



EU ASEAN STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Blue Book 2021





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Blue Book 2021





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FOREWORD

By the EU Commissioner for International Partnerships



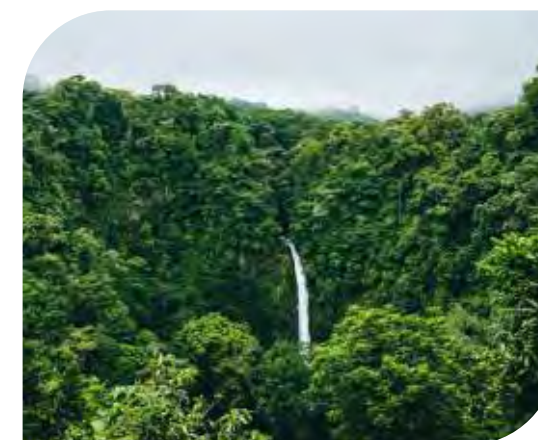
I welcome the longstanding, dynamic and broad-based relationship of the European Union (EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as we stand as Strategic Partners in 2021. Together, we share a commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In a challenging global context where models of inclusive governance are put to the test, it is more important than ever to stand for multilateralism, a rules-based global order, and responsible leadership based on peace, freedom and solidarity.

At an important juncture in our fight against COVID-19, these joint commitments are essential to battle its consequences on our economies, citizens and societies. Global solidarity and cooperation are crucial to end the pandemic, as no one is safe until everyone is safe. The EU has been committed from the start to making the COVID-19 vaccine a global public good and will continue to work together with international partners such as ASEAN, to ensure safe and fair access to vaccines for all.

These global commitments are also an integral part of both the EU and ASEAN regional integration processes, helping to ensure a sustainable and people-centred approach, which leaves no one behind. In this regard, our ASEAN-EU Sustainable Development Dialogue is an essential platform to exchange views, share experiences and take stock of the progress achieved, reinforcing our partnership towards longer-term objectives and concrete activities. Such objectives include the transition towards circular, climate-neutral and environmentally sustainable economies and resilient ecosystems as well as sustainable connectivity, as reaffirmed in our ASEAN-EU Joint Ministerial Statement on Connectivity adopted last year. The EU and ASEAN can notably build on their strong and successful cooperation on soft connectivity, which supports regulatory and policy frameworks to enable trade, policy dialogues to strengthen the links between citizens, businesses and institutions and strengthening people-to-people exchanges. I am delighted that we have established our Dialogue as a regular event.

As Commissioner for International Partnerships, I have put human development, in particular education, at the heart of our partnerships and made it my mission to ensure youth and women are not only included but also empowered. I am delighted to see that ASEAN has similarly put people at the core of its comprehensive recovery framework, focusing notably on skills, education and gender equality, testifying to our common interests and objectives at regional level. The EU as part of 'Team Europe' will aim to provide stronger and more coordinated support to ASEAN and its Member States. It will continue to work together with ASEAN to ensure our recovery efforts lead to a greener, more equal, and digital future.

Despite the pandemic, our partnership was quick to adapt to new global realities and has continued delivering on its positive and dynamic agenda. This sixth edition of the EU-ASEAN Blue Book demonstrates the resilience, importance and relevance of our partnership in the new global context but also for the lives of our citizens.



Jutta Urpilainen

EU Commissioner for International Partnerships



FOREWORD

By the EU Ambassador to ASEAN

I am proud to present the sixth edition of the Blue Book. As every year, you will find in this flagship publication all you want to know about the cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Last year, we reached an exciting milestone in our long-standing partnership. EU and ASEAN became Strategic Partners based on our shared values of effective multilateralism and rules-based international order. Regular summits at leaders' level will strengthen our ties, promoting fair and free trade, sustainable connectivity, and peace and security. Another major event was the EU High Representative's first attendance at the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting "plus" last December, boosting our security cooperation in the region.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accentuated our need for increased cooperation and solidarity. "Team Europe", as we call our joint efforts with our Member States, supports ASEAN's pandemic response and recovery efforts with over EUR 800 million, including a new programme for health pandemic response and preparedness in Southeast Asia. We will continue our expert dialogue on vaccine security and work together to ensure fair and equitable access to vaccines.

To build back better, our flagship cooperation programmes facilitated cross border trade through a new electronic ASEAN Customs Transit System, promoted the exchange of knowledge and experiences, and continued efforts to conserve ASEAN's rich biodiversity and mitigate the effects of climate change. We launched new programmes on disaster management and resilience, reducing illegal logging and strengthening sustainable forest management.



This year, we will kick off support for Smart Green ASEAN Cities and continue our work towards an ASEAN brand scholarship scheme. "Team Europe" will explore future opportunities for cooperation that can help us jointly address the global challenges of climate change and reap the benefits of connectivity and digitalization.

In 2021, the EU and ASEAN celebrate their 44th year of partnership. We have come so far as partner regions, having stepped up our relations to strategic economic, political, development, and security cooperation.

These advances should ultimately serve one purpose – making a positive change in the lives of the people of Europe and Southeast Asia. The following pages illustrate how our diverse cooperation is doing just that, with tangible impact on individuals and communities.

Thank you for your interest and I hope you enjoy reading our publication.



Igor Driesmans
EU Ambassador to ASEAN



THE EU WORLDWIDE

Strengthening international relations and global cooperation

The European Union (EU) is a unique economic and political union between 27 Member States that has delivered more than six decades of peace, stability, and prosperity for its citizens. Today, the EU represents almost half a billion people, and is the third largest economy in the world.

The EU as a single economic market represents the largest trade bloc in the world, the largest exporter of manufactured goods and services, and the biggest import market for over 100 countries.

To strengthen the EU's international leadership, the European External Action Services (EEAS) was created in 2011. With 145 diplomatic representations throughout the world, the EU plays an important role in diplomacy, the promotion of human rights, trade, development and humanitarian aid, and working with multilateral organisations.

In line with its commitment to promoting global solidarity, the EU launched the 'Team Europe' package on 8 April 2020 as part of the EU's response to the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The EU and its Member States have committed to a Team Europe global response package of €38.5 billion to support partner countries' efforts in fighting the pandemic.



David Sassoli
The President of
the European Parliament



Charles Michel
The President of
the European Council



Ursula von der Leyen
The President of
the European Commission



Josep Borrell
High Representative of the Union for
Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

EU COMMISSION PRIORITIES FOR 2019 - 2024:



A European Green Deal
Striving to be the
first climate-neutral
continent by 2050



An economy that works for people
Working for social
fairness and
prosperity



A Europe fit for the digital age
Empowering
people with a
new generation
of technologies



Europe in the world
Europe to strive for
more by strengthening
our unique brand of
responsible global
leadership



A new push for democracy
Nurturing, protecting
and strengthening
democracy



THE EU AND ASEAN

A Strategic Partnership

The EU and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations have been committed dialogue partners since 1977 with the shared values and principles of a rules-based international order, effective and sustainable multilateralism, as well as free and fair trade. Together, the EU and ASEAN represent close to half a billion people and almost 25% of global economic power.

Following the 23rd EU-ASEAN Ministerial meeting on 1 December 2020, the EU and ASEAN agreed to elevate their relations to a **Strategic Partnership** with a commitment to regular summits at leader's level and enhanced economic and security cooperation.

EU-ASEAN security cooperation currently covers maritime security, counterterrorism, and transnational crime. On 9 December 2020, the EU attended the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM+) for the first time as the Guest of the Chair.

**At heart,
the EU and ASEAN are
“partners in integration”
working together for
multilateral solutions**

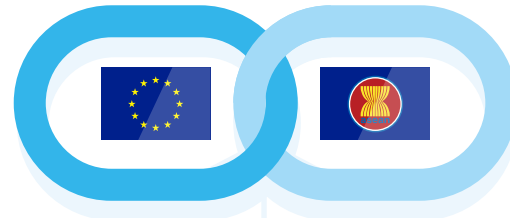
Josep Borrell,

High Representative of the
European Union for Foreign Affairs
and Security Policy / Vice President
of the European Commission



CONNECTING EUROPE & ASIA: THE EU STRATEGY

Promotes sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based connectivity to enhance prosperity, safety, and resilience.



Recognises the importance of ASEAN in strengthening connectivity in Asia.



Trade



Transport



Energy



Digital



Human Dimension

HOW THE EU ENHANCES CONNECTIVITY



Contributing to efficient cross-border connections



Strengthening bilateral, regional and international partnerships based on commonly agreed rules and standards



Leveraging sustainable financing for investments

EUROPEAN UNION
FOUNDED IN 1957



MEMBER STATES

27



MOTTO:
UNITED IN DIVERSITY

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
24

MILLION POPULATION
447.7

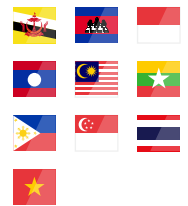
LAND AREA
4 214 995 KM²



ASEAN
FOUNDED IN 1967

MEMBER STATES
10

MEMBER STATES



MOTTO:
ONE VISION, ONE IDENTITY,
ONE COMMUNITY

01 WORKING LANGUAGE
ENGLISH

MILLION POPULATION
655.9

LAND AREA
4 500 000 KM²



The EU and ASEAN are the two most advanced **regional integration initiatives** in the world.



The EU is ASEAN's **most significant collaborator in development cooperation.**



EU-based entities are the **largest provider of foreign direct investment** to the ASEAN region, which is its third largest trading partner.



The EU is an increasingly **important destination for investment** coming from the ASEAN region.



EU-ASEAN cooperation is aligned with the

3 ASEAN COMMUNITY PILLARS



Political and security cooperation
As a founding member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the EU is committed to increasing its cooperation with ASEAN on political and security issues. The growing number of visits and dialogue events reflects the mutual goal to increase regional security and stability.

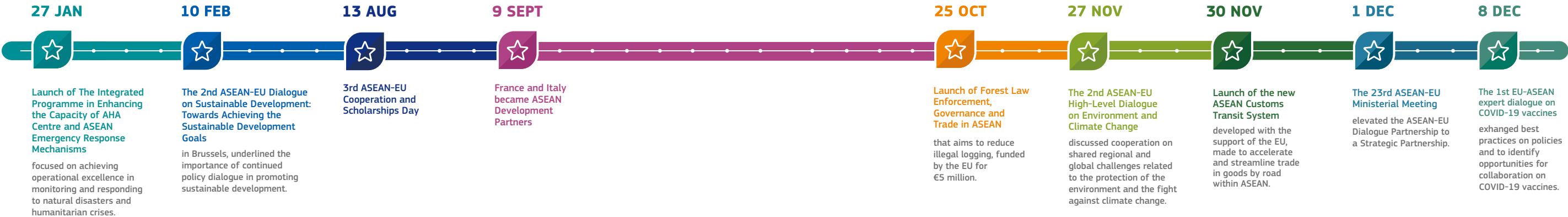


Economic cooperation
The EU is working towards improving trade-related regulatory and policy frameworks, intellectual property rights, standards, customs and transport, and civil aviation. The ultimate objective is to accelerate regional economic integration and improve livelihoods in the ASEAN region.

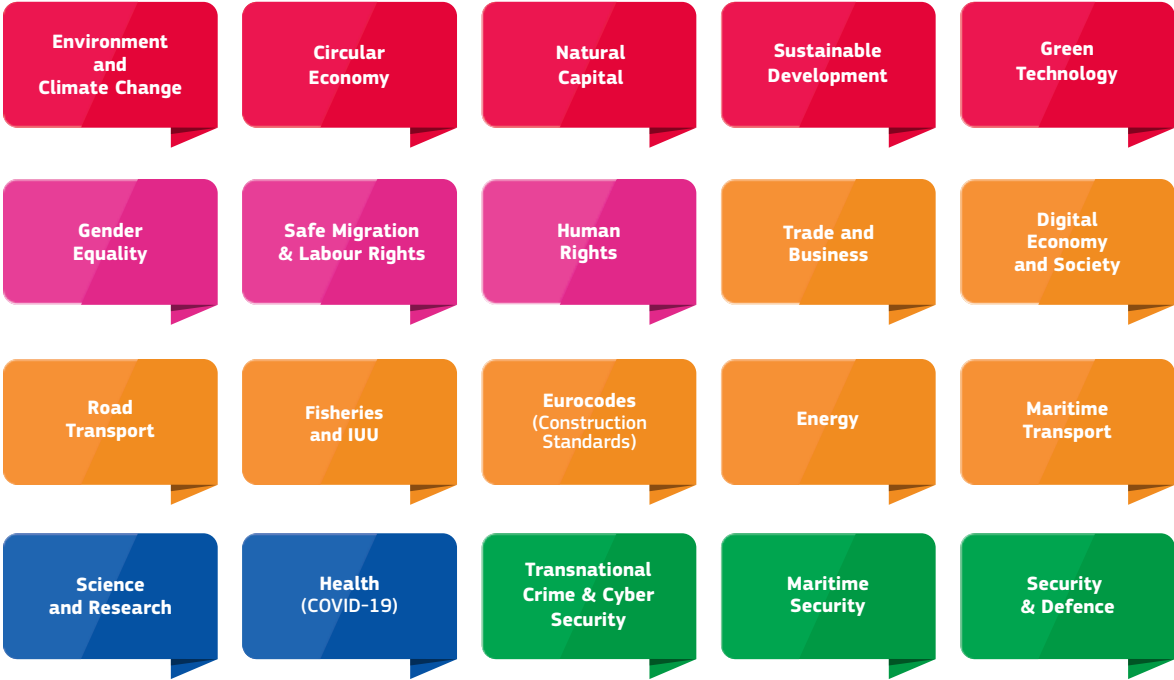


Socio-cultural cooperation
EU cooperation addresses higher education, health, land use and forestry, disaster management and preparedness, biodiversity protection and the effective management of protected areas, sustainable urbanisation, sustainable agriculture, and improving labour conditions for migrant women.

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

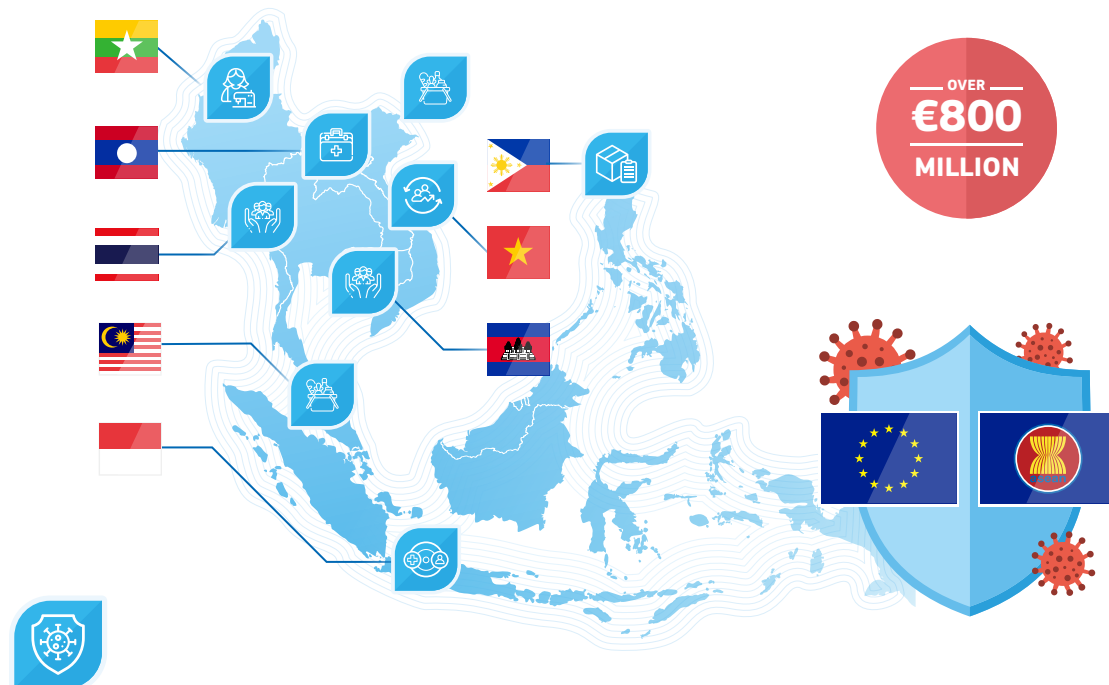


EU-ASEAN Dialogues



TEAM EUROPE

SUPPORTS ASEAN IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORONAVIRUS



ASEAN REGION

- ✓ The first virtual EU-ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting on 20 March 2020 discussed cooperation on mitigating the social and economic impact in both regions, keeping supply chains open and advancing scientific research.
- ✓ Support to the WHO for Southeast Asia (€20 million) to strengthen the health system capacity and to respond to the coronavirus and future diseases.
- ✓ EU- ASEAN Expert Dialogue on COVID-19 vaccines.
- ✓ €2.2 billion contribution from Team Europe for the COVAX Facility to help secure 1.3 billion doses of vaccination for 92 low and middle-income countries, including ASEAN Member States.
- ✓ The BIOSEC project (€300 000) under the CBRN Risk Mitigation Centre of Excellence Initiative is working to improve biosecurity management systems, including for pandemics.
- ✓ Germany contributed €5 million to the ASEAN COVID Response Fund.

