S.A.

This consortium offers a two-year programme in the emerging field of Industrial Ecology, which can be very briefly defined as the study of material and energy flows through all kinds of industrial systems by considering the behaviour of the actors concerned. Consequently, natural and technical as well as social sciences are needed, considering levels from global to local in an integrated systemic approach.

After finishing the orientation week, the selected MIND students separated to spend their first year in one of the EU countries, whereas in the third and fourth semester they have the opportunity to study at other European and non-European universities of the consortium. A summer school for all students of a MIND edition is organized between the first and second year. The first MIND graduation is scheduled for August 2013.

To enable an exchange between MIND cohorts, the second orientation week has been organized together with the first summer school; the third orientation week will be held together with the second summer school and the first graduation ceremony etc. See Figure 1 for the general structure of MIND.

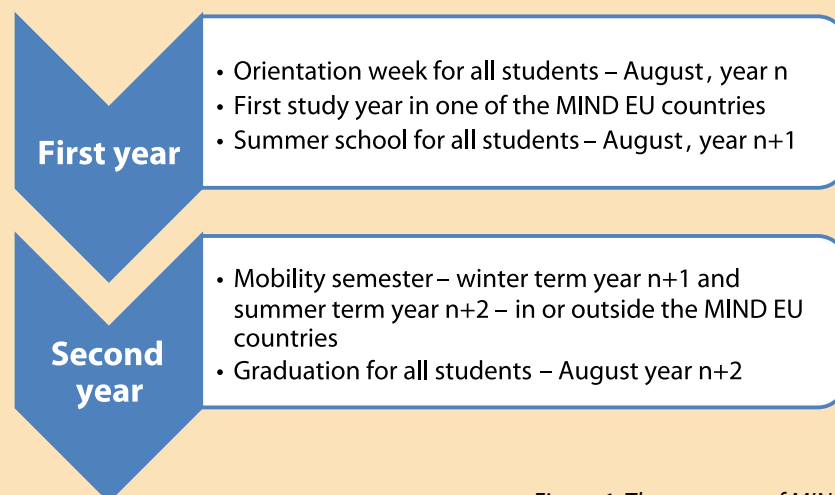


Figure 1: The structure of MIND



34 students -22 female and 12 male- were selected from more than 400 applications for the first two MIND editions. Their geographical distribution in terms of continents is shown in Figure 2 below.

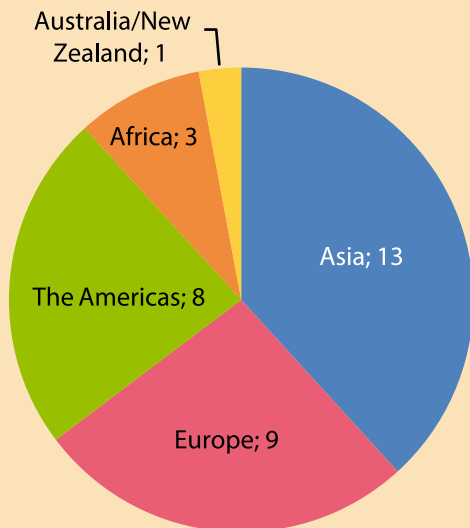


Figure 2: The ethnic origins of MIND students (the 2011-13 and 2012-14 editions)

It can be seen that the majority of the selected students -38.2%- are from Asia, 26.5% are from Europe and 23.5% from North and Latin America. The remaining 11.8% are from Africa and New Zealand.

THE BENEFITS OF EUROPEAN-ASIAN CO-OPERATION

When developing a joint study programme between European and Asian universities - which is the focus of this paper - collaboration with the U.S. universities can be neglected. However, inter-continental co-operation also has benefits.

The academics involved in MIND found new exchange opportunities through their jointly developed programme. For example, the Asian Institute of

Technology offers a course entitled Industrial Ecology from an Asian Perspective, two professors from Waseda University visited Gothenburg and Leiden during the summer term of 2012. In general, such activities lead to the added value of different perceptions and comparisons of different problem situations; for example comparing the South-East Asian situation in the case of the MIND Thai partner or East-Asian in the case of the MIND Japanese partner, in relation to the European one. As a result, there is a better mutual understanding in terms of environmental and sustainability priorities for the respective regions; this is a good starting point to build up new project groups; for example for international research calls such as the forthcoming Horizon 2020.

There are different benefits to report in respect of MIND students. For instance, all MIND courses at the University of Graz are mostly attended by Austrian colleagues from other study programmes. Apart from the personal element, this enables new contacts for both the incoming and the local students and offers insights in other higher education structures or different mentalities. New ways of thinking can be stimulated for both European and Asian MIND students, and students can develop and extend their language skills. Asian MIND students are exposed to new or different learning methods and teaching approaches in Europe and vice versa. This can broaden intellectual horizons.

As MIND students have to stay for at least one semester in a minimum of two different EU countries, their intercultural competences can grow, as well as those of their non-MIND colleagues. Asian students can establish links across Europe and vice versa; this broadens their CVs.

The MIND structure described in Figure 1 provides opportunities for students and professors to meet on a continuing basis to discuss issues such as subject and course content, the use of Industrial Ecology tools, the differences between the Asian and the European context and the contribution of natural and social sciences.



MORE BENEFITS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED APART FROM THESE ADVANTAGES

The first is concerned with quality. The jointly developed master's course enables the development of jointly-developed on both internal quality procedures through annual meetings and external quality assurance procedures as a result of an international evaluation group which reports to the MIND Programme Board. The quality of MIND can be checked from European and Asian viewpoints and improvements can be made. Moreover, informal quality assurance can be done by the students because they can compare the courses of the different consortium universities. This evaluation can also be conducted by academics who teach at partner universities.

Secondly, taking part in a joint study programme helps to position European and Asian universities in their respective countries or regions by making its internalization and mobility efforts visible. Valuable side-effects of the joint master's course include an increase of the employability of students, the ability to attract the best students from all over the world and awarding a degree that is jointly conferred and recognized by consortium members.

