



**REPORT OF THE 1st EXPERT MEETING OF
THE ASEM WORK PLACEMENT PILOT PROGRAMME
29 – 30 January 2015
The Sukosol Hotel
Bangkok, Thailand**

INTRODUCTION

1. The 1st Expert Meeting of the ASEM Work Placement Pilot Programme was held during 29-30 January 2015 at the Sukosol Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand.
2. The meeting was attended by representatives from four countries: Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Germany, and Thailand, as well as the Director of the ASEM Education Secretariat. The list of participants appears in Annex 1.

OPENING CEREMONY

3. Ms. Aporn Kanvong, Deputy Secretary-General for Higher Education Commission, Thailand welcomed all the participants to the meeting and stated that this kick-off meeting will contribute to drafting a guideline for launching the ASEM Work Placement Pilot Programme. She hopes that with the collective efforts and concrete collaboration of the participating countries the pilot programme will be launched soon and could significantly contribute to the ASEM Education Process.
4. Prof. Dr. Aris Junaidi, Director of the ASEM Education Secretariat expressed his deepest gratitude and appreciation to the Thai Office of the Higher Education Commission for hosting the 1st Expert Meeting of the ASEM Work Placement Pilot Programme. He stated that, through collaborative efforts, the participants have the opportunity to exchange and develop ideas for the implementation of the pilot programme. He hopes that the representatives from Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Germany, and Thailand will continue to work together in the future in order to ensure the success of the programme.

PRESENTATION ON "THE ASEM WORK PLACEMENT PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE" by Ms. Nina Scholle-Pollmann, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

5. Ms. Scholle-Pollmann gave an overview of the ASEM Work Placement Pilot Programme outlining the background of the programme, the benefits for stakeholders involved, and possible modalities. The presentation appears in Annex 2.

COUNTRY INFORMATION EXCHANGE: POLICY AND PRACTICE, AND CURRENT STATUS ON PROMOTING WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING AND WORK PLACEMENT PROGRAMME

6. Belgium (Ms. Patricia Burssens, Ghent University)

There is a growing attention toward internships and internship mobility in Belgium. By 2020, the goal is to raise international mobility from 11% to 20%. Students can benefit from engaging in international internships through acquiring specific professional competences and intercultural skills, as well as increasing their probability of employment. Along with international mobility, traineeship mobility is an additional way for students to gain professional and international experience. The Flemish Consortium for Traineeship Mobility was approved, has a total of 18 partnerships, and aims to create a central Flemish platform for international traineeship mobility. Future goals include: (1) collecting data for policy advice, (2) developing a dialogue among higher education institutions, companies, and other relevant organizations, and (3) expanding the database of traineeships. The presentation appears in Annex 3.

7. Brunei Darussalam (Dr. Mohd Ayub Sadiq, Universiti Brunei Darussalam)

The Ministry of Education, Brunei Darussalam advocates the teaching approach of action learning (i.e., experiential learning). In Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD), GenNEXT education framework, started in 2009. The distinct element in GenNEXT is Experiential Learning (known as Discovery Year, DY) which consists of four options: study abroad program, internship (work placement), community outreach, and innovation and incubation project. Furthermore, students have the opportunity to learn various skills which are essential for real world and life-long learning. All undergraduate students must take one or two of DY options for two semesters or a year. Over 80% of students take DY overseas (in six continents) and the rest take locally. 25% of DY is work placement and half of them go overseas. In addition, UBD engages industries in developing research such as UBD|IBM centre, and drug companies. There are 41 government agencies and 31 private institutions locally, and 21 overseas partners which accept the students' work placement. The Institut Teknologi Brunei (ITB) has the same policy and activities. Their students are placed at industries both locally and overseas. Dr Ayub shared the challenges in work

placement as expanding the network, monitoring and assessment of activities, including health and safety consideration. The presentation appears in Annex 4.