CAMBODIA*

- ✓ Hospitals, water, sanitation, hygiene, and nutrition
- ✓ Sustaining livelihoods and economic activities in rural areas
- ✓ Supporting social protection, education, and vulnerable groups
- ✓ Budget support for economic recovery

MYANMAR

- ✓ Protecting livelihoods and resilience of vulnerable communities
- ✓ Supporting research and testing capacities
- ✓ Strengthening health system preparedness

INDONESIA

- ✓ Supporting teaching hospitals and health sector investments
- ✓ Working with civil society
- ✓ Contributing to the UN Multi Sector Response Plan

THE PHILIPPINES

- ✓ Supporting the justice sector and the Department of Health
- ✓ Humanitarian Assistance
- ✓ Water, sanitation and hygiene

LAOS*

- ✓ Supporting digital learning
- ✓ Budget support for economic recovery
- ✓ Working with civil society and sustaining economic livelihoods
- ✓ Supporting health care facilities and testing capacity

THAILAND

- ✓ Working with civil society
- ✓ Protecting fundamental rights
- ✓ Supporting border provinces and refugee camps

MALAYSIA

- ✓ Supporting civil society and vulnerable communities, in particular women and children migrants
- ✓ Fostering recovery of SMEs

VIETNAM

- ✓ Budget support for economic recovery
- ✓ Working with civil society
- ✓ Expanding social protection and safe water



* together with:



EU-ASEAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Partnering for sustainable development

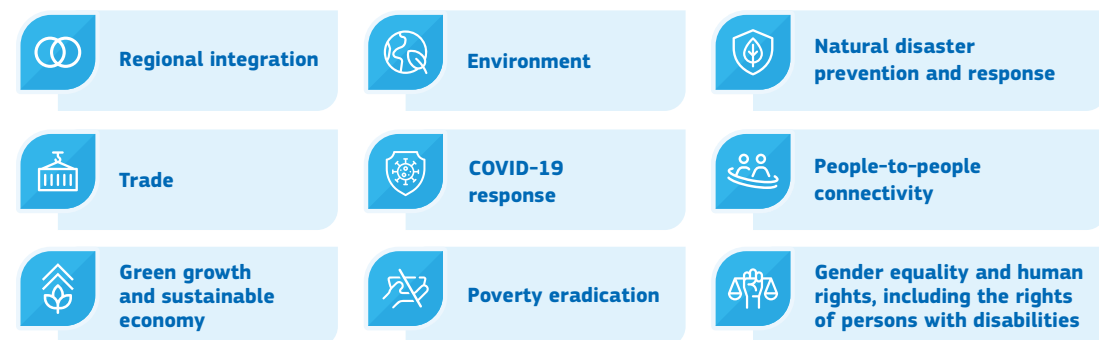
The year 2021 marks the beginning of a new decade of action in fulfilling the two regions' joint commitment to promoting sustainable development through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

The newly signed Strategic Partnership between the two regions is a further testament to the commitment of the EU and ASEAN to deepen existing cooperation.

The 2nd ASEAN-EU Dialogue on Sustainable Development: Towards Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, held in Brussels on 10 February 2020, highlighted the need for enhanced cooperation to tackle the global challenges of climate change and environmental degradation.

The EU reaffirmed its commitment to addressing these issues by launching three new programmes with a total funding of €13 million: Smart Green ASEAN Cities, Regional ASEAN Forest Governance and Supreme Audit Institutions.

Priority areas of EU-ASEAN International Partnerships:



EU AND ASEAN ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) TOGETHER



EU COOPERATION WITH ASEAN

POLITICAL SECURITY	ECONOMIC	SOCIO-CULTURAL
Policy Dialogue Facility €20 million 2018-2023 E-READI		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
CBRN Risk Mitigation €32 million Centres of Excellence 1 2 3 6 8 9 11 12 13 17	Economic Integration €40 million 2017-2022 ARISE Plus 2 3 8 9 17 Country-level interventions national trade support programmes €50+ million 2019 onward ARISE Plus Sustainable infrastructure investment €50 million 2021 onward ACGF 9 11 13 17	Higher education and student mobility €15 million 2015-2023 4 5 Sustainable use of Peat Lands and Haze Mitigation €20 million from the EU & €4 million from Germany 2019-2023 SUPA 14 15 Support to ASEAN's emergency response €10 million 2019-2024 EU Support to AHA Centre 11 12 13 Support to Farmers' organisation €15 million 2015-2020 AFOSP 12 15 16 Forest governance support programme €5 million 2020-2023 FLEGT 12 15 16 Governance and domestic accountability €3 million 2021 onward ASEAN SAI 16 Biodiversity Conservation Management of Protected Areas €10 million 2016-2021 13 14 15 16 SMART Green ASEAN Cities €5 million 2021-2024 8 11 12 13 South East Asia Health Pandemic Response and Preparedness €20 million 2020-2024 8 11 12 13
EU-ASEAN Think Tank Initiative €0.5 million 2021-2023 16		

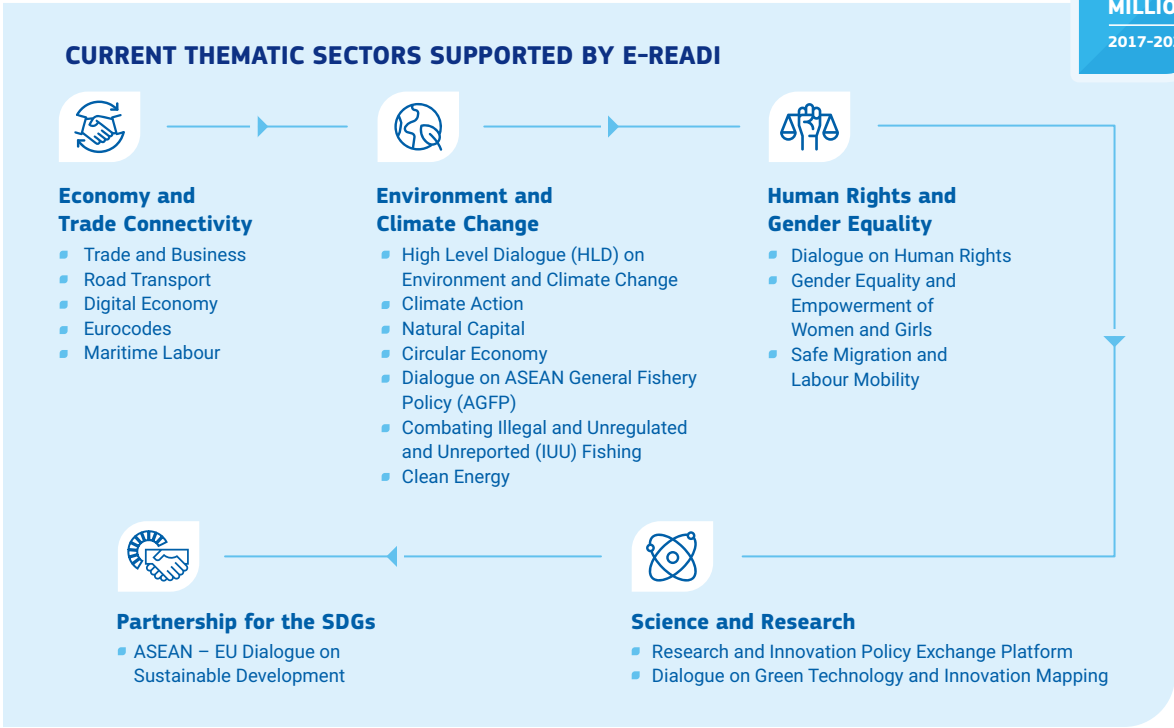


ENHANCED REGIONAL EU-ASEAN DIALOGUE INSTRUMENT (E-READI)

E-READI is a demand-driven instrument that supports ASEAN regional integration by strengthening EU-ASEAN networks and exchanging knowledge and experience in policy areas of joint interest. In addition to engaging with policy makers from EU and ASEAN institutions and Member States, it facilitates ongoing and new dialogues with civil society, the private sector, and other relevant stakeholders across various policy areas.

The initiative offers organisational and logistical support to EU-ASEAN meetings, workshops and study visits, which serve to identify common areas of policy dialogues. It can also provide expert studies and analysis in support of sectoral dialogue areas, or other short-term technical assistance.

€20
MILLION
2017-2023



ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

31 Events	1 786 Participants	5 Thematic Sectors	17 Divisions of the ASEAN Secretariat
19 Studies		18 Thematic Dialogues	30 ASEAN Sectoral Bodies & Working Groups





On 9 September 2020, France and Italy joined Germany in becoming ASEAN's development partners. The endorsement was made during the 53rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and set a positive dynamic to further cooperation on overlapping interests and common challenges.



PRIORITY AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN FRANCE AND ASEAN:



Promoting multilateralism and sustainable security in Southeast Asia



Sustainable development



Economic development and international outreach



PRIORITY AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN ITALY AND ASEAN:

ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC)



Organised crime, cybersecurity and counterterrorism



Civilian peacekeeping



Advancing the rule of law and human rights



Women, peace and security



Support to the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center



Maritime cooperation and defence

ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)



High-level political and economic dialogue



Sustainable connectivity



Free Trade Agreements (FTAs): implementing and promoting the application of FTAs



Space cooperation

ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC)



Exchange of best practices in the field of museology



Protection and conservation of cultural heritage



Cinema industry cooperation



Twinning of UNESCO world heritage cultural sites



Tackling illegal art trafficking



People-to-people exchanges





GERMANY-ASEAN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

2016: Granted the status of ASEAN Development Partner

General



Strengthening of the ASEAN Secretariat capacities and the Integration Process within the framework of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 (ASEC)

Funding



FFO

Budget



€ 2.7 million

Duration



Feb 2019 - Aug 2021

ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)



Sustainable Design of Urban Mobility in Middle-sized Metropolitan Regions in ASEAN Member States (SMMR)

€ 3.3 million | 2019-2021



Strengthening regional structures for small and medium enterprise promotion in the ASEAN region (ASEAN SME)

€ 3.84 million | 2019-2022



Consumer Protection in ASEAN (PROTECT)

€ 3.84 million | 2018-2022



Promotion of Competitiveness within the Framework of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (COMPETE)

€ 4 million | 2019-2021



Climate Smart Land Use in ASEAN

€ 2.5 million | 2018-2020



Strengthening quality infrastructure in ASEAN- Phase 3

€ 1.5 million | 2019-2021



ASEAN-German Energy Programme, Phase II (AGEP II)

€ 3 million | 2019-2022



Sustainable agriculture value chains in ASEAN (ASEAN AgriTrade)

€ 3 million | 2020-2021

ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC)



Small grants program by the ASEAN centre for Biodiversity – Biodiversity and Climate Change

€ 10 million | 2014-2022



Strengthening Institutional Capacity and Corporate Policies of AHA Centre

€ 800,000 | 2020-2022



Reduce, Re-use and Recycle to Protect the Marine Environment and Coral Reefs

€ 4 million | 2020-2023



Institutional Strengthening of the Biodiversity Sector in ASEAN, Phase II (ISB II)

€ 2 million | 2019-2023



Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA Component 1)

€ 4 million | 2020-2023



POLITICAL AND SECURITY COOPERATION

Responding to shared regional and global challenges

Political and security cooperation between the EU and ASEAN is built upon 44 years of robust partnership. Confirmation of the strategic nature of the EU-ASEAN partnership serves as an impetus to increase engagement at the leaders' level both on traditional and non-traditional security matters.



**Chemical, Biological, Radiological
and Nuclear Risk Mitigation
Centres of Excellence Initiative**

CBRN CoE



EU-ASEAN Think Tank Initiative

Think Tank



Political Cooperation

At the 23rd EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in 2020, the EU and ASEAN elevated their relationship to a Strategic Partnership.

The Strategic Partnership further enhances cooperation between the two regions across a multitude of sectors based on shared values and common interests. The partnership will enhance prosperity through sustainable finance, fiscal and financial stability, promotion of circular economy and job creation in the growingly interconnected world.

Enhanced cooperation in the security sector will encompass cybersecurity, maritime security, and partnership in the fight against transnational crime and counter-terrorism to preserve peace and stability in both regions. ASEAN's centrality in the regional architecture as a key provider of security, stability, and growth in the region continues to be a priority for the EU and its Member States. To further support and enhance regional cooperation in the prevention and tackling of transnational crime, Italy organised an initial high-level seminar for law enforcement heads across ASEAN and the ASEAN Chiefs of National Police (ASEANAPOL). France who has been an observer member of ASEANAPOL since 2019 is also committed to provide continuous support to ASEAN's fight against transnational crime and in building the capacity for peacekeeping operations and improving cyber security.



In a Joint Ministerial Statement on Connectivity on 1 December 2020, foreign ministers of EU and ASEAN Member States recognised the importance of connectivity between and within the two regions. Josep Borell, the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation to address shared global and regional challenges. The ministers also outlined the ambition and commitment of both regions to establish a connectivity partnership and develop synergies between the EU's Connecting Europe and Asia strategy and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025. Discussions on practical cooperation include the promotion of digital innovation, sustainable infrastructure, seamless logistics, regulatory excellence and people mobility.

EU-ASEAN cooperation in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic

At the onset of the pandemic in March 2020, the EU and ASEAN recognised the need to take a multilateral approach to mitigate the social and economic impact of COVID-19 in both regions. On 20 March 2020, ministers from the EU and ASEAN conducted a video conference to discuss cooperation in keeping supply chains open and advancing scientific research.

Team Europe has also provided over €800 million to assist ASEAN in its response to the coronavirus which includes support to health facilities and health workers, provisions of personal protective equipment and sanitizers, as well as technical assistance and institutional support.

On 8 December 2020, the 1st EU-ASEAN Experts' Dialogue on COVID-19 vaccines further confirmed the shared interest of the EU and ASEAN to facilitate affordable, fair and equitable access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines. The two regions have also agreed to the exchange of best practices among leading policy practitioners and medical experts on vaccine authorisation and production.

Team Europe also contributes to the financing of the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) facility, a global initiative to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines to everyone including citizens of ASEAN. The initial contribution was doubled on 19 February 2021, making Team Europe one of the lead donors to COVAX providing over €2.2 billion in funding.



We are in a race against the virus and COVAX is our best hope that all our partners have access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines. The EU has been leading efforts in international fora, such as the G20 and G7, to guarantee that collectively we ensure that COVID-19 vaccines become a global public good.

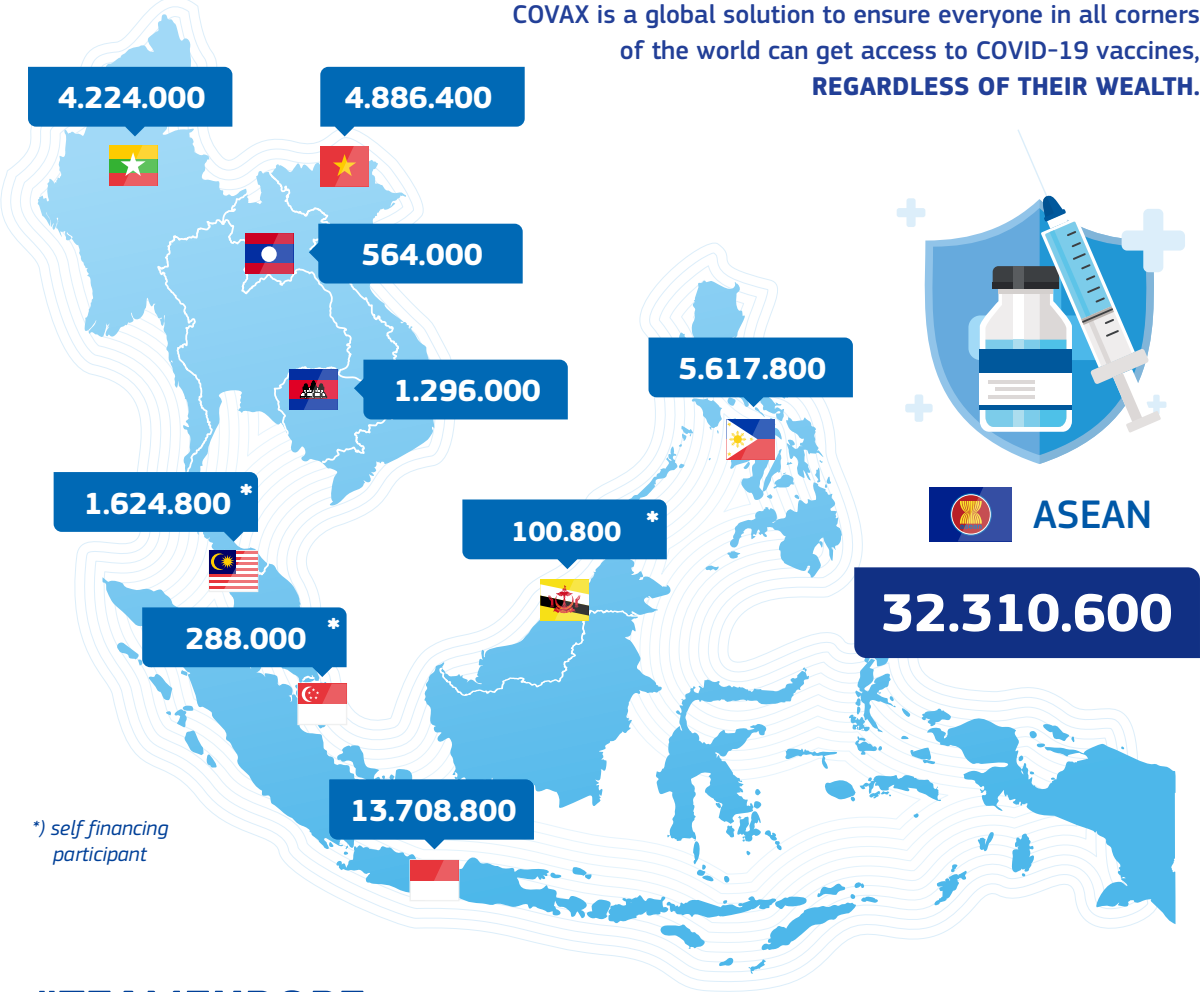
Jutta Urpilainen,

EU Commissioner for International Partnerships



COVAX FACILITY:
COVID-19 VACCINES FOR ASEAN

COVAX is a global solution to ensure everyone in all corners of the world can get access to COVID-19 vaccines, REGARDLESS OF THEIR WEALTH.



