FROM COPENHAGEN TO KUALA LUMPUR

Stocktaking Report of the ASEM Education Process
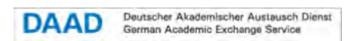
Drafted by the ASEM Education Secretariat

4th Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education

(ASEMME4)

Kuala Lumpur, 13–14 May 2013

Introduction

The Asia-Europe Meeting was established as an informal dialogue and cooperation platform in the mid-1990s. It has evolved into a non-binding process between 49[1] countries, the European Commission and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat that addresses issues in various sectors. Ministers responsible for Education have been meeting regularly since 2008 to demonstrate political commitment and set the agenda with regard to higher education and vocational education and training. The ASEM education ministers established a strategic Asia-Europe education partnership in order to strengthen the ASEM dialogue and cooperation between both regions. In a globalising world and in view of the increased economic interdependence, more intensive relations and cooperation between Asia and Europe are imperative, especially in the field of education and training.

During the first two ministerial meetings in Berlin in 2008 (ASEMME1) and Hanoi in 2009 (ASEMME2), ASEM education ministers expressed their political will to deepen the cooperation of ASEM members in the field of education and identified priority areas of work.

In their third meeting in Copenhagen in 2011 (ASEMME3), ministers concentrated on four priority areas:

   a. **Quality assurance and recognition;**
   b. **Engaging business and industry in education;**
   c. **Balanced mobility; and**
   d. **Lifelong learning including technical vocational education and training.**

In this context, ministers agreed on a number of conferences, seminars and initiatives to be carried out by ASEM members and education organisations until the next ministerial meeting in Malaysia[2]. In order to gain a systematic overview and analysis of these activities, the ministers asked the ASEM Education Secretariat (AES) to prepare a stocktaking report for ASEMME4.

This report contains four parts. Part one and two provide some background information on the ASEM Education Process in general and link developments in this area with other political processes in ASEM member countries and regions. The third part summarises the results and implementation status of the activities defined by the ministers during ASEMME3 and carried out by different ASEM members between the Copenhagen and Kuala Lumpur Ministerial Meetings. This part will also highlight some priorities resulting from an analysis of the ASEM members' responses to the

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[1] 27 EU Member States, 10 ASEAN member countries, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Pakistan, Russian Federation, New Zealand, Australia, and since November 2012 (ASEM 9) Bangladesh, Norway and Switzerland.
[2] Chair's Conclusions ASEMME3, 2011.

stocktaking exercise carried out by the reportages and responds to a mandate given by the ministers in Copenhagen. They asked the AES "*to observe and assist member countries in implementing the proposed initiatives and to inform the ministers on the progress achieved with the stocktaking report for ASEMME4 in 2013.*" Concluding remarks can be found in the fourth and last part of this stocktaking report.

The AES would like to thank the ASEM members for their commitment and constructive contributions to this report.
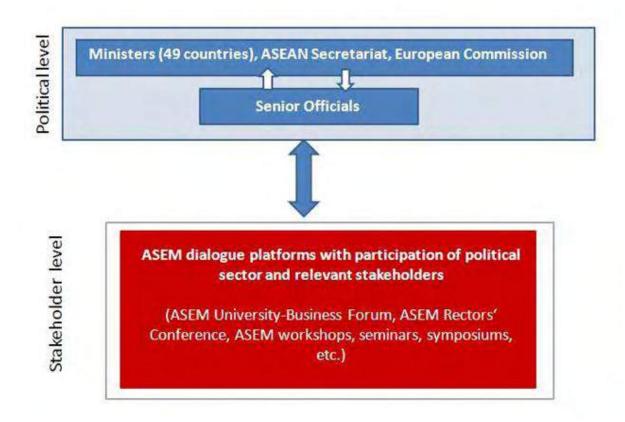
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1. The ASEM Education Process: a non-binding process with impact

1.1 Structure

The ASEM Education Process is an informal dialogue taking place at two levels. When necessary, and if possible, topics are discussed in specific working groups, composed of representatives from interested ASEM countries.

1. At political level: a Conference of Ministers responsible for Education is held every second year. Its main role is to facilitate political commitment, set the policy agenda and steer the activities of this dialogue process. Each Ministerial Conference is prepared during two Senior Officials' Meetings, which are chaired by the host country of the respective Ministerial Conference and supported by the ASEM Education Secretariat (AES). In the Ministerial Conferences, only the Heads of Delegation have the right to speak. Observers (e.g. Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), European University Association (EUA)) may attend the meetings on invitation of the host country.

2. At stakeholder level: a continuous dialogue is established with policymakers, thematic experts and other stakeholders discussing education topics e.g. Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the ASEM Lifelong Learning Hub (ASEM LLL Hub), ASEAN University Network (AUN), the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the European Student Union (ESU), the European University Association (EUA), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization's (SEAMEO) Regional Centre for Vocational & Technical Education & Training (VOCTECH). Experts meet regularly to share experiences, present examples of good practice, and contribute to policy discussions and the implementation of reform measures. Most initiatives for bringing these experts together are taken by different ASEM member states with the support of the AES. Valuable input is also given by ASEF's ASEM Education Hub (AEH) through the ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC), Asia-Europe Education Workshops, and the ASEM Education and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning (ASEM LLL Hub).

1.2 Characteristics

The ASEM Education Process is an informal political process supported and implemented by a series of initiatives and concrete actions in order to enhance Asia-Europe cooperation and exchange in education. The process at ministerial and stakeholder level could be described using the following attributes:

− *Forward-looking:*
  The process clearly defines outcomes that policies are designed to achieve. It aims to take, where possible, a long-term view based on collected information.

− *Outward-looking*:
  The process recognises the diversity of educational systems within the ASEM region and draws on experiences in other ASEM member states.

− *Evidence-based*:
  Decisions are, where possible and appropriate, based upon available evidence from a wide range of sources; relevant experts are consulted and stakeholders are involved in the process. Knowledge gained from reviewing research and commissioning new research is made available in an accessible and meaningful form.

- *Comprehensive*:
  The process includes relevant stakeholders from the fields of politics, education and the labour market and seeks feedback from experienced experts in the field.

1.3   Objectives and instruments

In order to strengthen educational cooperation and exchange between Asia and Europe, some tools can be defined in the context of the ASEM Education Process.

In general one can distinguish between:

1. **Programmes** to fill the ASEM Education Process with 'life';
2. **Knowledge bases** built through surveys/studies to share experiences and information as well as to increase visibility and transparency;
3. **Initiatives** to foster outcome-driven activities;
4. **Expert groups** to assist in policy/project formulation and to support the design and implementation of possible reforms.

1.4   Partners

The ASEM Education Process needs close cooperation with other key partners in the ASEM regions, such as the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the ASEM Lifelong Learning Hub (ASEM LLL Hub), the ASEAN University Network (AUN), the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the European Student Union (ESU), the European University Association (EUA), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), the European University Association (EUA), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training and the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization's (SEAMEO) Regional Centre for Vocational & Technical Education & Training (VOCTECH).

The ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC), launched by ASEF and its partners in 2008, was recognised as a dialogue partner by the ministers at ASEMME2 in Hanoi, Viet Nam, one year later. ARC serves as a discussion platform for university leaders and higher education experts from ASEM member countries to promote cooperation, debate higher education policy issues and develop recommendations for further collaboration and exchange opportunities. The third ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC3) was held in Groningen in 2012. The theme of the meeting was '*Universities, Businesses and You: For a Sustainable Future'* and contributed, in accordance with the ministers' recommendations from 2011, to the discussion of topics like the roles and responsibilities of higher education institutions, employability, and the stimulation of entrepreneurship.

2. The ASEM Education Process: Making education systems in Asia and Europe compatible for more exchange and mobility

2.1 Rationale

To enhance the transparency of the different systems and ultimately to make them more compatible, the ASEM ministers responsible for education initiated the ASEM Education Process, which in the end leads to better understanding, intensified educational cooperation and an increase in mobility between the two regions. Since the early days of the ASEM Education Process, ensuring the quality and competitiveness of education systems and institutions has been considered a key element in educating qualified and employable citizens and promoting economic growth in Asia and Europe. The first phase of the process focused on higher education. At a later stage, technical vocational education and training (TVET) was added to the agenda. Discussions in recent years mainly focused on how and to what extent higher education and TVET could contribute to developing high-quality human resources and increase the mobility of students and staff within and between the ASEM regions. Especially in the context of transcontinental cooperation, the heterogeneity of the educational systems in both regions poses a great challenge to the experts. Detailed information on the various educational systems is often lacking, and specific terms are used for different concepts in both regions. The understanding of qualifications frameworks and credits, for instance, can differ greatly between Europe and Asia. Bridging the gap between diverse education systems is of high priority in the ASEM Education Process. This is pursued by actions such as providing regular information and dialogue platforms, implementing mechanisms for ensuring better transparency and comparability of qualifications as well as coordinating efforts to improve the quality of education. These measures facilitate mobility and exchange across the ASEM regions.

2.2 Models of regional cooperation

The following text will firstly describe two regional models, focusing on educational cooperation within Europe and Asia and will then describe the model of the ASEM Education Process.

Ideas on how to organise and optimise cooperation among different educational systems are being discussed and put to the test all over the world, including in Europe and Asia. A better understanding of differences and more compatible systems are aimed at.

2.2.1 Model 1: The Bologna Process

Over the past decades, Europe has witnessed an expansion of its higher education systems, not only in terms of a growing student population but also of an increasing number of students wishing to study abroad for a degree or at least for part of a degree. With rising international mobility of students, European countries envisaged the regional coordination of higher education reform processes. Moreover, globalisation and increased international competition highlighted the importance of making higher education institutions in Europe more attractive to the world. The

Bologna Process promotes the development of comparable, compatible and coherent higher education systems in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)[3] to facilitate cooperation, mobility and exchange between higher education institutions.

Initial steps towards coordinating European higher education systems were taken with the Sorbonne Declaration in 1998, signed by the ministers for higher education from France, Italy, the United Kingdom and Germany, and one year later with the Bologna Declaration, signed by 29 European states. Back then, only a few countries had experience with the two-cycle structure of Bachelor and Master[4]. Higher education qualifications were typically awarded after a 3- to 6-year long one-tier study programme, which were, in most cases, not compatible with the Bachelor and Master levels. Nowadays, the Bologna Process is a far-reaching reform process, currently involving 47 countries (including all EU member states) plus the European Commission as an additional member. The Bologna Process aims to, inter alia help diverse higher education systems converge towards more transparent and compatible systems, based on three cycles. Its main purposes are to promote mobility and employability and to ensure quality and attractiveness[5]. The Bologna Process joins both EU and non-EU countries on a voluntary basis and is intergovernmental in nature.

The main pillars of the process include:

− **Comparability of the degree structure**, based on three cycles: the Bachelor, Master and Doctoral degree.

− **Mutual recognition** of degrees and course units. A system of academic credits (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (**ECTS**)) was created, guaranteeing accumulation and transferability of credits across countries. This enabled the mutual recognition of degrees, other higher education institutions' qualifications and periods of study abroad. In the same line, a **Diploma Supplement** was introduced, which describes the degrees and qualifications obtained, in terms of workload, level and learning outcomes.

− Assessment and accreditation of institutions and academic programmes based on shared **quality standards and procedures** (European Standards and Guidelines).

− Development of a **mobility** strategy, recommending measures such as the portability of national loans and grants, improved information on study programmes, and the removal of existing obstacles to mobility.

− Addressing **lifelong learning** and establishing procedures, guidelines or policy for the assessment and recognition of prior learning.

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[3] Berlin Communiqué, 2003.
[4] Since the Bergen Communiqué (2005) the two cycle system has been transformed into a three cycle system: Bachelor, Master and Doctorate.
[5] More background information can be found on http://www.ehea.info/

The Bologna reforms have achieved remarkable results over the last decade thus far. The state of play of structures and tools applied in the Bologna process is at different levels of implementation; it can be concluded that all countries have adopted at least some of the main elements, i.e. comparable degree structures, credit systems, the introduction of the Diploma Supplement and the development of National Qualifications Frameworks.

How successful has the implementation of the Bologna Process been?

The following conclusions are findings from the Bologna Process Implementation Report[6]. For a more detailed analysis we refer to this publication.

…with regard to degrees and qualifications?

The share of students studying in programmes that correspond to the Bologna two-cycle system is more than 90% in 18 European ASEM member countries[7], and between 70–89 % in five European ASEM member countries[8].

There is no single model for either Bachelor or Master degree programmes. Most countries use a combination of the 180 and 240 ECTS and another number of ECTS as workload in the first cycle programmes. In the second cycle, the 120 ECTS model predominates; however, other models with 90 or 60–75 ECTS also exist[9]. Nearly all countries leave some programmes outside the Bachelor/Master system for regulated professions (e.g. in the fields of medicine, pharmacy, architecture and engineering).

In order to improve the recognition of study achievements by better understanding what a student knows, understands and is able to do, the use of ECTS (quantitative measure) should be combined with learning outcomes (qualitative measure). Most countries in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) have already established ECTS as a transfer and accumulation system; yet, linking credits with learning outcomes has not been realised throughout[10].

As regards the recognition of qualifications, the Bologna Process Implementation Report still highlights problems. These problems do not result from different legal frameworks, since almost all countries have ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention, but are due to institutional practices that

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[6] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012.
[7] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 32: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden.
[8] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 32: Belgium, the Czech Republic, Great Britain, Italy, Portugal.
[9] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 33-34.
[10] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 46-49.

still constitute a challenge. Furthermore, the importance of a strong link between quality assurance and recognition is underlined[11].

…with regard to quality assurance?

Quality assurance has been a central topic in the Bologna Process since the very beginning. Considerable progress has been achieved in establishing quality assurance procedures since then. European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) were adopted in 2005 and will be revised by 2015. The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) was established in 2008 and is open to quality assurance agencies from all countries; so far 28 agencies from 13 countries have been listed in it.

The majority of the EHEA countries have established some form of external quality assurance system; their purpose and approaches, differ however. Some quality assurance systems focus on institutions or programmes, but the vast majority focus on a combination of both. Another difference is the scope of authority of a quality assurance agency or national body; some have supervisory tasks, and include even decision-making powers; some are advisory and more enhancement-oriented in character[12].

.… with regard to mobility?

Mobility has been at the heart of the Bologna Process right from the beginning. In the Bucharest Communiqué (2012) ministers considered learning mobility "essential to ensure the quality of higher education, enhance students' employability and expand cross-border collaboration within the EHEA and beyond"[13]. Mobility between the different countries is generally seen as unbalanced. The Bologna Process Implementation Report (2012) points in this context towards the East–West patterns in student flows within Europe where incoming students are mainly coming from Southern and Eastern European countries and outward students mainly going to Northern or Western Europe[14]. The Bologna Process set itself the goal of achieving a better balance in mobility in the EHEA. In this respect, funding is considered as the main obstacle for outward mobility as well as a lack of support services and accommodation for international students[15]. In terms of credit mobility, "the most common concern lies in recognition, while the most relevant obstacle to degree mobility is funding. The second most significant challenge for both is often language"[16].

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[11] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 55-57.
[12] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 60-61.
[13] Bucharest Communiqué, 2012.
[14] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 161-164.
[15] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 165-168.
[16] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 167.

During the Bucharest conference a separate mobility strategy was adopted: Mobility for Better Learning, Mobility strategy 2020 for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)[17]. In order to achieve the target of 20% of all higher education students graduating in the EHEA having experience abroad by 2020, the Ministers adopted with this mobility strategy, ten measures enhancing mobility[18].

…with regard to effective outcomes and employability?

Employability has been identified as one of the priorities for the Bologna Process and is to be achieved through the improvement of the cooperation between employers, students and higher education institutions and lifelong learning[19]. At their last meeting in Bucharest in 2012, ministers aimed "to enhance the employability and personal and professional development of graduates throughout their careers"[20].

In conclusion, following the Ministerial Communiqué of Bucharest (2012), major achievements of the Bologna Process have so far been:

1. "Higher education structures in Europe are now more compatible and comparable";
2. "Quality assurance systems contribute to building trust";
3. "higher education qualifications are more recognisable across borders and participation in higher education has widened"; and
4. "Students today benefit from a wider variety of educational opportunities and are increasingly mobile"[21].

During the last decade, the Bologna Process did not pass unnoticed and attracted worldwide interest. At the same time within the Bologna Process, more importance was given to cooperation in higher education around the world. On this account, European ministerial meetings have been supplemented since Leuven/Louvain la Neuve by the so-called Bologna Policy Forum. Ministers of 47 Bologna countries exchange ideas on the Bologna Process with their colleagues from all major regions of the world and discuss opportunities for inter-regional cooperation[22].

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[17] Mobility Strategy 2020, 2012.
[18] Mobility Strategy 2020, 2012.
[19] Bucharest Communiqué, 2012.
[20] Bucharest Communiqué, 2012.
[21] Bucharest Communiqué, 2012.
[22] More information about the Bologna Policy Forum can be found on: http://www.ehea.info/

2.2.2   Model 2: The ASEAN Plus Three Process

"Countries in each region attempt to extend cooperation of higher education activities. This is due to the recognition that a 'common education space' contributes to strengthening collaboration in politics, economy and socio-cultural community of the region, therefore, countries in the region expand the scale and scope of cooperation, particularly in higher education from which high-level manpower are produced"[23].

The ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Process includes the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) together with three East Asian nations: China, Japan and the Republic of Korea and has been established in 1997. In the beginning, cooperation focused mainly on finance, but broadened later on to other fields of collaboration. Higher education has received an important place in the development of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) since it is to reinforce the three pillars of that community by 2015: "ASEAN Political-Security Community, ASEAN Economic Community and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community"[24], aiming at increased student mobility and cross-border employability and promoting the "Higher Education Common Space in Southeast Asia". The "ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan (2007-2017)" adopted in 2007, was established.

