

NEWSLETTER July/August 2011

ASEM SEMINAR

Seminar on Regional Quality Assurance, 5– 6 July 2011

EXPERTS MEET IN BONN TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION IN QUALITY ASSURANCE

In accordance with the Chair's Conclusions of the 3rd Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education held in Copenhagen, the German Ministry of Education and Research invited international experts for external quality assurance in higher education. In Bonn, about 50 representatives from Asian and European quality assurance agencies and networks discussed ways to develop common principles of quality assurance across the ASEM education area.



Photo: ASEM Education Secretariat

During the two-day seminar, participants focussed their discussions on quality assurance tools and mechanisms implemented in Asia and Europe. They 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, and to share good practices.

Amongst others, participants agreed that interregional cooperation in quality assurance needs national commitment as well as governments' financial assistance and asked the

ASEM Education Secretariat to forward the recommendations to the Ministries of Education.

Within the framework of the seminar, participants were informed about the QA-SEAN initiative – taken by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), together with the ASEAN University Network (AUN), the ASEAN Quality Assurance Network (AQAN), the European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA) and the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Higher Education and Developments (SEAMEO RIHED). Prior to the ASEM Seminar the parties signed an agreement for the joint implementation of a capacity development project in the field of quality assurance (QA). The primary aim of ASEAN-QA project is to assure and enhance the quality of study programmes and to facilitate the recognition of credits and degrees based on shared quality assurance principles and standards. The project includes multi-part training courses which are directed at quality assurance coordinators at universities and officers of quality assurance agencies in the ASEAN region. Both groups will be trained in the upcoming three years by a team of international trainers from Asia. And Europe.



Photo: ASEM Education Secretariat

Participants agreed that it is worth observing the QA-SEAN project and that developments and

progress should be presented in a follow-up seminar which was already announced for 2012 by the French representative.

The ASEM Education Secretariat will also regularly inform about the project development.

Further information on the seminar and the recommendations can be found under:

<http://www.asem-education-secretariat.org/en/17159/>

QUALITY ASSURANCE

EURASHE SURVEY ON QUALITY ASSURANCE

EURASHE (European Association of Institutions in Higher Education), as the representative of professionally oriented institutions and programmes involved their different categories of stakeholders in Quality Assurance, namely higher education institutions, their staff and students as well as prospective employers. By conducting a survey on how the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance" have been implemented in the professionally oriented higher education institutions, the project "Mapping Implementation of the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) for Quality Assurance" should be supported in particular. The EU financed mapping project of the European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA) the European University Association (EUA), the European Student Union (ESU) and EURASHE investigate the implementation and application of the ESG after five years. The main outcome of the project is a survey based report on how the ESG have been implemented in the European Higher Education Area and it will provide recommendations on how their application could be improved, and whether there is a need for a revision of the ESGs.

For detailed information, please refer to :

<http://www.eurashe.eu>

ASEAN CREDIT TRANSFER SYSTEM UNDERGOING EXPANSION

According to Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, the ASEAN Credit Transfer System is being expanded to include more universities, students and programmes, as part of

the efforts to improve education quality through regional cooperation.

"Currently, we are in the process of expanding the number of participating universities, students and also programmes of each country. I strongly believe that the harmonisation of the quality of higher education within ASEAN will expedite the maturity of this programme," he said when speaking at the Informal ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting in Denpasar. In addition, quality assurance bodies and representatives from ASEAN countries had already initiated the ASEAN Quality Assurance Network (AQAN), currently chaired by the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA), with a view to harmonise higher education among ASEAN countries. Malaysia will chair the upcoming Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education in 2013 (ASEMME4).

UNIVERSITY-BUSINESS COOPERATION

GERMANY HOSTS THE 2nd ASEM UNIVERSITY-BUSINESS FORUM

From 10-11 November 2011, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research will hold the 2nd ASEM University-Business Forum in Bonn with representatives from the world of work and the higher education sector. During the two-day forum, participants from the different regions have the possibility to exchange their experience and knowledge in the field of university-business cooperation in several sessions and workshops. Among others, different approaches should be presented to identify demanded jobs and skills needed in today's market. Furthermore, it should be discussed what skills and competences educational institutes should have instilled in students before they enter the workforce. In addition, the role of career education and career services at higher education institutions should be explored.

