

Japan and ASEAN



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

What Is ASEAN?



The ASEAN Emblem
(Represents a bundle of rice)

ASEAN is an abbreviation for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Using the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA), which the Philippines, Thailand, and the Federation of Malaya had formed in 1961 at the initiative of Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman of Federation of Malaya as a foundation, ASEAN was established in August 1967 for the purpose of regional peace and economic growth in the wake of the Vietnam War.

Initially, the five member countries were Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore. Brunei joined later in 1984. Following the end of the Cold War, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, and Cambodia joined from 1995 to 1999, forming the 10-country system we see today.

Amid the changes in the political and economic structure of Asia that arose in the 1990s, ASEAN worked to strengthen intra-regional economic cooperation, including the signing of the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) in 1992, and adopted the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II in 2003, declaring its commitment to establishing an ASEAN Community. Furthermore, in 2007, the ASEAN Charter was passed (effective December 2008) to reaffirm ASEAN principles such as democracy, human rights, the rule of law, peaceful resolution of disputes, and non-interference in internal affairs, and to strengthen ASEAN's institutions and clarify its decision-making process towards the establishment of an ASEAN Community. Subsequently, at the 2015 Summit, ASEAN adopted the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 to further deepen ASEAN's integration by declaring the establishment of an ASEAN Community consisting of a "Political-Security Community," an "Economic Community," and a "Socio-Cultural Community."

ASEAN Community Vision 2025

ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC)

- A rule-based community
- An inclusive and responsive community
- A tolerant and moderate community
- A community that adopts a comprehensive approach to security
- A region that resolves differences and disputes by peaceful means.
- A region free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction
- A community that enhances maritime security and promotes maritime cooperation
- A community that strengthens unity, cohesiveness, and ASEAN centrality
- A community, in the interest of developing friendly and mutually beneficial relations.

ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)

- A highly integrated and cohesive regional economy
- A competitive, innovative, and dynamic community
- Enhanced connectivity and sectoral cooperation
- A resilient, inclusive, people-oriented, and people-centered community
- A global ASEAN

ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC)

- A committed, participative and socially-responsible community
- An inclusive community
- A sustainable community
- A resilient community
- A dynamic and harmonious community

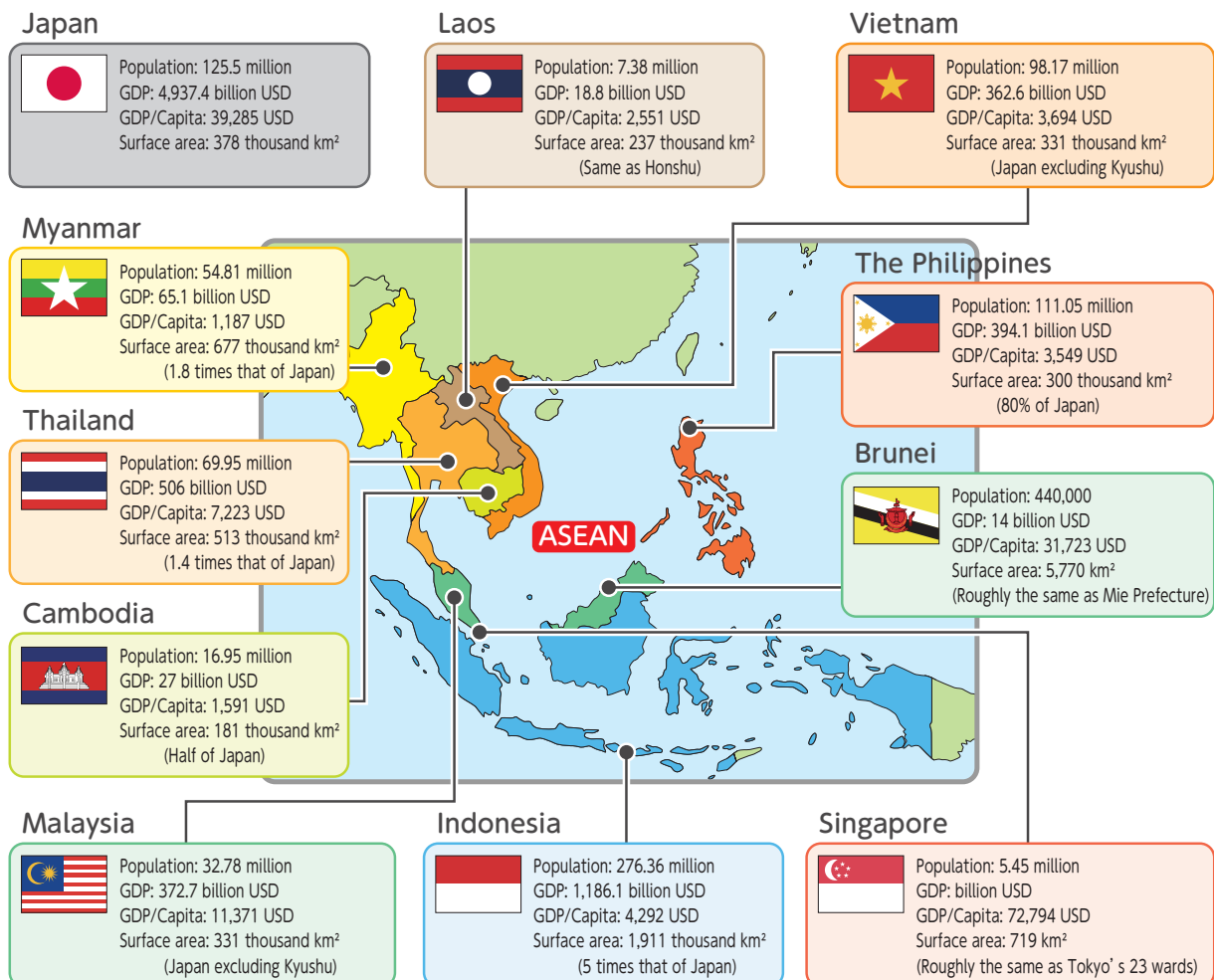
ASEAN, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in August 2017, has undergone remarkable economic growth. Its GDP, which was 23 billion USD for five countries when established in 1967, has now increased nearly 150-fold to approximately 3.3 trillion USD for 10 countries. This is why ASEAN is known as the world's growth center.