As regards mobility promotion, current efforts include the attempt to set up a common credit transfer scheme between these countries. The "goal is to build a practical and feasible credit transfer system for the region, which may help to stimulate and promote student mobility in order to improve the quality and quantity of human resources in the economy"[25].

In this APT Cooperation Work Plan, with a duration of 10 years, six strategies for higher education have been agreed upon:

− Investing in education and training to accelerate learning opportunities for out-of-school children and youth as well as to upgrade the quality of educational institutions, including human resources development for teachers, lecturers and administrative personnel;

− Promoting collaboration, networking and research and development among institutions and authorities involved in education;

− Promoting higher education cooperation, increasing links between universities through the AUN and encouraging credit transfers between universities in APT countries;

− Supporting research activities and exchanges of APT scholars and professionals interested in the APT relationship;

− Continuing to make efforts to expedite visa application procedures for students and intellectuals of ASEAN Member States who travel to the APT countries for academic purposes, in accordance with existing regulations;

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[23] Yavaprabhas, no date.
[24] Yavaprabhas, no date.
[25] Cited in Pham, 2012.

- Cultivating an East Asian identity through the promotion of ASEAN Studies and East Asian Studies in the region[26].

Each strategy is underpinned by specific programmes or actions implemented by different APT member countries. This gives new momentum to the process and encourages the member countries to develop a community and foster an East Asian identity.

The cooperation at ministerial level in the APT process started with the first biennial ASEAN Plus Three Education Ministers Meeting (APT-EMM), in conjunction with the Seventh ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (7th ASED) and the First East Asia Summit Education Ministers Meeting (1st EAS EMM)[27]. The First APT-EMM was held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia on 4 July 2012. At the meeting, the education ministers confirmed "their commitments in strengthening cooperation and joint efforts to promote development in the education sector and to address common challenges of education in the region"[28]. There, the ministers endorsed the ASEAN Plus Three Plan of Action on Education: 2010 – 2017 to specify, concretise and realise the above mentioned strategies in the APT Cooperation Work Plan.

2.2.3   Model 3: The ASEM Education Process

The ASEM Education Process refers to Asia and Europe: two regions that share a long-standing history of successful bilateral partnerships in education. This process recognises the significance of inter-regional cooperation and the importance of establishing a common education area which contributes to better qualification and employability of citizens, progress and innovation in science, economic growth, and mutual respect and understanding. The ASEM Education Process, similar to the Bologna Process in Europe and regional initiatives in Asia, takes into consideration mechanisms and tools that make systems more transparent, comparable and compatible, e.g. quality assurance, qualifications frameworks, credit transfer systems and joint curriculum development. Hence, efforts are initially being made to gather information and to create transparency in order to get a better understanding of different systems and instruments. In a next step, commonalities will have to be explored in order to create a basis for making the systems more permeable and compatible and to intensify collaboration and mobility in the area of education.

The following examples indicate how an information-based approach can enable the comparison of certain aspects of higher education systems in Europe and Asia and what recommendations can be drawn for improved cooperation.

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[26] ASEAN Plus Three, 2007.
[27] First ASEAN Plus Three Education Ministers Meeting, 2012. Note: Other meetings have been taking place in the region, e.g. since 2005: Meeting of Director General/ Secretary General/ Commissioner of Higher Education in Southeast Asia.
[28] First ASEAN Plus Three Education Ministers Meeting, 2012.

…. with regard to degree structures, credit systems and learning outcomes

A three-tier degree structure leading to a Bachelor, Master and Doctoral degree has been implemented in many countries and institutions across the ASEM region. However, as the following examples in the table show, there is no generalised model concerning the length and the credit range of the different cycles, (Bachelor and Master level) in selected countries:

	Bachelor		Master	
	Cycle length	Credit range	Cycle length	Credit range
EU	3–4 years	180–240	1–2 years	60–120
China	4 years	140–180	2 years	30
Indonesia	4 years	144–160	2 years	36–50
Japan	4 years	124	2 years	30
The Republic of Korea	4 years	130–140	2 years	24
Malaysia	3 years	120	1 year	40
Philippines	4-5 years	120-230	2 years	36-45
Singapore	3–4 years		1–3 years	
Thailand	4 years	120–180	2 years	24-36
Viet Nam	4 years	120–220	3 years	30–55

Table 1: Length in years and credit range of Bachelor and Master level in selected countries[29]

While in numerous Asian ASEM countries, Bachelor studies are scheduled for four years and Master programmes for two, most European countries prefer the 'three-plus-two-model'[30]. These discrepancies in **degree structures** e.g. the duration of study cycles, can easily lead to troubles in setting up joint study programmes. Cooperation on compatible cycles and readable and comparable degrees are important to move forward.

Furthermore, a more detailed analysis shows that the understanding of the term '**credit**' can vary greatly. In Europe, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System has initially been put to the test as an instrument to improve the recognition of credits earned abroad and was introduced in 1989 as part of a pilot project within the European Commissions' Erasmus Programme. Today, ECTS is being used with blanket coverage in the European higher education area in order to indicate the workload within specific study programmes. In the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) the term refers to the workload of a student "in order to achieve the expected outcomes of a learning process at a specified level", including "lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, self-study and examinations". "In most cases, student workload ranges from 1,500 to 1,800 hours for an academic year, whereby one credit corresponds to 25 to 30 hours of work"[31].

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[29] Source: ASEM Education Secretariat, 2011; European Commission, 2009, p. 16; Hotta, 2010.
[30] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 35.
[31] European Commission, 2009.

In Asia, the meaning of "credit" often only refers to contact hours. In Asian ASEM countries, many universities have established different credit systems to demonstrate students' workloads within universities. However, the implementation of a credit system at national level varies. To accommodate national and institutional differences, the ASEAN Credit Transfer System (AUN-ACTS) has been designed to facilitate student mobility between higher education institutions that are part of the AUN. By 2015, more than 6,000 higher education institutions are expected to apply the AUN-ACTS in their exchange programmes; an estimated 12 million students shall benefit from this step[32].

These different understandings of credit systems need to be considered, for instance, when requesting a certain minimum amount of credits for admittance to a doctoral programme.

To further improve recognition practices, higher education institutions in the EHEA have in recent years started to supplement the definition of workloads by linking credits to **learning outcomes**. This development, however, is far from being completed. Learning outcomes are used for curriculum development and student assessment and have close connections with the implementation of qualifications frameworks, ECTS and other processes[33].

In preparing for ASEMME3 in Copenhagen, the AES surveyed how student workload is measured and whether there is a link between learning outcomes and credits. This resulted in the guide on Credit Systems and Learning Outcomes in ASEM Member Countries[34]. A regular update however is needed. There are still many differences with regard to the understanding and the use of credits and learning outcomes within and between both regions. Moreover, further tuning of the different systems between the regions and the complementary description of learning outcomes achieved in various study programmes would constitute an important step towards overcoming possible problems in admitting students to the second or third cycle or developing joint study programmes.

… with regard to transparency and recognition of qualifications

The Diploma Supplement in the EHEA aims to improve international transparency and professional recognition of qualifications. It began as a joint initiative by the European Union, the Council of Europe and the UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES): the European Diploma Supplement Model. Since 1999, the Bologna Process has been using the Diploma Supplement as a means for documenting the nature, level, context, content and status of degrees in the 'first cycle' and 'second cycle'. Moreover, the Diploma Supplement provides "additional information on the national higher education system concerned, so that the qualification is considered in relation to its own educational context"[35] . For the time being, the Diploma Supplement is being issued automatically in 25 higher education systems in the EHEA; it is issued upon request in 22 further

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[32] More information can be found on the AUN-ACTS website: http://acts.ui.ac.id/
[33] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p.10, 49-50.
[34] ASEM Education Secretariat, 2011.
[35] EACEA/Eurydice, 2010, p.150.

systems[36]. Nevertheless, the Diploma Supplement enables both employers and higher education institutions to better compare documented study contents and qualifications gained.

Comparable to this practice, the Asia-Pacific region conducted the Model Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Higher Education Diploma Supplement (HEDS) project. This project examined the nature and the extent of diploma supplements in APEC member countries, and moreover explored the possibilities for consensus and implementation of guiding principles for a common Diploma Supplement model. Australia, New Zealand and the Russian Federation have already developed different diploma supplement models; policies for diploma supplements are being considered. The APEC countries involved in the project are in mutual agreement that diploma supplements bear key benefits and that a non-binding APEC diploma supplement would be useful. Both concepts show commonalities and therefore offer a profound basis for the use in the ASEM context[37].

…with regard to National Qualifications Frameworks

Within the European Higher Education Area, the national qualifications framework (NQF) was developed as part of the Bologna Process as a third tool to create better transparency and enhance recognition. NQFs describe the differences between qualifications in all cycles and levels of education. In 2005, the European education ministers "adopted the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA) and committed to the development of national qualifications frameworks that should refer to the three-cycle structure and use generic descriptors based on learning outcomes, competences and credits"[38]. NQFs should be combined with ECTS and the Diploma Supplement[39]. There is still a lot to do to implement NQFs in all Bologna member countries. With regard to the ten steps for establishing an NQF, only nine EU countries have so far fulfilled all steps (including compatibility with the FQ-EHEA); others have adopted the NQF in legislation, or have agreed to proposals on the level structure. A few are in the first stages of implementation and still need to draft a level structure[40].

In the Asian ASEM region, a number of countries, amongst them Australia, Brunei Darussalam, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, have implemented a NQF either at higher education or VET level or both. Cambodia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia and Viet Nam consider drafting a NQF[41].

Moreover, there are several regional initiatives and activities in the ASEM region to establish translation devices that make national qualifications more readable across regions. These include the

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[36] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p.53.
[37] APEC, 2010.
[38] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 30.
[39] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 30, 44-46.
[40] Bologna Process Implementation Report, 2012, p. 45: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal.
[41] The list does not claim to be exhaustive and therefore does not include the situation in all Asian ASEM member countries.

EQF, the ASEAN framework arrangement for mutual recognition and the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN). The ASEAN Australia New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) Joint Committee has endorsed a project on capacity building for National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) for ASEAN. The project aims to share information on the regulatory arrangements of participating countries, which will underpin the recognition of qualifications and the quality assurance of education provision through the development of comparable NQFs based on a common reference framework[42].

Comparison of different NQF models in Asia and Europe in a more detailed way could contribute to facilitate the exchange of higher education and VET students between Asia and Europe in future.

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[42] ASEAN Secretariat, 2012.

3. Preparing for the 4th Asia-Europe Meeting in Kuala Lumpur 2013

On 12 October 2012, the ASEM Education Secretariat (AES) started to carry out a stocktaking exercise by sending a paper for comments, annotations and corrections to the Senior Officials in all ASEM member countries and relevant stakeholders in the ASEM Education Process, such as ASEF, AUN, the ASEM LLL Hub, EUA, EURASHE, ENQA, ESU, OECD, SEAMEO VOCTECH, UNESCO, and UNEVOC.

The stocktaking exercise contained three parts:

1. The first part showed the state of play of the Chair's Conclusions from ASEMME3; the AES asked the member countries to provide information on relevant initiatives and/or programmes which contribute to the accomplishment of the Chair's Conclusions but which were not mentioned in this overview.

2. The second part listed all recommendations on the four topics from ASEM conferences (including the ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC3)), seminars and initiatives, carried out since ASEMME3; the AES asked the member countries to provide information on national and/or regional accomplishments concerning the four topics and to propose future actions to be implemented.

3. For the third part, ASEM members were asked for their commitment in ASEMME4 and for input on priorities after the ASEMME4 period.

4. The exercise resulted in this Stocktaking Report, incorporating the received feedback of the ASEM member countries. The following chapter summarises the findings from the different country reports.

3.1 Implementation of the ASEMME3 Chair's Conclusions

As agreed at ASEMME2 in Hanoi (2009), Denmark hosted the 3rd Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME3) in Copenhagen from 9 to 10 May 2011. 160 participants from 40 ASEM countries (including, for the first time, Australia, New Zealand and the Russian Federation) were welcomed by the then Danish Minister for Education, Troels Lund Poulsen. The Copenhagen Meeting focused on four main topics, namely '**Quality Assurance and Recognition**', '**Engaging Business and Industry in Education'**, '**Balanced Mobility**' and '**Lifelong Learning including Vocational Education and Training'**.

Each topic was introduced by a different keynote speaker. Jan Truszczyński, Director-General for Education and Culture in the European Commission, presented Europe's efforts and achievements in quality assurance and recognition in cross-border education with special regard to examples of good practice resulting from EU initiatives and the Bologna Process. The Asian perspective on this topic was highlighted by Ju-Ho Lee, Minister of Education, Science and Technology of the Republic of Korea. Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Mohd Yassin Muhyiddin, who was at the same time Minister for Education, focused his introductory words on cooperation between education and the world of work. On the second day of the conference, the Chinese Vice-Minister for Education, Dr Hao Ping, introduced the topic of balanced mobility by giving an overview on China's internationalisation

initiatives. The Viet Namese Deputy Minister Bui Van Ga presented his country's manifold efforts concerning lifelong learning. In their final declaration, the Heads of Delegation agreed on 29 conclusions. The following chart provides an overview of the state of implementation of these conclusions:

Conclusions	Status*	Approaches
Quality Assurance and Recognition		
A1. Laid emphasis on strengthening interregional cooperation in the field of external quality assurance between quality assurance agencies and networks in Asia and Europe by organising joint meetings, with a view to develop common principles of quality assurance across the ASEM education area. Germany offers to host a first expert seminar in 2011. In order to ensure the continuity of the dialogue on quality assurance a seminar will be held in France in 2012. Progress and results will be presented for ASEMME4. With support of the ASEM Education Secretariat, an extensive glossary of quality assurance terms used in both regions should be compiled;	Partly √	Regional Quality Assurance Seminar in Germany (July 2011); ASEM Seminar on Quality Assurance in France (Nov 2012); Regular reporting on the ASEAN Quality Assurance (QA) Project; Presentation of ASEAN-QA in the ASEM seminar on QA in Germany (July 2011) and France (Oct 2012); First compilation of information on QA in ASEM member countries edited by AES.
A2. Urged the ASEM members to improve mutual recognition of qualifications by developing a common understanding of credits and learning outcomes; the ASEM Education Secretariat has already compiled relevant information on credits and learning outcomes in ASEM countries and is asked to regularly update this information on its website;	Partly √	Update of the Compendium on Credits and Learning Outcomes edited by AES, foreseen for July 2013.
A3. Suggested exploring the feasibility of setting up an ASEM convention on mutual recognition of degrees and study achievements (including the establishment of National Information and Recognition Centres in all ASEM countries); Austria volunteers to take an active part in establishing an ASEM pilot group of experts who will inform ASEMME4 about the progress;	√	ASEM Recognition Bridging Declaration, presented at the SOM1 (Jan 2013) (see text in the annex).
A4. Proposed to consider the implementation of the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education across the ASEM Education Area;	-	
Engaging Business and Industry in Education		
B5. Agreed to make the ASEM University-Business Forum (organised for the first time in Bangkok, March 2010) an annual event; the Forum should identify examples of good practice, develop ideas and make recommendations on how to improve university-business cooperation between ASEM countries; Germany offers to host the second ASEM University-Business Forum in late 2011. Malaysia offers to host a stakeholder meeting in 2012;	√	2nd ASEM University-Business Forum held in Bonn, Germany (Nov 2011); 3rd ASEM University-Business Forum held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (Nov 2012);
B6. Invited the European Commission to link the ASEM University-Business Forum to the EU		Special session with Asian stakeholders within the EU

Conclusions	Status*	Approaches
University-Business Forum and include a specific session with Asian and European representatives from academia and the world of work that will contribute to deepen the dialogue on bi-regional university-business cooperation in areas such as participation of employers in curriculum development and the labour-market relevance of graduate qualifications; also the organisers of future ASEM University Business Fora are asked to consider balanced participation from Asia and Europe;	√	University-Business Forum in 2011; University-Business Fora in Germany (Nov 2011) and Malaysia (Nov 2012) and 3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC3) (Sep 2012) in the Netherlands with stakeholders from Asia and Europe.
B7. Invited ASEF through the ASEM Rectors' Conference to contribute to the ASEM University-Business Forum, in order to enhance the dialogue on higher education-business cooperation between stakeholders;	√	3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC3) in the Netherlands (Sep 2012)
B8. Considered the establishment of an ASEM placement programme in terms of setting up a pilot scheme for higher education-business mobility of qualified students between Asia and Europe (partly funded by public resources and industry);	Partly √	Proposal for a programme design was introduced during the 3rd ASEM University-Business Forum in Malaysia (Nov 2012) and presented during the SOM1 of ASEMME4 (Jan 2013) (see text in the annex).
B9. Asked to explore the possibility to open up the EU ERASMUS Mundus Programme to the exchange of ASEM placement students in the next phase of the programme;	-	The proposal for the next generation of EU education programmes is still under discussion.
Balanced Mobility		
C10. Shared the view that learning mobility between Asia and Europe should be more balanced and urged the ASEM Education Secretariat to organise workshops in order to develop, together with experts from ASEM members, a strategy for balanced mobility and prepare a first draft with recommendations for the next ministerial meeting;	Partly √	ASEM Conference on Balanced Mobility in Thailand, (March 2012); First meeting of Bologna experts and Asian higher education experts in the framework of the ASEMUNDUS Final Conference (Feb 2013).
C11. Underscored the need for more and better data on student and staff mobility between Asia and Europe to provide a solid basis for political conclusions and decisions;	-	
C12. Resolved to improve the level of information on educational opportunities in Asia and Europe among people and invite ASEM members to support ASEF in its effort to update and maintain the DEEP database;	Partly √	The database on Education Exchange Programmes (DEEP) Evaluation Report (2009–2011) was presented at the ASEM Conference on Balanced Mobility, Thailand (March 2012). It was also shared at the ASEMME4 SOM1 (Jan 2013) and will be made available for the reference of the Ministers at ASEMME4 (May 2013).
C13. Encouraged the ASEM members to increase the number of joint study programmes	Partly	ASEMUNDUS, Workshop on the feasibility of setting-

