

Europe-Asia Cooperation on SPS and Food Safety

The **Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM)** brings together 21 Asian countries and 30 European countries, as well as the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat. Its aim is to promote dialogue and cooperation between Europe and Asia in all areas of common interest. It was founded in 1996, and provides a forum for informal discussion based on equal partnership and mutual benefit.

Considering the utmost importance that food safety has for all ASEM members and the need to foster technical and scientific cooperation in this area, a first ASEM seminar on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures and food safety was organised by the European Commission in 2015. Given its valuable outcome, it was decided that a second conference should take place.

This 2nd conference will focus on the main aspects related to food safety, in particular on **food standards and official controls, e-commerce practices, food related frauds and animal health international standards**. It will also include a session on **combatting antimicrobial resistance**.



Why is Europe-Asia cooperation on food safety important?

Food safety is an important and growing concern for societies and governments, both in Europe and Asia.

SPS measures are necessary to protect human, animal and plant life or health, and thus public health. They help ensure that the food supplied to consumers is safe, but are liable to create trade barriers.

European and Asian countries are key trading partners.

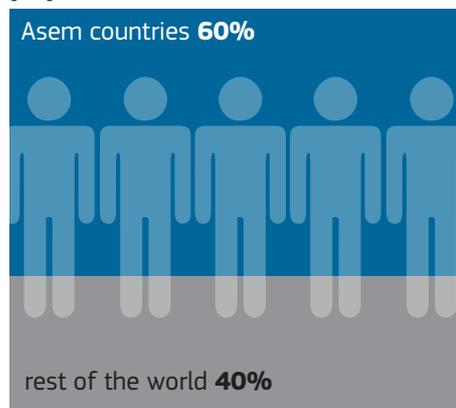
More cooperation on the SPS field could boost Europe-Asia food trade.

Scientific and technical cooperation on food safety between Europe and Asia is of great importance. The aim is to:

- exchange information on new scientific knowledge and regulatory developments,
- enhance capacity building,
- have a better understanding of each other's regulatory system,
- achieve more harmonised measures,
- ensure the protection of consumers and of animal health.

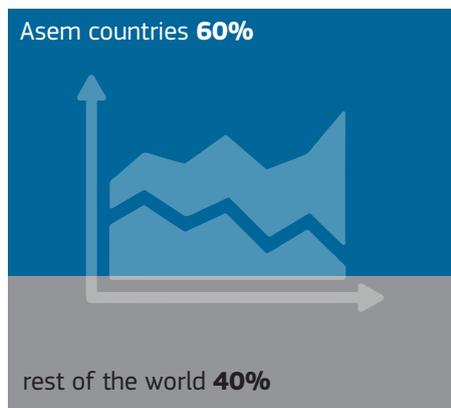
ASEM in figures

population



Source: World Development Indicators, The World Bank

GDP



Source: World Development Indicators, The World Bank

trade



Source: European Parliamentary Research Service Blog



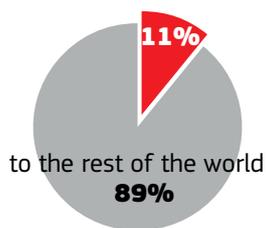
This fact sheet was produced with support from the European Union's Partnership Instrument



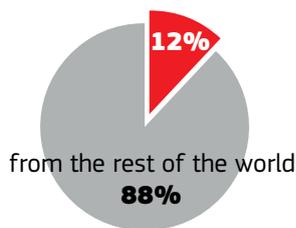
ASEM food trade

Percentage of Asian food (2015)

exports going to Europe

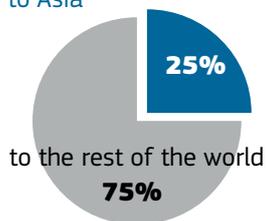


imports coming from Europe

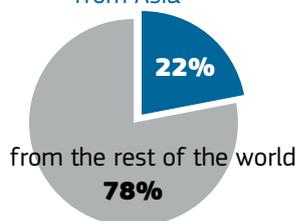


Percentage of European food (2015)

exports going to Asia



imports coming from Asia



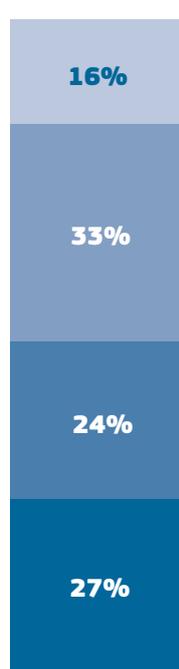
Source: UN Comtrade Database.

Food trade refers to trade within chapters 1-24 of the HS. Europe and Asia refer to European and Asian ASEM countries respectively.

European food exports to Asia



European food imports from Asia (2016)



animal or vegetable fats and oils



vegetable products



live animals, animal products



prepared foodstuffs, beverages, tobacco

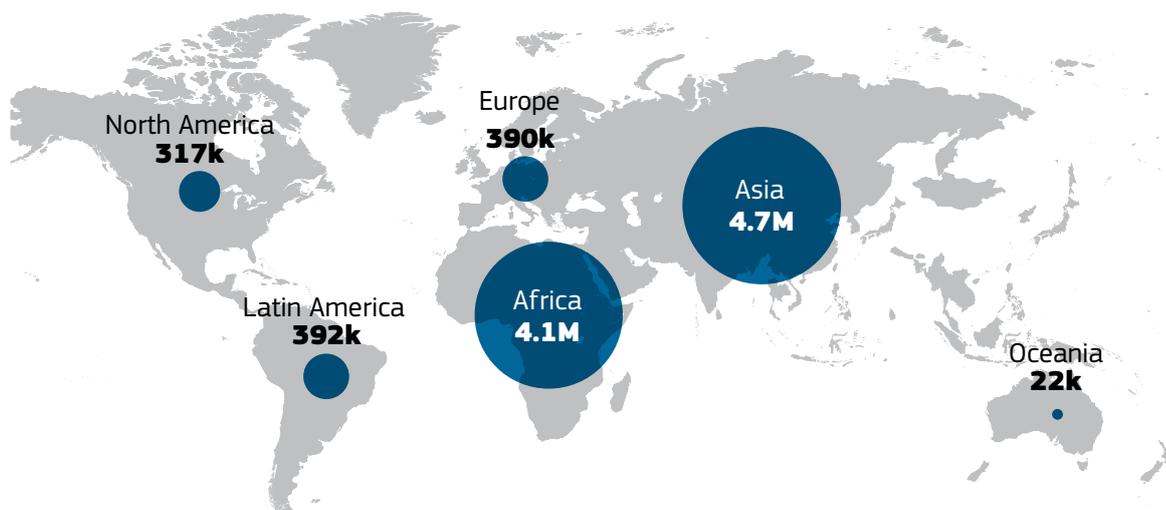
Source: European Union, Eurostat.

“One Health” policy

ASEM partners work together on food safety issues according to the “One Health” policy. This policy is based on the recognition that human and animal health are linked together, and are connected to the environment as well. Also, diseases may spread from one country to another. Therefore, health issues must be addressed through a collaborative approach, across sectors, disciplines and borders.

Fostering cooperation against Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

Fighting AMR has long been a priority for the European Commission which launched a 5-year Action Plan to combat AMR back in November 2011. This was followed in June 2017 by the “EU One Health Action Plan against AMR”. Fostering Europe-Asia cooperation in this area will help raise awareness, exchange knowledge and experience, and further European, Asian and International efforts to tackle this problem.



Deaths per year attributable to AMR by 2050 if current resistance rates increased by 40%.

Source: OECD. Antimicrobial Resistance in G7 Countries and Beyond, 2015.