The benefits mentioned create several opportunities: MIND improves networking activities and enhances career opportunities for academics and students; it also improves quality assurance mechanisms which contribute to the further development and advancement of the programme. Examples could be the introduction of new courses, better co-ordinated learning outcomes, co-supervised master's theses or an increase in work placement opportunities. Additionally, the subject of Industrial Ecology is not only perceived as interdisciplinary but looks at the perspectives from different countries in Europe and Asia with their specific cultures, history, psychology, economic situations, environmental situations and social circumstances.

THE CHALLENGES OF EUROPEAN-ASIAN CO-OPERATION

The introduction of MIND inevitably carries with it a number of challenges. It is crucial to select partner universities carefully. This is one of the golden rules for new joint masters' programmes according to EUA 2004 in respect of diversity or covering the expertise needed within your consortium. On the other hand the consortium needs to be small enough to deal with the co-ordinating activities.

It is also important to ensure and maintain the full support of all universities involved. This is not only necessary at colleagues' or department level, it is also vital that the charter of the university enables the awarding of joint or double degrees. It is vital, too, that there are sufficient academic and administrative resources for these processes.

The process of creating a joint curriculum and degree cannot be underestimated; particularly when universities from different continents are involved. The MIND experience suggests that, even for European partners, it is still not possible to award graduates of the first programme with a joint degree. This is so far only feasible for Gothenburg and Graz, because Dutch legislation only allows the award of a double degree.

“Apart from personal meetings, the main benefits of the seminar in Seoul were the lectures and presentations. The topics about joint study programmes, developing them, finding partners and preparing Erasmus Mundus projects gave me an opportunity to understand more the process of creating a joint study programme.”



Another challenge that faces programmes is the idea of sustainable funding. Usually, the European Commission's EACEA - the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency - supports five editions of masters' courses. After that, the consortium has to take care of finance. In a consortium with partners from more than one continent, this task is not easy to achieve, as universities tend to prefer their own programmes rather than to support joint ones. The current economic crisis is another obstacle. The introduction of new financial structures or changes to existing ones in respect of tuition fees, which has happened in the case of MIND, means that the financial structures of the entire consortium have to be changed.

Finally, issues such as last minute cancellations of selected scholarship holders have to be dealt with. This happened in the first MIND edition; a student from Sri Lanka announced at short notice that she would have to withdraw from the programme for personal reasons. Her scholarship could not be awarded to other non-EU candidates on the reserve list because it was too late.

RECOMMENDATIONS

MIND is still in a development phase; its first students will only graduate in August 2013. The experiences gained so far with the first and second student cohorts have been described in the previous sections, paying special attention to benefits and challenges that have occurred in European-Asian co-operation when developing and running a joint masters course. This section contains some recommendations.

Contracts such as the consortium agreement or the student agreement are necessary elements of developing a joint master's programme but mutual trust is another indispensable condition for fruitful co-operation. This belief exists in the MIND programme; the problems encountered can be solved by using personal contacts.

Another pre-condition for successful consortia is a degree of flexibility. Unexpected events happen sometimes and this happened in MIND in October 2011. The whole campus of the Asian Institute of Technology was totally inundated as an impact of the dramatic Thai floods. The consequence of that was that student mobility had to be restricted and the Thai partner will not be able to receive MIND students before 2013.

To amplify the various positive networking and exchange effects mentioned earlier, the involvement of multilateral institutions needs to be strengthened. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will play an important role for South-East Asia, as it heads towards achieving an ASEAN community, including a common market, by 2015.

REFERENCES

European University Association (EUA), 2004: Developing Joint Masters Programmes for Europe - Results of the EUA Joint Masters Project, March 2002 to January 2004, Brussels; http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Joint_Masters_report.1087219975578.pdf, last access on 12 November 2012.

"We were discussing practical plans for implementing a student exchange programme and closer cooperation in research. It is planned that members of their university, including their dean, will come to our university this year to join our overall partner meeting and sign a memorandum of understanding to co-operate further."



MOBILITY PROGRAMMES WITH EUROPE FROM THE ASIAN VIEWPOINT: LOTUS PROJECT CASE STUDY

Hoang Huu Hanh

Hue University, Vietnam - EMA2-LOTUS Project

1. BACKGROUND: LOTUS PROJECT

LOTUS, the Linking Organisation through University Synergy, is an EM Action 2 Partnership programme of European and Asian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Associations [1] aiming at fostering mutual enrichment and better understanding between the EU and Asia, through exchange programmes in the following programme activities [4, 5]:

- mobility of undergraduate and post-graduate students
- mobility of PhD students
- post-doctorate mobility
- academic and administrative staff mobility

The types of mobility to be funded are aimed at:

- undergraduate, masters, doctorate and post-doctorate students and
- academic staff exchanges for the purposes of teaching, practical training and research.

This project is designed:

- to provide South-East Asian students and staff with the opportunity to go to a European university to improve, enrich and develop their knowledge and skills. The scholarships are only granted to South-East Asian students and staff who go to Europe.
- to enable students to benefit linguistically, culturally and educationally from the experience of pursuing academic studies in another country. All students must have a thorough command of English.

The following objectives have been defined for the project [4]:

- To promote cooperation between the EU and Asian countries involved in the project: the project attempts to build structured long-term cooperation between all partners, resulting in a sustainable network. The project offers a perfect opportunity to boost the exchange of know-how for curriculum development, new teaching methods, international relations and university management.

- To enable students to benefit from a study/research period abroad and to develop a pool of knowledge from well-qualified, open-minded and internationally experienced young men and women as future leaders. The project also aims to form a bridge between the EU and the Asian countries involved by offering opportunities to young people to come to the EU and develop contacts.
- To promote regional cooperation in the Asian countries involved and to train a future generation of academics to foster a culture of sustainable development and durable growth as well as promoting regional integration.
- To improve the transparency and recognition of studies and qualifications: the project is focused on mobility and will focus explicitly on the promotion of the recognition of the studies undertaken.
- To contribute to the provision of studies to students from vulnerable groups, provide equal opportunities and disseminate EU social and democratic values. 15% of the scholarships are reserved for students from vulnerable groups in the Asian countries involved, refugees, ethnic minorities, internally displaced populations, disabled students and the financially disadvantaged.
- To enhance the skills of staff that can, in turn, contribute to the improvement of the education system in their home country. 22% of the scholarships are reserved for staff exchanges. Professors who apply will have to demonstrate how their stay will contribute to structural reforms in the Asian countries involved and how this can be evaluated.
- To enhance, in the medium term, the political, cultural, educational and economic links between the EU and the Asian countries involved. This project is intended to contribute to the improvement of mutual understanding between the EU and Asia through personal contacts.

