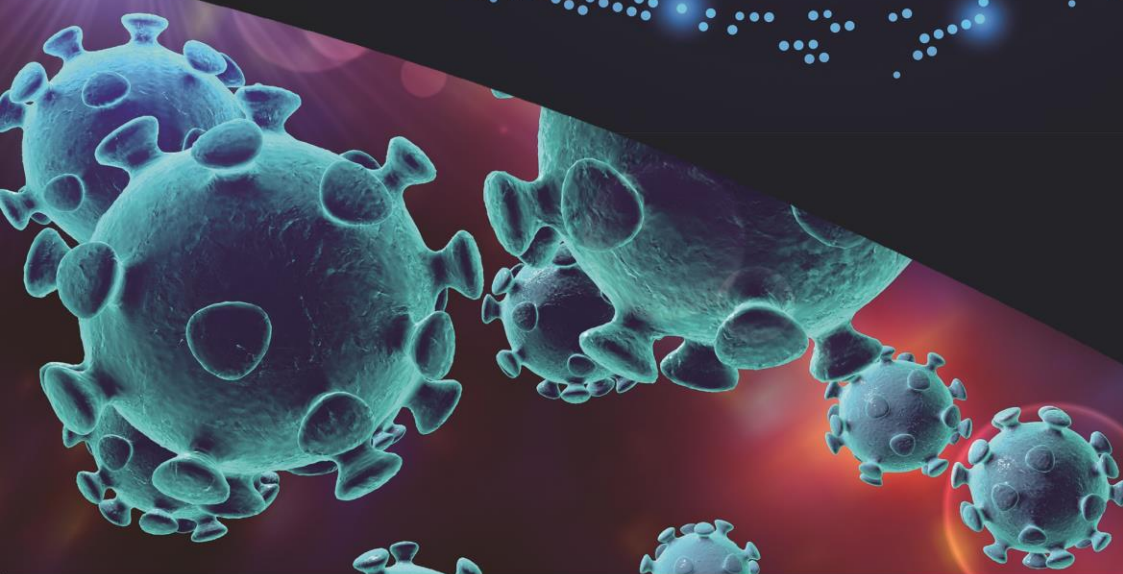


**EDITORS**

**Zhang Xuyao  
Tan Kway Guan**



**ANNUAL COMPETITIVENESS ANALYSIS**  
**AND IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON ASEAN**



# **Annual Competitiveness Analysis and Impact of COVID-19 on ASEAN**

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## About ACI

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The Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI) was established in August 2006 as a Research Centre at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP), National University of Singapore (NUS). It aims to build the intellectual leadership and network for understanding and developing competitiveness in the Asia region. ACI seeks to contribute to the enhancement of inclusive growth, living standards, and institutional governance through competitiveness research on sub-national economies in Asia. It identifies mitigating issues and challenges for potential public policy interventions through close collaboration with regional governments, business corporations, policy think-tanks, and academics. ACI's three key research pillars include (I) Sub-national economies level competitiveness analysis; (II) The development of digital economy and its implications in 16 Asia economies; and (III) Singapore's long-term growth strategies and public policy analysis.

ACI's value propositions may be encapsulated in its acronym:

**A**nalytical inputs to initiate policies for policy-makers and business leaders in Asia  
**C**apacity building to enable others through improvement in productivity and efficiency  
**I**ntellectual leadership to create pragmatic models of competitiveness and inclusive growth

---

## Vision and Mission

- ACI's over-arching vision is to build up its research credibility with policy impact, contributing as a professional, world-class think-tank.
- ACI's mission is to establish our niche as a leading policy think-tank by identifying development trends, opportunities, and challenges among Asian economies and business corporations.
- ACI endeavours to articulate sound recommendations, promote discussion, and shape research agenda in the arena of public policy amongst Asian governments.
- ACI undertakes evidence-based analysis of public policy issues and decisions, in order to provide assessment of their effectiveness as well as economic and societal impact.

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## Preface

The black swan event of the COVID-19 pandemic with its unprecedented global scale and spread has proven to be a major disruptor to the ASEAN development agenda. The stakes are high for ASEAN Member States (AMS), as states grapple with the immediate public health emergency. The pandemic threatens to upend decades of economic growth and development. Already there are signs of the disruption engendering lasting structural changes to the regional and global economy.

The Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI) at Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP), National University of Singapore (NUS), seeks to contribute to the understanding of the situation and provide meaningful research through our series of annual studies on the ASEAN region. This 2020 edition of the Annual Competitiveness Analysis and Impact of COVID-19 on ASEAN seeks to analyse effects of the first year of the pandemic, documenting and providing key insights into the policies adopted by each member state and ASEAN collectively.

Notably, this book heavily utilises the Annual Competitiveness Index of ASEAN economies as a framework to analyse the ongoing economic impact of the pandemic. The crisis has presented a clear opportunity to stress test the validity of ACI's Competitiveness Framework and methodology. In this volume, we find that the results of our Annual Competitiveness Indices have clear explanatory power regarding severity of the pandemic in the ASEAN region. Also present in this volume is a novel application of the ACI Competitiveness Framework to give an account of the general economic performance of select ASEAN-5 economies for the year 2020.

This publication hopes to provide readers with an understanding of the ASEAN region's first-year experience of the COVID-19 pandemic. It marks a key step in ACI's ongoing research into the economic competitiveness of ASEAN in providing a starting point to consider the landscape of ASEAN's development agenda in a post-COVID world.

**Professor Paul Cheung**

Director, Asia Competitiveness Institute  
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy  
National University of Singapore



## Executive Summary

2020 has proven to be a tumultuous year for the world and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as a highly internationalised region, is naturally not spared from events. At the time of writing, vaccines for the virus have begun to be distributed worldwide in the hopes of containing the virus. Meanwhile, new, more contagious strains of the virus have emerged. There is no doubt that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has severely hampered the progress of development in the region. This edition of the Asia Competitiveness Institute's (ACI) Annual Competitiveness Analysis on ASEAN endeavours to analyse the impact of the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ASEAN Member States (AMS) through the use of ACI's Competitiveness Framework. The repeated waves of COVID-19 infections and empirical findings highlight the importance of good governance and responsive policy in the future as economies are shown to be straining under pandemic restrictions and pressure for reopening grows.

This volume begins with profiles of the AMS's economies, using data up to 2019 before the irregularity of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact of COVID-19, through various indicators subject to availability.

