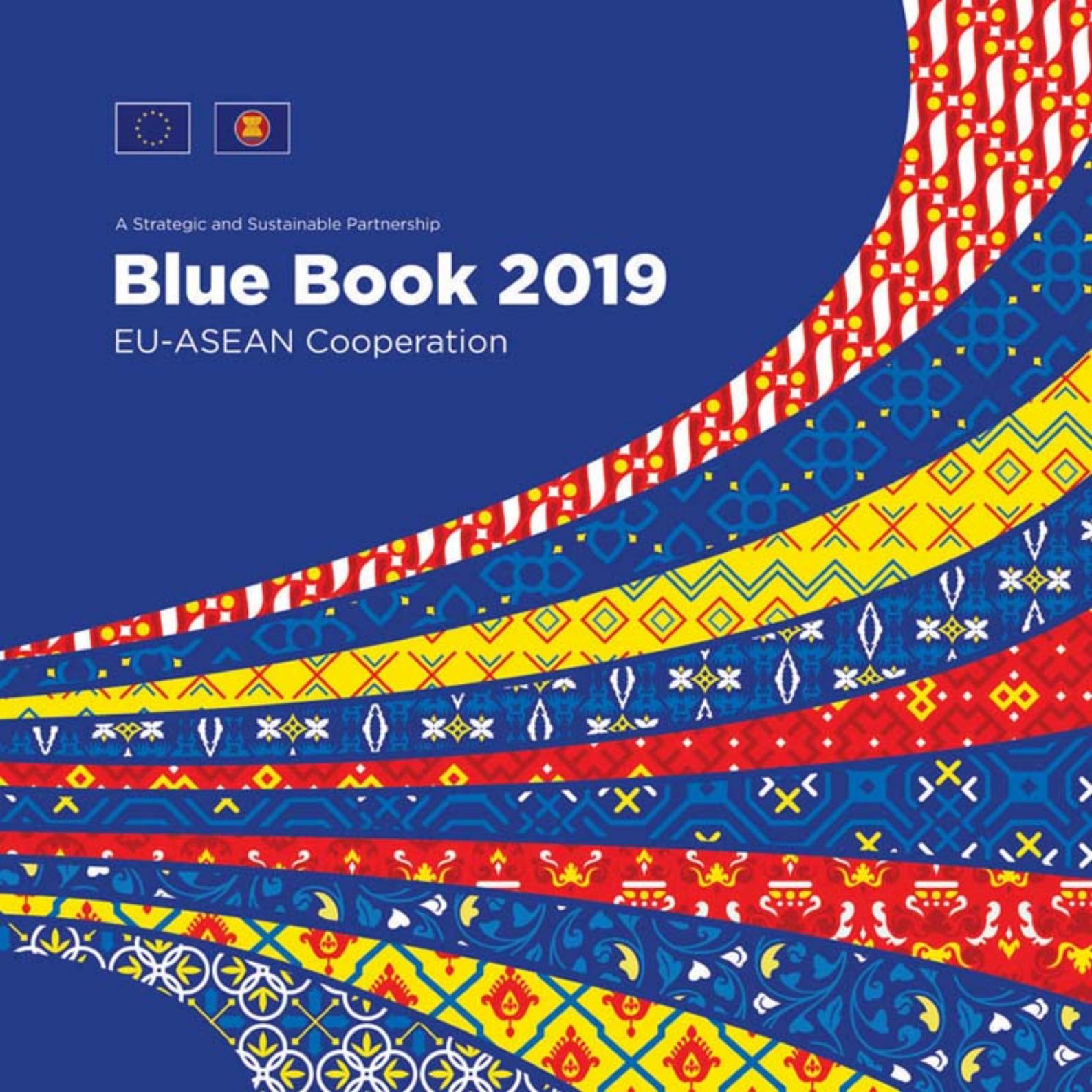




A Strategic and Sustainable Partnership

Blue Book 2019

EU-ASEAN Cooperation





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FOREWORD

by the Director-General for International Cooperation and Development at the European Commission



Stefano Manservigi

Director-General for International Cooperation and Development at the European Commission

The partnership between the European Union (EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has grown over the past 42 years to encompass ever more areas in a strategic agenda that is sustainable and dynamic.

Common values and interests such as the commitment to regionalism and multilateralism and a rules-based international order bind our two regions together as natural and proven "partners in integration". This is also true if we look at our joint support to global landmarks such as the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals, the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and enhancing sustainable connectivity within ASEAN and between our two regions.

And of course, combined, the EU and ASEAN bring together more than one billion people and two of the largest economic areas in the world. ASEAN represents the EU's third largest trading partner outside Europe, while the EU is ASEAN's second and the number one source of Foreign Direct Investments, and by far from the second one!

The year 2018 marked the adoption of the EU Connectivity Strategy for Asia, outlining the EU's approach to promoting sustainable, comprehensive and rule-based connectivity, to benefit the people both in Europe and in Asia. This strategic document recognises ASEAN as a central player in connectivity in Southeast Asia and the EU's interest to support the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, in line with our sustainability approach in all of its aspects – environmental, fiscal and social.

In 2018, we have successfully started two of our flagship EU-ASEAN programmes, the economic and trade connectivity package 'ARISE Plus' and our policy dialogue facility 'E-READI'. The latter is an excellent tool for furthering our partnership and we have started a number of dialogue activities in highly important new policy areas of EU-ASEAN engagement – such as circular economy and marine litter, digital economy, road transport, fisheries, clean energy, construction standards, research and innovation and others.

This EU-ASEAN Blue Book showcases these and many other success stories we have achieved together in the past year and demonstrates how EU and ASEAN regional cooperation is effectively contributing to sustainable regional and global development, security and prosperity. We look forward to taking the next steps in this partnership, to deliver benefits for our citizens and, as both ASEAN and the EU say, ensure no one is left behind.

FOREWORD

by the EU Ambassador to ASEAN



Francisco Fontan

EU Ambassador to ASEAN

It is a pleasure for me to introduce the 2019 edition of the Blue Book, our annual publication on cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), with contributions from several EU Member States. Throughout this Blue Book, you will see how multifaceted and strategic EU-ASEAN cooperation has become.

On 21 January 2019, the 22nd EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting was held in Brussels. Discussions among ministers reflected the depth and breadth of our relations. There was a unity of purpose – a common desire to strengthen EU-ASEAN cooperation. This was demonstrated through a commitment to collaborate in new areas such as the fight against unregulated fishing, the launch of a new high-level dialogue on the environment and climate change, and an agreement in principle to upgrade our relations to a Strategic Partnership.

The EU remains the largest donor to ASEAN, helping the regional organisation and its Member State governments to reduce poverty and spread opportunity. Over EUR 200 million is allocated to support ASEAN regional integration and connectivity, on top of over EUR 3 billion bilateral assistance to ASEAN Member States, and through the direct efforts of our 28 EU Member States. The EU's private sector is the largest investor in ASEAN, holding a quarter of total investment in the region, and we are ASEAN's second largest trading partner.

Connectivity is a key theme for the EU and ASEAN. EU support to the ASEAN Master Plan on Connectivity 2025 is embedded in most of our development cooperation programmes. The new EU Joint Communication 'Connecting Europe and Asia' will offer opportunities for further engagement.

Cooperation, solidarity and prosperity are the hallmarks of our relations, but the rapidly evolving international scene is leading us to focus more on key strategic issues. Our shared ambitions can only reach their full potential in a rules-based, peaceful and stable environment. This is what makes ASEAN so important for the EU in Asia – not just as a community of ten, but also as the core of the East Asia Summit, the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) process. Both ASEAN and the EU see regional integration as the most effective way to foster stability and prosperity.

Our cooperation brings together two regions covering 38 countries and over one billion people. On the following pages we share the impact of the work of the EU and ASEAN. Thank you for your interest, and I hope that you will enjoy our publication.

THE EU WORLDWIDE

The European Union (EU) is a unique economic and political community of 28 European Member States that work together to improve the lives of their citizens. For more than sixty years the EU has delivered peace, stability and prosperity through its commitment to democratic processes and the establishment of a single market which enables the free movement of people, goods, services and capital.

In 2018, the EU represented a population of more than 445 million people, and is the second largest economy in the world. Accounting for one fifth of global trade, the EU is also the world's largest importer and exporter of goods and services. As a global actor, the EU is committed to lead by example in addressing the most pressing global challenges of this century, including the fight against climate change and the promotion of peace and security.

To speak with one voice in international affairs, the EU has developed a Common Foreign and Security Policy and has established the European External Action Service (EEAS) as its official diplomatic corps. The EEAS supports the work of the EU's foreign affairs chief in carrying out the EU's political, diplomatic and policy agenda globally. Over 140 EU Delegations throughout the world cooperate closely with EU Member States and other countries to promote the values and interests of the EU.

The EU champions equal rights and opportunities for all regardless of socio-economic background. EU development assistance is prioritised for developing countries that are in need of urgent and critical support. The EU will continue these efforts and work together with its partners towards building a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future.



Antonio Tajani
The President of
the European Parliament



Donald Tusk
The President of
the European Council



Jean-Claude Juncker
The President of
the European Commission



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



THE EU AND ASEAN

Strategic and sustainable partners

The European Union (EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the two most advanced examples of regional integration in the world, are natural partners with a history of cooperation across a range of sectors that spans more than four decades.

Today, the EU is ASEAN's largest provider of foreign direct investment (FDI), its most significant partner in development cooperation, its second largest trading partner, and an increasingly important destination for investment coming from ASEAN.

The EU and ASEAN are partners in sustainable development, and enjoy mutually beneficial cooperation in areas such as education, economic integration, connectivity, food security and climate change mitigation. As the EU increasingly takes on the role of a global security actor and pursues engagement in all ASEAN-led processes, EU-ASEAN cooperation continues to expand into new fields such as maritime security, counter-terrorism and transnational crime.



Recognising the impressive progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN-EU Plan of Action for 2018-2022, the 22nd EU-ASEAN meeting of Foreign Ministers agreed, in principle, to upgrade EU-ASEAN relations to the level of a Strategic Partnership.

