Europe and the Asia Pacific are central to the new global order, acting both as partners and as counter-balances to American power and influence. Through the expanding European Union, the European states collectively have become a major actor in globalization through their economic might and global links. At the same time, economic development and transition politics have transformed the regional and international politics of the Asia Pacific.

Europe–Asia Relations analyses the increasingly complex and close-knit interrelations between these two regions. By addressing both key thematic topics—trade, investment, diplomacy and security—and crucial bilateral relations with major actors, such as China, Japan, India, as well as middle powers and regional organizations, this volume provides a comprehensive overview of the inter-regional relationship. By exploring the substance, manner and dynamics of these interactions at the bilateral, multilateral, and interregional levels, this volume examines how the various countries and peoples relate to each other and to the emerging multipolar and multilateral global order. The Europe–Asia relationship is often described as the weak link in the global power triangle with the United States. Yet, by using a multinationaI and multidisciplinary group of authors, this volume sheds new light on this increasingly important relationship, which will be crucial to the future dynamics of international order.

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5 EU–ASEAN Relations and Policy-Learning

Yeo Lay Hwee

Relations between the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the European Union (EU, formerly the European Economic Community (EEC)), which date back to 1972, constitute one of the oldest group-to-group relationships. For the ASEAN countries, the primary rationale for the relationship was economic – greater market access for ASEAN’s exports and a price stabilization scheme for ASEAN’s primary commodities. However, for the EEC, while the relationship was economic in form – ASEAN as an important source for raw materials – there was also a hint of political intent – ASEAN as a non-communist area of peace and economic cooperation.

After three decades of relationship, how have the two regional actors adapted their behaviour to meet the changes and expectations of each other? What were the quality and levels of this group-to-group relationship? Were there enough dialogue and information and communication flows to shape the interactions between EU and ASEAN and facilitate policy-learning? This chapter will examine the development of the EU–ASEAN relationship and discuss the implications, if any, this relationship has on the policy choices and policy development of the member states of ASEAN and the EU.

ASEAN–EU relations in a nutshell

ASEAN was founded in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, during a period of considerable uncertainty in Southeast Asia. At the time of its formation, ASEAN was scoffed at by many political observers, both in the region and also beyond. In a region marred by war and intra-regional conflicts, it was difficult to
perceive that the leaders of these independent, sovereign states with different historical experiences would have the political will to overcome their suspicions and latent hostilities.

In the initial years, ASEAN's growth as a regional organization proceeded at a slow pace. There were very limited real integrative efforts, since sovereignty was jealously guarded. In any case, ASEAN was never intended as an instrument of integration with supranational authority. ASEAN's raison d'être was, and is, to turn a region in turmoil and instability into a region of peace and tranquility. It was to be an instrument for managing and containing intra-regional conflicts, and in so doing maintain and strengthen national sovereignty.

From its onset ASEAN has been an outward-oriented organization. Most of ASEAN's success really came by way of a common stance vis-à-vis third parties. This was reflected, for instance, in the role it played in the Cambodian issue in the 1980s. It has also sought to establish friendly ties with key players in the region and the world in order to secure its own interests. One channel that ASEAN used to articulate its interest was through the dialogue sessions that it established throughout the years with the major powers and other key countries in the region. Its dialogue partners include the EU, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, China, South Korea and, most recently, Russia and India. In many ways, it was such interactions with the others that helped ASEAN define its identity.

The EEC was ASEAN's first dialogue partner. Informal dialogue between ASEAN and the EEC first took place in 1972 between ASEAN ministers and the Vice-President and Commissioner of the European Commission. Initially, the dialogue was aimed exclusively to achieve greater market access for ASEAN's exports and a price stabilization scheme for ASEAN's primary commodities.

After a few annual informal meetings, it was decided in 1975 that an ASEAN-EC Joint Study Group be set up not only to look into trade matters but also to evaluate other possible areas of cooperation, such as joint ventures in the exploration of ASEAN resources, the possibility of encouraging some degree of EC participation in ASEAN manufacturing activities and of mobilizing capital for financing ASEAN projects (Luhulima, 1993).

ASEAN-EC relations were given a boost and greater political significance with the inaugural ASEAN-EC Ministerial Meeting (AEMM) in 1978. Under the direction of the AEMM, the ASEAN-EC Cooperation Agreement was formulated and signed during the second ASEAN-EC Ministerial Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur in March 1980. This Agreement was to mark the beginning of a new stage of cooperation. The main emphasis of the Agreement was on economic cooperation and development. The Agreement, a milestone in ASEAN-EC relations, extended the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) treatment to the contracting parties. More importantly, it opened up an exclusive channel for the exchange of information and requests that paved the way for EC assistance in several development projects. It opened up a second track of cooperation which specifically covered the EC and the signatories of the Cooperation Agreement.

