



2014 ERI-Net Annual Meeting
26-28 November 2014, Hangzhou, China

Concept Note

The Education Research Institutes Network in the Asia-Pacific (ERI-Net), established in 2009 by UNESCO Bangkok, Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, aims to encourage and facilitate regional collaboration among education research institutions in conducting research work on education issues that are particularly pertinent to the Asia-Pacific region.

Since 2009, the network has facilitated knowledge generation and dissemination primarily in the fields of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education. In line with ERI-Net's inaugural statement to gradually expand its scope of research beyond TVET and higher education, a decision was made in the 2012 ERI-Net annual meeting to promote collaborative research for the entire education system.

With the decision in 2012 and establishment of the ERI-Net Steering Group in 2013, ERI-Net aims to become sector-wide, strategic and visible in its activities. In early 2014, ERI-Net held its second steering group meeting and expert meeting to finalise the research frameworks of two main studies and discuss the future activities of ERI-Net studies.

The two research topics agreed for 2014 are: (1) Integrating Transversal Competencies in Education Policy and Practice (Phase II) and (2) Academic Promotion of Higher Education Teaching Personnel. For the 2014 ERI-Net research study, several institutes have been providing their technical and financial support based on their respective interests. These partners include the Government of Malaysia, Tokyo Institute of Technology with support from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan, Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE), and Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI).

Based on the research frameworks which were finalized in early 2014, UNESCO Bangkok is organising the 2014 ERI-Net annual meeting from 26 to 28 November 2014 in Hangzhou, China with the generous support of Zhejiang University, this year's host. The meeting aims to share preliminary findings of the case studies conducted by participating institutions with a view to finalise the case study reports by the end of this year. The background notes of the research are briefly presented as follows.

Theme I: Integrating Transversal Competencies in Education Policy and Practice (Phase II)

Many countries in the Asia-Pacific region are increasingly emphasizing the importance of integrating the formation of transversal competencies in schools in order to help develop students in a more holistic manner. This issue is particularly relevant in the Asia-Pacific region where many education systems have been focusing on the acquisition of knowledge and academic skills. This bias towards knowledge and academic skills is expressed in the strong focus on high-stake exams and the academic performance of some countries in international assessments. It is within this context that UNESCO Bangkok's ERI-Net

launched a regional study on “Integrating Transversal Skills in Education Policy and Practice” in 2012. The first phase of the study focused on a broad picture of how countries in the Asia-Pacific region define and integrate the concept of transversal competencies in their education policies and curriculum frameworks. Ten countries and economies¹ participated in Phase I of the study and preliminary findings were shared at the 2013 ERI-Net annual meeting (17-19 October, 2013).

The research participants agreed that, while there is considerable variation among the countries/economies, integration of transversal competencies is seen as critical and important in their recent education reforms. Such reforms are driven by different factors including economic (e.g., improving employability of the students), social (e.g., reducing academic pressures), and humanitarian (e.g., improving character development).

During the 2013 ERI-Net annual meeting, participants discussed the research direction of Phase II. Participants expressed the need to identify ‘what is happening in the classroom’, since many case studies in Phase I revealed a gap between education policies that promote integration of transversal competencies, and what is actually taking place in school. Exploring this research area was seen as important in building a solid knowledge-base on this relatively ‘young’ topic that can inform international debate.

Theme II: Academic Promotion of Higher Education Teaching Personnel

A fair, transparent, comprehensive and merit-based system of academic promotion of higher education teaching personnel is the hallmark of good governance in higher education. Within the Asia-Pacific region, however, academic promotion of higher education teaching personnel is a topic that has not yet received significant attention in terms of research and analysis.

