



An Update of ASEAN Awareness and Attitudes – A Ten Nation Survey Fact Sheet on the Preliminary Findings

When was the ASEAN Awareness Survey first undertaken?

The first survey on “Awareness and Attitudes Towards ASEAN” was undertaken in ten universities in the main cities of ASEAN countries, from September to November 2007. This current survey is the second, and primarily aims to update the findings of the 2007 survey.

How different is the current survey update from the first one?

The current survey replicates the 18 questions of the 2007 survey, addressing awareness, knowledge and attitudes, and adds two questions aimed at gauging the perceptions of similarity and differences amongst ASEAN countries. The update aims to assess whether attitudes and awareness have changed from the 2007 survey.

The current survey also expands the scope of investigation to 12 additional universities across the region, to represent regional, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity within the nations. The list of universities is attached as Annex 1.

What does the survey measure?

The survey measures: 1) attitudes toward ASEAN; 2) knowledge about the region and the Association; 3) orientation towards the region and countries; sources of information about the region; and 4) aspirations for integration and action. As with 2007, the current survey targets undergraduate students in the universities surveyed. The

average age of the students is 20.5 years old. The sample size for each university is 200 to 220, with roughly equal numbers for male and female students.

What are the main findings from the update?

Preliminary findings of the current update show several similarities with the 2007 survey. There is a strong trend in commonality of responses and overall positive attitudes towards ASEAN throughout the region – in both the 2007 and 2014 surveys. Positive attitudes towards ASEAN have remained generally consistent, while awareness and knowledge of ASEAN show some increase. Overall, the students display high knowledge of ASEAN; positive attitudes towards ASEAN; and consider themselves “citizens of ASEAN” (over 80%). The strongest ASEAN-enthusiasm continues to be among the “newer” ASEAN members such as Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. ASEAN ambivalence continues to be found in Singapore. Self-reported familiarity (with ASEAN) declined modestly between the 2007 and 2014 surveys, but the objective knowledge measure generally improved between 2007 and 2014.

Generally, across the region, students are most aware of and familiar with countries in their own sub-region (maritime or mainland). Overall for the region, Laos and Brunei seem to be the least familiar or “outliers” to the others. For mainland ASEAN countries, Myanmar is the outlier; and for maritime ASEAN countries, the Philippines and Brunei are the outliers. The most salient

countries in ASEAN, according to the survey, are Thailand and Malaysia; and the most familiar to all respondents are Thailand and Singapore.

Similar to 2007, **students' orientations towards travel and work rank Singapore as the 1st preferred destination.** Thailand and Malaysia continued to rank 2nd and 3rd, but Thailand is more popular than in 2007 and Malaysia less.

In 2007, the sources of information about ASEAN were primarily television, schools, newspapers, and books. Internet and radio were secondary sources. In 2014, the internet has moved up as a primary source of information (third source overall), while secondary sources now list friends, advertising and sports, in addition to radio. However, radio still continues to be an important source in the lesser developed or more remote regions. The least important sources continue to be family, movies, travel, music, and work.

Main differences from the 2007 findings are found in the responses from Myanmar and Thailand, and in the ranking of aspirations for integration.

Myanmar respondents show more positive attitudes towards ASEAN. Preliminary findings from Myanmar tracked closely with regional norms for the survey, and, in some places, were close to the ASEAN enthusiasm seen in the other newer members. On the other hand, Thai respondents show greater ambivalence toward ASEAN as compared to 2007, together with higher objective knowledge about ASEAN.

In 2007, economic cooperation was ranked as the most important aspect of regional integration and cooperation, followed by tourism and development cooperation. In 2014, tourism was ranked the most

important, followed by development cooperation, and economic cooperation in third place. Both 2007 and 2014 surveys indicated political cooperation as the least important aspect of integration. However, students in Vietnam gave a high rank to regional identity and solidarity.

Who led the survey investigations?

Dr Eric C. Thompson of the National University of Singapore's Department of Sociology is the lead investigator for both surveys. He is supported by two project investigators - Dr Chulanee Thienthai of Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, and Ms Moe Thuzar of the ASEAN Studies Centre at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore. Dr Chulanee was also a project investigator for the 2007 survey.

When will the full report be launched?

The survey investigators are currently analysing data from the three remaining universities, to complete the update.

A final report detailing the full findings will be launched at a public seminar to be held at ISEAS in July 2015 (date to be announced).

ISEAS will also publish the survey findings, highlighting the joint role of ASEAN Foundation and ISEAS in supporting both the 2007 and current surveys.

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Universities surveyed in 2014

Returning to 2007 sites:

1. University of Brunei Darussalam
2. Royal University of Phnom Penh
3. University of Indonesia
4. National University of Laos
5. Universiti Malaya
6. University of the Philippines (Diliman)
7. National University of Singapore
8. Chulalongkorn University
9. Vietnam National University (Hanoi)

New site for Myanmar:

10. Yangon University* (in 2007, due to university closures, distance education students in Yangon were surveyed)

Additional sites for 2014:

11. University of Syiah Kuala, Aceh, Indonesia
12. Universiti Nusa Cendana, Kupang, Indonesia
13. University Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia
14. Universiti Malaya – Sarawak, Malaysia*
15. Mandalay University, Myanmar
16. University of the Philippines – Visayas
17. Mindanao State University*
18. Singapore Polytechnic
19. Khon Kaen University, Thailand (Northeast)
20. Walailak University, Thailand (South)
21. St John's University, Bangkok, Thailand
22. Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City

Legend * : Data collected but yet to be analysed. Results will be included in final report.