EU-ASEAN relations will continue to be strengthened by a mutual commitment to a rules-based international order, shared values and interests, and a common goal to jointly address global challenges.

EUROPEAN UNION

FOUNDED IN 1957

MEMBER STATES **28**

MOTTO:
UNITED IN DIVERSITY

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES **24**

POPULATION **512.7**
MILLION

LAND AREA
4,422,773 KM²



ASEAN

FOUNDED IN 1967

MEMBER STATES **10**

MOTTO:
ONE VISION, ONE IDENTITY,
ONE COMMUNITY

WORKING LANGUAGE
01
ENGLISH

POPULATION **642.1**
MILLION

LAND AREA
4,479,210.5 KM²



Formal Dialogue
Relations Established

1977

Joint Cooperation
Committee Established

1980

Nuremberg Declaration
on Enhanced Partnership

2007

EU Accession to Treaty of Amity
and Cooperation in Southeast Asia

2012

Bandar Seri Begawan
Plan of Action 2013-2017

ASEAN
Community Established

2015

EU Mission to
ASEAN Established

40 Year
Anniversary

2017

ASEAN-EU Plan of Action
2018-2022

Agreement in Principle to
Establish a Strategic Partnership

2019

EU-ASEAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Built on a robust foundation of over 40 years of partnership, the EU is committed to further strengthening its relationship with ASEAN. In 2018, the strategic focus of EU-ASEAN cooperation was demonstrated through the launch of new flagship programmes supporting economic integration (Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE Plus)) and EU-ASEAN dialogue in areas of shared policy priorities (Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI)) at the ASEAN Secretariat.

EU cooperation with ASEAN continues to develop rapidly. The EU has dedicated over EUR 200 million to support ASEAN integration for the period 2014-2020. Highlights of 2018 initiatives include: the first ASEAN-EU Cooperation and Scholarships Day held on ASEAN Day (8 August 2018) at the ASEAN Secretariat; the launch of numerous dialogue activities under the E-READI programme; and the #MyNatureMyHero Biodiversity video competition, which showcased youth engagement in biodiversity conservation in ASEAN.

Bilateral development cooperation with individual ASEAN Member States includes more than EUR 2 billion altogether, of which more than half support Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam.

Connectivity through Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Integration and Trade



€85 MILLION

Climate Change, Environment and Disaster Management Preparedness



€60 MILLION

Policy Dialogue Facility



€25 MILLION

Women Migrant Workers' Rights and Opportunities



€25 MILLION

Higher Education and Student Mobility for ASEAN



€60 MILLION





EU development cooperation supports:

- ✓ Regional integration
- ✓ Regional programmes with a specific thematic focus
- ✓ Bilateral assistance to ASEAN Member States

As regional organisations, the EU and ASEAN are uniquely positioned to support regional integration processes as effective tools to narrow development gaps and address cross-cutting development issues. This potential can be harnessed through enhanced region-to-region dialogue, by leveraging innovative development models such as triangular and South-South cooperation, and through further engagement of the private sector, academia and civil society.

All EU-ASEAN programmes are designed in alignment with ASEAN's own integration policies and priorities.

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals together

The EU provides multidimensional support to ASEAN in its pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are guiding principles for all EU projects and programmes. In 2018, EU development cooperation initiatives spanned all three ASEAN pillars and addressed a wide spectrum of cross-cutting issues, including mobility in higher education, sustainable agriculture, climate resilience and border security.

In addition, the E-READI programme will contribute to helping ASEAN fulfil the SDG targets, by engaging in dialogue with relevant ASEAN stakeholders in a wide range of relevant policy areas such as human rights, environment, climate change, circular economy, energy, fisheries, trade and enabling business environment, and research and innovation.

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



Connectivity through sustainable and inclusive economic integration and trade

The new EU-Asia Connectivity Strategy launched in 2018 reiterated that sustainable connectivity is central to EU-ASEAN cooperation. The strategy aims to build a more prosperous and resilient Europe and Asia through improved transport, energy, human and digital networks, sustainable infrastructure financing and bilateral, regional and international partnerships, including deeper region-to-region collaboration between the EU and ASEAN. It emphasises connectivity that is sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based, promoting smart and inclusive growth and a more sustainable, low-carbon future.

The EU-Asia Connectivity Strategy recognises ASEAN as a central player in strengthening connectivity in Asia. EU-ASEAN collaboration in this area, for instance, aims to improve institutional connectivity, and contribute to the development and completion of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

To support this vision, the ARISE Plus programme works towards improving trade and business-related regulatory and policy frameworks, intellectual property rights, standards, customs and transport, as well as civil aviation.

Trade and integration agendas, both at the regional and national level, are supported through capacity-building measures. These measures focus on facilitating the negotiations and implementation of trade agreements at national level, boosting the institutional strength of the ASEAN Secretariat, and helping ASEAN Member States with the implementation of their integration commitments through tailor-made country-specific support. With the objective of fostering inclusive development in the region, ARISE Plus places a particular emphasis on assisting Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam with their integration targets.

Climate change, environment and disaster management

Development activities in support of climate resilience, environmental conservation and disaster management are informed by the objectives outlined in the ASEAN Blueprints. Cooperation in these areas is based on the ASEAN Climate Change Initiative (ACCI) and the related ASEAN Action Plan on Joint Response to Climate Change. EU-ASEAN projects aim to foster climate resilience and food security, preserve ASEAN's rich biodiversity, the sustainable management of peatlands and the mitigation of problems caused by transboundary haze.

Activities which focus on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction are aligned with the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER).

A new programme supports the 'One ASEAN, One Response' declaration by strengthening ASEAN's institutional and disaster response capability through the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre).

The Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA) programme, co-financed by the German government, aims to advance environmental stewardship in the region by improving peatland governance and through concerted efforts to combat transboundary haze pollution.

EU-ASEAN thematic programmes also strive to preserve Southeast Asia's biodiversity by enhancing the institutional capacity of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), and by supporting sustainable agriculture and smallholder farmers across ASEAN through the ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP). Future initiatives are being prepared to develop smart cities and green infrastructure in the region.

POLICY DIALOGUE FACILITY

In 2018, the newly launched Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI) contributed to strengthening the relationship between the two regions by promoting increased policy dialogue in four thematic areas:



Economic & Trade Connectivity Business Enabling Environment

- Digital Economy
- Trade
- Business
- Road Transport
- Eurocodes (Construction Standards)



Environment and Climate Change

- Circular Economy
- Natural Capital
- Climate Action
- Sustainable Clean Energy
- Fisheries



Science and Research

- Research & Innovation
- Policy Exchange Platform



Human Rights, Gender Equality and Safe Migration

- Dialogue on Human Rights
- Gender Equality & Empowerment of Women and Girls
- Safe Migration & Labour Mobility

E-READI supports EU-ASEAN policy dialogue and ASEAN regional integration covering all three pillars of the ASEAN Community. The programme promotes sharing experiences and best practices on regional integration in policy areas of joint interest, delivering concrete outcomes and policy impact.

POLITICAL AND SECURITY COOPERATION

A sustainable partnership based on shared strategic goals

High-level political dialogue

On 21 January 2019, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, together with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore, Vivian Balakrishnan, co-chaired the 22nd EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, which saw 24 EU Member States represented by their foreign ministers. The ministers adopted a joint statement which serves as an agreement in principle to upgrade EU-ASEAN relations to a Strategic Partnership, with the timing and details to be determined at a later stage.

Ministers discussed cooperation on tackling global challenges, including climate change and the strengthening of a rules-based multilateral system, and regional issues, such as the South China Sea disputes and the Rohingya crisis. They also committed to hold a high-level dialogue on climate change and the environment.

In addition, the ministers assessed opportunities to strengthen EU-ASEAN cooperation on connectivity, and strategies to advance the EU's trade and investment agenda with the region. Participants agreed to increase the involvement of ASEAN Member States in the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions, and the EU outlined its plans to seek an observer role in the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus Experts' Working Groups (ADMM-Plus EWG).

2018 saw several high-level political meetings take place between the EU and ASEAN. The EU-ASEAN Leaders' Meeting was held on 19 October 2018 in Brussels at the invitation of European Council President Tusk and the European Commission President Juncker. The summit provided an opportunity to take stock of, and discuss ways to strengthen, EU-ASEAN relations. Ahead of the EU-ASEAN Leaders' Meeting, the EU High Representative, Federica Mogherini, received the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Lim Jock Hoi. Together they discussed options to deepen the partnership between the EU and ASEAN, and increase regional and global security and stability.

At the same occasion, the EU High Representative handed over the signed Financing Agreement of a new EU development cooperation programme, targeted at enhancing ASEAN's disaster preparedness and capacity to deal with humanitarian crises.

There have been an unprecedented number of high-level visits by EU officials to Southeast Asia in recent years. In early August 2018, the EU High Representative, Federica Mogherini, participated in the 25th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), held in conjunction with the 51st Foreign Ministers Meeting and the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC) 10+1 Sessions in Singapore.





In May 2018, a delegation from the European Parliament visited the ASEAN Secretariat, and met with the ASEAN Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives to ASEAN with the overarching objective of deepening EU-ASEAN relations. The delegation included members of the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) led by Member of the European Parliament (MEP) David McAllister and the European Parliament's Inter-parliamentary Delegation for Relations with Southeast Asia (DASE), led by MEP Werner Langen.

Each year, the EU participates in the General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA). In 2018, the meeting was held in Singapore with the participation of three MEPs. In addition, AIPA's Secretary General, Isra Sunthornvut, visited Brussels in November 2018 to discuss the potential of developing an inter-parliamentary dialogue between the EU and ASEAN.