ASEAN has also been active in promoting regional cooperation in Asia, creating multi-layered ASEAN-centered frameworks such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) (1994), ASEAN+3 (1997), and the East Asia Summit (EAS) (2005). ASEAN is located at a strategic point on the sea lanes connecting the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean; hence the stability of ASEAN is crucial for the prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region, including Japan.

ASEAN Basic Data (2021)

- **Population: Approx. 670 million**
(approx. 8.6% of the world's population)
Largest in the region: Indonesia (276.36 million) /
Smallest in the region: Brunei (440,000)
- **Surface area: Approx. 4.49 million km²**
Largest in the region: Indonesia (approx. 1.91 million km²) /
Smallest in the region: Singapore (approx. 719 km²)
- **GDP: Approx. 3.3 trillion USD**
(approx. 3.5% of the world's GDP)
Largest in the region: Indonesia (1,186.1 billion USD) /
Smallest in the region: Brunei (14 billion USD)
- **GDP per capita: 4,965 USD**
Largest in the region: Singapore (72,794 USD) /
Smallest in the region: Myanmar (1,187 USD)
- **Trade value: Approx. 3.5 trillion USD**
(approx. 8.0% of the world's total)
(Japan's trade value with ASEAN: Approx. 24.9 trillion JPY)

Source: IMF, World Bank, Trade Statistics of Japan



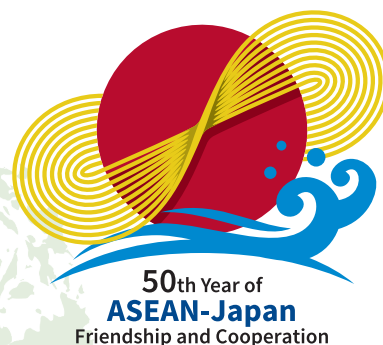
Source: IMF, World Bank, Trade Statistics of Japan

Japan and ASEAN



The 25th ASEAN-Japan Summit (November 2022; photo courtesy of the Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

Over the past 50 years, since the dialogue on synthetic rubber in 1973, Japan and ASEAN have worked closely together for the sake of peace and stability, development and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. In 1977, Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda visited the Philippines and announced the Fukuda Doctrine, which would later become the ASEAN diplomatic principles. Moreover, the first ASEAN-Japan Summit was held in Kuala Lumpur that same year, followed by the ASEAN-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting in 1978, which has since become a regular event. This relationship has become the foundation of ASEAN-Japan friendship, and Japan has become one of the most important dialogue countries for ASEAN.



