Asia-Europe Meeting

ASEM Education

Workshop C
Mobility and internationalisation as instruments to build bridges between Asia and Europe

Moderator: **Adrian Georgescu,** Director of the Erasmus+ National Agency, Romania

Speakers:

- **Nicoleta Popa,** Deputy Director of the Erasmus+ National Agency, Romania
- **Vladimir Tanasiev,** Associate Professor, National University of Science and Technology Politehnica of Bucharest, Romania
- **Prof. Dr. KJ Sung,** Director General of the Secretariat for ASEM-DUO Fellowship Programme, Seoul, Korea
- **Marie-Anne Persoons,** Advisor International Policy at the Department of Education and Training of the Flemish Community of Belgium

Rapporteur: **Prof. Azirah Hashim,** Asia-Europe Institute, Universiti Malaya

Still growing strong

in **2024** alone

Erasmus+ supported

1.5M participants

across Europe and beyond

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds

2021-2027

EUROPEAN UNION

European Student Card & Erasmus+ App

New flexible mobility formats for all

More & stronger European Universities alliances

More worldwide exchanges

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.

Higher education

ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus

European Commission

30% cooperation projects

70% mobility

€ 26.2b + 2.2b* budget

*from EU external cooperation instrument

10m participants

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.

Decentralised Erasmus+ actions

(projects funded by National Agencies)

KA1 - Mobility projects in all fields of Education and Training, Youth and Sports

In the field of Higher Education:

- o Internal policy funds – KA131 (**20% of a project's budget for international mobility**)

- o **External policy funds / International Credit Mobility – KA171**

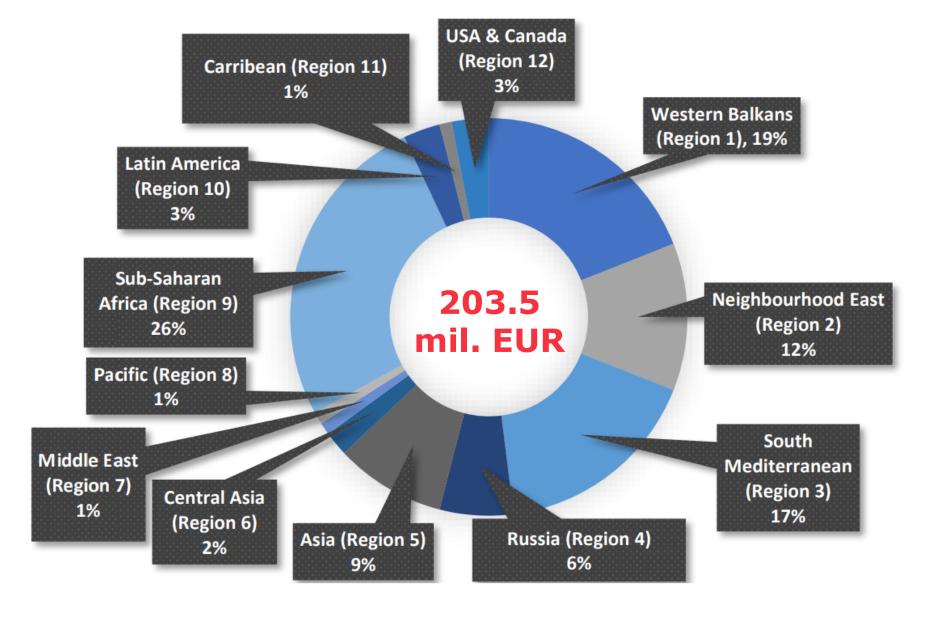KA2 - Cooperation Partnerships in any field of Education & Training and Youth – KA220

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International Credit Mobility

2026 draft budget

203.5 mil. EUR

USA & Canada (Region 12) 3%

Carribean (Region 11) 1%

Western Balkans (Region 1), 19%

Latin America (Region 10) 3%

Sub-Saharan Africa (Region 9) 26%

Neighbourhood East (Region 2) 12%

Pacific (Region 8) 1%

Middle East (Region 7) 1%

Central Asia (Region 6) 2%

Asia (Region 5) 9%

Russia (Region 4) 6%

South Mediterranean (Region 3) 17%

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Erasmus+
Experiențe de neuitat și noi orizonturi.

