

A Survey of the Architecture EU Studies in the Asia-Pacific: New Zealand's comparative performance

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Abstract

*The following survey of the current state of European Union Studies in the Asia-Pacific is in two parts. First, a region-wide perspective is offered that explores the various Networks and Centres that can be found dealing with the EU. This analysis builds on the publication *The Future of European Studies in Asia*.² The second part provides a more focused comparative assessment of EU Studies in New Zealand and the development of the EU Centres Network since 2006.*

Introduction

Complementarity, coherence and cooperation has long been a mantra for European Union policy-making and it would appear, at first glance, that these guiding principles could serve as an appropriate framework for the development of EU Studies outside of the EU's borders. However, these principles have not always found consistent resonance in the development of the institutional architecture that defines EU Studies in the Asia-Pacific region. While constructed around strong individual rationales, the mosaic of groupings that have emerged over the last decade collectively appear to lack an overall coherence. The question is to what extent do these developments exhibit a tendency to confuse complementarity with duplication? Although unintentional, the different funding authorities involved may inevitably promote a somewhat myopic perception of the wider context and the multitude of European players involved in the academic study of contemporary Europe. Such a potentially dysfunctional situation has only been rescued by a desire and commitment of each of these autonomous bodies

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² M. Holland, J. Silviu and P. Ryan (2008) *The Future of European Studies in Asia*, ESIA/ Asia-Europe Foundation, Singapore.

to seek cooperation and to identify both best practice and comparative advantage.

The European Union would not be the European Union without its acronyms - and the same logic holds for the organisation of EU Studies in the Asia-Pacific (although at least in the Asia-Pacific these acronyms follow the *lingua franca* of English and not the 23 official languages of the Union itself!). A preferred acronym could be 'NESCA', 'EUSA-AP', 'ECSA-WORLD' or 'ESiA' (depending upon the geographical, disciplinary or pedagogical collective focus) or Action Jean Monnet and RELEX (depending on the funding agency involved). To add a further layer of complexity, successful individual institutional programmes autonomous from these collaborative initiatives also exist in many of the region's member states. This brief survey of the current state of the discipline provides a context and broad description of these interlocking EU universes. The different groups have been categorized according to their primary focus while acknowledging a degree of overlap in activities. Those that are primarily oriented towards a collaborative research project; academic networks; teaching initiatives; and those offering medium-term activities support.

Survey of EU Studies Regionally

1) Collaborative Research Projects: NESCA and ESiA

The Network of European Studies Centres in Asia was a joint initiative by the Institute of European Studies, Macau and the Justus-Liebig-Universitaet Giessen, Germany. Funded through the European Commission FP6 mechanism, the budget for this three-year project was €450,000: NESCA brought together a new consortium of four European and six Asia-Pacific universities for the 2006-8 period dedicated to realising the following objectives: to

- (1) transfer and to disseminate the latest research on issues relevant for Asia to that region's European Studies community, politics, and public;
- (2) transfer Asian research on European Studies in general and on EU-Asian co-operation in particular to the European Research Area, and
- (3) to promote sustainable co-operation between universities and research institutions in the European Research Area and Asia.³

Over the life of the programme the research involved six thematic workshops being convened - in Macau (twice), New Zealand, South Korea, China and Thailand - with a concluding international conference held in November 2008 at the Palais d'Egmont, Brussels. The workshop themes were: EU foreign policy and its impact on Asia; EU identity; EU as a global actor; regional integration in Europe and Asia; the enlarged EU; and, Human Rights and Sustainable Development. Each of these events was designed to produce an

³ See <http://www.ieem.org.mo/nasca/>

edited volume of selected papers published by the German academic publishing house, Nomos.

