Voices of ASEAN: What Does ASEAN Mean to ASEAN Peoples?
ASEAN@50 Five Volumes

Volume 1: The ASEAN Journey: Reflections of ASEAN Leaders and Officials

Volume 2: Voices of ASEAN: What Does ASEAN Mean to ASEAN Peoples?

Volume 3: ASEAN and Member States: Transformation and Integration

Volume 4: Building ASEAN Community: Political Security and Socio-cultural Reflections

Volume 5: The ASEAN Economic Community into 2025 and Beyond
Voices of ASEAN: What Does ASEAN Mean to ASEAN Peoples?

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ERIA
Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia

www.eria.org
What do ASEAN people think about ASEAN?

What are their hopes and expectations for ASEAN as a region?

Do ASEAN initiatives address their concerns?
Methodology

1 survey

10 Partner Organizations

2 formats: paper and online

Multiple Focus Group Discussions

2322 Respondents
Respondents Demographic Profile: Affiliations

- Student: 29%
- Business: 18%
- CSO, NGO: 15%
- Academe: 14%
- Government: 13%
- Others: 11%
Respondents Demographic Profile: Age

- 11% 50+
- 39% 31–49
- 50% 15–30
Respondents Demographic Profile: Gender

- 49% Female
- 51% Male
FINDINGS
Virtually all respondents were at least ‘slightly familiar’ with ASEAN. Three-fifths of them are ‘moderately’ to ‘very much familiar’ with ASEAN.
Awareness has increased dramatically since 2014
In fact, many respondents believe

= AEC
Two-thirds of respondents perceived their countries’ membership in ASEAN as ‘moderately’ to ‘very’ beneficial.

- Access to more export markets and regional supply chains
- Greater diversity of goods for sale in their countries
- Ease of travel to other ASEAN countries and greater tourism opportunities, especially using ASEAN lanes
- Trade and investment linkages
- Greater access to jobs
I feel that I am an ASEAN Citizen

- **ASEAN**: 32% Very much, 68% Moderately
- **Brunei**: 71% Very much, 29% Moderately
- **Cambodia**: 32% Very much, 68% Moderately
- **Indonesia**: 67% Very much, 33% Moderately
- **Lao PDR**: 64% Very much, 36% Moderately
- **Malaysia**: 58% Very much, 42% Moderately
- **Myanmar**: 47% Very much, 53% Moderately
- **Philippines**: 44% Very much, 56% Moderately
- **Singapore**: 34% Very much, 66% Moderately
- **Thailand**: 21% Very much, 79% Moderately
- **Vietnam**: 58% Very much, 42% Moderately

Legend:
- **Very much**
- **Moderately**
However...

Citizenship was largely understood in geographic and ethnic closeness, not in the sense of a shared ASEAN identity.
Top 5 Pressing Problems: ASEAN

(1) corruption
(2) climate change and natural disasters
(3) income disparity and social inequality
(4) trade, investment, and regulatory coherence
(5) agriculture and food security
Top 5 Pressing Problems: National

1. Corruption
2. Income disparity and social inequality
3. Agriculture and food security
4. Unemployment
5. A trio of concerns: climate change and natural disasters, infrastructure availability and quality, and quality education and access
Expectations and Aspirations
Aspirations and Expectation for ASEAN by 2025 Group 1: Integrated and Connected ASEAN

- It is easy for skilled workers and professionals to find work in other countries in ASEAN.
- ASEAN countries are well connected through roads, railways, air, and shipping.
- Consumers have easy access to goods and services from any ASEAN country.
- People and businesses can communicate easily with one another through ICT.
2. Global and Regional Engagement: ASEAN deeply engages powers in the region and the world to ensure peace in the region and Asia Pacific
3. Resilient and sustainable ASEAN: The region’s biodiversity and natural resources are sustainably managed and conserved
4. People engagement, governance and social equality: There is good governance and very much less corruption
Optimistic or Pessimistic about Future of ASEAN?

- **ASEAN**: 39% Moderately optimistic, 18% Extremely optimistic
- **BRUNEI**: 44% Moderately optimistic, 19% Extremely optimistic
- **CAMBODIA**: 45% Moderately optimistic, 24% Extremely optimistic
- **INDONESIA**: 44% Moderately optimistic, 34% Extremely optimistic
- **LAO PDR**: 49% Moderately optimistic, 32% Extremely optimistic
- **MALAYSIA**: 36% Moderately optimistic, 22% Extremely optimistic
- **MYANMAR**: 52% Moderately optimistic, 23% Extremely optimistic
- **PHILIPPINES**: 51% Moderately optimistic, 31% Extremely optimistic
- **SINGAPORE**: 54% Moderately optimistic, 4% Extremely optimistic
- **THAILAND**: 30% Moderately optimistic, 5% Extremely optimistic
- **VIET NAM**: 51% Moderately optimistic, 19% Extremely optimistic