

Fact Sheet

to Press Release “Programmes Worth Ten Million Euros Launched to Enhance ASEAN-EU Cooperation”, 15 July 2008

1. EU-ASEAN Statistical Capacity Building Programme €6.000.000

The Programme will support ASEAN integration by facilitating enhanced production of more accurate and relevant statistics for more evidence-based decision-making.

The Programme specifically aims to:

- Improve the capacity of ASEAN Secretariat for the greater comparability of official statistical data among ASEAN Member States as well as between ASEAN and the EU.
- Improve production, compilation, dissemination and use of better quality statistical data on international merchandise trade (IMT), relevant components of international trade in services (ITS) and foreign direct investment (FDI), and on other statistical domains such as non-observed economy (NOE) and selected health and education statistics, as well as to lay down the necessary foundation for the development of ICT and forestry statistics within ASEAN Member States; and
- Strengthen statistical capacity of those ASEAN Member States that need most support, particularly Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam (CLV).

The Programme endeavours to reconcile statistical requirements with policy goals, and suggests actions to be taken at both the regional and national levels in order to improve data quality and achieve greater comparability of ASEAN statistics. The regional action would be spearheaded by an empowered ASEAN Secretariat in terms of enhanced statistical coordination role. The Project is to be aided by the comprehensive participation of the ASEAN national statistical offices and close coordination with relevant international organisations and other national statistical systems. It shall build strongly on past gains and ongoing activities to avoid duplication and thus optimise resources in achieving its objectives.

The Programme emphasises activities that will deliver more comparable and consistent merchandise trade statistics as a core theme. An improved basis for compiling detailed trade information provides a relevant framework for collecting other economic integration policy related statistics, including those that support relevant and congruent strategies of tariff reduction essential to the establishment of the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with external partners of ASEAN.

The expected results are an improved and more comparable national data that are able to feed to regional statistics/indicators, together with a wider dissemination analysis, and use of official statistics within the ASEAN region, particularly of ‘statistical products’ relevant to ASEAN trade and economic integration.

The Commission is now preparing to issue the international tender to hire the technical assistance team. The implementation of the Programme is expected to commence early 2009.

2. EU-ASEAN Migration and Border Management Programme €4.700.000

The overall objective of the Programme is to support the development of a more efficient and coherent Integrated Border Management System (IBMS) at selected main border crossing points in order to facilitate the legal movements of goods and persons, and at the same time, better combat transnational crime, illegal migration and trafficking in human beings.

The Programme shall be a means for ASEAN Member States and the ASEAN Secretariat to access relevant EU experiences and know-how in Regional Border Management (BM), in particular relevant EU Member States' experiences in regional cooperation and the "Schengen acquis".

The proposed intervention seeks to introduce a combination of support to regional cooperation among national agencies coupled with capacity building (training and equipment) at selected pilot border checking points and cooperation between operational units from both sides of the border.

Component 1 will focus on regional coordination, through a series of workshops and study tours with high-ranked officials, while component 3 will focus on operational border management and training of frontline officers in some selected pilot areas. The pilot sites will be identified in consultation with DG ICM¹ and DG Customs, according to the migration flow density. Component 3 will include provision of equipment for which Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam will be given the priority.

To complement components 1 and 3, component 2, which aims to upgrade and extend the I-24/7 network, will be carried out by Interpol with the assistance of the National Central Bureaus of the ASEAN Member States, through the signature of a Standard Contribution Agreement between the Commission and Interpol's General Secretariat.

The main results expected are:

- Strengthened regional institutional network between high-ranked police and customs civil servants, prosecutors and judges;
- Enhanced exchange of information between Interpol National Central Bureaus (NCBs) in the ASEAN capitals and ICPO-Interpol headquarters by extending Interpol capacity and improving regional cooperation; and
- Enhanced capacities of selected pilot Border Crossing Points, through the provision of equipment and training.

Like the previous programme, the Commission is now preparing to issue the international tender to hire the technical assistance team. The implementation of the Programme is expected to commence early 2009.

¹ DG ICM = ASEAN Directors General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of Ministry of Foreign Affairs