It finds that ASEAN entered into 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic on solid ground. Given the impact of US-China trade disputes, ASEAN has appeared to be an increasingly attractive destination for FDI. This FDI inflow and trends in exports provide an indicator of shifting global value chains and a pivot towards ASEAN as a production base for China and the US. It then summarises the policy responses adopted by the AMS to contain the pandemic. In the process of documenting developments in ASEAN, it becomes evident that a successful, coordinated and inclusive response by ASEAN will serve as a strong signal to a turbulent world that ASEAN is a region of stability, open and attractive to global trade and investment. It also finds a positive link between the level of urbanisation and spread of the pandemic in ASEAN. Chapter 1 then serves to provide key background information for subsequent chapters of the volume where more detailed analysis is conducted.

Chapter 2 conducts an analysis of COVID-19 using the updated results of the 2020 Annual Competitiveness Analysis for ASEAN-10 economies presented in the chapter. Motivated by the earlier findings regarding urbanisation and established trends relating to urbanisation, economic growth and competitiveness, Chapter 2 shows the Competitiveness index to have sound predictive and analytical properties with regard to black swan events. It identifies the Government and Institutional Setting (GIS) and Quality of Life and Infrastructure Development (QLID) as instrumental in minimising the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of the 2020 Annual Competitiveness Analysis find that the Overall Competitiveness rankings closely follow the rankings in previous years, with Singapore outpacing the rest of the ASEAN countries in most of the indicators. Malaysia is a far second, while Thailand has managed to retain the third position from Brunei after two years. Indonesia rounds out the top five countries that performed above average. The bottom five countries with below average performance are Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar.

Over the full period of the study, we can see that the development gaps in ASEAN have changed noticeably. In the early periods from 2000 to 2005, the overall competitiveness of the ASEAN economies can be observed to cluster in distinct tiers - Singapore a clear front runner, Malaysia, Thailand and Brunei forming a second tier, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam a third tier and finally Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar a fourth tier. This has, over time, morphed as Indonesia has pulled ahead of its third tier, moving much closer to the second tier countries while Myanmar has exhibited a worrying trend of falling further behind.

Chapter 3 is inspired from our Annual Competitiveness Analysis, whilst being more restrained in its approach. The objective is to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the relative macroeconomic performance of ASEAN-5 countries - Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand- using the new competitiveness algorithm developed by ACI. In order to assess the impact of the pandemic more robustly, we have used high-frequency data for our analysis. However, due to data constraints, the indicators used in the study pertain mainly to the environment of Macroeconomic Stability. This is done in the context of the raft of economic policies deployed across ASEAN documented in this chapter. We find that by Q2 2020, the performance scores of two economies have dropped compared with Q4 2019, namely Singapore and Philippines. The other three economies, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, although having slight increase in relative macroeconomic performance scores, also saw declines in most of their indicators. Besides, the ranking of all five economies has changed and their performance gaps have differed.

## Acknowledgements

This book on the Annual Competitiveness Analysis and Impact of COVID-19 on ASEAN was supervised by Dr Zhang Xuyao and led by Tan Kway Guan, with the support of team members Cheah Wen Chong, Sumedha Gupta, Mao Ke and Zhu Yan. The project was initially facilitated by former Co-Director of ACI, Professor Tan Khee Giap.

This book has benefited immensely from the 2019 World Bank-Asia Competitiveness Institute Annual Conference on 'Urbanization Drive and Quality-Adjusted Labour Contributions to GDP' held on 18-19 November 2019. Throughout the project, we received tremendous support from various experts as well as regional policy think tanks. The effort and time taken by the reviewers in discussing our papers presented during these events are much appreciated. Their constructive comments have helped us improve our studies significantly.

The reviewers' comments are included in this book as discussant notes. More specifically, our thanks are due to:

### **Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa**

*Chairman and Chief Executive, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS), Malaysia*

### **Dr Achim Daniel Schmillen**

*Senior Economist, Social Protection Labour, The World Bank*

This book would not have been possible without the support of our research and administrative colleagues. In particular, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to an able and dedicated administrative team at ACI, including Yap Xin Yi, Cai Jiao Tracy, Nurliyana Binte Yusoff and Dewi Jelina Ayu Binte Johari. We would also like to note with great appreciation the contributions from ACI Director Professor Paul Cheung and the research staff, Professor Tilak Abeysinghe, Dr Xie Taojun, Dr Bian Xiaochen, Dr Ammu George, Sky Chua Jun Jie, Sunena Gupta, Clarice Handoko, Lee Shu En, Lim Jing Zhi, Doris Liew Wan Yin, Zhu Yan and Lucas Shen Yan Shun.

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## List of Abbreviations

AADMER	ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response
ACCWG-PHE	ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group on Public Health Emergencies
ACI	Asia Competitiveness Institute
ACRF	ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework
ACRF	ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
AMS	ASEAN Member States
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AVSSR	ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on ASEAN Vaccine Security and Self-Reliance
BOI	Board of Investment (Thailand)
BPOM	Food and Drug Monitoring Agency (Indonesia)
BPR	Bantuan Prihatin Rakyat (Malaysia)
CDC	Community Development Council (Singapore)
CERP	COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (Myanmar)
CLMV	Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam
CMCO	Conditional Movement Control Order (Malaysia)
ComLink	Community Link (Singapore)
COT	Competitiveness over Time
CPF	Central Provident Fund (Singapore)
CPTPP	Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership
EBA	'Everything but Arms' (Cambodia)
ECQ	Enhanced community quarantine (Philippines)
EEC	Eastern Economic Corridor (Thailand)
EMCO	Enhanced Movement Control Order (Malaysia)
EPF	Employees' Provident Fund (Malaysia)
EU	European Union
FBMC	Financial, Businesses and Manpower Conditions
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GCI	Global Competitiveness Index
GCQ	General community quarantine (Philippines)
GCR	Global Competitiveness Report
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Government and Institutional Setting
GMID	Global Market Information Database
GST	Goods and Services Tax (Singapore)
HDI	Human Development Index
IATA	International Air Transport Association

ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDA	International Development Association
IMD	International Institute for Management Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JSS	Jobs Support Scheme (Singapore)
Lartas	'Restriction and Prohibition/ Larangan dan Pembatasan (Indonesia)
LKYSP	Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
MCO	Movement Control Order (Malaysia)
MECQ	Modified enhanced community quarantine (Philippines)
MGCQ	Modified general community quarantine (Philippines)
MOHT	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (Myanmar)
MOIT	Ministry of Industry and Trade (Vietnam)
MoPFI	Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry (Myanmar)
MOPH	Ministry of Public Health (Thailand)
MPAC	Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity
MS	Macroeconomic Stability
MSME	Micro, Small & Medium-sized Enterprises
NERP	National Economic Recovery Plan (Malaysia)
NLE	National Logistic Ecosystem (Indonesia)
NSSF	National Social Security Fund (Laos)
NUS	National University of Singapore
PCA	Periodic Commuting Arrangement (Singapore)
PERMAI	Perlindungan Ekonomi dan Rakyat Malaysia (Malaysia)
PPKM	Enforcement of Restrictions on Public Activities (Indonesia)
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRIHATIN	Prihatin Rakyat Stimulus Package (Malaysia)
PSBB	Large-scale social distancing policy (Indonesia)
PT	Property Tax (Singapore)
PTPTN	National Higher Education Fund Corporation/Perbadanan Tabung Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional (Malaysia)
QLID	Quality of Life and Infrastructure Development
RCEP	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
RGL	Reciprocal Green Lane (Singapore)
RMCO	Recovery Movement Control Order (Malaysia)
SCP	Supplementary Contributory Pension (Brunei)
SITC	Standard International Trade Classification
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SSF	Social Security Fund (Thailand)
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

US	United States
WCS	Wage Credit Scheme (Singapore)
WCY	World Competitiveness Yearbook
WHO	World Health Organization

# Chapter 1

## COVID-19 in ASEAN: Policies and Impacts

*Tan Kway Guan and Cheah Wen Chong*

### 1.1 Introduction

2020 has proven to be a tumultuous year for the world and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a highly internationalised region is naturally not spared from events. At the time of writing, vaccines for the virus have begun to be distributed worldwide in the hopes of containing the virus. Meanwhile, new, more contagious strains of the virus have emerged. There is no doubt that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has severely hampered the progress of development in the region. This edition of the Asia Competitiveness Institute's (ACI) Annual Competitiveness Analysis on ASEAN endeavours to analyse the impact of the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ASEAN Member States (AMS) through the use of ACI's Competitiveness Framework.

While the pandemic is the overriding concern, in the background, major issues such as increased global tensions, great power politics, the reorganisation of the global economy and a multitude of domestic concerns continue to play out. In the coming months, the AMS will have to grapple with the issues of containing the pandemic, resumption of economic activity and long-term changes to the socio-economic landscape. This will likely entail some trade-offs between the economy and public health and reorientation of development strategies. It must be stressed early that an effective public health response is essential to economic recovery as COVID-19 has proven difficult to contain and multiple waves of outbreaks have occurred around the world, necessitating repeated lockdowns.

With the adoption of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and the signing of the Region Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), ASEAN has collectively signalled that the region remains committed to globalisation and an ASEAN-centric solution. The ASEAN Economic Community's (AEC) vision of a single market and production base has been elevated to the fore as it has the potential to provide the platform of stability the AMS need to navigate the turbulent global environment.

This chapter profiles the AMS's economies, using data up to 2019 before the irregularity of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact of COVID-19, through various indicators subject to availability. It will then summarise the policy responses adopted by the AMS

to contain the pandemic. These will serve to provide key background information for subsequent chapters of the volume where more detailed analysis is conducted.

## 1.2 ASEAN in Numbers

The latest available annual data (2019) for several key indicators of the ASEAN region are presented in Table 1.1. This table highlights several key features of the region. The ASEAN region and the AMS are highly globalised, with trade as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) often exceeding 100%. The region is also characterised by a high degree of diversity in fundamental factors such as land area, population and economy sizes. The Human Development Index (HDI) scores of the AMS also vary from those classified as Very High Human Development to Medium Human Development. There is, notably, no AMS classified as Low Human Development. The presence of a clear positive relationship between GDP per capita and the HDI in the ASEAN region is indicative of the importance of economic growth in the development agenda.

**Table 1.1: ASEAN Key Indicators 2019**

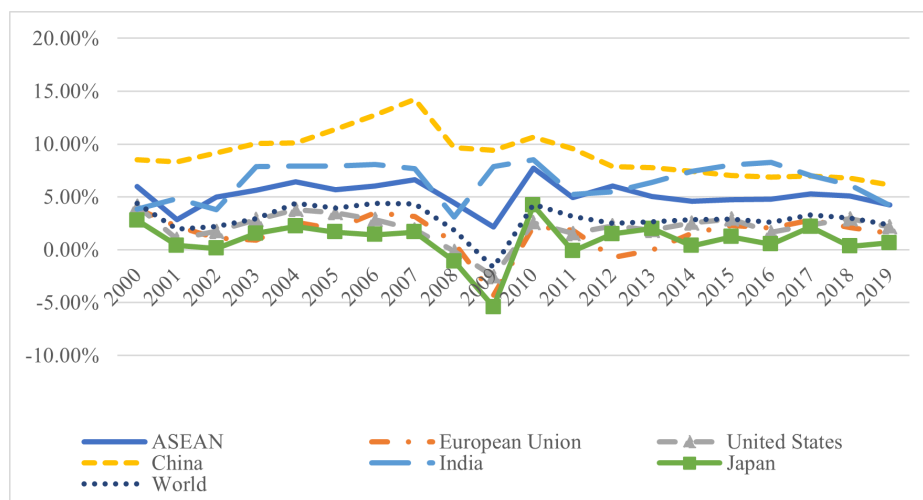
Country	Land Area (thousand square kilometres)	Population (million)	Human Development Index	GDP (constant 2010 US\$ billion)	GDP per capita (constant 2010 US\$)	Trade (%) of GDP)	FDI Inflows (Million US\$) (% of GDP)	
Brunei	5.27	0.433	0.838	14.007	32327.41	108.04	274.599	1.98
Cambodia	176.52	16.487	0.594	20.921	1268.97	162.13	3706.033	13.83
Indonesia	1811.57	270.626	0.718	1204.480	4450.72	36.46	23429.030	2.06
Lao PDR	230.8	7.169	0.613	13.195	1840.50	74.50	557.177	2.96
Malaysia	328.55	31.950	0.81	398.947	12486.68	144.79	7650.475	2.09
Myanmar	653.08	54.045	0.583	86.931	1608.49	70.51	2766.000	3.49
Philippines	298.17	108.117	0.718	360.859	3337.68	68.20	4996.392	1.37
Singapore	0.71	5.704	0.938	335.539	58829.64	310.11	92080.548	25.46
Thailand	510.89	69.626	0.777	452.675	6501.56	114.70	4145.672	0.76
Vietnam	310.07	96.462	0.704	200.858	2082.24	217.52	16120.000	6.10
ASEAN	4,325.63	660.618	N/A	3088.411	4675.03	115.58	155725.926	91

