

Strengthening E-Commerce to promote Business-to-Business and Business-to-Consumer under AHKFTA



E-commerce in ASEAN and Hong Kong, China has experienced significant growth and transformation in recent years, driven by rapidly increasing internet penetration and changing consumer preferences. One key driver of e-commerce growth in ASEAN is the rise of digital platforms and marketplaces. Companies such as Lazada, Shopee, and Tokopedia have gained prominence as leading e-commerce platforms, providing a convenient and secure way for consumers to access a wide range of products and services. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation in ASEAN, as lockdowns and social distancing measures have prompted more consumers to turn to online shopping for their everyday needs. This has created both opportunities and challenges for e-commerce companies, as they seek to meet the increasing demand while addressing logistical and supply chain constraints.

The project aimed at assessing the current state of e-commerce development, examining the extent to which ASEAN countries and Hong Kong are ready to participate in the upcoming wave of e-commerce, and evaluating the economic impacts of e-commerce in these economies through a research study on Strengthening E-commerce cooperation to promote business to business and business to consumers under AHKFTA: a case study of ASEAN countries and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. The study, which can be accessed [here](#), consists of country case studies conducted by reputable research institutes in ASEAN and Hong Kong, China on E-Commerce highlighting the dominant role of B2C and B2B in stimulating E-Commerce growth in the region. The study shows that the COVID-19 pandemic that ravaged

individual and global economies since 2020 had one silver lining – many countries were forced or encouraged to speed up their digital transformation in the ways people work, interact, live, consume, and conduct businesses.

A dissemination seminar was conducted on 3-4 November 2022 in hybrid mode. The seminar discussed the policy recommendations of the study for AHKFTA Parties to reap the most benefits of cross-border E-commerce and the way forward including the recommendation on the possibility to have a dedicated chapter on E-Commerce in AHKFTA to create greater coherence of legal framework for cross-border e-commerce and to improve MSMEs' ability to adapt to e-commerce in the region.
