

OVERVIEW

ASEAN-SWITZERLAND SECTORAL DIALOGUE RELATIONS

1. Switzerland was conferred the status of Sectoral Dialogue Partner of ASEAN at the 49th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM) on 24 July 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The ASEAN-Switzerland Development Partnership was institutionalised through the convening of the 1st ASEAN-Switzerland Joint Sectoral Cooperation (AS-JSCC) Meeting on 28 November 2016 at the ASEAN Headquarters/ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta. To date, ten AS-JSCC Meetings have been held, with the latest meeting held on 10 November 2025 at the ASEAN Headquarters/ASEAN Secretariat.
2. Seven Trilateral Ministerial Meetings between the Chair of ASEAN, the ASEAN Secretariat and Switzerland have been held at the sidelines of the AMM in 2017, 2018, 2019, 2022, 2024, 2025, and 2026.
3. The ASEAN-Switzerland Sectoral Dialogue Partnership: Practical Cooperation Areas (PCA) (2022-2026), which sets out the framework for cooperation in practical areas of mutual interest and expertise between ASEAN and Switzerland, was adopted *ad-referendum* in July 2022 by the AS-JSCC and was subsequently extended by one year, until 2027, on 10 August 2026.

A. Political-Security Cooperation

4. Switzerland accredited its first Ambassador to ASEAN in September 2009. The Ambassador of Switzerland to ASEAN, H.E. Olivier Zehnder, presented his Letter of Credence on 17 April 2023 and completed his tenure on 2 August 2026.
5. Switzerland has been supporting the activities and work plans of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR). It also supports ASEAN in the areas of advancing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda; cybersecurity; and addressing humanitarian aspects of landmines and explosive remnants of war in the region.

B. Economic Cooperation

6. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows from Switzerland to ASEAN amounted to US\$2.98 billion in 2025, compared to US\$-8.47 billion in 2024.¹ The total two-way merchandise trade between ASEAN and Switzerland reached US\$38.32 billion in

¹ ASEAN Statistics, FDI data, preliminary as of 29 April 2026

2025, an increase from US\$28.33 billion in 2024.² The number of tourist arrivals from Switzerland to ASEAN increased to 486,173 in 2025 from 454,854 in 2024.³

7. Switzerland partnered with ASEAN in strengthening the ASEAN Social Forestry Network (ASFN) to address interlinked issues of food security, poverty and climate change through the ASEAN-Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change (ASFCC). Switzerland continues to support ASEAN's initiatives in the promotion of responsible investment in food, agriculture and forestry as well as in mainstreaming social forestry practices at scale.

8. Following the initial virtual interface with the Head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research of Switzerland on 10 November 2020, the 2nd ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) Open-Ended Troika Dialogue with the Swiss Trade Minister, was held virtually on 13 September 2021. The momentum continued with the 3rd AEM Open-Ended Troika Dialogue held on 19 September 2024, in Vientiane, Lao PDR. Most recently, the 4th AEM Open-Ended Troika Dialogue with the Swiss Minister for Economic Affairs, Education and Research was held on 26 September 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

C. Socio-Cultural Cooperation

9. In the area of humanitarian assistance and disaster management, Switzerland has been working with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre). It committed to contributing to multi-year activities from 2018 to 2020 to support the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER). The Memorandum of Intent (MOI) between the AHA Centre and Switzerland was signed on 1 August 2019, to support the strengthening of the AHA Centre's capacity and role as the operational coordinating centre for humanitarian assistance on disaster management.

10. In 2022, the implementation of the MOI entered Phase 2 (2022-2024) to support the implementation of the AHA Centre Work Plan (2021-2025) in enhancing ASEAN capacities in disaster management and response. This Phase included support for activities aimed at strengthening disaster resilience in the region, including ASEAN's Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM) and the ASEAN Senior Executive Programme in Disaster Management (SEPDM).

11. ASEAN and Switzerland continue to promote cooperation in technical vocational education and training (TVET) through consultation, broader collaboration as well as capacity building initiatives. This includes the ongoing ASEAN-Swiss TVET Initiative (ASTI) (2022-2026), focusing on the CLM countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR

² ASEAN Statistics, IMTS data as of 13 March 2026

³ ASEAN Statistics, 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.

and Myanmar) countries and supporting the implementation of the IAI Work Plan IV (2021-2025).

12. Switzerland also supports ASEAN in the areas of sustainable water resources management and the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers.

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