The European Studies in Asia network launched by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) in 2005 was recognition of, as well as a response to, the need for complementarity, coherence and coordination. ESiA acts as a facilitator forging links and maximising efforts related to European Union Studies. It is an inter-disciplinary initiative open to any institution in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) countries involved with European Union studies for research, teaching and networking. ESiA is guided by an Advisory Group comprising 14 prominent academics representing various European Studies centres in Asia and Europe. While it seeks to strengthen the interaction between existing networks in Asia, its primary contribution to EU Studies in the region has been the support given to the multi-country research project on 'EU through the Eyes of Asia'.⁴ This unique body of data covering the media's reporting of the EU, as well as public and stakeholder perceptions of Europe has now examined 9 Asian ASEM countries, and in 2009/10 this work will be extended to India, Malaysia and Macau. This project has involved participation by a New Zealand institution, the National Centre for Research on Europe, as the project's methodological and intellectual coordinator.

II) Academic Networks: ECSA-World and EUSA Asia-Pacific

The European Community Studies Association World was the first networking organization that incorporated the individual national EU Studies Associations in the Asia-Pacific region (as well as those now covering over 50 countries globally). Launched in 1992, ECSA-World has largely been restricted to hosting biennial conferences held in Brussels to which representatives of national European Community/Union Studies Associations are invited. While originally membership was European in focus (Member States as well as potential candidate states), its global appeal has now grown so that by 2008 there were 24 non-EU members.

Undoubtedly, the organization of ECSA-World was the direct stimulus for the formation of an Asia-Pacific regional grouping, although it took several years of discussion before the new millennium saw the establishment of the European Union Studies Association Asia-Pacific (EUSA A-P). EUSA A-P brings together 9 individual EU Studies Associations across the region from Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Macau, New Zealand and Thailand. The Association has a biennial rotating presidency which has been held in turn by Korea, Japan, China, New Zealand and India. EUSA Asia-Pacific is registered as a legal entity in New Zealand, enabling it to apply for financial support from the European Commission under the Life-Long Learning Jean Monnet programme. Networking is the founding rationale behind EUSA A-P with an ambition to promote 'self-sufficiency' in EU expertise within our own region. In this regard, two major initiatives of the association have been successfully executed. Firstly, the launch of the bi-annual *Asia-Pacific EU Studies Journal* under the editorial responsibility of

⁴ See <http://esia.asef.org>

EUSA Korea: the first issue appeared in May 2003. And secondly, a biennial conference of the member EUSAs has been held - with meetings in New Zealand (1999), Seoul (2003), Tokyo (2005), and Shanghai (2007) – and under planning in New Delhi in 2010. In addition to performing the normal academic conference functions, these gatherings also serve as executive board meetings and provide an opportunity to develop further collaboration and new directions.

III) Teaching Initiatives: Jean Monnet

The Commission's Jean Monnet programme has had a significant impact on the promotion of modules on the EU at the tertiary level within the Asia-Pacific region. Jean Monnet Modules financially support the teaching in European integration studies (normally conceived of as involving political, economic, legal and historical analysis). Modules may concentrate on one particular discipline in European integration studies or be multidisciplinary in approach. European Commission funding is provided for a three-year period and the beneficiary institution must undertake to maintain the module for at least two further years. The ceiling for financing is €21.000, a significant incentive for many Asia-Pacific institutions: however, with a few notable exceptions, successful applications for Jean Monnet modules have not been that prevalent in the region.

Additional Jean Monnet support is available through teaching Chairs and *ad personam* chairs. Awards in these categories can be found in several Asia-Pacific countries (New Zealand, Australia, Korea, Japan and China, for example). In addition, large (€100,000+) research grants as well as conference/ Association grants (€50,000) are available. In recent years two such research awards have involved Asia-Pacific EU Centres and the EUSA Asia-Pacific has benefited from two tranches of support. Finally, Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence can be designated that bring together expertise across disciplines and universities: once again, several Asia-Pacific EU Studies programmes have achieved this designation.