2. LOTUS: NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

LOTUS I, II and III, correspondingly EM Action 2 Lot 13 in 2010, Lot 2 in 2011, and Lot 10 in 2012, have provided opportunities for students and staff from South-East Asian universities, including China, to study at distinguished European universities

through different mobility types. LOTUS I and II have completed selection of applicants and the following figures show planned and actual mobility.

As shown in Figure 1, planned and actual mobility was generally balanced. The biggest differences were in the post-doctoral and PhD exchange sectors.

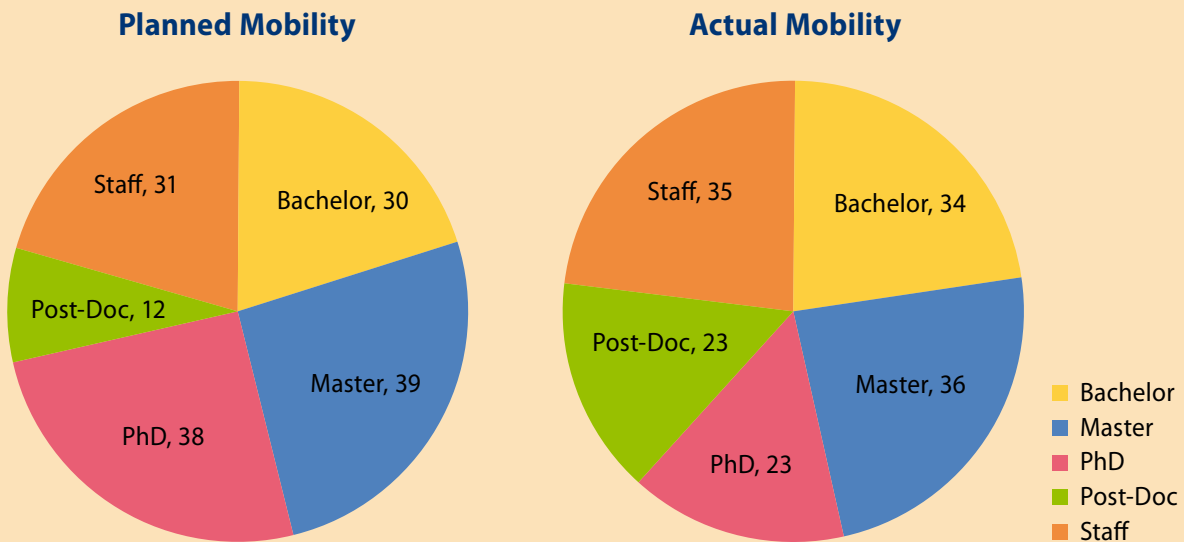


Figure 1: LOTUS I mobility [2]

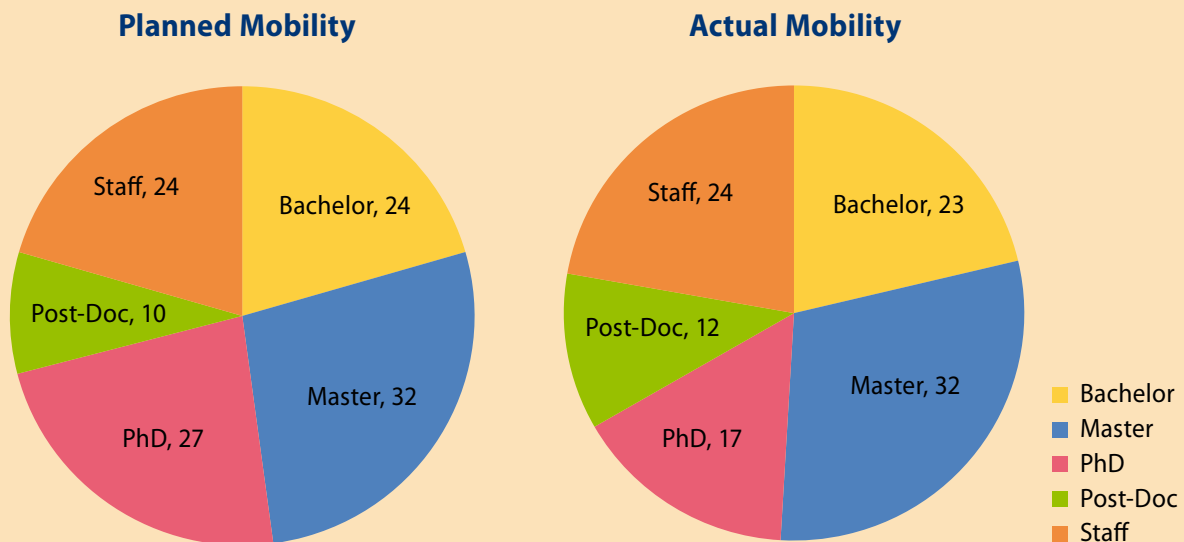


Figure 2: LOTUS II mobility [3]



The lessons learnt in LOTUS I were reflected in LOTUS II with only two calls; a first long call – CALL 1, and a short call – CALL 2 for the remainder of the scholarships. Figure 2 shows that the actual numbers of grants fit well with planned mobility.

3. AN ASIAN PERSPECTIVE

3.1. SWOT Analysis and an Asian Viewpoint

The achievement of project objectives have been analysed according to a SWOT analysis as follows:

● Strengths

LOTUS shows that a strong consortium with a dynamic partnership is vital to successful project implementation. This consists of strong EU universities to attract students, their experience in strategic planning, project management, centralised management of logistics, strong ICT support and a well-established communication method. Asian universities need to be strong in providing good students, support mobility and well-integrated procedures in the management system of each university. Universities in the LOTUS consortium need to have a strong commitment to the objectives of LOTUS projects.