*) self financing participant

#TEAMEUROPE
THE EU, ITS MEMBER STATES, AND THE EIB CONTRIBUTE APPROXIMATELY HALF OF THE CURRENT FINANCING TO COVAX

Based on the COVAX Facility Interim Distribution Forecast of 3 February 2021



Security and Defence Cooperation



Inter-regional security and defence cooperation between the EU and ASEAN are evident in the active participation of the EU in the ASEAN-led regional security architecture, including in the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) and the East Asia Summit.

The EU-ASEAN Strategic Partnership was reflected in the EU's inaugural participation as Guest of the Chair at the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting on 10 December 2020. Josep Borrell, the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, highlighted the inter-connected and critical nature of peace, security and prosperity in Asia to the peace, security and prosperity of Europe and the world.

In the past ten years (2010-2020), the EU has provided over €32 million in funding to mitigate the risks of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials at the national, regional and international level. The EU Chemical, Biological,

Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (CoE) initiative focuses on providing technical support and facilitating knowledge-sharing based on a voluntary and demand-driven approach.

Violent extremism poses a significant threat to the region's stability and undermines the global effort to promote peace and security. The rise of violent extremist groups and their message of intolerance underline the importance of preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE). The EU contributes to this effort through its support to The Strengthening Resilience Against Violent Extremism in Asia (STRIVE Asia) programme. The programme focuses on mitigating the impact of violent extremism in communities and vulnerable groups through a multi-stakeholder approach which includes governments, security actors, civil society and private sector entities.

Maritime Cooperation

The EU promotes international and regional cooperation, information-sharing, capability development, risk management and training to ensure safe, secure, and clean seas and oceans.

In addition to robust domestic policies, international maritime security cooperation that protects not only the external borders of countries, but also common natural resources and maritime infrastructures, offshore platforms, and scientific equipment, is critical to creating safe and secure seas.

Another key priority for maritime security cooperation is building resilience against and mitigating the impact of climate change on the marine and coastal environment.

Thirdly, from an economic standpoint, maritime security is also key in ensuring the safe and seamless flow of goods and the stability of the global trading system.

Maritime security has long been a shared priority for both the EU and ASEAN. Cooperation between the two regions has focused on responding to transnational maritime threats such as piracy, smuggling, illegal immigration, disaster risks and the impacts of pollution and climate change. Maritime security is also one of the main focuses of France-ASEAN bilateral cooperation with regular deployments and stopovers of French vessels in the region in addition to the permanent French naval presence in Asia and Oceania.

The EU maritime security strategy's four core principles include:

- ✓ **A cross-sectoral approach to improve coordination and deal with complex and interconnected challenges**
- ✓ **Functional integrity with a focus on what can be better achieved by working together**
- ✓ **Maritime multilateralism**
- ✓ **Respect for rules and principles to ensure stability and a better environment based on shared, transparent and rules-based good governance.**



ARF MARITIME

The EU co-chairs - with Vietnam and Australia - the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime security

- Fifth ASEAN-EU HLD on Maritime Security Cooperation

- ARF Workshop on Maritime Law Enforcement Cooperation

- 12th ARF ISM on Maritime Security in Alicante, Spain

2020
EVENTS

- 17th ARF ISM on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime

- 12th ARF ISM on Maritime Security

2021
UPCOMING



ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Creating opportunities and delivering prosperity for all

The EU and ASEAN share a common belief that close inter and intra-regional economic cooperation is crucial to reducing poverty and creating equal opportunities

2020 has further strengthened this partnership in response to the unparalleled challenges and disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through Team Europe, the EU has provided immediate support to ASEAN to protect vulnerable communities, and to mitigate the negative economic impact of the global pandemic.



Enhanced ASEAN Regional
Integration Support from the EU

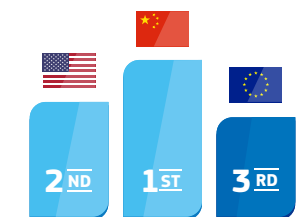
ARISE+



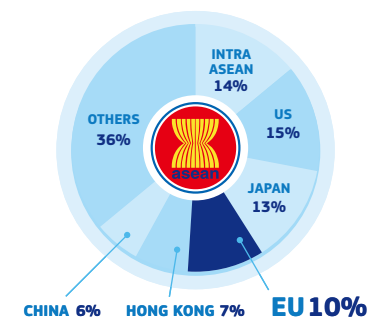
Enhanced Regional
EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument

E-READI



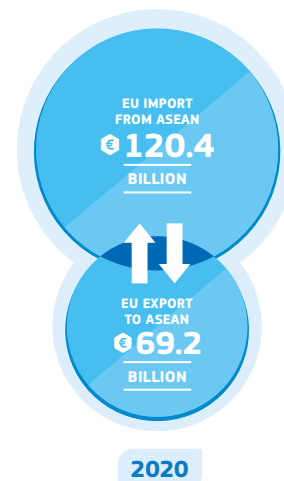


THE EU WAS ASEAN'S
3RD LARGEST
TRADING PARTNER
IN 2019

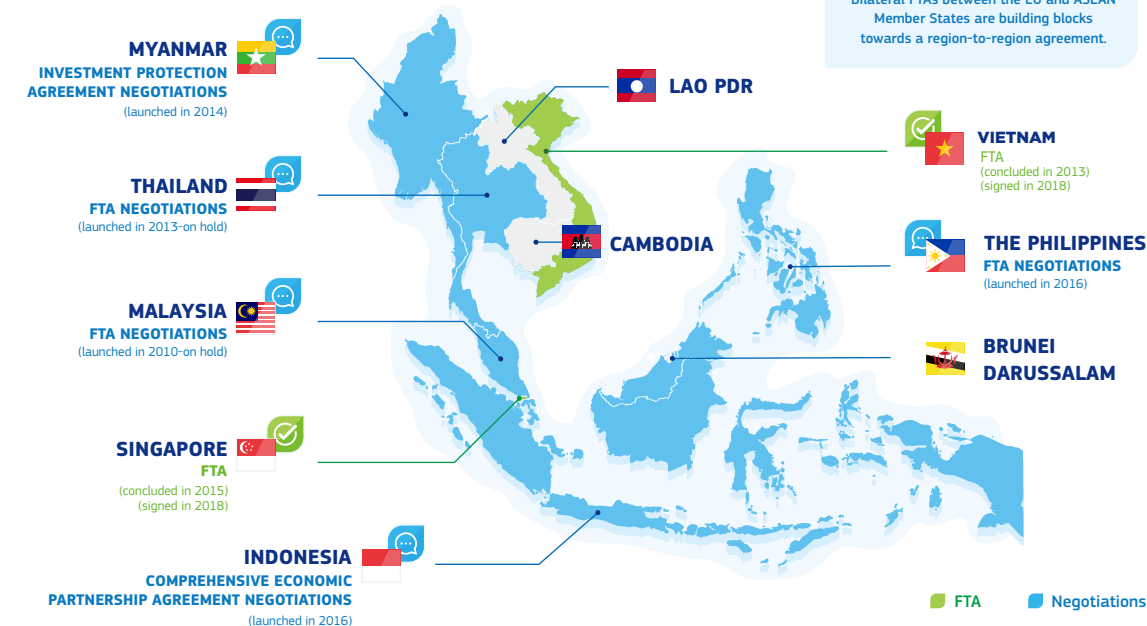


THE EU WAS THE
4TH LARGEST
PROVIDER OF EXTERNAL FOREIGN
DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI) IN ASEAN IN 2019

source: ASEANstats



EU FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (FTA) AND INVESTMENT AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS IN ASEAN



EU-ASEAN FTA

Bilateral FTAs between the EU and ASEAN Member States are building blocks towards a region-to-region agreement.

Comprehensive economic cooperation for equitable prosperity

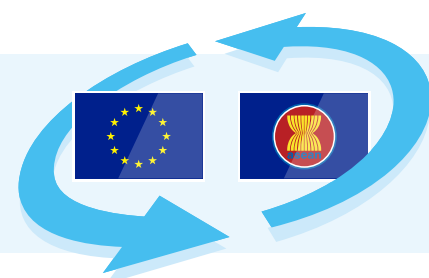
Economic cooperation between the EU and ASEAN spans a multitude of areas including: connectivity infrastructure, logistics, regulation, innovation, and mobility.

Rooted in shared values and mutual benefits, cooperation initiatives between the two regions have proven to be agile enough to adapt to the unprecedented global challenges presented by COVID-19.

As an example, the launch of the first electronic customs transit system in November 2020 has provided ASEAN with the required speed and connectivity to transport emergency health equipment across the region.

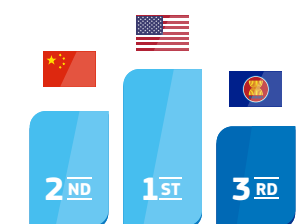
Travel restrictions and border closures imposed by governments have also significantly disrupted the aviation sector. Yet, continued engagement and commitment from both the EU and ASEAN have resulted in positive contributions to a sector that's one of the most challenged industries by the current health and economic crisis.

These initiatives include the ASEAN COVID-19 Operational Guidelines, which aim to contain the spread of the coronavirus through improved aircraft disinfection and better protection for flight and cabin crew.

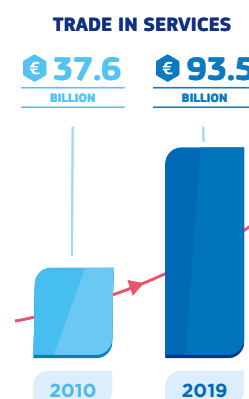
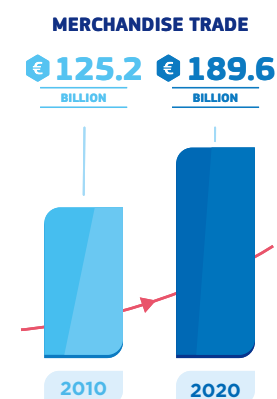


TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Working together, the EU and ASEAN are a global economic force.



ASEAN IS THE EU'S
3RD LARGEST
TRADING PARTNER
OUTSIDE EUROPE



ARISE+

Enhanced ASEAN
Regional Integration
Support from the EU

ENHANCING CONNECTIVITY THROUGH SUSTAINABLE
AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND TRADE



BILATERAL SUPPORT
TO ASEAN MEMBER STATES



ECONOMIC
INTEGRATION



Trade facilitation for goods



Harmonisation of standards



Transport and
customs procedures



Strengthen capacity
of ASEAN Secretariat



Integration monitoring
and statistics



Civil aviation



Intellectual property rights

€40
MILLION
2017-2022

ADDITIONAL
€50
MILLION



ARISE+ SUPPORTS:

- 12 ASEAN Economic Blueprint (AECB) elements
- 14 AECB strategic measures
- 38 AECB and ASEAN Consolidated Strategic Action Plan (CSAP) Key Action Lines
- 5 SDGs (2,3,17,8,9)
- 7 Priority areas of the ASEAN-EU Plan of action

ARISE+ INITIATIVES RELEVANT TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR:



ASEAN Trade Repository

Enhances the transparency of trade and customs procedures across the ASEAN region.



ASEAN Solutions for Services, Investments and Trade

Online tool that allows businesses to lodge questions or complaints directly with ASEAN Member State governments when exporting problems are encountered.



ASEAN Customs Transit System

First ever computerised customs transit management system in the ASEAN region.

ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

★ Has engaged with **13** ASEC Divisions, **38** ASEAN Sectoral Bodies & Working Groups and **85** AMS entities

★ **3,998** participants across **100** workshops. Participants from all 10 AMS – with **1435** from CLMV countries

★ Implemented **59** major activities





ARISE+

DIGITALISING AND SIMPLIFYING CUSTOMS IN ASEAN: THE ASEAN CUSTOMS TRANSIT SYSTEM (ACTS)



Ensuring the free flow of trade is key to effective economic integration in ASEAN.

Despite exponential growth in both extra and intra-regional trade in the region and robust infrastructure improvements, 'regulatory bottlenecks continue to limit ASEAN's potential by adding direct costs and making journey times unreliable', Glyn Evans, Transit Adviser for the Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support by the EU (ARISE Plus) programme, noted.

A study on ASEAN logistics development by the Asian Logistics, Maritime and Aviation Conference (ALMEC) found that 'the removal of regulatory bottlenecks would have a significant impact by opening new corridors or routes in the region that have transport speed advantages over the traditional shipping lines.'

According to Bruno Selmoni, Vice-President, Head of Road Freight and Multimodal ASEAN and South Asia, DHL Global Forwarding, 'road freight has long been considered a great middle ground between air and ocean freight in terms of cost, transit time, flexibility and carbon savings.'

Through the ARISE Plus programme, the EU is providing ASEAN with support, both on the technical level and financially, to develop an ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS).

The ACTS is an integrated online customs system which enables the use of a single, digital customs declaration for the movement of goods across all participating ASEAN countries, regardless of the number of countries crossed. There is no need to transfer the goods to a different truck in each country, and the duties and taxes at risk are covered by a single guarantee for all the countries involved in the transit operation. The ACTS simplifies and harmonises customs declaration processes across ASEAN, reducing paperwork and truck idling time.

DHL first introduced an integrated road freight network that connects Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand in 2011 and is excited about the prospect of the ACTS. 'The full implementation of the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) will contribute to the list of benefits by lowering costs, and enhancing efficiency and reliability for road freight movements in the region', Selmoni added.

In the EU, removal of regulatory barriers through the implementation of a similar system known as the EU's Common and Community Transit System and the New Computerized Transit System (NCTS) increased overall regional trade by up to 3% or €15 billion.

Evans believes that similar savings could be expected in the ASEAN context. 'It is a recognised phenomenon that measures such as the ACTS, along with the provision of improved infrastructure, will in themselves result in increased trade flows, as traders take advantage of a more benign environment, and there is no reason to believe that regional trade in ASEAN will be an exception to this rule.'

Beyond trade facilitation, ACTS will also improve the ability of customs authorities to detect and prevent smuggling and

fraud, thus reducing the potential of negative economic repercussions such as reduced government revenues and distortion in commodity prices.

'ACTS is a smart regional interconnected and automated IT system that links all customs offices in each ASEAN Member State via a secure communication network', Aivaras Pigaga, Lead ACTS IT Implementation Expert at the ARISE Plus programme, said. 'It allows customs officers in each participating country to exchange information on the goods in transit between each country and with their trade community automatically and in real-time'.

The EU has contributed €10 million to the development and the rolling out the ACTS in the region. With €5 million in funding provided by ASEAN, the ACTS also marks the biggest investment ASEAN has made to date in the implementation of economic integration in the region.

Prior to its official launch on 30 November 2020, the system was successfully piloted in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, and is currently operational on both the North-South and East West corridors.

Archipelagic ASEAN Member States such as Brunei, Indonesia and the Philippines are expected to join the ACTS in the future by using the roll-on/roll-off trucks and ferries to move goods freely between the island states.