This seminar is conceived as a follow-up of the 1st ASEM University Business Forum which has taken place in Bangkok/Thailand in March 2010. If you wish to attend the forum at your own expenses, please contact Ms Bettina Onyango

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(Onyango@daad.de). Further information will soon be available under:

<http://www.asem-education-secretariat.org/en/12209/>

MULTI- AND UNI-LATERAL ACTIVITIES

E-LEARNING CONFERENCE IN KOREA

The e-Learning Korea 2011 Conference will consist of the most advanced, up-to-date, information in the field of e-Learning. Domestic and international exhibitors will be on hand to provide a diverse range of educational backgrounds and offer a unique networking opportunity for participants. The conference “New Directions for Educational Innovation” will be held on September 6-7, 2011, at Coex in Seoul, Korea.

The conference will provide participants with the latest educational information, policies, technology, research and trends in e-Learning.

Researchers are invited to submit abstracts in line with the conference theme and topics. Additional information can be found under:

<http://www.elearningkorea.or.kr>

ASEMUNDUS IN THAILAND

From 27-28 October 2011, in the realm of the OCSC international education fair (October 29-30, 2011) an Erasmus Mundus seminar will take place in Bangkok, Thailand. The seminar will present the Erasmus Mundus programme, good practice examples from ongoing Erasmus Mundus projects and discuss common issues of higher education cooperation. The seminar will gather European and Thai (in limited numbers also Vietnamese/Malaysian/Singaporean) higher education representatives and provide the opportunity for project presentation and partner search.

The seminar aims to enforce partnerships between European and Thai higher education institutions and to increase the number of Thai institutions participating in Erasmus Mundus projects. For the European participants, the seminar targets both ongoing Erasmus Mundus project representatives as well as institutions intending to submit an Erasmus Mundus proposal involving a Thai (or

Vietnamese/Malaysian /Singaporean) partner institution. The seminar is organised by a consortium of Erasmus Mundus National Structures from Austria, Latvia, Estonia, Belgium, Hungary, Poland, the Netherlands, Cyprus and Germany (as coordinator) in the framework of an Erasmus Mundus Action 3 project, called ASEMUNDUS. Two further ASEMUNDUS seminars will take place in spring 2012: one in China and one in Korea.

Further information under:

<http://www.asem-education-secretariat.org/asemundus>

PRESS REVIEW

Australia

The Australian, August 10, 2011

We have 18 billion reasons to find a strategy

Australia sells to overseas markets 120,000 tonnes of oranges annually, second only to chickpeas in fruit and vegetable exports. The Australian dollar is killing orange exports, so the industry is calling on Australians to eat more of them. I'm eating an orange a day at the moment, although that's partly because bananas are so expensive.

I know all this because Alan Kohler mentioned it on television. It spurred me to do bit of research -- it's not easy to find out about orange exports. The best I could establish was that fruit and vegetable exports earn between \$500 million and \$1 billion annually. Not bad for a niche industry. Kohler also mentioned that other export industries are hurting, including international education.

Online: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/opinion/we-have-18-billion-reasons-to-find-a-strategy/story-e6fgrgcko-1226111942386>

India

India Education Review, August 16, 2011

11th Plan is an Education Plan: Manmohan Singh

Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh while addressing the nation on the occasion of 65th Independence Day said, "the government has decided to appoint the commission to make suggestions for improvements at all levels of education," as the vocational education and skill development acquired new importance and needed "major changes".

The Prime Minister said, "We are satisfied with our achievements in the last seven years in the areas of education and health. Whether it is elementary education, secondary education or higher education we have taken concrete steps for improvements at all levels. This has shown good results. In the last few years, fundamental changes have taken place in the area of education. Online: <http://www.indiaeducationreview.com/news/11th-plan-education-plan-manmohan-singh>

Indian Express, August 5, 2011

Vocational engineering in plus 2, UG courses planned

The Government plans to introduce vocational engineering in higher secondary and under graduate courses by next year, Human Resources Development Minister Kapil Sibal told Rajya Sabha on Friday.

