



EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORT TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE ASEAN REGION

SHARE Project Management Office

ASEAN Secretariat | 70A Jl. Sisingamangaraja | Jakarta 12110 | Indonesia
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TERMS OF REFERENCE

Call for Applications

“Graduate Employability in ASEAN – the Contribution of Student Mobility” Research Report

About SHARE

The Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region (SHARE) Programme is the European Union’s flagship higher education programme with ASEAN. The SHARE Programme has been in operation since 2015. An agreement between the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat has extended the Programme up to the end of December 2022. The SHARE Extension will see the programme continue its support of the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN stakeholders to enable greater harmonisation and internationalisation of ASEAN higher education. A central aim of the SHARE Programme Extension is to catalyse the transfer of ownership of programme outcomes to ASEAN entities and nominated organisations to be embedded within sustainable ASEAN-led structures and processes.

The SHARE Consortium is comprised of the British Council, the DAAD, ENQA, and Nuffic and is implemented in three components: Policy Dialogue, Qualifications Frameworks and Quality Assurance, Credit-bearing Student Mobility and Scholarships.

Coordinated by the DAAD and ENQA, Result Area 2 aims at strengthening and disseminating ASEAN higher education frameworks on qualifications and quality assurance. In this context, the DAAD is conducting a study on the state of Graduate Employability in ASEAN and the Contribution of Student Mobility.



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Background

Recent evidence from a study conducted in Germany suggests that study abroad experiences contribute significantly to employment and career perspectives of graduates.¹ Employers value certain skills that are obtained while studying abroad. Other recent studies in Europe have come to similar conclusions.² Considering that the labour market and socio-economic fabric in ASEAN differ significantly to Europe, it is important to analyse whether it can be expected that a large-scale intra-ASEAN student mobility programme (credit mobility, internships, service learning) would achieve similar outcomes. Recently, mobility initiatives such as SEAMEO-RIHED's AIMS (Asian International Mobility for Students Programme), the AUN mobility programme (ASEAN University Network), and the SHARE Scholarship have contributed significantly to the idea of promoting intra-ASEAN student mobility. Against the backdrop of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025), it is crucial to further develop these initiatives. This should be accompanied by an impact assessment of study abroad experiences on graduate employability and evidence-based policy making.

Research question and objectives of the study

To address the aforementioned questions, the proposed main research question of the study is:

How do intra-ASEAN study abroad experiences equip graduates with the key capabilities valued by organisations in ASEAN?

By answering this research question, the study intends to accomplish the following objectives:

- Contribute to the emerging body of knowledge on the impact of intra-ASEAN student mobility;
- Prepare the ground for further, quantitative research by exploring the current status quo of graduate employability following intra-ASEAN mobility periods;
- Assess the essential skills and capabilities needed for the contemporary graduate employment market in ASEAN and match these with the evidence base of the student mobility impact³ for a relevant selection of disciplines and ASEAN countries as described below (i.e. using samples and an adequate selection of cases);
- Enable policy learning by providing case studies.

¹ [Die Bedeutung von Auslandserfahrung für den Karriereerfolg von Hochschulabsolventen auf dem deutschen Arbeitsmarkt](#), National Agency for EU Cooperation Programmes, November 2020 (German only, with English summary).

² The Erasmus Impact Study, 2017. [The Erasmus impact study - Publications Office of the EU \(europa.eu\)](#); Petzold 2020: Heterogeneous effects of graduates' international mobility on employers' hiring intentions—experimental evidence from Germany; Waibel et al. 2017: Career consequences of transnational educational mobility: A systematic literature review; Waibel et al. 2018: Occupational status benefits of studying abroad and the role of occupational specificity – A propensity score matching approach.

³ see also Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025), p. 32 (“Chapter 3 – Trends Likely to Impact ASEAN Connectivity 2025 / F - The Skills Challenge”).



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Delivery of the study

This exploratory qualitative study will be conducted together with an ASEAN-based team of researchers from an ASEAN research institution identified through this Call for Applications. The research team will consist of a lead researcher/expert and a maximum of four supporting researchers/experts. Following the launch of a public call for applications, submitted proposals will be evaluated as part of the selection process.

Expected output

The expected output of this assignment will be a research report of approximately 40-60 pages length (excluding annexes) addressing the abovementioned objectives. The scope of the assignment includes the following:

- Conducting desk research and a literature review on the impact of student mobility on graduate employability;
- Providing an overview of current student mobility patterns and labour market mobility for skilled labour in ASEAN for selected disciplines and ASEAN countries;
- Proposing an appropriate methodological research design that considers variations between scientific disciplines and includes as minimal requirement:
 - a balanced selection of at least 4 (four) ASEAN countries⁴, of which:
 - a minimum of 2 (two) are from the ASEAN-6 country group (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand), and
 - at least 1 (one) is from the CLMV country group (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam);
 - a selection of 3 (three) industry sectors from which the business interviewees should be selected (suggested: Technology, engineering, tourism & hospitality, management & business⁵);
 - conduct a minimum of 5 (five) qualitative interviews per selected ASEAN country with business leaders and Human Resource Professionals, business chambers, Think Tanks and/or CSOs on the skills and capabilities required by the current labour market;
 - conduct a minimum of 10 (ten) qualitative interviews with alumni of student mobility programmes (AIMS, AUN, SHARE, etc.) and their current employers on the skills gained through student mobility (students alumni should represent a diverse group that can serve as a valid sample of mobility programmes, countries, and student experiences);

⁴ The following categories for selection of ASEAN countries remain tentative. Applicants are invited to propose their suggestions for selection of ASEAN countries, as well as justification of the selection in their research proposal.

