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# The Jakarta Post

## EU underrepresented in Asian media coverage

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Media in Asia has largely portrayed the EU as an economic and political actor, stopping short of depicting it as a developmental and environmental entity, despite its huge concerns about the two sectors, a survey shows.

The Asia Europe Foundation and National Center for Research on Europe sponsored a survey from 2004 to 2008, which monitored 68 media outlets daily across the Asia Pacific, including analysis of 15,194 news stories and 5,647 interviews with members of the public, as well as 404 political, business and civil society decision-makers in the region.

Martin Holland, director of the National Center for Research on Europe at the University of Canterbury, who led the survey, said in a seminar on Friday that media presentation of the EU as a developmental actor was below 2 percent, while the EU as an environmental actor was below 5 percent of the total media coverage about the EU in Asia.

"There must be a massive miscommunication here because the EU is engaged in significant environmental efforts and 50 percent of global aid comes from the EU, but it apparently goes unreported," he said during the seminar that marked the launch of the survey report that was titled "The EU through the eyes of Asia Volume II: New cases, new finding".

The results of surveys on Indonesia's public opinion about the EU show that people here perceive the bloc firstly as a monetary or economic union, second as a trade and business alliance, third as a bloc of euro-currency countries and fourth as a democracy with good governance and rule of law. The last perception marks a slight difference from other Asian countries surveyed such as China, Japan and Singapore, which did not register democracy as once of the bloc's credentials.

The survey also shows that media in Vietnam, Japan and Indonesia highlighted the political makeup of the EU, while media in Hong Kong, the Philippines and South Korea focused more on the economic side of the union.

The public survey revealed that China still regarded the US as its most important foreign country, followed by the EU in second place. Indonesia also placed the US as its number one foreign country, while the EU came in at eighth. Countries like Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore and Vietnam put China first, while the EU followed with ranks ranging from fourth to sixth most important after China.

The survey concluded that the overall visibility of the EU in Asian news media was very low and its best coverage rested with national or popular dailies, with television news ranked the lowest.

Media in South Korea, India, Macau and Malaysia were also included in the survey.