Conclusions	Status*	Approaches
(e.g. in Asian and European studies) and summer schools between Asian and European higher education institutions by using various programmes and funding schemes an ASEM pilot scheme for joint curriculum development, funded by interested ASEM countries, could be envisaged;	√	up an ASEM curriculum development programme in the framework of the ASEM QA Seminar in France (Oct 2012); first draft paper to be presented during Senior Official Meeting SOM1 (Jan 2013) (see text in the annex).
C14. Agreed to promote student, teacher, researcher and administrative staff exchanges by using existing mobility schemes; the Ministers acknowledged the efforts made by ASEM DUO to strengthen the bilateral student and teacher exchange between Asian and European institutions and took note of the extension of the ASEM DUO programme to its third phase the ASEM DUO secretariat is to be evaluated and looks forward to presenting the results at ASEMME4;	√	Evaluation of the ASEM DUO programme will be presented at ASEMME4 (May 2013);
C15. Proposed to enhance mobility between Asia and Europe by intensifying promotional activities in both regions, appointing competent students and staff with a mobility experience as "ambassadors for mobility" in each ASEM country and organising ASEM education fairs in Asia and Europe (e.g. with EU support). The ASEM Education Secretariat is asked to set up an expert group to explore the usefulness of a promotion strategy for the ASEM Education Area;	Partly √	Appointment of Erasmus Mundus promoters in the framework of ASEMUNDUS conferences in Indonesia, Thailand and the Republic of Korea; First meeting of Bologna experts and Asian higher education experts for discussing the usefulness of a promotion strategy in the framework of the ASEMUNDUS Final Conference (Feb 2013);
C16. Encouraged ASEM members to organise thematic training seminars on removing obstacles to mobility (e.g. recognition), funded by EU or national resources the Ministers welcomed Thailand's offer to host an international ASEM conference on mobility in late 2011;	Partly √	ASEM QA seminars (Germany (July 2011) and France(Oct 2012)); ASEM Conference on Balanced Mobility in Thailand (March 2012);
Lifelong Learning including technical vocational education and training'		
D17. Affirmed their commitment to enhancing adult and community education and acknowledged the importance of lifelong learning as the space in which democratic social and political participation can be fostered and practised, in the service of social cohesion and the quality of life;	●	Evidence of country commitment: Collect national LLL policies and strategies. Create a database of documents on website for peer learning. See http://www.dpu.dk/asem/advisoryboard/abmembers/

Conclusions	Status*	Approaches
D18. Encouraged the strengthening of lifelong learning research base in universities and research institutes in the ASEM area, including their capacity for international exchange of information and analysis, in order to contribute to evidence-based educational reform and innovation;	√	Recommend leading universities/ research institutes and researchers in each ASEM country for joint research projects on LLL with ASEM LLL Hub. Identify policy issues at national and regional levels. Specific issues could be gender, workplace learning, literacy, validation and recognition of informal and non-formal learning, qualifications frameworks, youth education, education reforms, legal frameworks for LLL, learning city/region, learning for aging population, prison education, e-learning, guidance and counselling, adult teacher training, role of universities in LLL, financing LLL, etc. Research results are to give implications and scientific evidence for policy development;
D19. Recommended dissemination of good practices, such as learning cities, learning communities, learning festivals, learning entitlements, lifelong learning accounts, vouchers for lifelong learning and academic credit banks system, literacy programmes, professionalization of adult teachers, etc., and sharing of research findings in lifelong learning between ASEM countries through the coordination of ASEM LLL Hub in cooperation with UNESCO and other international organisations;	√	ASEM LLL Hub to create a web-portal (www.dpu.dk/asem) and a Magazine for LLL (www.dpu.dk/asem/magazine) to disseminate knowledge and information and share good practices;
D20. Encouraged workplace learning and increase of both employer responsibilities for provision and employee opportunities for participation;	√	Member countries to create legal frameworks for workplace learning (e.g. study leave entitlement for employees, competence development funds set up by employers, tax-reduction for training budget of enterprises);
D21 Welcomed Denmark's offer to host an "ASEM Forum on Lifelong Learning" in April 2012 under the coordination of the ASEM LLL Hub during the Danish EU presidency;	√	ASEM Forum on Lifelong Learning (May 2012) in Denmark http://asemforum2012.dk/;
D22. Called attention to continuing the dialogue on qualifications frameworks between Asian and European experts in order to improve transparency and knowledge of the varied approaches to and understandings of lifelong learning in both regions;	Partly √	ASEM TVET Symposium in Germany (Feb 2012);
D23. Encouraged the exchange of experience on how qualifications frameworks affect	Partly	ASEM TVET Symposium in Germany (Feb 2012);

Conclusions	Status*	Approaches
lifelong learning and assure broad stakeholder acceptance of new forms of adult learning, thereby especially underlining the idea of enhancing and supporting the development of qualifications frameworks – including validation and recognition of informal and non-formal learning outcomes and flexible pathways to further education and career. In this context, the Ministers welcomed Viet Nam's offer to host a conference on qualifications framework and Germany's offer to organise the next Vocational Education Training Symposium with special regard to qualifications frameworks in early 2012;	√	ASEM LLL Hub and UNESCO are working with Viet Nam on a regional conference for 2013;
D24. Requested the Senior Officials and the ASEM Education Secretariat to provide the ASEMME4 with a systematic overview on existing qualifications frameworks models (including conclusions concerning ASEM education cooperation);	Partly √	Proposal for a global inventory on National Qualifications Frameworks for ASEM by the European Training Foundation (ETF), European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), UNESCO-TVET and UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning;
D25. Asked to document best practices in VET, particularly those reflecting industry-school partnerships which can be shared by all participating countries; a workshop hosted by Austria will present these examples;	Partly √	TVET Workshop in Austria (Nov 2012);
D26. Suggested establishing an expert group in order to elaborate the development of joint VET initiatives;	Partly √	TVET Workshop in Austria (Nov 2012);
D27. Welcomed Malaysia's offer to host an expert meeting on e-learning as a component of lifelong learning;	-	
D28. Agreed to support, disseminate and utilise the ASEM LLL Hub's research activities in national contexts and invited countries to contribute to the operation of the ASEM LLL Hub secretariat, for example by sending staff to work at the secretariat for a period;	√	Ministerial senior officials in charge of LLL in all ASEM countries are invited to join the Advisory Board for ASEM LLL Hub. See details: http://www.dpu.dk/asem/advisoryboard/abmembers/
D29. Encouraged ASEM members to support the cooperation between the ASEM LLL Hub, relevant EU networks and the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Lifelong Learning in order to maximise knowledge and scholarly exchanges in the field between Asia and Europe.	●	Asian member countries in ASEM are to support the operation of SEAMEO Centre for LLL;

* √ =accomplished; partly √= partly accomplished; ● = to be acknowledged; - = not yet accomplished

3.2 From Copenhagen to Kuala Lumpur: Results of activities carried out and proposals for future action

In 2013, the Malaysian Ministry for Higher Education hosts the 4th Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education. For sustainability reasons, the Malaysian host has decided to deepen discussions on the four topics from ASEMME3 and to substantiate cooperation. The official title of ASEMME4, which takes place in Kuala Lumpur from 13 to 14 May 2013, is 'Strategizing ASEM Education Collaboration'.

In order to prepare a streamlined discussion for each topic, the ASEM Education Secretariat (AES) has taken a closer look into all official ASEM documents[43] prepared since the last Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education in Copenhagen 2011 (ASEMME3). The results stemming from these ASEM conferences and/or seminars have been assigned to the respective four conference topics. Further to this, the Secretariat asked the ASEM member countries to provide information on national and regional developments concerning each topic.

3.2.1 Quality assurance and recognition

Following ASEMME1 in Berlin in 2008, leaders acknowledged the importance of quality assurance in higher education in order to ensure the sustainable growth of today's society. During ASEMME3 in Copenhagen in 2011, the Ministers for Education welcomed different country initiatives to strengthen cooperation between European and Asian stakeholders in quality assurance. **Germany** offered an interregional quality assurance seminar, bringing together experts in the field of external quality assurance in 2011. In a seminar hosted by **France** in November 2012, challenges and prospects of quality assurance in higher education were also discussed in detail. Recommendations from both conferences are available under: www.asem-education-secretariat.org. In addition to the seminars, an international working group has been constituted to explore the "feasibility of setting up an ASEM Convention on the mutual recognition of degrees and study achievements (including the establishment of National Information and Recognition Centres in all ASEM countries)". The working group, consisting of representatives from Austria, China, Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Malaysia, Thailand, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the ASEAN University Network, and the AES (UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the EUA being excused) met for the first time in **Austria** in December 2011 under the auspices of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research. Upon

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[43] Documents resulting from the following seminars have been regarded as official ASEM documents:
ASEMME3 Chair's Conclusions from Copenhagen 2011 (Chair's Conclusions ASEMME3, 2011); ASEM Expert Seminar on Regional Quality Assurance Germany 2011 (ASEM, 2011b); 2nd Asia-Europe Education Workshop on Knowledge Societies: Universities and their Social Responsibilities Austria 2011 (ASEF, 2011); TVET Symposium Germany 2012 (ASEM, 2012f); 2nd ASEM University-Business Forum Germany 2011 (ASEM, 2011a); ASEM Conference on Enhancing Balanced Mobility Thailand 2012 (ASEM, 2012d); Forum on Lifelong Learning Denmark 2012 (ASEM, 2012c); 1st Asia-Europe Students' Forum the Netherlands 2012 (ASEF, 2012a); 3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference in Groningen 2012 (ASEF, 2012b); ASEM Seminar on Quality Assurance France 2012 (ASEM, 2012b); 3rd ASEM University-Business Forum Malaysia 2012 (ASEM, 2012a); Workshop on Tourist Education, Austria 2012 (ASEM, 2012e).

invitation from the Ministry of Education in **China**, a second meeting was held in Beijing on 6 and 7 September 2011. The Working Group considered it feasible to set up an 'ASEM Recognition Bridging Declaration'[44] with reference to the following Conventions:

− the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon Recognition Convention), adopted on 11 April 1997 in Lisbon, Portugal; and

− the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (Tokyo Recognition Convention), adopted on 26 November 2011 in Tokyo, Japan.

This initiative has been explicitly acknowledged by the Bologna Policy Forum in Bucharest 2012[45].

Apart from these initiatives, officially agreed upon at the ministerial conference in Copenhagen, different ASEM member countries have put into practice several national and regional approaches in terms of quality assurance and recognition.

Other recent activities in regard to enhancing quality assurance in the Asia region include the Developing Capacity within the East Asia Summit in Quality Assurance in Higher Education project. Officials from fifteen quality assurance agencies attended a ten day workshop at the University of Melbourne (**Australia**) in early 2013. The intention of the project was to develop an improved understanding across the region on Higher Education Quality Assurance in conjunction with East Asia Summit (EAS) countries and ultimately improve the transparency and quality of higher education systems.

On 14 and 15 December 2011, **Belgium (Flemish Community)** hosted a Quality Assurance Conference, providing a discussion forum for experts, policymakers, representatives from higher education institutions and relevant stakeholders to exchange experiences, good practices and the challenges they face and foresee in quality assurance. In June 2013, an international quality assurance conference titled 'Assurance, Trust and Recognition' will take place in Belgium.

The **French Community of Belgium** has been vice-chairing the European Network of Information Centres (ENIC) Bureau and is today a member of the National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) Advisory Board and chairs the ELCORE Group (working group within the ENIC-NARIC networks in charge of the electronic provision of information). Since 2010, non-European experts in recognition have been invited to the annual joint ENIC-NARIC meeting, including a representative from China and India.

In **Brunei Darussalam**, the Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) has established its own quality assurance unit: the Strategic and Quality Assurance Management Unit (SQAMU). It acts as central body for developing and coordinating detailed plans for the respective faculties, the supporting service departments and the central administration of the university. In addition, it ensures that all the strategies or action plans carried out by the faculties and the administrative departments would

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[44] See 'ASEM Bridging Declaration' in the annex.
[45] Third Bologna Policy Forum, 2012.

be aligned towards the to-be-developed qualification framework. Further to this, a number of academic programmes at UBD were recognised and accredited by international professional bodies.

Cyprus decided to set up a new agency that is solely responsible for all issues concerning the evaluation of public and private universities, as well as for accreditation and recognition matters.

Germany has been active in several projects involved in enhancing cross-border accreditation. The ASEAN-QA project is carried out within the framework of the Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES) programme, which is jointly coordinated by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK). Partners are the AUN, SEAMEO Regional Institute of Higher Education and Development (RIHED) and two regional networks of quality assurance agencies in Europe (**European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)**) and Southeast Asia (**ASEAN Quality Assurance Network (AQAN)**). One of the main objectives of the ASEAN-QA project is to foster the exchange of experiences between quality assurance officers responsible for internal quality assurance (IQA) and external quality assurance (EQA) by evaluating study programmes. Bringing together representatives of both IQA and EQA can be seen as the unique feature of 'ASEAN-QA'. The project also aims at paving the way to creating a regional quality assurance framework in the ASEAN region.

Japan hosted 'the International Symposium on Exchange among Universities with Quality Assurance in East Asian Region', which was held in Tokyo in September 2011. The National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE), one of the leading quality assurance agencies in Japan, published a series of *Overview of Quality Assurance* providing basic and specific information not only on the Japanese quality assurance system for higher education but also on that of some overseas countries. Centred around the partnerships with quality assurance agencies in ASEM regions, based on the memorandum of understanding, NIAD-UE acts as an international 'bridge builder', conducting surveys and visits, holding seminars and training to support quality assurance activities in the higher education sector.

On 28-29 April 2011, the Stakeholders' Conference on Recognition in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) took place in Riga, organised by the **Latvian** authorities with the support of the Council of Europe. There was discussion on recognition issues between the EHEA and other parts of the world with a focus on the ways how the EHEA could further cooperate with other parts of the world to improve recognition.

Until March 2012, the accreditation of a qualification acquired abroad has been carried out on a two-tier basis in **Lithuania**. A governmental resolution approved in February 2012 enables the two-tier procedure to be merged into a single one. In order to make the system more transparent, the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education is currently running a project financed by the European Structural Funds that aims at designing the national structure for study level descriptors and study field descriptors.

In **Malaysia**, quality assurance is carried out by the Malaysia Qualification Agency (MQA) which covers a wide range of quality assurance initiatives including the Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning (APEL) and the rating of institutions.

In the **Philippines**, the Commission on Higher Education has programmed assistance to higher education institutions for the development of their internal quality assurance. External quality

assurance, on the other hand, is carried out by private accreditation associations under two umbrella networks.

Since July 2012, the Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC) in **Thailand** has implemented the project 'Tuning Educational Structure for Internationalization'. With support from the European Commission, this project enhances the sharing of information on curricula content, learning outcomes and instructional strategies. Furthermore it consolidates standards for selected subject areas, such as Computers, Tourism, and Hotel Management and Science.

According to the **3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference** (ARC3) recommendations worked out during the latest meeting in Groningen in the Netherlands, it has been agreed that it is necessary and worth working on a wider use of tools for recognition and comparability in ASEM.

When examining the different country responses, the following proposals/recommendations are considered as priority in order to enhance <u>quality assurance and recognition</u> in ASEM. **These proposals are listed in the chart below:**

1. PROGRAMMES

- Funding of an ASEM Curriculum Development Programme (BR, BE fr)

2. KNOWLEDGE-BASE

- Compiling an ASEM Manual for Recognition and Accreditation on agreed good practices in cross-border recognition and accreditation (BR, CY, DE)
- Up-dating of the Compendium on Credits and Learning Outcomes (BE fr)
- Inviting peers from Asia to Europe and vice-versa to take part in external quality assurance procedures (BE fl)

3. INITIATIVES

- Adopting (AT, DE)/Presentating (BE fr) the ASEM Recognition Bridging Declaration
- Encouraging membership in the European Quality Assurance Register for non-Bologna countries (DE)
- Setting up a higher education quality assurance center for Asia (JP)
- Organising an international symposium on higher education mobility and quality assurance (JP)
- Setting up a website "Asia Network of Information Centres-National Academic Recognition Information Centers" (ANIC-NARIC) hosted by China (CN)
- Encouraging the adoption of the ECTS credit system in all programmes of study in the entire ASEM region (CY)
- Implementing one single credit transfer system (BR)
- Appointing of ASEM QA experts from QA agencies, higher education institutions, students and Governments for establishing a continous dialogue (BE fl, BE fr, DE)
- Encouraging ASEM member countries from Europe joining the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (Tokyo Convention) (EE)
- QA-based qualifications referencing is an ongoing common effort of ASEAN member states towards the development of an ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework. This adds value to in place National Qualification Frameworks (NQF) of Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines while it is a parallel endeavor for the rest of ASEAN countries on their NQF development

4. EXPERT GROUPS

- Organising Peer Learning Activity related to new approaches in QA in HE (moving from programme accreditation to institutional review) (BE fl)
- Organising a Peer Learning Activity related to steering higher education (autonomy, responsibility and accountability) (BE fl)
- Setting up an ASEM guide on Degrees' Recognition (CY)
- Elaborating a set of common basic standards and procedures for Quality Assurance (DE)
- Establishing a dialogue between ENIC-NARIC centres and Asian QA experts (LV)
- Setting up an expert group or panel to harmonise the credit transfer system among ASEM member countries (BR)
- Setting up an expert group to explore concrete steps to implement the ASEM Recognition Bridging Declaration (EE)

3.2.2   Engaging business and industry in education

University-business engagement in education is becoming more and more important in a globalising world for improving the employability of students and graduates. During their first meeting in Berlin, ASEM Ministers for Education agreed to establish a bi-regional forum involving stakeholders from the education and economic sector to strengthen dialogue and cooperation between education and the world of work at local, national and international level. Ministers at the Hanoi meeting in 2009 asked for an ASEM University-Business Forum to be set up. In fact, since that time, three forums took place. Since ASEMME3, University-Business Forums have been held in **Germany** (November 2011) and **Malaysia** (October 2012).

