GEP Workshop highlights Asian role

Some of the world's leading authorities on Asian economies converged on Kuala Lumpur this week when GEP hosted a workshop at its new Malaysian branch.

Delegates from across the region met fellow academics from the UK to present and analyse research especially relevant to the area's ever-growing role in the global economy.

Experts discussed key issues such as trade reforms and liberalisation, foreign direct investment, exporting, openness and growth during the one-day event.

The workshop, entitled *Openness, FDI and Economic Development*, was hosted by GEP in Malaysia, which opened at the University of Nottingham's Semenyih campus in January.

GEP Research Fellow Dr Richard Kneller, one of the event's organisers, said: "The workshop gave us an excellent opportunity to showcase what we do and enhance our network of contacts."

"It also allowed all the people involved to see the different methodologies and approaches to the particular areas of research we use in GEP."

Dr Kneller launched the workshop by presenting one of his own papers, *Returns to Exporting at the Firm Level*.

Another discussion centred on *Openness and Growth*, a study by Dr Wyn Morgan, Dr Kneller's fellow Associate Professor of Economics in Nottingham.

The remaining papers were presented by Dr Albert Hu, an Associate Professor of Economics at the National University of Singapore, and Dr Wai Heng Loke, of the University of Malaya's Department of Economics.

Delegates from the International Islamic University, Universiti Kebangsaan, the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research and Universiti Putra Malaysia also attended.

Dr Kneller's research analysed a survey of UK businesses to examine how entering export markets affected the performance of firms.

One of his findings was that companies with less export experience but higher export intensity generally benefited more from selling abroad.

Another was that the gains arose around two years after a firm first entered the export market - and continued for as long as 10 years.

The findings could be significant for booming Far Eastern economies such as
China's emerging super-power and the Asian Tigers - the likes of Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand - allowing their firms to compete more effectively for customers with those from the UK and other developed countries.

Dr Kneller said: "The region is obviously among the most important in the world economy - as was shown by our by decision to open a GEP branch in Malaysia."

The Workshop took place at the University of Nottingham's offices at Chulan Tower, Kuala Lumpur, on 21 May.

**Topics discussed at the event**

*Returns to Exporting at the Firm Level* - Richard Kneller, GEP, University of Nottingham

*Openness and Growth* - Wyn Morgan, GEP, University of Nottingham

*Economic Reform and Liberalisation and Small and Medium-Size Enterprises in Chinese Manufacturing Industries* - Albert Hu, National University of Singapore

*Assessing Malaysia's and China's Comparative Advantages in Selected Manufacturing Goods* - Wai Heng Loke, University of Malaya

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