

EUClasia

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Message



The European Union (EU) has been supporting the set-up of EU Centres / Institutes in the Asia-Pacific as part of its public diplomacy strategy. These EU Centres / Institutes have helped generate greater awareness and

knowledge of the EU through education, research, academic links and outreach activities.

Representatives from the EU Centres and Institutes from Asia met informally in Madrid in April 2010 on the sidelines of the EU Centres World Meeting to discuss ways to strengthen collaboration. Since then, a few more meetings have taken place, and the Centres and Institutes are committed to growing the regional partnership.

As one of the initiatives to develop a habit of cooperation and to strengthen our ties, the EU Centre in Singapore is launching the EUCl Asia Regional Newsletter to highlight and showcase

some of our common activities. With the support of all our regional partners, we also hope that this newsletter will further promote and enhance visibility of all the Centres and Institutes and reflect the tremendous efforts and work that the staffs of these Centres and Institutes put in to raise knowledge about the European Union (EU) and its relevance to our region.

Through the regular sharing of information and experiences of working together, the various Centres and Institutes will also learn from each other, harness each other's strengths and encourage more exchange among young people in Asia with interest in furthering their studies and research on the EU.

We hope you will enjoy this newsletter and welcome any feedback and suggestions to make it more informative, interesting and intellectually stimulating!

Dr Yeo Lay Hwee
Director, EU Centre in Singapore

New EU Centres / Institutes in Asia

EU Institute in Japan, Kyushu (EUIJ-Kyushu)
Opening Ceremony
Nishitetsu Grand Hotel, Fukuoka
26 April 2011

The EUIJ-Kyushu is an academic institute comprising faculty and staff from three universities in Fukuoka, Japan — Kyushu University, Seinan Gakuin University, and Fukuoka Women's University — and supported by the European Union. Affiliates of our consortium include the Kyushu Society for EU Studies and l'Institut Franco-Japonais du Kyushu. EUIJ-

Kyushu provides a centre for the coordination of all EU-related activities in the Kyushu region.

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UPCOMING EVENT

**Regional Roundtable on
"Climate Change Action in
the EU and Asia"**
(Climate Change and European Lessons to Asia)

Organised by Yonsei-SERI
EU Centre

30-31 January 2012,
South Korea

More information overleaf

Article**Korea-EU FTA opens door to market with a population of 500 million**

By Prof Young-Ryeol Park

Director, Yonsei-SERI EU Centre

First published in Munhwa Ilbo on 28 April 2011

(translated by Yonsei-SERI EU Centre staff)

The Korea-EU FTA, which opens the largest market ever in Korea's 5000 year history, will improve Korea's competitiveness. The Korea-EU FTA will provide constant access to the 27 nations of the European Union, with over 500 million inhabitants. As the first Asian FTA partner of the EU, Korea will have the opportunity to take up market share before its trading competitors. For Korea, which has a population of 50 million, being able to trade with the EU which has a population of 500 million, is an immense benefit for the highly trade dependent Korean economy. The Korea-EU FTA will lead not only to increased trade between the nations, but to the creation of new jobs, increased foreign direct investment, economies of scale, innovation and technology transfers through cooperation.

The Korea-EU FTA will play an important role in establishing a new competitive structure in the Asian market. The EU has formed 'strategic partnerships' with China, Japan, India, and Korea. China and India will use its large domestic markets to exert significant influences on the global economy. Korea, which has a comparatively small domestic sector, will have to receive support from the European market to compete with China and India.

To gain an edge in this competition, there is a need to strengthen the strategic partnership using the Korea-EU FTA. Furthermore, the US market, with 300 million potential consumers should be utilized as well through the Korea-US FTA. An FTA with the EU provides an opportunity for Korea to compete with large Asian markets and become a pivotal part of the world.

