



Funded by the European Union



Name of Action	EU-ASEAN Sustainable Connectivity Package Higher Education (SCOPE-HE)
Commissioned by	European Union (EU)
Approved by	Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
Implementer	Nuffic – The Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education
Implementing Partner	DAAD – German Academic Exchange Service
Programme Region	EU and ASEAN Member States
Duration	February 2024 – January 2028
Value	EUR 9.300.000



The EU Ambassador to ASEAN and the ASEAN Secretary-General at the launch of SCOPE-HE.

## Context

Higher education plays a pivotal role in strengthening sustainable connectivity between the EU and ASEAN by fostering people-to-people links, advancing skills development, driving innovation, and supporting long-term socio-economic resilience.

ASEAN is entering a new phase of regional cooperation, with renewed policy priorities in education, connectivity, and sustainable development. As the region moves towards a more integrated and inclusive Higher Education Space, the need to enhance cooperation, mobility, and institutional capacity across ASEAN and between ASEAN and the EU is becoming increasingly important.

At the same time, higher education systems in Southeast Asia continue to face challenges related to accessibility, inclusivity, quality assurance, skills relevance, and alignment with labour market needs. Addressing these challenges requires inclusive and structured dialogue, trusted partnerships, and coordinated action that links policy development with practical implementation.

Within this evolving regional context, SCOPE-HE supports ASEAN and EU stakeholders in translating shared policy priorities into concrete cooperation in higher education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and research – fully aligned with the EU Global Gateway approach to sustainable and inclusive connectivity.

## Objective

The SCOPE-HE programme is a key component of the EU-ASEAN Sustainable Connectivity Package under the Global Gateway initiative. Its overall objective is to strengthen sustainable connectivity between the EU and ASEAN, as well as within ASEAN itself.

More specifically, the programme aims to increase exchanges and people-to-people connections in higher education, TVET, and research, with a strong focus on gender equality, women’s empowerment, and the development of digital and green skills.

Through its activities, SCOPE-HE contributes to long-term human capital development, fosters innovation, and promotes deeper regional integration.

## SDG Linkages

The programme contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by advancing the achievement of its goals of inclusive and equitable education, promoting gender equality, enhancing employability and skills development, fostering research and innovation, and supporting education and research that drive the green transition, sustainability, and the blue economy.

## Approach

The SCOPE-HE Programme is implemented through three interconnected Result Areas:

### Result Area 1: Strengthened Student and Academic Mobility

SCOPE-HE supports the strengthening of student and academic mobility in line with relevant ASEAN strategies and action plans. The programme facilitates dialogue, consensus-building, and collaboration among key ASEAN and EU institutions to advance the development and implementation of regional and inter-regional mobility frameworks. Activities focus on the mutual recognition of qualifications and academic credits, the comparability of reference systems between ASEAN and EU frameworks, and capacity building for Higher Education Institutions and relevant ASEAN bodies. These efforts complement existing initiatives, including Erasmus+, and contribute to increased mobility both within ASEAN and between ASEAN and the EU.

### Result Area 2: Stronger EU-ASEAN Higher Education Institution (HEI) Clusters

SCOPE-HE strengthens EU-ASEAN cross-regional Higher Education Institution (HEI) clusters to jointly address global challenges through enhanced research cooperation and technological connectivity. Through the Global Gateway investment in research systems addressing global challenges, structured partnerships are emerging among HEIs from the EU and ASEAN. These partnerships foster collaborative research, knowledge exchange, and innovation in priority thematic areas such as the green transition, digital transformation, and the blue economy. Together, these efforts advance sustainable development and reinforce EU-ASEAN cooperation in higher education and research.

### Result Area 3: Stronger Regional ASEAN Network of TVET and Businesses

SCOPE-HE supports the strengthening of the ASEAN regional network of TVET institutions and businesses, with a focus on the green transition, sustainability, and digital transformation. Under the Global Gateway priority on vocational training, SCOPE-HE's activities align TVET provision with labour market needs, enhance skills development and employability, and promote collaboration between education institutions, industry, and the private sector. Particular attention is given to inclusivity, the creation of digital learning ecosystems, and the advancement of green and digital skills.



## Expected Results

- ✓ Strengthened student and academic mobility in line with relevant ASEAN strategies and action plans.
- ✓ Stronger EU-ASEAN cross-regional Higher Education Institution (HEI) clusters to jointly address global challenges through research and technological connectivity.
- ✓ Stronger ASEAN regional network of Vocational Education Institutions and businesses, focusing on the green transition, sustainability, and digital transformation.



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