Fukuda Doctrine

- 1 Japan will never be a military power
- 2 Establish a "Heart-to-Heart" relationship with ASEAN
- 3 Japan and ASEAN are equal partners



Announcement of the Fukuda Doctrine (1977; photo courtesy of the Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



In 2013, which marked the 40th anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced the Five Principles of Japan's ASEAN Diplomacy. Following this, at the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit held in Tokyo in December, the leaders of ASEAN and Japan adopted the Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation and its Implementation Plan. They declared that Japan and ASEAN Member States would promote cooperation based on the four pillars of "Partners for Peace and Stability," "Partners for Prosperity," "Partners for Quality of Life," and "Heart-to-Heart Partners."

Concurrently, ASEAN and Japan adopted the Joint Statement on Regional and Global Issues to express their common understanding of regional and global issues from the perspective of "Japan-ASEAN relations in the world."

In 2023, ASEAN and Japan will celebrate their 50th anniversary of friendship and cooperative relations. Based on the strong partnership described above, Japan and ASEAN are expected to further strengthen their friendship and cooperative relationship.

Five Principles of Japan's ASEAN Diplomacy (2013)

- ① Will work with ASEAN countries to consolidate and expand universal values such as freedom, democracy, and fundamental human rights.
- ② Ensure in cooperation with ASEAN countries that the free and open seas, which are the "most vital common asset," are governed by "laws and rules" and not by "force." And welcome the United States focus towards the Asia-Pacific region.
- ③ Further promote trade and investment, including flows of goods, money, people, and services, through various economic partnership networks for Japan's economic revitalization and the prosperity of both Japan and ASEAN member states.
- ④ Protect and nurture Asia's diverse cultural heritages and traditions.
- ⑤ Promote exchanges among the younger generations to further foster mutual understanding.



Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF)

At the ASEAN-Japan Summit in December 2005, then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced a funding commitment of approximately 70 million USD to support integration efforts of ASEAN towards establishing an ASEAN Community, thus JAIF was established in March 2006. In December 2013, Japan made additional contributions totaling 100 million USD as JAIF 2.0. Additional contributions have been made to promote youth exchange, the promotion of ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP), disaster management, reduction of marine plastic debris, and the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED).

In March 2023, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced further additional contributions totaling 100 million USD during his policy speech regarding the Future of the Indo-Pacific. JAIF has significantly contributed to promoting ASEAN-Japan cooperation in a wide range of areas.



© Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD)

ASEAN-Japan Centre

The ASEAN-Japan Centre (official name: ASEAN Promotion Centre on Trade, Investment and Tourism / Secretariat: Tokyo) is an intergovernmental organization established on May 25, 1981, by the governments of the then ASEAN Member States (original members: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand) and Japan after Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda's announcement of the Fukuda Doctrine in Manila, Philippines, in 1977. Brunei, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar later joined, and now all 10 ASEAN Member States plus Japan are members of the Centre. As an intergovernmental organization established between Japan and the ASEAN Member States, the Centre works to further strengthen the relationship between Japan and ASEAN Member States by promoting trade, investment, tourism, and people-to-people exchanges between ASEAN and Japan.

A Brief History of ASEAN and Japan



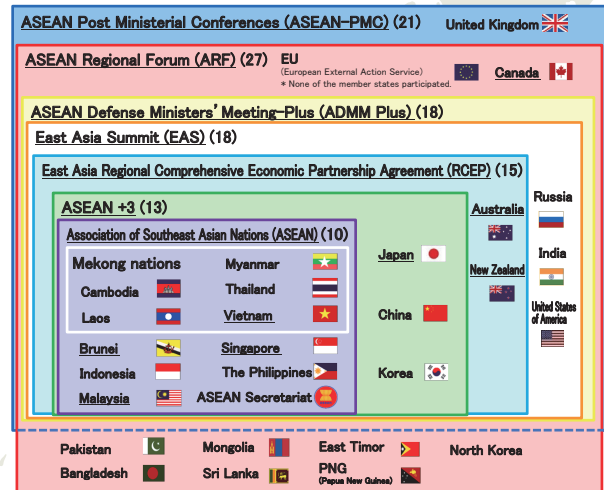
The signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the Foreign Ministers of five Southeast Asian countries (Photo courtesy of the ASEAN Secretariat)

