

Somalia and ASEAN Investment and Economic Relations

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ABSTRACT: There is no doubt that ASEAN has a lot to offer to Somalia, as such, this research aims to investigate the investment and economic relations and possibilities between Somalia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The objectives of this study are to underline the state of investment and economic relations between Somalia and ASEAN, to analyse the factors affecting these relations, and to explore the potential for further cooperation between Somalia and ASEAN countries.

The research answers the following questions: What is the current state of investment and economic relations between Somalia and ASEAN? What are the factors that affect these relations? What are the potential opportunities for further cooperation between Somalia and ASEAN in terms of investment and economic relations?

The problem statement for this study is that despite Somalia being strategically located in the Horn of Africa and having vast potential for economic growth and development, the country remains one of the least developed and poorest countries in the world. While ASEAN has emerged as a significant economic power, its engagement with Somalia has been limited. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the potential for greater investment and economic cooperation between Somalia and ASEAN to promote economic growth and development in Somalia. This study employs a qualitative research methodology that involves a review of the relevant literature, including academic journals, reports, and other secondary sources. Overall, this research will contribute to the understanding of investment and economic relations between Somalia and ASEAN, and provide recommendations for governments, policymakers, business leaders, and other stakeholders to promote greater cooperation between Somalia and ASEAN.

INTRODUCTION

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional intergovernmental organization founded in 1967 to promote economic growth, social progress, and cultural development among its members (ASEAN, n.d.). Over the past five decades, ASEAN has grown to become one of the most dynamic and influential economic blocs in the world, with a combined GDP of over \$3 trillion and a population of more than 640 million (ASEAN, 2021). Somalia, as a member of the African Union, can learn much from the experience of ASEAN in promoting regional integration and cooperation. In this article, we will examine the achievements of ASEAN and what Somalia can benefit from the ASEAN experience (Jones, 2011).

The study of ASEAN's achievements and its potential benefits for Somalia is important for several reasons. First, it can provide insights into the benefits of regional integration and cooperation for economic growth and stability. Second, it can inform policymaking in Somalia by highlighting the potential benefits of regional integration and cooperation and by providing recommendations for how Somalia can best benefit from the ASEAN experience. Finally, it can contribute to the larger body of literature on regional integration and cooperation by providing a case study of the ASEAN experience and its potential benefits for other regions (Robiyanto, 2017).

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. First, we will examine the achievements of ASEAN. Second, we will discuss what Somalia can learn and benefit from the ASEAN experience. Finally, we will conclude with a summary of the main findings and recommendations for future research (ASEAN economic community and the ASEAN investment framework, n.d).

BACKGROUND OF THE TOPIC

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on August 8, 1967, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration in Bangkok, Thailand, by the founding members, of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand (ASEAN, n.d.). Today, ASEAN has grown to include ten member states: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam (ASEAN, n.d.). ASEAN's main objectives are to promote regional peace and stability, enhance economic growth and development, and to promote cultural exchange and understanding among its members (ASEAN, n.d.).

One of the major achievements of ASEAN is its ability to promote economic integration and cooperation among its members. The organization has established the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), which provides for the elimination of tariffs on goods traded among its members (ASEAN, n.d.). AFTA has greatly increased trade and investment flows within the region and has helped to boost economic growth and development. For example, trade among ASEAN members has increased from \$52 billion in 1993 to \$1.2 trillion in 2019, and the ASEAN region is now the world's fourth-largest economy (ASEAN, 2021).

Another major achievement of ASEAN is its role in promoting peace and stability in the region. The organization has been instrumental in resolving conflicts and promoting dialogue and cooperation among its members (ASEAN, n.d.). ASEAN has also played a crucial role in promoting regional security through its active participation in various regional security initiatives and its efforts to address transnational issues such as terrorism, piracy, and human trafficking (ASEAN, n.d.).

As Somalia seeks to improve its regional integration and cooperation, it can learn from the achievements of ASEAN. The promotion of economic growth and stability, the resolution of conflicts, and the addressing of transnational issues are all crucial for Somalia's development. By studying ASEAN's experiences and best practices, Somalia can gain insights into how it can promote regional integration and cooperation to achieve sustainable economic and social development (ASEAN economic community and the ASEAN investment framework, n.d.).

BRIEF HISTORY OF ASEAN AND SOMALIA

Brief History of ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional intergovernmental organization comprising ten Southeast Asian countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam (ASEAN, n.d.). ASEAN was founded on August 8, 1967, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (also known as the Bangkok Declaration) by the founding members, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand (ASEAN, n.d.).

The main objectives of ASEAN are to promote regional peace and stability, enhance economic growth and development, and promote cultural exchange and understanding among its members (ASEAN, n.d.). ASEAN has been instrumental in promoting regional integration and cooperation, including through the establishment of the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), which provides for the elimination of tariffs on goods traded among its members (ASEAN, n.d.).

Since its founding, ASEAN has grown to become one of the most dynamic and influential economic blocs in the world, with a combined GDP of over \$3 trillion and a population of more than 640 million (ASEAN, 2021). ASEAN's efforts to promote peace and stability in the region have also been effective, with the organization playing a crucial role in resolving conflicts and promoting dialogue and cooperation among its members (ASEAN, n.d.).

Brief History of Somali

Somalia is located in the Horn of Africa and has a rich history that dates back to ancient times. The Somali people have a long tradition of oral history, and their stories tell of powerful empires and kingdoms that once dominated the region. In the Middle Ages, the Somali coast was an important trading centre for goods such as frankincense, myrrh, and spices, and the Somali people were known for their seafaring skills (Njoku, 2013).

In the late 19th century, Somalia became a protectorate of Britain, and the northern region was controlled by Italy. The country gained its independence in 1960, and the former British and Italian territories united to form the Somali Republic. The early years of independence were marked by political instability, and the government was overthrown in a military coup in 1969 (Njoku, 2013).

In the following years, Somalia was ruled by a military regime led by General Siad Barre. His regime implemented socialist policies and sought to modernize the country, but it also suppressed political dissent and opposition. In the 1980s, tensions grew between the government and various opposition groups, and civil war broke out in 1991 (Njoku, 2013).

The civil war led to the collapse of the central government and the country's fragmentation into various factions and clans. The resulting conflict and instability have lasted for decades and have caused widespread suffering and humanitarian crises. In recent years, there have been efforts to establish a new government and rebuild the country, but progress has been slow and challenging (Njoku, 2013).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOMALIA AND MALAYSIA

POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONSHIP

Somalia and Malaysia maintained diplomatic relations, and both countries have embassies in each other's capitals.

The meeting between the Somali President and his Malaysian counterpart in 2017 highlights the cordiality of their relationship. Malaysia has also provided humanitarian aid to Somalia in the past, particularly in the areas of food security and capacity building. Additionally, Somalia is a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and Malaysia has played an active role in promoting OIC solidarity and cooperation.

There have been positive interactions and cooperation in areas of mutual interest such as humanitarian aid and Islamic solidarity.

ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONSHIP

According to the Observatory of Economic Complexity, in 2020, Malaysia exported \$89.6 million worth of products to Somalia, making Somalia Malaysia's 138th largest export destination (OEC, n.d.). The main products that Malaysia exported to Somalia in 2020 were Palm Oil, which accounted for 74% of total exports (\$66 million), followed by Concentrated Milk (\$14.7 million) and Coconut Oil (\$3.03 million) (OEC, n.d.).

Over the last 25 years, Malaysia's exports to Somalia have increased at an annualized rate of 35.4%, from \$45.7 thousand in 1995 to \$89.6 million in 2020 (OEC, n.d.). The increasing trend in Malaysia's exports to Somalia can be attributed to the growing demand for Malaysian palm oil and other food products in Somalia.

On the other hand, Somalia's exports to Malaysia were valued at \$474 thousand in 2020, making Malaysia Somalia's 31st largest import partner (OEC, n.d.). The main products that Somalia exported to Malaysia in 2020 were Crustaceans, which accounted for 78% of total exports (\$369 thousand), followed by Molluscs (\$32 thousand) and Hard Liquor (\$29.7 thousand) (OEC, n.d.).