However, despite all these positive developments in general, until the 1980s AEC remained at the bottom of the EC's hierarchy of relations, below even that of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) and Latin American countries. The low priority accorded was reflected both in the fact that the ACP countries received more favourable trade benefits covered by the Lomé Convention and in the irregular attendance at the AEMMs by the EC ministers. The ASEAN-EC relationship was seen very much as a donor-recipient relationship. It was an unequal relationship in which the ASEAN countries were inevitably in a weaker bargaining position (Rueland, 1996, pp. 16-17).

In contrast to this unequal economic relationship, political cooperation between ASEAN and the European Community in the 1980s was markedly more successful. Specifically, Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia (then Kampuchea) in December 1978, and the Soviet Union's Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 provided the impetus for the two regions to work closely to coordinate their positions and support each other's positions on the Cambodian and the Afghanistan issues in international fora such as the United Nations. Indeed, during the 1980 AEMM, an unprecedented joint statement was issued deploring the armed interventions of Cambodia and Afghanistan. An analysis of the votes for the UN General Assembly Resolution from 1979 to 1984 showed that ASEAN and EC did indeed vote as a bloc in support of calls for Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia (Robles, 1998, p. 16). These two issues also remained dominant subjects of political discussion at successive AEMMs until their resolution in 1991.

Political relations, however, took a turn for the worse in the early 1990s because of the East Timor incident in 1991 and of differences over how to treat Burma in the midst of the Burmese ruling junta's violent suppressions of pre-democracy movements. At the same time the triumphant mood in the West following the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the breakup of the Soviet Union and the wave of democratization movements in the former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe led western countries to start pushing other developing countries towards
a greater degree of democratization. Free from the Cold War necessities of courting authoritarian but pro-western countries, Europeans introduced a policy of conditionality linking trade and aid to issues on human rights, democratization and environmental protection. The politicization of aid and economic cooperation policy heightened tension with the ASEAN nations. This new moralism of the West was criticized as ‘neo-colonialism’ by leaders such as Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohammad of Malaysia.

The past decade of continued economic growth in the ASEAN countries and the general dynamism and growing economic prowess of the East Asian region in which ASEAN is located, plus ASEAN's success as a diplomatic community, had made the latter more confident and assertive. A new sense of pride drawn from the decade of economic achievements translated to the ability to stand up to challenge the decisions or actions by the western countries. The ninth and tenth AEMMs held in 1991 and 1992 respectively were thus marked by heated exchanges over East Timor and the new conditionality of EC aid and cooperation policy.

The confidence and dynamism of ASEAN was also reflected in other, more proactive and positive measures it took in response to the new challenges in its environment. For instance, in the face of an uncertain politico-strategic situation with the rise of China, the wavering commitments of the United States to the security of the region, ASEAN first sought to bring all its dialogue relationships under the ambit of what was to be called the Post-Ministerial Conference which is held usually immediately after the annual ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meetings. It then went one step further to develop an ambitious multilateral framework for security and political dialogue - the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

The creation of ARF was especially significant as it reflected the willingness of ASEAN to assume new functions and responsibilities in order to shape its strategic environment.

On the economic front, faced with intensified economic competition, in the 1992 Summit in Singapore ASEAN announced the establishment of an ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) by the year 2005. This deadline was subsequently brought forward to the year 2000 for certain products and by 2003, 95 per cent of manufactured goods and services were to be included in AFTA. Work also commenced on drawing up an ASEAN Investment Area (AIA) to attract more direct investments into the region.

On a bilateral basis, when ASEAN examined the past 20 years' record of its relations with the EU, ASEAN could not help but note that while promotion of economic cooperation has translated into increases in the absolute values of trade and investments, it has not altered the relative importance of each region to the other. The challenge then was to imagine new channels and identify new areas for cooperation. In the midst of EU reassessment of its own strategy towards Asia, ASEAN was quick to cash in on this and promote itself as the gateway to the wider Asia-Pacific region, and as an interlocutor for the wider dialogue between Asians and Europeans. ASEAN also recognized that future efforts to create a new dynamic would have to involve European production in Southeast Asia. Hence, the ASEAN states were relentless in driving home the message that peace and stability in the region and the launch of AFTA and AIA would provide a secure and profitable environment for Europe's direct investments.

On the background of the economic success and growing self-confidence of the ASEAN states, EU was sold on the idea of ASEAN being the linchpin of its wider Asia-Europe relations. ASEAN's attraction as a rapidly growing market of 500 million people (in anticipation of an ASEAN-10) was also in the minds of key European decision-makers when a consensus decision was taken by the EU (and, in particular, by the four big powers - United Kingdom, Germany, France and Italy) to put aside sensitive political issues and return to a pragmatic course of focusing on economics. This, of course, must be seen together in the context of EU's general shift in policy towards Asia as reflected in the July 1994 EC Communication 'Towards a New Asia Strategy' (NAS).

