



Asia-Europe Meeting
ASEM Education and Research Hub
for Lifelong Learning



**ASEM Education and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning
Research Network 4 “National strategies of Lifelong Learning with
regard to citizens’ motivation and barriers against continuing
education and training” meeting in Riga, the University of Latvia,
June 16-19, 2009**

Welcome speech at Riga’s meeting

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Good Morning, everyone! Mr Chairman, all the distinguished colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen!

First of all, thank you very much Prof Marcis Auzins, Rector of the University of Latvia. Your attendance and speech are very impressive and important. Your speech let me know what we are working is beneficial for a person, an enterprise and even a country. We have learnt a lot from your speech.

The second thanks a lot to the meeting sponsor, Soros Foundation. Without your finance we cannot come here to participate in the meeting. Thank you very much for your generous contribution. Thank you very much for the meeting organizers, University of Latvia, you offered us very excellent accommodation, meeting facilities.

Of course, I would like to thank ASEM education and research hub and thank my colleagues in this network. We follow the topic of national strategy with regard to citizen's motivation and barriers against continuing education and training. Last autumn in Beijing we discussed the research projects, such as *Emerging Markets for Lifelong Learning; National Systems of LLL, National Strategies, Financing and Qualification Staff; The Patterns and Trends of Participation in LLL among Different Groups; Mapping National Strategies of Lifelong Learning (from pre-school to adult education and learning)*. This time we will continue to deepen the discussion of the topics and personally I think we need to develop a framework to cover the entire project and form a research report to be reference for policy makers and administrators in Asian and European countries.

In today's world, with rapid development of science & technology and social

progress, the total amount of knowledge human being created is growing greatly. The knowledge and skills people acquired in the schools or universities have not caught up the demand of work and personal fulfillment. The rapid changes in the structure of employment and in the organization of work have drastically altered the form and the content of jobs. People have to learn all the time and upgrade their skills to keep pace with the development of era.

To respond to new challenges, most countries in Asia and Europe are focusing on lifelong learning to enhance their competitiveness at the same time. For example, China Government set forth the objective of building up a learning system and a learning society in 2002. It indicates that the oldest idea of lifelong learning had entered a new stage, from concept to public policy, from the ideals to the action in China. Lifelong learning is now widely believed to be essential for everyone and has become a guiding principle for policy initiatives ranging from national economic competitiveness to social cohesion and personal fulfillment. The oldest Chinese proverb, “keep on learning as long as you live”, has transformed from person's dream to the social realities.

During this meeting we will discuss the cooperation research project in the future. We will elaborate a detailed research programme and move forward the multi-countries research project. I believe the future research achievements will be a very important reference for European-Asian countries. Your participation is very much appreciated!

Thank you!