Over the last 25 years, Somalia's exports to Malaysia have increased at an annualized rate of 11.2%, from \$33.7 thousand in 1995 to \$474 thousand in 2020 (OEC, n.d.). The increase in Somalia's exports to Malaysia can be attributed to the growing demand for Somali seafood products and the opening up of new markets in Southeast Asia.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOMALIA AND INDONESIA

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS

According to the World Bank, the total trade between Somalia and Indonesia in 2020 was \$73.2M, with Indonesia being a net exporter to Somalia. Indonesia's main exports to Somalia were palm oil, non-knit active wear, and soap, with a total value of \$33.78M (Observatory of Economic Complexity, n.d.). On the other hand, Somalia's main exports to Indonesia were air pumps, essential oils, and ball bearings, with a total value of \$30k (Trading Economics, n.d.).

Indonesia and Somalia have expressed their commitment to strengthening their economic relationship through increased trade and investment. In 2019, the Indonesian government announced plans to increase trade with Somalia and other African countries, with a focus on expanding exports of palm oil and other Indonesian products (Antara News, 2019). Somalia has also expressed interest in importing more Indonesian goods, particularly in the areas of food and agriculture (Jakarta Globe, 2021).

POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS

Indonesia is one of dozens of foreign delegates attending the inauguration of the new President of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, (09/06/2022)

During his visit, Ambassador Hery met with the Somali Prime Minister, Somali Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, and several officials and members of the Somali parliament. At each meeting, Ambassador Hery emphasized Indonesia's availability as a partner in Somalia's reconstruction process and "state-building" after decades of civil war.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOMALIA AND THAILAND

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP

According to data from the Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC), in 2020, Thailand exported a total of \$8.23 million to Somalia. The top exports from Thailand to Somalia were processed fish (\$5.98 million), plastic lids (\$998k), and packaged medicaments (\$840k) (OEC, 2021).

In contrast, Somalia's exports to Thailand were minimal, with only \$1.34k reported in 2020 (OEC, 2021). It is worth noting that trade between the two countries has been limited in recent years, and efforts to increase trade and economic cooperation have been identified as an area of potential growth (Dhamee & Abdille, 2021).

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONSHIP

According to the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, as of April 2023, Thailand does not have an embassy or consulate in Somalia (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, n.d.). Similarly, Somalia does not have an embassy or consulate in Thailand (EmbassyPages, n.d.). The two countries primarily interact through international organizations such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, as well as through trade relations (Embassy of the Federal Republic of Somalia in Kuala Lumpur, n.d.).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOMALIA AND PHILIPPINES

POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONSHIP

According to the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), as of 2021, the Philippines does not have an embassy or consulate in Somalia (DFA, n.d.). However, Somalia has a consulate in Manila, Philippines, which is responsible for the promotion of trade and cultural exchanges between the two countries (Consulate General of Somalia in Manila, n.d.).

The Philippines also has a relatively large Somali community living in the country. According to the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, as of 2019, there were 748 Somali nationals living in the Philippines (CFO, 2019).

ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONSHIP

According to the Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC), the trade relationship between Somalia and the Philippines is relatively small. In 2020, the Philippines exported Oscilloscopes, Coffee and Tea Extracts, and Baked Goods worth \$799k to Somalia, while Somalia exported Scented Mixtures and Metal Molds worth \$35.8k to the Philippines (OEC, 2021).

The Philippines and Somalia have expressed interest in expanding their trade relations. In 2019, the Philippine government announced plans to establish stronger economic ties with Somalia and other African countries by promoting Philippine-made products and services in the region (De Vera, 2019). Additionally, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry has called for the exploration of opportunities in Somalia's agriculture, fisheries, and construction sectors (Carino, 2018).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOMALIA AND VIETNAM

ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONSHIP

According to the Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC), in 2020, Somalia exported \$826K worth of goods to Vietnam, mainly consisting of raw hides and skins, while Vietnam exported \$554K worth of goods to Somalia, consisting of primarily cement and sugar. The trade balance between the two countries is in favour of Somalia.

Vietnam has also provided humanitarian aid to Somalia in the past, particularly in the areas of food security and disaster relief. In 2019, Vietnam donated 10,000 tons of rice to help alleviate food shortages in Somalia. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1976, and while Vietnam has an embassy in Mogadishu, Somalia does not have an embassy in Vietnam. The two countries have expressed interest in expanding their economic cooperation, particularly in the areas of agriculture, fisheries, and energy.

DIPLOMATIC AND RELATION

Somalia and Vietnam established diplomatic relations on August 1, 1978. Both countries have since worked towards strengthening their relationship, particularly in areas such as trade, education, and culture.

In 2018, a delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia visited Vietnam and met with Vietnam's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, highlighting the need to strengthen cooperation between the two countries.

In terms of political relations, Somalia has shown support for Vietnam's efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region, including the South China Sea. Vietnam, on the other hand, has expressed its commitment to supporting Somalia's efforts in fighting terrorism and promoting peace and stability in the country.

Despite the relatively cordial relations between the two countries, there have been no major political or diplomatic developments of note in recent years.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOMALIA AND SINGAPORE

In 2020, Singapore exported \$3.48M to Somalia. The main products that Singapore exported to Somalia are Seed Oils (\$2.29M), Industrial Fatty Acids, Oils and Alcohols (\$561k), and Other Pure Vegetable Oils (\$464k).

In 2020, Somalia exported \$715k to Singapore. The main products that Somalia exported to Singapore were Processed Fish (\$319k), Other Oily Seeds (\$170k), and Processed Crustaceans (\$111k).

Somalia and Singapore have established diplomatic relations, but their political relationship is not particularly close. Singapore has not been heavily involved in Somali affairs, but it has contributed to international efforts to combat piracy in the region. In 2011, Singapore deployed a naval vessel to the Gulf of Aden to participate in counter-piracy operations, and it has continued to send ships to the region in subsequent years. Additionally, Singapore has provided humanitarian assistance to Somalia, particularly in the area of healthcare, and has worked with international organizations to support Somali refugees in neighbouring countries. However, there have been no significant political or diplomatic developments between Somalia and Singapore in recent years.

STRENGTH OF ASEAN

The strength of ASEAN lies in its diverse and dynamic member countries, economic integration, political and security cooperation, cultural exchange, and strong network of partners and stakeholders.

Diverse and dynamic member countries: ASEAN represents a diverse range of cultures, religions, and political systems. In 2020, the combined population of ASEAN member countries reached approximately 660 million, and the GDP was \$3.11 trillion (ASEAN, 2021b). The region has experienced rapid economic growth in recent years, with an average annual growth rate of 5% between 2000 and 2020 (World Bank, 2021).

Economic integration: ASEAN has made significant progress in promoting regional economic integration through the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Established in 1992, AFTA aims to reduce or eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers among member countries (ASEAN, 2021c). The AEC, launched in 2015, seeks to create a single market and production base, with free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labour and a freer flow of capital (ASEAN, 2021d).

Political and security cooperation: ASEAN has played an essential role in promoting political and security cooperation among its member countries and beyond through initiatives such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM). The ARF, established in 1994, is a platform for dialogue and cooperation on political and security issues among ASEAN members and their partners (ASEAN, 2021e). The ADMM, inaugurated in 2006, seeks to promote regional peace and stability through defence and security cooperation (ASEAN, 2021f).

Cultural exchange: ASEAN actively promotes cultural exchange and understanding among its member countries through initiatives such as the ASEAN Cultural Year and the ASEAN Literary Festival. The ASEAN Cultural Year is an annual celebration that showcases the rich cultural heritage of the region (ASEAN, 2021g). The ASEAN Literary Festival, held since 2014, is an annual event that brings together writers, artists, and scholars from across the region to discuss and celebrate literature, art, and ideas (ASEAN Literary Festival, 2021). A strong **network of partners and stakeholders:** ASEAN has established a robust network of partners and stakeholders, including major global powers such as the United States, China, Japan, and the European Union. These partnerships are maintained through various mechanisms, such as the ASEAN+3, the East Asia Summit, and the ASEAN-European Union Dialogue (ASEAN, 2021h).

In conclusion, ASEAN's strength lies in its diverse and dynamic member countries, economic integration, political and security cooperation, cultural exchange, and a strong network of partners and stakeholders. These strengths enable the organization to play a vital role in promoting regional stability, economic growth, and cultural understanding.

ECONOMIC STABILITY OF ASEAN

The ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) was established in 1992 to promote economic integration and reduce trade barriers among the member countries of ASEAN. The AFTA has achieved significant progress in terms of trade liberalization and integration since its inception (ASEAN economic community and the ASEAN investment framework, n.d).

The ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) is the centrepiece of the AFTA, which aims to eliminate tariffs on a list of commonly traded goods among ASEAN member countries. According to the latest available data from ASEAN Secretariat, as of 2021, ASEAN has eliminated tariffs on over 99% of the products traded within the region. This indicates that the AFTA has been largely successful in achieving its goals of promoting intra-regional trade and investment (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

The AFTA has also facilitated the growth of trade and investment in the ASEAN region. The total merchandise trade among ASEAN countries has increased from US\$ 122.5 billion in 1993 to US\$ 1.2 trillion in 2019. This reflects a significant increase in the level of economic integration and intra-regional trade within ASEAN. Additionally, foreign direct investment (FDI) flows into ASEAN have been steadily increasing over the years. In 2020, ASEAN received a total FDI inflow of US\$ 107.9 billion, which is a 31% increase compared to the previous year (ASEAN economic community and the ASEAN investment framework, n.d).

However, despite the progress made by the AFTA, there are still challenges that need to be addressed to ensure sustained economic stability in ASEAN. One of the key challenges is the non-tariff barriers to trade, which continue to hinder the smooth flow of goods and services within the region. These barriers include technical regulations, standards, and conformity assessment procedures, which can create additional costs and uncertainties for businesses operating in the region (Robiyanto, 2017).

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted the ASEAN economies, with significant declines in economic growth and trade. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of strengthening the resilience and sustainability of ASEAN economies through regional cooperation and integration (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

In conclusion, the AFTA has played a crucial role in promoting economic integration and reducing trade barriers among ASEAN member countries. The progress made by the AFTA in terms of trade liberalization and investment has contributed to the growth and stability of the ASEAN economies. However, there are still challenges that need to be addressed to ensure sustained economic stability and growth in the region (Robiyanto, 2017)..

POLITICAL STABILITY OF ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made significant efforts to promote political stability in the region through various initiatives, including the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM).

The ARF, which was established in 1994, serves as a platform for informal political and security dialogue among

ASEAN member countries and other countries in the region. According to the latest data from the ASEAN Secretariat, the forum has grown to include 27 participants, consisting of ASEAN member states and 10 other countries, including the United States, China, Japan, and Australia. The ARF aims to promote confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy, as well as provide a framework for addressing political and security issues in the region. The forum has played a role in preventing conflict and defusing tensions among the participants, including the South China Sea dispute, which threatened to escalate into conflict (Lau, 1986).

The ADMM, which was established in 2006, is a forum for defence ministers from ASEAN member countries to discuss security issues and cooperate on defence-related matters. The ADMM has helped to promote military-to-military cooperation and confidence-building measures among member countries. According to the ASEAN Secretariat, the ADMM has made significant progress in promoting regional peace and stability through its various initiatives, including the establishment of the ADMM-Plus in 2010, which includes eight ASEAN Dialogue Partners: Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea, and the United States (Lau, 1986).

However, there are still challenges that need to be addressed to ensure sustained political stability in ASEAN. One of the key challenges is the ongoing territorial disputes in the region, particularly in the South China Sea. The disputes have created tensions among the claimant countries and have the potential to escalate into conflict.

In conclusion, the ARF and ADMM have played crucial roles in promoting political stability and security in the ASEAN region. These forums have provided platforms for regular consultations and discussions among the participants, as well as facilitated the establishment of confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy mechanisms. However, there are still challenges that need to be addressed to ensure sustained political stability and security in the region (Lau, 1986).

WHAT DID SOMALIA LEARN AND BENEFIT FROM ASEAN

HEALTH SECTOR

Somalia can learn and benefit from ASEAN countries in the health sector by implementing some of the initiatives and strategies that have been successful in improving access to healthcare services and strengthening the health system in the region.

One significant initiative implemented by ASEAN countries is the expansion of health insurance coverage, which has helped to improve access to healthcare services. For example, Thailand's Universal Coverage Scheme (UCS) provides healthcare coverage to all Thai citizens and has helped to reduce out-of-pocket expenses for healthcare services (Wibulpolprasert et al., 2016). Indonesia has also implemented a national health insurance program, Jaminan Kesehatan Nasional (JKN), which aims to provide access to healthcare services for all Indonesians (Wibulpolprasert et al., 2016).

Another initiative that has been successful in the ASEAN region is the establishment of health promotion hospitals, which focus on promoting healthy lifestyles and preventing disease. In Thailand, there are currently 120 health promotion hospitals, which have been successful in reducing the prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) (Wibulpolprasert et al., 2016). The Philippines has also established a number of health promotion hospitals, which focus on promoting healthy lifestyles and providing health education to the community (DOH, 2019).

Furthermore, the establishment of community health centres has also been successful in improving access to healthcare services in the ASEAN region. In Vietnam, there are currently over 11,000 commune health stations, which provide

primary healthcare services to the community (Wibulpolprasert et al., 2016). In Thailand, there are currently over 9,000 tambon health promotion hospitals, which provide primary healthcare services to the community (Wibulpolprasert et al., 2016).

The implementation of these initiatives in the ASEAN region has resulted in significant improvements in the health sector, including increased access to healthcare services, improved life expectancy, and reduced infant and child mortality rates (Wibulpolprasert et al., 2016).

In terms of the number of health centres in ASEAN countries, the following statistics are available:

Malaysia: In 2020, there were 1,138 hospitals and health clinics in Malaysia, an increase compared to the previous year (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2021).

Indonesia: In 2021, there were around 2,522 functioning hospitals and other types of healthcare centers in Indonesia, an increase of 9.6 percent compared to the period between 2017 and 2021 (Statista, 2021).

Philippines: In 2016, there were approximately 1,800 hospitals in the Philippines, of which 721 (40%) were public hospitals (World Health Organization, 2018).

Thailand: In 2020, there were 1,356 hospitals in Thailand, a decrease from the previous year (Department of Health Service Support, 2021).

Vietnam: In 2017, there were over one thousand hospitals in Vietnam, with the Northern Central area and the Central coastal area has the highest number of hospitals at 242 (World Health Organization, 2018).

Singapore: In 2021, there were 1,711 health centres in Singapore, an increase compared to the previous year (Singapore Ministry of Health, 2021).

According to the World Health Organization, ASEAN countries have made significant progress in reducing infant and child mortality rates. Between 1990 and 2019, the under-five mortality rate in ASEAN countries declined by 63%, from 76 deaths per 1,000 live births to 28 deaths per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate also decreased by 62%, from 45 deaths per 1,000 live births to 17 deaths per 1,000 live births during the same period (WHO, 2021).

Another area where ASEAN countries have made significant progress is in improving life expectancy. According to the World Bank, life expectancy at birth in ASEAN countries increased from an average of 68.4 years in 2000 to 73.6 years in 2019 (World Bank, 2021).

Somalia could learn from ASEAN's success in the health sector and implement similar initiatives to improve access to healthcare services and strengthen their healthcare system. For example, Somalia could expand health insurance coverage to more citizens and establish community health centres to provide basic healthcare services in rural areas.

HEALTH SECTOR

The education sector in ASEAN countries has made significant progress in recent years, with governments implementing a number of initiatives to improve access to education and increase enrolment rates.

Achievements in Education Sector:

Increased enrolment in primary education: For example, the primary school enrolment rate in Cambodia has increased from 67% in 2000 to 95% in 2018.

Increased access to secondary and higher education: Somalia faces a shortage of teachers, particularly in rural areas. This can lead to a high teacher-to-student ratio, which can affect the quality of education.

Improved literacy rates: ASEAN countries have also made progress in improving literacy rates, particularly among young people. For example, the youth literacy rate in Thailand has increased from 97% in 2000 to 99% in 2018.

Increased use of technology in education: ASEAN countries have made progress in the use of technology in education, including through the introduction of e-learning platforms and the use of educational software and apps.