The pragmatic course taken was reflected in the 11th AEMM held in Karlsruhe in September 1994 which showed that ASEAN has gained the upper hand in determining the topics, style and procedure of the meeting (Rueland, 1996, p. 31). The meeting was congenial, unlike the past few meetings. East Timor was not raised and human rights issues were only mentioned briefly. Another concrete example of this pragmatic approach was the sidestepping of the issue of a new agreement that was blocked by Portugal. The ministers resolved to continue and expand their dialogue through other existing channels, and also commissioned an ASEAN-EU Eminent Persons Group to develop a comprehensive approach of ASEAN-EU relations towards the year 2000 and beyond.

The European Commission’s Communication ‘Towards a New Asia Strategy’ also pinpointed ASEAN-EU relations as the cornerstone of the new partnership that Europe would seek in Asia.

However, recommendations in both the 1996 report by the EEP on 'A Strategy for a New Partnership' and also the Communication from the Commission to the Council on 'Creating a New Dynamic in EU-ASEAN Relations' on revitalizing the ASEAN-EU ties had no chance of being translated into concrete measures. A series of events - notably the
Asian financial crisis, the launch of the Asia–Europe Meeting (ASEM), and the enlargement of ASEAN to include Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar – changed the whole dynamics and further impacted on the state of ASEAN–EU relations.

The changing dynamics and policy-learning in EU–ASEAN relations

In more than thirty years of regular contacts between the EU and ASEAN, it is interesting to see if and what, why and how the two regions have learnt from each other. With the EU as the forerunner in regional integration, the first thing one might be tempted to ask is whether ASEAN can ‘learn’ anything from the EU? However, one could also perhaps expand the question and ask if the two regional actors have adapted their behaviour to meet the changes and expectations of each other? What were the quality and levels of this group-to-group relationship? Were there enough dialogue and information and communication flows to shape the interactions between EU and ASEAN and facilitate policy-learning? Were there policy changes and adjustments made as a result of the learning process? Did the changes occur mainly at technical or conceptual level? Before going into an analysis of policy-learning in EU–ASEAN relations, a brief definition and discussion about what is meant by policy-learning is necessary.

Definition of policy-learning

Policy-learning covers a broad terrain with various meanings attached to it. According to Paul A. Sabatier (1993, p. 19), policy-learning is ‘a relatively enduring alteration of thought or behavioral intentions that are concerned with the attainment (or revision) of the precepts of a policy belief system’. He divided policy-learning into the following three types:

- Technical learning about instruments: how the various policy instruments may be improved to achieve set goals;
- Conceptual learning: when the problem definition (the outlook on a problematique) changes, accompanied by development of new concepts and vocabulary; and
- Social learning: when there is a widely shared change in values, and ideas about a topic and about appropriate roles of policy actors, including the rules for interaction.

Peter Hall (Hall, 1990, p. 73) believed that policy-learning is informed by an understanding of policy failure providing an impetus to place new ideas on the policy and political agendas. Learning occurs when policy makers adjust their cognitive understanding of policy development and modify policy in the light of knowledge gained from past policy experience.

According to Hall (1993, p. 284), there are three orders of policy-learning. ‘First Order’ learning involves ‘satisficing’ and making minor adjustments in the precise settings of policy instruments – this is very much similar to the technical learning as propounded by Paul Sabatier. ‘Second Order’ learning is characterized by re-tooling, limited experimentation and the introduction of new policy techniques. Changes at these two levels are characteristic of normal politics. ‘Third Order’ change involves a radical shift in ‘the hierarchy of goals and sets of instruments employed to guide policy’. This ‘Third Order’ learning is a mix of what Sabatier would call conceptual and social learning. It involves significant departures in policy on the basis of a completely different conceptualization of policy problems.

Another much simpler and much used definition given by David Dolowitz and David Marsh (1996) refers policy-learning to ‘a process of policy transfer, emulation and lesson-drawing in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions in one time and/or place is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements and institutions in another time and/or place.’

Policy-learning between states or governments is not unusual. In different periods of time, governments have looked at each other’s experiences in areas where common problems were identified or innovations turned out to be successful. With increasing interdependence and improvements in communications, policy-learning – whether it is lesson-drawing or emulation or transfer – is becoming more common. However, our knowledge on what learning is actually concerned with and how actors engage in a learning process is still quite limited as there is not much literature yet on these. While it is often assumed that policy-learning is undertaken to ‘improve policy’, this may not be necessarily true as it could be ‘enforced’ or perhaps undertaken for other political objectives.