International Credit Mobility

Funding rules

- Individual support for mobility period (+ travel days):

  o Student (short-term = 5-30 days): 79/56 EUR/day

    + Top-up for student with fewer opportunities: 100/150 EUR/mobility

  o Student (long-term = 2-12 months): 700/800/850/900 EUR/month

    + Top-up for student with fewer opportunities: 250 EUR/month

  o Teaching and administrative staff (5-60 days): 148/170/190 EUR/day

- Travel support: based on distance band & green/non-green travel

- Inclusion support for participants and organisations

- Organisational support: 500 EUR/realised mobility

Career boost

68% say **Erasmus+**

gave them better **career opportunities**

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds

2021-2027

EUROPEAN UNION

UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ

Centralised Erasmus+ actions

(projects funded by EACEA)

KA1 - Erasmus+ Virtual Exchanges

KA2 - Partnerships for Excellence:

- o European Universities Initiative
- o **Erasmus Mundus (EMJM & EMDM)**
- o Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE)
- o Erasmus+ Teacher Academies

KA2 - Partnerships for Innovation:

- o Alliances for Innovation

KA2 - **Capacity Building HE / VET / Youth / Sport**

Jean Monnet Actions

- o **Teaching and Research (Modules, Chairs, Centres of Excellence)**
- o Policy Debate: Thematic Networks in HE
- o Networks in other fields of E&T (Teacher Training, Learning EU Initiatives)

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Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal (link)

Erasmus+
Experiențe de neuitat și noi orizonturi.

Objectives

Capacity Building in Higher Education

National / Multi-country (regional) / Multi-country (cross-regional)

- o Strand 1 - Fostering access to cooperation in higher education

- o Strand 2 - Partnerships for transformation in higher education
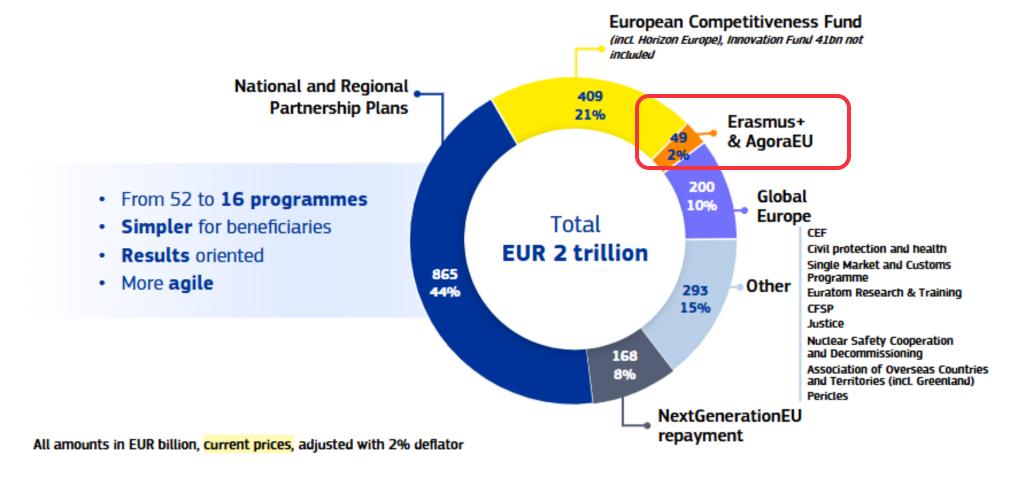
- o **Strand 3 - Structural reform projects**

An ambitious budget with a credible proposal for reforming the revenues to finance it.

EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034 Proposal

- From 52 to **16 programmes**
- **Simpler** for beneficiaries
- **Results** oriented
- More **agile**

Total **EUR 2 trillion**

European Competitiveness Fund
(incl. Horizon Europe), Innovation Fund 41bn not included
409 — 21%

Erasmus+ & AgoraEU
49 — 2%

National and Regional Partnership Plans
865 — 44%

Global Europe
200 — 10%

Other
293 — 15%

CEF
Civil protection and health
Single Market and Customs Programme
Euratom Research & Training
CFSP
Justice
Nuclear Safety Cooperation and Decommissioning
Association of Overseas Countries and Territories (incl. Greenland)
Pericles

NextGenerationEU repayment
168 — 8%

All amounts in EUR billion, current prices, adjusted with 2% deflator

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Erasmus+
Experiențe de neuitat și noi orizonturi.

Future Erasmus+ Programme 2028-2034 Proposal

*„A **reinforced Erasmus+ programme** will be the backbone of the Union of Skills. Education mobility, solidarity and inclusiveness will remain the core of the programme."*

➢ European Commission's proposal: 17th July 2025

➢ Proposed budget: ~41 billion EUR (2% of the EU budget)

➢ Programme objectives + fundamental priorities:

   • Skills development

   • Democratic participation

➢ Scope of intervention – structure based on two main pillars:

   1. Learning opportunities for all

   2. Capacity building support

➢ Enhance synergies between Erasmus+ and Global Europe

Useful links

- Erasmus+ Programme Guide (link)

  - ICM Handbook for participating organisations (link)

  - ICM Handbook for partner countries (link)

- Erasmus+ Project Results Platform (link)

- Erasmus+ annual reports, factsheets and statistics (link)

  - Programme countries (link)

  - Beyond Europe (link)

  - Asia factsheets (link)

- MFF 2028-2034 (link)

- Proposal Erasmus+ 2028-2034 (link)

Useful contacts

- Contacts, promotion, information:

  o EACEA (link): Events (link), News (link)

  o Erasmus Networks Platform (link)

  o National Agencies (link)

  o National Erasmus+ Offices (link)

  o Erasmus+ National Focal Points (link)

  o EU Delegations (link)

- FTOP Partner Search (link)

**Agenția Națională pentru Programe Comunitare
în Domeniul Educației și Formării Profesionale**

Splaiul Independenței nr. 313

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Best Practices in the SOHO Project & Mobility as a Bridge Between Europe and Asia

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National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest

SOHO Project Coordinator (Romania)

Content

What is SOHO?

Project Overview

SOHO is an **Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) project** that aims to modernize tourism education by integrating smart technologies, sustainability principles, and digital innovation into university curricula across Europe and Asia.

Partnership Network
European Partners

- National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest (UNSTPB) – Romania
- Université Lumière Lyon 2 (ULL) – France
- Politecnico di Milano (POLIMI) – Italy

Asian Partners

- Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) – Malaysia
- Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) – Malaysia
- University of Danang (UD) – Vietnam
- University of Technical Education – Da Nang (UTE) – Vietnam
- American International University Bangladesh (AIUB) – Bangladesh
- Jahangirnagar University (JU) – Bangladesh