ASEAN countries have also made progress in improving access to secondary and higher education. In Malaysia, there were 530 higher educational institutions (HEIs) in 2020, including universities and colleges (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2021). Indonesia had 4,537 HEIs in 2020, including universities, colleges, and polytechnics (Ministry of Education and Culture Indonesia, 2021). Thailand had 154 HEIs in 2019, including public and private universities and colleges (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2019). In Singapore, there were 14 publicly funded universities and polytechnics in 2021 (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2021). The Philippines had 1,346 HEIs in 2019, including universities, colleges, and technical-vocational institutions (Commission on Higher Education Philippines, 2020). Brunei had 5 HEIs in 2019, including the Universiti Brunei Darussalam and a technical college (Brunei Darussalam Department of Economic Planning and Development, 2019). Cambodia had 121 HEIs in 2019, including universities, colleges, and vocational schools (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport Cambodia, 2020). Myanmar had 132 universities and colleges in 2019, including public and private institutions (Ministry of Education Myanmar, 2020). Laos had 80 HEIs in 2020, including universities, colleges, and vocational schools (Ministry of Education and Sports Laos, 2021). Vietnam had 235 universities and colleges in 2019, including public and private institutions (Ministry of Education and Training Vietnam, 2020).

Moreover, ASEAN countries have made progress in improving literacy rates, particularly among young people. For example, the youth literacy rate in Thailand has increased from 97% in 2000 to 99% in 2018 (UNESCO, 2021). Additionally, ASEAN countries have also made progress in the use of technology in education, including through the introduction of e-learning platforms and the use of educational software and apps.

AGRICULTURE SECTOR

ASEAN is a major player in the global agriculture industry, and the region's agricultural production has continued to grow in recent years. According to the ASEAN Statistical Yearbook 2021, in 2019, the region produced 223 million metric tons of rice, 71 million metric tons of corn, 393 million metric tons of sugarcane, 3.14 million metric tons of soybeans, and 91 million metric tons of cassava.

Achievements in Agriculture Sector

Increased food security: ASEAN has made significant progress in increasing food security within the region by increasing domestic food production and reducing reliance on imports.

Promoted sustainable agriculture: including the use of modern technologies and techniques to increase productivity while minimizing negative environmental impacts.

Improved market integration: Through the establishment of the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and the ASEAN

Economic Community (AEC). These initiatives have helped to increase trade and investment in the agriculture sector within the region.

Improved access to education and training: ASEAN has made efforts to improve access to education and training for farmers and other stakeholders in the agriculture sector, including through initiatives to enhance extension services and the development of training programs (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

The region's leading producers of cereals, such as **wheat**, are Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Thailand. In 2019, Indonesia produced 85,297.4 thousand metric tons of cereals, while Vietnam produced 48,208.1 thousand metric tons. Thailand produced 33,162.9 thousand metric tons of cereals in the same year (ASEAN Statistical Yearbook 2021).

Palm oil is also a major agricultural product in the region, with Indonesia and Malaysia being the two largest producers. In 2019, Indonesia produced 245,633.1 thousand metric tons of palm oil, while Malaysia produced 99,065.4 thousand metric tons (ASEAN Statistical Yearbook 2021).

Fruits such as mangoes, bananas, and citrus fruits are also important agricultural products in the region. The leading producers of these fruits are Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Lao PDR, Vietnam, and Thailand. In 2019, the Philippines produced 16,766.6 thousand metric tons of fruits, while Thailand produced 11,325.6 thousand metric tons (ASEAN Statistical Yearbook 2021).

Sugarcane production in ASEAN has been growing steadily in recent years, with Thailand being the region's largest producer. According to the ASEAN Sugar Alliance, Thailand produced 107.2 million metric tons of sugarcane in 2020, followed by Indonesia with 31 million metric tons, and the Philippines with 22.5 million metric tons.

In terms of **rice production**, Vietnam is the largest producer in the region, followed by Thailand, Indonesia, Myanmar, and the Philippines. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in 2020, Vietnam produced 42.5 million metric tons of rice, while Thailand produced 34.5 million metric tons, and Indonesia produced 30.3 million metric tons (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

Overall, the ASEAN region's agriculture sector has made significant progress in terms of productivity and production in recent years. These achievements can serve as examples for Somalia to improve its own agriculture sector through the adoption of innovative technologies, expansion of research and development efforts, and the promotion of sustainable farming practices (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

The manufacturing sector has been one of ASEAN's key economic growth drivers. Already, the region is a global manufacturing hub and is estimated to grow at a compound **annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.6%** between 2016 to 2020.

The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) for example, envisions ASEAN as a single market and production base. Meanwhile, mega trade arrangements like the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)** if successful would be a positive step towards a broader **Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP)** that can serve as a useful intergovernmental forum on free trade (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

Achievements of ASEAN in the Manufacturing Sector:

Increased competitiveness: ASEAN has made significant progress in increasing the competitiveness of its manufacturing sector, particularly through efforts to improve infrastructure, reduce trade barriers, and promote the adoption of modern technologies and techniques. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2019, Singapore ranked second, Malaysia ranked 27th, Thailand ranked 40th, Indonesia ranked 50th, and the Philippines ranked 64th out of 141 countries in terms of their overall competitiveness (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

Increased exports: ASEAN has been successful in increasing exports of manufactured goods, particularly to the rest of the world. According to the ASEAN Secretariat, intra-ASEAN trade in goods increased from \$347 billion in 2010 to \$612 billion in 2019, with manufactured goods accounting for a significant portion of this trade. In addition, ASEAN's exports to the world increased from \$1.1 trillion in 2010 to \$1.3 trillion in 2019, with manufactured goods accounting for the majority of these exports (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

Promoted innovation and technological development: ASEAN has promoted innovation and technological development, particularly through initiatives to promote research and development and the adoption of new technologies. For example, the ASEAN Smart Cities Network was launched in 2018 to promote the adoption of smart city technologies across the region, while the ASEAN Plan of Action for Science, Technology, and Innovation 2016-2025 aims to promote innovation and technology transfer in the region (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

Enhanced connectivity: ASEAN has made efforts to enhance connectivity within the region, particularly through initiatives to improve infrastructure and facilitate cross-border trade and investment. For example, the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee was established in 2010 to oversee the implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Master Plan, which aims to improve physical, institutional, and people-to-people connectivity across the region. In addition, ASEAN has established several free trade agreements with other countries and regions, including the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement and the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area, to facilitate trade and investment flows (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

ELECTRONICS:

Malaysia is one of the largest producers of electronics in Southeast Asia. The country has a well-developed electronics manufacturing industry that produces a wide range of products, including computer hardware, consumer electronics, and semiconductor devices. The electronics industry in Malaysia is supported by the government, which has implemented various initiatives to attract foreign investors and promote the growth of the sector. The country's strategic location, skilled workforce, and well-established infrastructure also make it an attractive destination for electronics manufacturers (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

TEXTILES:

Indonesia, Vietnam, and Thailand are major producers of textiles, including clothing and other textile products. These countries have a long history of textile production, and their textile industries have grown significantly over the years. The textile industry in these countries is supported by abundant raw materials, including cotton, silk, and synthetic fibres, as well as a skilled workforce and favorable government policies. Textile production is a significant contributor to the economies of these countries, and the industry is expected to continue to grow in the coming years (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

AUTOMOTIVE PARTS:

Thailand and Indonesia are both major manufacturers of automotive parts. The automotive industry in these countries has grown significantly in recent years, driven by increasing demand for automobiles in the region. Both countries have established automotive manufacturing industries that produce a wide range of components and parts, including engines, transmissions, suspension systems, and electrical systems. The automotive parts industry in these countries is supported by a skilled workforce, favorable government policies, and the presence of major automakers and their supply chains (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

PROCESSED FOOD:

Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam all have large food processing industries, producing a range of processed food products including snack foods, beverages, and prepared meals. These countries have a rich agricultural heritage and abundant natural resources, which support the production of raw materials for the food processing industry. The food processing industry in these countries is also supported by a large and growing consumer market in Southeast Asia and beyond. The industry is highly competitive, and companies in these countries have been investing heavily in research and development to develop new and innovative products (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