● Weaknesses

Credit recognition is the main weakness of exchange programmes in general. LOTUS projects also face this problem but with a narrower scope. This problem is true for a small number of Asian universities in the consortium which do not have a proper credit transfer from student achieved ECTS. Learning agreements play a very important role in this issue.

● Opportunities

Opportunities can be seen for the sustainability of the project. By working in a consortium, universities become acquainted with each other and can explore cooperation bilaterally. This does not only apply to EU-Asian HEIs cooperation but also to vice-versa. From an Asian point of view, this

provides an opportunity to develop closer regional co-operation.

Within this project, there are universities involved in other projects; consequently, it is possible to share best practice, learn from each other to improve project management and quality assurance.

The synergy gained by utilising sources between universities is also clear. For instance, outputs of EM ACTION 2 projects could be good inputs for EMA3 projects or EM projects can share resources in terms of quality assurance.

Networking is essential for successful projects. Co-operation between EU-Asian, Asian-Asian HEIs could be established through initiatives by project consortium members. As a result, joint research and training programmes could be set up and funded by bilateral agreements between nations.

● Threats

As mentioned in [4], financial sustainability is the main threat. Secondly, an overall system for credit transfer and recognition in a common framework in Asian universities is still not available. There is also no mobility flow from EU to Asian HEIs.

3.2. Discussion

There are three pillars in HEIs: research, education and training and service to society. If an international cooperative view is taken, the first part is the easiest to achieve as it involves scientists in mutual research areas and research activities are not as complex as in social or educational areas. The third is concerned with establishing frameworks for technology transfer and benefits for the community. However, the second pillar combines complete co-operation between HEIs because it requires a combination of social and academic achievements to build successful collaboration. In my view, this cooperation is the hardest to achieve. For a globalised approach to education this pillar contains several levels of cooperation- a shared curricula, joint training programmes, credit exchange transfers and recognition, educational quality assurance and so on.



I can say that EM Action 2 projects play a very important role in bolstering educational cooperation between EU and Asian HEIs. Asian universities are the beneficiaries of EM Action 2 projects -specific lots- because they can enable staff to be trained at several levels – including masters level, PhD and post-doctoral. They can also enrich their professional lives through staff exchange mobility. Local students also benefit by studying in European HEIs.

This type of programme can limit the brain drain problem that other scholarship programmes face. Mobility can increase the possibility of grant holders returning because of their commitments to their home institutions.

This process can also encourage a systematic procedure for credit exchange transfer and recognition in Asian universities, and can also initiate an exchange scheme in EU-Asia credit exchange at different levels; for example at programme, department, faculty, university and consortia levels.

EM Action 2 projects can create consortia so that universities can have a closer working environment in which initiatives of cooperation could happen. An example of this type of cooperation is the case of Hue University which was involved in a LOTUS project. Following the success of the participation of Hue University, Flemish university rectors created a mission to Hue University in 2011 which resulted in co-operation with Hue University in an Institutional University Cooperation programme funded by VLIR-UOS¹. This started in 2012 with a preparation year.

It can be expected that there will be further EU-Asian cooperation. It is also expected that Asian HEIs cooperation and local and nationwide cooperation will increase. It is likely that this will be initiated by consortia through a credit exchange system, thematic networks and joint master's programmes between Asian HEIs. These would be considerable achievements of EM A1 and A2 projects and would provide the motivation for further collaboration regionally.

4. CONCLUSION

As presented above, it can be expected that the success of EM projects will play an important part in the Asian higher education reform agenda. This could also spread from each university involved to other institutions nationwide. Partner universities could become integral parts and motivators for a global approach to higher education.

The EM projects could seed into global higher education and become integral parts of the blossoming of future higher education. This could motivate regional education and training cooperation and research initiatives in EU-Asian and Asian HEIs cooperation.

5. REFERENCES

- [1] Erasmus Mundus Programme: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/programme/about_erasmus_mundus_en.php
- [2] LOTUS I Consortium meeting report, 2011.
- [3] LOTUS II Consortium meeting report, 2012.
- [4] LOTUS Project Guidelines, 2010.
- [5] LOTUS website: <http://www.lotus.ugent.be/>

“During the meeting, contacts were established with the people mentioned and an agreement was made to participate in the Erasmus Mundus Action 2 project application.”



“I have learned that many Korean students have not considered Europe as an attractive place to study. During and after the meeting, I presented our programmes to many participants who seemed to be very interested.”



INTERVIEW WITH ERASMUS MUNDUS ALUMNI FROM ASIA

Chaidarun Tippawan,

Erasmus Mundus Student and Former Student Association

PROFILE OF THE STUDENT

Chaidarun Tippawan was born in Bangkok, Thailand. She graduated with honours in Political Science specialising in International Relations from Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. She received an Erasmus Mundus scholarship to study a Master of Arts in Euroculture - Europe in the Wider World - from 2006 to 2008. During her EM MA studies, she took courses at Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden, Palacky University, Olomouc, Czech Republic; and Marc Bloch University, Strasbourg, France. She also undertook work placements at the European Commission and the Mission of Thailand to the European Union in Brussels, Belgium. She currently works as the Head of the Management and Strategy Section at the Thailand Centre of Excellence in Physics, Chiang Mai Thailand.

1. How did you discover the Erasmus Mundus programme and why did you choose to do an EMMC?

I first heard about the Erasmus Mundus programme in 2004 from the European Union Delegation in Thailand through my previous work at the Office of the Higher Education Commission – OHEC. Having learned about the Erasmus Mundus scholarship opportunity, I applied for an EMMC with the prime aim of improving my career path in foreign affairs. I was attracted by the ideas of mobility and transferrable credits in Europe. During my first degree studies, I undertook several Europe-related subjects and seminars including the history, the integration process and foreign policy of Europe. However, I was even more fascinated by Europe itself.

2. Is Erasmus Mundus well-known among Thai students? Do Thai students decide to move easily to other countries during their studies?

Since the first promotional event of Erasmus Mundus in 2004, Thai students have known of the programme as demonstrated by the increasing number of applications as well as the growth in scholarship/fellowship awardees. Mobility was not very attractive to Thai students because Thai universities did not

have fully transferrable credit agreement even among themselves. Consequently, it was difficult to explain the idea of ECTS and double/multiple/joint degrees to Thai students and potential scholars.