Originally launched in 1990, the Jean Monnet Action is currently present in 61 countries on all continents. According to the official website between 1990 and 2008, the programme has helped to set up approximately 3,000 teaching projects in European Integration Studies, including 134 Jean Monnet European Centres of Excellence, 798 Jean Monnet Chairs and 2,014 European modules and permanent courses. The programme brings together a network of 1,500 professors, reaching audiences of 250,000 students every year.⁵ In this context, the Asia-Pacific share of the Jean Monnet Action is modest and more effective synergies with other EU Studies activities and centres within the Asia-Pacific are needed.

⁵ See http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc88_en.htm

Table 1: Jean Monnet Action Support in the Asia-Pacific by 2008⁶

	Chairs	Modules	Centre of Excellence	EU Studies Assoc	Research groups
New Zealand	2	4	1	2	2
Australia	2	3	1	2	1
Japan	3		1		
Korea	1	1		1	
China + Macau SAR	5	2	2	1	
Taiwan		4			

IV) Activities Support: DG RELEX

Putting China (which has its own large-scale dedicated Commission programme) to one side, the Commission's major EU Centres support for Industrialised Countries is through DG RELEX, rather than through DG Research (as for Framework Programme 7) and DG Education and Culture (ECSA-World and Jean Monnet Action). The focus is on identifying EU Centres in North America and the Asia-Pacific and through a co-funding mechanism instigate a 3-4 year programme of activities designed to increase awareness of the EU. Typically, this involves a teaching programme, a research component but most importantly community outreach (which a public diplomacy role). The co-funding conditions require selected universities to largely support the institutional and staff costs associated with these activities and there is a longer-term perspective that such centres and activities will eventually become sustainable and no longer require EU funding. Grants to date have ranged from €300,000 (for New Zealand) to €1m (for Singapore, for example).

The North American RELEX centres were the first to be launched with this programme being extended to the Asia-Pacific at the turn of the millennium. In 2008 there were 11 EU Centers of Excellence in the USA and 4 in Canada; 3 EUCs each in Australia, Japan and South Korea; and one in New Zealand. In April 2008 the first ever meeting of these global RELEX centres was convened in Brussels with a view to extending the grouping as well as to seek greater linkages, research collaborations and to learn from best practice. The budget line approved by the European Parliament for this initiative runs until 2013 although history suggests that ongoing RELEX support can be anticipated.

Two broad conclusions can be drawn from this regional survey. First, the six different frameworks and acronyms discussed here suggest that it is perhaps best to understand the promotion of EU Studies in the Asia-Pacific along a conceptual continuum that reflects the multitasking that inevitably occurs within each EU Studies grouping. While these individual groupings have been organized within a 4-category typology for the purposes of this survey, clearly the designations are, in places, forced and overlaps exist. Second, it would be mistaken to conclude that these different prisms for studying Europe create significant duplications; rather, complementarity does exist and the

⁶ See <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/jeanmonnet/directory/>

cooperation that has developed in one forum has often led to new forms of collaboration and the creation of separate but aligned academic teams. In this regard, ESiA has provided a unique contribution and facilitated not just a unique research project 'The EU through the Eyes of Asia', but established the broadest network of EU scholars in the region and promoted the teaching of European Studies as witnessed by its 2008 publication *The Future of European Studies in Asia*.

Table 2: Overview of the Architecture of EU Studies in the Asia-Pacific

	NESCA	ESiA	EUSA- AP	ECSA- World	Action Jean Monnet	RELEX
Macau SAR	Institute of European Studies	University of Macau	EUSA Macau	EUSA Macau	University of Macau	
Hong Kong SAR		Hong Kong Baptist University	EUSA Hong Kong	EUSA Hong Kong		
China	Fudan University China	a) Fudan University b) Renmin University	EUSA China	EUSA China	a) Fudan University/ b) Wuhan University/ c) Renmin University d) Sichuan University	
Taiwan					a) Nanhua University b) National Taiwan University c) Chengchi University d) Tamkang University	EUC Taiwan (National Taiwan University)
South Korea	Korea University	a) Korea University b) Institute for International Economic Policy	EUSA Korea	EUSA Korea	a) Seoul National University b) University of Seoul	a) EUC Seoul National University b) Pusan University c) Yonsei University
Thailand	Chulalongkorn University	Chulalongkorn University	EUSA Thailand	EUSA Thailand		
India			EUSA India	EUSA India		
Singapore		National University of Singapore				EUC Singapore
Vietnam		Vietnam National University				