The EU has entered into trade agreements with many nations. However, the FTA with Korea is the first treaty that is so ambitious and comprehensive. It may appear that the Korea-EU concerns only trade and economics, but the Korea-EU partnership can develop to include

political cooperation as well. Korea and the EU can act as strategic partners, resolving global issues such as the financial system and climate change. The Korean role in the global society is increasing, and cooperation with the EU can be a huge support for Korea.

The Korea-EU FTA will not only have positive effects in terms of economic and political cooperation, but also provide an opportunity for Korea to receive the necessary experience in becoming a truly developed nation. Frequent exchanges with Europe will enable Koreans to experience and learn European history and culture. It will also enable us to learn from the diversity of European society, and the art of communication that makes this diversity possible. Social systems such as the European welfare model will present a path for Korea to become an advanced society.

The Korea-EU FTA will be the starting point for a partnership between Korea and the EU in various sectors such as economics, politics, society, and culture. Preparations should be made in multiple areas to carry on the Korea-EU strategic partnership constructively.

[Click here to read the original article in Korean](#)

Yonsei-SERI EU Centre: upcoming event

Regional Roundtable on

"Climate Change Action in the EU and Asia"

(Climate Change and European Lessons to Asia)

30-31 January 2012, South Korea

Outline

- The 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen once again failed to achieve a satisfying consensus on how to counter climate change
- What should the roles of the EU and Asia be regarding climate change, and how should cooperation take place?

If you are interested in attending this Roundtable, please contact the Yonsei-SERI EU Centre (eucenter@yonsei.ac.kr, 82-2-2123-8157, Dr Joo Hyun GO) by 1 September 2011.

The Yonsei-SERI Centre is able to provide three nights of accommodation and daily stipends in Korea for a maximum of 3 participants per EU Centre.

Pusan National University (PNU) EU Centre: events on Korea-EU FTA

Baltic International Symposium

The PNU EU Center and the Language & Culture Education Institute Promotions Committee convened the '1st Baltic International Symposium 2011' on 14 January 2011, aimed at discussing the Korea-EU FTA, introduce the Baltic states and to map the direction for development of Korean-Baltic relations.



The Center invited professors and experts from the Baltic states (specifically Lithuania and Estonia), the Director General for Korea-EU FTA Negotiations Bureau from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and professional guests related to the EU including the Baltic states.

EU Business Workshop

The EU Business Workshop is regularly organised to discuss EU related issues with organisations concerned.



The EU Business Workshop was held on 6 May 2011 at the Sangnam International House, PNU. At the workshop, Mr Park Hyo-Cheol (Small & medium Business Corporation (SBC)) gave a presentation on the supporting policy for small and medium enterprises. This workshop also provided opportunities to share business ideas and information for export business related to the Korea-EU FTA.

New Publications

“The EU-Korea FTA and its Implications for the Future EU-Singapore FTA”

By Anne Pollet-Fort

Associate Fellow, EU Centre in Singapore

The EU Centre in Singapore has published a background brief which takes an in-depth look at the EU-Korea FTA – the first the EU has concluded in Asia. Could the EU-Korea FTA be a benchmark for the FTA currently being negotiated between the EU and Singapore? What might the forthcoming EU-Singapore FTA look like? Would the EU-Singapore FTA in turn provide a point of reference for the EU's FTA negotiations with other ASEAN nations?

[Download the background brief](#)

“The Remarking of the Euro: Changes to the Economic Mode of Governance of the Eurozone – Does the Euro have a Future?”

By Prof Kurt Huebner

Visiting Fellow, EU Centre in Singapore (April 2011)

Professor of European Studies, University of British Columbia

This policy brief discusses the reasons behind the sovereign debt crisis and the policies that will impact the future of the eurozone. It also looks at how the financial architecture of the eurozone is being rebuilt and what else needs to be done to see the eurozone returning to growth and stability.