Project Objective

Modernize Tourism Education

Integrate smart technologies, renewable energy solutions, and digital competencies into innovative curricula that prepare students for the future of sustainable tourism.
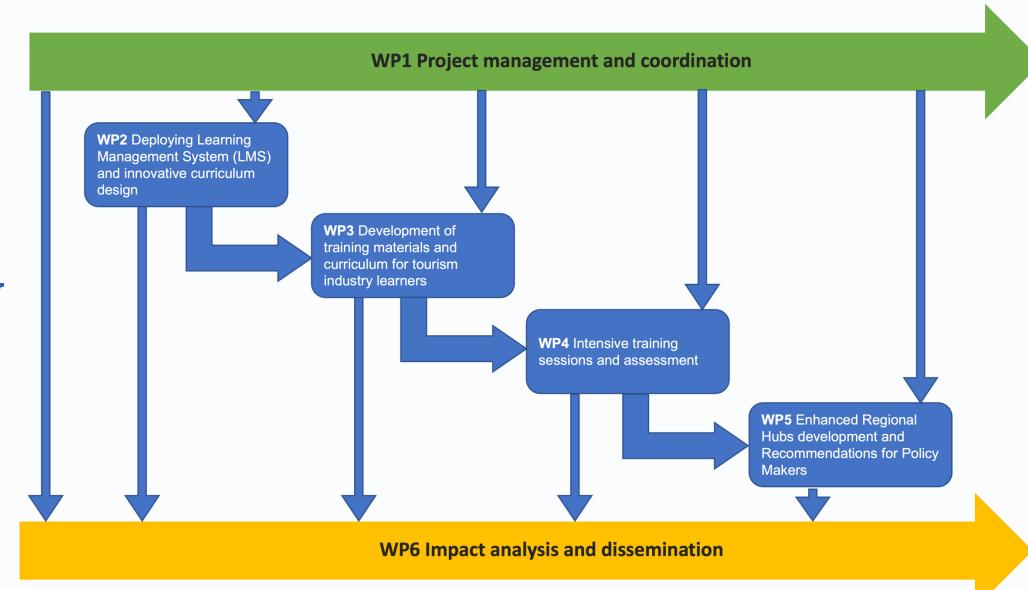
Align with Labor Market

Strengthen HEI relevance through competency-based training, updated learning materials, and modular micro-credentials that meet industry demands.

Bridge Europe and Asia

Build sustainable connections between continents, enhancing institutional capacity, international cooperation, and long-term regional development in smart sustainable tourism.

Methodology Framework

1
Joint EU–Asia Collaboration

Mixed teams work together across all work packages, ensuring diverse perspectives and shared ownership of outcomes.

2
Evidence-Based Design

Training Needs Analysis conducted across all partner countries informs curriculum development and ensures relevance.

3
Competency-Based Curriculum

Clear learning outcomes aligned with labor market needs create practical, applicable education for students.

4
Digital-First Approach

Utilization of Moodle LMS, H5P interactive content, and micro-credentials enables scalable, accessible learning.

5
Phased Implementation

WP2 (analysis & design) → WP3 (development) → WP4 (training) → WP5 (competence centres) ensures logical progression.

6
Continuous Quality Assurance

Monthly coordination meetings and structured peer review maintain high standards throughout the project lifecycle.

7
Blended Work Format

Combination of physical TPMs, virtual meetings, and online co-creation maximizes efficiency and inclusivity.

Best Practices in Building SOHO Partnership

Partner Selection Based on Complementary Expertise

The partnership emerged from previous Erasmus+ mobility and research collaborations. European partners contributed to digital and technological know-how, while Asian partners brought tourism sector experience and strong regional relevance, creating a balanced knowledge ecosystem.

Building Trust Through Early Communication

Initial online meetings before proposal writing helped clarify roles, expectations, and collaboration dynamics. This foundation of transparency set the stage for effective long-term partnership.

Clear Distribution of Responsibilities

Work packages, leaders, co-leaders, and tasks were defined transparently from the beginning, ensuring accountability and preventing overlap or confusion in project execution.

Joint Proposal Writing

The application was co-created in mixed Europe–Asia working groups, ensuring ownership and balanced input from all partners from the project's inception.

Best Practices in Building SOHO Partnership

Continued Strategies for Success

Alignment with National and Regional Priorities

Partners were selected to align with Erasmus+ CBHE priorities, including digital transformation, green transition, labor-market relevance, capacity building for higher education institutions, and stronger regional cooperation between Europe and Asia.

Inclusion of Both Academic and Administrative Stakeholders

Involving teachers, researchers, and administrative teams ensured a stable and functional partnership with buy-in at all institutional levels.