8. Germany (Prof. Dr. Alexandra Angress, Aschaffenburg University of Applied Sciences and Mr. Brian Trenaman, Center of Competence, Karlsruhe University of Applied Sciences)

The Universities of Applied Sciences are very much involved in work placements, internships, and traineeships. Furthermore, there is a long tradition with industry employers being actively involved in vocational education and training. For example, students at Aschaffenburg are required to engage in a compulsory traineeship for 18 weeks and can as well undertake a voluntary traineeship for two months. The European Network of Consortia and Higher Education Institutions LEO-NET (association registered with Secretariat at TU Eindhoven) serves to find and ensure transnational work placements. The Center of Competence is another resource for students that aim to create a link between students and companies. The trusted employers that students work with have high expectations and are expected to provide: (1) sufficient resources, (2) a qualified supervisor, (3) quality assurance, (4) a learning plan with expected outcomes and means of achieving those outcomes, (5) a contract, (6) access information, and (7) information or logistic support. In return, employers expect to hire students with an excellent combination of personality, practical experience, and grades. With these expectations in mind, it is crucial to develop an education system that focuses on developing students' personal, professional, and academic characteristics in order to best prepare them for the world of work. The presentations appear in Annex 5.

9. Thailand (Prof. Dr. Wichit Srisa-an, President of the Thai Association for Cooperative Education)

The Cooperative and Work-Integrated Education (CWIE) in Thailand aims to follow the goals of the Thai Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and Professional Standards. Graduates are expected to possess firm theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and readiness for employment immediately after graduation. Such skills lead to a higher probability of employment, as well as greater career development. Currently, the Office of the Higher Education Commission fully supports CWIE and relies upon Suranaree University of Technology (SUT) and the Thai Association for Cooperative Education (TACE) to set the CWIE standards and assist with CWIE initiatives. The International CWIE serves as an ideal way to prepare for the integration of the ASEAN Community in 2015, as it is able to enrich the work-integrated learning experience of Thai students in a foreign country. The formation of the ASEAN CWIE Network is needed in order to strengthen and promote more student exchange and specific CWIE initiatives. The presentation appears in Annex 6.

BRAINSTORMING ON HOW TO DRAFT THE ASEM WORK PLACEMENT PROGRAMME

10. The meeting discussed extensively the characteristics and model of the pilot programme and agreed that the target group of the programme should be both undergraduate and master students with the priority given to the master students. Regarding the number of students to participate in the pilot programme, it was agreed that for the year 2015 - 2016, each participating country will send 5 - 10 students to join the programme, and the balanced exchange between Asia and Europe needs to be taken into account. The duration of the exchange should be 2 - 6 months [full-time] and the programme should be voluntary or embedded in the curriculum to allow the flexibility for the students.
11. In order to provide quality service to both students and companies, educational pamphlets or additional documents should be offered to help foster their intercultural awareness and to inform the students of the big pool of companies they could work with. The meeting sees the need to develop one common training agreement for both Asian and European sides, and a service and information package for workplace, universities, and students. The meeting also views that a certificate should be given to the students upon their completion of the programme for marketing the programme and for increasing the students' employability chances.
12. To allow the programme to run smoothly and efficiently, adjustment of the implementation where applicable is necessary, and this could be done through an annual meeting with alumni and stakeholders. Monitoring and follow-up on the implementation of the programme should also be undertaken, including the arrangement for the participating students to submit their final reports additionally to the ASEM body.
13. For the purposes of programme publicity and communication, a communication or conversation platform is to be developed. The meeting requested the ASEM Education Secretariat (AES) to host the website, and members of the consortium will design the countries' specific websites. The AES website should have a link to each respective country's website. The ASEM Education Secretariat will explore a possibility to create a webpage of the programme with the links to each participating country's programme website. In addition, each participating country is requested to nominate a national coordinator and an institutional coordinator to coordinate the programme implementation. It was noted that the institutional coordinator should engage the participation of the work places.

14. With regard to the funding to support the implementation of the programme in the pilot stage, the meeting agreed that a 3-year funding scheme should be set at that stage and at least travel expenses for the students should be provided (also taking the national settings into account). In addition, staff costs for administrative support should be taken into account in the participating countries.
15. For the next steps, it was agreed that the calculation of the costs for running the programme should be completed by 27 February 2015 by each participating country.
16. The meeting welcomed Indonesia to participate in this programme.
17. The meeting agreed that the Director of the ASEM Education Secretariat will contact the Latvian host to report on the progress of the ASEM Work Placement Pilot Programme to the 2nd Senior Officials Meeting.
18. Ms. Aporn Kanvong, Deputy Secretary-General of OHEC expressed her appreciation to all participants for their valuable contribution to the meeting.