To celebrate 40 years of EU-ASEAN partnership, the EU and ASEAN organised two flagship events in Brussels to reflect on what the partnership has achieved so far, and to look at what region-to-region cooperation might look like in the years to come. The inaugural EU-ASEAN Young Leaders Forum took place on 26 February 2018, followed by the EU-ASEAN Strategic Thinkers' Forum on 27 and 28 February 2018. Both events provided a unique platform for young people and strategic thinkers from the government, civil society, academia and the private sector to make their voices heard and put forward their proposals for future EU-ASEAN cooperation. Topics addressed included: EU-ASEAN security cooperation to address emerging threats such as terrorism, radicalisation or cyber attacks, and non-traditional challenges such as climate change or irregular migration; fostering trade relations and entrepreneurship; and enhanced people-to-people connectivity through increased inter- and intra-regional youth mobility and representation.

ASEAN-EU Policy Dialogue on Human Rights



The EU and ASEAN hold a regular Policy Dialogue on Human Rights addressing a wide range of topics including: trafficking in persons; business and human rights; women's rights; child protection; the safety of migrant workers; and the right to development.

As EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis has undertaken extensive efforts to increase dialogue on human rights in Southeast Asia. He met with the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in May 2013 and travelled to Jakarta, Indonesia, twice during 2014. In October 2015, the AICHR visited the EU institutions for the second time on a full-week visit and participated in the first EU-ASEAN Policy Dialogue on Human Rights.

The EU Special Representative for Human Rights travelled to the Philippines in November 2017 for the second edition of the Policy Dialogue. As a result of the meeting, the EU and AICHR agreed to continue their partnership and cooperate more closely in priority areas. Preparations are underway to hold the third Policy Dialogue on Human Rights in Brussels within the course of 2019.

Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) risk mitigation



The EU created the EU Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (CoE) Initiative to help partner countries enhance coordination among institutions working towards CBRN risk reduction

at the national, regional and international level. The initiative adopts an all-hazards approach and aims to tackle the full spectrum of CBRN risks, ranging from criminal (e.g. theft, sabotage, illicit trafficking and terrorism) to accidental (e.g. industrial accidents, waste treatment, transport incidents) and natural (e.g. infectious disease outbreaks, CBRN releases caused by natural hazards) hazards. The Regional Secretariat of the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence in Manila aims to foster knowledge-sharing, and provide technical support in CBRN risk mitigation, with approximately EUR 20 million in funds already allocated to Southeast Asia.

Border management



The EU is committed to advancing regional integration in ASEAN by focusing on increased people-to-people connectivity and supporting initiatives such as the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC). The EU-ASEAN Migration and Border Management Programme II (EA-MBMP II), which was implemented by the international police agency, INTERPOL, between 2015 and 2018, provided capacity-building support to ASEAN Member States in preventing and mitigating transnational crime.

Through a series of training and operational activities, the project contributed to strengthening border control and law enforcement in ASEAN. The programme also conducted a feasibility study on visa liberalisation in ASEAN, assessing the potential economic benefits as well as security and socio-cultural impact of a region-wide visa mechanism. The study identified how a potential ASEAN Common Visa could help create a shared ASEAN identity, boost economic growth and improve overall border management in the region.



Security and defence cooperation



The EU also continues to increase its involvement in security and defence matters, commensurate with its global role and responsibilities. Cooperation on security issues is a growing aspect of the EU's partnership with ASEAN, and already covers a number of non-traditional security areas, such as: maritime security; conflict prevention; mediation and reconciliation; crisis management; transnational crime; counter-terrorism; cyber security; and non-proliferation.

Since 2014, the EU has hosted four orientation courses on the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), with the participation of high-ranking officials from foreign affairs and defence ministries across ASEAN. The 4th EU-ASEAN Seminar on Security and Defence, organised by the European External Action Service (EEAS) in collaboration with the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) and the Indonesian Defence University (IDU), took place between 26 and 28 November 2018 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Officials and experts from the EU and ASEAN exchanged views on security and defence issues of mutual interest, and discussed ways to strengthen defence cooperation between the two regions. The seminar brought together over 40 high-level delegates from EU Member States, foreign affairs and defence ministries in ASEAN, the ASEAN Secretariat and other key stakeholders. The EEAS Deputy Secretary-General, Jean-Christophe Belliard, delivered the closing remarks of the event.

The EU is increasing its security cooperation within, and in partnership with, Asia and plays an active role in the region's security architecture, as illustrated by the regular involvement of the EU High Representative, Federica Mogherini in the ARF Ministerial Meetings. The EU takes part in all ARF-related annual meetings including: the Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM); the Inter-Sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy; the ARF Senior Officials Meeting; the ARF Security Policy Conference; the Defence Officials Dialogue; and disaster relief exercises.

The EU also participates in the Shangri-La Dialogue every year, an annual inter-governmental defence summit held by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in Singapore. In 2018, EEAS Deputy Secretary-General, Jean-Christophe Belliard delivered a Special Session on 'The security and humanitarian crisis in Myanmar's Rakhine State'. The 2018 event also provided a platform to discuss the deepening of EU-ASEAN security cooperation in the context of the 'Council conclusions on enhanced EU security cooperation in and with Asia', which was adopted by the 28 EU foreign ministers at the Foreign Affairs Council on 28 May 2018. The ministers underlined the need for cooperation in the region to become more operational through capacity building, training programmes and joint exercises.

Maritime security



A mutually beneficial partnership between the EU and ASEAN on maritime security contributes to maintaining peace and good order at sea. The High-Level Dialogue (HLD) on Maritime Security aims to improve EU-ASEAN connectivity through increased information-sharing and cooperation in maritime security. The dialogue has taken place regularly since 2013 with discussions on maritime security, inter-agency coordination, investigation of incidents and port security. The fourth dialogue event, which was held in Manila in October 2017, explored the potential for greater EU-ASEAN cooperation in marine environmental management, maritime dispute resolution, and in the establishment of joint resource development mechanisms. Preparations for the fifth High-Level Dialogue, which is due to take place before the end of 2019, are ongoing.

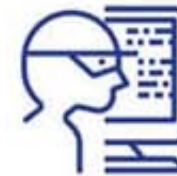


Together with Vietnam and Australia, the EU is co-chairing the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security between 2018 and 2020. The objective of the event is to promote dialogue on the challenges and threats that ARF members face in terms of maritime security, and encourage concrete actions and cooperation in this space. At the 10th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security in March 2018 in Brisbane, Australia, the EU was represented by Francois Rivasseau, Head of the EEAS Security Policy Unit. The meeting enabled the exchange of insights on critical maritime security issues such as navigational safety at sea, the protection of marine ecosystems, and the fight against illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. The exchange of insights on maritime security, including an evaluation of existing cooperation measures as well as

proposals for future activities, continued at the 11th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on 14 and 15 March 2019 in Da Nang, Vietnam.

Again in partnership with Vietnam and Australia, the EU co-chaired the ARF Workshop on Enhancing Regional Maritime Law Enforcement Cooperation in January 2018 in Nha Trang, Vietnam. The workshop highlighted the need for greater collaboration between law enforcement agencies in the Southeast Asia region to tackle criminal activities perpetrated at sea, including piracy, drug and trafficking in persons, and illegal fishing. The event was the first in a series of ARF activities targeted at translating the ARF Ministerial Statement on Enhancing Cooperation among Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies into practice, which was adopted by the ARF Foreign Ministers in August 2016.

The fight against transnational and cybercrime



An official dialogue between EU and ASEAN senior officials takes place annually to discuss issues related to transnational crime and identify areas for cooperation. In 2018, the 18th event was organised alongside the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime in Putrajaya, Malaysia. The meeting culminated in a commitment towards continued cooperation on counter-terrorism, cyber security and trafficking in human beings, and plans to increase cooperation with Europol, the EU's police agency.

Following its establishment by ARF Ministers in 2017, the EU participated in the first ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in April 2018 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The meeting was chaired by Malaysia and co-chaired by Singapore and Japan. Against the backdrop of rapid digital transformation worldwide and the potential risks presented by digitisation, participants discussed confidence-building measures to promote conflict prevention, cyberspace cooperation and stability in the Asia-Pacific.

In late 2018, the EU Mission to ASEAN welcomed the arrival of its first counter-terrorism expert, which reiterated the EU's continued commitment to step up engagement on security issues in the region.



THE ROAD TOWARDS SECURE AND OPEN BORDERS IN ASEAN

EU-ASEAN Migration and Border Management Programme II (EA-MBMP II)

The EU-ASEAN Migration and Border Management Programme II (EA-MBMP II) was successfully completed in October 2018 by the international police agency INTERPOL. The project contributed to strengthening the capacity and networks of law enforcement agencies, as well as cooperation at major regional transit hubs in ASEAN. It helped expand the reach of the INTERPOL I-24/7 Secure Communications System, delivered crucial training and operational activities, and completed a study on the feasibility of an ASEAN Common Visa.

Within 40 months, the programme modernised the I-24/7 system in six INTERPOL National Central Bureaus (NCBs) and expanded its access to 50 transit hubs, following the signing of six Memoranda of Understanding in five ASEAN Member States. The project also trained a total of 849 officers, including 266 female officers, in the 39 operational and technical training sessions organised since June 2015. In addition, the programme coordinated six operational activities, which resulted in 89.25 million searches against INTERPOL databases, the uploading of 302 141 new records, and the opening of 1012 new cases.

In collaboration with The Habibie Center, a feasibility study on an ASEAN Common Visa was conducted, with a view to exploring the possible mechanism that a regional visa could take. By evaluating the potential economic benefits as well as security and socio-cultural repercussions, the study identified how visa harmonisation could help to foster a common ASEAN identity, boost tourism and support overall border management in the region.



“The capacity building and operational support provided by INTERPOL on border security operations is an important way for police and immigration officers in the Philippines to develop their skills in the field, so that we are prepared to keep our country’s citizens safe from all forms of threat.”
- Allan Guisihan, Undersecretary and Executive Director, Philippine Center on Transnational Crime (PCTC), former Head, NCB Manila



BUILDING BLOCKS FOR THE ASEAN COMMUNITY OF THE FUTURE

ASEAN Secretariat Post 2015 – Institutional Strengthening & Capacity Development (ASEC Post 2015)

With a commitment to achieve the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, ASEAN continues to strive towards accelerating and deepening the regional integration process. The ASEAN Secretariat Post 2015 – Institutional Strengthening & Capacity Development (ASEC Post 2015) project, commissioned by the German Federal Foreign Office, contributes to this goal by strengthening the institutional capacity and effectiveness of the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) as a direct beneficiary.