Table2: continued

	NESCA	ESiA	EUSA- AP	ECSA- World	Action Jean Monnet	RELEX
Japan		Keio University	EUSA Japan	EUSA Japan	a) Keio University/ b) Hosei University	a) EUIJ (Kansai) b) EUIJ (Tokyo) c) EUI (Waseda)
Philippines		Ateneo de Manila University,				
Indonesia		University of Indonesia				
New Zealand	NCRE, University of Canterbury	NCRE, University of Canterbury	EUSA New Zealand	EUSA New Zealand	NCRE University of Canterbury	EUCN New Zealand
Australia			CESAA	CESAA	a) University of Melbourne b) Deakin University	a) NEC, ANU/ b) Monash EUC/ c) Innovative Universities consortium

The State of EU Studies in New Zealand

The 2009 RELEX Call for Proposals for EU Centres in Australia and New Zealand illustrates the important differences between European Studies and EU Studies.⁷ According to the Commission, European Studies...

tend to focus on linguistic or linguistic dimensions of European studies. Courses and degrees tend to be centred on individual Member States rather than focusing on the EU as an overall economic and political entity and as an international actor. Shifting the focus of European studies towards a more comprehensive range of EU-related issues, such as its political and economic role on the world stage, the history and objectives of the European integration and its role in the democratisation of Eastern and Central Europe, European law ... the economic dimension of European integration, the development and prospects for EU-Australia/New Zealand relations is therefore an important objective.⁸

The purpose of EU Studies, in the view of the Commission, should rather be to 'stimulate development of a focus in European Studies on the role and experience of the European Union as a whole; and to cover a more comprehensive range of EU-related issues.'⁹

⁷ See <http://www.delau.ec.europa.eu/newzealand/education/calls2009.htm>

⁸ CALL FOR PROPOSALS: Establishment of European Union Centres in AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND 2009, p.4.

⁹ Ibid., p.4.

It is clear that the twenty-first century has witnessed a significant growth in European Union Studies beyond the European continent. Global programmes noted above sponsored by the European Commission have significantly contributed both financially and academically to this trend. While independent and self-funded EU programmes have also emerged, the long-term sustainability of such initiatives has been questioned. An exception has been the development of EU Studies in New Zealand which while its origins are within this general support framework of Commission assistance, has within a decade become autonomous and sustainable. The refocusing of European Studies to embody EU Studies (as outlined above in the 2009 Commission perspective) has been adopted by the European Union Studies programme initiated by the National Centre for Research on Europe at the University of Canterbury.

As suggested by both Table 1 and 2, New Zealand has possibly benefited the most in the Asia-Pacific region from the various complementary EU initiatives that exist (indeed, the origins for ESiA can be traced to the Antipodes). Historically, EU Studies were promoted (almost exclusively) by the University of Canterbury beginning in the mid-1980s before becoming institutionalised with the establishment of what was to become the National Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE) in 2000. Since 2006, and under the new framework of the EU Centres Network (EUCN) of New Zealand, the NCRE's expertise has been utilised and shared with six of the country's seven other universities with the ambition to see Canterbury's success replicated elsewhere. There have been early signs of encouragement emerging under the EUCN framework: in 2007, the University of Auckland established its Europe Institute while in 2009 a similar initiative was developed at the Victoria University of Wellington (the Victoria Institute for Europe). Without undervaluing these two important new developments, to date the NCRE has been the focal point for EU-NZ interaction, a reality underlined by the NCRE's management of the EUCN.