1967	ASEAN was established by Bangkok Declaration.
1973	Japan-ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Synthetic Rubber (Start of ASEAN-Japan relations)
1976	1st ASEAN Summit (Bali) passed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and the Declaration of ASEAN Concord.
1977	First ASEAN-Japan Summit (Kuala Lumpur); Fukuda Doctrine announced (Manila)
1978	First ASEAN-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held
1981	Establishment of the ASEAN-Japan Centre (Tokyo)
1984	Brunei joins ASEAN
1987	ASEAN-Japan Summit
1992	Agreed to establish the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA)
1994	1st ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meeting was held.
1995	Vietnam joins ASEAN
1997	Myanmar and Laos join ASEAN ASEAN Vision 2020 was passed at the ASEAN Summit (Kuala Lumpur). ASEAN-Japan Summit held (held annually thereafter), 1st ASEAN+3 Summit held (held annually thereafter)
1999	Cambodia joins ASEAN
2003	ASEAN Summit (Bali): Passed the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II, ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit (Tokyo): Passed the Tokyo Declaration
2004	Japan joins the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC).
2005	Adopted the Joint Statement of the ASEAN-Japan Summit on Deepening and Broadening of ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership 1st East Asia Summit (EAS) held (held annually thereafter)
2007	ASEAN Summit (Cebu): Agreed to advance the target year for establishing the ASEAN Community (from 2020 to 2015). ASEAN Summit (Singapore): ASEAN Charter signed (effective from 2008)
2008	ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP) Agreement comes into effect.
2009	ASEAN Summit (Cha-am): Passed the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009–2015)
2010	ASEAN Summit (Hanoi): Passed the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity Japan appoints resident ambassador to ASEAN (first ASEAN dialogue country)
2011	Special ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Meeting (Jakarta) (held at the initiative of the ASEAN side immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake) Established the Mission of Japan to ASEAN ASEAN-Japan Summit: Passed the Joint Declaration for Enhancing ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership for Prospering Together (Bali Declaration) and the Action Plan
2013	ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit (Tokyo): Passed the Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, the Implementation Plan, and the Hand in Hand, Facing Regional and Global Challenges (Joint Statement on the ASEAN-Japan Regional and Global Issues)
2015	Inauguration of the ASEAN Community
2016	ASEAN Summit (Vientiane): Passed the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025
2017	50th Anniversary of ASEAN
2018	45th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship Cooperation
2019	ASEAN Summit (Bangkok): The ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP*) was issued.
2020	ASEAN-Japan Summit (video conference): Issued the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on AOIP.
2023	50th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation

* AOIP :ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific

Partners in Peace and Stability (Politics and Security)

As the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region becomes increasingly severe, it is essential for Japan and ASEAN to deepen cooperation while utilizing the regional multilateral framework to maintain peace, security, and stability in the region and the world. The region has developed a multi-layered framework of cooperation centered on ASEAN, including ASEAN+3, East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM Plus) and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), each of which has its own cooperation based on its unique characteristics. Japan values the EAS, established in 2005 as a forum for dialogue and cooperation among leaders on political and security issues of strategic importance to the region, and actively contributes to the EAS. Furthermore, promotes mutual confidence building through practical cooperation in ADMM Plus and ARF.



Note 1: Figures in parentheses indicate the number of participating countries, regions, and institutions.
 Note 2: Underlined are the countries participating in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP11) (other participating countries are Mexico, Peru, and Chile)

In view of the importance of “Free, Open and Stable Seas”, Japan and ASEAN affirm their commitment to the observance of international law and the peaceful resolution of disputes in the field of maritime security. Since 2012, based on Japan’s proposal, the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) has also been held to discuss maritime cooperation among the EAS participating countries.

Moreover, cooperation on countering terrorism and transnational crimes is underway, and between defense authorities, based on the Vientiane Vision 2.0, the guiding principle for ASEAN-Japan defense cooperation, further practical defense cooperation is being pursued including (1) ensuring the “rule of law,” (2) strengthening maritime security, and (3) assisting ASEAN’s organizational responses to regional challenges such as natural disasters and non-traditional threats.