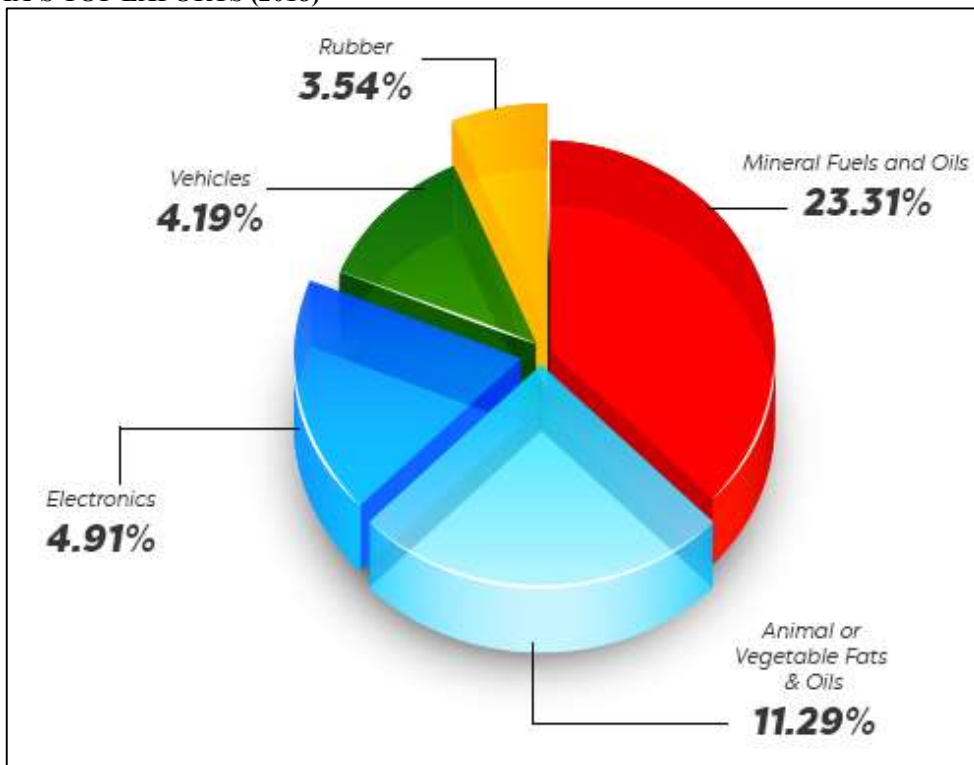
MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT:

Including construction machinery, agricultural equipment, and industrial machinery. Southeast Asia is home to a thriving machinery and equipment manufacturing industry. Countries like Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam have established manufacturing hubs that produce a wide range of machinery and equipment, including construction machinery, agricultural equipment, and industrial machinery. The machinery and equipment industry in these countries is supported by a skilled workforce, favorable government policies, and the presence of major global manufacturers (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

CHEMICAL PRODUCTS:

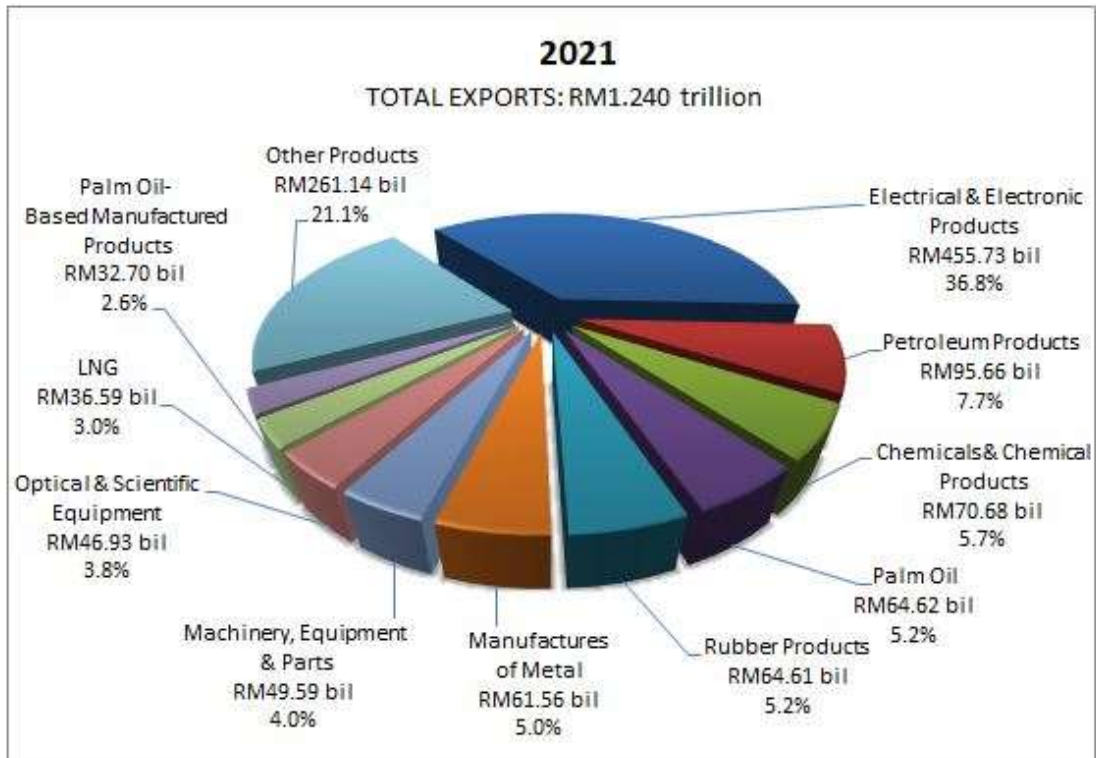
Singapore is a major manufacturer of chemical products, including pharmaceuticals and industrial chemicals. The country has a well-developed chemical industry that produces a wide range of products, including petrochemicals, speciality chemicals, and pharmaceuticals. Singapore’s chemical industry is supported by a favorable business environment, strategic location, and strong intellectual property protection laws. The country is also home to a world-class research and development ecosystem, which has helped to drive innovation in the industry (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

INDONESIA’S TOP EXPORTS (2018)



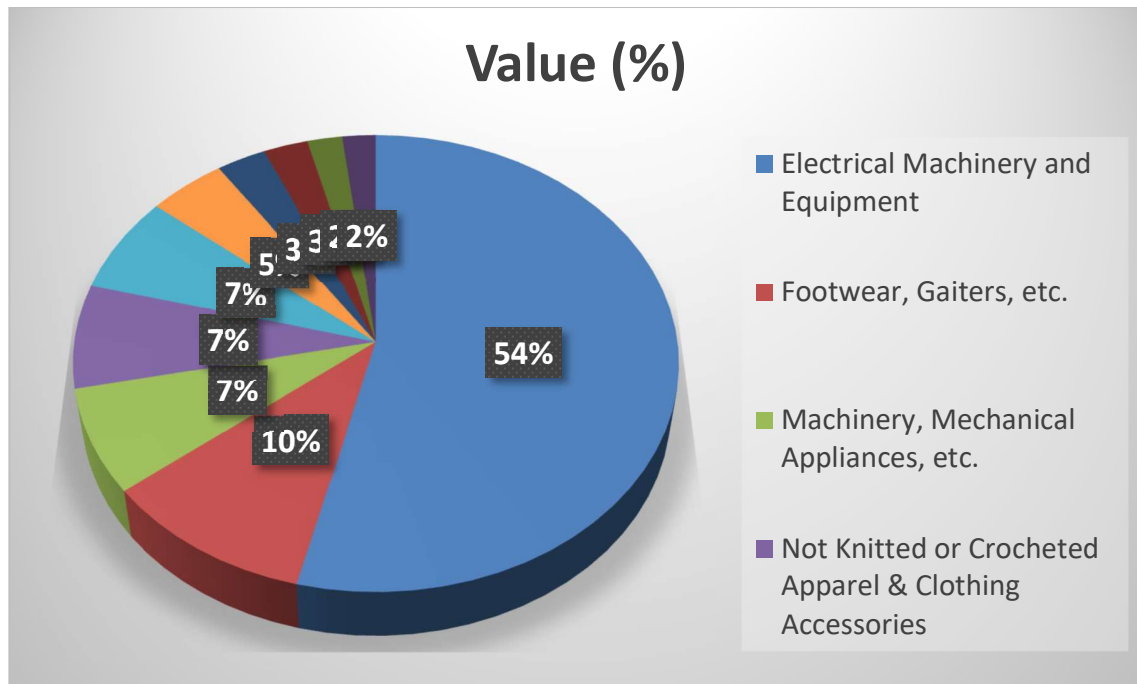
Source: ASEAN Secretariat (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021)

MALAYSIA'S TOP EXPORTS (2021)