*Source:* ASEANstats, Human Development Report, World Bank, World Development Indicators and UNCTAD

Figure 1.1 compares the economic growth of ASEAN countries with the major global economies of US, EU, China, India and Japan. Since 2000, ASEAN's Real GDP growth has consistently outperformed global growth. The region's growth outpaces that of the major developed economies. In comparison with major developing economies, growth in ASEAN falls significantly behind China and marginally exceeds India in 2019. The

economy of ASEAN shows positive signs of catching up with the other major economies. Most notably, economic growth in ASEAN remained positive even during the Global Financial Crisis in 2008/09. This resilience will be tested again in the face of the COVID-19 disruption. A positive outcome will serve as a signal to global investors that ASEAN is a stable investment location with good prospects for growth. Foreign Direct Invest-

**Figure 1.1: GDP (Constant 2010 US\$) Growth of Selected Economies (in percent), 2000 – 2019**



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on World Bank, World Development Indicators

ment (FDI) inflows to ASEAN have been demonstrated to have a positive effect on trade flows and vice versa.<sup>1</sup> This makes FDI inflows a driver of economic growth in ASEAN as a highly globalised and export-driven economy.<sup>2</sup> Based on Figure 1.2, FDI inflows to ASEAN in 2019 reached a 20-year high of US\$155.7 billion. The three-year annual average growth rate of FDI inflows to ASEAN from 2017-2019 at 12.9% is the fastest of the major economies tracked in Figure 1.2. In comparison, India, as the second, is at 5.09%. This period coincides with the escalation of trade tensions between the US and China. As presented in Table 1.1, FDI inflow is largely concentrated on Singapore, Indonesia and Vietnam. With Singapore being the largest recipient and also the third largest national source of FDI, it is likely that Singapore serves as an intermediary for extra-ASEAN FDI to access the region.

The largest source of FDI in 2019 was from the US (US\$24.08 billion), reversing the negative flow in 2018. This is followed by intra-ASEAN FDI (US\$22.07 billion), of which Singapore was the largest contributor at 70.6% of total intra-ASEAN FDI inflows in 2019, making it the third largest source after Japan (US\$20.64 billion).<sup>3</sup> The bulk of the FDI to ASEAN is largely directed towards Manufacturing and Financial and Insurance activities.<sup>4</sup> The significant inflow of Manufacturing FDI has been sustained for several years

<sup>1</sup>See Kawai and Naknoi (2017)

<sup>2</sup>See Moudatsou and Kyrkilis (2011) and Tan and Tang (2016)

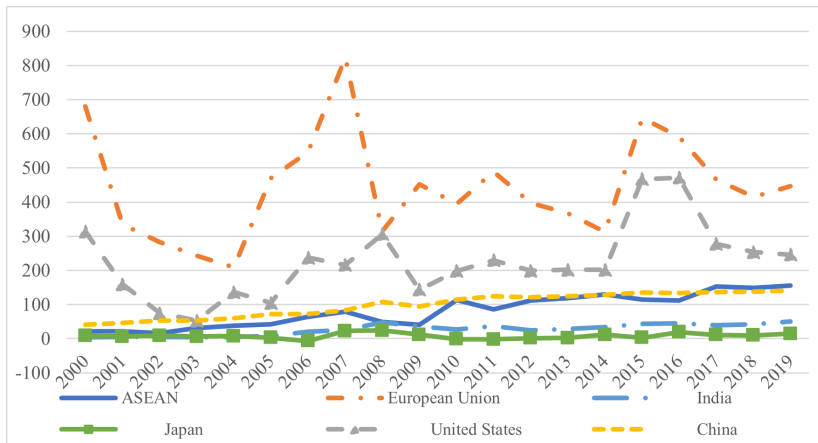
<sup>3</sup>See Figure 1.3

<sup>4</sup>See Figure 1.4

and is indicative of a wider shift in global production capacity into ASEAN.<sup>5</sup>

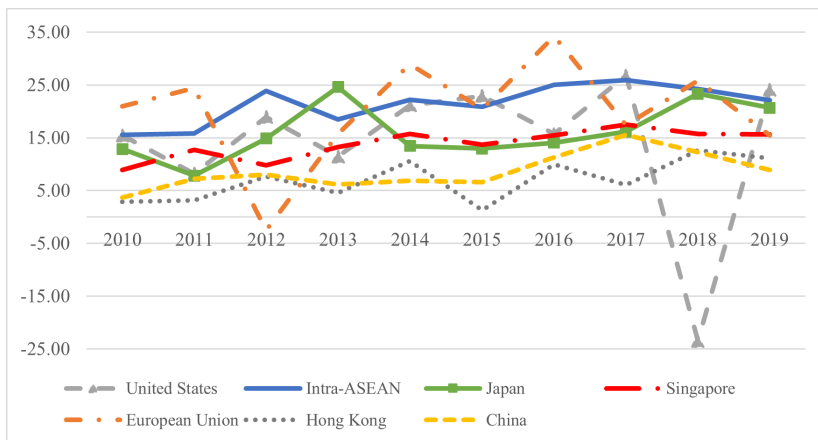
The service sector of the economy comprises the largest share of FDI. These are mainly concentrated in Financial and Insurance activities, Wholesale and retail trade and Real estate. The influx of FDI in Financial and Insurance activities signals global interest in the often underserved and underdeveloped financial markets in the region.<sup>6</sup> The FDI directed towards Wholesale and retail trade is to some extent attributable to increased Manufacturing FDI, with the intent of developing supporting regional wholesale and logistics networks. The retail investment signals a positive outlook for ASEAN as a significant consumer base.<sup>7</sup>

Figure 1.2: GDP (Constant 2010 US\$) Growth of Selected Economies (in percent), 2000 – 2019



Source:Asia Competitiveness Institute based on UNCTAD

Figure 1.3: FDI Inflows to ASEAN by Source Country (in US\$ billion), 2010 – 2019