The 3rd Japan-ASEAN Ship Rider Cooperation Program (June 26–July 2, 2019) (JS Izumo)



The 5th Japan-ASEAN Invitation Program on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (February 13–17, 2023 (Ichigaya))



The 3rd Professional Airmanship Program (February 20–21, 2023: Hamamatsu JASDF Air Rescue Squadron Training (Hamamatsu Air Base))

(Photo courtesy of the Japan Ministry of Defense)

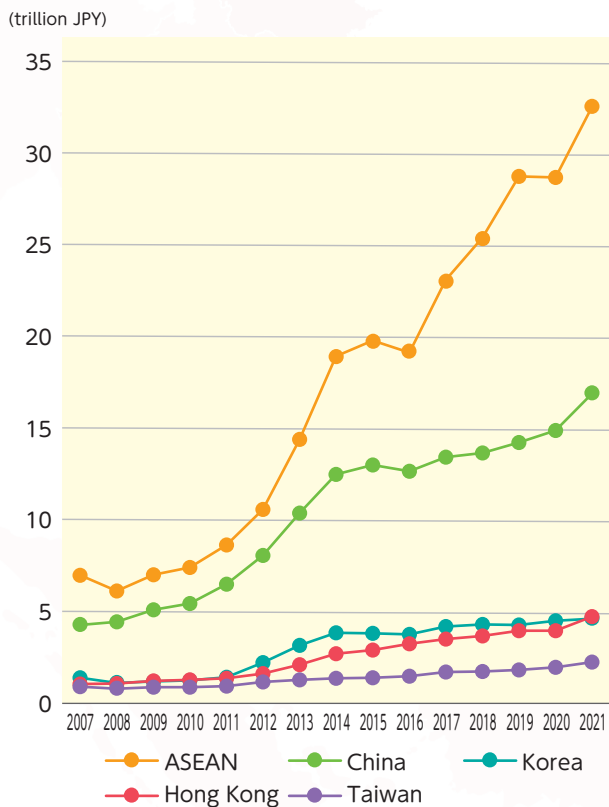
Partners for Prosperity (Economic Cooperation)

The economic interdependence between Japan and ASEAN Member States continues to deepen. The movement of people, goods, money, and information across borders is becoming increasingly active, and Japan is ASEAN's fourth-largest trading partner as of 2021. Additionally, the number of Japanese residents in ASEAN has exceeded 200,000, making ASEAN the largest investment destination for Japan in East Asia, thus establishing a strong cooperative relationship between Japan and ASEAN as business partners.

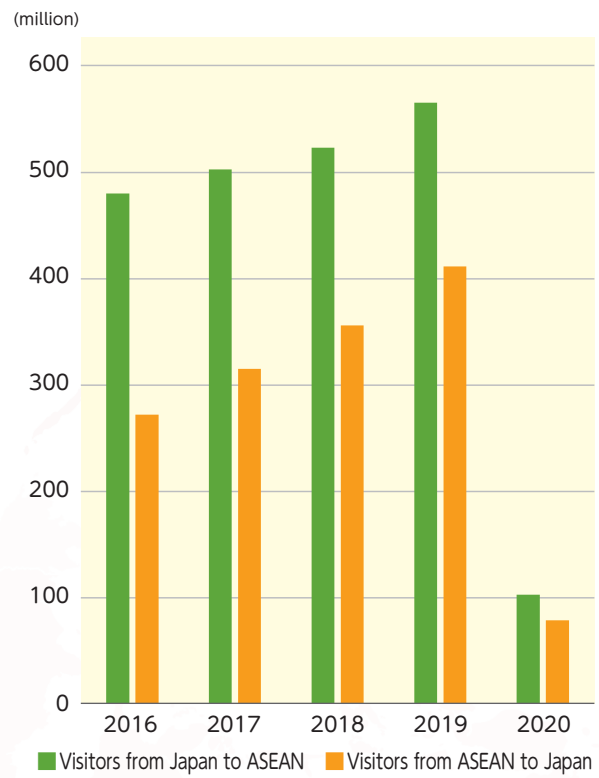
To further facilitate such active economic exchange, Japan and ASEAN Member States have concluded bilateral economic partnership agreements and investment agreements, as well as the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP) Agreement, and have established cooperative relations not only in trade and investment, but also in a wide range of areas such as competition, intellectual property, and movement of people. In particular, the AJCEP Agreement has helped to strengthen production networks throughout the ASEAN region and Japan. In January 2022, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement, which also includes Japan and ASEAN, have entered into effect.

Furthermore, Japan has consistently supported the establishment of the ASEAN Community, its integration, and the reduction of disparities within the region. In particular, Japan has promoted public and private sector support for efforts to strengthen ASEAN connectivity, which is at the core of community development, thus has worked to deepen Japan-ASEAN economic relations.

Japan's Outstanding Outward Direct Investment
(major East Asian countries and regions)



Human traffic between Japan and ASEAN



Free and open Indo-Pacific and the cooperation on the AOIP

The Indo-Pacific region, which extends from the Asia-Pacific Ocean through the Indian Ocean to the Middle East and Africa, is the core of global vitality, feeding more than half of the world's population. Japan is committed to maintaining and strengthening the free and open international order based on the rule of law, and realizing a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP), which brings stability and prosperity to all nations without distinction.