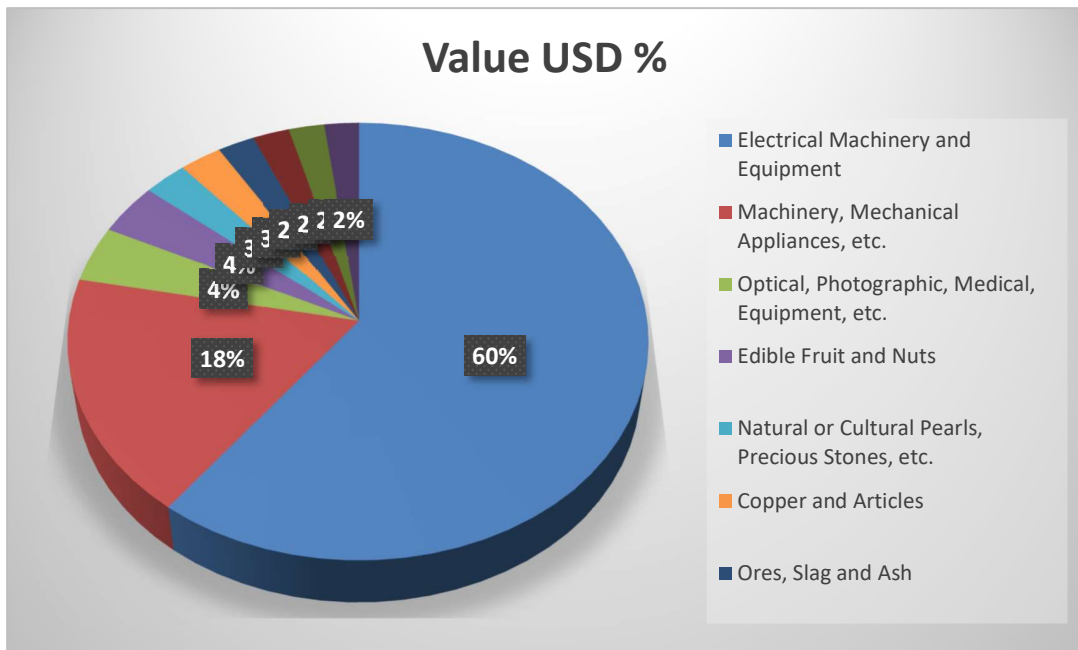
Source: ASEAN Secretariat (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021)

VIETNAM'S TOP EXPORTS (2018)



Source: ASEAN Secretariat (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021)

SINGAPORE'S TOP EXPORTS (2018)



Source: ASEAN Secretariat (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021)

TRANSPORT SECTOR

Over the years, ASEAN countries have made considerable development in the transport sector, with many countries investing in the development of infrastructure such as roads, bridges, ports, and airports. The governments have implemented a number of initiatives to promote the development of the transport sector, including public-private partnerships and investments in infrastructure (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

ASEAN Road Infrastructure, 2020

1. Indonesia: 538,590 km
2. Thailand: 702,576.5 Km
3. Myanmar: 237,288.4 Km
4. Vietnam: 213,800 km
5. Philippines: 33,119.6 Km
6. Malaysia: 267,012.0 Km
7. Cambodia: 64,883.0 Km
8. Laos: 58,286.8 Km
9. Brunei: 2,143 km
10. Singapore: 3,356 km

ASEAN Railways (Route Length 2020)

1. Malaysia - 1,799.4 Km
2. Cambodia - 652.0 Km
3. Indonesia - 6,324.0 Km
4. Myanmar - 6,112.3 Km
5. Philippines - 148.0 Km
6. Thailand - 4,997.9 Km

Number of Vehicles per 1000 Population in ASEAN, 2011 - 2020

Here is the data for the number of vehicles per 1000 population in ASEAN countries from 2011 to 2020, sourced from the ASEAN Secretariat:

| Country | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Brunei | 436 | 464 | 473 | 477 | 491 | 497 | 507 | 517 | 525 | 535 |
| Cambodia | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| Indonesia | 33 | 37 | 42 | 48 | 54 | 62 | 70 | 78 | 87 | 97 |
| Laos | 16 | 18 | 20 | 23 | 26 | 30 | 34 | 38 | 42 | 46 |
| Malaysia | 332 | 348 | 366 | 379 | 391 | 407 | 421 | 433 | 443 | 456 |
| Myanmar | 7 | 8 | 9 | 11 | 13 | 15 | 17 | 19 | 22 | 26 |
| Philippines | 34 | 36 | 38 | 41 | 44 | 48 | 51 | 54 | 58 | 63 |
| Singapore | 1132 | 1152 | 1170 | 1178 | 1181 | 1190 | 1189 | 1188 | 1194 | 1194 |
| Thailand | 254 | 265 | 275 | 286 | 297 | 308 | 319 | 329 | 340 | 351 |
| Vietnam | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 24 | 25 |

Source: ASEAN Secretariat (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021)

Note that the data represents the number of vehicles (including cars, trucks, buses, and motorcycles) per 1000 population.

International Air Passenger Traffic in ASEAN, 2011 – 2020

Here is the data for international air passenger traffic in ASEAN countries from 2011 to 2020, sourced from the

ASEAN Secretariat:

| Country | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Brunei | 1,608,691 | 1,541,290 | 1,609,682 | 1,639,226 | 1,681,233 | 1,128,542 |
| Cambodia | 3,712,000 | 4,361,000 | 4,974,000 | 5,875,000 | 6,465,000 | 1,876,000 |
| Indonesia | 26,367,899 | 30,223,052 | 34,153,425 | 38,235,855 | 42,702,804 | 7,645,206 |
| Laos | 1,409,000 | 1,621,000 | 1,862,000 | 2,197,000 | 2,466,000 | 364,000 |
| Malaysia | 45,403,394 | 48,076,685 | 52,276,886 | 59,195,025 | 64,845,612 | 4,068,566 |
| Myanmar | 1,402,499 | 1,548,487 | 1,711,622 | 2,039,566 | 2,334,152 | 428,881 |
| Philippines | 12,330,000 | 13,332,000 | 15,106,000 | 16,547,000 | 20,118,000 | 3,540,000 |
| Singapore | 51,236,021 | 55,448,964 | 62,219,611 | 65,628,955 | 65,628,955 | 2,674,249 |
| Thailand | 25,674,274 | 28,050,828 | 32,625,086 | 38,270,734 | 39,859,854 | 6,142,187 |

Source: ASEAN Secretariat (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021)

Note: The data for 2020 was significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated travel restrictions and lockdowns, resulting in a sharp decline in air passenger traffic for most countries.

WATER SERVICES

ASEAN countries have made significant progress in the water sector, with many countries investing in the development of infrastructure such as dams, reservoirs, and water treatment plants. The Thai government has implemented a number of initiatives to promote the development of the water sector, including public-private partnerships and investments in infrastructure (II. Intra-ASEAN trade as a proportion of total ASEAN trade, 1985).

Achievements in Water Services

1. ASEAN Cooperation on Water Resources Management (ACWAM)

To coordinate efforts on water resource management among member states. This includes initiatives to improve the efficiency of water use, reduce water pollution, and strengthen the resilience of water systems.

2. Water Security Initiative

ASEAN has launched the Water Security Initiative to improve access to clean water and sanitation in the region. This includes efforts to increase the efficiency of water use, protect water sources, and promote the sustainable management of water resources.

3. Integrated Water Resources Management

ASEAN has promoted the concept of integrated water resources management (IWRM), which aims to balance the competing demands for water and ensure its sustainable use. IWRM involves the coordinated management of water resources at the catchment level, taking into account the needs of different sectors and users.

4. ASEAN Water Management Network

Infrastructure that is used to manage and distribute water for a variety of purposes, including drinking, irrigation, and

industrial use. This can include infrastructure such as dams, reservoirs, water treatment plants, and distribution networks.

Proportion of Population with Access to Improved Drinking Water and Sanitation in ASEAN, 2020

Here is the data for the proportion of the population with access to improved drinking water and sanitation in ASEAN for the year 2020, sourced from the ASEAN Secretariat:

| Country | Access to improved drinking water (%) | Access to improved sanitation (%) |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Brunei | 100 | 100 |
| Cambodia | 77 | 41 |
| Indonesia | 76 | 63 |
| Laos | 66 | 50 |
| Malaysia | 100 | 99 |
| Myanmar | 63 | 47 |
| Philippines | 91 | 76 |
| Singapore | 100 | 100 |
| Thailand | 95 | 85 |

Source: ASEAN Secretariat (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021)

Note: "Access to improved drinking water" refers to the percentage of the population with access to water that is safe to drink, from an improved source. "Access to improved sanitation" refers to the percentage of the population with access to improved sanitation facilities, which hygienically separate human excreta from human contact.