'Our feasibility study shows that the ACTS can also be implemented in a multi-modal transport environment', Pigaga said. 'In a nutshell, the ACTS is a clear win-win, not only for logistic providers like us, but also for exporters', Selmoni added.





ARISE+

PROTECTING GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS TO IMPROVE FARMERS' LIVELIHOODS IN ASEAN



Oeur Sam Ath was born and raised in one of the poorest provinces in Northern Cambodia. Like everyone in Preah Vihear province, his family owns a small plot of land used to cultivate rice.

Farmers in the province typically rely on the natural quality of the soil only for their agricultural activities without adding any pesticides or chemicals. 'I didn't know then that our farming practices would qualify our rice as organic', Ath said.

Upon graduating from university, Ath returned to the province and started working with farmer cooperatives. In 2016, he became the executive director of the first agricultural union in the province, the Preah Vihear Mean Chey Union of Agricultural Cooperative.

'Through the union, we are able to negotiate better prices for our farmers and can help them increase their income.' Ath has been relentlessly looking for ways to improve the livelihoods of the farmers in his union.

**'As a son of a farmer, their issues are
always close to my heart.'**

Through his research, he came across the concept of geographical indications. 'I thought it could be an avenue to further improve the lives of the farmers here, but I didn't know enough about it.'

A geographical indication is a distinctive sign used to identify a product whose quality, reputation or other such characteristics relate to its geographical origin. Establishing and protecting geographical indications globally is one of the key objectives of EU development cooperation.

Within ASEAN, this mandate falls under the remit of the Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the European Union Intellectual Property Rights (ARISE Plus IPR) programme.

Every year, the programme holds a so-called AsiaGI training in ASEAN countries with potential geographical indications. The training aims to provide relevant stakeholders with a basic but comprehensive understanding of geographical indications.

To ensure the training reaches all potential users and creators of geographical indications, every year the programme sponsors the attendance of officials and producers from all ten ASEAN Member States.

For the 5th AsiaGI training in 2020, the list of invitees included Ath and his union. 'I was so excited to hear of the opportunity', Ath said.



Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the event was held virtually with pre-recorded videos, readings, quizzes and group work. 'We also have weekly online discussions which I find really useful too.'

The training helped Ath better understand the concept and benefits of geographical indications, and provided him with practical knowledge on how to develop and register a geographical indication for products developed by his union members.

The session has also inspired him to pursue another business opportunity. 'It's been a few years since the rice we produce received organic certification', Ath said. 'If we can successfully apply geographic indications to our products, we can promote them more effectively!'





ARISE+

CREATING A REGIONAL TRADEMARK REGISTRATION SYSTEM FOR ASEAN



Arthur Simon is an Indonesian dermatologist, based in Balikpapan, Kalimantan. For the past thirteen years, he has been developing his own line of skincare products.

'Many of my patients were using products that do not necessarily fit their specific needs', he said. 'I wanted to provide them with something that is specifically formulated for our specific climate and skin conditions.'

Although his skincare product line continues to grow in prominence in Indonesia, Simon is still wary about bringing his products to other ASEAN countries. 'I know it would be a sensible progression considering the similarities in skin conditions and climate across the region', he explained. 'But the thought of having to repeatedly register my products in different countries which I am not familiar with is just daunting.'

The economic structure of ASEAN is increasingly dominated by small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which contribute to 30% of ASEAN national exports. Out of these export products and services, up to 60% is developed in intellectual property rights (IPR)-intensive industries.

'As ASEAN economies become more integrated thanks to the free flow of goods, navigating intellectual property (IP) issues will become more complicated for technology and knowledge-intensive SMEs', said Ignacio de Medrano, Head of Service of

the International Cooperation Area, EU Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and former project leader of the Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the European Union's Intellectual Property Rights (ARISE Plus IPR) programme.

For Simon, the complexity of navigating individual trademark requirements for each country he wanted to expand his business in became a major barrier to entering the regional market.

ASEAN has for long acknowledged the need for a regional trademark system and an ASEAN trademark office. The concept was first introduced on 15 December 1995 when the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Intellectual Property Cooperation was signed.

The idea was once again brought forward during the 8th ASEAN Trademark Consultation Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand between 15 and 17 August 2018. The ARISE+ IPR presented the concept note to conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of an ASEAN Trademark Registration System in line with the Action Plan initiative during the ASEAN Working Group on Intellectual Property Cooperation in Bangkok, 27 March 2019 which was approved by the ASEAN IP Offices. The Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL) as country champion of this initiative and the ASEAN Intellectual Property Association (AIPA) were both consulted during the development of the concept note to assess the collaboration with ARISE+ IPR and its experts in conducting the study.

As part of the enhanced regional integration support from the EU, ARISE+ IPR welcomed the proposition as a key initiative to not only assess the feasibility of a regional trademark system but also to identify a model that will best suit ASEAN needs.

Drawing comparisons with the European Trademark System which was first implemented in the mid-1990s, 'the study highlighted the way forward towards an ASEAN trademark registration system. It proposed one model that would best suit ASEAN in developing a sophisticated IP landscape in the region', Medrano said.

'The study also includes a cost-benefit analysis that shows how a regional trademark system would benefit both end users such as businesses and national IP offices.'

ARISE+ IPR also supported ASEAN in developing both the ASEAN Common Guidelines for Substantive Examination of Trademarks and the Common Guidelines for Substantive Examination of Industrial Designs. These guidelines will provide the foundation for setting up an ASEAN regional trademark registration system and will lower barriers of entry for foreign companies and SMEs like Simon's. This will in turn promote higher capital inflows – both within ASEAN Member States and from outside of the region.





ARISE+

AVIATION'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19: LAUNCHING ASEAN-WIDE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

When COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020, countries around the world, including ASEAN Member States, immediately introduced a slew of measures to mitigate the negative health and socio-economic impact of the outbreak.

To prevent the rapid spread of the coronavirus, governments around the globe imposed varying levels of travel restrictions and border closures which drastically disrupted the movement of people.

In alignment with its EU-Asia connectivity strategy, the EU, through the ARISE Plus Civil Aviation Project, focused its efforts on assisting the development of an ASEAN Single Aviation Market.

However, as the aviation sector was presented with unprecedented challenges because of the pandemic, the project extended its support to facilitating discussions for the creation of common ASEAN-wide operational guidelines for aviation to control the spread of COVID-19.

On 23 September 2020, the project organised a workshop with aviation authorities from nine ASEAN Member States and key EU and global aviation stakeholders to exchange best practices between the two regions in the prevention and containment of the transmission of communicable diseases.

Stakeholders in attendance included the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Asia and Pacific (APAC) Office, the International Air Transport Association (IATA), Airport Council International (ACI), Airbus and representatives from EU national or civil aviation authorities.)

The civil aviation authorities of Malaysia and Singapore took stock of the exchange in preparation for the ASEAN COVID-19 Operational Guidelines, which cover the protection and safety of the operational air crew, and the cleaning and disinfection of aircrafts.

The guidelines were endorsed by the ASEAN Air Transport Working Group, a key coordinating and implementing arm of the ASEAN Senior Transport Officials Meeting and the ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting for aviation, and serve as a crucial reference point for ASEAN Member States.

'To restore air connectivity in a safe manner, and to do it with an internationally consistent, mutually accepted and harmonised way will depend on how rapidly governments implement the internationally agreed guidelines, in close partnership with industry stakeholders.'

Kelvin LEE, IATA Singapore



E-READI

WORKING TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE AND SECURE DIGITAL ECONOMY

Gaby Poliman has always loved the idea of browsing through the supermarket shelves and the hustle and bustle of a traditional market. 'I actually enjoy the shopping experience more than the actual products I end up buying', she said.

But when the city government started imposing restrictions to curb the spread of COVID-19 in Jakarta, Indonesia, Poliman had to turn to online marketplaces for her daily needs. 'The learning curve is not as steep as I thought it would be', she said, 'and now it has been almost a year that I do all my shopping online'.

As the global pandemic disrupted almost all economic sectors, ASEAN witnessed a surge in the use of digital services, including e-commerce, food delivery and online payment. In 2020, the region saw as many as 40 million first-time users of online market places like Poliman, across Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand (Google et al 2020)

With more than 300 million internet users in the region and a dozen tech unicorns valued above USD 1 billion, the digital economy is a priority sector for ASEAN. On 12 November 2018, the ASEAN Economic Ministers signed the ASEAN Agreement on Electronic Commerce to drive economic growth and social development in the region. The move reiterates the region's commitment to creating a digitally-enabled economy that is secure, sustainable and transformative.



On 23 October 2019, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Communication Networks, Content, and Technology met with ASEAN senior officials in Vientiane, Lao PDR to discuss how to strengthen digital economy and connectivity cooperation between the two regions. The event covered the sharing of best practices from the EU's Digital Single Market strategy, which also covers areas of common interest to ASEAN.

Facilitated by the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI), a series of workshops focusing on policy and regulatory research and training aims to promote the development of the ASEAN Digital Benchmarking Index as a tool to monitor the progress of relevant digital indicators. These trainings will also help enhance ASEAN capabilities in providing legal certainty and confidence in a digital environment.





E-READI

JOINING FORCES TO COMBAT ILLEGAL FISHING IN ASEAN'S WATERS

Ensuring the sustainability of ASEAN's vital marine resources, such as fisheries, transcends the geographic and political boundaries of the ten ASEAN Member States.

According to Dr. Taworn Thunjai, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Fisheries, Thailand, 'combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) is an essential action for ASEAN. Overfishing will otherwise deplete aquatic resources and could lead to the total extinction of endangered marine species.'

Coordinating efforts both through regional and international cooperation has been a priority for both the EU and ASEAN. The EU practices a zero-tolerance policy on IUU fishing, and has supported ASEAN through a series of dialogues to improve existing monitoring, control and surveillance tools and mitigate IUU fishing in ASEAN waters.

Through the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI), the EU facilitated the first and second ASEAN dialogue with the EU on the issue of IUU in Bangkok, Thailand in April and December 2019.

This support led to an important development. On 21 October 2020, ASEAN ministers adopted a cooperation framework for the ASEAN Network for Combatting IUU Fishing (AN-IUU) during the 42nd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF). AN-IUU is expected to serve as a tool to further enhance cooperation and coordination among ASEAN Member States.

'However, there should be real engagement from the users, in addition to increased political support from ASEAN governments, providing the necessary resources to make the network a success', said EU Ambassador to ASEAN, H.E. Igor Driesmans.

For island countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia, combatting IUU fishing requires stronger security measures, which include protecting national waters against illegal foreign fishing vessels and the deployment of regular sea patrols.

Other ASEAN Member States have also called for the establishment of sustainable fishing policies and sustainable seafood certifications to eliminate IUU fishing from the supply chain.

STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN ITALY AND ASEAN

Italy's connection with the ASEAN region can be traced back to Italian tradesmen and explorers venturing to Asia in the 16th century. In the modern context, the first High-Level Dialogue on ASEAN-Italy Economic Relations took place in 2017.

With Italy formally becoming ASEAN's development partner in 2020, cooperation has been extended to sustainable connectivity, space collaboration and the implementation of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs).

The change in partnership status comes with new commitments from both ASEAN and Italy to intensify political and economic exchanges, using the High-Level Dialogue on ASEAN-Italy Economic Relations as a key platform.

Developed through an integrated public-private sector partnership, the dialogue has shaped an exclusive and influential community of business leaders working together to boost economic ties, consolidate business relationships and establish a dynamic environment for economic growth and social development.

In 2020, a series of webinars and digital roundtables were organised in preparation for the fourth High-Level Dialogue, set to take place in 2021.





ADVANCING EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are integral to the economic development of ASEAN Member States. Beyond their traditional economic role, MSMEs also play an important part in advancing social innovation which is key to promoting inclusive and equitable growth in the region.

For the past few years, the Government of Germany has worked with MSMEs in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam to support their integration into regional and global value chains.

Assistance has also been provided to enable the four ASEAN Member States to adopt an investment-conducive and pro-competitive approach to the implementation of ASEAN agreements focusing on trade in services and competition policy.

Creating a competitive business environment that's attractive to investors is contingent on robust consumer protection, especially as ASEAN integration is promoting increased cross-border and online transactions.

The partnership has contributed to the creation of a number of regional cooperation frameworks, and has helped drive cross-border cooperation and national reform processes in the consumer protection space.

A key highlight is the launch of the pilot ASEAN Consumer Empowerment Index in early 2021, which aims to benchmark the level of consumer empowerment in the region, including consumer skills, awareness, and behaviour. The index will also help identify priority consumer concerns which will be vital to improving consumer protection mechanisms in the region.

German-ASEAN economic cooperation also focuses on the sustainable design of urban mobility initiatives in mid-sized metropolitan areas across ASEAN, especially in rapidly growing medium-sized cities such as Phnom Penh, Vientiane, and Can Tho.

Under this initiative, cross-border working groups are working on developing concrete solutions to address urban transport challenges in their respective regions or cities.



GREEN GROWTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities

A clear indication of the EU's commitment to tackling climate change, the European Green Deal is at the heart of EU policymaking and the region's growth strategy.

It encapsulates the EU's pledge to become carbon neutral by 2050 and provides an action plan to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy and at the same time, restore biodiversity and cut pollution.

A sustainable transition that is just and socially fair is a key priority for all of the EU's international cooperation projects. As a strategic partner, the EU supports ASEAN and its Member States with initiatives to increase the region's adaptability and resilience to the impacts of climate change, protect its rich biodiversity, and strengthen its disaster preparedness and response.



Forest Governance support programme (FLEGT)



ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility (ACGF)



Sustainable use of Peat Lands and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA)



Support to ASEAN Farmers' Organisations (AFOSP)



Biodiversity Conservation & Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP)



Integrated Programme Enhancing Capacity of AHA Centre & ASEAN Emergency Response Mechanisms (EU Support to AHA Centre)



SMART Green ASEAN Cities



The European Green Deal

The overarching aim of the European Green Deal is to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions within the EU and deliver a pollution-free environment by 2050. Advances in transport, agriculture systems and ecosystems and biodiversity are all required, as well as efforts to further develop a circular economy that ensures products can be reused and recycled. From 2021 to 2027, 35 percent of the EU's research funding will be dedicated to developing climate-friendly technologies.





E-READI

Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument

ASEAN CLIMATE ACTION



The Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released in 2014, indicated that six out of the 10 ASEAN Member States are among the most vulnerable countries to climate change worldwide. Within the framework of the European Green Deal and the EU-ASEAN partnership, the EU has been supporting ASEAN in mitigating the impacts of climate change.

On 27 November 2020, the second EU-ASEAN High-Level Dialogue on Environment and Climate Change discussed further cooperation on shared regional and global challenges related to the protection of the environment and the fight against climate change. The Paris Agreement, as the global foundation of the efforts, encouraged all its signers to formulate and communicate their national Long Term Strategy (LTS). Thus far, Singapore is the only ASEAN Member State to have finalised and submitted its national LTS to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), while others are on different stages of their LTS development. To support other ASEAN Member States in developing their respective national LTS, the EU, through its Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI), conducted a Scoping Study which identifies the core elements on the way towards LTS formulation, accumulates good practices from ASEAN Member States and beyond, and suggests ways to strengthen national capacities as well as the regional agendas and support for LTS development in ASEAN.



The Study generates a list of recommendations which include the importance of initiating political exchange on a regional long-term low-carbon development framework and organising specific technical sessions in selected areas and sectors related to LTS. Further cooperation among ASEAN Member States on emerging low-carbon technologies, market mechanisms, adaptation, climate finance and regional energy grids is also required to enable a meaningful regional contribution to the global effort.

Singapore as a low-lying, densely populated tropical island state realised its vulnerability to climate change impacts such as sea-level rise, higher temperatures and its reliance on rainfalls. Its Climate Action Plan and national Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategy encapsulate a whole-of-government and whole-of-nation approach to not only

develop possible climate measures but also provide strategic responses to climate change impacts. 'First, we need to transform our industry, economy, and society. Second, we will have to draw on technologies, which are not yet mature such as carbon capture and utilisation, and low-carbon fuels. Third, we will need international collaboration in areas such as well-functioning carbon markets, carbon storage, and regional electricity grids', said the National Environment Agency, the National Focal Point of the ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change. 'We welcome ASEAN regional partners to share their best practices and methodologies for preparing their LEDS, in particular, setting of emission reduction goals, proposed means of tracking progress, financial arrangements, and plans to implement market-based mechanisms or deploy game-changing technologies such as carbon capture, utilisation and storage, and hydrogen'.





ADOPTING CIRCULAR ECONOMY PRACTICES REQUIRES MORE THAN JUST REDUCING THE USE OF PLASTICS



The EU and ASEAN are working together to shift from a linear economic model that requires the use of vast amounts of natural resources to a circular economy that derives much greater value from resources and materials and prevents the generation of waste.

Circular economy is often thought of as an approach to waste management and recycling. However, this misses its transformative potential and much wider scope that encompasses business development, innovation, product design, value creation and resource management.

