



Celebrating EU-ASEAN People-to-People Cooperation on Higher Education

Brussels, 12 December 2022
09.00 – 14.00 (CET)

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Distribution

PARTNERSHIP ON HIGHER EDUCATION IS A KEY PILLAR OF THE FUTURE OF EU-ASEAN STRATEGIC COOPERATION

Brussels, 12 December 2022 – This year marks 45 years of dialogue relations between the EU and ASEAN. Ahead of the EU-ASEAN Commemorative Summit on 14 December in Brussels, the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat, in partnership with the SHARE¹ and ERASMUS+² Programmes, today hosted an event titled “Celebrating EU-ASEAN People-to-People Cooperation on Higher Education”. The event was attended by high level stakeholders, including Commissioner Urpilainen and discussed the numerous gains achieved through higher education and research cooperation, concluding it as a key pillar to the strategic partnership between both regions. Greater mobility of students and professionals was identified as a driver to further knowledge, facilitate the flow of ideas and innovation between the EU and Southeast Asia regions, all which enhance employability, digital transition, and the green agenda.

In her remarks, **Jutta Urpilainen**, Commissioner, International Partnerships, European Commission commended the success of higher education and research cooperation and committed, “to go further...[to] take our cooperation on education, connectivity, and research to new heights” via the Global Gateway Strategy. She revealed that on Wednesday the *Sustainable Connectivity Global Gateway Flagship* will be launched. This will “build on the very successful SHARE programme” and “key priorities include strengthening student and academic mobility, reinforcing cross-regional university networks, and boosting ASEAN vocational education institutions and businesses, notably to support the green and digital transitions.”

H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General ASEAN thanked the EU for its “continued support in the advancement of ASEAN higher education” mentioning a new report on “the current state of higher education in the region [which] highlights key thematic areas including equity, diversity and inclusion, internationalisation and regionalisation of higher education, and sustainability that needs to be addressed to improve ASEAN higher education.”

¹ <https://share-asean.eu/>

² <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/>





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H.E. Dr. Hang Chuon Naron, Cambodian Minister of Education, Youth and Sports highlighted the EU and ASEAN are transforming education through the partnerships and “must work together to achieve the SDGs and leave behind a better world for all”. Key thoughts for the future include “1) university reforms are necessary to develop soft skills and 21st century skills...; 2) Universities [become] a hub within an entrepreneurial ecosystem – [allowing] education to link to the real world...3) University-business sectors [link up] to promote joint projects and research...4) and establish a EU-ASEAN Cyber University” to, amongst other things “implement digital education programme such as coding, app, robotics, etc.”

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About the European Union (EU)

The European Union (EU) is the economic and political union of 27 Member States EU with a population of 447 million. Together, the EU has built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development while maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedom. In 2012, the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for advancing the goals of peace, reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe. The EU is the world's largest trading bloc, and the world's largest source and destination of foreign direct investment. Collectively, the EU and its Member States are the largest donors of Official Development Assistance (ODA), providing more than half of ODA globally.

The 27 Member States of the EU (in protocol order) are Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.

About ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the Founding Fathers of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Brunei Darussalam then joined on 7 January 1984, Viet Nam on 28 July 1995, Lao PDR and Myanmar on 23 July 1997, and Cambodia on 30 April 1999, officially making up what is today the ten Member States of ASEAN. Visit asean.org for more information.

About the EU Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region (SHARE) Programme

SHARE is an EU-funded project with an overarching objective to strengthen regional cooperation, enhance the quality, competitiveness and internationalisation of ASEAN higher education institutions and students, contributing to an ASEAN Community. The primary aim is to enhance cooperation between the EU and ASEAN and to create an ASEAN Higher Education Space. On behalf of ASEAN and EU, a consortium led by the British Council and comprising the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Nuffic, and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) works with ASEAN counterparts to implement the SHARE Programme.

Follow [@shareprogramme](https://www.instagram.com/shareprogramme) on Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and the website share-asean.eu for more information.

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