QUALITY OF STUDIES

3. Have you been satisfied by the quality of your course?

I have been satisfied with the quality of the Erasmus Mundus Master of Arts programme in Euroculture. The curriculum was very well-designed and seemed compatible between one university and another. The academic staff was highly qualified and encouraging.

4. Could you identify and evaluate different teaching methods in Europe and Asia at the level of students' interaction and if so, could you evaluate them?

Based on my experience, the teaching methods in many Thai universities are lecture-based. This meant having reading assignments and paper-based examinations. At those European universities where I studied, professors initially gave lectures and then organized discussion classes as well as study groups. This encouraged students to express their ideas. There were times when classes were held at local bars, in parks or within historical surroundings to familiarise students with the subject concerned. As a result, the opportunities for interaction during my studies at European Universities' were more motivating than in Asian Universities.

5. What was the language of instruction? How did the language of instruction affect your communication skills?

My master's course was conducted entirely in English; this helped me to strengthen my English proficiency to a high professional standard. I also had the opportunity to learn some basic Czech during my semester at Palacky University, Olomouc in the Czech Republic. I was also able to refresh my French during my studies in Strasbourg and work placements in Brussels.



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

6. How would you describe the administrative procedures? Did you encounter problems? If yes, could you describe them?

The administrative procedures were quite poor and problematic among partner universities. The most crucial problem during my studies concerned financial matters because the host university was unable to send monthly allowances to the host university - from Sweden to the Czech Republic. I could not receive my allowance for a couple of months until they found a solution. The whole procedure was stressful during that time.

7. Could you describe the process of finding accommodation?

Usually university officers help people to find accommodation on campus with various choices regarding cost. I stayed in a private studio in Sweden, a shared room on campus in the Czech Republic, a rented apartment in Belgium and a hostel in France. Based on my experience, students can decide how much they would like to spend on accommodation and select a room which is suitable. Considering the fact that a normal minimum rental period is 6 months or 1 year some universities had a limited number of flats available for short-term accommodation. This was because Erasmus Mundus students may spend only 3-4 months at certain universities. In these cases, students had to find accommodation themselves, through websites or networks of exchange students.

STUDENT LIFE

8. Describe the experience of making new friends.

Making new friends with my international classmates was never a problem. We were all from different cultures and open to learn new things. Nevertheless,

living in a multicultural environment can cause unintentional misunderstandings or cultural clashes from time to time. This is a priceless lesson to learn regarding the acceptance of cultural differences.

9. Describe your activities during your free time.

I had the chance to join several activities specially organized for international students at Uppsala University. Thanks to the highly efficient student union, I could work voluntarily in student canteens and at university functions. My main purpose was not to earn extra money but to make new friends. I also spent holidays with friends both from my Erasmus Mundus course, student clubs and people I met at social events and other occasions. My main activities with friends included travelling, parties, cooking, sports events, shopping etc. When I was on my own I explored historical sites and museums in every place I visited.

AFTER ERASMUS MUNDUS

10. Do you believe that the Erasmus Mundus programme helps former students to be better prepared for professional activities? How did this experience help your academic and personal development as well as your employability?

The Erasmus Mundus definitely helped me. My peer Erasmus Mundus graduates have much better employment opportunities after their graduation while most of them work on an international basis outside their home countries. The academic and personal experiences I gained from being an Erasmus Mundus student have significantly expanded my career opportunities from being a civil servant based in Thailand to becoming a competent consultant at international level. This is thanks to the knowledge I gained and the excellent networking activities during my study and research in Europe.

OVERALL EVALUATION

11. What are your recommendations for EM coordinators?

First and foremost, the website is the most important source of information for Erasmus Mundus as well as other European courses and programmes. It must be clear to understand and navigate and must provide guidelines and sufficient information, especially about curriculum, application requirements and processes, selection criteria and the contact person. Many times applicants do not know who to contact when they have questions concerning their application and visa matters. It is also essential for the coordinators to be able to provide all the necessary information because students often need endless information and assistance. When they encounter problems ranging from visa issues to cultural misunderstandings, the first person they rely on is the coordinator at their respective university.

12. What were the most detrimental and the positive aspects within the Erasmus Mundus Masters Programme for you?

My worst experience was when I was robbed in the Czech Republic. It was a disaster because I immediately had to fly back to Sweden with money borrowed from a classmate for banking and visa issues. It was also difficult for me to go through the police procedures which were not conducted in English as I had to go to a Czech police station. However, I regarded this bad experience as an accident that could happen to anyone, anywhere and I have learned from it.

The benefit of being an Erasmus Mundus student was the priceless experience of living in an international environment with high quality education as well as excellent opportunities for mobility around Europe. I have learned first-hand about the experience of living in a diverse and multicultural environment. I have fallen in love wholeheartedly with Europe since my experience. However, my Erasmus Mundus road was not paved with roses.





RECOMMENDATIONS ON SETTING UP A JOINT STUDY PROGRAMME

Giovanna Filippini,

Head of International Relations Division, University of Bologna, Italy

The following recommendations derive from the experiences of two projects on the management of joint study programmes, both funded by the European Union within the Lifelong Learning Programme. The specific projects are JOIMAN and JOI.CON¹, and both were presented at the ASEMUNDUS seminar in Seoul.

Joint study programmes present several challenges to be addressed both in their development and implementation.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PHASES

The most important message in these phases is “know why and plan in advance”.

The issues to be tackled are as follows:

1. *Why, who with and how. It is essential to:*

- examine, evaluate and assess the reasons behind the idea of setting up a joint study programme and in particular, the added value, both in terms of the teaching experience and education opportunities for students;
- choose partner institutions, not only on the basis of trusted partnerships, but also on the basis of the teaching available, complementary studies, similarities, strong points and mobility opportunities;
- ensure institutional commitment and support at all levels, including academic and administrative, and by each partner institution involved;
- evaluate carefully at an early stage the compliance of all national legal frameworks and accreditation procedures and the tuition fee policies of each partner institution;
- be clear regarding the administrative processes to set up in a joint study programme and the availability of both academic and administrative support;
- define all the management issues, such as approval procedures by all relevant bodies in each partner institution, the creation of the necessary cooperation agreements,

accreditation processes both at national and internal levels;

- define a clear division of tasks among academic, administrative staff and individuals; define the people in charge of key activities and provide them with the necessary authority.

