



## Demographic Changes in Asia and Europe: Challenges for the Youth

A side-event on the occasion of the 26<sup>th</sup> ASEF Board of Governors Meeting

Mykolas Romeris University, Conference Hall I-414  
11 May 2011; 4:30 – 6:30pm

### ***BRIEF***

According to the United Nations World Youth Report 2010, young people constitute about 18 per cent of the world's population. In numbers, these are 1.2 billion young people between the ages of 15 and 24.

In today's age of unparalleled connectivity and mobility, the youth benefit from vast opportunities to discover, to experience and to be involved in the global village. At the same time, young people are also most affected by the challenges and problems of today's interconnected societies. They are posed by climate change, depletion of resources, unemployment, new security risks, and major demographic changes such as migration, the gender gap, or an ageing population. Addressing and adjusting to these changes will be a defining feature and task of future generations.

Significantly however, while the youth share is close to or above 20 per cent in many developing countries, young people account for an average of only 12.6 per cent of the total population. This poses serious implications on the power of the youth to shape policies decided and implemented today which will influence their well-being and living conditions in the future.

The many activities organised and facilitated by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) in the field of youth and education over the past decades showed one clear message: "The youth are prime agents for social and political change, economic development and technological innovation."<sup>1</sup> But how can the youth co-operate with the various actors in societies to ameliorate the negative consequences caused by demographic changes given their relative position in many societies in Asia and Europe today?

The dialogue „Demographic Changes in Asia and Europe: Challenges for the Youth” will bring together four representatives from the youth and education sectors to share their views and expertise on this topic from Asian and European perspectives. The panellists from Finland, Lithuania, The Philippines and Singapore will discuss pertinent issues resulting from demographic developments, with a particular focus on the challenges posed by an increasing ageing population. Key areas of discussion deal with potential initiatives, programmes and measures that could encourage solidarity between the younger and older generations.

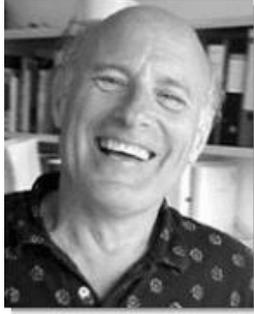
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<sup>1</sup> ASEM Youth Statement on Globalisation, Denmark 2002

## Speakers

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|    | <p>Giedrius Viliūnas graduated in Lithuanian Philology in Vilnius University (1986). Doctor of Humanities (Vilnius University, 1990). Dr. Viliūnas is currently Vice-Rector for Studies at Mykolas Romeris University. He also holds the positions of: member of the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language, member of the board of the Institute for Lithuanian Literature and Folklore, member of the board of the Lithuanian Institute of History, member of the Board of Governors of the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission.</p> <p>In the years 2009-2010, Dr. Viliūnas headed the Department of Research Policy at the Research Council of Lithuania. In 2007-2009, he was serving as a secretary at the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania and was responsible for higher education, basic research, research infrastructures and international cooperation in areas of research and higher education. He was involved in restructuring of Lithuanian research and higher education system encompassing the preparation of new Law on research and higher education (adopted in May 2009), development of programme- and competition-based research funding system, creation of the concept of integrated research, higher education and business centres (“valleys”), introduction of support schemes for research and higher education based on European structural funds. He also was taking care of the preparation of a national roadmap for the development of research infrastructures, of the e-infrastructures development programme and of the implementation of Bologna process in national higher education system. At that time he was a member of the Lithuanian Research Council, board member of the Lithuanian State Science and Studies Foundation, member of the CREST committee</p> <p>In the period between 2002 and 2007, Dr. Viliūnas served the Ministry as a public, and later permanent, adviser to the Minister. Between 2003 and 2006 he was leading strategy groups for the development of social sciences and humanities in Lithuania and SSH research infrastructures. From 2001 to 2006 he was a member of the Higher Education Council of Lithuania. He was Vice-President of the Association of Scholars in Lithuanian from 1997 to 2000. Between 1989 and 2007, Dr. Viliūnas was a lecturer and associate professor at Vilnius University, heading the department of Lithuanian literature from 1996 to 2006. He was a Member of the Senate of the University from 2002 to 2006 and Editor-in-Chief of University research papers <i>Literatūra</i> from 2000 to 2004.</p> |
|  | <p>Ambassador Dominique Girard joined ASEF as its fourth Executive Director in November 2008. A graduate in Political Studies from the Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Paris and in Oriental Languages (Chinese and Vietnamese) from the Ecole Nationale des Langues Orientales (1967 and 1969 respectively), Ambassador Girard is a career diplomat holding the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary (hors classe).</p> <p>He started his diplomatic career in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Secrétaire des Affaires Etrangères (Orient) in 1970 and since then has been alternating diverse postings in the Ministry and in French diplomatic missions in Vietnam, Laos, Singapore, USA and China. He was Ambassador to Indonesia (1992-1995), Australia (1995-2000) and India (2002-2007). Prior to his present appointment, he was Diplomatic Adviser to the French Government, as well as Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Council of France. Ambassador Girard has been awarded several French Honorary distinctions; among them, National Order of Merit (Officer), 2002; and the Legion of Honour (Officer), 2007.</p>  |
|  | <p>Ma. Krizna Gomez obtained her BA in Political Science and <i>Juris Doctor</i> degrees from the Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines. Since her law school days, she has been involved in advocacies for accountable governance and human rights. She has also been active in and pioneered the nationwide expansion of the Legal Network for Truthful Elections- the first and only citizens’ arm in the Philippines composed of lawyers and paralegals that monitors elections, advocates for law reform, and prosecutes violators.</p> <p>Currently, she serves as Program Coordinator of the Ateneo Human Rights Center, a research, litigation and advocacy NGO in her country, on establishing multi-sectoral quick reaction teams to address extra-legal killings and enforced disappearances. She also sat in the Organizing Committee that launched the Asian Consortium for Human Rights-Based Access to Justice, a regional initiative aimed at capacity</p>  |