ASEAN is the core of realizing a FOIP. In 2019, ASEAN released the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), which guides ASEAN's engagement in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean region. Japan fully supports the AOIP. In 2020, the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on AOIP Cooperation was adopted, and Japan announced a list of specific cooperation proposals. The AOIP has identified (1) maritime cooperation, (2) connectivity, (3) the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and (4) the economy as priority areas of cooperation, and Japan intends to work along these lines to accumulate concrete cooperation.

Furthermore, in March 2023, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced a new plan for FOIP. In this new plan, Japan identifies Southeast Asia as one of the important regions for cooperation for FOIP. Japan continues to promote cooperation with ASEAN Member States in line with the AOIP priority areas of cooperation with the spirit of co-creation.

ASEAN Connectivity Support

One of Japan's key priorities as a partner for prosperity with ASEAN is to support ASEAN Connectivity. ASEAN Connectivity is an ASEAN initiative to enhance the economic cohesiveness of the region by facilitating the smooth flow of logistics and people through the development of cross-border infrastructure, such as railroads and roads, as well as common institutional arrangements, such as customs procedures. ASEAN adopted the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 in 2016 and is working with Japan and other ASEAN dialogue countries to promote physical, institutional, and interpersonal connectivity. Promoting intra-ASEAN connectivity will strengthen ASEAN's presence as a community, thus leading to regional peace, stability, and development. Japan announced the Initiative on Overseas Loan and Investment for ASEAN to financially support these initiatives at the ASEAN-Japan Summit in November 2019. This initiative provided 1.2 billion USD in loans through JICA to mobilize a total of 3 billion USD in public and private funds over three years (2020–2022) in areas such as quality infrastructure, financial access, and support for women, focusing on the ASEAN region. Furthermore, at the ASEAN-Japan Summit in November 2020, the Japan-ASEAN Connectivity Initiative was launched, with a commitment to support the strengthening of ASEAN connectivity in terms of both hardware and software, focusing on land, sea, and air corridor connectivity projects, totaling approximately 2 trillion JPY, and to develop 1,000 human resources over three years that will help strengthen connectivity. Japan will continue to support ASEAN connectivity in various ways, pursuing the realization of both FOIP and AOIP, which together promotes connectivity.



Cambodia: Tsubasa Bridge over the Southern Economic Corridor (Photo by Shinichi Kuno / JICA)



Laos: Second Mekong International Bridge over the East-West Economic Corridor (Photo by Shinichi Kuno / JICA)

Partner for Quality of Life (New Economic and Social Issues)

In recent years, ASEAN Member States have achieved remarkable economic growth, but along with this growth, they face various problems such as the environment, urbanization, health and medical care, aging, energy issues, and disaster prevention. Japan has experience in achieving economic growth while overcoming similar issues and is working with ASEAN Member States to help them achieve a better quality of life.

For example, knowledge of clean energy, such as energy conservation and high-efficiency coal-fired power generation, are areas where Japan can contribute to improving the ASEAN lifestyle. In addition, utilizing the knowledge of Japan, the world's number one country in terms of healthy life expectancy, will also promote cooperation in the fields of health and medical care, including the expansion of basic health care services such as maternal and child health care and infectious disease control, emergency lifesaving, aging, and non-communicable diseases. Moreover, to realize a society where women shine, Japan will cooperate with ASEAN in promoting women's activities and enhancing their capabilities.

Disaster Prevention Cooperation

For Japan and ASEAN, which are both prone to natural disasters, disaster response is a challenge shared by Japan and ASEAN. Therefore, Japan has long been promoting cooperation to protect people's lives and property from disasters, such as by supporting the capacity building of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre).