2. *Financial issues. It is critical to:*

- define a financially sustainable plan by drawing up a budget using full cost methods or at least considering the additional costs of the programme; also to ensure that these additional costs can be fully covered;
- exploit funding opportunities by considering all potential funding sources such as tuition fees, external funds available for the start up phase and the availability of grants and scholarships from national and international donors.

3. *Academic issues. It is absolutely necessary to:*

- develop the programme content, define the learning outcomes for students, set up the mobility scheme and include practical issues such as academic calendars, examination procedures, the awarding of credit points, thesis preparation and discussions and so on;
- define a quality assurance plan shared by all partners;
- define the level of integration of the study programme and decide on the degree to be awarded. Issues which have to be tackled are a jointly planned curriculum, the recognition of the periods spent and the examinations taken at partner institutions, language policy, certification of the programme, for example a double degree versus a joint degree or any other form of degree with a cross-reference quotation.

¹ Reports and project results of both are available and downloadable at www.joiman.eu



4. **Promotion. It is also necessary to:**

- define the target group - international versus local students - and define an appropriate promotion and communication plan;
- plan welcoming, tutoring and integration services and activities for international students;
- prepare the proper use of ICT tools for application and selection procedures and the management of student records.

THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

All the relevant decisions taken during the planning phase are put in place in the implementation phase: the main issues to be tackled can be grouped into the following groups:

1. **Administrative issues. It is important to:**

- obtain all definitive approvals from internal and external relevant bodies;
- approve and sign the cooperation agreement which represents the legal basis for cooperation between partner institutions;
- implement the accreditation and quality assurance procedures and take into consideration feedback procedures.

2. **Student management. It is essential to:**

- make sure that the enrolment procedures are followed according to the plan and evaluate the difficulties that may arise;
- organize services for students on their arrival; for example accommodation, visa and residence permits and to obtain feedback on perceived quality from them;
- prepare for the issuing of certificates and other documents to be given to students or to partner institutions.

3. **Financial management. It is imperative to:**

- ensure that the sustainability plan works and to evaluate deviations in order to revise and update the financial plan;
- organize financial support for the mobility of all students involved.

EVALUATION AND STABILISATION PHASES

These last two phases are often neglected, although they represent the core for the long-lasting sustainability of a joint study programme and to safeguard students and the degrees that they will be awarded.

These two phases should be based on sound and solid evaluation and assessment procedures to be decided and conducted jointly by all partner institutions involved in the joint programme.

To conduct this evaluation the following points need to be considered:

- periodical evaluations;
- the use of both internal and external experts to assess the results and design and write a reporting model to be used by all partners;
- the importance of student opinion and the involvement of stakeholders;
- the possible revision of the cooperation agreement;
- the protection of the successes achieved in respect of finance and structure.

“The networking seminar in Bangkok provided us with great opportunities to meet many European and Asian institutions, look for new potential partners and learn from the experience of other participants.”



GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS FROM THE PRACTICAL GUIDELINES OF EACEA OF THE REGIONAL CLUSTER ON ASIA

The following recommendations are the result of the regional cluster project on Asia that focused on the main characteristics and challenges in cooperation between European Higher Education Institutions and Asian partners. The aim of the EACEA was to bring the projects together and to identify and disseminate good practice through the exchange of experience. We compiled the Ten Golden Rules that help to establish a well-working partnership between European and Asian higher education institutions. The entire report can be found on the website of the EACEA: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/clusters/regional_cluster_asia_en.php

* * *

The diversity of the countries included makes it difficult to formulate universally valid messages. Nevertheless, existing good practice in EU-Asia higher education collaboration within EM, specifically regarding sustainability, the recognition of study periods abroad and university-business cooperation could be identified as key items and form part of the guidelines.

The following outcomes aim at enhancing international higher education cooperation in general and with Asia in particular. They could help coordinators and partners to establish and/or deepen a smooth-working partnership:

1. Align your motivation Although the EU-Asia community is developing in its level of cooperation, careful attention needs to be paid to the motivation and expectations gaps existing between Asian and European partners before establishing the partnership. While Europeans think of Asia as an opportunity for international development and mobility, Asian stakeholders seem to look for co-operation improvements in terms of capacity-building and attaining higher quality standards. Understanding the motivation of your partner and the added value for your consortium can build trust. Involving your Asian partner as an equal colleague will become a key factor in a long-lasting partnership.

2. Combine the know-how of partners The knowledge of the strength and weaknesses of each partner can prove to be important when formulating a strategic approach. A sound combination of the respective levels of know-how could create synergy and could lead to new ideas. This could be true regardless of the strands of action within Erasmus Mundus projects. The capacity of the Asian partner could also be important in respect of promotion projects and must be considered carefully.

3. Deal with challenges Language barriers, different academic calendars as well as diversity in teaching methods because of intercultural discrepancies are challenges in almost all international projects. Nevertheless, increasing the mobility of students and staff is a major motivator for cooperation across the two regions and perceived as added value to employability. Harmonisation of study periods and the fine-tuning of academic calendars in Asia and Europe must be considered. Language courses and intercultural courses in preparation for the period abroad need to be included in the curriculum. To avoid unpleasant surprises, the use of learning agreements, learning outcomes and/or diploma supplement is advisable before mobility takes place.

4. Balance mobility Two-way mobility is the best way to widen the engagement of EM Asian partners. Above all, staff mobility from Asia to Europe needs to be promoted, because guest lecturer and scholar exchange is usually followed by an increased interest by students and scholar applicants for exchanges. As soon as Asian scholars enter European higher education institutions to give lectures on certain topics, Asia will become more visible to Europe and more interest may be created. Real-life experience from country experts can lead to more attention and increase the interest of students and scholars.

