



4 December 2009, Jakarta, Indonesia

Press Release No. 091204_PR0919
7 December 2009

Perceptions of the EU in Indonesia

According to a public opinion survey carried out by "The EU through the Eyes of Asia" research team, the EU ranked seventh in a list of most important partners for Indonesia with only 8.9% of respondents listing the EU as among Indonesia's most important partner compared to the USA, China and Japan, and, neighbouring economic partners such as Australia and Singapore. The research highlights that the perception does not reconcile with reality. According to the International Monetary Fund, the EU is Indonesia's second largest export partner.

"Misperception or ill-informed views of the European Union's global role puts the EU at risk of being overlooked or undervalued by non-EU countries with [which] the EU is a significant partner. Similarly, low awareness of the EU expose[s] countries, like Indonesia, to the risk of slipping under the EU's radar." according to **Prof. Martin Holland**, Jean Monnet Chair *ad personam*, National Centre for Research on Europe of the University of Canterbury.

In 2006, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and the National Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE) in reaction to this existing knowledge gap initiated the "EU through the Eyes of Asia" project to address "How the EU was perceived in Asia". The latest publication, "The EU through the Eyes of Asia Volume II: New Cases, New Findings" will be launched on 4 December 2009 at the Le Méridien Hotel in Jakarta, Indonesia. This event is organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation in partnership with the Delegation of the European Union to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam.

H.E. Julian Wilson, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Indonesia remarked at the event, "The publication we are launching today can galvanise us in our efforts to build understanding and engagement between the EU and Asia. Knowing how you are perceived is vital to the success of such an enterprise and the survey results assessed in this book will help us to reach out more effectively to the people of Indonesia."

This unprecedented comparative study looks at the attitudes and citizens' perceptions of the EU in Asia, and, to date, the project has been undertaken in 12 research sites throughout Asia. The Asia-wide research project is a major academic collaboration to measure media, public and elite perceptions of the EU in the Asian countries of the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM). The latest findings of this project are expressed in this new publication which provides detailed empirical insights into EU's visibility in the public discourses of 3 Southeast Asian countries – the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam. The data and analyses in this work cover the period between 2008 and the first half of 2009, and compares the findings with those included in Volume I (published in 2007), which examined the perceptions of the EU in China, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and Thailand. The data collected through this project is of direct relevance to policy-makers and opinion leaders across Asia and Europe, providing essential recommendations to the EU, Asian governments, the media and those managing relations between the two regions.

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The publication launch is organised by the **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** and the **Delegation of the European Union to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam**.



The **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** promotes greater mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. Through ASEF, civil society concerns are included as a vital component of deliberations of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). ASEF was established in February 1997 by the participating governments of ASEM. Since then, ASEF has implemented over 350 projects, engaging over 15,000 direct participants as well as reaching out to a much wider audience in Asia and Europe. www.asef.org

The **Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)** now brings together 43 member states (Austria, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam), the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat. www.aseminfoboard.org



The **European Union (EU)** is a unique economic and political partnership between 27 democratic European countries. With a population of nearly half a billion, the EU has worked to bring peace, development and stability to its citizens and to create a fair society, committed to promoting economic prosperity and creating jobs. The five main EU institutions are: the European Parliament, the Council, the European Commission, the Court of Justice and the Court of Auditors.

The relationship between the EU and Indonesia is a longstanding one, which has developed significantly in recent years. Bilateral discussions on economic and political issues of common interest – at both the ministerial and official level – have been held regularly, including in the framework of regular Senior Officials Meetings. The relationship between the EU and Indonesia received a significant boost in November 2009 with the signature of a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA). The PCA will strengthen cooperation across a wide range of policy fields, including trade, environment, energy, science and technology, and good governance, as well as tourism and culture, migration, counter terrorism and the fight against corruption and organised crime.

The EU is a major trade and investment partner of Indonesia, with two-way trade amounting to more than € 20 billion per year, most of which is in manufactured goods. European companies have also long been significant investors in Indonesia with 750 European firms already investing in Indonesia and with Indonesian companies now beginning to invest in the EU. The EU is also an important partner for Indonesian development. EU assistance outlined in the Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013 has almost doubled to reach € 498 million. EU-Indonesia cooperation focuses on education, promoting economic growth through trade and investment, and promoting good governance through better law enforcement.

The EU Delegation in Jakarta is a fully-fledged diplomatic mission which officially represents the EU in Indonesia. It works to strengthen political, economic and commercial relations, as well as managing EU-funded co-operation programmes, and providing information on the policies and institutions of the EU. The EU Delegation works closely with the embassies of the EU Member States. www.delidn.ec.europa.eu