In a circular economy, products are designed to be easily repairable, to last much longer, and with the potential to be upcycled for a different use. Consumers gain access to a wide range of goods and services through rental while purchasing and owning fewer products.

Products that cannot be repaired or are no longer needed can be safely repurposed into high-quality materials. Waste products are upcycled rather than downcycled. Biological materials are composted and returned to the soil as nutrients for new plants.

In March 2020, the EU launched its new Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP) as part of the region's industrial strategy. CEAP is a key pillar of the EU's Green Deal and will play a major role in the region's recovery efforts from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2019, the EU supported a gap analysis focusing on circular economy and plastics and ASEAN. This was done with the technical expertise of the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI) in the context of a policy dialogue on circular economy between the EU and ASEAN.

The study identified gaps in both policy and practice, and recommended five regional initiatives including: the establishment of regional guidelines for ASEAN; harmonized technical standards; ASEAN-wide research and innovation networks; and the phasing out of harmful substances in plastics. It also suggested that the establishment of a regional platform could provide an institutional mechanism for further action.

In close coordination with the ASEAN Secretariat, the EU has also developed a proposal for an ASEAN Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. The initiative is modelled on the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform, which was established in 2017 and played a key role in promoting a better understanding and adoption of circular economy practices in the EU.

The ASEAN platform will serve as an information and knowledge portal showcasing best practices and resources with the support of an engagement group consisting of circular economy practitioners and experts. The platform secretariat will be hosted by the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD) in Bangkok.





AFOSP

TRAINING SMALLHOLDER FARMERS TO PURSUE BETTER LIVES



'If you want to have a peaceful life, be a farmer. If you want to be rich, be an entrepreneur'.

Naning Suprawati is the eldest daughter in a family of farmers and while she never argued with her father, she had always known that she wanted something different than the two options her father laid out for her.

Suprawati went on to major in education in university but when she started her first teaching job, life in the classroom felt suffocating. She returned to her hometown in Blitar, East Java but didn't give up on the idea of teaching. 'I believe I can still be a teacher, even without a classroom', she said.

In 2009, she joined the Indonesian Farmers Alliance (API) to improve the capacity-building support provided to farmers and their families.

'I purposefully wanted to include women in the alliance', she said. Traditionally, women have never been actively involved in the economic activities of the village, let alone the decision-making process. 'I think this needs to change', she said. 'When women are given the opportunity to actively participate, their children and their whole families will benefit.'

Under the Medium-Term Cooperation Programme Phase Two (MTCP2) of the ASEAN Farmers' Organisation Support Programme (AFOSP), Suprawati started organising various capacity-building activities. The sessions cover a wide range of different topics, from financial literacy and management to entrepreneurship skills, organic farming and vocational training for women. AFOSP is a multi-stakeholder project funded by the EU and the International Fund for Agricultural Development to improve the livelihoods and food security of smallholder farmers and rural producers in ASEAN countries.

'Most farmers here still have the same mindset as my father's, Suprawati said. 'They believe that as farmers, they don't have to think about how to sell their produce or how to run a business. But understanding the business side of things can really help the farmers become more successful'.

Suprawati started with training farmers on basic financial literacy skills, 'We ask the farmers to categorise their expenses into needs and wants', she said. 'Once we found out that most farmers are spending more than what they're earning, we asked them to identify potential sources of extra income.'

Through a series of simple activities, the community identified the potential of using papaya as more than a source of personal consumption. 'Female farmers learnt how to process the surplus papayas they had into papaya chips', she said. 'This becomes another source of income for the family, which proves to be crucial in a time of a pandemic'.

The COVID-19 pandemic also disrupted the supply chain of fertilisers. Already equipped with the needed skills, API farmers turned to organic farming to continue production and utilised social media to market their produce directly to the consumers. 'All the capacity building we have been doing all these years really proved to be useful especially during this challenging time', she said.



© Facebook / Naning Suprawati



© Facebook / Naning Suprawati





AFOSP

STRENGTHENING LABOUR RIGHTS AND REPRESENTATION OF SMALLHOLDER FARMERS IN MYANMAR



As the eldest daughter of a farmer, Ti Chia Pan grew up helping her parents grow bananas and vegetables in the village of Nanphalong, Temu, at the border between Myanmar and India. Her experience in the field gave her first-hand insight into the plight of farmers.

'Ever since I was young, I was convinced that this was not how things were supposed to be', said Pan, coordinator for the Medium-Term Cooperation Program Phase Two (MTCP2) of the ASEAN Farmers' Organisation Support Programme (AFOSP) in Myanmar. "I believe that we can change things for the country and for the farmers.'

AFOSP is a multi-stakeholder project funded by the EU and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), which aims to provide better livelihoods to smallholder farmers and rural producers and improve food security in ASEAN.

Pan moved to India after finishing grade 10 to study theology. Every day she would encounter migrant workers from Myanmar living hand to mouth as domestic workers for Indian families. 'I wanted to help but I knew I could not do much with my own money', she said.

In 2013, her uncle took her to the capital to join a one-day training on labour organisation. "The training showed me what we can do together. If we organised ourselves, we could have a voice", Pan said. The first law regulating how workers can organise was enacted only in 2011, and the first farmers' unions were established in 2012.

It took her two months staying in the first village she visited before the first farmers' union was eventually formed. 'We approached them through their leaders and pastors', she said. 'It was a big challenge to convince these farmers', Pan recalled. 'We have to gradually help them understand that by having a union, they will gain collective bargaining power and can form cooperatives to improve their economic conditions.'

That same year, Pan joined the Confederation of Trade Union Myanmar and moved on to creating unions across different professions. 'I started working with farmers, teachers, domestic workers....I organised them into unions because I believe they all need to have their voices heard', Pan said. .

In her role at the AFOSP-MTCP2 programme, she focuses on offering practical solutions to improving food security and the economic conditions of smallholder farmers which were put at risk as the COVID-19 pandemic forced the government to impose lockdowns. 'With the lockdown in place, our farmers did not have the means to sell their produce', Pan said. 'We needed to find a quick solution without compromising their health'.

Pan started working with the Agriculture and Farmers Federation of Myanmar (AFMM) to initiate a cross-selling activity amongst farmers who grew different produce in different geographic areas. She also picked 12 basic produce to be sold in the industrial zones of the Hlaing Tharyar township in the western part of Yangon, Myanmar. Produce was traded at a fair price and the initiative helped both the farmers and customers benefit.

Pan has also worked to provide food processing training for farmers to help them better preserve their produce, and has taught them how to leverage digital communications tools to ensure the MTCP2 programme's workplan can still continue despite the pandemic.

Instead of slowing her down, the challenges associated with COVID-19 have inspired Pan to work even harder.

'The pandemic has exposed how vulnerable our farmers are', she said. 'They have no access to social protection or any forms of social security. Addressing this gap is my next goal.'





TACKLING GLOBAL CHALLENGES THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

As one of ASEAN's new development partners, the health sector has been cited as one of the priorities of ASEAN-France cooperation. France has been working with ASEAN countries to develop a solid cooperation on health issues both through multilateral channels (ACT-A, Global Fund, Gavi, UNITAID) and bilateral channels (medical training; the 5% Initiative to combat AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; Institut Pasteur and IRD's works on **emerging infectious diseases** and antibiotic resistance, like the ECOMORE projects). Within the new framework, these programmes will be complemented by initiatives on a regional scale.

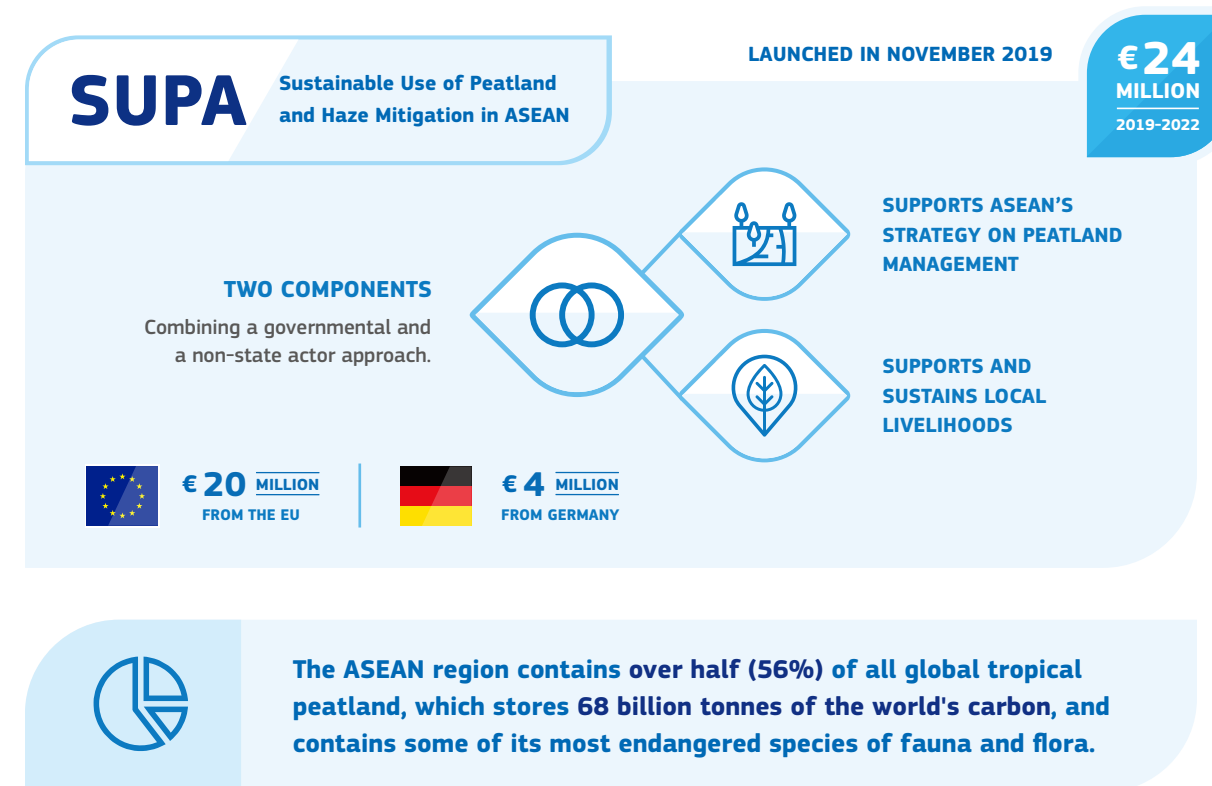
France's active participation in multi-donor initiatives such as the ASEAN Catalytic Green Facility (ACGF) and the Southeast Asia Energy transition partnership also exemplifies its commitment to support ASEAN in its effort to protect its unique biodiversity and in promoting sustainable development in the region. The Agence Française de Développement (AFD) is currently developing bilateral and multi-country projects with regional stakeholders in sectors such as sustainable cities, blue economy, and sustainable agriculture.



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Sustainable Land Use and Forest Management

EU-funded environmental initiatives include the €5 million Regional-ASEAN Forest Governance Programme (FLEGT Asia) launched in October 2020 which aims to strengthen ASEAN's institutional capacity to enhance forest governance and sustainable forest management at both the regional and national level. It builds on the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, published in 2003, which sets out a range of measures available to the EU and its Member States to tackle illegal logging.





SUPA

BRIDGING THE GAP IN PEATLAND MANAGEMENT



The ASEAN region is home to over half of the world's peatland. Yet not all ASEAN Member States are familiar with the ecosystems and the management challenges it may entail. Through the Component 1 of the Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA) programme, the European Union and ASEAN are committed to tackle the root causes of peatland fires and mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change.

Phingsalaiao Sithiengtham has worked at the Department of Water Resources at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Lao PDR, since 2012 but it is not until 2018 that peat management came under his purview. 'Peatland management is a new mandate for all of us in Lao PDR', Phing said. 'Since it has been defined, the mandate had been transferred from one department to the next, until it finally came under my department in 2018'.

In September 2020, Phing participated in three half-day sessions of Joint Regional Virtual Training for the Northern ASEAN Member States (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam) organised by SUPA and Measurable Action for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management in Southeast Asia (MAHFSA). One of the main objectives of the training is to strengthen the capacities of ASEAN Member States on peatland assessment and mapping. 'Learning about the different characteristics of peatlands will help me identify and map peatlands in my country', Phing said. In Lao PDR, a peatland survey was conducted in 2015 in two provinces: Vientiane and Champasak. The survey identified two peatland sites in Vientiane

province and five in Champasack. 'It's not easy to confirm exact peatland area in our country without having a national definition of peatland, or any national guidelines for mapping peatlands', Phing said.

Peatland identification is the first step in peatland management and conservation but as Phing experienced, it remains a challenge for Lao PDR. The same challenge is also faced by other countries in the region.

Zoisane Geam Gabinete Lumbres is an Ecosystems Management Specialist in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines. Even as a Forestry major, Lumbres was not familiar with peatland until she started working in a peatland conservation project in 2011. 'Peatland was not included in forestry curriculum before and even in the forest formations in the Philippines', she said.

Two of the main peatlands in the Philippines are the peatlands of Agusan Marsh in Mindanao and the Leyte Sab-a Basin in the northeastern part of Leyte island. The Caimpugan peatland in Agusan Marsh has remained relatively intact due to the natural protected area status it received in 1996. The Leyte Sab-a basin, however, is severely degraded. In the 1970s, the National Food Authority and Philippine Coconut Authority funded an initiative to, among others, convert swamps and marshlands for agricultural development. This included the conversion of the Leyte Sab-a peatland forest. Over 3 000 hectares of the basin was drained over the years and portions of it were converted into agricultural lands. 'It was not until 2008, the government realized the importance

of peatland and initiated a rehabilitation project', Lumbres said. In 2019, a major peatland fire that lasted for weeks occurred in the dry portions of the Leyte Sab-a Basin and in some peatland areas in Agusan Marsh. 'We didn't have an early warning system nor the capacity to manage it.' Dry peatlands are major fire hazards in the region and the Philippines is not the only country facing the risks of peatland fires and in need of an early warning system. In 1997 – 1998, severe land and forest fires in the region led ASEAN Member States to draft an agreement on transboundary haze pollution. The agreement was signed on 10 June 2002 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. 'Not only did the Joint Regional Virtual Training provide me with the knowledge about the risks of peat fires and the importance of establishing an early warning system, it also made me realise how much we need national policy on peatland', Lumbres said.

Meanwhile in Lao PDR, Phing is also putting his new knowledge into practice.

'We just started peatland mapping and preparing for peatland surveys', he said with a smile.





SUPA

LIVELIHOODS AND CONSERVATION ON PEATLANDS TO STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19



Environmental issues have always been close to Difa Shafira's heart. A recent graduate from the law faculty of the University of Indonesia, Shafira spent her university days avoiding the use of private transport. 'My friends used to call me the queen of public transport', she said. When in her third year of university, she was requested to specialize. 'Of course, I chose to specialize in environmental law!' During one of her environmental law classes, she learned about peatland and the various legal instruments available in peatland management and conservation. 'My professor talked about the danger of drying peatland and how legally, it is considered as an abnormally dangerous activity'.

Shafira now works for the Indonesian Center for Environmental Law (ICEL), an independent non-governmental organisation working with different stakeholders to develop good environmental governance in Indonesia. Good environmental governance is one of the key pillars in peatland conservation which is why ICEL was invited to participate in the webinar on the Livelihoods and Conservation on Peatlands: Strengthening Resilience in Response to COVID-19 on 26 November 2020. The webinar was organised and facilitated by the Component 1 of the Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA) programme. SUPA Component 1 is a programme co-funded by the EU and the German Government to support ASEAN's endeavours in combating transboundary haze pollution and peatland fires.

The opening remarks for the webinar were provided by the Deputy Head of Mission of EU Mission to ASEAN, Lukas Gajdos and the First Secretary for Climate and Environment of the German Embassy, Warthane Puvanarajah. For Shafira, the webinar session on the topic of whether ASEAN will go greener in response to COVID-19, presented by Johanna Son from Reporting ASEAN, was particularly interesting. 'This was a really eye-opening session for me', Shafira said. 'It was the first time I had really thought of the impacts of COVID-19 on the environment and migrant workers, for example'.

The webinar also included presentations from Maria Nuutinen from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and Sonya Dewi and Telly Kurniasari from The World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) on livelihoods in wet peatland landscapes and sustainable peatland management methods for tropical peatlands of ASEAN in the times of pandemic, respectively.

The public webinar attracted close to 200 participants and reached an additional 3 200 people on Facebook Live. According to Berthold Haasler, Principal Advisor of SUPA Component 1, successful peatland management and conservation depends on the commitment of many stakeholders, especially in the wake of the global pandemic. 'We have to promote sustainable peatland management, biodiversity and conservation to strengthen resilience in response to global pandemics—now and in the future. We are currently developing a catalog of methods for sustainable management of tropical peatlands to increase the resilience of rural landscapes in times of pandemic, which we hope to share with the public soon.'



