

Meeting of National Coordinators of ASEA-Uninet, Innsbruck, 11-14 October, 1998

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1. Organisational Matters

1.1. New Members

The following Universities have been accepted as new Associate Members, following their written application:

- The University of Oviedo / Spain
- The University of Ioannina / Greece

The following Universities are given the status of Full Members:

- The University of Barcelona / Spain
- Utrecht University / Netherlands
- The University of Middlesex / UK
- Southern Denmark School of Business and Engineering, now University of Southern Denmark
- The University of the Philippines / Manila

The National Coordinators of Thailand and the Philippines have announced that one new application from a University in each country is to be expected soon.

1.2. Discussion of Membership Policy

The National Coordinators unanimously agree to the "***Principle of Balanced Contributions***", according to which partners should contribute to funding of projects performed under ASEA-UNINET in a ratio corresponding to the relation of per capita incomes of the respective countries. Contributions can be made either in kind or cash.

The idea of "***balanced growth***" of the Network is adopted in 2 aspects:

- balance in Members from Europe and South-East Asia
- completeness of coverage of countries in Europe and in South-East Asia

As a first step to achieve balanced growth, the following contacts should be made:

- Utrecht University and Southern Denmark Business School , now University of Southern Denmark, will contact the University of Lund / Sweden and possibly also a University in Finland
- The National Coordinator of Indonesia will contact IT Bandung and IP Bogor
- The Coordinator for Asia will report on the university situation in Laos during the plenary meeting in July 1999.

The following ***criteria for "active membership"*** have been defined:

- participation in meetings
- participation in projects
- payment of membership fees

The possibility of exclusion of a Member from the Network has been considered. In case a Member did not pay the membership fee for one year nor participate in any projects, a letter of reminder would be issued by the Chairman of the Network. If no change is observed after a further year, the subsequent Plenary Meeting of ASEA-UNINET will consider the exclusion of this Member from the Network.

1.3. Budgets / Membership Fees

It was confirmed that the membership fees would be mainly used to support the organisation of Plenary and Intersessional Coordinator Meetings, and that they are at the disposal of the Chairman of the Network for this and other administrative tasks.

The main sources of ASEA-UNINET financing are the autonomous contributions of the Member Universities to projects and budgets given by Government Authorities.

All National Coordinators were encouraged to ask their Governments / Ministries / Authorities for additional financial support for the Network.

2. Focus Areas

2.1 Review of Current Projects

Each University Coordinator should prepare a list of past activities and future plans for the next Plenary Meeting, and the National Coordinators should collect these reports and forward them to the Chairman at the latest one month before the Plenary Meeting.

2.2 Planning of Focus Areas

Focus areas of the future may be designed either according to disciplines or to specific problem areas.

It is suggested that a whole day of the next Plenary Meeting should be devoted to evaluation and planning of focus areas.

3. Presentations by National Coordinators

The University of the Philippines and Utrecht University were presented to the delegates, Southern Denmark School of Business and Engineering announced its merger with the University of Odense.

4. The Economic Situation in South East Asia and the Universities - Possible Support from ASEA-UNINET

The delegates from Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam presented the economic situation of their countries. As an example for the serious impact of the crisis, the changes in currency rates compared with the US-\$ were noted:

	<i>Previous</i>	<i>Present</i>
Indonesia	1:2500	1:10000
Philippines	1:24	1:42
Thailand	1:25	1:40
Vietnam	1:13000	1:14000

Clearly, Indonesia was hit hardest, which resulted in an inflation rate of 75%, high unemployment and large increase in population below the poverty limit. Due to this, there is the danger that thousands of students will drop out from their studies. The Indonesia Student Support Foundation Project of European Companies (refer also to ASEA-UNINET homepage) was mentioned as a good example of immediate help in this situation. A further problem are the Asian students abroad, whose financial support cannot be upheld by their families or sponsoring institutions, and who have to return, therefore, to their home countries.

In general, the Delegates came to the following conclusions:

- broad initiatives are needed to overcome the difficulties for the Universities: education cannot be postponed, even in times of economic crisis
- the Network should try to initiate programmes for helping the partner institutions in Asia and do everything to keep activities going on in this time of difficulties
- EU funding of academic projects in SE Asia seems more than ever crucial for a prosperous development of cooperation

5. ASEA-UNINET and the European Union

5.1 Current Status of EU-ASEAN Projects

The latest information on ASEAN-European Cooperation Programmes of the EC was distributed and discussed. It was felt that the ideas of this paper may lead to unnecessary delays and too bureaucratic procedures.

5.2 Possible Initiatives by ASEA-UNINET Coordinators

Concerning the administrative part of the EU-programme the Delegates, having been informed about the reservations of AUN to recent EC proposals, give the following recommendations:

- The administration of EU-ASEAN University Cooperation Programmes should be performed by an organisation with practical experience in academic exchange programmes, especially those between Europe and Asia
- in establishing guidelines for projects, the Project Coordination Office and the Steering Committee should build on the experience of existing networks between Asian and European academic institutions, with particular regard to a previous record of successful achievement.

Concerning the projects to be performed under the EC-ASEAN University Cooperation Programmes the Delegates have unanimously decided to forward the resolution given in the appendix of this protocol to the EC and to their National Governments.

6. Planning of the Plenary Meeting, July 1999

The Coordinator of the local organising committee for the Plenary Meeting in Vienna reported about the progress of the preparations and the estimated budget requirements. The meeting will be held at different Universities in Vienna in order to give the Delegates an opportunity to see several academic institutions in Austria.

The meeting will be held from July 4 to 7, 1999. It is hoped that all Member Universities will participate, and the Austrian side will make all efforts to support representatives of Asian Universities who cannot find sufficient fundings for travel and accommodation.

7. Press Conference

The media have been informed about ASEA-UNINET, its targets and achievements by the delegates. The results of the National Coordinator Meeting, including the resolution mentioned under 5.2 were also provided to them.