Balanced Partnership Structure

Tasks and leadership roles were shared fairly between EU and Asian partners, promoting equity and strong engagement throughout the project lifecycle.

Best Practices in Project Implementation

Phased and Structured Implementation

Clear sequence of activities—needs analysis → curriculum design → content development → training → competence centres—ensured coherence and high-quality outputs at every stage.

Continuous Communication and Coordination

Regular online meetings and TPMs every six months maintained alignment, transparency, and rapid problem-solving across all partners, regardless of geographic distance.

Digital-First Delivery with Unified LMS

Use of Moodle, H5P, and micro-credentials enabled consistent content quality, virtual mobility, and scalable collaboration across Europe and Asia.

Best Practices in Project Implementation

Continued Excellence

Standardized Templates and Quality Assurance

Shared templates for modules, assessments, and reports ensured uniformity and reduced administrative burden across diverse institutions.

Short, Intensive Training Formats

Blended mobility and intensive sessions increased participation, reduced costs, and accelerated capacity building for faculty and staff.

Multi-Level Stakeholder Involvement

Academics, administrators, industry partners, and policy actors contributed to design, validation, and dissemination, ensuring practical relevance.

Lesson Learned

Early alignment is essential

Clarifying roles, expectations and timelines at the start prevents delays and misunderstandings.

Selecting realistic deliverables

Focusing on fewer, well-defined outputs improves quality and reduces administrative burden.

Visa access requires time

Invitation letters from both the project coordinator and the TPM host institution are essential for smooth visa processing.

Standardisation improves quality

Common templates and workflows ensure consistency across all partner institutions.

Early Definition of Indicators

Defining a realistic and consistent set of indicators from the very beginning facilitates coherent proposal writing, ensures alignment with programme priorities, and supports accurate monitoring during implementation.

Structured communication builds trust

Monthly online meetings and TPMs every six months maintain alignment and responsiveness.

Regular review of deliverables and deadlines

Each meeting must include a clear update on what has been completed, upcoming deadlines and responsibilities — this improves accountability and keeps the consortium on track.

Best practices in Erasmus Mobility Projects

Clear and transparent mobility procedures. Straightforward steps for selecting staff, invitation letters, confirming availability, preparing documents and reporting activities.

Early planning of teaching/training mobilities. Agreement on staff numbers, periods, teaching hours and roles well in advance of the academic year.

Support for incoming and outgoing staff. Assistance with visas, travel arrangements, accommodation, institutional access and administrative requirements.

Clear definition of teaching/training outcomes. Well-defined expected learning or teaching outcomes guarantee relevance and maximise the impact of the mobility.

Thank you!

Progress of ASEM-DUO

Strengthening *BALANCED*
People-to-People Connectivity
between Asia and Europe

1. Why ASEM-DUO?

◆ **Serious Imbalance in Mobility between the Regions**
  - We all know that there is a severe imbalance win the number of exchange students between the two regions

✓ **How to Tackle?**
  -Creating an inducive environment from a longer perspective, such as establishment of mutual recognition system
  -One alternative is to force balanced exchange between the **Regions**, between the **Countries**, and between the **Institutions**
  -In practice, forced balanced exchanges between the Regions or Countries would not be easy, as they require some formal arrangements
  -What about forced balanced exchanges between the institutions through PAIRING, also through financial assistance?

-This is what ASEM-DUO is all about.

✓ **How to find pairing partners from the other region?**

- In practice, individual students cannot find paring partners.
- However, staffs in international exchange offices know which students would like to go out to which institutions, and also, which students from the other institutions would like to come to their institutions
- Thus, in practice, only they can find matching partners for the exchanges

Furthermore, once the exchange is made, then they would recommend later to their students which institutions to go. Thus, the possibility of continued exchange is enhanced (***more than 95% of the exchanges continued***)

✓ **How to Finance the exchanges?**

- Suppose country A made financial contributions.
- Under ASEM-DUO, not only their students, but also the paired students will receive support from the country A.