At the 2013 ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit, Japan reiterated the need for cooperation in disaster management and put forth a package to strengthen ASEAN-Japan Disaster Management Cooperation, which focuses on expanding the disaster management network with ASEAN, conducting disaster management-related dialogues, and enhancing cooperation among defense authorities in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

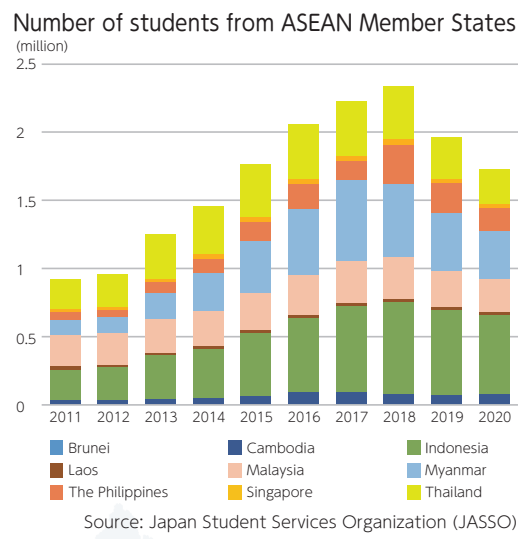
Japan has also been supporting the AHA Centre since its establishment through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), including the establishment of an ICT system to monitor disaster situations in the region and Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA) to stockpile emergency relief supplies and provide assistance to disaster-stricken areas, as well as capacity building of the ASEAN-Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ERAT) and training of potential executive officials of disaster management agencies in ASEAN Member States (AHA Center Executive (ACE) Programme). Since its establishment, the AHA Centre has responded to many major disasters, all utilizing the DELSA and ICT systems. Japan will continue to fully cooperate with the AHA Centre, including its operations so that it can fully function as a regional disaster prevention hub.



AHA Centre staff monitoring disaster information
(Photo courtesy of AHA Centre)



Heart to Heart Partner (People-to-People Exchange)



Japan and ASEAN have deepened cultural exchanges over the years. In December 2013, at the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit held in Tokyo, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced an Asian cultural exchange policy titled the “WA Project: Toward Interactive Asia through Fusion and Harmony”. The Asia Center was established within the Japan Foundation in an effort to create a new Asian culture, and had a major role in the implementation of this project. Through this project, Japan Foundation implements bidirectional arts and culture exchange programs to promote dialogue and collaboration among artists and cultural figures and the NIHONGO Partners Program that dispatches Japanese assistants to support Japanese-language teachers and introduce Japanese culture at junior high schools and high schools in various countries.

Additionally, the “JENESYS* Programme”, launched in 2007, continues to promote exchange between Japanese and ASEAN youth under various themes, including politics, economics, society, culture, history, and sports. So far, more than 35,000 youths from ASEAN Member States have visited Japan, and more than 2,500 youth from Japan have visited ASEAN Member States, visiting and observing educational and research institutions, advanced industries, traditional industries, cultural heritages, and local governments, as well as exchanging views and participating in workshops with relevant personnel and youths of the same generation, doing homestays and experiencing the traditional culture. Online visits to Japan and ASEAN, student conferences, and alumni associations have also become active in the wake of the spread of COVID-19. Through this program, the young generation, who are the future leaders of Japan and ASEAN Member States, have deepened mutual understanding and friendship.

The interaction of future generations and strengthening relations with other countries are essential for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. It is hoped that further promotion of such cultural and personal exchange programs will deepen the ties between Japan and ASEAN Member States.

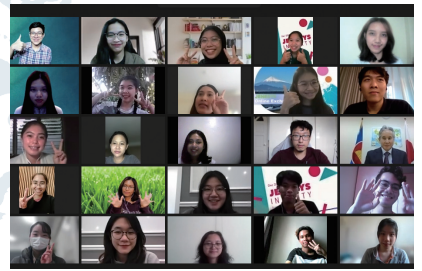
* JENESYS stands for Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths.



JENESYS ASEAN-Japan History of Development Cooperation (Photo courtesy of MOFA)



JENESYS Site visit to Japanese culture (Tsurugajo Castle, Fukushima Prefecture) (Photo courtesy of Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE))



JENESYS ASEAN-Japan AOIP·FOIP Online Exchange (Photo courtesy of Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE))