University leaders and students who participated in the 3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC3) back-to-back with the 1st Asia-Europe Students' Forum in Groningen on 24 - 26 September 2012 and jointly organised by the **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the ASEAN University Network (AUN**) and the University of Groningen (UoG) (the Netherlands), discussed the education sector's role with regard to employment. They agreed that it is necessary to create more opportunities for students to acquire competences for the workplace and engage with the communities. Further recommendations include promoting a credit-transfer system within ASEM, promoting student entrepreneurialism, increasing student participation in the ASEM Education Process, supporting lifelong learning and creating platforms for exchange of good practices on University Social Responsibility (USR) through industry and community engagement. The topic of USR was introduced during the 2nd Asia-Europe Education Workshop on Knowledge Societies: Universities and their Social Responsibilities (June 2011). The results fed into the discussions of the 3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC3). Recommendations from all conferences are available under: www.asem-education-secretariat.org and www.asef.org.

Apart from these meetings, several national and regional approaches have been implemented in order to enhance the engagement of the world of work in the academic sector.

In **Germany**, for example, round table discussions have been taking place, where government representatives, higher education institutions and industry players meet regularly in order to fulfil their different needs.

In **Japan**, various efforts to promote industry-university collaboration have been implemented in recent years. For example, Japan has amended the "Standards for Establishing University" (which is the basic law of quality assurance in higher education) in 2011 to encourage universities to adjust their systems to help students to establish social and vocational independence through, within and outside the curriculum. Based on the amendment, universities facilitate such academia-industry efforts as internship, project based learning, and cooperative education. In the same year, for the purpose of strategic human resources development through the combined efforts of the government and the private sector, the roundtable meeting was held by the leaders from universities and industries. The meeting proposed the "Action Plan" which is to identify issues to be tackled by university and industry. Furthermore, Japanese industries take initiatives to create scholarship funds which are to be provided to students who wish to study abroad.

In December 2011, **Lithuania** adopted a new procedure of funding study programmes which, alongside the state funding, may be financially backed by employers. This financial support applies to

study programmes that are needed by the state, but which are unpopular among the most qualified entrants or graduates. This arrangement legally binds a student to follow his or her graduation, to work for the employer – at least for an established period of time – and it binds the employer to employ the graduate. The arrangement is signed in a tripartite agreement between the higher education institution, the employer and the student.

In **Malaysia**, the Industry Center of Excellence programme is an avenue for graduates to obtain the skills required by the industry before graduation. To further enhance collaboration between academia and the industry sector, the Ministry of Higher Education in Malaysia established the Graduate Employability Taskforce (GET) with the aim of improving the employability of graduates. The Graduate Employability Blueprint provides a new framework for institutions of higher learning (IHLs) to navigate and guide graduates' cumulative progress and curricular alignment throughout their years in IHLs. This blueprint allows each IHL to devise its own internal mechanism and to use its own knowledge to accomplish the expected outcomes of enhanced graduate employability as guided by the framework and road maps in the blueprint. In Malaysia, the Industry Centre of Excellence (ICoE) is an establishment for the development of explicit human capital to satisfy the current market projection, and requirements, besides cultivating and enhancing the quality of research and development. As a translation model of The National Graduate Employability Blueprint 2012-2017, a crucial framework for higher education, ICoE also supports the smooth implementation of the Economic Transformation Program (ETP) within the higher education sector. The implementation of the ICoE promises intensification of the university-industry affiliation and collaboration. ICoE is a program specially designed to benefit both industry and university, catering for the need to produce graduates with the right core attributes within the profession and therefore employable both locally and globally. Universities leverages by gaining on practical training and exposure to industrial experiences for both students and lecturers. In addition to this, the ICoE covers a range of diverse realities in both teaching and research, including student and lecturer attachment, consultancy, Research & Development (R&D), as well as small and medium enterprise development (SME) and the creation of spin-off enterprises for the joint commercialization of R&D products.

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in **the Philippines** has begun to undertake a Jobs-Skills Matching Project that includes the establishment of labour market information systems and the massive information dissemination of employment opportunities among students and higher education institutions. In collaboration with industry partners, it has developed industry-oriented programmes, among them the CHED-Business Processing Outsourcing Industry Collaboration; the CHED-IBM collaboration in the field of Smarter Analytics. A recent development is the collaborative revision of policies, standards and guidelines of other industry-oriented programmes. As a follow through, an industry-CHED collaboration for talent development is an on-going intervention through courseware development, faculty development and assessment-based assistance to students for short-term and long-term response to industry's human resource needs.

In May 2012, **Singapore's** Republic Polytechnic signed a memorandum of understanding with the Waterside Inn in the **United Kingdom** to establish a joint programme including student attachment, scholarships and sponsorships, staff exchanges and joint research and partnerships. In the universities, industry representatives play a key role by sitting on the Board of Trustees as well as on the Advisory Boards of faculties and schools.

When examining the different country responses, the following proposals/recommendations are considered as priority in order to enhance business and industry cooperation with education in ASEM. **These proposals are listed in the chart below**:

1. PROGRAMMES

- Developing an ASEM Placement Programme (BE fr, ASEF, BR, MY) (including both undergraduate and graduate level in various fields (BE fl))

2. KNOWLEDGE-BASE

- Investigating national strategies for University-Business cooperation in ASEM countries (AES)

3. INITIATIVES

- Participating in a seminar on funding opportunities under the new European Commission Programme proposal (AT, MY)

4. EXPERT GROUPS

- Strengthening the international dialogue on University-Business cooperation via seminars, round tables aso; including issues such as public-private partnership, corporate social responsibility, philanthropy, sponsorship, internship opportunities, client-based project and industrial liaison (BR)
- Organising the 3rd Asia-Europe Education Workshop on "Beyond the Academic Yardstick: the Societal Excellence of Education", building on the results of the 2nd Asia-Europe Education Workshop (ASEF)

3.2.3   Balanced mobility

Mobility is predominately unbalanced within and between regions. This is true within Asia and within the EHEA, but also between both regions. Many more Asians study in Europe than Europeans in Asia. In the Bologna context, ministers are striving for better balanced mobility between European countries and other parts of the world[46]. In the Copenhagen Chair's Conclusions, ASEM Education Ministers "shared the view that learning mobility between Asia and Europe should be more balanced and urged the AES to organise workshops in order to develop, together with experts from ASEM members, a strategy for balanced mobility and prepare a first draft with recommendations for the next ministerial meeting"[47].

Looking at the present situation concerning student and staff mobility between Asia and Europe, there are several aspects that are important for improving mutual mobility: foreign language skills, attractiveness of higher education institutions, information provided on study options, teaching and research opportunities, and many more. All of these aspects were discussed during the 'International Asia-Europe Conference on Enhancing Balanced Mobility', which took place in Bangkok, **Thailand** in March 2012. Some 120 participants discussed ways to motivate students and teachers to go abroad for study and research purposes and to foster inter-regional mobility. According to the participants, this could be achieved by providing transparent two-way information websites in different languages, offering accredited and attractive international short-term programmes such as summer schools, promoting joint education and joint research programmes, and including mobility in the international strategies of institutions. As an example of good practice for strengthening balanced mobility, the **Secretariat for ASEM-DUO Fellowship Programme** presented the ASEM-DUO Fellowship Programme during the Bangkok conference. This programme specifically addressed the imbalance in exchange and encouraged balanced mobility by supporting pair-based, two-way exchanges. This initiative was first proposed at ASEM 3, and was put into practice in 2001. It initially started as a 5-year project but was already extended twice. The programme has supported more than 2,000 teachers and students so far. An extensive evaluation report will be provided for ASEMME4.

Apart from these programmes and initiatives, various ASEM member countries have put into practice national and regional approaches in terms of balancing mobility.

In October 2012, **Australia** announced the AsiaBound Grants Program. AsiaBound will support more than 10,000 Australian students to take up part of their study in the region.

Different scholarship schemes exist in several ASEM member countries to promote both inbound and outbound mobility. One of the most important promoters of global mobility, including mobility between Asia and Europe, still is the **European Commission**. **Brunei Darussalam**, for example, is part of the MULTI consortium within the framework of Action 2 in Erasmus Mundus. This project promotes scientific exchanges between Europe and industrialised countries in South-East Asia,

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[46] Third Bologna Policy Forum, 2012.
[47] Chair's Conclusions ASEMME3, 2011.

dealing with multilingualism and multiculturalism. MULTI offers attractive mobility grants to Asian and European students and researchers (Master students, PhD students, post-docs and staff) for studying or performing research in one of the consortium institutions.

The Flemish Community of Belgium is setting up an action plan on student mobility. In addition, the Flemish Community is reconsidering its bilateral agreements with other countries in the world, Asian countries included. In 2013, the 'Study in Flanders project' is taking part in the European Education Fair and the Asia Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE) conference in Hong Kong. In 2011, the Flemish Community of Belgium joined the ASEM-DUO programme. It plans to continue its participation in the following years.

In 2010, the information and promotion agency Wallonia-Brussels Campus (www.studyinbelgium.be) in the **French Community of Belgium** was established jointly by the Ministry of the French Community of Belgium and Wallonia-Brussels International with the support of the higher education institutions and their representative councils. Many activities specifically focused on the Asian region through the participation in the most important fairs (APAIE, European Higher Education Fair (EHEF), PROMODOC) as well as the ministerial and Prince Missions to Viet Nam, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, etc.

In summer 2012, **Estonia** hosted the 18th ASEF University (AU18), themed "Conscious Consumers for Environmental Sustainability". Out of 400 applicants, 42 (under-)graduate students, young professionals, artists and educators from 33 ASEM countries were given a chance to participate in the programme. AU18 broadened the participants' horizons through a dialogue on environmentally sustainable consumption in a multi-cultural setting.

With regard to institutional cooperation, **Germany** promotes 14 double-degree programmes with Asian ASEM members (China, India, Thailand, Viet Nam) via DAAD. Within the framework of DAAD's International Study and Training Partnership (ISAP), more than 90 German and foreign students and graduates were mobile in more than 40 projects. In the Asian and Australian region, all in all, the DAAD promoted about 5,400 German and 7,400 foreign students and academics in 2011. Projects like the EU-funded ASEMUNDUS and Euro-Asia.net, coordinated by **Germany** and executed together with **Austria, Belgium (Fl), Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, the Netherlands** and **Poland**, promote the participation of excellent Asian and European students and staff in joint degree programmes. In the context of these projects, 'mobility ambassadors' have been nominated who promote the idea of going abroad. These ambassadors met in February 2013 together with Bologna and Asian higher education experts in order to discuss the feasibility of setting up a balanced mobility strategy and to explore the usefulness of a promotion strategy for the ASEM Education Area.

Japan has been promoting student exchanges through a variety of measures, such as provision of scholarships and fostering inter-university projects. The projects being carried out in recent years are as follows. **Japan, China** and **the Republic of Korea** have implemented a project called 'CAMPUS Asia' (Collective Action for the Mobility Program of University Students), which aims to promote quality assured student exchange. The exchange is implemented with measures for quality assurance such as academic performance evaluation along a guideline commonly adopted. Currently, ten selected pilot programmes are being implemented under this project. **Japan** has been conducting a project to promote inter-university exchanges through a collaborative education programme seeking to assure the quality of credit transfers and academic performance management between universities in Japan

and regions including Asia and Europe (the Re-inventing Japan Project). While providing support to universities' efforts for internationalization of institutions with view to promoting inbound mobility (Global 30 Program), Japan launched a new programme in 2012 which encourages institutions to create an enabling environment for Japanese students to study abroad (Global 30 Plus Program). This programme expects efforts such as support to improve students' language skills and faculties' teaching skills, and gathering and providing useful information on studying abroad.

In 2010, the Cabinet of Ministers' of the Republic of **Latvia** approved the "Action Plan for necessary reforms in Higher Education and Science for 2010-2012". The Action Plan consisted of several tasks, including the promotion of internationalisation and competitiveness of higher education. The aim was to increase the share of foreign students in Latvia to 3% in the total number of students. In 2012, there were 3,7% of foreign students in Latvia's higher education institutions, around 25% of them were coming from Asian countries. The total number of scholarships for foreign students, researchers and teaching staff offered by Latvia to students from the countries having international agreements with Latvia in the field of education, has increased considerably starting from 2011.

In February 2011, a programme for the 'promotion of the international dimension in higher education' was adopted in **Lithuania**. This programme embeds the promotion of mobility as a key factor for the internationalisation of higher education in Lithuania. It sets benchmarks for the number of inbound and outbound students and teachers. Since 2012, the Ministry of Education and Science renders financial support for higher education and research institutions, enabling them to invite prominent foreign teachers to lecture in Lithuania. The purpose of the programme is to stimulate exchange, share teaching methods and activate teachers' involvement in global processes for teaching and research.

In 2012, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) of the **Philippines** expanded its Memorandum of Agreements with ASEM and other countries as well as international organisations to facilitate the mobility of students, faculty members and researchers. Through the University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP), 52 higher education institutions have also strengthened their internationalisation and student exchange programmes. In addition, 10,000 Filipino students have acquired knowledge and skills from reputable institutions abroad under the Student Internship Abroad Programme. CHED, likewise, spearheaded the participation of Philippines' higher education institutions in student mobility programmes and networks such as the ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) and the ASEAN UNIVERSITY NETWORK (AUN). A sub-network of the AUN, the Southeast Asia Engineering Education Development Network (SEED-Net) Project, admitted in 2012 the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) as additional member –university from the Philippines.

Singapore's IHLs have actively encouraged student exchanges between ASEM countries. The National University of Singapore (NUS) has a very successful Student Exchange Programme with over 300 partner universities worldwide. Each year, more than 1,600 NUS students go abroad and more than 1,600 foreign students from partner universities come to NUS.

Apart from the fact that **Thailand** joined the ASEM-DUO Fellowship Programme in 2006, the Office of the Higher Education Commission also promoted intra-regional student mobility by joining the **Malaysia-Indonesia-Thailand** Student Mobility Programme, whereby SEAMEO RIHED has been actively serving as the Secretariat for the programme. The programme serves to promote credit

transfer in the region and fosters cross-cultural understanding. The programme recently welcomed **Viet Nam** as the fourth partner country. In order to accommodate the increase in participating countries, the programme was renamed the ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) Programme.

In addition, the **ASEF University (AU)** is organised annually in venues alternating between Asia and Europe. It tackles topics of relevance to ASEM, employing formal and non-formal education methodologies, and involving youth from ASEM countries.

The examples listed above show very clearly that quite a number of ASEM members have already implemented, individually or in connection with other countries, programmes to increase outward and/or inward mobility within a given region. Some programmes are also open for global cooperation and mobility, including between Asia and Europe. Schemes targeting only the exchange between Asia and Europe still represent a minority.

When examining the different country responses, the following proposals/recommendations are considered as priority in order to balance mobility in ASEM. **These proposals are listed in the chart below:**

1. PROGRAMMES

- Enlarging the ASEM DUO Fellowship Programme (KOR)
- Implementing ASEM Summer Schools in a tripartite or multi-mode model where students need to travel to more than one country and work on trend-setting themes (MY)
- Organising the ASEF University (AU) annually (ASEF and ASEM partners)
- Developing an ASEM Curriculum/Study Programme (BE fr, CY)

2. KNOWLEDGE-BASE

- Up-dating of the Compendium on Credits and Learning Outcomes (BE fr, AES)
- Providing a systematic overview on existing qualifications frameworks (DE)
- Collecting data on inbound and outbound mobility (BR, DE)
- Gathering data from all higher education institutions on a website (CY)
- Improving information by up-dating DEEP Database (BR) with support of ASEM members (ASEF)
- Encouraging the adoption of the ECTS credit system in all programmes of study in the entire ASEM region (CY)
- Implementing one single credit transfer system (BR)

3. INITIATIVES

- Applying for European funds to set up joint study programmes (CY)
- Appointing ASEM mobility ambassadors (DE, MY)
- Organising annual ASEM Education Fairs on a rotation basis and back-to-back with a one day expert group workshop (BR)
- Providing information on all international education fairs in Asia and Europe on AES website (CY)
- Organising a seminar on funding opportunities under the new European Commission Programme proposal (CY)
- Providing grants to support inbound mobility of students from less developed countries (BR)

4. EXPERT GROUPS

- Identifying various themes for training seminars on overcoming obstacles to mobility (BR)

3.2.4   Lifelong learning (LLL) including technical vocational education and training (TVET)

In Copenhagen (ASEMME3), the ministers affirmed their commitment to enhancing adult and community education and acknowledged the importance of lifelong learning (LLL) as the space in which democratic, social and political participation can be fostered and practiced. In the context of LLL, **Germany** offered a symposium on TVET with special regard to qualifications frameworks in February 2012. Furthermore, the **ASEM LLL Hub**, supported by ASEF, organised the ASEM 'Forum on Lifelong Learning', which took place in May 2012. Last but not least, **Austria** carried out a workshop on TVET in the Tourism and Catering Sector in November 2012. Recommendations worked out during these seminars are available under: www.asem-education-secretariat.org.

In addition to these seminars, officially agreed by the ministers, different ASEM members have launched national and regional approaches in order to facilitate and enhance LLL.

In October 2010, the ministers responsible for education and training (including primary and secondary education, higher education, vocational training, etc.) in the **French Community of Belgium** decided to re-launch the process of developing and implementing the overall francophone qualifications framework (QF). To this end, an expert group with representatives from all sectors was established and defined a proposal for the QF development and a methodology for qualifications referencing. The working document was analysed by a pool of international experts. Based on their comments, the expert group will discuss the proposals and finalise the development of the QF by spring 2013.

Cyprus set up the Open University of Cyprus. At the same time, higher education institutions have introduced LLL programmes of study for people already in the labour market, unemployed people and unskilled manpower who wish to acquire new skills. Regarding VET, Cyprus runs a 3-year upper secondary VET system which provides young people with the skills needed for vocational work.