[Download the policy brief](#)

Report: Regional Roundtable on 'EU-Asia Strategic Partnership – Form and Substance'

The EU Centre in Singapore organised a regional roundtable on 21-22 January 2011, where distinguished academics, policymakers and experts from both continents gathered to take stock of EU-Asia relations.

The report on the proceedings of the roundtable has now been published. It records the presentations and discussions of the roundtable participants, on topics from foreign policy to free trade agreements to educational exchanges. Recommendations were made as to how EU-Asia partnership could be further strengthened, for the benefit of all stakeholders.

[Download the report](#)

Commentary

A 'lost generation' fights back

By Timothy Misir
*Policy & Programme Executive,
EU Centre in Singapore*



A wave of civic protests is sweeping across the EU, one that is largely composed of the young, educated and unemployed. Known as the 'lost generation', these European youths have come of age at a time of social and economic upheaval and are disillusioned with their prospects for the future with the dearth of job opportunities, and feel abandoned by the political establishment. Though many of them are highly educated, many are working in positions for which they are overqualified and underpaid, while at the same time, many others are prevented from entering higher

education due to cuts in public spending that have affected education in many European countries.¹ Austerity measures mean that public spending has to be reeled in, and with government funds being channelled elsewhere, cuts in spending had to be made – education was particularly hit. So were spending in health and other social services.

The youths are particularly affected by the effects of the global financial crisis and the sovereign debt crisis in the EU, with significant social consequences tied to long-term youth unemployment. The unemployment rate in the EU-27 stands at 9.4 per cent. The youth unemployment rate (16-24 years of age) however, stands at 19.6 per cent. Greece (36.1 per cent) and Lithuania (34.1 per cent) have very high youth unemployment rates, but the worst can be found in Spain (44.4 per cent).² Just five years ago, the youth unemployment rate stood at 26 per cent in Greece, 19.7 per cent in Spain, and 15.7 per cent in Lithuania.³

Early school leavers account for only 14.4 per cent in the EU-27,⁴ but while higher education might provide an advantage to job-seekers entering the labour market, European economies are in a bad shape, and educational qualifications are no longer a guarantee of a job upon graduation. The crisis has made finding a job all the more difficult and there is a lack of opportunities for those entering the job market. The growing ageing population and the trend of increasing retirement age to delay the withdrawal of pensions further compound the problems.

Many youths are turning to apprenticeships and trades, favouring employment over further education. There has also been a proliferation of internships and temporary contracts, but in the current economic climate many seem willing to work for less. These positions are taken up by those unable to find a permanent job upon graduation. Employers have no obligations to workers on these temporary contracts and during an economic downturn or recession, they are the first ones laid-off. Furthermore, in most cases, employers are not obliged to contribute to pension funds and provide health insurance to individuals on such contracts.⁵

Increasingly disillusioned with the state of affairs, they are starting to make their voices heard across the continent. Madrid, Paris, Lisbon, Athens and London

have been the sites of the largest protests led by students, but smaller demonstrations have been taking place in Rome, Berlin and other cities, feeding off the energy and debates generated by the larger demonstrations. They are adamant that their voices be heard by the political elite as they took to the streets calling for change. Europe has not seen such high levels of involvement and solidarity among the youth since 1968, and through the use of social and alternative media, a movement that transcends borders is developing.

The surge in youth activism has been credited to the popularity of the publication "*Indignez-vous!*" ("Be Outraged"), a 32-page pamphlet by 93 year-old war veteran and co-drafter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Stéphane Hessel.⁶ A resistance fighter who once escaped the Nazi concentration camp at Buchenwald, he is now leading the resistance of the current generation, giving the lost generation hope once again with his pamphlet. He has tapped into public sentiment and his pamphlet provided impetus for an EU-wide movement in calling for social justice and the younger generation to end their indifference through non-violent action and solidarity. Published in France in 2010, it has since sold over 1.5 million copies and has been translated into 9 languages, with others planned.