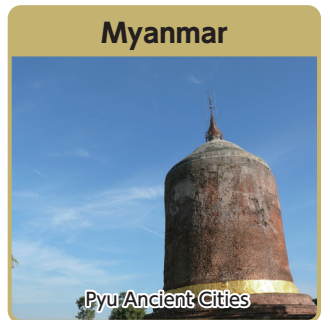
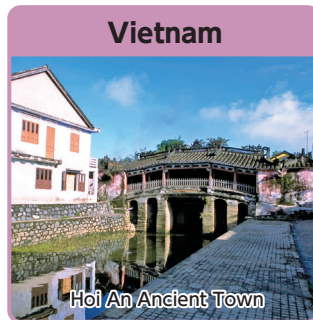
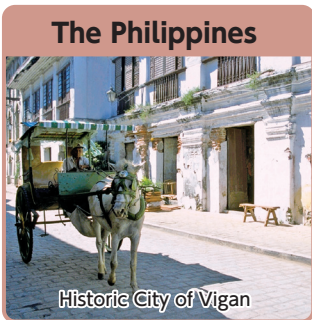
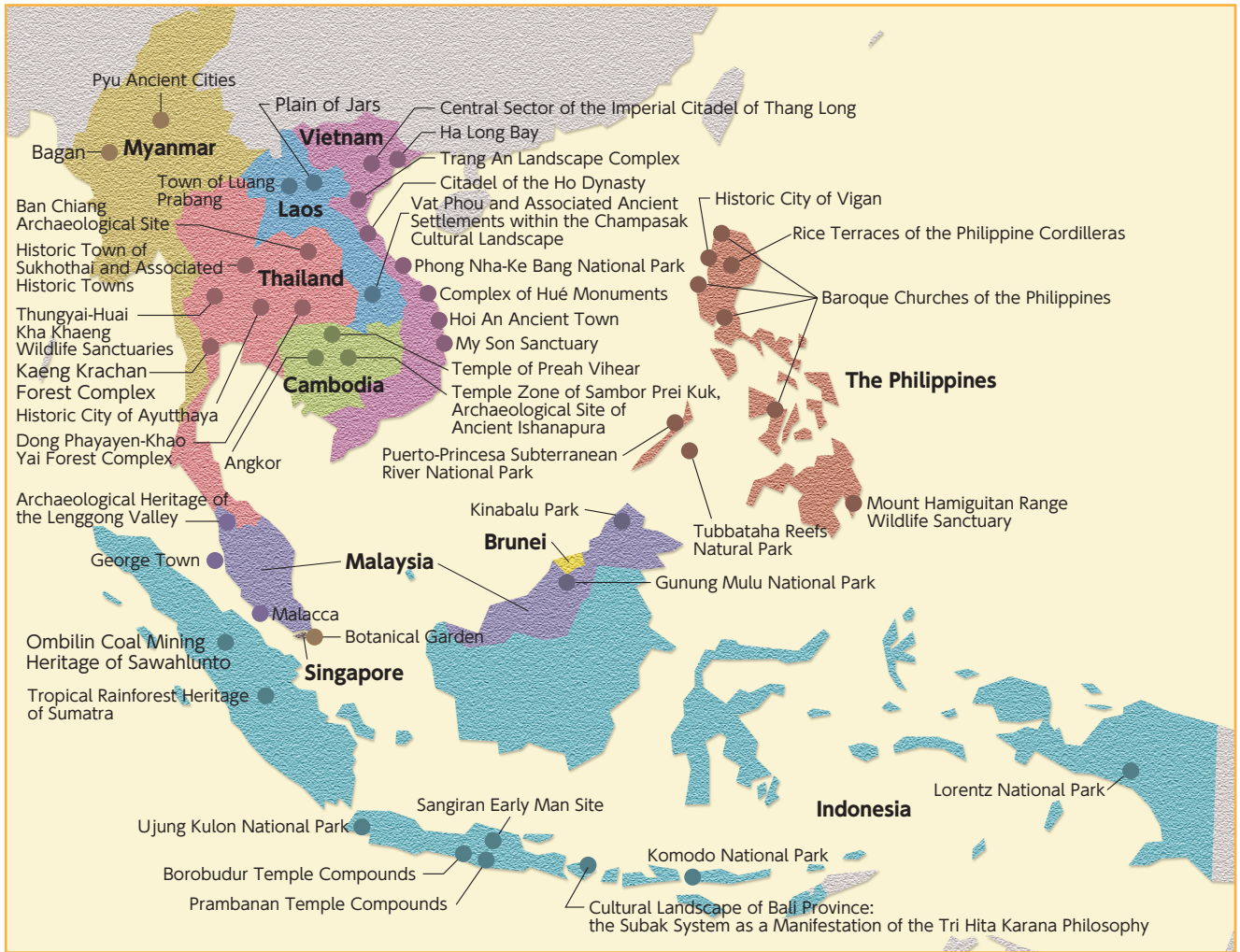
JENESYS ASEAN-Japan Sports Exchange (Football) (Photo courtesy of Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE))



NIHONGO Partners Program (Photo courtesy of the Japan Foundation)



NIHONGO Partners Program (Photo courtesy of the Japan Foundation)



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