

OVERVIEW

ASEAN-FRANCE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

1. France was conferred the status of Development Partner of ASEAN at the 53rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM) on 9 September 2020 via videoconference. ASEAN and France marked the fifth anniversary of their Development Partnership in 2025, commemorated by the official visit of the President of the French Republic, H.E. Emmanuel Macron, to the ASEAN Headquarters/ASEAN Secretariat on 28 May 2025.

2. The ASEAN-France Development Partnership was institutionalised at the 1st ASEAN-France Development Partnership Committee (AF-DPC) Meeting on 4 March 2021 via videoconference. To date, five AF-DPC Meetings have been held.

3. The ASEAN-France Development Partnership: Practical Cooperation Areas (PCA) 2022-2026 was adopted *ad-referendum* in November 2022 to serve as a practical guide to substantiate the ASEAN-France partnership with a focus to foster resilient, inclusive and sustainable growth models in the regions, in practical areas where ASEAN and France have expertise and mutual interests.

A. Political-Security Cooperation

4. France acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) in 2007, making it the first European Union (EU) Member State to accede to the Treaty.

5. France accredited its Ambassadors to ASEAN since 2009. The current Ambassador of France to ASEAN, H.E. Fabien Penone, presented his Letter of Credence on 1 August 2023 at the ASEAN Headquarters/ASEAN Secretariat.

6. France has diplomatic representations in all ASEAN Member States. The ASEAN Committee in Paris (ACP) comprises ten resident AMS Ambassadors to France.

7. The 18th ADMM in November 2024 admitted France as observer to the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus Experts' Working Groups (ADMM-Plus EWGs) on Maritime Security (MS) and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) for the 2024-2027 cycle.

8. France first launched its Indo-Pacific Strategy in 2018. In 2022, France updated the Strategy, which is anchored on the following four pillars: (1) Security and Defence; (2) Economy, Connectivity, Research and Innovation; (3) Multilateralism and the Rule of Law; and (4) Climate Change, Biodiversity, Sustainable Management of Oceans. France's Indo-Pacific Strategy complement the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).

B. Economic Cooperation

9. The total two-way merchandise trade between ASEAN and France in 2025 reached USD 37.81 billion¹, while Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows from France to ASEAN amounted to USD 2.54 billion.² In 2025, 2.23 million tourist arrivals from France to ASEAN were recorded.³

10. To propel economic cooperation with ASEAN, France funds several projects such as:

- i. “Sustainable Ship Waste Management for ASEAN” Programme, which aims at establishing and strengthening regional cooperation on Port Waste Management between AMS; and
- ii. “Promoting Energy Efficiency in Buildings in ASEAN” (PEEB-ASEAN) Programme, which aims at supporting the transition of the building sector towards better energy and environmental performance and better resilience to the effects of climate change.
- iii. “ASEAN Power Grid: Financing Stronger Interconnexion and Supporting ASEAN in Implementing the APG towards a Complete Power Regional Integration”, which aims to support the continued development of a reliable and sustainable electric infrastructure in the ASEAN region, facilitating access to clean and decarbonised power.
- iv. “France-ASEAN: Advancing Regional Electricity Interconnections”, which would serve as a bridge between initial feasibility studies and future commercial projects, bringing together stakeholders from both private and public sectors, to address two dimensions of the challenges tied to regional integration of electricity grids.
- v. Partnership for Sustainable Aquaculture in ASEAN (AquASEAN), which intends to support the emergence of a climate-resilient and circular aquaculture model in ASEAN.

C. Socio-Cultural Cooperation

11. France provided humanitarian assistance through the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) following the earthquake and tsunami, which hit Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, in September 2018.

12. In November 2022, France contributed to the AHA Centre as part of its support towards the operationalisation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and

¹ ASEAN Secretariat. IMTS data, as of 13 March 2026

² ASEAN Secretariat. FDI data, preliminary as of 29 April 2026

³ ASEAN Secretariat. Preliminary Tourism Data as of 28 April 2026. Brunei Darussalam’s data by country-of-origin cover air arrivals only, whereas Malaysia’s data from 2024 refer to total visitor arrivals, including both tourists and excursionists. Data for Timor-Leste are available up to Q2 2025.

Emergency Response (AADMER) and the implementation of the Memorandum of Intent (MoI) between the French Government and the AHA Centre, which was signed in July 2022.

13. France also supported the ASEAN Junior Fellowship Program (AJFP) in 2022, and hosted an evening cocktail reception for the participants of the ASEAN Junior Fellows 2023. In 2024, France extended another financial support to the AJFP.

14. Under Socio-Cultural cooperation, France is supporting a number of projects such as:

- i. “Higher Education Scholarships for Advanced Studies at a French University (PSL): Forest and Peatland Fires Management”, providing scholarships for ASEAN Member States’ civil servants to follow advanced studies on *Tropical Forest and Peatland Fires Management* for a duration of 7 weeks. The project aims to contribute to the realisation of a Transboundary Haze-Free ASEAN by 2030 and to the goal of eliminating open burning from agriculture, land and/or forest fires, including peatland fires.
- ii. “Air Quality Improvement Program in ASEAN” aims at supporting AMS in their engagement and efforts to develop comprehensive public policies to improve air quality in their territory.
- iii. “Multisector Capacity Building Facility”, which aims at enhancing the capacity of AMS and the ASEAN Secretariat in various areas that are aligned with ASEAN priorities, will be implemented until 2027.
- iv. “French for Diplomacy and International Relations” aims to enhance participants’ proficiency in French, enabling better communication and collaboration with French-speaking external partners.
- v. The “Women Leadership in ASEAN” project aims to support the implementation of the ASEAN leaders’ Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security in ASEAN, the ASEAN Declaration on the Gender-Responsive Implementation of ASEAN Community Vision 2025, the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security and the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework 2021–2025.
- vi. “Creative ASEAN - Enhancing Regional Cultural Cooperation through Residencies and Professional Exchanges between France and ASEAN” aims to enhance collaboration between the AMS and France in the fields of arts, culture and creative industries towards a Creative, Innovative and Responsive ASEAN.

D. Development Cooperation

15. To maximise the implementation of the ASEAN-France PCA 2022-2026, the ASEAN-France Fund was established in September 2024, following the adoption of the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN-France Fund in February 2024. Other

development cooperation support from France is channeled through the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD).

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