When studying policy-learning, therefore, distinctions should be drawn between technical learning (about instruments); conceptual learning (about goals and strategies) and social learning (about societal values, responsibilities, appropriate ways of interacting and policy approaches).
While cross-border learning between governments/states are happening with increasing frequency, much less has been discussed or studied at the inter-regional level. In considering EU–ASEAN relations, the focus here is to look at how their interactions may result in policy-learning on regional integration. Does ASEAN as a regional entity look consciously at the EU regional model and policies adopted by the EU in promoting European integration to draw some lessons to be used for their own policy designs? Has the long interaction between ASEAN and EU result in evolution of common norms, common policies governing the relations between the two regional entities?

The potential for policy-learning
In the years of interaction, particularly through development assistance in areas such as environment, energy, trade facilitation, individual ASEAN states receiving aid in specific sectors such as forestry, energy might make some policy adjustments with increased knowledge and capacity building made possible by the EU partners. Policy-learning here is therefore only in the First Order or confined to technical learning. One would assume that armed with better knowledge and capacity, policy makers would be privy to a wider set of policy instruments, leading to different policy choices.

However, in terms of broader inter-regional interactions, whether policy-learning has occurred at a regional level by the two regional entities representing the region is really up for debate. Has ASEAN learned from the EU experience of regional integration, and is there anything that the EU has learned from the so-called 'ASEAN Way' of regional cooperation? These are highly contentious and certainly worth debating.

Regional integration and community-building
The EU is considered to be the forerunner of regional integration, beginning with the 1952 European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) which became the European Economic Community (EEC) with the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1958. Therefore, in a policy-learning context, one is tempted to think that, as a late-comer, ASEAN would be the one watching and learning from the EU experience so as to avoid costly mistakes and leverage on workable and successful experiments by the EU. Of course, this is far from reality. From the very beginning the raison d'être for forming ASEAN was very different from the EU. ASEAN was not about regional integration but arose out of the need to contain regional tensions in order to focus on domestic development as a counterweight to internal communist insurgencies and communal problems.

This raison d'être of ASEAN was explicitly stated in its founding declaration, which expressed the determination of its member states 'to ensure their stability and security from external interference . . . in order to preserve their national identities' (the ASEAN Declaration). This explains why from the very beginning ASEAN has taken the form of 'state-to-state cooperation where diplomacy is the main instrument' (Wanandi, 2001, p. 25). Regional economic integration was never mentioned as an ASEAN objective in the founding declaration.

ASEAN's growth as a regional organization proceeded at a very slow pace and there were very few real integrative efforts in the first two decades. Economic cooperation among the ASEAN states was also minimal. However, as the global and regional picture began to change with the relentless forces of globalization, the collapse of communism, and the opening of China's market, ASEAN also has to re-orientate its focus. The socioeconomic landscape of ASEAN has changed considerably by the late 1980s. Societies and economies have been opening up. In the face of these political changes, economic challenges and growing interdependence, ASEAN began to look more actively into closer economic cooperation and the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) was signed in 1992. To further cement regional economic cooperation to meet the challenges from other regions and emerging economies, the idea of creating an ASEAN Investment Area (AIA) was also adopted. AFTA and AIA marked a perceptible shift in policy beliefs from a staunchly nationalistic approach to economic development to a wider approach taking into account regional cooperation leading to some sort of integration.

For a long time ASEAN has resisted any attempts to compare itself with the EU, and has dismissed the EU integration model as not relevant for ASEAN. ASEAN is a loosely-knit organization with a penchant for informality, flexibility and pragmatism. It has pride itself for developing a modus operandi, the 'ASEAN Way'. The much-touted 'ASEAN Way' is one that entails behavioural norms that prescribe 'respect for sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs, peaceful resolution of conflicts, and non-use of force' (Nischalke, 2000, p. 90); as well as procedural norms that privilege informalism and non-confrontational behaviour as encapsulated in the concepts of musyawarah (consultation) and mufakat (consensus) (Nischalke, 2002, p. 93).

However, the inability of ASEAN to use its 'ASEAN Way' to address and deal with the fallout from the Asian financial crisis and other regional problems such as the haze that enveloped the region in 1997 has led to a serious re-think of the direction and the modus operandi of the organization. Core policy beliefs with regards to the norms and procedures
of regional cooperation are now being challenged. The risks of becoming irrelevant forced ASEAN to do some serious soul-searching and face up to the need to change its way of doing things. There was, hence, economic integration between ASEAN countries.