'I realized how multifaceted the issue of peatlands management and conservation is,' Shafira said.

'We all just need to do our little parts and together, we can make a difference'.





SUPA

SAVING THE LEYTE SAB-A BASIN: PROTECTING PEATLANDS AS A NATURE-BASED SOLUTION TO MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE



Juvilyn Salazar grew up around the Leyte Sab-a Basin, 'I used to pass it every day on my way to campus', she said. Even as a forestry major, she never knew that the basin is one of two major peatlands in the Philippines or that it classified as peatland in the first place. It was not until she crossed paths with Dr. Eli Nur Nirmala Sari from the World Resources Institute (WRI) in Indonesia in February 2019, that she realised how important her beloved Basin is. Peatlands store vast amounts of carbon and play a vital role in mitigating climate change, yet more than half of the Leyte Sab-a Basin's 3088 hectares has been drained and reclaimed for agricultural purposes since the 1970s.

In 2019, a major peat fire happened at the Basin. "After trying for some time, the fire department told us that they cannot suppress the fire," Salazar recounted. The fire went on for weeks, "They were simply not trained to handle peat fires," she added. Salazar had started working as a Project Coordinator for the Leyte Sab-a Peatland Forest and had understood the condition of the Basin better, 'The peatland is almost dry now which is what's causing the annual fires and floods, and fire departments are not trained to handle peat fires', Salazar said. 'Restoring this basin will have so many benefits for us, and I am determined to find a way to do so', she added.

Salazar, who has since joined the Leyte Sab-a Peatland Forest Restoration Initiative, would have never thought to receive an opportunity to learn more about peatlands just as the COVID-19 pandemic brought the world to a halt. The Leyte Sab-a Peatland Forest Restoration Initiative project is one of the non-state actors in the Philippines that is one of the targeted stakeholders of the People for Peat coalition.

In August 2020, all the planned physical conferences were pivoted into a series of eight virtual seminars to identify peatland knowledge gaps in Southeast Asia. The virtual events saw stakeholders from the EU, the ASEAN Secretariat, NGOs and other non-state actors, like Salazar, come together with peatland experts from across ASEAN to discuss current research gaps, define each country's baseline for peatland policy and determine how to address the identified gaps.

Peatlands in Southeast Asia cover approximately 23.6 million hectares, which represent 56 percent of the global tropical peatlands. It stores approximately 68 billion tons of carbon, accounting for 14 percent of global carbon storage.

An analysis conducted by the WRI in 2016 shows that unsustainable practices, such as draining and burning peatlands, has turned this massive carbon store into a carbon emitter, where just one hectare of drained peatland releases an average of 55 metric tons of CO₂, the equivalent of over 6 000 gallons of gasoline. This has been the cause of the annual transboundary haze plaguing the region.

'Haze is a pervasive and complex issue that affects us all, no matter where in ASEAN you are. Our goal with this Conference



of Parties is to compile knowledge from regional experts and discuss issues most pressing to each country. From there we hope to establish priority research areas and start to empower communities to manage their peatlands sustainably, using locally driven narratives', Dr. Sari who is a Peatland Restoration Technical Expert, explained.

"We still have so much homework to do here," Salazar said. "Besides continuing to engage the local community, we also need to conduct hydrology research, not only to understand how to increase the level of water in our peatland but also to identify where the water will come from," she added.

People for Peat brings together representatives from the WRI, the Tropical Rainforest Conservation and Research Centre (TRCRC), and Yayasan Inisiatif Dagang Hijau (IDH) as part of the EU-funded Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA) programme.



Reducing the impact of natural disasters

EU SUPPORT TO AHA CENTRE

Integrated Programme in Enhancing the Capacity of AHA Centre and ASEAN Emergency Response Mechanisms

€10 MILLION
2019-2022

LAUNCHED IN JANUARY 2020



Supports the goals of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER)



Implemented through a combination of a direct grant to the AHA Centre, as well as capacity building by EU Member States' Civil Protection Agencies



Aims to strengthen the capacity of the AHA Centre, to achieve operational excellence in disaster monitoring and emergency response

The support from the European Union through this project is crucial for the AHA Centre to ensure its continuing development. It allows the Centre to develop its internal mechanism and expand at the same time. The project will also benefit the Member States through its support to a number of capacity building activities, workshops, and other events.

Adelina Kamal,
Executive Director of the AHA Centre



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STRONGER TOGETHER: STRENGTHENING ASEAN'S REGION-WIDE RESPONSE TO DISASTERS



It was getting dark, and Adelina Kamal was still at her desk at the ASEAN Secretariat on 2 May 2008 when news of Cyclone Nargis flashed on her computer screen. Since the cyclone first formed on 27 April, it was all she could think about.

'We had the resources and the will to help but lacked the mechanism to coordinate and mobilise relief efforts', Kamal said.

Within two days, approximately 140,000 people were killed or unaccounted for. For Adelina, the hours, days, and weeks that followed were a blur of long nights filled with frantic coordination, meetings, and negotiations. A week later on 9 May 2008, the first ASEAN-Emergency Rapid Assessment Team was granted entry visa.

ASEAN is one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world, and after the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami and the Cyclone Nargis, Kamal knew there will be more to come. 'I always want to make the impossible possible', Kamal added, 'and that's exactly what the AHA Centre seemed like back then.'

Established in 2011, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) is the operational engine of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER). AADMER provides a framework for region-wide cooperation, coordination, technical assistance, and resource mobilisation in response to disasters.

Kamal supported the establishment of the AHA Centre from her seat at the ASEAN Secretariat until she joined the inter-governmental disaster relief agency as Executive Director in 2016.

'I've always dreamt of working with the EU', Kamal said. 'We want the AHA Centre to be able to facilitate an ASEAN-wide response to disasters outside the region and the best teacher to learn from would be the EU because it has been doing so collectively as a region for years', she explained.

In January 2020, the EU and ASEAN signed an agreement on a €2.2 million joint programme called Leveraging ASEAN Capacities for Emergency Response (LACER) as part of the EU-funded Integrated Programme in Enhancing the Capacity of AHA Centre and ASEAN Emergency Response Mechanisms (EU SAHA). Implemented by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) and the Estonia Rescue Board (ERB), LACER provides capacity-building support to the AHA Centre through a series of knowledge-sharing activities.

The pandemic has forced the project to shift their planned activities online including the first project steering committee meeting on 8 December 2020.

'The first phase of the project was meant to lay the foundations of our work with the AHA Centre', Carl Johan Breitholtz, Project Manager of LACER said. 'It's important to build our relationship with the AHA Centre on trust, and despite the pandemic we managed to do just that.'

In 2021, the project aims to continue working with the AHA Centre across four technical components:

- ✓ **Strengthen the institutional capacity, corporate policies and management of the AHA Centre**
- ✓ **Enhanced operational capacity for the AHA Centre in monitoring, preparing and responding to disasters**
- ✓ **Increased preparedness and Respond-As-One capacities for ASEAN**
- ✓ **Enhance professionalism through standards and certification**



Sustainable Urbanisation

Smart Green ASEAN Cities

The EU has considerable experience in promoting and delivering 'smart' urban growth and 2021 will see the launch of the €5 million Smart Green ASEAN Cities initiative, which aims to support sustainable urbanisation in the ASEAN region, reduce the environmental impacts of urban areas, and improve the quality of life of citizens. The initiative will combine city level solutions with national capacity building and regional approaches, such as the ASEAN Smart City Network, which supports green and smart city solutions in selected ASEAN cities. An integral element will be the increased exchange of proven environmentally-sound city management practices between the EU and ASEAN.

€5
MILLION
2021 ONWARD

Financing for Sustainable Infrastructure

Under the Asia Investment Facility (AIF), the EU blends grants with loans from European and other international financial institutions to provide finance and technical assistance for sovereign infrastructure projects that will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote climate resilient development.



ACGF
ASEAN Catalytic Green
Finance Facility

€50
MILLION
2021 ONWARD

For instance, the EU will contribute €50 million to the ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility (ACGF), an innovative initiative designed to encourage private investments in green infrastructure projects in ASEAN Member States. Targeting fast growing sectors in the green economy which are in the greatest need of de-risking, the ACGF will mobilise a total of over US\$1 billion from the ASEAN Infrastructure Fund, the Asian Development Bank, and European development banks, such as the European Investment Bank (EIB), the German KfW, and the French AFD.

Preserving the natural environment



BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS IN ASEAN (BCAMP)

- Completion of the formulation of the Protected Area Management Plan for Nam Poui National Protected Area in Lao PDR
- Procurement of Protected Area enforcement equipment for pilot sites in Lao PDR, Malaysia and Philippines
- Conducted capacity building activities for protected area staff in Malaysia
- Supported the declaration of the 50th AHP (Khao Sok National Protected Area, Thailand)
- Conducted the technical workshop on the transboundary cooperation between Malaysia and Thailand
- National stocktaking on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service Assessment (BESA) stocktaking in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia and Thailand
- Developed the ASEAN Dashboard which is a regional interactive platform for visualization of biodiversity targets and information
- Mainstreaming biodiversity in a number of sectors - agriculture, health, infrastructure, mining, education
- Conduct of the ACB Institutional Review
- Conducted ASEANYouth and COVID-19 webinar series

“The webinars are really insightful and taught me a lot about being more aware of the biodiversity around us and doing what we can to conserve and protect it”

Rhaka Katresna
Participant of the #ASEANYouth
Webinar Series organised by AYBP





BCAMP

PROTECTING LAO PDR'S RICH BIODIVERSITY



Growing up in Nam Poui, the Thongmixay District of Xayabouri Province in Lao PDR, Phaivanh Phiapalath's childhood memories consist of fishing in the Nam Sing river, camping, farming, and traveling on elephants. '80% of my childhood was spent outdoors within what is now the Nam Poui National Protected Area', he said.

His parents are illiterate farmers and education was never high on their agenda. Yet when Phiapalath decided to seriously pursue his education, his parents supported his decision.

Phiapalath's hometown, Ban That, is a remote village at the border of Lao PDR and Thailand. It took Phiapalath an hour to walk to his elementary school and a full day over 32 river crossings to get to his high school. Due to the distance, he spent his high school years staying in a bamboo dormitory with grass thatches and a bamboo bed he made for himself.

'Once a year, my parents would deliver 12 sacks of rice for me on our elephant', he said.

Nam Poui is home to both wild and domesticated populations of Asian elephants. Local villagers like Phiapalath's family have a long history of using elephants in their daily lives and breeding domestic as well as wild elephants.

Besides elephants, Nam Poui is also one of the world's most ecologically and culturally rich landscapes with a variety of endangered species and ethnically diverse communities.

However, despite being declared a protected area in 1993, in the last three decades, Nam Poui's rich biodiversity has been threatened by habitat fragmentation caused by road construction, logging and harvesting of non-timber forest products, as well as excessive fishing and hunting.

Phiapalath is now one of the most prominent conservationists and primatologists in Lao PDR with extensive experience assessing potential ASEAN Heritage Parks for the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity.

As a regional expert in wildlife conservation and the management of protected areas, in 2019, he was chosen by the EU-funded Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP) to develop a management plan for the Nam Poui National Protected Area.

The development of the Collaborative Management Plan for the Nam Poui National Protected Area commenced in December 2019 and include a series of field work and consultation meetings with relevant stakeholders such as the communities surrounding the National Protected Area.

On 18 December 2020, the plan was approved by the Director-General of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR.



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© Ashley Westerman / NPR

'I've worked on a dozen other national park management plans before, but this one is closest to my heart,' Phiapalath said.





BCAMP

EMPOWERING YOUNG BIODIVERSITY CHAMPIONS TO TAKE ACTION

Forest conservation is not something that most would immediately associate with the city-state, Singapore. Located at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula, Singapore had pursued a general policy of export-oriented industrialisation since the late 1960s. This general policy was balanced by the adoption of the Garden City vision in the same period.

The Garden City plan has allowed Singapore to increase its green cover from 35.7% in 1986 to 46.5% in 2017. Despite its growing population, close to 10% of the total land area in the country is home parks and nature conservation areas. These conservation parks and botanical gardens are where Karl Png spent the weekends of his childhood; 'I'm always amazed by our connectivity with nature.'

It was not until 2019 that Karl had the opportunity to connect with like-minded peers through the ASEAN Youth Biodiversity Programme (AYBP). 'It was a great opportunity to meet people with the same passion and to have the opportunity to discuss what we, as youth, can do', Png said.

The ASEAN Youth Biodiversity Programme is funded by the EU through the Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN project (BCAMP) to encourage and strengthen youth-led conservation projects. The project also aims to build a community of young individuals passionate about environmental issues and connect them with the right decision-makers to make a more meaningful contribution.



Despite his parents' wishes for him to become a doctor, Png took a Biology major at the National University of Singapore (NUS). 'Initially it was not easy for them to understand my decision, but they always support me and my passion.'

His passion and activism became personal when the Housing and Development Board (HDB) of Singapore announced their plans clear the Dover Forest for a new public housing project.

'I have lived around the Dover Forest almost all my life', Png said. 'I used to walk around the forest and listen to the sound of the birds. It was my place to seek solace after a long day at school'

An environmental baseline study conducted by HDB found at least 158 animal species, including critically endangered ones, and 120 plant species in the forest which spans an area equivalent to the size of 46 soccer fields.

Inspired by his participation in the Youth Biodiversity Leaders programme of the AYBP, Png took to focusing his advocacy on saving the Dover forest.

'The trainings sharpened my understanding of the biodiversity issues we are facing locally', he said referring to the ongoing debate around the preservation of the Dover forest versus the need for additional public housing. 'I think we need to start integrating the issues of nature conservation into national planning.'

As part of the Youth Biodiversity Leaders programme, in February 2020, Png has also joined the negotiations of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) headquarters in Rome, Italy.

Seeing the bigger picture also gave him a sense of belonging to the region. 'Knowing that our efforts are interconnected makes me feel less isolated and pushes me to work harder', he added.

Partnering with the Global Youth Biodiversity Network, the AYBP trains and encourages youths like Png to get involved in conservation-related decision-making processes at both national and international levels, such as the CBD negotiations.

'It was an honour to be there and to see that the leaders were interested in hearing my perspective on the policies discussed'. At the negotiations, Png was able to advocate for a recurring theme from his national youth consultations: the importance of transformative education for young people which will be key to achieving the CBD's 2050 vision of living



in harmony with nature. 'I think we need to overcome our insatiable need to always want and consume and to dominate both nature and the people around us', he said.

This sentiment is shared by Kittikun "Bright" Saksung, a fellow Youth Biodiversity Leader from Thailand, who also participated in the event with Png. 'Biodiversity protection is a common challenge across the ASEAN region. People are trapped in a fast-consuming cycle and don't realise that they are losing their connection with nature'.

For Saksung, the opportunity to be surrounded by biodiversity experts and leaders provided him with the feeling of endless possibilities. 'I can see what the adults are doing and what we, as young people can bring to the table', he said. 'It makes me hopeful that we can save our biodiversity.'

As for Png and his efforts to preserve the Dover Forest, the issue has recently been raised in parliament, and the government has extended the public consultation period till the beginning of March to find a suitable solution for the future of the forest.

'It feels like I have spent every day of my life preparing for that one moment that can make all the difference', he said referring to his lobbying efforts with the parliament. 'It may seem small to others, but this is definitely a win for us.'

Both Png and Saksung are actively encouraging youths around them to be more aware of the environment and related biodiversity issues. 'It is my generation and those who come after us that will bear the consequences of today's actions. So, is it too much to dream of living in harmony with nature?', Png added.



SOCIO-CULTURAL COOPERATION

Putting people first

People-to-people connectivity is central to the EU-ASEAN Strategic Partnership and development cooperation. Increasing the mobility of students and professionals alike opens the region to a flow of new ideas, cooperation and innovation, which are key to creating a prosperous, inclusive society, and improving the well-being and social welfare of all.



Advancing EU-ASEAN cooperation
in higher education

EU-SHARE



Realising Women Migrant Workers'
Rights and Opportunities in ASEAN

Safe & Fair



Facilitating science and
research dialogues

E-READI





Exchanges for education, science and research

People-to-people connectivity and mobility are facing unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As global mobility has become increasingly restricted because of border closures and travel restrictions, digital platforms provide an alternative avenue to maintain intra-regional connectivity.

	Since 2014, over 5 500	Students and staff from ASEAN universities have received scholarships
	NEARLY 3 000	European students and staff have taken up work or study in ASEAN Member States under the Erasmus+ programme
	CATA	ASEAN and the EU are currently negotiating the first region-to-region Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement (CATA).



E-READI

ADVANCING GREEN TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION IN ASEAN

Applying green technologies in the development of new products and services, and integrating these sustainable innovations into manufacturing processes can help fuel both economic growth and socio-environmental development. Green technologies also have the potential to contribute to advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), through mitigating the effects of climate change and building greater climate resilience.