The previous generation of political leaders in member states across the EU have been overwhelmingly rejected in recent national elections, but the new leaders are in a tough position in addressing this situation as European economies are not diverse enough or growing fast enough or to accommodate growing numbers of graduates. There is also a feeling among many that citizens are treated as mere economic digits in the pursuit of economic growth, and that the social dimension has been neglected. There is a feeling that this generation of youth has to pay for the excesses the generation before, and that most will never get to enjoy the prosperity the older generation did. They feel that their political leaders can do little in an environment dominated by unbridled capitalism. Alienated and abandoned by the political system, taking to the streets is the only way their voices can be heard.

How will this transnational solidarity across the EU evolve, and what changes can be expected as this lost

generation make their voices heard? Would a new social compact be forged as the youths fight back, and what is the way forward for the EU and its citizens?

References

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- 3 European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs & Equal Opportunities) Employment in Europe 2006.
- 4 European Commission Early School Leavers: Questions and Answers (Memo/11/52, 2011). Early school leavers are defined by the EU as "people aged 18-24 who have only lower secondary education or less and are no longer in education or training".
- 5 Perlin, Ross. *Intern Nation* (New York: Verso, 2011) & *Comparative Perspectives Database Working Paper Series* at the Gender and Work Database (<http://www.genderwork.ca/cpdworkingpapers/>) for individual case studies of precarious employment and vulnerable workers in Sweden, Germany, France, Ireland, UK and the Netherlands.
- 6 Hessel, Stéphane. *Indignez-Vous!* (Montpellier: Indigene, 2010). English translation: "Time for Outrage" in *The Nation*, 7-14 Mar 2011.

2011 Workshop on EU Studies

Organised by the EU Centre in Taiwan (EUTW) on 22-23 February, the 2011 Workshop on EU Studies was held at the Barry Lam Hall, National Taiwan University, Taipei. Over the course of the two days, graduate students and young researchers, based in Taiwan, Japan, South Korea and Singapore, had the opportunity to present their work and have them discussed by distinguished academics and experts in EU affairs. The topics on the future of European integration and the EU-Asia relations provided for enriching and invigorating exchanges among the workshop participants.



New EU Centres in Asia

(continued from page 1)

The goal of the EU Institute in Japan, Kyushu is to develop a sustainable, high quality, and cost-effective platform that brings together and builds upon existing expertise to promote EU Studies and disseminate information about the EU in the Kyushu region.

The Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to Japan, His Excellency Hans Dietmar Schweisgut, and the President of Kyushu University and the EUJ-Kyushu Consortium Representative, Setsuo Arikawa, welcomed over 150 distinguished guests from the EU, Tokyo, Kobe, and Fukuoka.



Prof Machiko Hachiya speaks at the opening ceremony of her new institute.

Their opening remarks contributed to an atmosphere of excitement and anticipation at the prospect of further strengthening relations and understanding between the EU and Japan in the Kyushu region.

Congratulatory remarks from a number of distinguished guests, from both the EU and Japan, followed. Professor Machiko Hachiya, Director of EUIJ-Kyushu, spoke next of the role EUIJ-Kyushu will play within the consortium, as well as within the wider scope of the EU Institutes in Japan. She thanked those who supported the formation of EUIJ-Kyushu and those who will work in the coming years toward the institute's mission.

Tisato Kajiyama, President of Fukuoka Women's University and Takayoshi Takei, Vice President of Seinan Gakuin University, opened a reception luncheon by underscoring the messages of hope for continued learning from and collaboration between the EU and Japan.



Editor's note: This year has also seen the opening of two other new EU Centres in Asia – the **Yeungnam University EU Centre** and the **EU Centre at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies**, both in South Korea.

EU Centres / Institutes in Asia:



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European Union Centre in Singapore :: 11 Slim Barracks Rise, #06-01 Executive Centre, NTU@one-north campus, Singapore 138664
Phone: (+65) 6513 2007 Fax: (+65) 6774 1445 :: Website: www.eucentre.sg