5. Money makes the world go round It is the same with international projects. Limited budgets, the administration and running of inter-regional programmes are widespread and even more difficult to tackle when Erasmus Mundus funding runs out after five years, as it did under the Erasmus Mundus I

(2004 – 2008) and still does under the Erasmus Mundus II (2009 – 2013) programme. To provide sustainability after the funding period, coordinators as well as partners from both regions need to look for further funding already during the Erasmus Mundus period. National and/or private income streams need to be identified. Sometimes, National scholarship schemes are compatible with Erasmus Mundus activities and could complement the programmes. In that way, Erasmus Mundus courses could be attended, not only by Erasmus Mundus scholarship holder, but also by students equipped with a national fellowship. The possibility of applying for financial assistance apart from an Erasmus Mundus scholarship needs to be made clear. The fine-tuning of the tuition fee policy of the consortium in a way that not only benefits rich stakeholders but also benefits high-quality target groups needs to be examined. This is linked to the next significant recommendation on project promotion.

6. Promote the product The sustainability of the course depends on the interest raised at student level. The benefits of the added value of the study programme and the increased options for employability need to be made clear. The establishment of an EU-Asian former student association as a promoter for EU-Asian mobility could make people aware of this option, inform them of the challenges and underline the added value for future career planning. Staff mobility needs to be intensified as teachers can spread the message more effectively amongst their students regarding the richness of study abroad. To summarise, the visibility and credibility of the programmes in institutions needs to be increased. Further promotion can take place via publications and higher education fairs.

7. Brand the product To find funds from either national or private sectors there is a need to raise awareness of the product on offer. The Asian perspective in the programme is the real added value and is the benefit on offer. The quality of students educated with this special focus could open the door to further funding. Promotion in both regions could decide whether projects could continue and be financially sustainable. A former student association that operates well could become a binding link to industry and business and an

entry card to the world of work for future graduates. Continuing communication between the European and Asian partners is imperative. An effective former student association could also promote courses offered and the Asian perspective.

8. Learn the lessons There have been many lessons learned since the launch of Erasmus Mundus I in 2003. There have also been lessons learned regarding co-operation with Asia. Do not reinvent the wheel. So – talk to former project coordinators or partners, share experiences in meetings, create networks and take advantage of the possibilities new technologies offer.

9. Ensure the quality of the programme In the time of Bologna, quality assurance has become more and more important. The use of highly-effective quality assurance procedures in international programmes is still on the agenda of policy decision makers. When it comes to co-operating with Asia, significant progress has already been made. Internal and external quality assurance tools have been installed and are internationally linked. Nevertheless, to ensure further quality progress in your programme, monitoring and evaluating systems still need to be applied. The Handbook “Erasmus Mundus Quality Assurance for International Higher Education Courses” can help to review quality and/or adapt new features. To monitor and follow up graduate employability, tracer studies can also play an important role. Information on the professional success of graduates is crucial to the relevance of the knowledge and skills of the programmes offered.

10. Link the product to industry The first contact with the industrial world needs to be established during the study programme. The establishment of joint summer and/or winter schools in tandem with partners and industrial companies can enable work placements for students and increased co-operation with companies. It might also be possible to establish a comprehensive career service concept with special regard to working opportunities for European graduates in Asia and vice versa. Work experience in Asian countries could also lead to establishing strong links for students. Students could become the best ambassadors for mobility between Europe and Asia in the future.



PROMOTING THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA IN CHINA: A PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY FUNDED BY ASEMUNDUS

Zhuyu LI, Jian SHI

Sichuan University, China

Sichuan University (SCU) is one of China's key universities under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Education. It is located in Western China and is identified as a key high-level comprehensive research university under Project 985 and Project 211. SCU works with over 100 universities in the world. It boasts a faculty of over 3900 full-time academics, including 993 full-time professors. It enrolls 10,000 undergraduate and 6000 graduate students each year with a student body of 40,000 in undergraduate studies and 25,000 in graduate studies. It has more than 1500 international students.

SCU has had the opportunity to participate in 5 Erasmus Mundus (EM) projects with its European and Asian partners since 2009. SCU has sent out over 70 students and staff to Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Italy, France, Slovenia, Liechtenstein and Turkey for exchange visits or to undertake degree studies. There have also been 11 European students and teachers who have come to Sichuan University for exchange studies. They came from Belgium, Germany and Italy.

An EM panel has been set up in SCU to promote the success of projects. The panel members include the Vice President of SCU and experts from the Centre for European Studies (CES) and relevant departments of SCU. The panel is responsible for project promotion, file verification and all relevant formalities involving information feedback and credit authentication to support the overseas studies of scholarship winners and their consequent research in China.

SCU has successfully participated in two new EM Action 2 projects - LOTUS III (since 20 July 2012) - the beneficiary organization for this project is University of Ghent, Belgium and for the PANACEA Project it is *Université Montpellier 2: Sciences et Techniques*, France.

The university has organised two campus-ranged promotions to promote EM projects. Professor Li Zhuyu lectured to over 40 students on LOTUS III on 11 October 2012. The follow-up forum entitled Touch Europe through Erasmus Mundus was held on 26 October 2012. This attracted over 70 students and teachers from relevant colleges and departments of SCU. The event was funded by the ASEMUNDUS project and organized by Professor Li Zhuyu, who is also the Chinese promoter of ASEMUNDUS.

The forum was hosted by Professor Dr. Duan Feng, the Deputy Director of the ESC of SCU. Mr. Guan Ping, the Deputy Director of the Office for International Cooperation and Exchange of SCU delivered an opening speech which reviewed SCU's participation in EM, particularly the application and implementation of projects since 2009. Mr. Guan Ping confirmed the key role of EM in providing students and teachers with broader applications of international communication and reaffirmed the important role played by EM in promoting the prestige of the SCU in Europe. Based on EM projects, the memorandums of cooperation and communication have been signed between SCU and universities in Germany, Belgium, and Sweden. These have laid solid foundations for the sustainable development of interscholastic cooperation between the SCU and European universities.

"Besides gaining insight into the work of departments in other fields, which will be useful in developing interdisciplinary works, there were some representatives we have found who shared interests with to develop a joint research / education programme."



