

## **Panel proposal: EuroSEAS 2022 (single session)**

### **FROM MEASLES TO COVID-19 POLITICS OF MASS IMMUNIZATIONS IN SOUTH EAST ASIA**

#### **Conveners :**

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After more than half a century of measles vaccination (1963-), there is regular news of numerous outbreaks across the globe and the viral disease remains one of the most important causes of children deaths in the Global South. Right before the first case of SRAS-COV<sub>2</sub> was discovered, we were experiencing a "global pandemic" of measles and resurgences were noted and fought in Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia and mostly the Philippines. The extremely contagious viral diseases seem to be 'coming back' over and over. Yet, the history of this vaccine-preventable disease (VPD) remains puzzlingly unexplored. The panel seeks to explore some of the following issues related to measles that might help understanding the limits of mass vaccinations as prevention: What are the historical (political, economic, sociocultural) determinants and consequences of national, regional and international measles vaccinations policies, programs and practices on the SEA region? Since measles is linked to poverty, overcrowding, malnutrition and mobility, how health disparities are addressed and perhaps exacerbated by biomedical knowledge, technology, and policies over time? Who or what – from faulty fridges to misguided mothers, poorly trained nurses, risky refugees and mobile minority groups – has been blamed for breaking vaccination chains? Conversely, what key connections are credited with interruptions of transmission?

This panel will offer an opportunity to analyze from various perspectives the interaction between multiple, local and global levels of actors and decision-makers and the local declinations and appropriations of policies and concepts imposed from above. A special attention will be given to the recent observations about how the emergence of COVID-19 epidemic shapes, or undermines, measles immunization programs and redefines new public health priorities. Thus, we wish to open the debate about the transferability of policies and goals, notably of eradication, between VPDs as well as targeted communities and offers a nuanced way of thinking about health as a value that is produced through an appropriation by different interests from the vantage point of Southeast Asia. In times of another "global pandemic", we need to question how mass vaccination presents as an indicator of both expansion and contraction in the ambitions of state welfare, international development, and global humanitarianism and securitization.