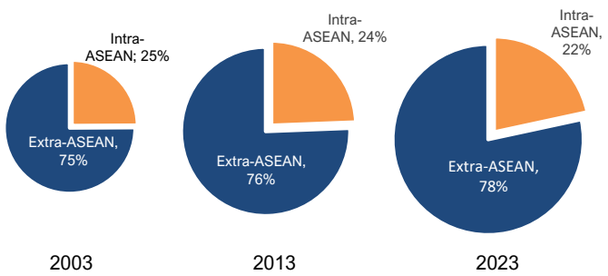
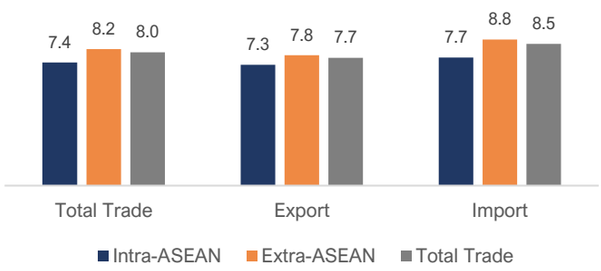
EXPLORING INTRA-ASEAN MERCHANDISE TRADE DYNAMICS

During the period of 2003–2023, total ASEAN trade in goods with both internal and external partners, experienced significant growth. In 2003, total ASEAN trade was valued at US$ 871.8 billion. This figure increased to US$ 2,533.1 billion in 2013, and to US$ 3,560.1 billion in 2023. intra-ASEAN trade accounted for approximately 22% of the total ASEAN trade during this period. The average annual growth rate was 8.0% for total ASEAN trade, 8.2% for extra-ASEAN, and 7.4% for intra-ASEAN. Notably, the growth rate of intra-ASEAN trade was lower than that of extra-ASEAN for both exports and imports.

Intra and Extra ASEAN Trade: Share to Total
2003, 2013, and 2023 (in percent)



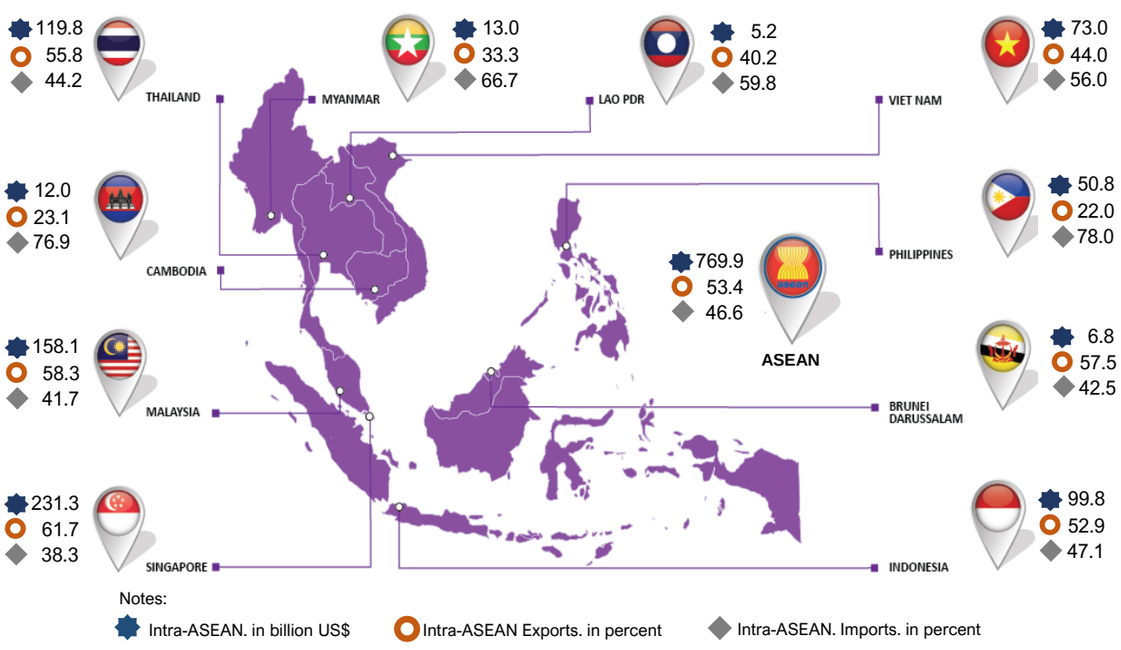
Intra and Extra ASEAN Trade: Average Annual Growth Rate
2003-2023 (in percent)



Following the COVID-19 pandemic, intra-ASEAN trade grew faster than extra-ASEAN. Intra-ASEAN trade grew by 25.5% and 20.3% in 2021 and 2022, respectively, surpassing the growth of extra-ASEAN, which was 25.3% and 13.5% respectively. However, in 2023, total ASEAN trade, amounting to US$ 3.6 trillion, decreased by 7.4% from the previous year. Intra-ASEAN trade declined by 10.1% to US$ 769.9 billion, while extra-ASEAN trade declined by 6.7% to US$ 2,790.2 billion. This decline can be attributed to various factors, including global economic conditions, regional trade dynamics, and internal challenges within each of ASEAN Member States (AMS).

From a country perspective, the value of intra-ASEAN trade of AMS in 2023 ranged from US$ 5.2 billion (Lao PDR) to US$ 231.3 billion (Singapore). The value of intra-ASEAN exports ranged from US$ 2.1 billion (Lao PDR) to US$ 142.6 billion (Singapore), while intra-ASEAN imports from US$ 2.9 billion (Brunei Darussalam) to US$ 88.7 billion (Singapore). During the period, Singapore exports to the ASEAN region, representing 61.7% of its total Singapore intra-ASEAN trade. The main commodity was [HS85] electrical machinery and equipment which amounted to US$ 53.5 billion or 37.5% of total Singapore intra-ASEAN exports. The next biggest intra-ASEAN exporter was Malaysia with US$ 92.2 billion (58.3%). Malaysia's main commodity exported within the region was also [HS85] electrical machinery and equipment, amounting to US$ 33.0 billion or 35.8% of its total Malaysia intra-ASEAN exports.

Intra-ASEAN Trade by ASEAN Member States, 2023



Meanwhile, in the same year, the Singapore purchased US$ 88,7 billion (38.3%) of their import commodities from other AMS, with the largest product imported was [HS85] electrical machinery and equipment accounted for US$ 38.8 billion, or 37.0% of the total Singapore intra-ASEAN trade. Malaysia was the second largest intra-ASEAN importer where US$ 65.9 billion (41.7%) of their total imports came from other AMS, with the main product was [HS85] electrical machinery and equipment, accounted for US$ 15.6 billion (23.6%).