The **Japanese** Government has started a project in which consortia composed of professional training colleges and industry held discussions through which the knowledge and practical occupational skills, sought in each professional field, are clarified in a systematic and structural manner and a model curriculum can be created. The current consortia are composed of entities from growing fields such as IT, fashion and tourism. Further to this, Japan aims to build a system in which study units can be accumulated, making it easier for those who currently have a job, to balance their work and learning.

In 2011, the 'Education for All' international week was organised by the **Latvian** National Commission for UNESCO in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia, the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments and other social partners. The aim of the week was to discuss the development of schools in local governments as the centres of communities. In addition, information on 'Self-governed Schools' was prepared; one of the lines of action was to support personal fulfilment at any age, including for adults. In Latvia, the NQF has been established and includes the validation and recognition of informal and non-formal learning outcomes in vocational and higher education.

In April 2012, a financial framework for projects implementing measures that "provide services of highest quality in formal and non-formal education" was approved in **Lithuania**. The Ministry of Education and Science and the Social Fund Agency jointly organised a presentation for potential

applicants and a discussion on procedures and the application. In June 2012, 14 state projects were approved.

In May 2012, the Polytechnics in **Malaysia** launched Reskilling and Upskilling programmes to rebrand the LLL programmes, targeting 4,500 participants for 2012. LLL modules are derived from the full-time programmes, which need the approval of the Malaysia Qualification Agency (MQA). As programmes offered in the community colleges are in the process of being accredited, the LLL modules will also obtain partial accreditation. Community colleges are also aspiring to spearhead the use of APEL for certificate to diploma qualifications in the near future. With regard to vocational education, the success stories of mobile vocational education graduates have been published through focused group reports such as books on entrepreneurship or employability programmes. These have been disseminated to the stakeholders within the community college education system as a means of demonstrating the attractiveness of vocational education to future students.

Singapore's Ministry of Education recognises LLL as a critical avenue for Singaporeans to continually upgrade their skill sets in face of a constantly changing and increasingly sophisticated economy, and will continue to promote LLL and vocational education. Singapore's Polytechnics and Institute of Technical Education organised the Singapore International TVET Conference in 2012 to share strategies for a responsive and sustainable TVET system that supports economic growth.

Thai higher education institutions have joined the research networks under the ASEM LLL Hub. In December 2012, Srinakharinwirot University, the ASEM LLL Hub Secretariat, and the Office of the Higher Education Commission have co-organised the Meeting of the ASEM LLL Research Network2 on Workplace Learning. It was agreed that a comparative case study would be conducted in Europe and Asia on competence development in the working space of some selected occupational groups and how such competence development in the work place impacts on the well-being of workforce.

When examining the different country responses, the following proposals/recommendations are considered as priority in order to promote lifelong learning and technical vocational education and training in ASEM. **These proposals are listed in the chart below**:

1. PROGRAMMES

- Developing a programme proposal for innovative competences in primary and secondary school systems (DK)

2. KNOWLEDGE-BASE

- Providing a systematic overview on existing qualifications frameworks models (CY)
- Producing a documentation of good practices in VET (CY, MY)
- Developing a transparent framework for the recognition of informal and non-formal learning in ASEM (CY)
- Carrying out joint and comparative studies between researchers from Asia and Europe (ASEM LLL Hub)
- Improving dissemination concerning research-based knowledge and the ASEMagazin for LLL (MY)
- Launching the ASEM Education Reviews by the ASEM LLL Hub (MY)

3. INITIATIVES

- Expanding the ASEM LLL Hub by more members

4. EXPERT GROUPS

- Offering expert seminars to exchange experience in specific sectors of LLL (CY, MY)
- Organising expert seminars to exchange experience in specific sectors in VET (CY, MY)

3.3 Priorities and additional activities for the post-ASEMME4 period

In the framework of the stocktaking exercise, the ASEM member countries have been asked to indicate their priorities for the post-ASEMME4 period. As a result, it became clear that all respondents agreed to continue with the current four priority areas, namely Quality assurance and recognition, Engaging business and industry in education, Balanced mobility and Lifelong learning including technical vocational education and training (TVET).

Several countries attach additional importance to specific areas. **Japan's** and the **Republic of Korea**'s priority is clearly on balanced mobility. **Latvia** and the **Flemish Community in Belgium** focus on high-quality mobility. For **Malaysia**, lifelong learning is high on the agenda. **Latvia** puts emphasis on the acquisition of basic, transferable and professional skills in this context to facilitate integration of individuals in the labour market and to reduce youth unemployment. **China** asks for including discussions on the impact of cyber age on education. The **French Community of Belgium** calls for stronger links between the Bologna Process and the ASEM Education Process in the future. Moreover, the knowledge triangle between higher education, research and innovation should be taken into consideration by the upcoming ministerial meetings. Referring to the 3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference's (ARC3) recommendations, the **French Community of Belgium** is advocating the incorporation of the social dimension of higher education in the ASEM Process. Delving deeper into the topic, the 3rd Asia-Europe Education Workshop to be organised by **ASEF** with Siam University (**Thailand**) in September 2013, will look at the *Societal Excellence* of education.

In the framework of the stocktaking exercise, the AES has also taken the opportunity to ask the ASEM members whether they plan to support the on-going process by implementing specific actions. In this regard, **China** would be willing to host a website "Asia Network of Information Centres – National Academic Recognition Information Centers" (ANIC-NARIC). **Thailand** has announced it would host the 4th ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC4) and the 2nd Asia-Europe Students' Forum in Bangkok in 2014, in partnership with **ASEF**, the **ASEAN University Network (AUN)** and Chulalongkorn University. **Malaysia** would be willing to assist in the documentation of best practices in VET and to cooperate with the relevant EU networks and the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Lifelong Learning in order to maximise knowledge and scholarly exchanges in ASEM. Furthermore, the Malaysia Qualification Agency (MQA) has shown interest in undertaking a comparability study of Asian Bachelor qualifications with European counterparts. Malaysia also proposes a Global Seminar on Lifelong Learning to be held in 2014 and open to all ASEM member countries. **Cyprus** is offering to contribute to a conference presenting the operation of the three-fold policy recently adopted in the country in order to provide LLL including VET. **ETF, Cedefop, UNESCO-TVET and UNESCO-UIL** will co-produce a worldwide inventory of NQF developments. This inventory will be divided into two parts: a thematic chapter and a country chapter. **Indonesia** is ready to host the AES from October 2013 onwards and **Germany** has shown interest to second staff to the Secretariat. **Latvia** will host ASEMME5 in 2015 and the **Republic of Korea** ASEMME6 in 2017.

4. Concluding remarks

Looking at the very positive implementation level of the Chair's Conclusions from ASEMME3 and the different national and regional developments in ASEM, it is most encouraging to see how cooperation between ASEM member countries has been further developing since 2011. Although the Stocktaking Report highlights only some important aspects in the country responses, one can see that education is high on the political agenda of ASEM members. More and more countries are taking concrete measures to further improve the quality of their education systems and are willing to strengthen cooperation and exchange in the ASEM region and beyond.

On the regional level, there are also initiatives such as the Bologna Process in Europe and the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Process in Asia, which initially strive to improve transparency and compatibility between the different education systems within their respective region. Many of the issues addressed are similar, for example quality assurance, recognition, qualification frameworks and mobility. However, the discussions within joint working groups and conferences show that the terms used, often have different meanings in Asia and Europe. An important task in the coming years will therefore be to intensify collaboration on a common understanding in different areas of education and to improve compatibility and transparency between the education systems within and between the regions.

The Bologna Policy Forum, the ASEM University-Business Forums and initiatives arising from the ASEM Ministerial Meetings (ASEMME) and ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC), the Bologna Process and the ASEAN Plus Three Process will constitute a suitable framework for this. Moreover, a series of activities are planned whose outcomes could be used for the ASEM Education Process. A few examples are outlined below: the Bologna Working Group Mobility will consider mobility issues for the intensification and improved balancing of student and staff mobility in Europe and beyond. The European Quality Assurance Register will launch a study on the possibility of mutual recognition of quality assurance decisions and, in close cooperation with the Ministry of the French Community of Belgium, the Bologna Experts team will conduct a survey on the use of the Diploma Supplement by students, employers and higher education institutions. In close cooperation with other ENIC-NARIC centres, the Dutch NARIC (Nuffic) is developing a European Recognition Manual (www.eurorecognition.eu/manual) that will describe the 'good practices' in all aspects of the international recognition of qualifications. In doing so, it aims to improve and streamline recognition practices. In cooperation with the European Commission, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has initiated a training alliance with several European countries in the field of vocational education and training, which aims to improve employment prospects for young people through dual training at school and in companies in the participating countries. Various promising initiatives are also being developed in Asia, which could be useful for the ASEM Process. Also promising are the activities of the ASEAN Plus Three Process, which has gained new momentum after having adopted the APT Cooperation Work Plan and the Plan of Action on Education[48] with its strategies to foster cooperation between the member states. The important work of the ASEAN

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[48] ASEAN Plus Three, 2007.

University Network (AUN) – in the field of quality assurance and recognition (AUN-ACTS) – should also be mentioned. The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) through its ASEM Education Hub (AEH) ensures substantial stakeholder participation in the ASEM Education Process by incorporating the perspective of students into the ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC).

Not only interesting ideas and the goodwill of all participants are required to intensify the education cooperation and mobility between Asia and Europe but ultimately also sufficient financial resources. Besides the national governments, to date primarily the European Commission has supported and financed multilateral programmes such as Asia-Link (until 2006), Erasmus Mundus and bilateral programmes with Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea. All these programmes will come to an end in 2013. Negotiations for the 'Erasmus for All' follow-up programme (2014-2020) are still under way. The new umbrella programme should cover all areas of education and also afford an international dimension. Asia wishes to explicitly be named as a programme target region. It appears that there will also be good opportunities for the ASEM region to participate in 'Erasmus for All' in the fields of mobility, partnerships and policy dialogue.

All of this forms an excellent basis to further the ASEM Education Process in the coming years and to create a real ASEM Education Area. In light of the as yet high commitment of the ASEM member countries and the sustained support of their representatives, the ASEM Education Secretariat looks with optimism to future development within the ASEM Education Area, and will confidently hand over the Secretariats duties to their Indonesian colleagues in Jakarta at the end of September 2013, with gratefulness for an interesting and exciting time.

Bonn, 26 April 2013

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6. Annexes

6. Annexes

6.1 ASEMME3 Chairs' Conclusions, Copenhagen 2011

3rd Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME3)
Copenhagen, 9/10 May 2011

Shaping an ASEM Education Area

Conclusions by the Chair

The Third Meeting of the Ministers for Education of the ASEM countries was hosted by Denmark in Copenhagen on 9 and 10 May 2011. The meeting was attended by 160 participants from 40 ASEM member countries and chaired by the Danish Minister for Education.

The Meeting warmly welcomed representatives from the new ASEM members Australia, New Zealand and the Russian Federation, who joined the ASEM Process during the 8th ASEM Summit held in Brussels, October 2010.

Four main topics were discussed during this third ministerial meeting and introduced by speakers of different ASEM members. The topic of quality assurance and recognition was introduced by both the European Commission and the Republic of Korea. The second topic of engaging business and industry in education was presented by Malaysia. The introductory remarks on the third topic of balanced mobility were given by China. Vietnam focused on the fourth topic of lifelong learning including vocational education and training.

The Meeting congratulated Denmark for successfully hosting the Third Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education and thus giving continuity and new momentum to the ASEM Education Process and education policy dialogue started in Berlin 2008 and Hanoi 2009.

The Ministers:

(1)   Underlined their wish for an intensive and sustainable Asia-Europe education partnership on the basis of mutual respect and benefit, thus contributing to the overall strategic dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe, reaffirmed by the ASEM Leaders during their Summit in Brussels on 4 and 5 October 2010.
(2)   Renewed their views that high-quality research, education and training systems that encourage and foster lifelong learning in all its diversity are crucial for the attractiveness of their education and training provision and hence for the devel-

opment of highly qualified and employable citizens and economic growth in Asia and Europe, and no less for democracy and social cohesion in both regions; therefore, investment in all education and training sectors is of utmost importance, also and especially in times of financial crisis.[1]

(3) Stressed the key role of the ASEM Education Process for the dialogue and cooperation in the field of education and training between Asia and Europe for the broader context of relations between both regions; the results of the ASEM Education Process should be transferred for consideration to the Bologna Policy Forum and the ASEM Summits of Heads of State and Government.

(4) Acknowledged that the ASEM Education Process made good progress since the first two ministerial conferences in Berlin and Hanoi and noted with appreciation the numerous initiatives taken by ASEM members[2], the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) through the ASEM Education Hub, the ASEM Education and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning in order to strengthen cooperation and mobility between Asia and Europe and to improve transparency and understanding of the different education systems.

(5) Emphasised the importance of keeping the momentum of the ASEM Education Process and strengthening the efforts to further develop the ASEM Education Area by continued joint activities and concrete measures taken by the ASEM members. Future cooperation between the ASEM countries should build on existing structures and international conventions (e.g. UNESCO), in the field of recognition, quality assurance and mobility of both students and researchers. If new structures are needed, lessons learned by members should be taken into account in order to ensure that the goal of cost effectiveness is met.

(6) Thanked the ASEM Education Secretariat which was established by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and hosted by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for effectively coordinating the ASEM educational activities and providing a comprehensive progress report on the implementation of these activities. In order to get a systematic overview and analysis of the ASEM educational activities on a regular basis, the Meeting called on the Secretariat to prepare a stocktaking report for the biennial Ministerial Meetings. In this context the Ministers thanked Belgium, China, Indonesia, Luxemburg and the Netherlands for the secondment of staff to the Secretariat.

(7) Recognised the need to involve stakeholders, through the ASEM Rectors' Conference, and other initiatives from higher education institutions and student repre-

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[1] Noted from the conclusions of the ASEF-organised initiatives in 2010: the 1st Asia-Europe Education Workshop on the Impact of the Financial Crisis to Higher Education and the 4th Connecting Civil Societies of Asia and Europe (Eight points for ASEM8).

[2] For more details, please refer to the AES Status Report

sentatives, in the ASEM Education Process to achieve a broad consensus on the aims and measures of the Process, and acknowledged the recommendations from the 2nd ASEM Rectors' Conference which was held in Korea, October 2010.

(8)   Recognised with appreciation the successful activities in mobility joint research and industry contacts achieved by European-Asian University networks such as the ASEA-UNINET and EURASIA-PACIFIC Networks.

In order to advance and deepen the ASEM educational cooperation in the four topics discussed in their meeting, the Ministers agreed on a number of activities and measures to be carried out and implemented in the coming years.

A. Quality Assurance and Recognition

The Ministers:

1.   Laid emphasis on strengthening interregional cooperation in the field of external quality assurance between quality assurance agencies and networks in Asia and Europe by organising joint meetings, with a view to develop common principles of quality assurance across the ASEM education area. Germany offers to host a first expert seminar in 2011. In order to ensure the continuity of the dialogue on quality assurance a seminar will be held in France in 2012. Progress and results will be presented for ASEMME4. With support of the ASEM Education Secretariat, an extensive glossary of quality assurance terms used in both regions should be compiled;

2.   Urged the ASEM members to improve mutual recognition of qualifications by developing a common understanding of credits and learning outcomes; the ASEM Education Secretariat has already compiled relevant information on credits and learning outcomes in ASEM countries and is asked to regularly update this information on its website;

3.   Suggested exploring the feasibility of setting up an ASEM convention on mutual recognition of degrees and study achievements (including the establishment of National Information and Recognition Centres in all ASEM countries); Austria volunteers to take an active part in establishing an ASEM pilot group of experts who will inform ASEMME4 about the progress;

4.   Proposed to consider the implementation of the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education across the ASEM Education Area.

B. Engaging Business and Industry in Education

The Ministers:

5.   Agreed to make the ASEM University-Business Forum (organised for the first time in Bangkok, March 2010) an annual event; the Forum should identify examples of good practice, develop ideas and make recommendations on how to

improve university-business cooperation between ASEM countries; Germany of-fers to host the second ASEM University-Business Forum in late 2011. Malaysia offers to host a stakeholder meeting in 2012;

6. Invited the European Commission to link the ASEM University-Business Forum to the EU University-Business Forum and include a specific session with Asian and European representatives from academia and the world of work that will contribute to deepen the dialogue on bi-regional university-business coopera-tion in areas such as participation of employers in curriculum development and the labour-market relevance of graduate qualifications; also the organisers of future ASEM University Business Fora are asked to consider balanced participa-tion from Asia and Europe.

7. Invited ASEF through the ASEM Rectors' Conference to contribute to the ASEM University-Business Forum, in order to enhance the dialogue on higher educa-tion-business cooperation between stakeholders;

8. Considered the establishment of an ASEM placement programme in terms of setting up a pilot scheme for higher education-business mobility of qualified students between Asia and Europe (partly funded by public resources and in-dustry);

9. Asked to explore the possibility to open up the EU ERASMUS Mundus Pro-gramme to the exchange of ASEM placement students in the next phase of the programme.