The 1997 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel describes the importance of a fair system of career development to advance scholarship and attract a corps of talented and highly qualified teaching professionals. In particular, it states that academic personnel should enjoy a just and transparent system of career development. This includes clear procedures for appointment, tenure where applicable, promotion, dismissal, and an effective system of labour relations. The supporting guidelines are important given uncertainty about mechanisms to enhance the status of higher education teaching personnel²

With these issues and fundamental priorities in mind, the ERI-Net members agreed to focus on academic promotion as one of the 2014 research topics. For this research study, the term ‘higher education teaching personnel’ is taken to mean ‘all those persons in institutions or programmes of higher education who are engaged to teach and/or to undertake scholarship and/or to undertake research and/or to provide educational services to students or to the community at large’, as defined in Article I.1 (f) of the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel. While continuing to monitor the applications of the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation by its Member States, UNESCO Bangkok will also take stock of existing policies and mechanisms so that a more

¹ Australia, Hong Kong (SAR, China), India, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Shanghai (China) and Thailand

² Joint ILO–UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (Geneva, 2012)

complete picture can be consolidated at the regional level, contributing to the development of a technical document to the benefit of all Member States in this region.

Objective of the meeting

1. Share the main findings of the case studies on the two 2014 ERI-Net research studies;
2. Discuss and finalise topics for the 2015 ERI-Net research study.

Expected outcomes

1. Case study reports presented and commented upon for the purposes of further revision;
2. Follow-up activities to finalise the case study reports;
3. Topics for 2015 ERI-Net research study finalised.

Participants

Approximately 25 researchers from 12 countries and 5 UNESCO staff

Provisional Programme

Day 1

- Opening and welcome remarks
- Session I: Presentations of case studies on 'Integrating Transversal Competencies in Education Policy and Practice (Phase II)' (Q&A after each presentation)
- Plenary discussion on policy recommendations
- Wrap-up of Day 1

Day 2

- Session II: Presentations of case studies on 'Academic Promotion of Higher Education Teaching Personnel' (Q&A after each presentation)
- Plenary discussion on policy recommendations
- Wrap-up of Day 2

Day 3

- Plenary discussion on potential topics for ERI-Net research studies in 2015
- Closing remarks

For further information about the meeting, please contact:

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List of researchers

Integrating transversal competencies in education policy and practice (Phase II)

Country	Institute	Researcher
Australia	Flinders University	Martin Westwell
India	Learning Links Foundation	Deepika Sharma
Japan	Tokyo Institute of Technology	Shinobu Yume Yamaguchi, Junichi Takada
Malaysia	EPRD, Ministry of Education	Sheela Nair
Mongolia	Institute of Finance and Economics (IFE)	Javzan Sukhbaatar
Philippines	Foundation for Upgrading the Standard of Education (FUSE)	Fe Hidalgo
Republic of Korea	Korea Institute for Curriculum & Evaluation (KICE)	Bokyung Cho, Gunjoo Jang
	Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI)	Ju Hur
Shanghai, China	Shanghai Normal University	Xu Jinjie
Thailand	Dhurakij Pundit University	Paitoon Sinlarat, Janpha Thadphoothon
Vietnam	Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences	Yen Nguyen

Academic Promotion of higher education teaching personnel

Country	Institute	Researcher
Australia	Southern Cross University	Martin Hayden
Cambodia	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport	Leang UN
China	Zhejiang University Xixi Campus	Zhu Huaixin
Hong Kong SAR, China	The University of Hong Kong	Gerard A. Postiglione
India	National University of Educational Planning and Administration	Jandhyala B G Tilak
Indonesia	Andalas University	Helmi
Japan	Osaka University	Taro Mochizuki
Malaysia	Universiti Sains Malaysia	Ahmad Nurulazam Md Zain
	Universiti Malaysia Kelantan	Hj Ibrahim Che Omar
Philippines	SEAMEO INNOTECH	Ethel Agnes Pascua-Valenzuela
Republic of Korea	Korea University	Kiyong Byun
Sri Lanka	Ocean University	Ranjith Senaratne
Thailand	Mahidol University	Nopraenue S. Dhirathiti