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|   | <p>development of government institutions, justice actors, and civil society organizations in Asia in access to justice programming. She is also a teaching assistant in Constitutional Law at the Ateneo School of Law. Krizna now serves as President of Asia-Europe Foundation University Alumni Network (ASEFUAN) and has been coordinating the network's programmes on public health.</p>   |
|    | <p>Mr. Jussi Tapio Lehmusvaara graduated with a Master of Arts from the Collège of Europe (Brugge, Belgium) and Master of Social Sciences from the University of Turku (Finland). He also holds a Certificat d'Etudes Politiques from the Sciences Po-Institut d'Etudes Politiques IEP (France) and studies in economics at the University of Stockholm (Sweden).</p> <p>He currently works as Financial Adviser at the Financial Markets Department at the Finnish Ministry of Finance, being in charge of Finland's strategic shareholder steering of the World Bank Group. His previous work experience includes e.g. consulting business opportunities in Asia in projects financed by the Asian Development Bank; analysing the OECD's Enhanced Engagement process with emerging economies of China, India, Indonesia, South-Africa and Brazil; capacity building of NGOs in a Liberian refugee camp, etc. He has been working at duty stations through four continents in e.g. Stockholm, Bonn, Gomoa, New York, Manila, Beijing, and Paris. He has been actively involved in various ASEFUAN activities, including serving as Vice-President of the organisation, building the Model ASEM project, etc.</p> |
|   | <p>Mr Julius Pagojus is member of the Executive Board of the Lithuanian Youth Council (LijOT), the biggest non-governmental, non-profit umbrella structure for Lithuanian national youth organisations and regional unions of youth organizations. Founded in 1992, LijOT has 62 members (non-governmental youth organisations) with more than 200 000 members in all Lithuania.</p> <p>Mr Pagojus is also member of the Executive Board of the Vilnius Chamber of Lithuanian Socialdemocratic Youth Union (LSDJS). Since 2007, Mr Pagojus has been working as Project Manager at the Self-government Development Institute (SPI) which specializes in the fields of strengthening self-government, cooperation among communities and sustainable growth.</p> <p>Mr Pagojus is currently finishing his Masters of Law at Vilnius University.</p>   |
|  | <p>Prof. Leo Tan is the Chairman of the Pacific Science Association Committee on Science Communication and Education.</p> <p>He attained his Bachelor of Science (Hon.), Graduate Research and PhD from the University of Singapore. He has been a lecturer at the National University of Singapore and has held various positions at the National Institute of Education (Nanyang Technological University), including as the Director of the Institute. In the course of his career, he has also been the Chairman of the National Parks Board, the President of the Asian Scientific Academies &amp; Societies, the Director and CEO of the Singapore Science Centre and the Chairman of the National Youth Achievement Award Council.</p> <p>Prof. Tan has, over the years, received several Singapore National Day Awards for Public Service and Administration. He was also awarded the Green Leaf Environmental Award and the French National Order of Merit.</p>   |
|  | <p>Ambassador Kamaitis has been the Lithuanian Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in Japan since 2006, concurrently accredited to the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand. Born in 1965 in Kaunas, Lithuania, Ambassador Kamaitis graduated in Architecture from Vilnius Civil Engineering Institute in 1987.</p> <p>His diplomatic career began in 1992 in the Asia, Africa and Pacific Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. He has held various positions at the MFA since, including head of Asia, Africa and the Pacific and North Europe divisions, and was the first Lithuanian diplomat posted in Japan, serving as Charge d'Affairs ad interim in 1998-2002. He is fluent in Japanese, English and Russian. In 2003, Ambassador Kamaitis was awarded the Knight's Cross, Order of Merit to Lithuania. Ambassador Kamaitis joined the Executive Committee in December 2010 on ASEF's 25th Board of Governors Meeting held in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR.</p>  |