The project has enhanced the capability of the six key functional units of ASEC by providing support to initiatives such as Rules-based ASEAN, the ASEAN Media Forum and the

ASEAN Project Proposal Management System, as well as social media strategies, training needs analysis, small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) dialogues and internal audit.



“With the technical assistance of Germany, we are able to enhance the use of social media to effectively convey how ASEAN citizens derive multiple benefits from the maintenance of peace in the region, wider economic opportunities, and social improvements. Along with initiatives like the “ASEAN Media Forum,” a platform has been built to strengthen cooperation with the media through exchange of views, access to senior ASEAN officials, and to provide new perspectives from key thinkers on topics of regional significance.” - Romeo Arca Jr., Assistant Director, Community Relations Division, ASEAN Secretariat



“

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Together for trade facilitation

Improved trade and investment relations with ASEAN, which generate mutual economic, social and political benefits for the two regions, continue to be a strategic priority for the EU. Enhanced dialogue on trade-related regulatory and policy frameworks, intellectual property, standards, customs and transport and civil aviation are supported by development cooperation programmes. These programmes focus on economic integration (Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE Plus)), capacity building for monitoring and statistics (EU-ASEAN Capacity Building Project for Monitoring Integration Progress and Statistics (COMPASS)), agricultural development (ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP)), as well as negotiations over an EU-ASEAN Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement (CATA).

Over the past decade, the EU and ASEAN's economic partnership has matured as inter-regional trade and investment have intensified.

To illustrate the scale of this acceleration, since 2004, bilateral trade between the two regions has more than doubled. The EU is also by far the largest investor in ASEAN. Since 2004, EU companies have invested an average of over EUR 15 billion annually in the region, and in 2017, the EU and its Member States have invested twice as much as China and more than five times as much as the United States.



*Based on 2017 figures; source: Eurostat



Despite these impressive figures, there is still scope for EU-ASEAN economic cooperation and trade relations to grow. With the creation of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015, the region is now moving towards the establishment of a single market, with significant investment and export opportunities for European businesses. To support this objective, the ASEAN-EU Business Summit takes place on a regular basis as a key platform for business leaders and policy makers to discuss and shape commercial and diplomatic relations across a variety of sectors.

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



AVERAGE GDP GROWTH RATE
5.5%
 PER ANNUM

IF IT WAS CONSIDERED A SINGLE ECONOMY, ASEAN WOULD BE THE FIFTH LARGEST IN THE WORLD. ASEAN HAS AN AVERAGE GDP GROWTH RATE OF 5.5% PER ANNUM, AND A MARKET THAT REPRESENTS MORE THAN 642.1 MILLION PEOPLE.

Both the EU and ASEAN derive significant value from enhanced connectivity among their Member States, and view a more connected ASEAN as a critical area for collaboration. To support the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, a roadmap adopted by ASEAN leaders in 2016 to promote competitiveness and inclusiveness in the region, ASEAN connectivity is embedded in the majority of EU programmes in ASEAN. EU projects cover all of the strategic areas outlined in the MPAC, including: harmonisation of standards; mutual recognition of technical regulations and reduction of non-tariff measures under regulatory excellence; and people-to-people mobility.

Importantly, half of the EU development cooperation funding to ASEAN from 2014 to 2020 has been allocated to ASEAN's economic integration, which reiterates the priority the EU attaches to economic and trade connectivity as the bedrock of EU-ASEAN relations.

ARISE Plus

The new Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE Plus) (2017-2022) programme, the EU's largest support programme with ASEAN in terms of financial commitment, kicked off in November 2017. Within ARISE Plus, EU engagement follows a unique, two-pronged approach combining a regional programme with bilateral support measures in pursuing the ultimate objective of accelerating regional economic integration.

Regional activities, such as the ARISE Plus Regional Programme (EUR 40 million), follow the structure of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 and focus on trade facilitation; standards, customs, integration monitoring, intellectual property rights and civil aviation. These are complemented by national activities (approx. EUR 50 million), which support the specific country needs and priorities of ASEAN Member States, including Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia.

This two-level approach streamlines coordination and creates synergies between regional and national level interventions, which will help boost the impact and value of the programme for both individual Member States and ASEAN as whole.



In addition to the development cooperation funding it contributes to ASEAN, the EU blends grants with loans from European and other international financial institutions under the Asia Investment Facility (AIF). The facility supports, as an example, project studies related to ASEAN connectivity and sustainable urban development in ASEAN. Moreover, the EU is committed to championing sustainable consumption and production through the SWITCH-Asia initiative, continuing the drive towards sustainable forestry and the fight against illegal logging through the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) facility, and advancing sustainable agriculture through more robust farmer organisations.

AFOSP

Established in 2015, the **ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP)** is a key EU-ASEAN initiative targeted at improving livelihoods and food security for smallholder farmers in ASEAN. To date, the programme has reached 14 million farmers through supporting a total of 26 national and 1 200 sub-national farmer organisations.

EU SUPPORT TO REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION: Achievements in 2018

The Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE Plus) continues to build on the flagship initiatives started under its preceding programme, the ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE).

- **The ASEAN Trade Repository (ATR)** enhances transparency on trade and customs procedures. The ATR is an electronic interface through which the public can access trade information from the National Trade Repository (NTR) of each ASEAN Member State. In year one, ARISE Plus completed the mapping of 10 NTRs and connected them to the ATR.
- **The ASEAN Solutions for Services, Investments and Trade (ASSIST)** provides a consultative, non-binding tool for ASEAN enterprises to refer trade-related problems to ASEAN Member States. In addition to trade in goods, ASSIST for Services was soft-launched at the ASEAN Business Investment Summit in November 2018. Furthermore, ASSIST now offers greater anonymity to companies and ASEAN-based associations keen to file a complaint through the tool.
- **The ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)** is a computerised customs transit management system targeted at moving goods between countries faster. In 2018, system upgrades were implemented for the pilot countries (Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand), and preparatory work was carried out for the ACTS roll-out to Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam and Myanmar (CLVM), including the training of customs department personnel and the Central Management Team based in the ASEAN Secretariat. Once completed in 2020, the ACTS will constitute a milestone for ASEAN economic integration by optimising cross-border trade across the region.
- **The ASEAN Risk Assessment Centre for Food Safety (ARAC)** is an ASEAN institution which aims to provide independent scientific opinion on issues related to food safety. In year one, ARISE Plus provided support to the 2nd Scientific Panel meeting, which conducted a risk assessment on aflatoxins, a family of toxins produced by fungi typically found on agricultural crops. In parallel, ARAC initiated work towards the harmonisation of food consumption data in ASEAN, and also provided support to strengthening the ASEAN Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (ARASFF) focusing on three areas: enhancing national traceability systems; strengthening national food crisis management; and the establishment of national rapid alert systems.
- **Greater engagement with the ASEAN private sector:** In 2018, ARISE Plus organised two round table discussions on trade facilitation with the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ABAC). This type of activity supports the implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 by promoting greater engagement and dialogue between ASEAN officials, the private sector and industry associations such as the EU-ASEAN Business Council.

REHABILITATING MANGROVE FORESTS IN THE PHILIPPINES

ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP)

With the support of the Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA), the Coalition of Municipal Fisherfolks Association of Zamboanga Sibugay (COMFAS) has made significant progress in the reforestation of mangrove resources in the Philippines' Zamboanga Sibugay Province. Restoration efforts were implemented as part of the EU-funded ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP).

Mangrove forests are vital to coastal communities as they help protect against tsunamis, storms and floods, and serve as a nursery for fish and other marine species. However, with a decline rate of up to 50% in countries such as the Philippines, they are also one of the world's most endangered tropical ecosystems.

To combat rapid mangrove deforestation, COMFAS, a federation of 56 fisheries associations with a membership of more than 5200 fishing households, carried out the replanting of around 6000 mangroves. The restoration initiative, which was supported by national and local government agencies and various civil society organisations, resulted in a remarkable boost of fish catches from 3-5 kg per trip in 2005 to 12-15 kg per trip in 2018, and the increase continues.

To help sustain COMFAS' efforts, AsiaDHRRA extended financial and advisory support to strengthen the livelihood of its members, and to help local fishing businesses bring their produce to market. To date, the programme's support has enabled COMFAS to establish 10 fish cage modules for its members with a capacity of producing an estimated USD 226 415 worth of grouper, snapper and sea bass fish species annually.



"To sustain our efforts in reforesting, conserving, protecting and managing our mangrove forest resources, we need to be armed with '3-8s'. That's three eats a day—breakfast, lunch and dinner."
- Roberto Ballon, President, COMFAS

A ROADMAP FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ASEAN

ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP)

Following a multi-stakeholder consultation process, the ASEAN Roadmap for Enhancing the Role of Agriculture Cooperatives in the Global Value Chain 2018-2025 was adopted at the 40th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) on 11 October 2018 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

A milestone achievement for the EU-funded ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP), the Roadmap aims to assist resource-constrained smallholder producers and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to improve productivity and product quality, meet global market standards and increase competitiveness in international markets. It will also support efforts to harmonise legal frameworks and institutional arrangements serving agricultural cooperatives in ASEAN Member States.

AFOSP subsequently held a regional workshop, in conjunction with the 8th ASEAN Cooperative Business Forum (ACBF), to translate the Roadmap into an actionable work plan that aligns national cooperative development with the four pillars of the Roadmap: institutional and capacity development; competitiveness; access to finance; and access to market.