⁵ This is a tentative selection of scientific disciplines/industry sectors. Applicants are invited to suggest a selection of scientific disciplines and/or industry sectors, as well as a justification of the selection in their research proposal.



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- drafting success stories / case studies (if possible, one per selected ASEAN member state) on the impact of a student mobility phase on the career track.

The report should contain an executive summary, literature review, a detailed explanation of the methodology applied, an analysis of the interview results from the selected countries and case studies (one case study per selected ASEAN country) along with medium- and long-term conclusions as well as policy recommendations.

Expected qualifications and requirements of the research team

- 1) One Lead Researcher with the following criteria:
 - Residing in ASEAN or ASEAN national;
 - An academic (Professor/Lecturer/Researcher), preferably with a specialisation in Economics (especially but not limited to Labour Economics), Education, Sociology, Public Policy, and other related areas;
 - PhD or equivalent qualification (essential);
 - Demonstrated research expertise through relevant publications and/or projects;
 - An established network of professional contacts in the field in ASEAN.
- 2) Supporting Expert(s) with the following qualifications:
 - Master's degree or higher in Economics (especially but not limited to Labour Economics) or Education, Sociology, Public Policy and other areas related to the research;
 - Relevant knowledge and prior research/project experience on the topic;
 - In addition to the lead researcher, a maximum of four supporting experts/researchers can participate in the research.

Provisional timeline

The study is expected to be delivered between August 2021 – August 2022, with the publication of results foreseen in October 2022 at the latest. The expected delivery period will be twelve months starting from the time of the assignment. The exact timeline will be agreed between the research team and SHARE before the start of the research. Please see the indicative timeline on the following page.



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Selection of proposals

The proposals will be evaluated based on the documents submitted by the applying research team, including the following:

- Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the Lead Expert/Researcher indicating that eligibility criteria are fulfilled;
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) of each Supporting Expert(s)/Junior Researcher(s)/Research Assistant(s) indicating that eligibility criteria are fulfilled;
- A comprehensive proposal to address the expected outputs as further listed above, comprising of:
 - (1) A description of the research design and methodology, including potential ethical issues/anticipated difficulties related to data collection;
 - (2) Preliminary bibliography for literature review (if available);
 - (3) Proposed work plan & timeline, including an indicative date for the start of the research, and
 - (4) Detailed cost breakdown (incl. daily expert rates).

The distribution of points for the evaluation of the proposals are specified in the table below.

Composition	Item of Evaluation	Weight
Researcher Profiles	Researcher CVs	30%
	Evidence from previous relevant projects	
Cost Efficiency	Submitted budget (cost breakdown)	20%
Research Proposal	Research design	50%
	Bibliography	
	Feasibility of the work plan	
Total Score		100%

Transferred Deliverables

All documents and other materials produced resulting from these terms of reference including but not limited to strategies, reports, application forms, report forms etc. are transferred deliverables and ownership of intellectual property rights is to be assigned to the SHARE Programme without exception. The results, however, can be used for further research in order to contribute to the publicly available body of knowledge.



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How to Apply

Interested applicants should apply as a research team comprising 1 (one) Lead Researcher and up to 4 (four) Supporting Researchers.

Please send your application (comprising Research Proposal addressing criteria specified above and Curriculum Vitae of each member of the applying research team, combined in one PDF) to share@daad.de.

The deadline for the submission of applications is **Sunday, 11th of July 2021**.



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ANNEX I

“Graduate Employability in ASEAN – The Contribution of Student Mobility” in the context of the previous SHARE studies in support of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025

The study “Graduate Employability in ASEAN – The Contribution of Student Mobility” intends to support the implementation of Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025), specifically on the Strategic Objective for People Mobility - Initiative 15 (Support higher education exchange across ASEAN Member States), with regards to the following key implementing measures:

“Key Implementing Measure 9 – Develop and create alumni network of students that are associated with the EU scholarship (including expanding alumni network to other scholarship programmes for higher students by identifying student ambassadors in ASEAN Member States)”⁶

“Key Implementing Measure 10 – Partner with the private sector to create internship opportunities for scholarship students and students associated with the alumni networks”⁷

The results of the study may become a baseline for reference in the establishment of future intra-ASEAN internship, alumni, and student ambassador programmes. As a prospective study, it may also contribute to the assessment of desirability for such programmes, both for students and employers. This study will be exploring employability factors specifically linked to mobility, potentially identifying the role of a network of (an) alumni of intra-ASEAN mobility scheme(s) in helping graduates acquire higher credibility in the eyes of employers. Through interviews with businesses and human resources professionals, the study may also contribute to a needs-assessment for employers in the region.

The proposed study will also contribute to the successful implementation of ASEAN Education Workplan 2021-2025, particularly on the establishment of the ASEAN Branded Scholarship (Activity 3.2.4) through incentivising the engagement of the private sector and dialogue partners, contributing to the establishment of a Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) mechanism to track the efficacy of mobility scholarships. This study may also support the promotion of inter and intra-regional student exchange programmes (Activity 3.2.7), particularly through provision of lessons learned from existing student mobility programmes.

Results and recommendations from the previous [Study on Enhancing Intra-ASEAN University Student Mobility](#) on data collection, ASEAN student mobility visa and Single Branded Scholarship (SBS) will be taken into account as a reference point to look into the value of mobility with regard to graduate employability. The proposed study may thus further incentivise Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the ASEAN region to collect and analyse student and alumni mobility data, identify visa barriers and implications in the process of employability, as well as potentially identify the role of internships and alumni networks in graduate employability. There is an opportunity to create a cohesive bridge from university education to employment in the ASEAN region.

⁶ MPAC 2025, p. 111 (“Appendix D – Work Plan for the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 – Initiative 15 ‘Support higher education exchange across ASEAN Member States’”)

⁷ Ibid.