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“Bridging the gap between increasing knowledge and decreasing resources”

Perceived Employability of Graduates on the Asian Labour Market: Different Perspective of Employers, Graduates and Universities

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Abstract

Education is still considered as presumption for successful employment and thus it influences the socio-economic situation. Educational systems in South-East Asia went through many reforms in the last decades. This study examines how far higher education graduates in agriculture and related life sciences are capable to stand out on domestic labour market in 6 selected countries: Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Thailand and Vietnam. The analysis highlights the need to adopt skills and competences that graduates have to acquire during their studies at home universities or abroad to fulfill the demands of the local employers. The results should help to adjust the study programmes to the needs of the local stakeholders and to help the European universities to understand the needs of the local labour markets. To conduct this study two-dimensional approach was chosen. Quantitative questionnaires are distributed through online survey to more than 500 locals and 200 Erasmus Mundus graduates. Three different target groups are addressed and the questionnaire is adopted accordingly. The qualitative approach involved also semi-structured interviews with employers/HR managers and key informants from related NGOs, public and private institutions. Selected employers and graduates are invited to join the focus group discussions during local workshops, these should provide a platform for discussion and cooperation. To conduct the selected research activities the researchers will be present personally in the field accompanied by local consultants. Goal is also to assess whether the labour market in the six selected countries is ready and open to competitive graduate labour. All activities related to this research are coming under ongoing Erasmus Mundus project ASK Asia that is facilitated in a cooperation with four European and six Asian universities.

Keywords: Cambodia, China, competences, education, graduate destination, Indonesia, knowledge, Mongolia, skills, Thailand, Vietnam