Prof. W.A.L. Stokhof graduated from University of Amsterdam in Slavic and Baltic Studies. Between 1971 and 1985, he worked in Indonesia as Head of Indonesian Linguistics Development Programme (ILDEP). From 1985 to 2006, Prof. Stokhof was Chair of the Department Austronesian and Papuan Linguistics at Leiden University; from 1986 to 2012 he headed the Indonesian-Netherlands Programme in Islamic Studies (INIS).

He is the Founder of the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) and served as its Director between 1993 and 2006. He was the Founder and Director of the International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) between 1997 and 1999. At present, he holds the Chair of Cultural and Societal Relations between The Netherlands and Indonesia (Leiden University) and teaches at the Centre for Policy Research and International Studies (CenPRIS), Universiti Sains Malaysia. Prof. Stokhof is the Founder and Secretary General of the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) and has published and (co-)edited work in the fields of Islamic Studies, Linguistics and Asia-Europe cultural, academic and strategic relations.

Prof. Stokhof is the Governor for the Netherlands at the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). He is a member of ASEF's Executive Committee and ASEF's Chairman of the Board of Governors for 2011.

## Partners



The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) promotes greater mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. Through ASEF, civil society concerns are included as a vital component of deliberations of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM\*). ASEF was established in February 1997 by the participating governments of ASEM and has since implemented over 500 projects, engaging over 15,000 direct participants as well as reaching out to a much wider audience in Asia and Europe. [www.asef.org](http://www.asef.org)

\* ASEM now brings together 46 member states (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam) plus the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat. [www.aseminfoboard.org](http://www.aseminfoboard.org)



ASEF University Alumni Network (ASEFUAN) is an international non-profit organization consisting of more than 500 Asian and European young leaders from the 46 ASEM countries who have graduated from the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) University programme since 1998. ASEFUAN aims to strengthen cross-cultural ties, promote excellence, and foster Asia-Europe relations at international and grassroots level within its membership and with its partner institutions. It organises activities to maintain and reinforce the relationships forged among participants of the ASEF University programme and undertakes projects to promote a continuing intercultural dialogue between Asia and Europe, particularly among the younger generation. [www.asefuan.org](http://www.asefuan.org)



Mykolas Romeris University, named after Professor Mykolas Pijus Paskalis Romeris, a founder of the Lithuanian Constitutional Law, is a dynamic, modern University with a well-established place in the sphere of global higher education. The mission of the University is to educate youth, to amass and nourish intellectual potential, to train leaders capable of creating and implementing innovations, which influence the overall scientific, cultural and technological progress changing society. It is possible to achieve this, understanding that only a competitive environment gives birth to quality and that universities are equal participants of the market. The University fosters autonomy. This allows to independently tailor the content of studies and areas of research, while applying the latest management principles to improve and change one's activities, taking into account contemporary European higher education development tendencies and the needs of the labour market. Experts from the European University Association (EUA) conducted a comprehensive audit of Mykolas Romeris University's activities. They concluded that the University undoubtedly has the potential to become one of the most notable social science universities in Europe.