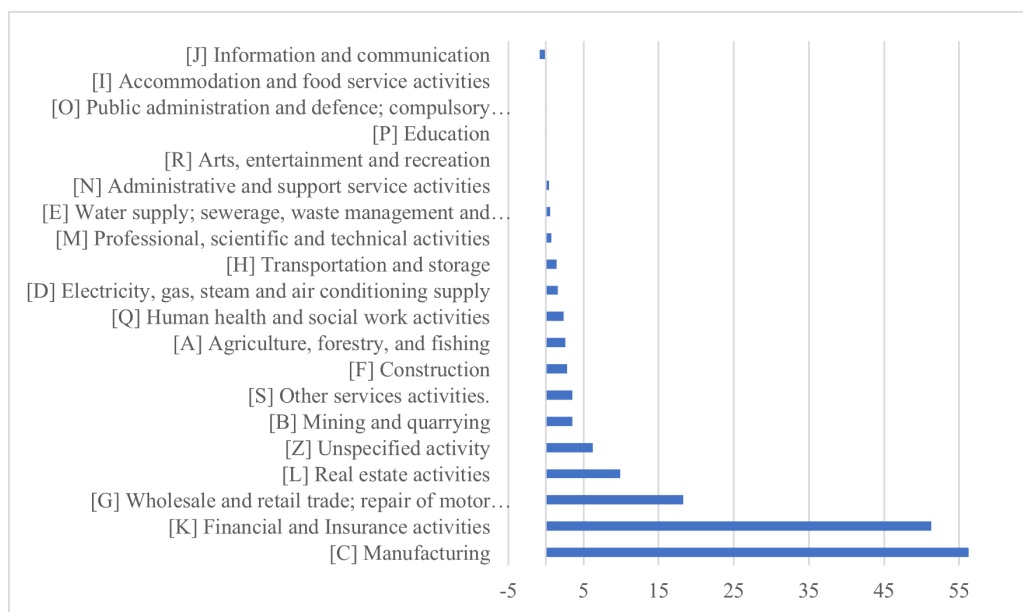
Source:Asia Competitiveness Institute based on ASEANstats

<sup>5</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (2019)

<sup>6</sup>See Chapter 2

<sup>7</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (2019)

**Figure 1.4: FDI Inflows to ASEAN by Economic Sectors (in US\$ billion), 2019**



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on ASEANstats

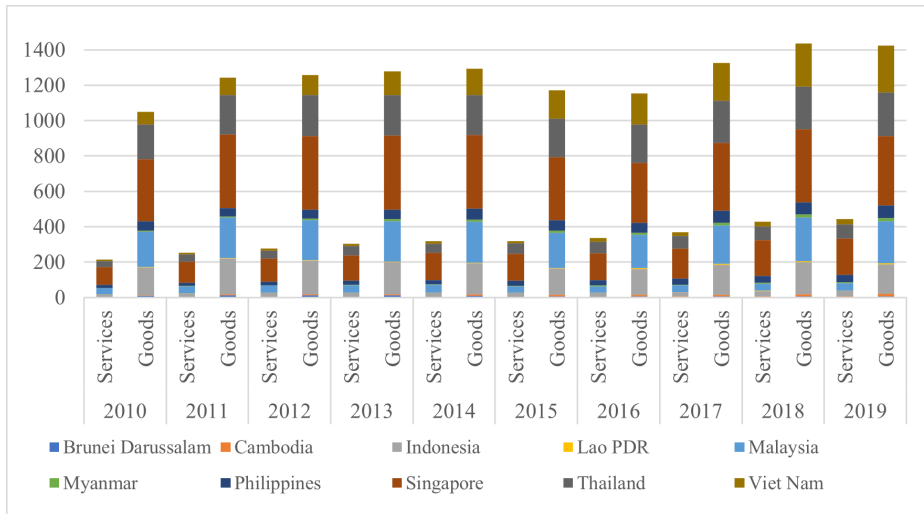
Referring to Figure 1.5, the export of goods and services in ASEAN has been on a gradual rise since 2010. Notably, the volume of services exports has experienced consistent growth over the decade, more than doubling in value from US\$214.5 billion to US\$444.8 billion over the period. In terms of individual countries, Singapore is the largest exporter of both goods and services over the period, with services exports more than doubling in value. Positively, the lesser developed AMS of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV) are the fastest growing exporters of both goods and services. Most notably, Vietnam’s share of total regional goods exports has significantly expanded from 6.89% to 18.6% on the back of a raft of trade facilitation policies.<sup>8</sup>

Figure 1.6 charts the share of total goods trade with ASEAN’s top trading partners over the period of 2010-2019. Intra-ASEAN trade forms the largest share of total goods trade in the region. This share has diminished over the decade despite the growth in value observed in Figure 1.5. Of the extra-ASEAN partners, China’s position as the region’s largest goods trading partner expanded drastically as the value of trade with China more than doubled over the period from US\$235.5 billion to US\$507.9 billion. Trade relations with the US also expanded as the value of trade grew by 62.5% over the period, allowing the US to become the second largest trading partner to the region, overtaking the European Union and Japan.

<sup>8</sup>See Eckhardt et al. (2018)