Through the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI), the EU is cooperating with ASEAN to implement the EU-ASEAN Dialogue on Green Technology & Innovation Mapping (Greentech). The initiative aims to contribute to sustainable green growth by fostering EU-ASEAN technology transfer, research cooperation and capacity building in sustainable technologies. Three sectors, namely plastic wastes management, sustainable technologies, and COVID-19 research cooperation, have been identified to pilot the feasibility and value of the approach.

E-READI is also facilitating a series of webinars to further promote EU-ASEAN technology cooperation and to create a platform to discuss the latest technology innovations in plastic waste management between EU and ASEAN stakeholders.



The series of webinars, which will take place in 2021, will bring together business and industry players from both the EU and ASEAN, as well as academics and researchers, local and central government agencies, and non-governmental organizations.





E-READI

CHAMPIONING CROSS-BORDER HEALTHCARE IN ASEAN



In the 1960s, medical services were not as widely accessible as they are today in the Philippines. In Cavite province on the southern shores of Manila Bay where Dr Jose Cueto Jr was born and raised, 'We didn't have a complete line up of specialists.' Cueto came from a family of teachers and was in his second year in the seminary, when he decided to fulfil his calling to serve through the world of medicine instead, 'I wanted to help'.

Dr Cueto currently serves as the Head of the Professional Regulation Commission of the Philippines, and with four clusters of professions under his purview including medical professionals, he has been a passionate proponent of the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs). MRAs in services aim to facilitate the mobility of skilled labour across ASEAN through the mutual recognition of professional qualifications.

'Mobility is very important in ensuring the free flow of services under the ASEAN Economic Community', Cueto said.

Currently ASEAN Member States have formalised mutual recognition in eight professions: architectural services; surveying; medicine; dentistry; engineering; nursing; accounting; and tourism.

However, practical implementation of the MRAs has remained limited, especially in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam. According to Cueto, one of the main challenges has been in harmonising regulations and standards in all ten ASEAN Member States, 'especially for allowing doctors to interact directly with patients', he said.

Cooperation between the EU and ASEAN on the issue of safe migration dates back to 2015. Facilitated by the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI), the first EU-ASEAN Dialogue on Safe Labour Migration and Mobility was held in 2018, in conjunction with the launch of the ASEAN Safe Migration Campaign. The dialogue provided a platform for the EU and ASEAN to exchange views and best practices on issues related to labour mobility, access to and portability of social security for migrant workers, and responsible business practices that contribute to safe labour migration.

One of the dialogue's key outputs is an ASEAN-wide comparative study titled 'Comparative study on laws and policies pertaining to the management of migrant workers, including occupations under the eight MRAs in ASEAN'. Launched in November 2019, the study identified differences in laws and policies in managing the entry, stay and exit of foreign workers within ASEAN Member States.

In Cueto's experience, for medical practitioners, the concept of mobility means the ability to travel within the ASEAN region in the following capacities: medical practice; expert visits; education training; research; and humanitarian missions.



However, despite having the MRAs in place since 2009, 'it is still difficult to determine how many ASEAN medical practitioners are benefitting from the MRA mechanism or are even aware of the recognition and eligibility requirements', Cueto said. 'Unlike the architectural sector, we don't have an ASEAN registry for medical practitioners.'

A series of education materials on safe and fair migration are currently being prepared to be launched during the 2nd EU-ASEAN Dialogue on Safe and Fair Migration in 2021.

'Increasing the knowledge of safe migration among migrant workers is just as important as strengthening our regional framework', Cueto said.



Academic cooperation

Erasmus+ is the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport. Aimed at developing and sharing knowledge and experience, it funds cooperation and mobility between Europe and other regions, including the ASEAN region, offering opportunities to individuals and a range of organisations, including universities, education and training providers, research organisations, and private businesses.

In response to the educational challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, on 25 August 2020, Erasmus+ announced two new calls:

DIGITAL EDUCATION READINESS

€100 MILLION

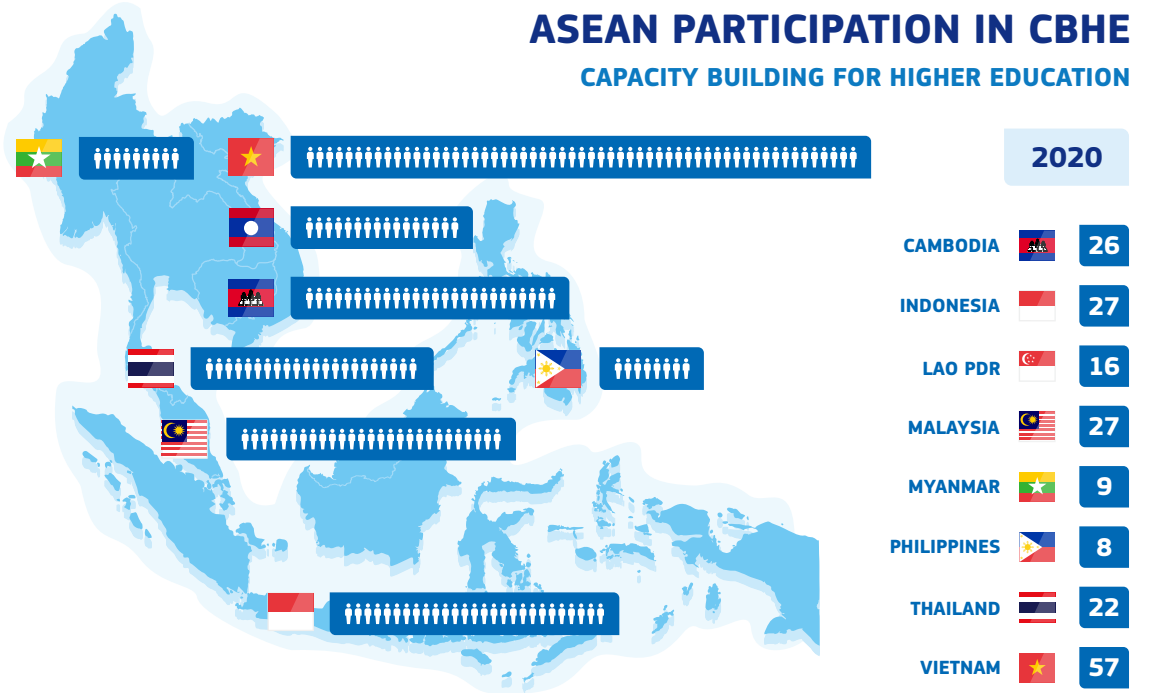
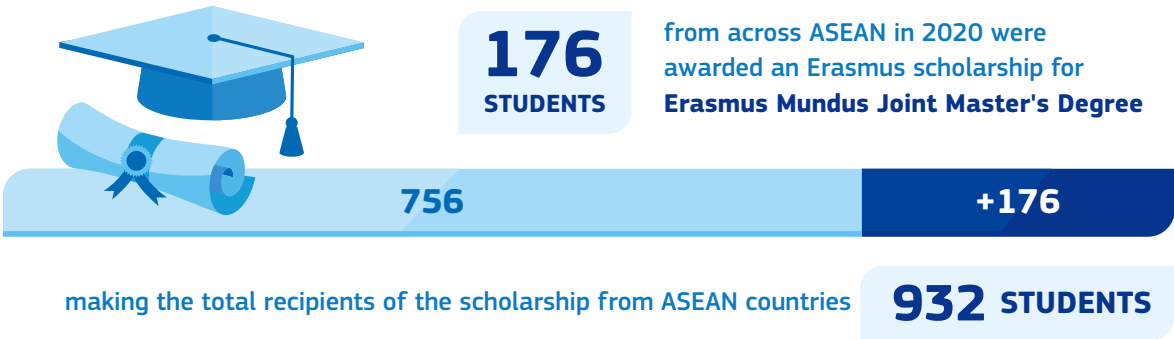
to enhance online, distance, and blended learning in school education, vocational education and training, as well as higher education

PARTNERSHIP FOR CREATIVITY

€100 MILLION

to encourage creativity and boost the quality, innovation and recognition of youth's work.

- International Credit Mobility**
mobility scheme for students and staff
- Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees**
two year scholarships with study in at least two different European countries
- Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE)**
including partnerships with commercial enterprises
- Jean Monnet Activities**
excellence in teaching and research on the European integration process
- Capacity Building projects in the Field of Youth**
support to improve youth work, non-formal learning and volunteering





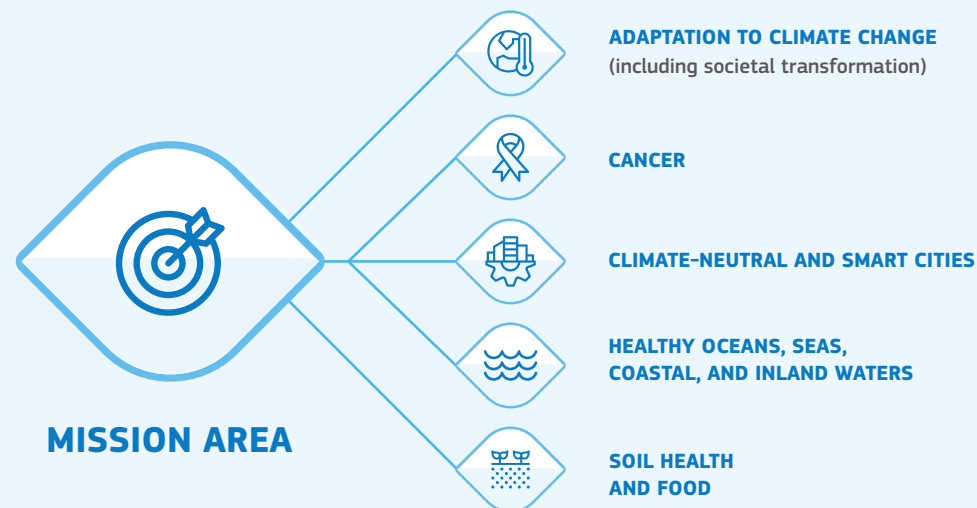
Horizon Europe

EU cooperation with ASEAN on science, technology and research is driven by mutual interests and the desire to share experiences on issues of common concern, enhance connectivity, and boost sustainable economic growth.

In 2021, the EU launched its research and innovation framework programme, Horizon Europe.

HORIZON EUROPE

€95
BILLION
2021-2027



STRUCTURE OF HORIZON EUROPE

HORIZON EUROPE

SPECIFIC PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE & EIT*



SPECIFIC PROGRAMME: EUROPEAN DEFENCE FUND

Exclusive focus on defence research & development



WIDENING PARTICIPATION AND STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA



EURATOM



*The European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) is not part of the Specific Programme





E-READI

SUPERCOMPUTING FOR THE FUTURE

In the face of the global pandemic, science, technology and innovation have become the new frontier of hope.

While discussions on increasing access to high-performance computing (HPC) for both EU and ASEAN scientists started in 2019, the urgent need to utilise HPC to find solutions to COVID-19-related challenges prompted the EU-ASEAN Regional Dialogue Instrument (E-READI) to organise the first inter-regional webinar on the topic.

Held on 10 July 2020, the webinar served as a platform for EU and ASEAN scientists to exchange experiences on using HPC modelling and diagnostics for COVID-19-related projects, and to promote networking and cooperation among research projects and donors.

As a follow-up action in 2021, the EU and ASEAN partnered with Japan to hold the inaugural EU-ASEAN-Japan Symposium at the SupercomputingAsia (SCA) conference. The symposium was held on 4 March 2021 under the theme 'Supercomputing in the new norm – Adapting to COVID-19 and beyond'.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Igor Driesmans, Head of the EU Mission to ASEAN, highlighted the importance of continuous collaboration to further optimise the use of HPC in finding solutions to the challenges of our time. 'We recognise its potential to stimulate further cooperation and synergies and thus, to contribute to knowledge-sharing.'



The symposium provided an opportunity for stakeholders from the ASEAN HPC working group as well as EU and Japanese research institutions to present updates on their joint HPC initiatives. Participants shared insights into the latest challenges and trends in HPC and data infrastructure, in addition to new research, talent and HPC skills development opportunities.

Following the EU-ASEAN Joint Ministerial Statement on Connectivity on 1 December 2020 which committed its support to an HPC online school, E-READI is also organising the first EU-ASEAN HPC summer school in 2021. The two-week virtual programme will be open to students interested in learning from EU and ASEAN experts on HPC and its applications.

EU Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region

EU SHARE

€15
MILLION
2015-2023



STRENGTHENS REGIONAL COOPERATION
and enhances the quality of ASEAN higher education.



SUPPORTS HARMONISATION
of higher education in ASEAN to increase and enhance the mobility of university students and staff.



REGIONAL MOBILITY
Scholarships facilitate regional mobility and the credit transfer system is an integral part of SHARE scholarships.



mutual recognition of qualifications



improving quality assurance



enhancing regional credit transfer systems



strengthening institutional capacity

ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

★ **OVER 2000** participants attended policy dialogues, workshops, and forums

- with **251** participants from **17** HEIs CLMV countries participating in the policy dialogues
- Total **7,377** concurrent views streamed on Youtube in Policy Dialogue 11

★ **11** policy dialogues

★ **11** country-based policy and capacity building workshops on qualifications frameworks and quality assurance

★ **591** scholarships awarded **489** intra-ASEAN scholarships, **102** ASEAN-EU scholarships

with **380** (64.24%) from CLMV countries with **428** (73.4%) ASEAN women awardees

★ **2** ASEAN student mobility forums

★ Establishment of national secretariats of SHARE Scholarship Alumni Association in 8 ASEAN Member States

★ **22** publications including policy briefs, infographics and reports





EU SHARE

INCREASING REGIONAL MOBILITY IN EDUCATION ACROSS ASEAN



Karen Mae grew up with her mother by the Philippine Sea in Catarman, Northern Samar province, the Philippines. Here, the pace of life is much slower than in the bustling capital, Manila. 'I used to just spend my days swimming in the ocean and playing outdoors', she said. 'But I was also always very curious. I was curious about everything!'

Her curiosity to discover new things led her to take on an academic challenge where she applied to the University of the Philippines. She was the first student from the province to apply, but following her admission, she also became the first one to ever be accepted into one of the top universities in the country.

'Of course, I took the opportunity!' Mae exclaimed. "It was my first time to live far away from my home province and family, but I was excited for the new adventure."

Mae spent the next few years adjusting to the fast pace of life in Manila. She juggled multiple side jobs to pay her study as a clothing technology major.

One day, she learned about the European Union Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region (EU SHARE) programme from her friend's social media post. 'I went to her straight away to ask for more information about the programme,' Mae said. EU SHARE is a programme by the European Union and ASEAN which aims to strengthen regional cooperation in the field of education, and enhance the quality, regional competitiveness and internationalisation of ASEAN higher education institutions and students. As the flagship project of the ASEAN higher education sector, the programme promotes regional harmonisation of higher education and facilitates the creation of an ASEAN Higher Education Space in support of a people-centred ASEAN Community.

Mae undertook the whole selection process of the EU SHARE intra-ASEAN scholarship programme without the knowledge of her family. Only when she was admitted as one of the successful applicants did she share the good news with her mother and grandmother. 'They were surprised, but in a good way', Mae said. 'I think they're proud of me.'

With a funding of €15 million from the EU, EU SHARE has provided over 500 scholarships for ASEAN university students since its establishment in 2015.

The intra-ASEAN scholarship programme Mae participated in is a key component of the EU SHARE programme designed to test the application of credit transfer systems and increase intra-ASEAN student mobility. The scholarship enables students to spend a few months earning academic credits during their study period at a partnering university in the region. For Mae, this meant spending a four-month study at the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia in Johor Baru. 'It was a once in a lifetime experience', she said. In addition to the knowledge that she received in the classes, the programme has also broadened her cultural horizon.

In Johor Baru, she stayed with her fellow international students from ASEAN and tried different cuisines almost on a daily basis. "We did our groceries together and took turns to cook," she said. "It was amazing to be able to learn about the diversity of our region at first hand."

Coming from the predominantly Catholic Philippines, Mae also had her first experience celebrating one of the biggest Muslim holidays, Eid al-Fitr. Mae's professor invited her and two of her friends to join their family's celebration. "She was so nice and even took us to visit her extended family members who were all also very welcoming," Mae said.

As a student with a major in clothing technology, Mae has always had an affinity towards the apparel industry and textiles. In Malaysia, she was able to visit a costume museum. "My heart skipped a beat, and I knew right then that I want to become a museum curator for textiles, costumes or traditional clothing."

Mae is now back in the Philippines to finish her study and has recently received a job offer with a clothing company in Korea. "It's a good opportunity to gain more experience in the industry before creating my own little clothing museum and business."