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

The level of internet connectivity varies among ASEAN countries, with some countries having a higher level of connectivity than others. Many countries in ASEAN have a high level of **broadband penetration** and advanced **telecommunications infrastructure**. The countries have invested heavily in **fibre-optic networks**, which have enabled **high-speed internet access** for both residential and business users (Jones, 2011).

Achievements in Internet Connectivity

1. Increased broadband penetration

According to the International Telecommunication Union, the percentage of households in the ASEAN region with access to the internet increased from 19.2% in 2010 to 67.3% in 2020.

2. Investment in infrastructure

The ASEAN member countries have invested heavily in the expansion and upgrading of their telecommunications infrastructure to support increased internet connectivity. This has included the deployment of new fibre-optic networks, the expansion of wireless networks, and the roll-out of satellite-based services (Jones, 2011).

3. Development of national broadband plans

Many ASEAN countries have developed national broadband plans to increase internet access and promote the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs). These plans often include targets for increasing broadband penetration and expanding access to underserved areas (Robiyanto, 2017).

4. International Connectivity

ASEAN nations have made steps to increase international connectivity, and enhancement of cross-border transmission capacity through the construction of new submarine cables, terrestrial cables, and satellite systems (Robiyanto, 2017).

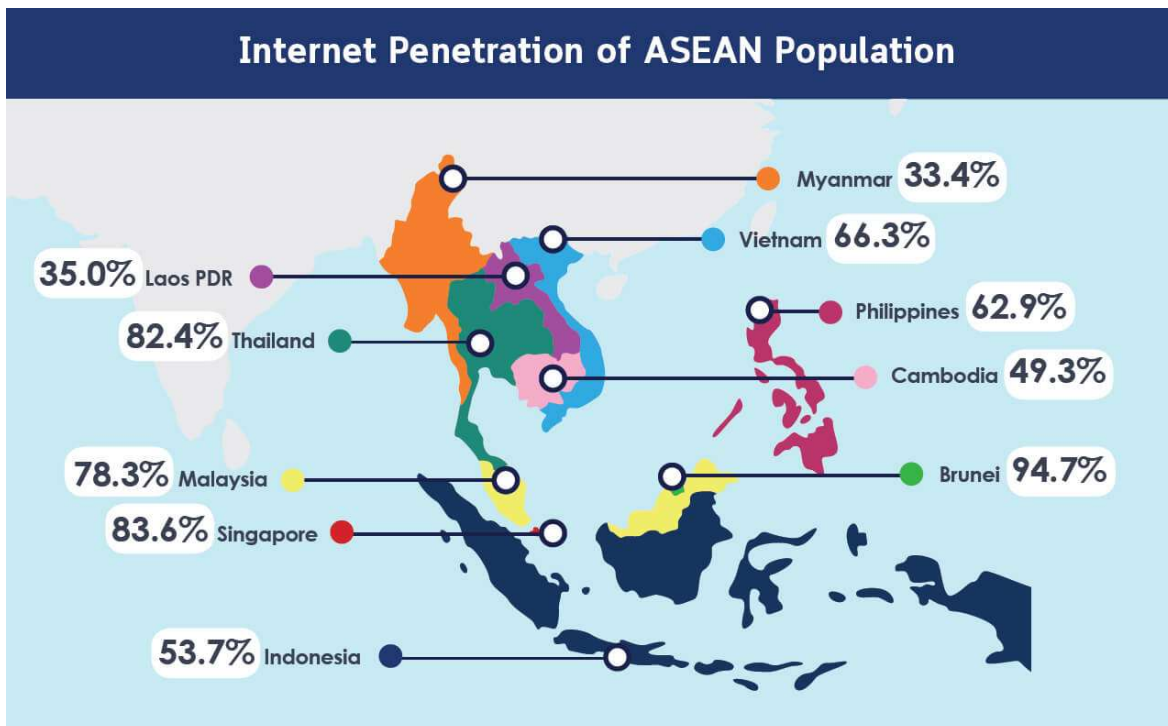
Access to Internet Services in ASEAN, 2019

Here is the data for access to internet services in ASEAN for the year 2019, sourced from the ASEAN Secretariat:

| Country | Internet Penetration Rate (%) |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Brunei | 73.7 |
| Cambodia | 13.1 |
| Indonesia | 20.0 |
| Laos | 14.5 |
| Malaysia | 80.1 |
| Myanmar | 22.0 |
| Philippines | 48.0 |
| Singapore | 84.5 |
| Thailand | 57.0 |

Source: ASEAN Secretariat (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021)

Note: "Internet Penetration Rate" refers to the percentage of the total population of a given country or region that uses the internet.



Source: Internetworldstats, data calculation by The Gem and Jewelry Institute of Thailand (Public Organization)

HOUSING & PROPERTY

The housing and property development market in ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) has seen significant growth in recent years, driven by increasing urbanization, a growing middle class, and government initiatives to promote affordable housing. The ASEAN region is made up of 10 countries, each with its unique housing market, but some common trends and challenges have emerged across the region (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

Achievements in Housing and Property

1. Increase in affordable housing.

Many governments in the ASEAN region have implemented policies and initiatives to increase the supply of affordable housing, such as setting targets for the number of affordable housing units to be built and providing tax incentives for developers who build affordable housing (ASEAN economic community and the ASEAN investment framework, n.d).

2. Development of new towns and cities

Several ASEAN countries, particularly those with high population density, have been developing new towns and cities to accommodate the rising population. For example, Malaysia has developed the Iskandar Malaysia region, while the Philippines has developed the Clark Green City (ASEAN economic community and the ASEAN investment framework, n.d).

3. Development of eco-friendly housing

This includes the use of energy-efficient materials, solar panels, and rainwater harvesting systems, as well as the inclusion of green spaces in housing developments. The development of eco-friendly housing not only helps to reduce the environmental impact of housing development but also improves the quality of life for residents (ASEAN economic community and the ASEAN investment framework, n.d).

4. Encouraging smart city development

This includes using technology to improve the delivery of services, reduce traffic congestion, and promote sustainability. The development of smart cities is expected to improve the quality of life for residents, while also attracting investment and promoting economic growth (ASEAN economic community and the ASEAN investment framework, n.d).

Malaysia

Malaysia Number of Property Sales: Residential data was reported at 64,989.000 Units in Units2022. This records an increase from the previous number of 58,428.000 UniUnitsr Jun 2022. Malaysia Number of Property Sales: Residential data is updated quarterly, averaging 52,225.000Unitst from Mar 2002 to Sep 2022, with 83 observations. The data reached an all-time high of 73,630.00Unitsit in Jun 2011 and a record low of 28,284.0Unitsnit in Jun 2020.

Singapore

In 2021, there were around 1.51 million residential dwelling units in Singapore. These residential dwellings included all the apartment units under the Housing Development Board (HDB), apartments, landed properties, and other types of dwellings.

Indonesia

House Built by NHUDC: Unit data was reported at 8,375.0Unitsnit in 2018. This records a decrease from the previous number of 17,004.0Unitsnit for 2017. House Built by NHUDC: Unit data is updated yearly, averaging 10,522.UnitsUnit from Dec 2008 to 2018, with 11 observations. The data reached an all-time high of 18,071.UnitsUnit in 2016 and a record low of 5,216Units Units in 2008.

The Thai government established the NHA (National Housing Authority February 12,,1973 to provide housing and financial assistance to low middle-income come-earners. According to its official website, the Nas successfully constructed a total of 544,686 housing units between 1972 and 2006. About 75% of those projects were in Bangkok (the capital city of Thailand) and its surrounding areas. Currently, the Thai government is promoting the development of affordable housing projects through the PPP (public-private partnership) scheme to cater to two low-incomers and the lower middle class.

Philippines

A 2020 survey of Filipino households revealed that the majority of households resided in a residential unit that had a floor area of around 10 to 29 square meters. On the other hand, about 30.2 per cent of centrefolds occupied a housing unit with a floor area of around 30 to 49 square meters. Only 2.3 per cent of households lived in a housing unit with a floor area of 200 square meters and above.

Vietnam

In 2019, the total number of houses was 14,030 Units where with 12,621 apartments and 1,409 private houses. Also, the total area of the housing floor was 701,500 square meters for both apartments and private houses.