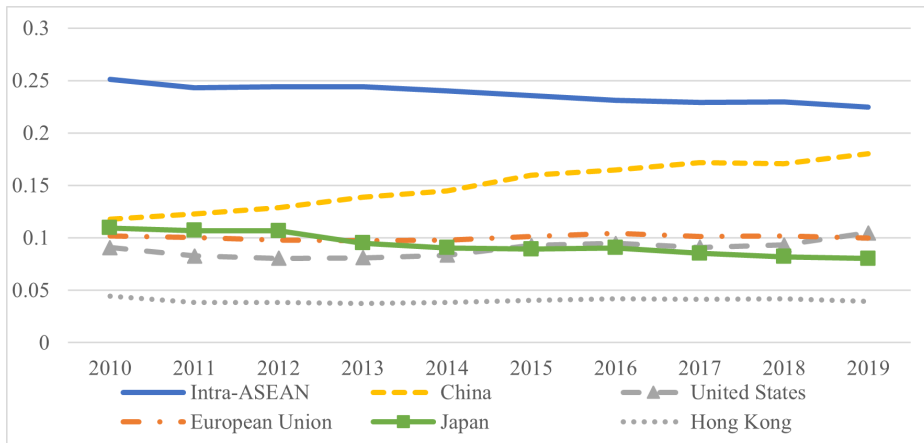


**Figure 1.5: Export of Goods and Services by Country (in US\$ billion), 2010 – 2019**



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on ASEANstats

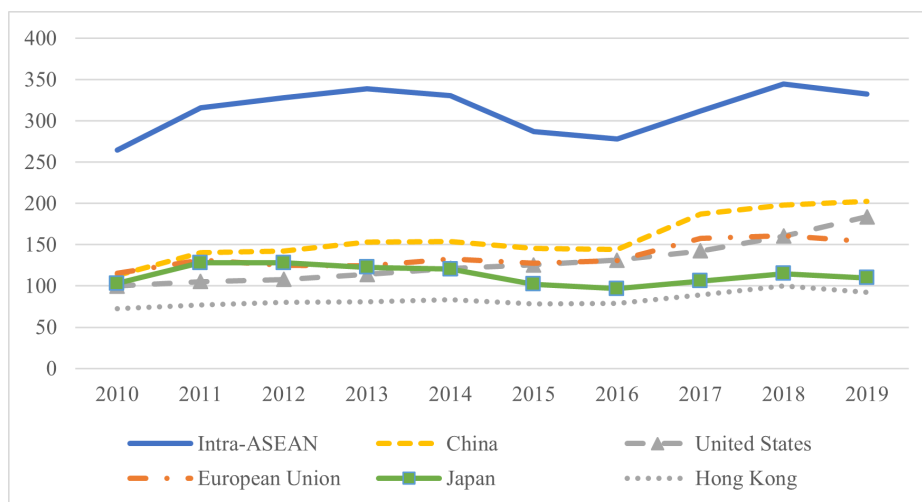
**Figure 1.6: Share of Total Goods Trade by Top Trading Partners (in percent), 2010-2019**



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on ASEANstats

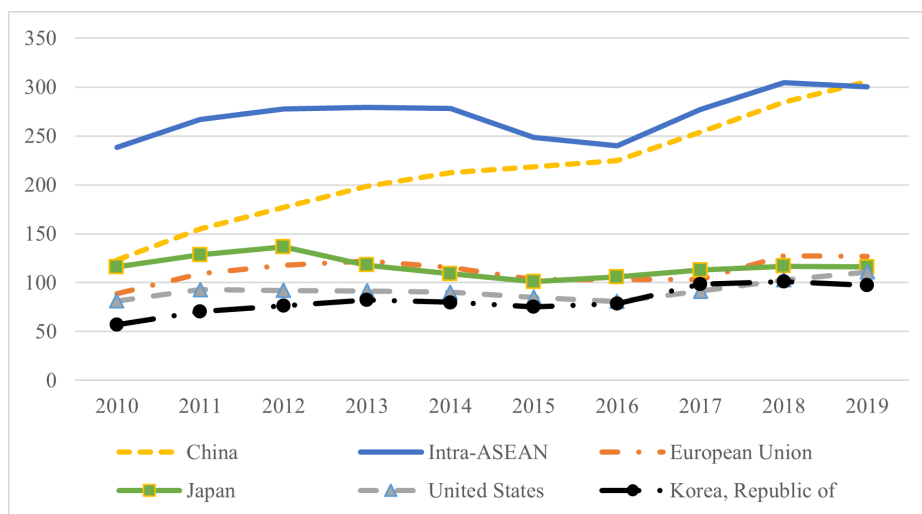
The breakdown of trade volumes by top export and import markets in Figures 1.7 and 1.8 respectively finds that the economies that comprise the top trade partners in Figure 1.6 are also the top export markets. Intra-ASEAN exports are by far the largest share of total exports. As the value of exports from ASEAN grew over the decade, there is a growing divergence among the top extra-ASEAN export markets. Despite starting from relatively comparable values in 2010, China, the US and the EU have diverged from Japan and Hong Kong. China and the US have grown to become the largest and second largest markets respectively, overtaking the EU which started the decade as the largest export market. This trend of growing exports to China and the US accelerated in the wake of increased US-China trade tensions in 2016/17.

**Figure 1.7: Value of Goods to Top Export Partners (in US\$ billion), 2010-2019**



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on ASEANstats

**Figure 1.8: Value of Goods from Top Import Partners (in US\$ billion), 2010-2019**



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on ASEANstats

In terms of imports, based on Figure 1.8, while intra-ASEAN imports has until 2019 been the top market, it has since been supplanted by China. Of the top extra-ASEAN import markets, the composition of the top economies remains largely the same as the top trade partners, with the absence of Hong Kong and the inclusion of the Republic of Korea. In contrast with the divergence observed in exports values, barring the phenomenal growth of imports from China, import values in the top extra-ASEAN economies are converging over time. With the signing of the RCEP in 2020 and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) in 2018, it is expected

that trade volumes within the Asian region and with partner countries will increase. The agreements are expected to reorient production networks and offset the losses from the US-China trade tensions.<sup>9</sup>

### 1.3 COVID-19 in ASEAN

**Table 1.2:** ASEAN COVID-19 Statistics, 10 Mar 2021

	Cumulative Cases	Infection Rate	Cumulative Deaths	Case Fatality Rate	Max Daily New Cases	Max Daily Deaths
Brunei Darussalam	191	43.66	3	1.57	15	1
Cambodia	1124	6.72	0	0	64	0
Indonesia	1392945	509.26	37757	2.71	23088	633
Lao PDR	47	0.65	0	0	14	0
Malaysia	316269	977.16	1186	0.375	5728	25
Myanmar	142059	261.09	3200	2.25	2260	48
Philippines	600428	547.93	12528	2.09	6725	259
Singapore	60052	1026.47	29	0.0483	1426	2
Thailand	26540	38.02	85	0.320	1060	4
Vietnam	2526	2.6	35	1.39	98	3

*Source:* Asia Competitiveness Institute based on WHO data

The preceding section provided a profile of the ASEAN region in 2019, going into 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic. In this section, we examine the state of the pandemic in ASEAN, its impacts on the AMS and some of the major policy responses adopted across the region at the time of writing. The economic impact of the pandemic on select ASEAN-5 economies will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 3 subject to data availability.