Several EM scholarship winners were invited to the promotion to share their experiences. Through vivid description and dozens of pictures, He Rong, the Ph. D candidate of the College of Foreign Languages and Cultures of SCU, emphasized that Greek and Roman myths brought her into *the printed Europe*, and EM offered her the opportunity to touch *the living Europe*. She appreciated the ten-month exchange at VUB for causing a profound influence in her life and greatly inspiring her in academic activities. Cai Lingling, a teacher at the Sichuan University of Science and Engineering in Zigong, Sichuan Province, shared her valuable two-year experience in Sabanci University in Turkey. This time was focused on methods of selecting courses as an MA exchange student. Cai believed that selecting courses wisely, in particular selecting the courses beyond a SCU curriculum, can be an effective way of utilizing opportunities for overseas studies. Jiang Hainan, a Ph. D candidate of Sichuan University Business School, reported his academic experiences and lessons learnt at Gent University, Belgium. This stimulated great interest among students.

The presentation by Professor Li Zhuyu, the delegate of the EM panel of the SCU, reviewed the history of the Erasmus Programme in the European dimension since 1987 and EM global participation. She stressed that the SCU has participated in five EM projects up to 2012 and had provided students and teachers with a broader knowledge of Sino-EU communication and cooperation. After her introduction of two new EM projects, Professor Li highlighted the idea that the launch of the new EU programme, Erasmus for All would bring more opportunities for young scholars, who are dedicated to the idea of EU-China academic cooperation and dialogue.

Candidates of each target group are now making their applications. In the course of implementing the EM programme, the SCU is dedicated to strengthening its ties with European partners and upgrading performance in key areas such as faculty mobility, joint PhD student programmes, joint applications and research programmes. The SCU is determined to play an active role in the China-EU High Level Humanities Dialogue, contributing to the advancement of higher education of China and the EU and the mutual cooperation in this fast changing and demanding century.

“Participating in the ASEMUNDUS networking seminar created opportunities to get to know more about the internationalization of the Korean higher education system, strengthening cooperation with our existing partners in Korea and getting to know new partners as well as discussing possible joint doctoral programmes.”



LIST OF EUROPEAN – ASIAN CO-OPERATION (ASEMUNDUS) PROMOTERS 2009-2013

Title	First name	Surname	Institution/ Organization	Email
China				
Ms.	Huanfang	Bu	China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE)	buhuanfang@ceaie.edu.cn
Ms.	Yang	Xinyu	China Scholarship Council	xyang@csc.edu.cn
Ms.	Ying/Iris	Wang	Fudan University	wang_ying@fudan.edu.cn
Ms.	Zhuyu	Li	Sichuan University	zyli@scu.edu.cn
Indonesia				
Mr.		Junaidi S.S.	University of Indonesia	junaidi@ui.ac.id
Ms.	Badia	Perizade	Sriwijaya University	rektor@unsri.ac.id
Mr.	Edward	Panjaitan	Graduate School of European Studies Programme, Universitas Indonesia	e_panjaitan@ui.edu
Mr.	Hariato	Hardjasaputra	Universitas Pelita Harapan	hardja@yahoo.com
Ms.	Lily	Manoharan	Binus University	lmanoharan@binus.edu
Ms.	Moehkardi	Rio Rini Diah	Universitas Gadjah Mada	head-oia@ugm.ac.id
Ms.	Harwintha Yuhria	Anjarningsih	Erasmus Mundus Alumni	wintha_salyo@yahoo.com
Japan				
Mr.	Antonio	Formacion	Kyushu University / EU Institute in Japan - Kyushu	spformacion@yahoo.com
Mr.	Masahiko	Yoshii	EU Institute in Japan, Kansai Kobe University, Graduate School of Economics, Kobe University	yoshii@econ.kobe-u.ac.jp
Korea				
Mr.	Chae-Deug	Yi	PNU EU Centre, Pusan National University,	givethanks@pnu.ac.kr
Ms.	Gi Eun	Kim	Seokyeong University	gkeun@skuniv.ac.kr
Ms.	Joo Hyun	Go	Yonsei-SERI EU Centre, Yonsei University	Joohyun.go@gmail.com
Mr.	InSoo	Park	Yeungnam University, YU-EU Centre	ispark@ynu.ac.kr
Mr.	Young-Ryeol	Park	Yonsei-SERI EU Centre, Yonsei University	yrpark@yonsei.ac.kr

Title	First name	Surname	Institution/ Organization	Email
Thailand				
Ms.	Rattikan	Saelim	Prince of Songkla University	ratti.lim@gmail.com
Ms.	Unchalee	Sanguanpong	Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi	unchalee@mail.rmutt.ac.th
Mr.	Yothin	Sommanonont	Office of non-formal and informal Education, Ministry of Education, Thailand	ysommanonont@hotmail.com
Mr.	Yuthana	Tantirungrotechai	Thammasat University	yt203y@gmail.com
Vietnam				
Mr.	Nguyen	Tuan Anh	Vietnam International Education Development, Ministry of Education and Training	ntanh@vied.vn





LIST OF ERASMUS MUNDUS NATIONAL STRUCTURES – ASEMUNDUS PROJECT PARTNERS

Erasmus Mundus National Structures (EM NS) – ASEMUNDUS project partners		Web-page address of the EM NS
Country	Organisation	
Project CO-ORDINATOR:		
GERMANY	German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) National Contact Point for EU-Third Country Programmes in Higher Education	http://www.daad.de
Project PARTNERS:		
AUSTRIA	OeAD-GmbH - Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research	http://www.oead.at/erasmus-mundus
BELGIUM (Flemish Community)	<i>Vlaams Departement Onderwijs en Vorming</i>	http://www.studyinlanders.be/ http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/English/
CYPRUS	Ministry of Education and Culture – Republic of Cyprus	http://www.moec.gov.cy http://www.highereducation.ac.cy
ESTONIA	Archimedes Foundation - Centre for Educational Programmes	http://www.archimedes.ee
HUNGARY	Tempus Public Foundation	http://english.tpf.hu/
LATVIA	State Education Development Agency	http://www.viaa.gov.lv
The NETHERLANDS	Nuffic - the Netherlands organisation for international cooperation in higher education	http://www.nuffic.nl/
POLAND	Foundation for the Development of Education System	http://www.frse.org.pl/



CYPRUS
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND CULTURE

DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
German Academic Exchange Service



Netherlands organization
for international cooperation
in higher education