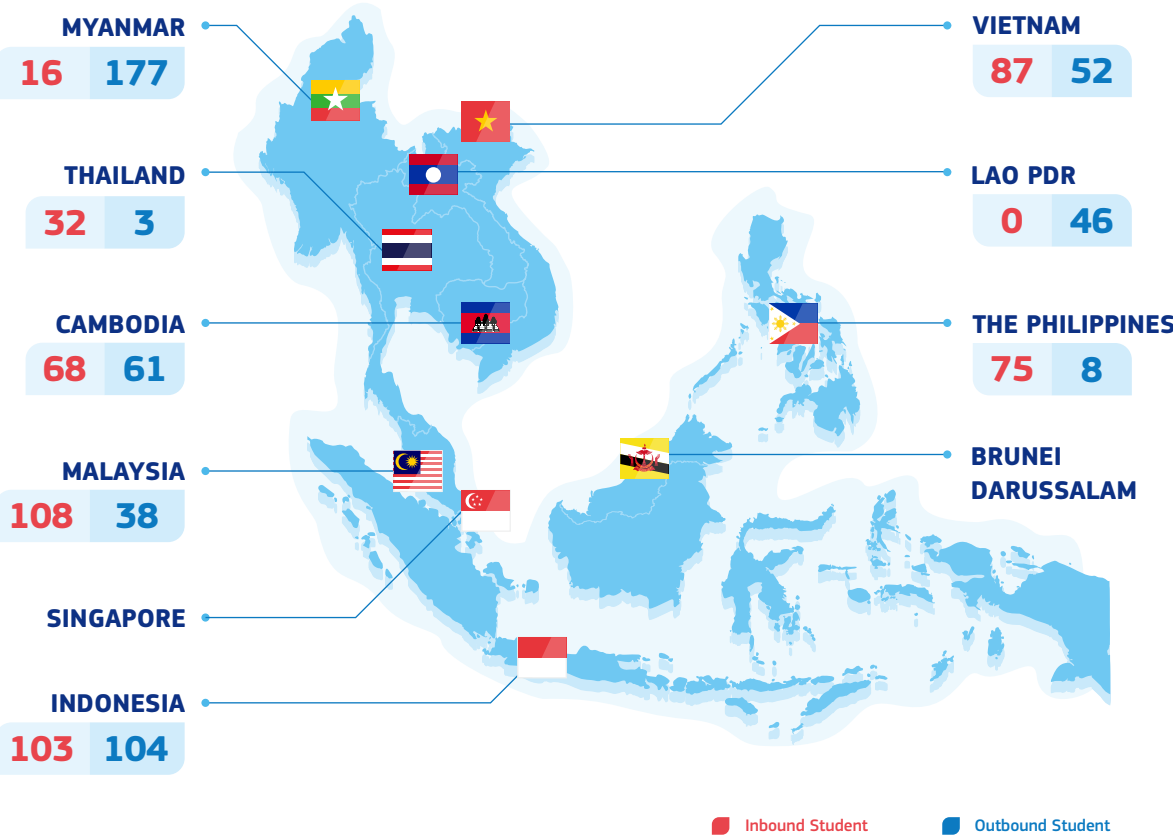
Implemented by a consortium including the British Council, DAAD (the German Academic Exchange Service), ENQA (the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) and Nuffic (the Dutch non-profit for internationalisation in education), the European Union has announced the extension of the SHARE programme from 27 February 2021 to the end of December 2022.

EU SHARE

- ✔ Policy dialogue
- ✔ Credit transfer system
- ✔ Qualifications framework
- ✔ EU SHARE scholarship
- ✔ Quality assurance



EU SHARE STUDENT EXCHANGE





489

INTRA-ASEAN SCHOLARSHIPS

8

COUNTRIES

32

UNIVERSITIES

Realising women migrant workers' rights and opportunities

Violence against women migrant workers is one of the most pervasive human rights violations facing over ten million migrants in ASEAN. To ensure safe and fair labour migration for all women in the ASEAN region, the EU is working with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) through the global €500 million Spotlight Initiative.

SAFE AND FAIR

Safe and Fair: Realising women migrant workers' rights and opportunities in the ASEAN region

€25 MILLION

2018-2022



REACHING 4.7 MILLION PEOPLE

Through its national and local level engagements, the programme has shared information and provided services to more than **75 000 women** migrant workers and their families, and built capacities of more than **18 000 people**.



SUPPORTING WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS

The project facilitates coordinated and responsive services for women migrant workers at risk of violence and exploitation.



IMPLEMENTED THROUGH INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION AND UN WOMEN

Working in close cooperation with regional ASEAN bodies, national governments and institutions, as well as the private sector and civil society organisations.

94

EU-ASEAN
STRATEGIC PARTNERS

EU-ASEAN
Blue Book 2021

95



SAFE & FAIR

PROTECTING VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMIDST A GLOBAL PANDEMIC



© Karmila Jusup

With the support of an EU-funded programme to combat violence against women, Karmila Jusup, founder of a crisis centre for victims of domestic violence, was able to continue to provide critical support to women migrant workers despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a Christian woman of Chinese descent in a patriarchal family in the predominantly Muslim West Java, Jusup grew up experiencing regular discrimination. 'My father openly regretted having me. He didn't see the need to provide me with education as I am just a "girl"', she said.

Jusup soon found refuge in her faith and became a priest in her local church in Bandung, West Java, but would have never imagined that she would encounter cases of violence against women there.

The congregation would gather every Sunday, 'but after the service, I would have people coming to me with stories of violence', she said. She took the stories to church management, but no one would believe her. It took her 13 years to convince both the church community and the local villagers to open the doors of the church complex for women who experienced violence.

The Pasoendan-Durebang Women's Crisis Centre first opened in 2013 to cater to the needs of women within the church community and to support local survivors of domestic violence. Leveraging public advocacy and by connecting with similar organisations, Jusup worked tirelessly to raise awareness of the services provided by the centre and the pervasive issue of domestic violence. Due to their proximity to a migrant workers' hotspot, the centre also became a safe haven for migrant workers who experienced violence abroad.

The centre currently covers four major destinations for Indonesian migrant workers: Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Korea. 'We provide survivors with safe shelter, health services, counselling and legal services as needed', Jusup said. 'Anything we can help with, really.'

As the number of women seeking help grew rapidly, Jusup recognised the need to increase the capacity of the centre to provide better services for the survivors.

She has thus joined a network of over 60 civil society organisations (CSOs) in the ASEAN region under the Safe and Fair programme, an EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls. Through Safe and Fair, Jusup received critical training on safe and fair migration, and on how to provide psychosocial, health, social and legal services to women migrant workers.

'COVID-19 brought a new set of challenges to our centre', Karmila said. 'The number of survivors that require our help actually increased during the pandemic and we just simply cannot stop our services.'



While the influx of women migrant workers in need of shelter and support skyrocketed, the centre could only accommodate a limited number of survivors due to strict health and social distancing protocols

Government-imposed lockdown measures have also restricted Jusup's ability to reach out to survivors, and the centre was forced to close temporarily. 'I was worried and scared for these women', Jusup said. 'It was so hard to have to say no to them.'

Safe and Fair has helped Jusup make the services more easily accessible to survivors by opening a satellite shelter closer to the migrant workers' hotspot. 'The support could not have come at a better time.'

Safe and Fair is a regional programme implemented by UN Women, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with a €25 million funding from the EU to strengthen the rights of women migrant workers in the region. On the policy level, the programme is working in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, the Philippines and Vietnam to relevant revise laws and regulations to provide better protection for migrant workers and tackle violence against women and girls.

The programme has also partnered with governments, trade unions and CSOs to provide services to women migrant workers and their families through local service providers like Jusup and a network of Migrant Worker Resource Centre across ASEAN.





BILATERAL COOPERATION

Strengthening EU-ASEAN development cooperation through close partnerships with ASEAN Member States





BRUNEI DARUSSALAM



Brunei Darussalam holds the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2021 under the theme, 'We Care, We Prepare, We Prosper'



1985

Cooperation Agreement between European Economic Community (EEC) and ASEAN Member States came into force

FOCUS AREAS



Trade and investment



Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear risks (CBRN)



Security-related areas

HIGHLIGHTS OF EU COOPERATION



Cooperation on Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Risks Mitigation Centres of Excellent Initiative (CBRN CoE) supports Brunei's National Action Plan.

The EU and Brunei Darussalam share a close working relationship, partnering with each other through various multilateral dialogue platforms, including:

ASEAN

ARF

the ASEAN Regional Forum

ASEM

the Asia-Europe Meeting

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

★ TRADE

- The EU is Brunei's seventh largest trading partner in goods, with an overall value of **€559.2 million in 2019**
- The EU is Brunei's **third largest** supplier of goods

★ IMPORTS

- €331 million** worth of goods (2020) or **€254 million** worth of services from the EU in 2019 (Eurostat)
- Several small and large EU-based companies are part of Brunei's economy



CAMBODIA



2002

EU Delegation opened in Phnom Penh

€ 530 MILLION

2014
2020

TOTAL FUNDING SUPPORT

FOCUS AREAS



Good governance



Education



Natural Resources (fisheries)



FLAGSHIP PROJECTS



EU Support to Public Finance Management Reform phase III

2015-2020

€ 127 MILLION



EU-Cambodia Education Sector Reform Partnership

2018-2021

€ 145 MILLION



Cambodia Programme for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth (CaPFish)

2014-2020

€ 117 MILLION

HIGHLIGHTS OF EU COOPERATION



Effective cooperation through Joint Programming with nine EU Member States and Switzerland, aligning with Cambodia's national priorities.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019



The €111 million EU COVID-19 response, part of the €443 million Team Europe response announced mid-year is the largest in ASEAN (almost half of the total). EU support is exclusively made of grant assistance, it combines new allocations (around 5%), funds already programmed (55%) and redirected funds (40%), and notably includes support to Social Protection. All related actions were approved before the end of 2020, including numerous actions with civil society organisations to support urban and rural families, most affected by the economic crisis.



The entire Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2014-2020 has been committed in 2020 (€395 million of grant) with strong policy dialogue on Public Finance Management (PFM), Education and Fisheries sectors.



Sharp increase in approved blending projects (€247.1 million in 2020 only) including two with the European Investment Bank.





INDONESIA



2014

Indonesia is the first country in ASEAN with a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU

FOCUS AREAS



Trade, investment and connectivity



Climate change and the environment



Governance, human rights, and security

FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

ARISE+
Indonesia

2018-2023

€15
MILLION

Support to
sustainable
investments
and
infrastructure

€28.8
MILLION

Indonesia
benefits
directly from
SUPA
programme
with

€5
MILLION

HIGHLIGHTS OF EU COOPERATION



Team Europe provides over €200 million to support Indonesia in its response to the COVID-19 crisis, including grant funding for CSO projects to support vulnerable communities, and co-financing loans from France and Germany for improving hospital and health infrastructure.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020



Team Europe's support to Indonesia's national financing institution, PT SMI consisting of €22 million grant from the EU and €500 million loans from AFD and KfW



LAO PDR



1997

Cooperation Agreement between European Economic Community (EEC) and ASEAN Member States came into force

€ 203
MILLION

2014
2020

TOTAL
FUNDING
SUPPORT

FOCUS AREAS



Nutrition



Nutrition Support
Programme

2014-2020

€ 100
MILLION



Education



Basic Education Support
Programme

2018-2021

€ 62
MILLION



Good
Governance



Citizen Engagement for Good
Governance, Accountability
and Rule of Law

2017-2020

€ 18
MILLION

HIGHLIGHTS OF EU COOPERATION

- The EU celebrated 45 years of relations with Lao PDR.
- The EU, EU Member States active in Laos (Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg) and Switzerland agreed on a joint TeamEurope Green initiative for Lao PDR in 2021-2025, to support Lao PDR's Green Growth Strategy 2030.
- TeamEurope launched a joint package of over 80 million EUR to support the Lao PDR Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020



The Lao PDR Government developed and adopted the implementation guidelines of the Decree on Breastfeeding Milk Substitute, a very long-awaited important policy development in the nutrition sector, supported by EU budget support and EU-funded technical assistance through UNICEF.



For the first time, two local civil society organisations (CSOs) were allowed to accompany the Lao Delegation at the Human Rights Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in Geneva in January 2020. Their participation was funded by the EU.





MALAYSIA



1980

Cooperation Agreement between European Economic Community (EEC) and ASEAN Member States came into force



Malaysia continues to receive support through regional and thematic budget lines

FOCUS AREAS



Trade



Environment and climate change



Human rights

HIGHLIGHTS OF EU COOPERATION



The EU is working with the State of Sabah and its forestry department to help reduce emissions from deforestation and to strengthen community engagement in pro-poor sustainable forest management



The EU is working with the European Business Chamber to strengthen investments in Malaysia

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020

★ The COVID-19 response for Malaysia focused on human rights, and strengthening the inclusion of the most marginalised groups of the population in the national response. Many of the ongoing Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities (CSO/LA) projects adapted their activities to respond to the crisis, and put in place outreach programmes to reach the most marginalised segments of the Malaysian population.



MYANMAR



2013

EU Delegation opened in Yangon

FOCUS AREAS



Rural development, agriculture, food & nutrition security



Education



Peacebuilding

FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

**SMART
Textile &
Garments**

Promotes
sustainable
consumption
and production
of garments

FROM 2019



Education
Support

2019-2022



Enhancing
Rural
Nutrition
in Myanmar

2020-2025

HIGHLIGHTS OF EU COOPERATION



In 2020, Team Europe supports Myanmar to tackle COVID-19





THE PHILIPPINES



1980

Cooperation Agreement between European Economic Community (EEC) and ASEAN Member States came into force

€ 216 MILLION 2014 2020

TOTAL FUNDING SUPPORT

FOCUS AREAS



Justice and rule of law



Inclusive growth through access to sustainable energy



Socio-economic and governance programmes to support peace process in Mindanao

■ Cross cutting issues such as gender equality, children, youth, persons with disability and indigenous people.

HIGHLIGHTS OF EU COOPERATION



Launch of a range of socio-economic and governance programmes for a total of €100 million to support the peace process in Mindanao



Integrating COVID response in ongoing and new support measures, such as support to WHO, justice sector, Red Cross and CSOs

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020

★ €170 000 is allocated under the GOJUST I programme to support COVID-19 response to purchase bus units, PPEs and multimedia tablets

★ Six schools located in off-grid areas are now electrified through solar power, complementing the technical support provided to the local authorities and the Department of Energy

★ €6 456M worth of humanitarian assistance from EU and Member States to the Philippines following the devastating typhoons that hit the country



SINGAPORE



1980

Cooperation Agreement between European Economic Community (EEC) and ASEAN Member States came into force

FOCUS AREAS



Trade and investment



Regional and global security



Economic development

HIGHLIGHTS OF EU COOPERATION



The EU supports private sector development through the EU Business Avenues in Southeast Asia programme.



From July 2016 to December 2020, 20 business missions in seven industry sectors have been successfully organised to Singapore and other key ASEAN markets to showcase EU innovative technologies and bolster partnerships.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020

★ The comprehensive EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA) came into force on 21 November 2019

★ The ESCPA will strengthen political dialogue with Singapore and enhance cooperation in a broad range of areas, while the EUSIPA will further strengthen the strong investment ties between the EU and Singapore.

★ The European Parliament gave its consent to the EU-Singapore Investment Protection Agreement (EUSIPA) and Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (ESPCA) – signed in October 2018 and will enter into force once ratified by all EU Member States

★ On 3 December 2020, the EU and Singapore signed an Administrative Arrangement on Cluster Cooperation, to put in place practical initiatives for clusters and their members, including regular exchanges and business matchmaking events, where Singaporean and European businesses can connect, network, and develop strategic partnerships.





THAILAND

1980

Cooperation Agreement between European Economic Community (EEC) and ASEAN Member States came into force



FOCUS AREAS



Sustainable growth and development



Human development and migration



Environment and climate change

FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

Aid to Uprooted People

2016-2021

€16 MILLION

Ship to Shore Rights Project-Southeast Asia

AUGUST 2020

Promoting regular and safe labour migration among South East Asian countries in the fishing and seafood processing sectors

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020

- ★ Mobilisation of stakeholders to respond to the COVID 19 pandemic and support the most affected communities, such as migrant workers.



VIETNAM

1999

Cooperation Agreement between European Economic Community (EEC) and ASEAN Member States came into force

€ 320 MILLION 2014 2020

TOTAL FUNDING SUPPORT



FOCUS AREAS



Renewable / Sustainable Energy



Government and Rule of Law



Trade



Sustainable consumption and production

FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

Vietnam Sustainable Energy Transition Programme

2021-2025

€ 142 MILLION

HIGHLIGHTS OF EU COOPERATION



The EU's bilateral grant support programme to the energy sector in Vietnam is among the largest in the world, with a total commitment of €250 million. The programme focuses on providing access to a reliable source of power, energy efficiency and renewable energy.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020

- ★ Entry into force of the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement on 1 August 2020
- ★ Disbursement of €19 million grant to the Treasury as part of the Team Europe COVID-19 response.



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