"AFOSP played a significant role in the development of the ASEAN Roadmap for Enhancing the Role of Agriculture Cooperatives in the Global Value Chain 2018-2025. This blueprint will enable us to accelerate the development of the agricultural sector in the region, and work towards genuine economic development and social justice." - Salvador Valeroso, Vice Chairperson, 20th Meeting of ASEAN Sectoral Working Group Agricultural Cooperative (ASWGAC)

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR COFFEE FARMERS IN VIETNAM

ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP)

Despite the area's favourable geographical conditions and climate, coffee farmers in Lam Dong Province in Vietnam's Central Highland region have long struggled with production inefficiencies due to limited production capacity, inadequate processing and storage facilities, and lack of knowledge on sustainable harvesting methods.

In 2016, two groups of local coffee farmers signed up to the 4C certification programme, a set of baseline practices and principles for the sustainable production of coffee beans. However, the adoption of sustainable production standards did not translate into higher pricing for their produce.

To address these pain points, the EU-funded ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP), in partnership with local authorities and farmer unions, provided farmers with knowledge and capacity-building support focusing on business planning, market research, marketing and cooperative development. Farmers also visited cooperatives within and outside of the province to learn more about best practice business models, and to expand their network of suppliers, traders and customers.



In 2017, as a result of the project, the informal farmer groups formed two official cooperatives with a set of operational guidelines and responsibilities. Formalising the groups helped increase membership from the initial ten households to 110 coffee farmers responsible for 200 hectares worth of agricultural land.



Cooperative members devised joint business plans to ensure compliance with international sustainability standards and to align economic growth with environmental stewardship. Increased bargaining power through the cooperatives enabled farmers to secure more favourable deals from vendors and customers alike, reducing their operational costs, increasing their revenue and guaranteeing a stable source of livelihood.

DROUGHT-RESISTANT FARMING IN THAILAND

ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP)

As Thailand grapples with what experts consider the worst drought in over a decade, the Don Lak Dam community in Khon Kaen Province suffers from the resulting shortages in water supply. Villagers lack access to electricity, drinking water and appropriate irrigation systems, which challenges their ability to undertake farming activities crucial to their livelihood.

In collaboration with the EU-funded ASEAN Farmers' Organisation Support Programme (AFOSP), the Assembly of the Poor, a non-governmental organisation in Thailand focused on rural development, carried out an experiment to reverse the adverse effects of drought, by introducing a simple drip irrigation system using broken jars and plastic barrels, growing drought tolerant native plants, and breeding animals that require minimal amounts of water.



The initiative enabled the villagers to start producing seasonal food indigenous to their area, improve their livelihoods and thereby increase their self-esteem and well-being.

"Because of water shortages, we have to travel to a nearby swamp, fill our buckets with water and bring them back in pushcarts. The water dripping equipment helps us cut the number of trips and supports our plans to shift to growing drought-resistant native vegetables and fruits, which will hopefully increase our income and compensate for poor rice yield." - Sunantha Saenbut, Farmer, Don Lak Dam Community

INTEGRATED SHED HOUSES FOR TROPICAL FARMING IN LAO PDR

ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP)

In recent years, shed houses were introduced in Lao PDR as an alternative means to growing vegetables during the country's rainy season. However, the houses were roofed with plastic covers, which contributed to increased temperatures within the hut, not ideal in tropical countries. They were also expensive to construct given their singular purpose of harvesting vegetables.

With support from the ASEAN Farmers' Organisation Support Programme (AFOSP) funded by the EU, the Lao Farmer Network developed an alternative design, with the roof and walls made out of a fine net fabric.

The redesigned shed house is more cost-effective to build, allows farmers to grow vegetables and raise animals such as ducks under the same roof, and has contributed to improving weed and pest control. By building on local knowledge and using locally available materials such as bamboo, this innovative design has empowered the community to pursue more efficient farming methods and thereby increase villagers' income levels.



"I can earn about USD 100 from selling vegetables and about USD 600 from selling ducks—all grown in the same shed house." - Sone, Head of Don Sehong Producer Group, Khong District, Champasack Province



ZERO ENERGY COOLING AND STORAGE IN LAO PDR

ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP)

Farmer organisations in Lao PDR have traditionally struggled to commercialise their produce due to lack of adequate storage and cooling facilities. Past attempts to introduce modern cooling systems were not fit for purpose; they were too big and too expensive to operate due to the cost of electricity and maintenance. Without an effective storage system, farmers were unable to align their production plans with market demand, which resulted in oversupply and wastage during low season.

The Lao Farmer Network, in partnership with the EU-funded ASEAN Farmers' Organisations Support Programme (AFOSP), developed a low-cost, zero energy cooling and storage system run without electricity. The storage area is kept cool through connection to natural sources of cool air such as spring wells or creeks, resulting in a documented 4-7 degrees Celsius drop in temperature.



Produce that has previously gone to waste during the harvest season due to lack of demand can now be stored until it fetches a higher price in the market. Farmers can also purchase vegetables they don't grow and keep these in the storage area. This simple, effective and low-cost technology has helped farmer organisations improve both productivity and their living standards.



"Even though the storage area is not as cool as a refrigerator, it allows us to protect our produce from wind, sunlight and heat." - Khammone, Head of Thongmang Organic Vegetable Group



CREATING AN ENABLING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IN ASEAN

Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration
Support from the EU (ARISE Plus)

Under the auspices of the Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE Plus) programme, the soft launch of the ASEAN Solutions for Investments, Services and Trade (ASSIST) for Trade in Services took place at the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit on 13 November 2018 in Singapore.

ASSIST has been operational since 2016 to support companies in ASEAN with issues related to trade in goods and will expand its scope to addressing trade in services matters by May 2019.



ASSIST is a powerful trade facilitation tool that can be used by ASEAN-based enterprises to lodge complaints about cross-border issues with governments in the region. The tool has been enhanced to allow greater anonymity for companies filing a complaint.



Trade facilitation and regulatory transparency are the drivers for ASEAN regional economic integration.
- H.E. Francisco Fontan Pardo, Ambassador of the EU to ASEAN



THE PATH TOWARDS SAFER ROADS IN ASEAN

Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI)

The start of 2019 saw the first EU-ASEAN Workshop on Road Safety take place in Brussels, signalling increased collaboration and a shared commitment between the EU and ASEAN to create safer roads in the ASEAN region.

With the support of the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI), the event brought together the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Development and Cooperation (DG DEVCO), the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE), and ASEAN transport officials from both technical and policy backgrounds.

By enabling the sharing of best practices in road transport and safety, the workshop highlighted the importance of skills training and research, as well as policy and regulatory harmonisation, in tackling issues such as speeding, drunk driving, crash response and road infrastructure management. Practical demonstrations brought innovative initiatives such as helmet testing, alcoholometry, speed cameras and vehicle simulator machines to life.



Planned follow-up activities include the publication of a Gap Analysis Study on road safety and capacity-building measures to advance the harmonisation of road safety rules and regulations in ASEAN. The event marked the start of closer cooperation between the two regions in working towards the joint objective of mitigating the social and economic costs of traffic accidents, injuries and fatalities.



LEVERAGING DATA TO DRIVE REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

EU-ASEAN Capacity Building Project for Monitoring Integration Progress and Statistics (COMPASS)

Following four years of contribution towards improving the quality, availability and comparability of ASEAN statistics and the ASEAN Community Statistical System, the EU-ASEAN Capacity Building Project for Monitoring Integration Progress and Statistics (COMPASS) was completed in 2018.

The project helped narrow gaps in statistical capacity between ASEAN Member States and strengthened the ASEAN Integration Monitoring Directorate's ability in monitoring the progress of ASEAN regional integration.

Built on the premise that more timely, comparative and relevant information is critical to reduce development gaps in the region, COMPASS contributed to advancing regional integration as well as effective decision-making by ASEAN governments, both as individual Member States and at the ASEAN level.

Through tools and publications such as the ASEAN Statistical Highlights 2018, which was launched at the 33rd ASEAN Summit in November 2018, the project also helped enhance the visibility and value of ASEAN statistics in the public eye.



"I would like to warmly thank the EU-ASEAN COMPASS project for its significant contributions towards enhancing and strengthening statistical cooperation in the region. (...) As a result, the quality of the statistics compiled and disseminated by the ASEAN Secretariat has seen significant improvement." - H.E. Dr. Aladdin D. Rillo, Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN for the ASEAN Economic Community



SOCIO-CULTURAL COOPERATION

Building closer people-to-people contacts

Increased people-to-people connectivity is a core component of the EU-ASEAN partnership. EU projects focused on socio-cultural cooperation underpin ASEAN's commitment to improving living standards in the region through people-centric as well as socially and environmentally responsible actions.

In alignment with the ASEAN Social-Cultural Community Blueprint and with a strong focus on nurturing the human, cultural and natural resources needed for sustainable development, EU-ASEAN cooperation aims to build an inclusive society prioritising individual well-being and social welfare.

EU SHARE

As one of the EU's flagship initiatives, the European Union Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region (EU SHARE) programme, along with university student exchanges organised through the EU's Erasmus+ programme, are facilitating the increased regional mobility of ASEAN students and raising the quality of university education in the region. By improving people-to-people connectivity through inter-regional exchange and scholarship programmes, EU SHARE contributes to the implementation of the EU-Asia Connectivity Strategy.

The programme also works to harmonise higher education frameworks in ASEAN by enabling the sharing of EU best practices on the mutual recognition of qualifications and regional credit transfer systems.