C. Balanced Mobility

The Ministers:

10. Shared the view that learning mobility between Asia and Europe should be more balanced and urged the ASEM Education Secretariat to organise work-shops in order to develop, together with experts from ASEM members, a strat-egy for balanced mobility and prepare a first draft with recommendations for the next ministerial meeting;

11. Underscored the need for more and better data on student and staff mobility between Asia and Europe to provide a solid basis for political conclusions and decisions;

12. Resolved to improve the level of information on educational opportunities in Asia and Europe among people and invite ASEM members to support ASEF in its effort to update and maintain the DEEP database;

13. Encouraged the ASEM members to increase the number of joint study pro-grammes (e.g. in Asian and European studies) and summer schools between Asian and European higher education institutions by using various programmes and funding schemes; an ASEM pilot scheme for joint curriculum development, funded by interested ASEM countries, could be envisaged;

14. Agreed to promote student, teacher, researcher and administrative staff ex-changes by using existing mobility schemes; the Ministers acknowledged the ef-

forts made by ASEM DUO to strengthen the bilateral student and teacher exchange between Asian and European institutions and took note of the extension of the ASEM DUO programme to its third phase; the ASEM DUO secretariat is to be evaluated and looks forward to presenting the results at ASEMME4;

15. Proposed to enhance mobility between Asia and Europe by intensifying promotional activities in both regions, appointing competent students and staff with a mobility experience as "ambassadors for mobility" in each ASEM country and organising ASEM education fairs in Asia and Europe (e.g. with EU support). The ASEM Education Secretariat is asked to set up an expert group to explore the usefulness of a promotion strategy for the ASEM Education Area;

16. Encouraged ASEM members to organise thematic training seminars on removing obstacles to mobility (e.g. recognition), funded by EU or national resources; the Ministers welcomed Thailand's offer to host an international ASEM conference on mobility in late 2011.

D. Lifelong Learning (LLL) including Vocational Education and Training (VET)

The Ministers:

17. Affirmed their commitment to enhancing adult and community education and acknowledged the importance of lifelong learning as the space in which democratic social and political participation can be fostered and practised, in the service of social cohesion and the quality of life;

18. Encouraged the strengthening of lifelong learning research base in universities and research institutes in the ASEM area, including their capacity for international exchange of information and analysis, in order to contribute to evidence-based educational reform and innovation;

19. Recommended dissemination of good practices, such as learning cities, learning communities, learning festivals, learning entitlements, lifelong learning accounts, vouchers for lifelong learning and academic credit banks system, literacy programmes, professionalization of adult teachers, etc., and sharing of research findings in lifelong learning between ASEM countries through the coordination of ASEM LLL Hub in cooperation with UNESCO and other international organisations;

20. Encouraged workplace learning and increase of both employer responsibilities for provision and employee opportunities for participation;

21. Welcomed Denmark's offer to host an "ASEM Forum on Lifelong Learning" in April 2012 under the coordination of the ASEM LLL Hub during the Danish EU presidency;

22. Called attention to continuing the dialogue on qualifications frameworks between Asian and European experts in order to improve transparency and knowledge of the varied approaches to and understandings of lifelong learning in both regions;

23. Encouraged the exchange of experience on how qualifications frameworks affect lifelong learning and assure broad stakeholder acceptance of new forms of adult learning, thereby especially underlining the idea of enhancing and supporting the development of qualifications frameworks – including validation and recognition of informal and non-formal learning outcomes and flexible pathways to further education and career. In this context, the Ministers welcomed Vietnam's offer to host a conference on qualifications framework and Germany's offer to organise the next Vocational Education Training Symposium with special regard to qualifications frameworks in early 2012;

24. Requested the Senior Officials and the ASEM Education Secretariat to provide the ASEMME4 with a systematic overview on existing qualifications frameworks models (including conclusions concerning ASEM education cooperation);

25. Asked to document best practices in VET, particularly those reflecting industry-school partnerships which can be shared by all participating countries; a workshop hosted by Austria will present these examples;

26. Suggested establishing an expert group in order to elaborate the development of joint VET initiatives;

27. Welcomed Malaysia's offer to host an expert meeting on e-learning as a component of lifelong learning;

28. Agreed to support, disseminate and utilise the ASEM LLL Hub's research activities in national contexts and invited countries to contribute to the operation of the ASEM LLL Hub secretariat, for example by sending staff to work at the secretariat for a period;

29. Encouraged ASEM members to support the cooperation between the ASEM LLL Hub, relevant EU networks and the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Lifelong Learning in order to maximise knowledge and scholarly exchanges in the field between Asia and Europe.

The Ministers mandated:

The ASEM Education Secretariat to observe and assist the member countries in implementing the proposed initiatives and to inform the Ministers on the progress achieved with the stocktaking report for ASEMME4 in 2013.

The Ministers welcomed:

- Malaysia's offer to host the Fourth Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME4) in 2013;

- Indonesia's offer to host the ASEM Education Secretariat as of October 2013. ASEM members are invited to second staff to the ASEM Education Secretariat;

- Latvia's offer to host the Fifth Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME5) in 2015;

- The Republic of Korea's offer to host the Sixth Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME6) in 2017.

Copenhagen, May 10th 2011, 12.00 am

6.2   ASEM Expert Seminar on Regional Quality Assurance, Germany 2011

ASEM Seminar on Regional Quality Assurance

Bonn, 5. – 6. July 2011

 RECOMMENDATIONS

On July 5 – 6 2011, about 60 experts have met in Bonn in order to discuss possibilities to enhance cooperation concerning quality assurance in higher education in ASEM. This seminar was a mandate from the 3. Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education where Ministers "laid emphasis on strengthening interregional cooperation between quality assurance agencies and networks in Asia and Europe in the field of external quality assurance by organising joint meetings, with a view to develop common principles of quality assurance across the ASEM education area."

During the two-day seminar, participants focussed their discussions on quality assurance tools and mechanisms in Asia and Europe, pointed out the different perspectives and approaches and tried to find ways to enhance mutual understanding.

Several workshops and sessions dealt with external and internal quality assurance instruments, their meaning and implementation in the different regions. One aim of the seminar was to make the audience aware of these tools, to create more transparency, to share good practices and to find ways to create common principles.

The participants:

Considering the results and recommendations worked out during the workshop on quality assurance in the framework of the Europe-Asia Higher Education Platform, Bangkok 2009

Bearing in mind the findings of the ASEM Seminar on Credits and Learning Outcomes, Berlin 2010

Having regard to the outcomes of the ASEM Quality Assurance Seminar, Limassol 2011

Respecting the wish of the ASEM Minsters for Education for convergency of different quality assurance approaches,

Underlining the significance of involving different stakeholders, such as representatives from higher education institutions, quality assurance agencies, the business sector and students in the development of quality assurance in higher education and

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Emphasising the need of a National commitment to quality assurance and the necessity of Governments' financial contribution in order to advance interregional cooperation in this field, **have recommended the following:**

In terms of creating more transparency the participants proposed:

1   To gather information on different quality assurance systems in ASEM rather than compiling an extensive glossary of quality assurance terms used in both regions. This "ASEM collection of materials on quality assurance systems in Europe and Asia" should include institutions, principles, and procedure data basis at the regional level. This information will be collected by the ASEM Education Secretariat with the support of quality assurance experts in the relevant countries.

2   To compile an ASEM Manual for Recognition and Accreditation illustrating agreed good practices for cross border recognition and accreditation; the ASEM Education Secretariat may coordinate the collection of relevant examples.

In terms of enhanced interregional cooperation in quality assurance the participants proposed:

3   To explore the possibility to fund more inter-regional curriculum development programmes in line with a cross border quality assurance procedure;

4   To stimulate mutual recognition of Quality Assurance Agencies in Asia and Europe and their quality assurance decisions/results within and between Asia and Europe, in order to facilitate the recognition of qualifications;

5   To promote the inclusion of regional and/ or international assessors in peer review procedures, e.g. that assessors/ peers from Asia can participate in European site visits, and vice versa

6   To observe and widen sub-regional approaches in internal quality assurance procedures; progress in the ASEAN-QA project should be observed and could be presented in a follow-up seminar on quality assurance.

In order to ensure the continuity of the dialogue on quality assurance, France has offered to host a further expert seminar in 2012.

The ASEM Education Secretariat will forward the recommendations to the respective Senior Officials in the Ministries for Education in order to ask for governmental commitment.

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6.3 ASEM Seminar on Quality Assurance in Higher Education, France 2012

ASEM Seminar on Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Sèvres, 11 – 12 October 2012

RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon invitation of the French Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Higher Education and Research and the ASEM Education Secretariat about 80 experts in quality assurance in higher education met in Sèvres (France) on 11 and 12 October 2012. This seminar was conceived as a follow-up to the ASEM Seminar on Regional Quality Assurance held in Bonn on 5 and 6 July 2011. Possibilities to further enhance cooperation concerning quality assurance in higher education were discussed and proposals were developed to be presented to the 4th Asia Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME 4) to be held in Kuala Lumpur in May 2013.

This seminar was a mandate from the 2nd and 3rd ASEM Meetings of Ministers for Education where the Ministers stressed that quality assurance in higher education should be one of the priority areas for education cooperation between Asia and Europe.

During the seminar, organised in plenary and parallel sessions, reports on the current status of quality assurance in Asia and Europe were presented. The speakers focussed on common principles and practices, on recognition issues, capacity building projects and on the development of pilot programmes, in order to ensure continuity to earlier seminars and conferences offered in the ASEM framework. During the seminar, the participants reaffirmed their will to continue the dialogue and cooperation on quality assurance in higher education. They agreed to focus on realistic proposals that could lead to concrete projects and initiatives.

Common issues emerged from the discussions such as:

- The need to establish a continuous dialogue between quality assurance and recognition specialists in order to better meet the needs of students and graduates and to facilitate their mobility;
- The necessity of opening up the national quality assurance systems in order to develop mutual understanding and trust (mainly through the participation of international evaluators in peer-review panels, international dialogue and co-operation between QA agencies and the mobility of QA professionals);
- The importance of joint projects between quality assurance agencies and professionals from both regions in order to develop quality assurance further and to settle the necessary international dimension of quality assurance activities;
- The need for an all-inclusive dialogue, open to all the quality assurance stakeholders (including students, higher education institutions and government authorities) within Asia and within Europe

as well as across the ASEM region in order to reach a common understanding on and ownership of quality of higher education and its assurance;

- Within the ASEM framework, the need for flexibility in developing instruments for cooperation, to ensure an efficient adaptation to regional and national contexts and to take into account cultural differences;
- The advantages that would result from mobilising and coordinating tools and initiatives and creating synergies between existing ones.

The participants recommended the following:

1. To make the best use of existing quality assurance structures, institutions, tools and instruments in both regions. Among the most realistic possibilities for cooperation, participants have proposed the following:

    a. To ask ASEM Education Ministries to appoint ASEM quality assurance experts from Quality Assurance agencies, higher education institutions as well as student experts, who will be involved in a continuous dialogue on quality assurance issues in the two regions (travel and accommodation costs related to the attendance in the experts' meetings should be borne by each ASEM member country). To reinforce the development of trust and cooperation, this expert group should be notably tasked to develop a common quality assurance language and understanding, that would seek commonalities between the Higher Education Quality Assurance Principles for the Asia Pacific Region (the so-called "Chiba Principles") and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (the so-called "ESGs"). Such a group should benefit from the political and financial support from ASEM interested parties. The expert group could build on existing mutual understanding initiatives such as those undertaken by the European Consortium for Accreditation and use the opportunities offered by INQAAHE that already gathers QA agencies from the two regions.

    b. To better connect the Asia-Pacific Quality network (APQN) and the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA) within the ASEM framework, to promote joint cooperation such as sharing of information and good practise, to undertake joint projects with the support of ASEM as well as exchange of quality assurance professionals between both regions.

    c. To bridge the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (the so-called "Lisbon Recognition Convention") and of the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific (the so-called "Tokyo Recognition Convention").

    d. To encourage Quality Assurance Agencies from the Asia Pacific Region to apply, when appropriate, to the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

    e. To develop inter-regional pilot schemes, in line with already existing capacity building initiatives such as the ASEAN-QA project.

2. To promote capacity building concerning quality assurance in higher education, by developing joint training programmes for quality assurance between both regions that target all stakeholders in quality assurance. Trans-regional projects aiming at the development of quality assurance capacities should systemically involve several countries from both regions. At the same time, projects aiming at supporting the development of quality assurance in higher education in a single country could be useful too. Such projects could take the form of twinning initiatives involving one or several quality assurance agencies.

3. To develop concrete cooperation between quality assurance and recognition professionals. This could be done by promoting well targeted joint projects like projects aiming at ensuring that the needs of the students in terms of guidance and mobility are met or that the diploma supplements and the processes used for the recognition of diplomas are quality assured. Within the Asia Pacific region, the creation of an easily accessible, multilingual register of trustworthy quality assurance agencies should be explored; possibly taking into account the experience of the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR).

4. To launch pilot projects between both regions on selected themes such as

   a. The recognition of Quality Assurance Agencies decisions in the context of existing joint degrees between higher education institutions in Asia and Europe.
   b. The development of a joint ASEM study programme.

France, 2.11.2012

6.4   2nd Asia-Europe Education Workshop on Knowledge Societies, Austria 2011

2nd Asia-Europe Education Workshop
Knowledge Societies:
Universities And Their Social Responsibilities
Innsbruck, Austria
5-7 June 2011

In today's global, fast changing, but also critical world, universities need to be aware that they serve the society at large more than ever before. Therefore, they need to revisit their role, assume social responsibility as an evidence-based concept and foster sustainable development. Their mission cannot be built only on an academic base anymore. Higher education policy should consequently not be detached from social policy in order to secure a promising, just and environmentally sustainable future for our societies. As USR does involve investments and therefore costs, governments need to secure funding for the further development of USR, which encompasses wider aspects than Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), such as international links in teaching, research and services.

Based on the expert discussions at the 2nd Asia-Europe Education Workshop on Knowledge Societies: Universities and their Social Responsibilities, the ASEM Education Hub, herewith, presents three main recommendations, for the consideration of policy-makers and higher education stakeholders in ASEM countries.

(1) Promote and support the topic of USR

USR is not an entirely new phenomenon, but as the 2nd Asia-Europe Education Workshop has shown, the use of the term and its practices differ throughout ASEM countries. This is, above all, due to varying contexts. What all practitioners and interested stakeholders have in common is an awareness of a changing context. The University of Today is not the University of Tomorrow, both in Europe and in Asia. A new general (minimum) paradigm should thus be developed, devoid of the chains of the past and present contexts, including geographic ones.

The international links in research, teaching and services need to be strengthened to face the challenges and developments of a changing world. Clearly, there is great interest and need to further explore concepts of USR, benchmark them and exchange good practices.

The topic of USR should therefore be promoted and supported through the continuous dialogue of stakeholders – universities, communities, industries and governments alike – in ASEM countries. Universities should particularly be supported in communicating and exchanging good and innovative ideas with the general public.

(2) Identify elements of a new (minimum) paradigm for USR

As mentioned above, a new (minimum) paradigm for USR could include the following elements:

- ethically grounded research;
- teaching based on educational aims founded on critical reflection, values and knowledge including traditional wisdom and indigenous knowledge (not only skills and competences);
- a social dimension towards students (access in accordance with the ability to achieve equity) and staff (e.g. gender issues); and
- the inclusion of national and international dimensions, in particular EFA[21].

In developing this paradigm, universities in ASEM countries should reflect on the entire education process, from early childhood education to lifelong learning. Furthermore, in the practice of USR, the needs for the following arise:

- a clear model and engagement principles (esp. on the trade-off between excellence and social responsibility or ability and social support);
- a governance system;
- sustainable strategies grounded in evidence-based research (today, they are on an ad hoc basis); and
- a reward system, for both students and staff (to initiate and promote volunteering as part of learning and help).

Some of these elements were identified at the 2nd Asia-Europe Education Workshop and they should be further promoted.

(3) Pursue evidence-based USR policies: data needs, target-setting and monitoring

National systems are highly diverse and there is a lack of comparable data. To support evidence-based policy, it is recommended that an ASEM-wide data collection or pilot studies on the social dimension of higher education be undertaken. The data collected should serve, in particular, to identify whether and what kind of support can be further provided at supranational (ASEM) and national levels.

- The education targets should include social criteria, and stipulate the social dimension to be reflected in the teaching and learning processes, in research frameworks, as well as in the quality assurance standards. A non-exclusive and non-exhaustive list of indicators on the social and economic situation of students in ASEM countries could include: ethnic and cultural background of students; social status of parents including their contribution to student finances; capacities of higher education systems.

- Each country should further develop a strategy, including an action plan, for the social dimension of higher education, determining the "musts" (elements that the state must provide to everyone) and the "wants" (elements that are desirable but not essential or even possible for everyone). This might in some cases involve (soft and hard) affirmative action programmes.

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[21] On Education for All, see UNESCO: http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/

To monitor the progress made by the countries on their national strategies for the social dimension of higher education, an ASEM observatory should be established to collect and share data among stakeholders.

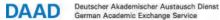## 6.5   2nd ASEM University-Business Forum, Germany 2011

2nd ASEM University-Business Forum
Bonn, 10/11 November 2011

Looking back – looking ahead

Prof. Dr. Alexandra Angress
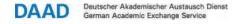### University of Applied Sciences Aschaffenburg

Governments, higher education institutions and employers are encouraged to engage further in debate about enhancing employability.

… to the policy sector
Governments should encourage employers to provide work experience / placements for higher education students.
Developments aiming at enhancing employability should be supported by a continuity of resources to ensure that the issue continues to be a priority.
Life-long learning forms an integral part of university-business cooperation and needs to be given special attention.
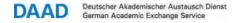
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Governments, higher education institutions and employers are encouraged to engage further in debate about enhancing employability.

… to higher education institutions
Institutions should develop a strategic, institution-wide approach to employability and are encouraged to revise their course structures, curricula and pedagogy accordingly.
The should also foster a creative mindset and the acquisition of global competences (to encourage brain circulation) .
Work experience as part of a study programme or as an extra-curricular activity and thereby obtained qualifications should be described and recognised.
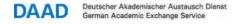
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Governments, higher education institutions and employers are encouraged to engage further in debate about enhancing employability.