Industry-prepared syllabus will be introduced in the school system and polytechnics so that students easily find jobs and their employability improves, he said during Question

Hour. As per the scheme, there will be Higher Secondary (10+2) Academic or Regular and 10+2 Vocational. Also there would be BSc Vocational Engineering, he said, adding that the attempt is to introduce the course "this year and certainly by next year."

Online:

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/vocational-engineering-in-plus-2-ug-courses-planned/827637/>

Indonesia

The Jakarta Post, August 8, 2011

Analysis: Indonesia: Increased spending, international focus

Increasing government spending and a renewed focus on international partnerships are paving the way for Indonesia's education sector to open up to foreign universities with more public funding allocated to improving learning services. Indonesia's revised 2011 budget, which was under parliamentary discussion in July, would see education expenditure reach Rp 262 trillion (US\$30.99 billion), up around Rp 14.5 trillion from the initial suggested allocation. These figures do not include an additional Rp 2 trillion for the National Education Development Fund.

Online:

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/08/08/analysis-indonesia-increased-spending-international-focus.html>

Japan

The Mainichi Daily News, August 15, 2011

Fall enrollment at University of Tokyo could have far-reaching effects

The University of Tokyo (Todai), known for churning out Japan's elite, has begun deliberating shifting the start of its school year from spring to autumn. As the school has so much influence on Japan's educational community that some say "when Todai moves, so does everyone else," the discussions have provoked various reactions from other higher education institutions and industry accustomed to "new beginnings" being marked by the cherry blossom season in April. "By eliminating a major factor that's keeping (Japan) from globalizing, we can achieve a type of system reform," said Todai President Junichi Hamada at a meeting of the Central Education Council's basic educational promotion plan committee on July 21.

Online:

<http://mdn.mainichi.jp/features/news/20110812p2a00m0na014000c.html>

Korea

The Korean Herald, August 15, 2011

Universities to be checked for overseas student facilities

Universities here educating students from abroad will undergo inspections to determine their ability to manage and care for their international academic community, according to the education ministry on Monday. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology plans to prevent poorly managed universities from enrolling foreign students for the sake of receiving more tuition. Officials are worried that universities are accepting foreign students mainly for financial reasons, without facilities catering to foreigners or adequate cultural programs to bring Korean and foreign students together.

Online:

<http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLid=20110815000246>

Airang, August 1, 2011

Korea Takes in over US\$35 Mil. from foreign students coming here to study

Korea has taken in the most money in 15 years from international students, especially from China, coming here to study. The number of foreigners who came to Korea to receive medical treatment also jumped dramatically, reaching its highest level since 2006. According to the Bank of Korea, the nation raked in over 35 million US dollars in the first half of this year from overseas students, doubling the amount earned during the same time last year.

Online:

http://www.arirang.co.kr/News/News_View.asp?nseq=118723&code=Ne2&category=2

New Zealand

TVNZ, August 12, 2011

Universities consider shorter Masters degrees

New Zealand universities are considering chopping a year from the traditional five-year programme for a Masters degree to try to compete with Australia in attracting international fee-paying students. Some Australian universities offer a four year course, compared with the usual five years in New Zealand, and experts say international students are opting for the shorter study time. Here it takes two years to complete a Masters degree after three years of a Bachelor degree, while in Australia some universities allow a Masters to be completed in one year. Universities here are considering a similar move, as they believe it will attract extra foreign students.

Online:

<http://tvnz.co.nz/national-news/universities-consider-shorter-masters-degrees-4349987>

Poland

Poland takes over the EU Presidency

On 1 July 2011, Poland took over the Presidency of the European Union (EU). The programme of the Polish Presidency states as its priorities education learning mobility and the modernisation of universities.

In particular, the Presidency aims to facilitate

student and worker mobility by advancing work on developing key competencies, such as language skills, among young people and adults, enhancing cooperation between vocational training, higher education and employers, helping to raise the quality of education, and creating flexible lifelong learning paths.

For the Presidency, initiatives to modernise universities will put an emphasis on supporting quality in teaching and research, promoting diversity and transparency in higher education, enhancing graduate employability, and promoting university-community partnerships.