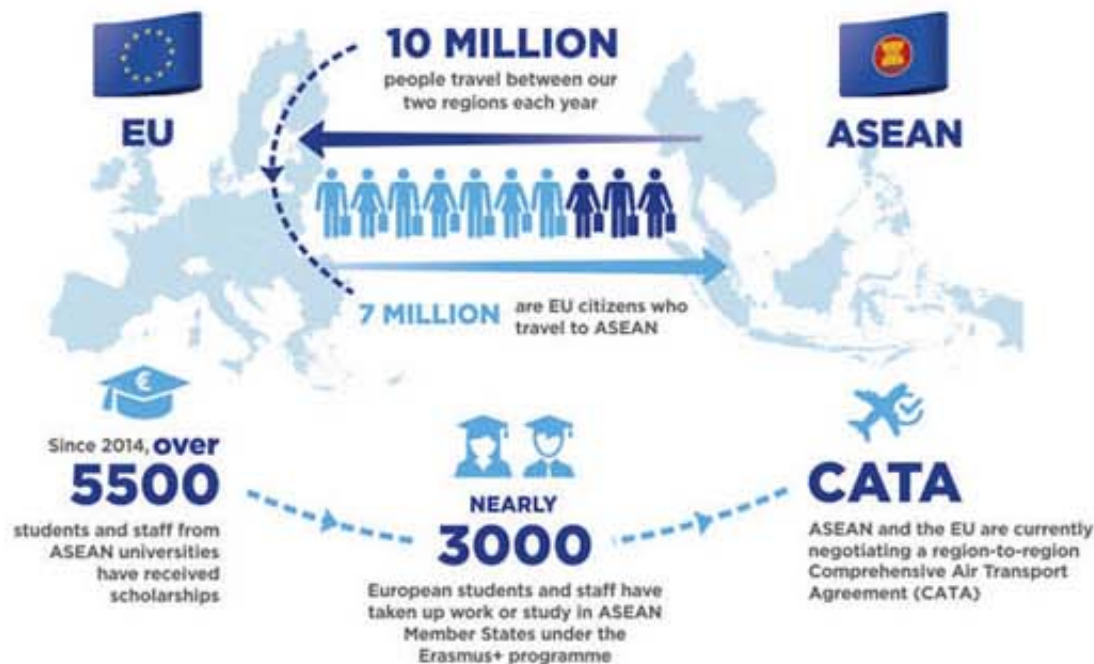
2018 marks the fourth year of the EU SHARE programme. To date, a total of 591 scholarships have been awarded to students from eight ASEAN countries. Each undertakes a short-term study programme from a selection of 42 universities – 32 in ASEAN and 10 in Europe.

EU SHARE also co-organised nine policy dialogues with ASEAN education ministries and other key stakeholders to discuss and develop strategies for the enhancement and harmonisation of higher education in the region. A potential regional student exchange and credit recognition system will not only increase the mobility and employability of students and academic staff, but also extend the same benefits to skilled workers in the region.

Since 2014, more than 5500 students and staff from ASEAN have travelled to Europe on scholarships funded by the EU and its Member States, and nearly 3000 students and staff have studied or worked in ASEAN under Erasmus+.

ASEAN's participation in the EU's research and innovation programmes led to the launch of more than 100 successful projects in the region. There is little doubt that the future will see greater EU-ASEAN cooperation in this space under the current framework Horizon 2020.

MOBILITY, EDUCATION AND CULTURE



Human rights, and the empowerment of women in particular, are at the forefront of the EU's development cooperation agenda in ASEAN. In 2018, the EU and the UN launched the Safe and Fair programme, which will contribute to improving labour conditions for migrant women in Southeast Asia.

According to estimates, 10 million of the 20.2 million migrants who originate from ASEAN are women, predominantly hired for domestic and care work, but also in the construction, manufacturing, agriculture and services sectors. Labour and migration frameworks tend to be gender-blind, and a staggering rate of physical and sexual violence cases has been recorded against migrant women from Southeast Asia.

This initiative supports concrete measures to end violence, including preventative steps, increased protection and the

enhanced provision of services to migrant workers, alongside broader efforts to ensure women's economic empowerment and their participation in all aspects of society. In particular, the programme aims to improve data and knowledge on the rights and contributions of women migrants, and will work towards advocating for labour law reforms.

The Safe and Fair programme is working hand in hand with everyone from government to grassroots activists, civil society, the private sector and other development partners. The programme is the first initiative in Asia under the new EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls worth EUR 500 million.

SAFE AND FAIR: REALIZING WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS' RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ASEAN REGION

Women make up almost half of migrants in the ASEAN region yet are largely concentrated in informal, low skilled, low paid labour. Fewer resources – such as skills, benefits and pay – means fewer options for women, especially those facing or experiencing violence.



#SafeandFair #SpotlightEndViolence



Safe and Fair, shining the spotlight on violence against women migrant workers



Closer people-to-people ties are also seen as central to addressing global challenges such as climate change and natural disasters. Because of their unique geographic location, many ASEAN countries are vulnerable to natural disasters, while access to safe food, water and energy sources remains an area of concern in the region due to rapid population growth, urbanisation, migration, and continued wealth and income disparities.

The EU has therefore dedicated critical resources to support ASEAN and its Member States with initiatives related to disaster preparedness and response, environmental conservation, and climate resilience and adaptation.

EU SUPPORT TO AHA CENTRE

In October 2018, the EU and ASEAN signed a EUR 10 million Financing Agreement to strengthen the region's emergency response mechanisms and to boost the capacity of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre).

In close reflection of the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management, the Integrated Programme Enhancing the Capacity of AHA Centre and ASEAN Emergency Response Mechanisms (EU Support to AHA Centre) is designed to improve the region's resilience, and mitigate the human, economic, social and environmental costs of natural disasters. It will encourage regional and international cooperation on joint disaster responses and the sharing of best practices in disaster management between the EU and ASEAN.

SUPA



The Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA) programme champions the sustainable management of peatlands and the fight against transboundary haze pollution in ASEAN. By advocating for responsible land use and forestry, the initiative contributes to mitigating carbon emissions from carbon-rich peatland areas, as well as the conservation of peatland ecosystems, home to some of the world's most critically endangered flora and fauna.

In addition, two EU-ASEAN programmes promote the protection and restoration of peatlands, combat haze pollution, and advance biodiversity conservation in ASEAN.

Implemented by the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) in the Philippines, the Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP) programme supports the preservation of the region's biological diversity, and the effective management of protected areas in Southeast Asia, including the ASEAN Heritage Parks.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN ASEAN



THE EU AND ASEAN SUPPORT

- THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS
- REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING FOR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
- RESEARCH ON BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
- CONSERVATION EFFORTS ACROSS THE MEKONG RIVER AND BORNEO

CELEBRATING ASEAN'S BIODIVERSITY CHAMPIONS

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

On 7 August 2018, ASEAN recognised ten biodiversity conservation advocates representing the grassroots, government, academic, and business sectors at the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes Award ceremony held in Manila, Philippines.

From protecting Papua's forests in Indonesia to championing sustainable agriculture in Lao PDR, these change-makers rose to the challenge of mitigating biodiversity losses in ASEAN. They are the faces of biodiversity conservation in the region – individuals who people can identify with and who will inspire others to take action for biodiversity in their own spheres of influence.

To build on the momentum generated by the award, the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes Regional Forum Series was organised across the region in 2018. Forming part of the EU-funded Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP) project, the events helped raise awareness of the ten biodiversity champions' conservation journeys, and encouraged students, policy-makers, local governments and the media to take action in the protection of life on our planet.



“It was great to be part of the Philippines' leg of the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes Regional Forum as I was able to hear inspiring stories from renowned biodiversity heroes in the region. Aside from this, it was an honour for me to get insights from different sectors, particularly from the youth. The forum helped me realise that we need unity and collective efforts for the conservation of biodiversity in ASEAN.” - Mark Jacinto, Co-Chair ASEAN Youth Leaders Summit

ZOOMING IN ON BIODIVERSITY

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

Zooming in on Biodiversity, an ASEAN-wide photo contest organised by the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) in 2018 offered a unique platform to promote appreciation of the region's biodiversity through the art of photography.



With more than 300 submissions bringing to life the beauty and importance of the region's marine and terrestrial ecosystems, as well as the critical relationship between humans and the environment, the photos will serve as powerful visuals to advocate for biodiversity conservation in ASEAN.

Winner Daniel Ocampo captured a sweetlips and soldierfish on film, sheltered by the corals of the Tubbataha Reefs Marine Park, an ASEAN Heritage Park in the Philippines where fishing and other extractive activities are prohibited. The photo demonstrates the understated value of coral reefs, which are endangered around the world by overfishing, climate change and pollution, as a crucial habitat for marine species.

Runner-up Asep Ayat photographed a unique frog species in Indonesia, while third prize recipient Kyaw Kyaw Win's picture, depicting a woman collecting water in rural Myanmar, reinforced the significance of water as a crucial, albeit often scarce, resource.



Held as part of the Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP) project funded by the EU, the competition contributed to achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Target 1, which focuses on raising public awareness of biodiversity conservation.

THE INTER-LINKAGE BETWEEN BIODIVERSITY AND HUMAN HEALTH

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

To reinforce the complex inter-linkages between biodiversity and human health, and the importance of protecting one to safeguard the other, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Secretariat on the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) started a joint endeavour to engage health and biodiversity sectors worldwide, with a particular focus on developing countries.

As part of the initiative's launch in ASEAN, a Regional Workshop to Address Inter-Linkages Between Human Health and Biodiversity in the ASEAN Region took place from 5 to 7 November 2018 in Manila, the Philippines, with the support of the EU-funded Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP) project.



The event aimed to strengthen collaboration and policy coherence between national agencies in ASEAN responsible for biodiversity and health, mainstream biodiversity and health linkages in national policies and programmes, and contribute to the implementation of the CBD, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and related Sustainable Development Goals in the region.

It also explored potential areas for partnership, including: urban health; traditional medicine and food systems; and the prevention and treatment of vector-borne and zoonotic diseases, which are infectious diseases transmitted by animals.

ADVOCATING FOR AGROBIODIVERSITY IN ASEAN

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

As a major exporter of agricultural products, including rice, coffee and seafood, agriculture is a vital sector for ASEAN. However, the sustainability of the sector - and the plates of millions of Southeast Asians - are currently threatened by severe biodiversity losses resulting from overfishing, unsustainable farming methods, climate change and more.

To address the inherent connection between agriculture, biodiversity and food security, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) conducted an ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Workshop on Mainstreaming Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture from 4 to 6 December 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Held under the auspices of the EU-funded Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP) project, the workshop brought together representatives from the environmental and agricultural sectors in ASEAN to gain a common understanding of agrobiodiversity conservation and identify areas for collaboration.