EU Studies at universities outside the Union face specific challenges. This short overview will illustrate the special characteristics of a New Zealand-based EU programme, some elements of which may be common to EU Studies programmes within the Member States themselves, and others that reflect an external perspective of the integration process.

From its inception, the NCRE established a thriving post-graduate tradition in its teaching programme (some 30 Masters and doctoral thesis students were enrolled in 2009, for example). To complement this in 2006, the NCRE introduced a BA EU Studies degree major for the first time and now offers a three-year undergraduate programme as well as three separate post-graduate degrees (Honours, MA, and PhD) and offers 13 undergraduate and 8 Honours courses in total – a unique achievement for EU Studies taught outside the Union. The multidisciplinary nature of the NCRE's offerings are shown in Table 3. As noted already, the NCRE consciously and purposely differentiates between European Studies and EU Studies, and it is this narrower yet interdisciplinary focus on the EU that attracts students. Drawing on Politics, History, Law, Economics and so on creates – in a New Zealand context – an almost uniquely interdisciplinary degree. The important – and for some

controversial - consequence of this broadly social science interdisciplinary approach is a de-emphasis on language acquisition. While encouraged, at the tertiary level in New Zealand it would be counter-productive to require any specific language requirement, especially in addition to other quite rigorous interdisciplinary requirements. This approach is not peculiar to New Zealand and is reflected in some other countries, usually where English is the mother tongue.

Table 3: Undergraduate EU Studies Degree Major and Honours Courses 2009

Level	Discipline	Code	Title
100			
	Multi-disciplinary	EURO 101	Discovering the European Union*
200			
	Culture	EURO 201	European Union Identity and Culture+
	Geography	EURO 223	Remaking the New Europe
	Economics	EURO 224	Economic Development of Europe and Prospects for Enlargement *+
	Development	EURO 225	The EU and Global Development
	History	EURO 226	Rise and Fall of Soviet Domination in Eastern Europe
	Economics	EURO 227	Doing Business in Europe
	Politics	EURO 228	The EU's Diplomacy and 'effective Multilateralism'
300			
	Politics	EURO 310	European Integration*+
	Law	EURO 311	EU Legal Studies+
	Methods	EURO 312	EU Research Training and Methods
	Law	EURO332	EU Business Law
	Economics	EURO 339	The Economics of European Integration
400			
	Multi-disciplinary	EURO 401	The Idea of Europe and European Integration+
	Politics	EURO 404	Europe and the Pacific
	Politics	EURO 409	The Europeanisation of Politics East and West
	Politics	EURO 410	The EU as a Global Actor*
	Methods	EURO 416	EU Research Training and Methods
	History	EURO 448	Reconstructing Europe 1945-57
	Multi-disciplinary	EURO 480	Independent Research paper
	Multi-disciplinary	EURO 481	Internship
* = Jean Monnet module + = degree major core course			

EU Studies for Whom and for What?

Very few – if any – New Zealand students of the EU at either the undergraduate or postgraduate level envisage working for an EU institution. A small percentage may anticipate working for a New Zealand Ministry (such as Foreign Affairs and Trade) but the limited scale of New Zealand's diplomatic

relations and civil service constrains this demand. Similarly, there is no professional training aspect associated with EU Studies: specialised courses for the media, government officials, NGOs and lobbyists simply do not exist. The only target group for EU Studies is therefore tertiary students. Consequently, teaching EU Studies in this 'non-career' context has a different focus and does not have at its core vocational elements. In what ways, then, is the focus of EU Studies outside the EU *radically different* from EU Studies inside the Union?