Q. You may ask why should country A support both students; why not just their students?

- By supporting both students, the institutions in country A provides further incentives to students from the other institutions.
- This is also to make sure that bilateral exchange takes place.

2. Benefits from ASEM-DUO

✓ *Supports* **Only** one-to-one **paired** exchange, ensuring *Balanced mobility* between Asia and Europe

✓ *Contributes* to building *regular, structured, and sustainable* exchange programs between Asian and European tertiary institutions through **MoUs** and institutional cooperation

One-to-One Exchange

Asia ⬌ **Europe**

Evaluation of ASEM-DUO

✓ ASEM-DUO, therefore, clearly contributes to the overarching ASEM objective of people-to-people *connectivity* which was confirmed at the highest political level by all ASEM members

✓ There is *unanimous support* for the continuation of the programme with *100%* respondents clearly *advocating* for ASEM-DUO to be continued as one of the uncontested success stories of ASEM

Remarks from German Stock-taking (2019)

3. History of ASEM-DUO

◆ **Fellowship-granting programme** for university students and academics in ASEM member countries to promote Balanced exchange between Asian and European institutions

◆ **Proposed** by Korea, France and Singapore at **ASEM3 in 2000**,
  - Since 2001, its **25ᵗʰ year of operation** as an ASEM Initiative
  - **Extended** for 6ᵗʰ phase(2026-2030), ASEMME9, Malta (2024)

◆ **Six ASEM countries** are currently acting as contributors in the ASEM-DUO

◆ Supported close to **5,000** university students and academics by 2025

4. Current ASEM-DUO Programmes

Ongoing

- Umbrella concept
- Governed by Core Principles

ASEM-DUO Fellowship

DUO-Korea

DUO-Sweden

DUO-Singapore

DUO-Belgium/FWB

DUO-Thailand

DUO-CIMEA/Italy

Terminated

DUO-Denmark

DUO-France

DUO-Belgium/Flanders

DUO-Korea/Germany

DUO-India

※ **Actual fellowship determined and tailored by contributors.**

Comparisons (Current ASEM-DUO Programmes)

	Korea	Singapore	Thailand	Sweden	Belgium/ FWB	CIMEA/Italy
Starting year	2001	2002	2006	2010	2014	2025
Related Division	MOE, Korea	MFA, Singapore	MHESI, Thailand	UHR Sweden	ARES, Belgium/FWB	CIMEA
Beneficiary	Undergraduate/Graduate students				Professors	Professors, Researchers, PhD
Duration	1 semester				3 weeks - 2 months	10 working days to 30 days
Amount (Euro)	4,000 Each	4,000 Each	4,800 for Thai 3,200 for European	3,500 Each	7,000 for pair	Min. 2,500 ~ Max. 8,500 Each

5. How does ASEM-DUO work?

◆ Contributing member country can dictate terms of exchange other than **3 core principles (pairing, duration, and amount)**