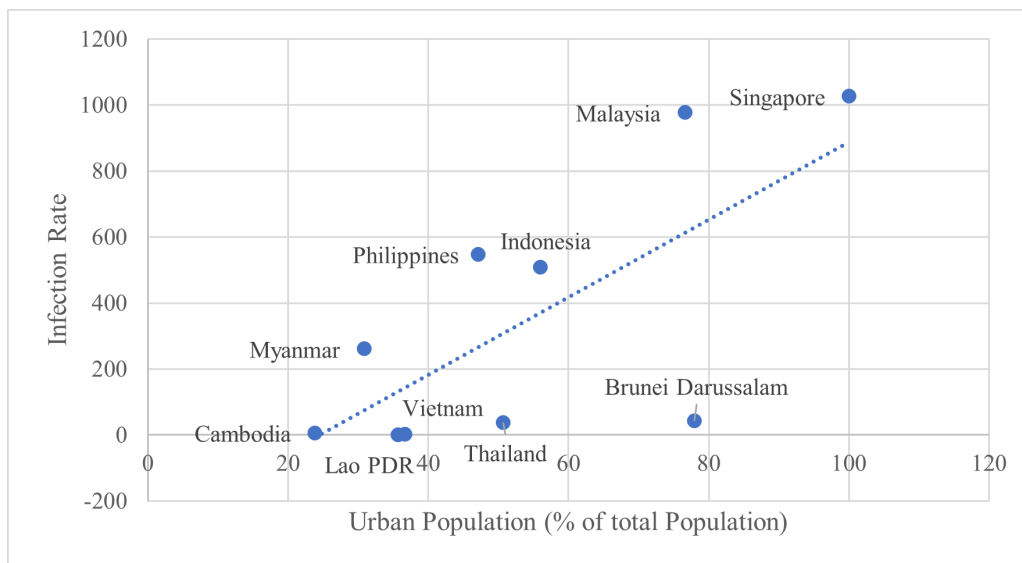
Given the geographical proximity and high volume of travel between China and the ASEAN region, the region was highly vulnerable to the spread of the virus at the outset of the pandemic. The earliest reported case of COVID-19 was reported in Thailand on 13 January 2020. The first fatality was reported in Philippines on 2 February 2020.

The impact of COVID-19 across the AMS has been highly varied. Based on World Health Organization statistics compiled in Table 1.2, it is observed that the CLMV and Brunei were the most successful at containing the spread of the virus in contrast with the more developed countries like Singapore. Figure 1.8 finds that the degree of urbanisation is a significant determinant of the spread of the virus, a higher proportion of urban population tending towards higher infection rates in ASEAN.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup>See Petri and Plummer (2020).

<sup>10</sup>Infection Rate calculated as Cumulative Cases per 100000 Population.

**Figure 1.9: Urbanisation and Infection Rates in ASEAN**



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute

Of the eight AMS where deaths have been reported, Singapore has the lowest case fatality rate despite having the highest number of cumulative cases per million population. Malaysia and Thailand also note comparatively lower case fatality rate despite having higher proportions of elderly in the population.<sup>11</sup> Further analysis of this will be conducted in Chapter 2.

In response to the pandemic, ASEAN and the AMS have deployed a wide array of pandemic containment and economic policies. Prior to the pandemic, at the 35th ASEAN Summit held in Bangkok on 2 November 2019, ASEAN Member States (AMS) signed the ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration on ASEAN Vaccine Security and Self-Reliance (AVSSR)<sup>12</sup>, aiming to avoid incidental vaccine scarcities and improve the supply of affordable, quality vaccines for normal and emergency situations at the national and regional levels. AMS committed to strengthen cooperation via capacity building, training and sharing best practices in line with national laws in respective AMS. As the COVID-19 pandemic enveloped the region, the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group on Public Health Emergencies (ACCWG-PHE) was formed and held its inaugural meeting via teleconferencing on 31 March 2020. The ACCWG-PHE aimed to strengthen cooperation in the ASEAN Community to cope with developments of the COVID-19, such as sharing information about the situation and best practices among respective AMS, as well as to implement policies and measures assisting businesses and vulnerable groups in the society.

The Special ASEAN Summit on Coronavirus Disease 2019 was called on 14 April

<sup>11</sup>Case Fatality Rate calculated as Cumulative Deaths per Cumulative Cases.

<sup>12</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat (2019) - ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration on ASEAN Vaccine Security and Self-Reliance (AVSSR)

2020<sup>13</sup>, in which AMS mooted the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund<sup>14</sup>. The Fund, equally accessible to all AMS, will serve as a pool of financial resources to provide support in the detection, control and prevention of COVID-19 transmission and in protecting the safety of medical professionals, as well as the wider population. The Fund will be drawn to procure test kits, personal protective equipment, medicines, vaccines and other necessary medical supplies. Post-COVID-19, the Fund will be made available to support research and development relevant to COVID-19, as well as other relevant studies in virology and immunology. The Fund was established by an initial contribution of 10% from the ASEAN Development Fund and voluntary contributions from AMS and other external partners. Parties that have pledged donations include Germany (EUR5,000,000)<sup>15</sup>, Japan (US\$1,000,000)<sup>16</sup>, India (US\$1,000,000)<sup>17</sup>, Korea (US\$1,000,000)<sup>18</sup>, and Singapore (US\$100,000)<sup>19</sup>, among others.

In July 2020, the COVID-19 Recovery Guidelines for Resilient and Sustainable International Road Freight Transport Connectivity in ASEAN (“Guidelines”)<sup>20</sup> was developed to support AMS in establishing their regional and national transport connectivity recovery plans with a focus on resilience and sustainability, as well as developing regional COVID-19 recovery guidelines on cross-border road freight transport. The Guidelines served as the foundation for the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF). While the Guidelines are non-legally binding and open to amendments by AMS to accommodate their respective needs, the Guidelines focuses on three priority areas, namely, (1) transport workers’ safety and training, (2) preserving connectivity for efficient and resilient supply chains, (3) building back better through digital, resilient and decarbonised transport connectivity in immediate, medium and long-term framework to support the development of cross-border road freight transport in the region. Salient immediate policy measures proposed by the Guidelines include (1) declaring freight road transport a key service and road transport workers key workers, (2) improving occupational measures, including access to decent sanitation facilities and safe parking infrastructure, (3) keeping borders open for freight and ensuring the continuity of cross-border freight operations, (4) exchanging information and share best practice on freight transport policy responses, (5) promoting greater digitalisation and automation in national and cross-border road freight sector.

