



# EU Insight - EURAXESS 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Conference in ASEAN

In 2015, the European Research Area (ERA) within the EU borders will be completed. Even with this goal in sight, there is still much to do in terms of homogenisation of laws and regulations within the EU and overall improvement of the ERA. In particular, the issue of individual researcher mobility and flexibility within the borders of the European Union, as well as between different research areas, still face some challenges.

In 2015, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), a single regional common market and production base within the ASEAN borders, will be created. However, with the exception of Singapore, ASEAN still faces a number of challenges in the on-going development of ST&I in the region. Amongst others, ASEAN countries are in need of more flexibility and mobility not only within ASEAN's own borders, but with other research areas as well.

In this respect, the EURAXESS 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Conference took place in Singapore and Bangkok, Thailand, on 11 and 13 November 2014, and dealt with linking the EU and ASEAN and promoting the ERA as a successful example of an integrated research area and attractive destination for international researchers.

The questions guiding the discussions were:

- **How can science act as an engine for growth in a globalised world?**
- **How can we improve scientific collaboration and talent mobility between Europe and ASEAN?**
- **How can international networks such as EURAXESS contribute?**

Thailand's Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Pichet Durongkaveroj and the Head of Singapore's A\*STAR Graduate Academy, Professor Alfred Huan both delivered welcome addresses. The EU ambassadors to Singapore and Thailand, Dr Michael Pulch and Jesús Miguel Sanz, welcomed the conference participants and European guests. The ambassadors agreed on the fact that a closer link between the ERA and ASEAN would help both regions to grow. During the opening keynote, European Commission representative Dr Anna Karaoglou explained the efforts of the European Commission to eradicate barriers to researcher mobility with the pan-European "EURAXESS–Researchers in Motion" initiative. Specifically, she also emphasised that:

*[Europe is] open to the world - and definitely open for business to extend the frontiers of scientific knowledge; to tackle challenges that affect us all and to make industries more competitive [...] by opening up, Europe can generate more research excellence.*

Several workshops led by European and Asian experts focused on delivering key skills essential for scientific career advancement. In Singapore, Dr Oliver Kuettel (EPHL) and Massimo Gaudino (European Commission) led the session



on “**How to write a successful proposal for EU funding programmes**”. The presentation can be downloaded [here](#).

Professor Rachid Yazami and Singapore-based Eugene Tan (XentiQ Partners) elaborated on “**How to market your innovation successfully**”, a topic closely linked to the question of scientific communication. Also in Singapore, Dr Sanna Fowler (EPHL) provided insights on “Science Communication”.

It is important for researchers to be able to communicate not only with academia in their respective disciplines, but also with proposal evaluators, funding organisations and the broader public amongst others. To address this issue, Susanne Rentzow-Vasu (EURAXESS Links ASEAN) moderated the session “**Science Communication: How to present your innovative ideas successfully**”, in Thailand. And as a way of going one step further in helping researchers expand their research beyond the walls of academia, the EURAXESS Science Slam finals were held following the conference in Thailand. This event encourages young researchers to use creative methods to make their research accessible for non-academic audiences, thus showcasing an interesting and innovative example of science communication.

The discussion on “Meet European Industry: Career Opportunities for Young Researchers”, was dedicated to providing young researchers with the opportunity to learn about the requirements of industry in terms of research personnel, and how the research environment in the private sector differs from that of academia.

Moderator Chadamas Thuvasethakul from the National Science and Technology Development Agency addressed the question “**How to Increase ASEAN-EU Researcher Mobility**” in Thailand. In addition to the Marie Skłodowska Curie Action, the ASEAN Talent Mobility (ATM) Program and EURAXESS Links were discussed as opportunities to improve mobility between the two research areas.

Kitty Fehringer (European Commission) chaired the session on “Discover Europe: Funding and Fellowship Opportunities for ASEAN Researchers”. Grantees from the Marie Skłodowska Curie Action, European Research Council and members of EURAXESS discussed current and future funding opportunities available, as the number of researchers from ASEAN benefiting from European funding and mobility programs has room to increase. The unique services provided by EURAXESS cater to researchers’ needs at all stages of their career including jobs, funding and fellowship search, and offer a network of service centres to facilitate a move to Europe. After summarising the conference results, the organizers provided the possibility of networking during a reception.

For more information on the conference and the EURAXESS Links ASEAN Science Slam Finals, please visit: [EURAXESS Links ASEAN website](#).