10.9 ECONOMIC DIGITALIZATION

Southeast Asia's digital economy is on track to reach USD 200 Billion of Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) by end of 2022, three years earlier than expected. With 125,000 new users coming onto the Internet every day, the ASEAN digital economy is projected to grow significantly, adding an estimated \$1 trillion to regional GDP over the next ten years.

Achievements in Economic Digitalization

1. E-commerce Growth

The growth of e-commerce has been significant in ASEAN, with more businesses using digital platforms to sell their products and services. This has led to increased competition and better access to goods and services for consumers.

2. Financial Inclusion

Digitalization has also helped to increase financial inclusion in ASEAN, with more people able to access banking services and other financial products online. This has helped to reduce poverty and improve the lives of many people in the region.

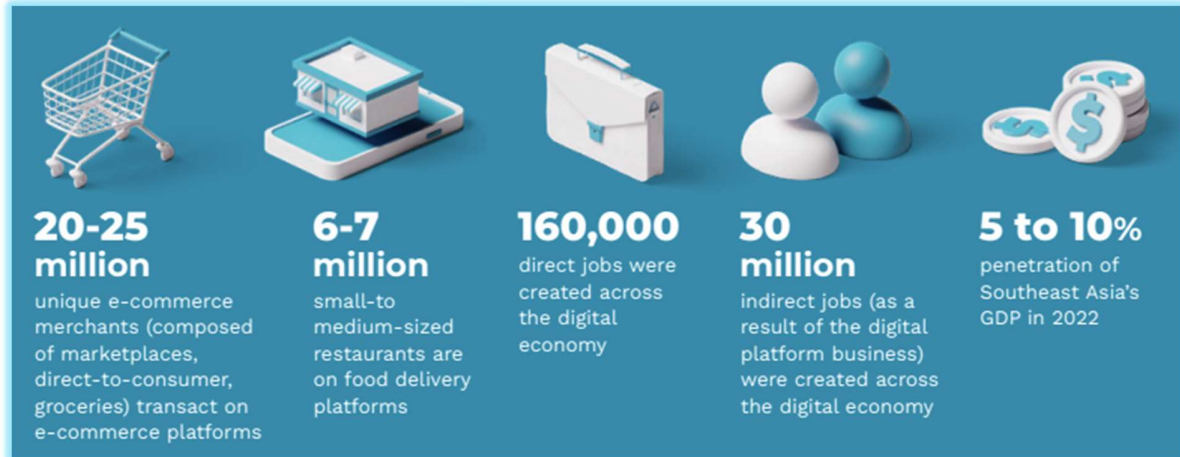
3. Agricultural Modernization

Digitalization is transforming the agricultural sector in ASEAN, by enabling precision farming, improving supply chain management, and increasing productivity.

4. Tourism Industry Development

Digitalization has made it easier to access information and book travel, leading to increased tourism in ASEAN.

Impact of Southeast Asia's Digital Economy On Business, Jobs, And Regional Economy (As Of 2022)



Source: ASEAN Secretariat (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021)

FUTURE TECHNOLOGY

ASEAN is expected to see significant growth in technology in the coming years. Some of the key areas of focus for future technology in ASEAN include Artificial Intelligent, Big Data, Blockchain ledger, Internet of things and biotechnology (Jones, 2011).

BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY

is a decentralized and **distributed ledger** that can be used to record transactions across a network of computers. It is the technology behind cryptocurrencies like **Bitcoin and Ethereum**, but it has many other potential uses as well (Robiyanto, 2017).

How will help the economy?

Financial Services: Blockchain can be used to create decentralized financial systems that are **faster, cheaper and more secure** than traditional systems. This can help to increase financial inclusion in ASEAN and reduce the cost of financial transactions.

Supply Chain Management: Blockchain can be used to create tamper-proof records of goods and services as they move through the supply chain. This can help to increase transparency and trust in supply chain operations and reduce the risk of fraud.

BIG DATA

Big data refers to the large and **complex data sets** that are generated by various sources, such as social media, sensors, and transactions. It is characterized by the "3Vs": **volume, velocity, and variety**.

How will help the economy?

Business Intelligence: Big data can be used to gain insights into customer behaviour, sales trends, and market conditions. This can help businesses to make better decisions and improve their operations (Robiyanto, 2017).

Predictive Analytics: Big data can be used to analyze patterns and trends in data to make predictions about future events. This can help businesses to anticipate demand, identify new opportunities, and mitigate risks (II. Intra-ASEAN trade as a proportion of total ASEAN trade, 1985).

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a branch of computer science that involves the **development of algorithms** and systems that **can perform tasks** that would typically require human intelligence, such as understanding natural language, recognizing images, and making decisions (Robiyanto, 2017).

How will help the economy?

Automation: AI can be used to automate repetitive and low-skilled tasks, such as data entry, customer service, and manufacturing, which can increase efficiency and reduce labour costs.

Personalization: AI can be used to create personalized experiences for customers, such as targeted marketing, personalized product recommendations, and customized financial products (II. Intra-ASEAN trade as a proportion of total ASEAN trade, 1985).

CYBERSECURITY

Cybersecurity refers to the **practice of protecting** digital devices, networks, and data from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction. With the increasing adoption of digital technologies in ASEAN, cybersecurity has become an important area to protect the economy and society from cyber-attacks (Robiyanto, 2017).

How will help the economy?

Protecting Businesses: Cybersecurity can be used to protect businesses from cyber-attacks, such as hacking, data breaches, and ransomware. This can help to reduce the risk of financial loss, reputational damage, and legal liability.

Protecting Critical Infrastructure: Cybersecurity can be used to protect critical infrastructure such as power plants, financial systems, and transportation networks from cyber-attacks. This can help to ensure the continuity of essential services and reduce the risk of major disruptions (II. Intra-ASEAN trade as a proportion of total ASEAN trade, 1985).

BIOTECHNOLOGY

Biotechnology is the application of **technology to living organisms** to modify or manipulate their characteristics or functions.

How will help the economy?

Agriculture: Biotechnology can be used to improve crop yields, reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides, and develop crops that are resistant to disease and pests. This can help to increase food security and reduce the cost of food production.

Industrial Biotechnology: Biotechnology can be used to produce biofuels, bioplastics, and biochemicals from renewable resources such as crops and microorganisms. This can help to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and mitigate the impact of climate change.

CONCLUSION

The ASEAN has been successful in promoting regional integration and cooperation, which has led to economic growth and stability in the region. With a combined GDP of over \$3 trillion and a population of more than 640 million, ASEAN has grown to become one of the most dynamic and influential economic blocs in the world. Somalia, being a member of the African Union, can learn much from the ASEAN experience in promoting regional integration and cooperation (Jones, 2011).

By studying ASEAN's achievements and potential benefits, policymakers in Somalia can gain insights into the potential benefits of regional integration and cooperation. The article's examination of ASEAN's achievements and what Somalia can learn from them can inform policymaking in Somalia, highlighting the potential benefits of regional integration and cooperation and providing recommendations for how Somalia can best benefit from the ASEAN experience (Robiyanto, 2017).

The article can contribute to the larger body of literature on regional integration and cooperation by providing a case study of the ASEAN experience and its potential benefits for other regions. This can be useful for policymakers, researchers, and students interested in the topic (ASEAN statistical yearbook 2021, 2021).

The article is organized into different sections, each examining the relationship between Somalia and different ASEAN member states such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Each section discusses the economic, political, cultural, and diplomatic relationships between the two countries, highlighting the areas of cooperation and potential for growth.

In addition, the article also examines the strengths of ASEAN, including its economic and political stability. Policymakers in Somalia can learn from ASEAN's success in creating an enabling environment for economic growth and stability, which can be applied in Somalia to promote economic growth and reduce poverty.

The article also explores specific sectors in which Somalia can benefit from the ASEAN experience. These sectors include the health sector, agriculture sector, manufacturing sector, transport sector, water services, internet connectivity, housing and property, and economic digitalization. For each sector, the article highlights the best practices that Somalia can adopt to improve the sector's performance.

Finally, the article concludes by summarizing the main findings and recommendations for future research. The conclusion highlights the potential benefits of regional integration and cooperation, and the need for policymakers in Somalia to adopt policies that promote economic growth and stability. The article's recommendations can inform policymakers in Somalia on how to leverage the ASEAN experience to achieve their development goals (Jones, 2011).

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