The workshop discussed the adverse and counterproductive impact intensified food production has on biodiversity and, in the long run, on food security, and the subsequent urgency to adopt sustainable agricultural practices and technologies in ASEAN.

The event is part of a series of mainstreaming workshops run by the ACB and its partners, targeted at developing an Agrobiodiversity Pilot Project and a cross-sectoral coordination mechanism among relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies for the mainstreaming, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in the region.



“Pioneering and innovative strategies and state-of-the-art technologies provide us with solutions to boost yield and production to meet steadily rising demands in food and changing consumption patterns. However, constantly coping with these challenges through agricultural practices and technologies takes its toll on our environment.” - Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim, Executive Director, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB)

THE JOURNEY TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY: EMPOWERING WOMEN AND GIRLS

Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI)

The EU and ASEAN's shared aspiration towards gender equality was reiterated at the first ASEAN-EU Policy Dialogue on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls, held on 22 October 2018 in Hanoi, Vietnam with the support of the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI).

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Despite the progress achieved, women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence in every part of the world.

With the overarching theme of 'Implementing SDG 5: Gender Equality at Work', the dialogue event reinforced the EU and ASEAN's joint commitment to achieve gender equality through empowering women and girls. This robust vision is a true testament to the two regions' partnership in the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

By convening representatives from the EU and ASEAN, including Member States, relevant regional bodies, the corporate sector, academia and civil society, E-READI provided a unique, multi-stakeholder platform to discuss critical gender-related issues, including success stories as well as challenges and lessons learnt.



An important programme referenced at the event was the Safe and Fair programme, which is the first project in Asia under the global EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls. Safe and Fair aims to strengthen the rights of female migrant workers in ASEAN, by advocating for gender-sensitive labour migration governance frameworks and robust measures to reduce vulnerability to violence and trafficking.

"ASEAN is committed to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as enshrined in ASEAN Vision 2025 and embedded in key ASEAN instruments." - Kung Phoak, Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community

SAFE AND FAIR MIGRATION FOR ALL

Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI)

Collaboration and dialogue between the EU and ASEAN continue to deepen in the area of labour migration. This was signalled by the launch of the ASEAN Safe Migration Campaign in conjunction with the ASEAN and EU Labour Mobility – Sharing Experiences and Lessons Learnt event on 12 December 2018 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Hosted by the Ministry of Manpower of Indonesia with support from the ASEAN Secretariat, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI), the event gathered more than 120 participants from ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, private sector companies, civil society groups and media, to raise awareness on safe and fair labour migration and migrants' rights.

"It is estimated that 21.3 million ASEAN citizens live outside their countries, of which 6.8 million people are intra-regional migrants." - Maruli A. Hasoloan, Director General of Manpower Placement Development and Job Opportunity, Ministry of Manpower of Indonesia

The dialogue event has served as an inaugural platform for representatives from the two regions to discuss key challenges and best practices in labour mobility governance, portability of social security for migrant workers and responsible business practices that contribute to safe labour migration.

The ASEAN Safe Migration Campaign contributes to the implementation of the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers signed by ASEAN leaders at the 31st ASEAN Summit in November 2017.



"The EU is committed to supporting ASEAN on safe migration. We dedicate substantial efforts to make labour migration safe and fair for all, in particular women migrants in Southeast Asia, to prevent and reduce forced labour, and progressively eliminate the exploitation of migrant workers." - H.E. Francisco Fontan Pardo, Ambassador of the EU to ASEAN

ADVANCING STUDENT MOBILITY TO FOSTER AN ASEAN IDENTITY

European Union Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region (EU SHARE)

The European Union Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region (EU SHARE) programme continues to champion efforts to improve the quality of higher education in the region, stimulate student mobility and advance regional integration and competitiveness.

A key highlight of the programme's work in 2018, the ASEAN Student Mobility Forum offered an opportunity for the 120 participating students to exchange insights and voice challenges with regards to student mobility, highlighting success stories as well as barriers to overall people-to-people connectivity in the region.

Held on 28 and 29 August 2018 in Yangon, Myanmar, with representatives from all ten ASEAN Member States in attendance, the forum culminated in a student statement, articulating the benefits, including increased regional inter-connectivity, and challenges presented by an expanding intra-ASEAN scholarship scheme.

Mobility and cross-ASEAN scholarships are effective tools that support the harmonisation of higher education frameworks, which in turn can help drive regional integration forward and forge an ASEAN identity among the region's future generation.

Work, study and cultural experiences across ASEAN not only enhance young people's academic qualifications, employability, interpersonal skills and intercultural competence, but also encourage them to view themselves as members of the ASEAN community, not just nationals of their own country.



“The SHARE scholarship has provided me with a wealth of knowledge and opportunities, as well as connections with both local and international students. Straight after my graduation, I've gotten my first job in Myanmar thanks to the network that I had built up during the student mobility programme. Now, I identify myself not just as Indonesian, but also as an ASEAN citizen.” - *Fernando, a SHARE awardee from Indonesia who studied in Vietnam*





BILATERAL COOPERATION

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



BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

The EU and Brunei Darussalam share a close working relationship, partnering with each other through various multilateral dialogue platforms, including ASEAN, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). Based on figures from 2018, the EU is Brunei's fourth largest supplier of goods and fifth largest trading partner, with an overall trading value of EUR 741 million. Brunei imports EUR 612 million worth of goods and close to EUR 500 million worth of services from the EU. EU-based enterprises of all sizes are established in the Bruneian economy, including in the oil and gas, financial and construction sectors.

Brunei is an active member of ASEAN, and the EU recognises its strong legacy linked to the Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action 2013-2017, which introduced EU-ASEAN cooperation to climate change mitigation, disaster management and environmental conservation.

Although Brunei is not eligible for EU development assistance because of its high income per capita, the country has contributed to key EU-ASEAN programmes. The EU welcomes Brunei's voluntary participation in the implementation of initiatives focusing on border management, intra-ASEAN student mobility, and the sustainable management of peatlands and biodiversity.

The conclusion of a potential Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), similarly to other countries in the region, would result in deeper EU-Brunei cooperation in areas such as higher education or climate resilience.



In the meantime, the EU is committed to furthering its collaboration with Brunei on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risk mitigation, as part of its CBRN Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative. The initiative supports Brunei's National Action Plan towards CBRN risk mitigation, and other security-related programmes addressing areas such as maritime security, and the prevention and countering of violent extremism.



CAMBODIA

The EU and Cambodia marked 20 years of economic partnership and development cooperation in 2017. Currently, the EU, working under a Joint Programming approach together with nine EU Member States and Switzerland, is the country's largest grant development assistance provider, with total funding estimated at EUR 1.4 billion for 2014-2019. The greatest share of this assistance is channelled through bilateral cooperation between the EU and the Royal Government of Cambodia, as set out in the Multiannual Indicative Programme 2014-2020.

With the overarching objective of reducing poverty, EU development assistance focuses on three main sectors: governance and administrative reforms; education; and the management of natural resources. The EU supports public finance management and decentralisation reforms to advance good governance, while in the area of natural resource management, the focus is on fisheries and aquaculture. These initiatives are aligned with the government's Rectangular Strategy and National Development Plan. The EU's development cooperation to Cambodia, which totals EUR 410 million in bilateral cooperation for 2014-2020 and EUR 21 million in thematic budget lines for 2014-2017, benefits millions of Cambodians.

In addition, the EU, the largest destination for Cambodian exports, is also providing bilateral trade-related technical assistance through the ASEAN Regional Integration



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Support from the EU – Cambodia Trade-Related Assistance (ARISE Plus Cambodia) programme, and through support to the Cambodian Climate Change Alliance.

European partners launched a joint Roadmap for Engaging with Civil Society 2014-2018, which sets out commitments to: structuring dialogue with civil society; supporting civil society efforts to enhance accountability and transparency; and creating and maintaining an enabling environment for civil society in the country.

EU partners in Cambodia have also developed a joint Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 which focuses European action on: preventing violence against women; improving nutrition for girls and women; equal access to education, and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET); equal access to decent work and productive resources; and promoting equal participation in policy and governance processes.



INDONESIA

Over the years, EU-Indonesia relations have evolved from that of donor and recipient to equal partners. The EU-Indonesia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) of 2014 indicates the growing importance of EU-Indonesia ties, with relations based on the principles of equality, mutual benefits and respect. The agreement is the first of its kind between the EU and an ASEAN country.

Over the last 10 years, the EU has contributed more than EUR 500 million in development assistance to support Indonesia with four priorities: education; democracy and human rights; the environment; and economic cooperation.

EU-Indonesia bilateral cooperation for good governance focuses on public finance management, human rights and justice. An EU Roadmap for Engagement with Civil Society ensures a more structured approach for collaboration between civil society, central and local governments across the archipelago, and with the EU and its Member States. The EU also promotes gender equality, women's empowerment, and the fight against gender-based violence through the EU-Indonesia Human Rights Dialogue.



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Another important field of cooperation between the EU and Indonesia is the protection of the environment, including support to the sustainable management of Indonesia's rich forests and peatlands, and the fight against climate change. These efforts have seen significant success with Indonesia becoming the first country in the world to obtain Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) licensing for its timber products exported to the EU market – a landmark achievement in the fight to combat illegal logging.



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Economic cooperation programmes aim to promote bilateral trade and investment, and strengthen the policy framework for increased trade and investment flows. This has been reinforced by the start of negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the EU and Indonesia. Once concluded, the EU-Indonesia CEPA will facilitate the flow of goods, services and investments in a common market of 750 million people. The agreement will provide mutual benefits and build confidence between the complementary economies of Indonesia and the EU. A new bilateral trade support programme (ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE Plus) - Indonesia Trade Support Facility) is closely coordinated with the regional ARISE Plus programme.

Finally, the EU together with its Member States' development banks, Germany's Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and France's Agence Française de Développement (AFD), will support Indonesia's national infrastructure financing institution PT SMI for feasibility studies, capacity building and project preparation, and provide technical assistance linked to policy sector reform in Indonesia under the Asia Investment Facility.