While the long-standing EU-ASEAN relations did not contribute directly to a policy shift in approaches to regional cooperation by the ASEAN countries, EU avails itself if not as a model, at least as a subject for study and for lessons-drawing. It was interesting therefore to see that since the crisis, the discourse coming from ASEAN has been moving towards the need to build institutions and there are more serious attempts and studies to understand how the EU works. Of course, no one made the big leap in embracing the EU model entirely, but there are calls to adapt some of the EU norms and institutions to the ASEAN realities. One example is the call to strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat. While not calling for the ASEAN Secretariat to have supranational authority akin to that of the European Commission, there is a push for ‘devolving sufficient authority to regional mechanisms and institutions to enable them to review and coordinate between the different countries’ (Tay and Estanislao, 2001, p. 19).

More concretely, the EU has offered to help to strengthen the institutional capacity of the ASEAN Secretariat through its ASEAN Programme for Regional Integration Support (APRIS). In its Regional Indicative Programme for ASEAN, the Commission explained that APRIS was conceived after the Asian financial crisis, which underscored the need for closer economic integration between ASEAN countries.

APRIS is a facility through which the ASEAN Secretariat obtains flexible and responsive technical assistance from the EU, where know-how and experience is shared on aspects of regional cooperation relevant to ASEAN’s integration, with the primary focus on strategic planning. Support for the ASEAN Secretariat through APRIS takes the form of technical assistance, for the delivery of policy papers, work programmes and other studies, institutional capacity building and training.1

One can easily dispute the suggestion that the policy shifts within ASEAN are as a result of the EU. Indeed, it is not a direct result of the

EU–ASEAN interactions, but rather because of a combination of factors as set forth earlier – the rise of China, the Asian financial crisis, and so on. But it cannot be denied that the interactions with EU and the assistance rendered have influenced the discourse. More important is the role played by the epistemic communities in the two regions, or perhaps more accurately the experts and scholars involved in Track II diplomacy, particularly those within the ASEAN–ISIS network of think-tanks.

The role of the epistemic community or policy network or community, particularly transnational networks, in the diffusion and dissemination of ideas and policy paradigms is important in any discussions about policy-learning. The section below will examine the role of ASEAN–ISIS in shifting the change in discourse on regional cooperation and discuss its ability or inability to engender real policy-learning among the state policy actors.

The role of ASEAN–ISIS in policy-learning

How can researchers in an epistemic community or policy networks influence policy change? In Southeast Asia, unofficial diplomacy has made significant contributions in the area of regional cooperation. According to Herman Kraft in his paper on ‘Unofficial Diplomacy in Southeast Asia: The Role of ASEAN–ISIS’, Track II activities have grown in tandem with Track I channels and have become directly involved in policy advocacy and policy formulation by providing policy frameworks for officials too busy to put together proposals (Kraft, 2000, p. 4).

The ASEAN–Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN–ISIS) is a network of think-tanks in ASEAN involved in policy research. Founded in 1984, it has been credited for policy recommendations leading to the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum in 1994 and, more recently, the idea of an ASEAN Economic Community and ASEAN Security Community.

The ASEAN–ISIS comes close to being a policy network in which communities with a limited number of people, with frequent contact, persistent membership and consensus on basic values, work together to advance ASEAN’s development. Whether the ASEAN–ISIS representatives fit the bill of an epistemic community is open for debate. However, what is clear is that ASEAN–ISIS works in conjunction with ASEAN and, since 1993, its representatives have consulted annually with the senior officials of ASEAN member states. It has submitted policy recommendations in the form of memoranda to the ASEAN governments on various issues (Kraft, 2000, p. 5). The latest was the ASEAN–ISIS memo on the ASEAN Charter to the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) for the ASEAN Charter.
In the area of regional integration and community building, ASEAN-ISIS has been actively involved in dialogue with European partners and has been in the forefront of pushing for greater regional integration after the Asian financial crisis. The annual ASEAN-ISIS–EU think-tanks dialogue, which began in 1999, was one such channel. They are in some sense a central force in promoting collective policy-learning. Policy ideas are spread and some start to take root. Though the network has recently also come under critical scrutiny for being too close to governments and too elitist, closeness to government is a comparative advantage because it gives ASEAN-ISIS some influence on government policy. Of course, it can also become a disadvantage as it results in self-censorship and may limit the ability of ASEAN-ISIS to provide critical thinking when it is most needed.

**Multilateralism and cooperative security dialogue**

Evolving clearly from the concept of a European community as embodied in the EU, multilateralism in security has become clearly part of the European identity. This is in contrast to ASEAN where security dialogue until the early 1990s was still very much in the bilateral mode, with US as the main security provider in a sort of hub and spokes framework. The launch of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1994 was a major shift towards a more multilateral approach towards comprehensive and cooperative security.

The ARF emerged from ASEAN in the 1990s. The end of the Cold War, the rise of China and a proliferation of security matters of a non-military nature left the Asia-Pacific searching for a new organizing principle for security. Again the search for a new framework was informed by the discourse within ASEAN-ISIS, which in turn was coloured by the interactions and partnerships of ASEAN-ISIS with its counterparts in Australia, Canada, Japan, US and the European Community.