Commissioned to Secretariat	• DUO-Korea and DUO-Sweden • Each Government establish the *Selection Committee and make decisions* • The Secretariat monitors exchanges for compliance with guidelines and provides quarterly reports to the Governments
Direct Operation	• DUO-Singapore, DUO-Thailand, DUO-Belgium/Wallonia, DUO-CIMEA/Italy • Each Government operates independently, and shares information with the Secretariat annually to update the current status
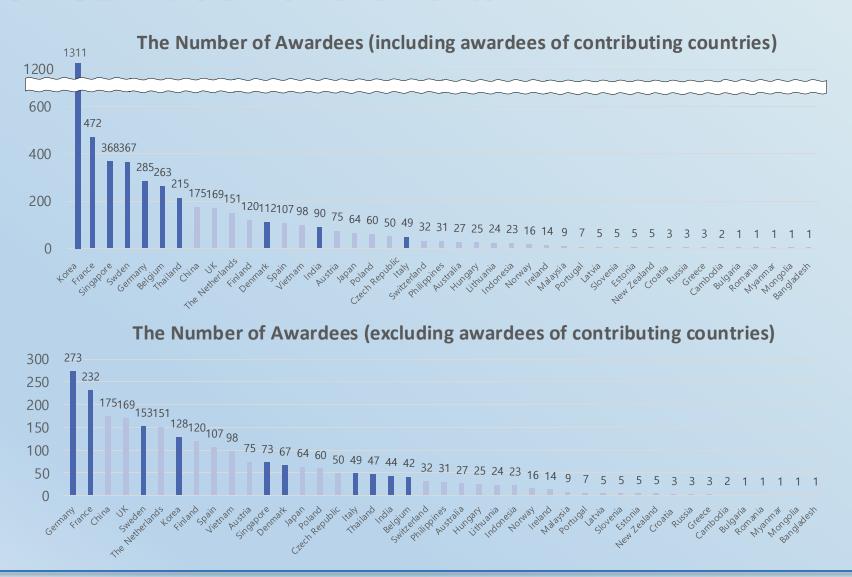
6. ASEM-DUO Achievements

The Number of Awardees (including awardees of contributing countries)

Korea 1311, France 472, Singapore 368, Sweden 367, Germany 285, Belgium 263, Thailand 215, China 175, UK 169, The Netherlands 151, Finland 120, Denmark 112, Spain 107, Vietnam 98, India 90, Austria 75, Japan 64, Poland 60, Czech Republic 50, Italy 49, Switzerland 32, Philippines 31, Australia 27, Hungary 25, Lithuania 24, Indonesia 23, Norway 16, Ireland 14, Malaysia 9, Portugal 7, Latvia 5, Slovenia 5, Estonia 5, New Zealand 5, Croatia 3, Russia 3, Greece 3, Cambodia 2, Bulgaria 1, Romania 1, Myanmar 1, Mongolia 1, Bangladesh 1

The Number of Awardees (excluding awardees of contributing countries)

Germany 273, France 232, China 175, UK 169, Sweden 153, The Netherlands 151, Korea 128, Finland 120, Spain 107, Vietnam 98, Austria 75, Singapore 73, Denmark 67, Japan 64, Poland 60, Czech Republic 50, Italy 49, Thailand 47, India 44, Belgium 42, Switzerland 32, Philippines 31, Australia 27, Hungary 25, Lithuania 24, Indonesia 23, Norway 16, Ireland 14, Malaysia 9, Portugal 7, Latvia 5, Slovenia 5, Estonia 5, New Zealand 5, Croatia 3, Russia 3, Greece 3, Cambodia 2, Bulgaria 1, Romania 1, Myanmar 1, Mongolia 1, Bangladesh 1

Remarks from the Awardees

A Catalyst for Global Career Growth and Cultural Transformation

Mr. Daniel de Mare (Sweden)

The exchange studies provided the foundation for a successful career in design and technology, allowing me to embrace Korean culture and broaden my global outlook, nurturing a profound respect for diversity and intercultural synergy and served as a catalyst for personal growth. The memories and experiences will forever remain etched in my heart, reminding me of the transformative power of cultural exchange.

A Multicultural Lens on AI Ethics

Ms. Tang Xinwen (China)

