



Asia-Europe Institute



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European Studies in Asia (ESiA) Network Public Panel

“EU-Asian relations: Policies and Perceptions of the EU in Malaysia”

Hosted by:

Asia Europe Institute – University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Abstract

The Asia-Europe Foundation in partnership with the Asia Europe Institute (AEI) presents the European Studies in Asia (ESiA) Network Public Panel on ‘EU-Asian relations: Policies and Perceptions of the EU in Malaysia’, to be hosted by the AEI on 19 June 2009. The public panel will take place to launch the implementation of the ESiA network’s flagship project ‘The EU through the Eyes of Asia’ in Malaysia.

The Asia wide research project provides scientifically valid feedback drawn from three sources; public opinion survey, media analysis and key stakeholder interviews. The EU through the Eyes of Asia project illustrates the unique perceptions of Asians towards the EU, highlighting a wealth of information designed to build better mutual understanding between Academics, Media, Policy Makers and private sector actors in Asia and Europe. To date the study has been carried out in nine research locations including China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, The Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, with India and Macao joining Malaysia in the latest phase of the research.

It is on this basis that this public panel will discuss the current state of play in relation to EU – Asian relations and attempt to map the shifts and trends of EU policies and perceptions in Asia as a whole and Malaysia specifically. The two regions of Asia and Europe are becoming increasingly more interrelated and interdependent and over the past decade have strengthened their ties politically, economically and culturally. At present the strategic partnership between the two regions is of immense importance to one another.

The panel will bring together four high-level experts from both academic and policy making backgrounds to share expertise and discuss their own unique perspectives. The goal of this event is to spur dialogue between Asian and European experts to evaluate the current policies of the EU towards building stronger links and partnerships across Asia while discussing the popular perceptions of the EU in Asia. The panelists will discuss economic, educational, environmental, political factors that are of paramount importance to forging a healthy relationship between the EU and Asia, paying particular attention to how these factors of mutual interest impact our perceptions of one another.



Asia-Europe Institute

The **Asia-Europe Institute** has successfully established itself as one of the Southeast Asia's leading institution for social science postgraduate research and teaching. Established under the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process with a philosophy of enhancing Asia-Europe relations, AEI aims to foster exchange of students and scholars with a view to develop a better understanding of the cultures, histories, politics, institutions, economics, business and legal practices of both regions.

The origins of AEI can be traced back to the idea of establishing closer higher education linkages between Asia and Europe under the provisions of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) initiative in 1996.

AEI aims to be the place where intellectual discourses are held. Key issues on intensifying globalisation and regionalisation environment, international business, innovation and technologies and inter regional relations between Asia and Europe are discussed. Further AEI promotes collaborative research with academic as well as government and private sector institutions. Our postgraduate students are central to the realisation of a collaborative and innovative education hub for the future.



The **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** advances mutual understanding and collaboration between the people of Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural, and people-to-people exchanges. These exchanges include conferences, lecture tours, workshops, seminars and the use of web-based platforms. The major achievement of ASEF is the establishment of permanent bi-regional networks focussed on areas and issues that help to strengthen Asia-Europe relations.

Established in February 1997 by the partners of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), ASEF reports to a board of governors representing the ASEM partners. ASEF is the only permanent physical institution of the ASEM process. Since 1997, the Foundation has initiated projects engaging 14,000 individuals from Asia and Europe. ASEF works in partnership with other public institutions and civil society actors to ensure its work is broad-based and balanced among the partner countries. For more information, please visit <http://www.asef.org>.



In 2000, the forerunner to the **National Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE)** - the Centre for Research on Europe - was founded at Canterbury. In 2002 a grant from the European Commission was awarded and at this time the Centre became the NCRE. It remains the only EU-dedicated tertiary level centre in New Zealand. Since then, the NCRE has developed significantly in both academic and outreach activities, involving a variety of roles and mechanisms. It has also established an effective form of collaboration with four other New Zealand universities (Auckland, Victoria, Otago and Lincoln) and one Australian university (Melbourne) during this time. Above all, the NCRE has begun the essential process of encouraging and promoting a new generation of New Zealand graduates who have a high level of expertise and interest in the European Union (EU).



The **Delegation of the European Commission in Malaysia** seeks to strengthen existing EU and Malaysia relations. The EU and Malaysia have had strong trade and political ties for many years. The partnership includes projects on environment and education to the promotion of social causes such as human rights and gender equality. At a micro level, the EU collaborates with many partners here, be it the local government, business communities and NGOs towards a common good of the local community.

At the international front, the EU, a 27 member state union is one of the world's biggest traders. It has a web of bilateral and multilateral across the world and its relationship with non member countries such as

Malaysia is crucial as the union recognises the potential of Malaysia as a friendly ally.

In Malaysia, the EU is represented by the European Commission Delegation to Malaysia, the executive arm of the EU