… to employers and their representative bodies
Employers, employer representative bodies and professional bodies should participate in efforts to enhance the employability of higher education students.
Industry should inform by up-to-date and accurate data both on the actual requirements of employers and on the attributes needed by graduates.
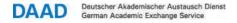
From Bonn to Kuala Lumpur

1. Further strengthening of the international dialogue on University-Business Cooperation (via seminars, conferences, round tables…)

2. Investigating on National Strategies for University-Business Cooperation
   - implementation
   - evaluation

3. Creating an understanding between Asian and European tools of recognition for workplace learning (ASEM Pass?)

4. Enlarging higher education curricula by practical elements

5. Enhancing the entrepreneurial mindset by offering specific courses

6. Establishing an ASEM placement programme

7. Combining Asian and European „know-how"

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6.6 3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference, the Netherlands 2012

3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC3)
Universities, Businesses and You: For a Sustainable Future
University of Groningen, the Netherlands
24-26 September 2012

I. Introduction: ASEM Education Process - enhancing synergies and fostering university, business and stakeholder co-operation

Jointly organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the ASEAN University Network (AUN) and University of Groningen (UoG), ARC3 took place in Groningen, the Netherlands from 24 to 26 September 2012 gathering around 150 university leaders, representatives of ASEM higher education institutions, the business community, and students.

Since 2008, the ASEM education dialogue has provided impetus for a discourse on university-business co-operation. According to the 1st Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME1, Berlin, May 2008) "close co-operation between education and industry at international, national, regional and local level is a core element for ensuring the employability of the young generation entering the workforce as well as the employability of older generations".

This was further reinforced at their 3rd Meeting (ASEMME3, Copenhagen, May 2011) when the ASEM Education Ministers invited ASEF, the ASEM Rectors' Conference permanent Secretariat, to contribute to the dialogue on higher education-business co-operation between and among education stakeholders. Furthermore, the ASEM governments "recognised the need to involve stakeholders, through the ASEM Rectors' Conference, and other initiatives from higher education institutions and student representatives in the ASEM Education Process to achieve a broad consensus..."

In response to the aforementioned call, ARC3 tackled *Universities, Businesses and You: For a Sustainable Future*. The Conference also followed up on the results of ARC1 and ARC2 held at the Free University of Berlin and Korea University in October 2008 and October 2010 respectively.

II.   Recommendations

The recommendations reflect the topics discussed at the plenary and working group sessions of ARC3 where ASEM university leaders deliberated on the models of and best practices in university-business co-operation, community engagement and universities' social responsibility (USR). ARC3 participants also explored how collaboration across borders on employability and university-business and university-community co-operation can be strengthened including the state-of-the-art approaches to teaching creativity and entrepreneurship education.

The ASEM university leaders convey the following recommendations for the consideration of the ASEM Ministers for Education at their 4th meeting in Malaysia in 2013. The participating universities also address these recommendations to their counterparts, business leaders and relevant institutions and stakeholders in ASEM countries.

(1) Support universities in achieving both excellence and widening access

ASEM Governments and Ministries for Education are called upon to:
- Develop systems that link all education levels not only across disciplines, but also across national borders while acknowledging the variety of institutions and diversity of the student body;
- Monitor the quality and efficacy of higher education institutions and support universities' efforts in providing quality education while guaranteeing access for students from marginalised backgrounds, both territorially and socio-economically;
- Subsidise disciplines and research fields that are not supported by market forces;
- Encourage universities' efforts in research talent development by identifying the most talented individuals at an early stage and allowing them to pursue research that may lead to scientific breakthroughs (i.e. strengthening the framework for research collaboration and mobility of young researchers in Asia and Europe)[1].

University Leaders call upon their fellow university leaders in ASEM as well as on other stakeholders to:
- Recognise that academic excellence and widening participation do not conflict with each other i.e. e-learning, as a means to widen access;
- Advocate a common understanding of excellence and equal access which encompasses the ideals of inclusive education, ethics and sustainability. Universities should be proactive and self-confident in identifying what their strengths and expertise are and communicate what they are good for;
- Share examples and experiences in promoting equal opportunities and institutional talent development.

(2) Enhance co-operation between universities and businesses in ASEM

ASEM Governments and Ministries of Education are called upon to:
- Offer further platforms for exchange on creative and innovative skills (i.e. entrepreneurship education) and work-integrated learning schemes in ASEM such as the ASEM University-Business Forum established in the framework of ASEMME1 in Berlin 2008 and reaffirmed as an annual event during ASEMME3 in Copenhagen;

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[1] See: The Aarhus Declaration of Excellence in Research: http://www.excellence2012.dk/the-aarhus-declaration/ - c10401

- Commission data collection to compare and identify best practices on structures and mechanisms that encourage university-business co-operation in ASEM countries;
- Promote and support the recognition of workplace learning by documenting industries' contributions to university programmes (and curricula) as well as universities' contributions to workplace learning;
- Promote and support the wider use of tools for recognition and comparability in ASEM i.e. the European and the ASEAN credit transfer system (ECTS and ACTS), Diploma Supplement, etc.[2] and work towards making ECTS and ACTS compatible[3];
- Adopt the current proposal on ASEM Work-Placement Programme, developed by the ASEM Education Secretariat and presented during the 3rd ASEM University-Business Forum in 2012[4], and provide support for its implementation.

University Leaders are called upon to:
- Facilitate and support the implementation of the ASEM Work-Placement Programme in their respective institutions;
- Engage pro-actively in university-business co-operation and participate in existing platforms for exchange i.e. ASEM University Business Forum and AsiaEngage[5];
- Design curricula that enhance graduates' employability and entrepreneurship, i.e. by including work-placement programmes, international internships, etc.;
- Further promote and disseminate university-industry research findings nationally and across borders.

(3) Support universities' engagement with industry and the community

ASEM Governments and Ministries of Education are called upon to:
- Commission a report on policies, funding distribution and recognition systems that drive community and industry engagement across research, education and service in higher education;
- Support universities in their efforts to equip students with skills that benefit society and reflect the demands of the labour market i.e. ASEAN Youth Volunteer Programme;
- Recognise the contribution of experiential learning to soft skills development i.e. work-placement programmes and student volunteering;
- Create platforms for exchange of good practices in university, industry and community engagement i.e. AsiaEngage and the ASEAN USR Thematic Network;
- Establish a legal framework that allows universities to integrate industry and community stakeholder engagement in the curriculum[6].

University Leaders encourage their counterparts in ASEM to:
- Advocate a common understanding of University Social Responsibility (USR) and its integration in universities' mission and implementation strategies across research,

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[2] See: Recommendations of the ARC1 and ARC2
[3] Inspiration for making ECTS and ACTS compatible can be found in the Tuning Methodology, initially developed in 2000 to understand curricula and to make them comparable by increasing the awareness on students learning outcomes. See: http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/
[4] See: 3rd ASEM University Business Forum, Malaysia, 5 - 6 November 2012 http://www.asem-education-secretariat.org/en/20363/
[5] AsiaEngage is a platform that will share good practices for both industry and community engagement across the region – at present it has 68 members of universities across ASEAN and Asia. See: http://www.asiaengage.org/
[6] 3rd ASEM University-Business Forum, Malaysia, 5 - 6 November 2012 http://www.asem-education-secretariat.org/en/20363/

education and service (see the recommendations of the 2nd Asia-Europe Education Workshop: a new general (minimum) paradigm should be developed[7]

- Promote lifelong learning and equip students with skills that benefit society based on UNESCO's Report on Education for the 21st Century: Learning to know, to do, to be and to live together[8];
- Recognise competences and skills obtained through work experience and non-formal education i.e. integration of student volunteering in the curriculum;
- Co-operate with other stakeholders at community, local, regional or (inter-)national level in order to strengthen universities' role in providing education not only for the workplace but for social cohesion, intercultural dialogue as well as active and global citizenship.

(4) Encourage and support student involvement in the ASEM Education Process

The ARC3 participants recognise ASEF's efforts to integrate the voice of the students in the ASEM education process through the launch of the Asia-Europe Students' Forum. The ASEM university leaders further call for increased and active involvement of students in strategic planning and consultation processes.

They acknowledge the contributions from the 1st Asia-Europe Students' Forum (annexed to the ARC3 Recommendations) presented at the 3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference and forward them to the ASEM governments and Ministries for Education, their ASEM counterparts and the wider higher education community.

III. Outlook: Next ASEM Ministerial Meeting

The Conference reaffirms its willingness to contribute to the ASEM Education Process and forwards its recommendations to the 4th Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME4) to be held in 2013 in Malaysia.

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[7] Refer to the 2nd Asia-Europe Education Workshop "Knowledge Societies: Universities and their Social Responsibilities.
[8] UNESCO's Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty first Century
http://www.unesco.org/delors/highlights.htm

Case examples

(1) Support universities in achieving both excellence and widening access

- The *PARTNERS Programme* (Newcastle University, UK). Started more than a decade ago, the programme engages with over 100 schools where students from disadvantaged backgrounds can - under certain conditions - be admitted to the university with lower grades than normal.[9]
- The *Realising Opportunities Programme*. A collaboration of 12 leading UK universities working together to promote fair access and social mobility of students from under-represented groups.[10]
- The *Integrated Outdoor Campus, IOC* (University of Surabaya (Ubaya), Indonesia) is a leafy green and environmentally friendly campus that integrates outdoor learning activities, development, and productive collaboration with community, nature conservation, recreation, and business.[11]
- The *Learning Beyond the Classroom* at the University of Surabaya (Ubaya), Indonesia which includes student activities like in-company internships, company visits, entrepreneurship outside the campus, community services, etc. Students and lecturers benefit from in-company internships for a period of time to minimise the gap between theories and the real working condition.[12]
- The *Mini Indonesia* recruitment process at the University of Surabaya (Ubaya), Indonesia. The university is aware that higher education is based on a system of equality and merit, in which all students have equal opportunity to enter Ubaya, regardless of their ethnicity, race, social class, and religion. Ubaya therefore actively strives to accept students from all provinces in Indonesia, including Papua, Kalimantan, Maluku, Batak, Aceh, Java, etc.
- The *NOHA Erasmus Mundus Masters' Programme in Humanitarian Action*: The third stage of the programme allows students who want to pursue a career in research to participate in brief exchange programmes with universities outside Europe. Three of these universities are based in Asia. The programme aims to: (1) to respond to the challenges raised by the new environment in which international humanitarian action works and to further the development of humanitarian assistance education through an agreed programme of joint research and training and (2) to advance in cooperation at world level by a common understanding of the importance of international humanitarian action and its developments through courses jointly designed and elaborated[13].

(2) Enhance co-operation between universities and businesses in ASEM

- The *Rise Up Entrepreneurship Programme* (RUEP, Newcastle University, UK). A specific university training initiatives in entrepreneurship for students.[14]
- The *Graduate Employment Training Unit* (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)). UKM is in the advanced stage of setting up the UGet, which focuses on soft-skills training and other work place required competencies which can be discipline based.

[9] See: Partners Programme: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/partners/
[10] See: http://www.realisingopportunities.ac.uk/
[11] Ubaya, IOC: https://www.ubaya.ac.id/ubaya/news_detail/530/Universitas-Surabaya-Launches-a-Green-Campus.html
[12] Ubaya: www.ubaya.ac.id/
[13] NOHA: http://www.nohanet.org/erasmus-mundus-programme.html
[14] See: RUEP: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/careers/

The curriculum and delivery will be worked on by industry, NGOs and government agency partners.

- The *endowment chairs, the research thrusts and publications* by UKM. UKM is becoming the regional hub for research in the sustainable development of the oil-palm industry, for zero waste technology and for social and economic aspects. This is with collaboration of the Sime Darby Foundation and the Malaysian Palm Oil Board.

- The *Ubaya Tan Chong Center of Asian Management Studies* (Ubaya and Tan Chong Holding Company Malaysia) provides the opportunity for Ubaya students to do internships and work at Tan Chong Holding, which has a wide reach in the Asian region[15].

- Ubaya is exploring similar large-scale cooperation with the *Korean Ginseng Company in Indonesia* (Ubaya and Korean Ginseng Center for Most Valuable Products (KGCMVP), Kyung Hee University Korea - Ubaya will place a big investment to establish a Korean Ginseng company in Indonesia)

- The *Cátedra de Emprendedores* ("Entrepreneurship department") of the Universidad de La Rioja is a collaboration between the university and the regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry.[16]

- The *Cátedra de Emprendedores* of the Universidad de Salamanca is focused on researching entrepreneurship trends and practices, as well as offering training for students.[17]

- The *University of Navarra-Business Foundation* works to promote strong connections between business world-wide and universities.[18]

(3) Support universities in their engagement with industry and the community

- The *ASEAN Youth Volunteer Programme* at the AsiaEngage.
- The *Student Community Action Network* (SCAN) by the National Union of Students, UK.[19]
- The *Industry Partnership* at the University of Surabaya (Ubaya) Indonesia: The terms of this partnership comprise financial support of the industry to Ubaya (i.e. scholarships) as well as Ubaya's support of the industry in terms of research and development.
- The *Solidarity & Action* Office (Oficina de Acción Solidaria) was created and is funded by the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. This office, effectively an NGO inside the University, manages different community involvement programmes, promotes research on aid and development practices, and is itself part of the NGO network which supports the European Volunteer Service programme.[20]

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[15] *Ubaya Tan Chong Center of Asian Management Studies*: http://cams.ubaya.ac.id/
[16] *Cátedra de Emprendedores, Rioja:* http://fundacion.unirioja.es/Catedras_subsecciones/view/6/catedra-de-emprendedores (in Spanish)
[17] *Cátedra de Emprendedores, Salamanca:* http://www.catedraemprendedores.net/ (in Spanish)
[18] See FEUN: http://www.feun.es/feun/general-information
[19] See: SCAN: http://www.nusu.co.uk/scan/
[20] See Universidad Autónoma de Madrid:
http://www.uam.es/ss/Satellite/es/1242664234487/subHomeServicio/Oficina_de_Accion_Solidaria_y_Cooperacion.htm (in Spanish)

6.7   1st Asia-Europe Students' Forum, the Netherlands 2012

1st Asia-Europe Students' Forum
Are You Fit For The Future?
University of Groningen, the Netherlands
24 September 2012

I. INTRODUCTION

Jointly organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the ASEAN University Network (AUN) and University of Groningen (UoG), the 1st Asia-Europe Students' Forum took place at the University of Groningen on 24 September 2012, directly preceding the 3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC3) on 25-26 September 2012. It gathered about 50 students from 37 countries.

The Students' Forum followed up on the call made by ARC1 and ARC2 held at the Free University and Korea University, in Berlin (October 2008) and Seoul (October 2010) respectively, to further engage students in the ASEM Education Process, specifically in the ASEM Rectors' Conference series. Themed *Are You Fit For the Future?* the Students' Forum complemented the topic of the 3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference which explored the topics of university-business and university-community engagement.

Two panel discussions looked at employability and entrepreneurship education from students' perspectives while an interactive session explored the role of universities in ensuring graduate employability and entrepreneurship. The results of these discussions were presented at a plenary session in the 3rd ASEM Rectors' Conference and are detailed in the following section.

II. STUDENTS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ASEM EDUCATION DIALOGUE

"Learning opens the door to building a satisfying and productive life, quite apart from a person's employment status and prospects" (Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, 2000). Recognising that the aim of education and learning should not be limited to employability alone, but one that encompasses a humanistic understanding of global citizenship, ASEM university students recommend the following to university and business leaders:

(1) To ensure that students have the skills to acquire a work life balance in their future working lives, the students recommend that universities integrate time management training in their teaching and learning environment.

While it was acknowledged that a considerable part of this challenge is personal responsibility, students called on universities to make teacher-training sensitive to this issue. Rewarding good teaching that incorporates time management training was also highlighted as good practice. Students agreed that universities regularly evaluate students' progress to detect and improve time-management at an early stage in the learning process. Including voluntary service and community engagement in the study experience were also mentioned as examples of how to improve the teaching and learning environments.

(2) **To prepare graduates for an increasingly diverse multicultural workplace, universities should foster cultural awareness and sensitivity throughout their studies.**

The participants of stressed the importance of learning from others such as student-to-student learning, student-teacher (and vice versa) as well as teacher-teacher learning. Language courses, mobility and exposure to diverse cultural settings, both abroad and within one's own institution, are important aspects. Institutions should be pro-active in facilitating their international students' engagement with home country students for mutual enrichment. Mobility should not be limited to academic mobility, but also open up to multicultural workplace experiences and community service.

(3) **To make subjects relevant to students' possible future workplaces, universities should enable students to make informed choices about designing their own curricula, which should include soft skills learning and counselling.**

The need to integrate internship opportunities, mobility windows, community learning in the curricula and public-private partnerships were highlighted in the discussions. Students would like to be given the opportunity to customise their curricula according to their specific interests and career choices. However, for students to be successful in making the right choices in designing their curricula, they need to be informed. To this end, university career counselling centres for graduates and other professional departments should be put in place to maintain high-quality external relations and ensure proper conditions for innovative programmes and career development. The feedback and involvement of students and alumni in the provision of these services were stressed as crucial. In addition, a wide range of stakeholders such as the faculty, employers and the community should also be asked for feedback and be involved in the curriculum development. Further, it was discussed to offer soft skills training and assessment to all students and graduates (based, for instance, on the Tuning Generic Competences).

(4) **To make sure that a mobile workforce does not encounter issues of cultural prejudice, universities should foster mobility with a focus on intercultural communication and intercultural training and skills.**

International classrooms and diversity at home were also stressed as an

indispensable way to foster intercultural skills. A concern on mobility as a privilege based on financial means, instead of achievement and ability, was raised. Mobility should also include international work placement and voluntary service. Universities should encourage alumni networks to better support mobility of future generations of students. It was further acknowledged that education should be equally accessible, and that minorities be supported. The challenge of avoiding brain-drain was identified at systems' level and needs to be tackled across countries together with policy-makers.

(5) To encourage students to become more entrepreneurial, universities should provide greater resource support, access to critical business dialogue and start up incubators at every institution.