I was awarded the DUO-Belgium/Flanders which enabled me to explore 15 other countries, each offering unique insights that broadened my perspective on culture, society, and human behavior. I undertook a research project that examined audience views on AI ethics through social media platforms. My career-changing experience from ASEM-DUO has set me on a path that I could not have imagined at the onset.
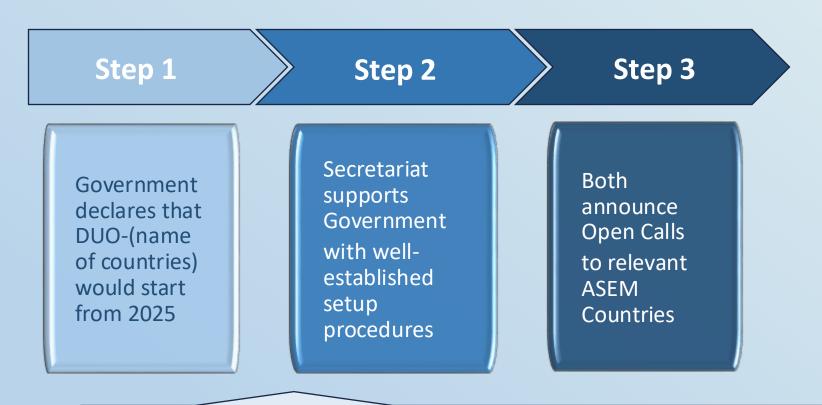
My Career and life-changing ASEM-DUO Experience

Mr. Maciej Lachowicz (Poland)

Thanks to my exchange and results achieved at both universities, I was awarded an internship in the USA, given to the top 10 students from the whole university. After my master's thesis and work experience at PwC, I was lucky enough to receive an offer from Nordea, where I currently work. Frankly speaking, ASEM-DUO changed my life drastically - both in my career and personal life - and my exchange in Korea was a huge piece of that change.

7. How to join to ASEM-DUO?

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Government declares that DUO-(name of countries) would start from 2025	Secretariat supports Government with well-established setup procedures	Both announce Open Calls to relevant ASEM Countries

Flexibility

Any partner countries, any field of exchange

No limitation to the amount or duration of contribution (small scale funding possible)

Can be linked to existing national scholarship schemes

ASEM-DUO
Fellowship Programme

Thanks for Your Attention

- Homepage : www.asemduo.org
- Email : admin2@asemduo.org

Flanders
State of the Art

ASEM WPP
in Belgium/Flemish Community

Asymmetric mobility between Asia and Flanders

▸ Most mobility happens outside the ASEM framework

- Either in the context of inter-university cooperation (short term mobility) BUT less frequent than among European universities

- Either via Degree mobility (from Asia to Flanders)

➢ Degree mobility is asymmetric due to Asian free movers to Master programmes or applicants for Ph.D. scholarships.

➢ Almost 60% of non-European degree students are Asian. P.R. China alone already 24 %, followed by India and Iran.

Asymmetric mobility between Asia and Flanders

➢ ASEAN countries represented (Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia) but increasing

➢ New trend: Central Asia upcoming

➢ Limited but stable number from Japan and Korea but also slightly increasing.

➢ Some nationalities well represented by no recent mobility (refugee families from Iran, Afghanistan, Syria, Palestine...)

Why encourageingFlemish students to choose Asia as destination for an internship?

▶ Inter-university study mobility is still successful but the mobility towards Asia follows the trend of higher demands for internships (as part of the studies), cf. Erasmus+ programme

▶ Each year about 60 students from Flanders in work placement in Asia with ASEM WPP scholarship

▶ Impact on personal development: contact with global labour market, stimulation of intercultural understanding, independence and hence more direct contact with local population (usually not in a larger class-group of foreign students)

▶ Often link with inter-university cooperation. Students can choose: studies or internship organised/mediated by the partneruniversity

Figures of destinations 2024-2025

Vietnam: 9

Philippines: 8

Indonesia: 8

Thailand: 7

Cambodia: 6

Japan: 4

Korea: 4

India: 3

China: 3

Singapore: 3

Malaysia: 2

Way forward on work placement in general

➢ Widen the countries of destination
➢ Involve HEIs of all profiles in Flanders (research universities and universities of applied sciences)
➢ Extend to other levels of education (e.g. VET at secondary level) and after graduation
➢ Align with other scholarship schemes, notably in Asia
➢ Align with internship offer in Flanders (link with recruitment policies) and corporate funding schemes
➢ Remain mindful of blurring boundaries between study mobility and work placement (as part of the same study trajectory)