First, the pedagogical task is to educate a new generation of scholars for whom the EU is a relatively unknown external reality, but one that will increasing impact upon the New Zealand context (through globalisation, European 'values and norms' and even security). Ongoing research into the awareness and engagement of the New Zealand public with the European Union underlines the marginalised perception that is typically held in the country and expressed through a narrow media prism¹⁰. Making the EU as relevant as the trading, environmental, security and people-to-people links effectively demonstrate, is a challenge confronting EU studies.

Second, the external perspective – studying the EU from outside – opens up different questions and points of contrast. For example, while the focus of EU policy-making courses within Member States would typically examine the internal consequences for integration of specific policy areas, when studying these same policy areas from outside it is their external impact that is often the guiding intellectual curiosity. For students in New Zealand the single currency is less about internal EU market dynamics and more about how the Euro affects global exchange rates and trade with New Zealand. Similarly, the CAP takes on a rather different shape when viewed from the perspective of external agricultural competitors. The recent Brussels initiative to ban sheepdogs herding sheep flocks appears more like a non-tariff barrier than based on animal welfare, for example. Indeed, which EU competences are seen as important and which peripheral also depends upon location. For students in the South Pacific, European Development policy would be a core interest, an area given less attention within the EU curriculum in the EU itself.

Third, overcoming both the tyranny of distance and of colonial memory presents unique challenges. The school curriculum in New Zealand does not prepare students for any real understanding of the post-1945 changes in Europe: the increasing emphasis is towards Asia (in terms of language acquisition and area knowledge). The cultural legacy of largely British settlement some 170 years ago has led at best to general disinterest and at worse to outright hostility towards an ungrateful and disloyal Britain (since 1973). Consequently, the student 'raw material' is largely unaware of the EU and often bring to their studies an historical scepticism and no second European language competence.¹¹ This situation is further compounded by the enduring British shadow over many of New Zealand's political and constitutional values: the message of a Euro-sceptic UK rarely finds any

¹⁰ See www.euperceptions.canterbury.ac.nz

¹¹ It is hoped that this will change from 2010 with the introduction of the four modules on the EU into the national curriculum (NCEA), something of an international first for New Zealand.

balance in New Zealand where the media remains myopically Anglo-Saxon in its reporting preferences.

Fourth, and consequently, to put in place a viable and sustainable Europe-oriented programme requires a proactive approach and a long-term perspective with the aim to raise awareness of modern Europe in New Zealand and wider Asia-Pacific region. Education and to some degree public outreach must go hand in hand. And for this to succeed, adequate funding has to be allocated for such this activities and the source of such support is almost inevitably European rather than local, thereby often raising questions of impartiality and academic autonomy, which although unfound, can contribute to a variety of urban myths.

To conclude this review of EU Studies in the Asia-Pacific, a unique feature of the situation in New Zealand requires comment. This significance of the EUCN framework as developed on the 'best practice' model of the NCRE has been acknowledged in the *EU and New Zealand Joint Declaration on Relations and Cooperation* (signed 21st September 2007): in this, the New Zealand Government and the Commission

'acknowledge the importance of the EUCN to European Union-New Zealand relations, the Commission's funding of the network and they reconfirm their commitment to continued support to this activity.'¹²

'Staff and student exchanges under the auspices of the European Union Centres Network (EUCN) are an important part of the academic connections between New Zealand and Europe.'¹³

Such official endorsement of a University activity as instrumental to a bilateral dialogue is rare and provides an independent commentary on what has been achieved in New Zealand to date. The advantages of a unitary 'small state' have clearly helped in the development of EU Studies to this level of official endorsement and without encouraging complacency, the medium-term vitality of the discipline looks assured. With a second New Zealand RELEX EU Centres grant for the 2010-2013 period awaiting implementation, New Zealand has the opportunity to both consolidate the existing embeddedness of EU Studies as well as to extend these activities across the country's entire tertiary sector.

¹² *EU and New Zealand Joint Declaration on Relations and Cooperation*, Para. 48.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Para. 37.