Based on the ASEAN-ISIS experience, the Council for Security Co-operation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) was formed in June 1993. The underlying goal enunciated by the ASEAN-ISIS founders of CSCAP was to create an alternative conception of security in the Asia-Pacific based on cooperation rather than military balances. (Simon, 2002, pp. 12-13)

Again it is not possible to prove a direct policy linkage between the EU and ASEAN with regards to the change in approach adopted towards security dialogue. But some shades of similarities that ARF shared with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) forced one to consider whether or not Europe’s head-start in developing new frameworks and institutions for security dialogue made an inevitable mark on the new evolving framework in Asia pioneered by ASEAN. The role of Track II institutions and their impact on the learning curve and the discourse at the official track level is again something to be considered.

The issue of applicability of the European model to the Asia-Pacific will always be a point of contention within ASEAN and the ARF. But the founding principles of ARF are in fact close to the CSCE philosophy that Joachim Kruse argued for in his monograph *The OSCE and Cooperative Security in Europe: Lessons for Asia*, so that the ARF might be seen as an attempt to test how applicable is the CSCE philosophy in the Asia-Pacific (Krause, 2003, p. 127).

**Inter-regionalism as a feature of international relations**

The EU (and its predecessor EC) has been in the forefront of pushing for inter-regional or group-to-group dialogue. Such dialogues entered a remarkable period of growth in the early 1980s. These inter-regional or group-to-group dialogues are seen as an additional element or level to manage global interdependence. They fill the gaps between bilateralism and universalism. Also, it brings about more ‘consistency’ in Europe’s international profile at a time when the EC/EU has not really developed a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Besides the EU–ASEAN other examples of such dialogue are those with the ACP Group, Andean Pact, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Arab League and more recently the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, and EU-Mercosur partnership.

ASEAN in the 1990s also developed a penchant for such inter-regional dialogue, and it has been the driving force behind several inter-regional or group-to-group initiatives such as the Asia–Europe Meeting (ASEM) process, the Forum for East Asia and Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC), and the Asia–Middle East (AME) dialogue.

However, it could suggest that the EU’s and ASEAN’s ‘love’ of inter-regional dialogues are driven by different factors. The EU’s inter-regionalism is driven mainly by an institutionalist consideration that underscores the importance of institutional cooperation as a way to manage complex interdependence, and perhaps also an element of social constructivism that stresses the formation of regional perceptions and identities triggered by inter-regional interactions. In addition, the EU’s pursuit of inter-regionalism, as argued by Vinod Aggarwal and Edward Fogarty, is driven by what they see as a ‘desire to promote its
political-institutional influence around the world' (Aggarwal and Fogan- 
y, 2003, p. 387).

On the other hand, realism and neo-realism still very much colour the international relations approach of ASEAN member states. Hence the focus of inter-regional dialogues is perhaps more on the balancing aspect, though it has also been argued that in the case of the Asia– 
Europe Meeting (ASEM), an element of constructivism may have also been envisaged.

What ASEAN has learned from the EU in this aspect is taking the form and adapting it in some way to suit its own interests. Inter-regional dialogues promoted by ASEAN tend to be informal, less institutional-
ized and more flexible. The configuration of Asia differs in the different inter-regional dialogues jump-started by ASEAN, making ASEAN the only constant ‘regional’ player in these dialogues.

The ASEAN charter – strengthening ASEAN and giving ASEAN a legal personality

On 12 December 2005, during the eleventh ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur ASEAN leaders decided that it is time for the Association to have a formal charter as the basis for cooperation. The decision was a recogni-
tion of the need to promote necessary changes in order to adapt to the changing environment and its challenges. The leaders understand the need for ASEAN to deepen its integration, strengthen its institutions and processes to cope with the various transnational challenges. More specifi-
cally, as pointed out by the former ASEAN Secretary-General, Rodolfo Severino, the reason for having a charter is as follows:

A charter would help establish the association as a juridical personality and a legal entity. It would make clear the association’s objectives. The charter would enshrine the values and principles to which the association’s members adhere and which, in a real sense, define its very nature. The charter would envision the arrangements for the fur-
ther integration of the regional economy and define the institutions, mechanisms and processes for dealing with transnational problems. It would establish the organs of the association and delineate their respective functions, responsibilities, rights and limitation, the relations-
ships among the organs, and their decision-making processes. Among these organs would be an objective and credible dispute-settlement mechanism. The charter would mark out the relationship between the association and the member-states. It would specify the

ways for the charter to take effect and when. It would lay down the rules for amendments to be made.²

An Eminent Persons Group (EPG) for the ASEAN Charter was convened in 2006. The EPG was tasked to study ASEAN and make ‘bold and visionary’ recommendations on what should go into the Charter. The EPG met a number of times in 2006 and carried out consultations with leaders, officials, parliamentarians, academics and civil society to get ideas for the EPG report.