The main challenges mentioned by the participants were lack of guidance and common risk adversity. Furthermore, it was pointed out that failure is not commonly accepted and, thus, not seen as an opportunity to learn. The proposals to overcome this challenge encompassed talks, courses and seminars on entrepreneurship, e.g. on financing, risk-management, human resource management, psychological training, etc. Examples of practical resource support include office space for students striving to start up a business, loans or grants, and formalised mentorship programmes for such students. Universities should facilitate the translation of students learning into practice. In the spirit of thinking outside the box, entrepreneurship education and learning should not be limited to business students. Providing opportunities during university studies to learn from other young entrepreneurs and opportunities for entrepreneurial work-place learning was seen as one way forward. At the same time, universities should create networks of alumni, recognising their achievements as entrepreneurs and as role models.

(6) For universities to effectively involve student stakeholders in the development of higher education, students should be considered as equal partners. Students are a large stakeholder group within the higher education community.

They are the centre of teaching and learning. Although they should be responsible for their own learning, they need to be involved in the development of higher education. Therefore, they should have a possibility to participate in the governance of higher education. As students are the ones who know best about barriers, challenges and needs they are facing, their feedback and ideas should be used for higher education development and improvement. Students can provide different perspectives which can enrich creativity and efficiency. It should further be kept in mind that part of the current student body also constitutes the future generation of academics. To ensure transfer, they should be involved in their future working field at an early stage. Another area where students' feedback and ideas can play an important role is the quality assurance of the institutions. As can be seen in the Bologna Process, where students are already integrated and playing an important role, equal partnership is a beneficial relation of students with the higher education community.

6.8 3rd ASEM University-Business Forum, Malaysia 2012

RECORDS OF DISCUSSION

**THIRD ASEM UNIVERSITY-BUSINESS FORUM
PUTRA WORLD TRADE CENTRE (PWTC), KUALA LUMPUR
5-6 NOVEMBER 2012**

The **THIRD ASEM UNIVERSITY-BUSINESS FORUM (3rd ASEM UBF)**, hosted by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, was held on 5 and 6 November 2012 in the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia). It was viewed as an important forum since it encouraged and facilitated the expansion of strategic cooperation of academia and industry in the field of higher education between the ASEM member countries.

The theme, '**Driving Innovation'**, served as a platform for the higher education sector, the higher education institutions and the industry in Asia and Europe, to discuss and deliberate on various issues of significance to university-business cooperation in order to achieve successful collaboration between the two regions. The outcomes of this forum will be presented on the Fourth Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME4), taking place in Kuala Lumpur in May 2013.

The third ASEM UBF began with a short session, looking back at the recommendations of the Second ASEM University-Business Forum (2nd ASEM UBF), organized in Bonn in 2011. During the discussions of the 3rd ASEM UBF some of the issues raised in the Bonn Declaration were addressed. Three parallel sessions were conducted during the two-day forum:

a) Accreditation / Recognition: Creative Society through Innovative Education System

b) Graduate Employability based Curriculum: Human Capital Development for Innovation based Economy

c) Knowledge and Technology Sharing: University as an Enabler towards Strategic University-Industry Partnership (Vendors, SMI/SME)

During the discussion in the **first parallel session** on Accreditation / Recognition, different models of university-business cooperations were presented. Many issues were raised, such as, (1) to form a globalised quality assurance system that is legitimate and comprises common values and practices, (2) the role of the university in creating a sustainable economy and students employability, (3) the need to understand industry's demands, (4) the necessity to push Malaysia for higher workforce in order to enhance production.

Having extensively deliberated, several suggestions were made on the followings:

a) A qualification framework should be designed to reach closer partnership between government, industry & university; and

b) To ensure high graduate employability, universities should work hand in hand with the industry, by designing university curricula, including the needs of industry and students.

Parallel session two on Graduate Employability-based Curriculum addressed the need for sustainable employability, the way problem-based project work works, and the need for industry-ready graduates. The working group discussed on issues such as: (1) the lack of fundamental skills that promote employability among fresh graduates; (2) graduates who aren't instilled with the courage to innovate; (3) problem based learning (4) the lack of stimulus to accelerate the growth of innovation in research and development in the Electronics & Electrical sector; (5) the lack of exposure of graduates to the world of work.

Several recommendations were put forward on the followings:

a) Graduates should be instilled with the innovator's traits;

b) A specific roadmap towards innovation should be designed;

c) In the perspective of marketability and sustainability, curriculum design should be based more on real world problems;

d) Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) should pay more attention to industry's demands and needs in exposing students to the world of work; and

e) Change in the Teaching & Learning methodologies in educational institutions should be taken into consideration as the focus should be more on experiential learning.

During the **third parallel session** on Knowledge and Technology Sharing, the presentations focused on the institutionalizing of knowledge generation and exchange through industry and community engagement, a toolbox for successful science marketing, and the presentation of Silterra Malaysia. Issues covered during the discussions were, among others (1) the lack of engagement between internal and external stakeholders (university and industry), (2) the poor collaboration, integration and engagement of the core business between university and diverse stakeholders, (3) the development of a clear goal and measurement of what needs to be achieved in relation to industry, (4) the difficulties in extending fellowship to university and vice-versa and (5) efficiency through innovation and economic growth.

A number of recommendations were put forward on the followings:

a) Governance system and structures, related policies and the implementation between the university and industry should be strengthened;

b) The partnership/collaboration models should be more holistic in approach;

c) Communication barriers within and between organisations should be eliminated, and

d) Achievements in the field of Knowledge and Technology Sharing should be kept track of and followed up.

In the perspective of offering students real life work experience within their education, the ASEM Placement Programme was presented. This programme, funded by public resources and industry, offers the possibility to qualified students to do a 2 to 6 months placement in the ASEM region. Before the actual start, the proposed scheme includes the establishment of a small scale preliminary work placement programme as a try-out. Based on Good Practices, the organizational structure, organizational procedures, financial means and methods awarding grants were illustrated.

With regard to the issues and suggestions discussed in the keynote speeches and the parallel sessions, and in the perspective of strengthening and enhancing university-business cooperation, following recommendations were made:

A. There should be a focus on well-defined joint goals towards successful academia-industry collaborations on knowledge and technology exchange via proper governance and structure, policy and implementation;

B. There is a need for joint industry-academia efforts towards holistic employable graduates;

C. There is a need for an ASEM Graduate Innovation Roadmap (Specific Innovator's DNA);

D. There should be a reinvestment in a specific human capital development programme (government - industry - professional associations - university);

E. The proposed ASEM Placement Programme should be worked out and followed up by interested ASEM member countries.

All recommendations will be taken into account during the ministerial discussions on Engaging Business and Industry in Education in May 2013 in Kuala Lumpur (ASEMME4).

Prepared by:
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION MALAYSIA
PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA
6 NOVEMBER 2012

6.9 ASEM Conference on Enhancing Balanced Mobility, Thailand 2012

International Asia-Europe Conference on Enhancing Balanced Mobility
5-6 March 2012
Pullman Bangkok King Power, Bangkok, Thailand
Conclusions by the Chair

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Balanced mobility has been one of the core topics during the last Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education in Copenhagen, May 2011. According to the ASEM members' information, the overall situation for the exchange between Asia and Europe varies from country to country. Some countries are "net importers" of mobile students while others are "net exporters". However, European countries still count more incomings than outgoings, while most Asian countries do the other way around.

According to the Chair's conclusions from the third Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME3), the leaders encouraged ASEM members to organize thematic training seminars on removing obstacles to mobility, funded by the EU or national resources. The Ministers welcomed Thailand's offer to host an international ASEM conference on Mobility in late 2011. Originally, this conference was scheduled for November 2011 but a terrible flood made it impossible to meet in Thailand at that date.

Consequently, about 180 participants met in Bangkok from 5-6 March 2012. The majority of them were representatives from Thai universities and other organizations relevant to education; others were representatives from embassies and educational organizations of Australia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Spain, Estonia, India, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Sweden, ASEAN University

Network, Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Secretariat, Fulbright Thailand and SEAMEO Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development. During the two-day seminar, Asian and European experts informed the audiences about the current situation on student and staff mobility in the different regions and presented different national and institutional approaches to better balance mobility.

The participants reaffirmed:

• the necessity to enhance mobility between Asia and Europe;
• the need to improve other factors relevant to balance mobility, this includes the quality enhancement of teaching and learning, the increase of institutional cooperation and the provision of transparent information;
• the need to promote staff mobility along with student mobility;
• the necessity of cooperation between Ministries of Education and Ministries of Higher Education to set up a mobility strategy.

In order to move towards a more balanced mobility, participants have come to the following conclusions:

• mobility strategies should be set up by both Ministries of Education and Ministries of HigherEducation. They should formulate an "International Strategy" to embed mobility at national level both at bilateral and multilateral level. In this respect, communication with stakeholders in order to involve them in implementing mobility strategies, is needed. Higher education institutions should be highly committed to academic mobility. They should put national strategies into practice by formulating specific plans to embed mobility in institutional frameworks both at bilateral and multilateral level; Ministries should promote balanced mobility by providing funds to

support both student and staff mobility; in this regard mobility for all should be envisaged;

- national database/information on academic mobility needs to be improved and kept updated ;
- convene international sessions;
- industry should be more involved in mobility programmes.

In this context, some instruments were proposed:

At Ministry level:

- to set national standards and guidelines for recognition;
- to establish a National Qualifications Framework;
- to elaborate a credit transfer mechanism;
- to set up national scholarship schemes such as ASEM-DUO Fellowship
- programme in order to give incentives for temporary mobility;
- to appoint and promote ambassadors for mobility, internships and placements;
- to encourage university-business cooperation;
- to fund more joint study programmes;
- to arrange education fairs for promoting global education.

At higher education level

- to set internal quality criteria for credit transfer;
- provide transparent two-way information through universities' websites in different languages;
- to provide accredited and attractive international short-term programmes such as summer schools;
- to promote joint education and joint research programmes;

- to improve accessibility to education such as offering online courses or using online application system;
- to provide university scholarships;
- to pay attention on learning outcomes;
- to lessen barriers for mobility;
- to provide more programmes taught in English.

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6.10 TVET Symposium, Germany 2012

ASEM Symposium Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Berlin 27 – 28 February 2012

WRAP UP

According to the Chair's conclusions from the third Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME3), the leaders encouraged the exchange of experience on how qualifications frameworks affect lifelong learning and assure broad stakeholder acceptance of new forms of lifelong learning, thereby especially underlining the idea of enhancing and supporting the development of qualifications frameworks. In this context, the Ministers welcomed <u>Germany's offer to organize the next Vocational Education and Training Symposium with special regard to qualifications frameworks</u> in early 2012.

Following this encouragement, about 60 experts from 22 ASEM member countries and various organisations dealing with vocational education met in Berlin from 27 – 28 February 2012 in order to exchange information on the respective state of development of National Qualifications Frameworks in ASEM member states. In different plenary sessions and workshops, examples of good practice in developing and implementing Regional and National Qualifications Frameworks were presented, commonalities and differences identified and further developments explored.

The participants:

Bearing in mind *the initiatives proposed by the Symposium in the Qingdao Declaration, January 2011 (No. 1 – 6 Qingdao Declaration);*

Highlighting *that the development and implementation of National Qualifications Frameworks is a long-term and an on-going process;*

Underlining the need for commitment of all stakeholders in the development and implementation of National Qualifications Frameworks. In this context, the involvement of social partners needs to be strengthened;

Emphasising that National Qualifications Frameworks play an important role in lifelong learning. They are tools to translate levels and qualifications between systems and subsystems, to enhance transparency and to support mobility. They support comparability through mutual trust, quality assurance and the use of learning outcomes. In this context the day-to-day use of framework terminology in education and at work should be promoted to create acceptance and shared understanding.

Considering the request of the Ministers for Education to provide the ASEMME4 with a systematic overview on existing qualifications frameworks models (No. 24 ASEMME3). A wide range of National Qualifications Frameworks is already documented through the 16 country study by the ILO, and through international inventories published at regular intervals by Cedefop (Working Papers on NQF development in Europe), ETF (Inventory of NQF developments) and UNESCO (upcoming) which will be made available through the Qualifications Platform of ETF. It is important that these initiatives are sustained and widened

Underpinning that the attractiveness of vocational education needs to be enhanced. A promotional campaign considering success stories of mobile vocational education graduates would help making vocational education more attractive in the ASEM region;

Stressing the importance of trade sectors reflexions including about Sectoral Qualifications Frameworks. In this context it seemed recommendable to bring together stakeholders from Europe and Asia from the same sector to exchange experience and to learn from each other; this could improve comparability of content and use of qualifications between those actors developing qualifications in a specific sector (such as tourism) and the final users (labour market, companies and professionals;

Welcoming the regularity in which ASEM seminars take place and deal with topics related to Lifelong Learning; in this context, the offer of Vietnam to host the next conference on qualifications frameworks with special regard to developing mechanisms to recognise informal and non-formal learning by frameworks, as well as to transitions between vocational education and higher education, was highly appreciated;

The ASEM Education Secretariat will forward the recommendations to the respective Senior Officials in the Ministries for Education in order to feed them into the next Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education which will take place in Malaysia 2013.

6.11 Workshop on Tourist Education, Austria 2012

Conclusions of the ASEM Workshop on TVET
in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector
Vienna, 20 – 21 November 2012

On invitation of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture (BMUKK), the "ASEM Workshop on TVET in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector" took place from the 20th to the 21st November 2012 in Vienna, Austria. The Workshop was attended by approximately 60 TVET experts from 17 ASEM member states in Asia and Europe and from international organisations as UNEVOC, UNESCO and the European Training Foundation, and SEAMEO VOCTECH and the ASEM Education Secretariat. It was organised by the BMUKK with support from the ASEM Education Secretariat, and hosted by the MODUL University Vienna and the MODUL Tourism College, two leading Austrian institutions in secondary and tertiary education for the tourism and hospitality sector.

The workshop programme featured two major working sessions: the first was on "New Trends in TVET and their significance for the international hotel and tourism sector" while the second was on "Successful co-operation projects between Asia and Europe in tourism and hospitality education". The proceedings of these workshops and of the plenary sessions resulted in the following consensual conclusions:

TVET for the hospitality and tourism sector has a great potential for future co-operation within the ASEM process. Tourism is a growing industry worldwide, even in times of economic crises. Many countries in Asia and Europe are popular tourist destinations and tourist flows between Asia and Europe are increasing.

The participants of the ASEM Workshop on TVET in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector

- stressed that – more than any other sector – the tourism and hospitality industry is a global one with transnational firms and a transnational labour market. Therefore the international tourism and hospitality industry – also more than most other sectors – needs TVET curricula and TVET certifications that are both competency-based and internationally comparable, to ease transfer of credit and credentials between countries and regions that would prepare human development with comparable competencies in the ASEM .

- emphasized the need for continued and intensified interregional dialogue between TVET practitioners on sectorial level.

- recognised that ASEM provides an ideal forum for such a dialogue at sector level and suggest that the ASEM Education Secretariat be given a continued mandate by the ASEM education ministers to facilitate this dialogue.

In this context, the participants of the workshop agreed that:

- there is a continuing need for interregional dialogue, networking and the development of sector-based interregional communities of practice, ideally supported through ASEM workshops;
- in order to fill the idea of ASEM with sustainable efforts, joint projects in the sector should be promoted. Possible partners are national and regional administrations, social partners, universities, TVET schools and colleges as well as industry associations representing tourism and hospitality sectors ;
- co-operation can focus on many different concerns such as
    o development of curricula, standards, and learning outcomes,
    o education of teachers and trainers,
    o the development of TVET systems
    o and enhancement of work based learning;
    o comparable qualification frameworks that would facilitate credit transfer or certification of qualifications in the region
- projects can be funded by public funds or by the private sector on a commercial basis;
- it will be useful to discuss and develop cross-referencing mechanisms between the European Qualifications Frameworks and emerging regional qualifications frameworks in Asia.

6.12 ASEM Recognition Bridging Declaration

DECLARATION ON THE COOPERATION IN RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION IN ASIAN AND EUROPEAN REGIONS ("ASEM RECOGNITION BRIDGING DECLARATION")

Following the Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education (Recommendation), adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-seventh session, Paris, 13th November 1993,

Considering parties to the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon Recognition Convention), parties to the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (Tokyo Recognition Convention), and ASEM member countries,

Echoing the spirits of Shaping an ASEM Education Area in Conclusions by the Chair of the 3rd Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education, made on 10th May 2011,

Acknowledging that there is no significant and fundamental difference for recognising higher education qualifications in general principles, regulations and methods in both Tokyo and Lisbon Recognition Convention,

The Ministers of ASEM countries declare the following:

I.

In order to foster CLOSER cooperation and exchange of information in recognition of qualifications concerning higher education between Asian and European regions under the Framework of ASEM, it is necessity to establish an effective cooperation mechanism in this regard.

II.

Each Party to one of the two Conventions will, with regard to decisions on the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education, apply the principles and regulations on recognition to holders of qualifications which have been issued by a Party of the respective Convention.

III.

The national information centres according to Article IX.2 of the "Lisbon Recognition Convention", and Article VIII.3 of the "Tokyo Recognition Convention" will fulfil their tasks to Parties to the respective Convention.

IV.

The networks of national information centres in the European and Asian regions are encouraged to work closely with regard to inter-regional cooperation and information exchange on recognition matters.

V.

The effective cooperation mechanism, as well as cooperation activities shall be jointly constituted and implemented by all national information centres and those institutions with responsibilities for national information centres through respective regional networks.

VI.

Inter-regional cooperation is not confined to national information centres or those institutions with responsibilities for national information centres through respective regional networks. Other institutions with responsibilities for recognition of qualifications in other regions are encouraged to participate in inter-regional cooperation activities.

Comments on the draft

As it was agreed upon by the ASEM Working Group on Recognition, which met from 5th to 6th December 2011 in Vienna, Austria, and from 6th to 7th September 2012 in Beijing, China, no "third Convention" should be elaborated.

Therefore a document was drafted which would be fully in line with the intention of applying the provisions of both Conventions also between the two regions, and which does not any more contain provisions on recognition, but could serve as a "bridging document". It has provisionally been named "ASEM Recognition Bridging Declaration". The term "declaration" would stress the official character, without creating an international treaty.