Download the Programme of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union at: http://pl2011.eu/sites/default/files/users/shared/o_prezydencja/programme_of_the_polish_presidency_of_the_council_of_the_eu.pdf

Singapore

Channel News Asia, August 16, 2011

University sector expansion underway

Work is under way to chart the future direction of Singapore's university sector, from 2015 and beyond. One key focus of the Ministry of Education (MOE) is to provide more opportunities for students to get a degree. MOE said it has formed a review committee, headed by Minister of State for Education Lawrence Wong, to study and recommend ways to expand the university sector. "We know we have to proceed carefully. This is not just a numbers game; it's not just about expanding heedlessly and growing university places without regard for the quality of education and employment outcomes," Mr Wong said.

Online:

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/1147356/1.html>

TechZone, August, 14, 2011

Singapore universities to cap enrollment of foreign students

Singapore universities will add 2,000 more places for local students by 2015, while the foreign enrollment will be capped at present levels, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced on Sunday

evening. Delivering his National Day Rally Speech, Lee said the measures aim to allay the concerns of the increasing competition from foreigners felt by local residents. "One unhappiness is the feeling that, maybe, foreign students have taken the place of locals in universities because our universities do take in a proportion of foreign students," he said. Lee's speech has been widely expected to address the concerns of the local population following the recent general election.

Online:

<http://www.techzone360.com/news/2011/08/14/5704554.htm>

Thailand

Pattaya Mail, August 10, 2011

Thailand asked to adopt same academic calendar as other ASEAN nations

Council of University Presidents of Thailand President Prasart Suebkha has proposed that Thai universities adopt a new semester calendar, which corresponds to most of the ASEAN nations, for the benefits of Thai education. According to Mr. Prasart, Thailand is the only country in this region with a unique academic calendar. The move was said to synchronize college semesters in Thailand with the rest of the ASEAN community before all the ten nations merge under the economic framework in 2015. The new academic year will still consist of two semesters but instead of starting the 1st semester from May to October, it will be from September to December. Meanwhile, the 2nd term will begin from January to May.

Online:

<http://www.pattayamail.com/news/thailand-asked-to-adopt-same-academic-calendar-as-other-asean-nations-5354>

UK

The Guardian, August 5, 2011

Mutual recognition: the return of the wandering scholar?

David Willetts wants greater mutual recognition of qualifications so students can be mobile during studies, but with all the current constraints it's hard to see this happening

The universities' minister, David Willetts, has raised the issue of mutual recognition between universities.

"I would like to see greater mutual recognition of qualifications so that a student born in Britain can build up credits for a British degree while studying abroad", he said at a Westminster Education Forum event last week. "Not only does this build cultural fluency, [and] the ability to work in differing environments, but it also generates wide networks that form the basis of long term partnerships."

Online:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/higher-education-network/blog/2011/aug/03/mutual-recognition-university-visa-caps>

BBC, July 27, 2011

English students should study abroad, says minister

David Willetts wants to see students being able to study at overseas campuses of English universities

More students from England should be able to study abroad, says the Universities Minister David Willetts. He said it should be easier for English students to gain credits towards their degree while studying overseas. There should be "greater mutual recognition" of qualifications between countries, he suggested. With many students in England facing tuition fees of £9,000 a year from 2012, study at foreign universities could become more popular. Speaking at a Westminster Education Forum event on higher education, Mr Willetts, minister for universities in England, said: "I would like to see British universities with more of a presence abroad.

Online: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-14306817>

Vietnam

VietNamNet, August 11, 2011

Education is name of the game

The Vietnamese government just green-lighted Vietnam's human resources development planning for 2011-2020. National Assembly's Committee on Culture, Education, Youth and Teenage deputy chairman Nguyen Minh Thuyet talks about its planning.

In light of the recently approved Vietnam human resources development planning, 158 new universities will be founded from now until 2015, which will rise to 573 by 2020. What's your view?

First of all we need to explain why Vietnam needs such a big number of nearly 600 universities and colleges. In 2010, the National Assembly Standing Committee founded a group to supervise investments and formulations of colleges and universities across the country. At that time Vietnam was home to 400 higher education facilities with most of them coming into existence in 2006. Large amounts of such facilities could not satisfy minimum requirements for higher education training bases.

Online:

<http://english.vietnamnet.vn/en/society/11752/education-is-name-of-the-game.html>

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