Most significantly, the EPG members also made a visit to the European Union to study the EU’s integration experience and problems and also dialogue with parliamentarians and officials from the EU to under-
stand how the EU works through its various institutions and procedures. The visit afforded the EPG members a better understanding of the issues that need to be contemplated as ASEAN deepens to become a rule-based organization.

The decision to have a Charter to take ASEAN towards a more structured intergovernmental organization in the context of legally binding rules and agreements was remarkable considering the fact that for more than 30 years, ASEAN has resisted formal institutionalization with an emphasis on binding rules. Instead it has clung on to the so-called ‘ASEAN Way’, which is informal, with its emphasis on consultation, consenus-building and non-binding agreements relying on voluntary implementation. Once the decision was taken to transform ASEAN into a more rules-based organization, it is perhaps not surprising that officials should look to the EU for ‘inspiration’ and some of the changes rec-
commended reflected learning and adaptation from the EU integration experience.

ASEAN’s institutions and decision-making processes will remain decidedly intergovernmental and hence although the ASEAN Secretariat will be strengthened and the power and role of the ASEAN Secretary-
General will also be enhanced, there is no decision at this juncture to create any supranational authority. However, the reality of inter-
dependence and the need to have a much more coordinated regional approach and policies to confront the various challenges have been rec-
ognized by the leaders. Hence, for the first time, ASEAN has moved away from the jealously guarded principle of non-intervention. The EPG has recommended that ASEAN ‘calibrate the traditionally policy of non-intervention in areas where the common interest dictates closer cooperation’. The unanimous decision-making process is also tweaked
to allow more flexibility of applying the 'ASEAN minus X and ASEAN 2 plus X' formula on certain issues.

Other organizational changes proposed also appeared to bear some broad similarities to the EU. For example, the ASEAN Summit will now be replaced by the ASEAN Council (the supreme policy-making organ of ASEAN comprising the leaders of the ASEAN members). The various ASEAN Ministerial Meetings will be consolidated and grouped into Councils of the ASEAN Community - comprising the Council of ASEAN Economic Community, Council of ASEAN Security Community and Council of ASEAN Socio-cultural Community.

Because it has remained essentially intergovernmental, the ASEAN Secretary-General and Secretariat will not be in the same league as the European Commission. But the Secretary-General of ASEAN will have his/her role and power enhanced - in addition to discharging all the functions and responsibilities entrusted by the ASEAN Council and the Councils of the ASEAN Community, he/she can now initiate plans and programmes of activities for ASEAN regional cooperation, harmonize, facilitate and monitor progress in the implementation of all approved ASEAN activities and submit reports on non-compliance, and represent ASEAN as an observer in other international, regional and sub-regional forums.

Another important adaptation is the recommendation to have Permanent Representatives accredited to ASEAN. The Permanent Representatives from the member states, appointed by their respective governments with the rank of Ambassadors will attend meetings at the ASEAN Committees.

Again, as in the other examples, while the impetus for drafting an ASEAN Charter to strengthen ASEAN and confer ASEAN with a legal personality is a result of many factors not related to the EU, the EU as a forerunner in regional integration, and a highly successful regional organization avails itself as a subject for study and lessons-drawing.

All the above examples from regional integration to inter-regionalism are not perfect examples of deep policy-learning and hence illustrate the limits and constraints to policy-learning in the context of ASEAN–EU relations.

The limits and constraints to policy-learning

While crisis can act as an impetus for policy change, this alone is not sufficient. The interpretation and analysis of the causes of the crisis must be exploited skillfully by those policy actors serious about genuine change. The EU may be a willing master in imparting its lessons on regional integration, but ASEAN is not entirely ready or prepared as a student. The diversities within ASEAN meant that while some have a greater capacity for learning, others may adopt lessons only for symbolic purposes or as a strategic device to secure political support rather than as a result of improved understanding. The lack of discussions and deliberations in the policy-making process in some of the less democratic ASEAN countries has also constrained the ability to produce adequate knowledge about the desired changes.

There is certainly some emulation which involves the borrowing of ideas and adapting policy approaches, tools or structures to local conditions (Stone, 2000, p. 6). However, the level of actual policy-learning in the area of regional integration has remained stuck at best on what Hall sees as first order learning. There is no convergence on values with the EU on things such as pooled sovereignty and supranational authority. ASEAN is not on a par with the EU on its goals of regional integration. ASEAN's interest is on tightening its economic cooperation to allow it to compete more effectively as a region vis-à-vis other economies such as China and India. Hence, the focus of its learning has been on economic policy instruments and techniques.