LAO PDR

As an important development partner, the EU has been present in Lao PDR for more than 20 years. During the country's rapid transformation, the EU has shifted its development cooperation focus from traditional project assistance to a more long-term approach targeted at policy reforms, and the promotion of government ownership, sectoral strategies, budget support and donor coordination. European grant assistance has amounted to over EUR 500 million for this period, making the EU one of Lao PDR's largest development partners.

Key EU bilateral programmes in the country aim to reduce poverty and support the government's objective to graduate from the Least Developed Countries list by 2020. While EU financial assistance totalled more than EUR 69 million for 2007-2013, the current programming period of 2014-2020 has seen a substantial increase to a total of EUR 207 million.

Since 2016, EU development partners have used a joint approach to improve the delivery of tangible results and impact. This joint planning of development cooperation involves nine EU development partners, as well as the Government of Lao PDR, and is fully aligned with the national development strategy. The primary objectives are poverty eradication, a clean and safe environment, good social services and a better life for all. Programming concentrates on seven sectors, all of which are priorities for the government and its population alike. The EU is leading on education-, governance- and nutrition-related projects,



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while Germany focuses on natural resources and the environment, and private sector development. Agriculture and rural development is led by France, and health-related assistance by Luxembourg. A careful division of sector-based priorities among the partners improves dialogue and coordination with national line ministries.



MALAYSIA

The establishment of the EU Delegation to Malaysia in 2003 led to significantly closer collaboration between European and Malaysian federal and state authorities, civil society, and academia. Today, cooperation in trade and economic issues continues to be the driving force behind tighter relations.

Bilateral cooperation with Malaysia focuses on two main areas: business development; and the environment and climate change. The EU is supporting the development of stronger business ties, and strives to reinforce the presence of small- and medium-sized EU enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia, and Malaysian SMEs in the EU. Cooperation targeted at climate resilience and environmental conservation covers a range of topics, including green technology, renewable energy and sustainable forest management. Specifically, the EU is working with Malaysia to improve the readiness of the State of Sabah to engage in REDD+ activities, and promote pro-poor sustainable forest management.

Increasingly, the EU is partnering with Malaysia in areas falling under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). These initiatives include maritime security, export control, and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risk mitigation.

Since 2017, the EU has assisted the Malaysian government with the preparation of the country's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Roadmap and the localisation



of SDGs at the state level. Cooperation on human rights will continue, and support to civil society on issues such as women's empowerment will start in 2019.

Following the Malaysian general elections in May 2018, the EU Delegation to Malaysia is discussing possible areas of future cooperation with the authorities in order to support government reforms.



MYANMAR

The EU's cooperation initiatives with Myanmar aim to support the country's continued reform process, as well as efforts to build a stable democracy, and foster inclusive and sustainable development. The EU, as outlined in the Multiannual Indicative Programme for 2014-2020, provides EUR 688 million worth of bilateral assistance, making it one of Myanmar's most significant donors. Four priority sectors have been identified following extensive discussions with the government, civil society and international partners: rural development, agriculture, food and nutrition security; education; governance, the rule of law and state capacity building; and peacebuilding.

In addition to the EU's bilateral support, Myanmar also benefits from various EU thematic and regional programmes. These include: the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, Non-State Actors and Local Authorities; the Energy Thematic Programme, which covers environment and natural resource management; the Enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE Plus); and the Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace.



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PHILIPPINES

The EU is a key development partner of the Philippines and has contributed more than EUR 1 billion worth of grants over the past four decades to combat poverty and to raise the living standards of the poor. The seven-year EU support strategy for 2014-2020, with an allocation of EUR 285 million, is aligned with national development priorities, and more than doubles grant assistance to the Philippines compared to the financial support provided for the period of 2007-2013, which totalled EUR 130 million. Most EU funds are given as grants making the EU – together with its Member States – the country's largest grant donor.

The 2014-2020 strategy focuses on two areas: the rule of law and inclusive growth through sustainable energy and job creation. The EU and the Philippines aim to increase cooperation in the justice sector to support the country's reform agenda. The EU is also committed to promoting energy access for all by helping the government achieve its ambitious electrification targets for poor areas. In the conflict-affected island of Mindanao, the EU has made support to the peace process and community development a key priority of its development assistance. In addition, the EU remains a key partner in the health sector and also provides critical trade-related technical assistance to the country.

Bilateral assistance is complemented by additional funding – often channelled through civil society organisations – to address social issues, environmental conservation, indigenous people, governance, human



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rights, peacebuilding and migration. The EU is also one of the most important providers of emergency funds deployed in the event of natural disasters. In 2013, the EU and its Member States provided enormous support to the Philippines, in the form of humanitarian assistance and disaster recovery, following Typhoon Haiyan (known as Super Typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines).

In 2017, the EU-Philippines Partnership Agreement was ratified, solidifying the long-standing partnership between the two partners.



SINGAPORE

Fuelled by common interests in trade and investment, regional and global security, and economic development, the EU has long regarded Singapore as a key partner. This is reflected in the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (FTA), and complemented by an Investment Protection Agreement (IPA) and a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), signed in October 2018. The PCA builds on a shared commitment towards multilateralism and an international rules-based order. Once in force, the PCA will provide the basis for more effective bilateral engagement between the EU, its Member States and Singapore by strengthening political dialogue and enhancing cooperation in a broad range of areas. These include: sustainable development; democracy and fundamental freedoms; justice and security; connectivity and people-to-people links; information society, education and cultural exchanges; and employment and social affairs. It will boost scientific and technological cooperation in fields such as energy, the environment, climate change mitigation, the protection of natural resources, smart cities and transport.

Singapore also serves as the hub of the EU Business Avenues in Southeast Asia, an EU-funded business promotion programme which aims to support European small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Southeast Asia. The programme covers several sectors, ranging from the environment, water, green energy, healthcare, medical, information and communication technologies to organic food and beverages. It offers European companies the opportunity to participate in fairs, networking events and



© EU Business Avenues in Southeast Asia

business-to-business meetings with potential partners and local stakeholders. Each mission covers Singapore and another emerging Southeast Asian market. From July 2016 to March 2019, twelve business missions to showcase EU innovative technologies to the ASEAN region were successfully organised.





THAILAND

The EU's bilateral development cooperation with Thailand spans three mutual areas of equal strategic importance: sustainable growth and development; human development and migration; and environment and climate change.

Most ongoing projects are implemented by civil society organisations who are working towards building civil society capacity in these areas, as well as addressing human rights and providing aid to uprooted people. Under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the EU's support to civil society in the implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has contributed to improving collaboration and dialogue between civil society networks, academia and relevant government bodies. Advancing the SDGs in Thailand will be a continued focus of the EU together with its stakeholders in Thailand.

A number of additional EU projects managed from Thailand have a regional remit. These are either trade-related projects focused on sustainable production and consumption, intellectual property rights, and civil aviation, or are linked to environmental protection and climate resilience with an emphasis on supporting community forestry and sustainable natural resource management in the Mekong region. These initiatives are implemented through different modalities and in close cooperation with public authorities.



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Two areas of cooperation – decent work and migration – cut across several national and regional programmes. Strengthening and protecting the rights of migrant workers in the Thai fishing sector is a flagship EU initiative in this space. Implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the project complements efforts by the Thai government to introduce reforms and enact legislation that complies with international standards, and contributes to improving the working and living conditions of migrant communities in Thailand.



VIETNAM

The EU first established relations with Vietnam in 1990, and has since provided the country with more than EUR 600 million in grant funding. This strong and dynamic partnership is enshrined in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which came into force in October 2016, and lays the foundation for further political, economic and development cooperation. Many EU Member States are also active through their own development initiatives, making the EU and its Member States together the largest grant donor in Vietnam.

Through the bilateral Multiannual Indicative Programme 2014-2020, the EU contributes up to EUR 325 million to support Vietnam's socio-economic growth by developing a sustainable energy sector, and by strengthening good governance and the rule of law in the country.

Sustainable energy was identified as a new focal sector of EU support to Vietnam in 2018. The EU promotes affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy services for all. With a budget of EUR 108 million, the first Energy Sector Policy Support Programme aims to enhance access to sustainable energy sources in the rural, mountainous and island areas of Vietnam and strengthen the governance of the energy sector, and facilitate the shift to a more sustainable energy development path.



The EU also provides EUR 14 million worth of funding to a programme targeted at improving access to justice in Vietnam. Support is also planned to enhance economic governance in the country, including public finance reforms and capacity-building for the State Audit Office of Vietnam.

Health has been a focal sector of EU bilateral aid to Vietnam for more than a decade. The Multiannual Indicative Programme 2007-2013 allocated more than EUR 100 million to improve the population's health status, especially the health conditions of the



poor and most vulnerable, through a more effective, efficient and equitable health system. The EU-Vietnam Health Sector Policy Support Programme – Phase 2 (EUR 114 million, 2015-2019) is the largest health sector support programme in Asia. The programme contributed to the achievement of key policy objectives as laid out in the national five-year plan for the health sector, including the establishment of universal health coverage, and an improvement in the availability and quality of services in Vietnam's ten poorest provinces.



At the end of 2018, the EU and Vietnam signed a Financing Agreement for the EUR 6 million ASEAN Regional Integration Support – Vietnam Trade-Related Assistance (ARISE Plus Vietnam) programme that aims to maximise the benefits enjoyed by Vietnam from preferential trade regimes, such as the forthcoming EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement.



The EU's trade assistance cooperation covers not just trade in goods, but also trade in services, as well as intellectual property rights, export policy, and foreign direct investment. Negotiations for the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement were officially concluded on 2 December 2015, and are currently in the process of ratification. In 2017, EU-Vietnam trade in goods totalled over EUR 47.6 billion, including EUR 37 billion in exports from Vietnam into the EU, and EUR 10.6 billion in exports from the EU to Vietnam. The EU is Vietnam's fifth largest foreign investor in terms of total investment stocks.



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