There are real limits and constraints on policy-learning between EU and ASEAN, particularly in the area of regional integration, because the starting conditions and the end goals of the two regional entities are very different. Though the decision of ASEAN to form an ASEAN Free Trade Area has brought ASEAN closer to the regional integration path as exemplified by the EU in its early stages, there are key differences. The enlargement of ASEAN to include Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar further constrained the ability for ASEAN to deepen the integration process. Hence parallel to the rhetoric and push towards 'community-building' is the parallel 'coalition of the willing' approach to move ASEAN forward.

Interestingly enough, EU’s relations with ASEAN – though supposedly a group-to-group dialogue – have also begun to show considerable flexibility from a rigid inter-regional approach. The most significant shift was captured in the Commission's most recent Communication on 'A New Partnership with South East Asia' (2003). Through its long-standing EC–ASEAN cooperation programmes, the Commission has tried to engender certain change and tried to promote cooperation at the regional level. It, however, has admitted that 'some of these programmes in retrospect have been overly ambitious and were not paced with ASEAN’s own agenda. The initiatives have sometimes been in advance of the realities of ASEAN integration and lacked sufficient ownership on behalf of
ASEAN.' Region-to-region cooperation has proven to be more complex than bilateral cooperation.

Thus, drawing on lessons learned from earlier programmes, the new approach towards cooperation with ASEAN as spelt out in the Communication on ‘A New Partnership with South East Asia’ was to first establish ‘true mutual interest’ at least with one ASEAN counterpart, and then adopting an approach which can be bilateral, regional or a mix of both. This in some way borders on similar ‘coalition of the willing’ approach to that developing within ASEAN.

This is also interesting in light of the fact that ASEAN has caught on with the promotion of ‘inter-regional’ dialogue in the broadest sense in its search for new partnerships with other regions such as Latin America and the Middle East. However, after establishing the broad framework, the practical way forward is through a sort of ‘coalition of the willing’ approach. Therefore in these areas, we see some sort of mutual learning - ASEAN’s adaptation of the practical way forward is through a sort of ‘coalition of the willing’ approach to that developing within ASEAN.

Conclusion

Policy shifts or changes are common place in politics and can be brought about by many factors. Here in this chapter we are concerned about policy-learning, an acquisition of new knowledge about problems and solutions, as a source of change. Studies of policy-learning are very much concerned with the effects of organizational learning. Looking at the long-standing inter-regional dialogue between EU and ASEAN, and following the changing discourse on regional integration, particularly the paths taken by ASEAN towards regional cooperation, one is inclined to ask how much influence the EU has on ASEAN in this area.

The initial conclusion drawn from the above discussion on policy-learning and the changing dynamics of ASEAN–EU relations showed that there are real limits and constraints on what ASEAN can learn from the EU in the area of regional integration. ASEAN as a regional organization is still in flux after the Asian financial crisis and the enlargement that took place at the time the crisis was in full swing was a costly mistake for ASEAN. Nonetheless, the past few years has seen an ASEAN that is more open to a dialogue on institutionalization of regional cooperative mechanisms and more willing to draw lessons and study more carefully what the EU model can offer for possible adaptation.

Notes

1. This is found in the Regional Indicative Programme 2005–06 for ASEAN, prepared by DG Relex of the European Commission (available on its website).

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Asian Migrants in Europe: the Need for a Global Perspective

Leo Douw

Over the past ten years Asian migration to the European Union (EU) has gradually gained in importance as an area of policy making. The Amsterdam Treaty (1997, enacted in 1999) and the Tampere Council (1999) are the most important hallmarks of this trend: they reflect the widely felt need among policy makers at the top of the EU, in particular within the European Commission, to liberalize external migration and thus fulfill the EU's fundamental commitment to the principles of liberal democracy (Angenendt and Hernandez, 2004, p. 3; Battistella, 2002). Nevertheless, progress is slow, and EU policies have retained their defensive character: they serve to control and restrain external migration flows rather than facilitate them (Angenendt and Hernandez, 2004, pp. 6–8; Angenendt and Kruse, 2004, pp. 100–1).

This chapter argues that the construction of a global perspective on Asian migrants in Europe is needed to improve the quality of governance on non-European immigration and support the liberalization of international and inter-regional migration policies. For too long, migration has been conceived of as being individually motivated and as a temporary and socially marginal phenomenon. In addition, the separation of migration studies and the study of minority communities should be overcome. This mode of thinking pertains to the Cold War period, when all over the world nation-building was focused on putting the domestic resources of national states to their optimal uses and international flows of capital, commodities and labour were of limited importance. Despite all the problems which beset it, however, migration is usually in the interest of both the sending and the receiving countries, and is also actively promoted or at least permitted at both ends of the migration chain. In this respect it resembles trade and investment: state involvement in facilitating and promoting international flows of goods and capital are