At the 37th ASEAN Summit hosted by Vietnam from 11-15 November 2020, the ACRF<sup>21</sup> was endorsed to serve as a consolidated and coordinated whole-of-community exit strategy from the COVID-19 crisis. The ACRF guides ASEAN response through various stages

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<sup>13</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat (2020a) - Declaration of the Special ASEAN Summit on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

<sup>14</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat (2020b) - TERMS OF REFERENCE THE COVID-19 ASEAN RESPONSE FUND

<sup>15</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat (2020f) - ASEAN, Germany to enhance cooperation

<sup>16</sup>See Kyodo News (2020)

<sup>17</sup>See Chaudhury (2020)

<sup>18</sup>See Ministry of Foreign Affairs ROK (2020)

<sup>19</sup>See CNA (2020a)

<sup>20</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat (2021) - COVID-19 Recovery Guidelines for Resilient and Sustainable International Road Freight Transport Connectivity in ASEAN

<sup>21</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat (2020d) - ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and its Implementation Plan

of recovery by focusing on key sectors and segments of society, setting broad strategies and identifying recovery measures inline with sectoral and regional priorities. Salient measures included in the ACRF include (1) the development of the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies<sup>22</sup> to distribute readily available stockpiles of essential medical supplies to support AMS affected by public health emergencies and pandemics, (2) the formulation of the ASEAN Strategic Framework for Public Health Emergencies<sup>23</sup> to enhance ASEAN's preparedness, detection, response, and resilience to current and future public health emergencies, as well as to strengthen cooperation among AMS in enhancing regional health security, (3) strengthening food safety via initiatives such as expediting the ASEAN Food Safety Regulatory Framework Agreement and establishing the Food Safety Emergency Response, which are critical to ensure a centralised coordination and response to food traceability and recall systems, (4) the development of the ASEAN Tourism Recovery Plan following the signing of the ASEAN Travel Corridor Arrangement Framework<sup>24</sup>, which called for common safety measures facilitating essential business travels among AMS.

At the 8th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management on 27 November 2020, AMS adopted the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2021-2025.<sup>25</sup> With support from the Japanese and Canadian governments, and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the AADMER aims to develop a framework to mitigate the effects of disasters — natural and human-induced — in pursuit of safer communities and sustainable development.

Representatives of AMS met via video conference on 4 February 2021 at the 24th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers.<sup>26</sup> The Ministers endorsed the updated ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2016-2025, with new priority programmes comprising (1) the adoption of strategies to support the digitalisation of ASEAN tourism, (2) the enhancement of data and information networks, (3) the organisation of activities to promote connectivity and facilitate inter- and intra-regional travel. The ASEAN Economic Ministers, meeting over the first week of March 2021, further pushed for the establishment of an ASEAN-wide digital coronavirus vaccine certificate to revive the region's ailing tourism sector<sup>27</sup>. The proposed digital coronavirus vaccine certificate will be smartphone-based, similar to the IATA Travel Pass.

The subsequent sections present an overview of the containment policies deployed by the various AMS. The charts of daily reported COVID-19 cases in the context of various containment policies of the AMS in the subsequent sections are purely for illustrative purposes and are not representative of the full raft of policies. Indeed, given the need for responsive policies, it is often largely impossible to present in graphical form all the various targeted policies employed. The economic policies will be discussed Chapter 3.

<sup>22</sup>See NUS Centre for International Law (2020)

<sup>23</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat (2020c) - ASEAN STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

<sup>24</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat (2020e) - ASEAN DECLARATION ON AN ASEAN TRAVEL CORRIDOR ARRANGEMENT FRAMEWORK

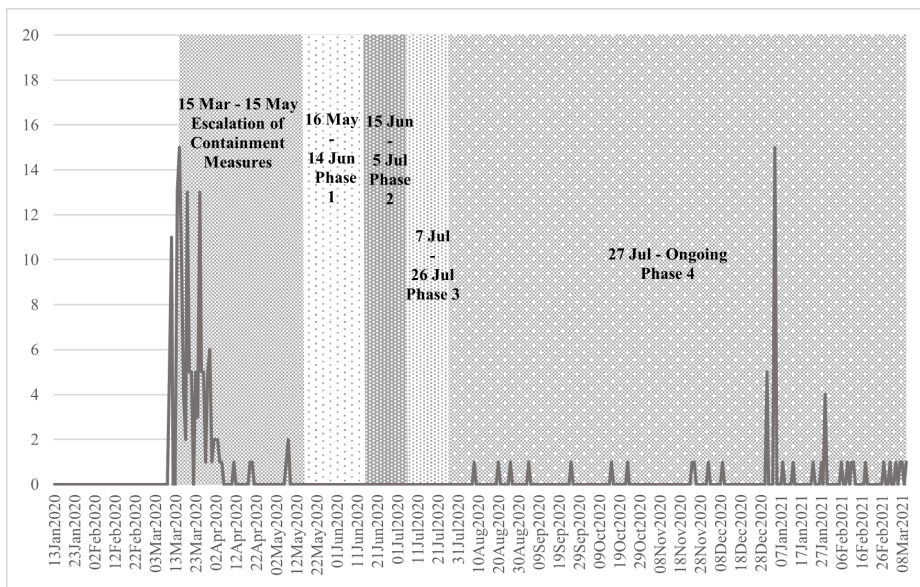
<sup>25</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat (2020g) - ASEAN adopts New Disaster Management Framework for 2021-2025

<sup>26</sup>See ASEAN Secretariat (2021) - Joint Media Statement of the 24th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers

<sup>27</sup>See Iwamoto (2021)

### 1.3.1 Brunei Darussalam

Figure 1.10: Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Brunei, 13 Jan 2020 – 10 Mar 2021



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on WHO data

Brunei imposed entry restrictions for arrivals from China in January 2020: travellers from Hubei were prohibited from entering the country, while travellers from other parts of China were required to undergo a 14-day self-quarantine upon arrival.<sup>28</sup> The travel restrictions were later expanded to 24 other high-risk countries in February 2020. The national flag carrier, Royal Brunei Airlines, also reduced its flights to Beijing and Hong Kong, while flights to Shanghai, Haikou, Nanning, Changsha and Hangzhou were suspended<sup>29</sup>. Additionally, the Health Ministry mandated temperature screenings at all seven entry points into the country while actively encouraging the public to practise good personal hygiene and the wearing of masks.<sup>30</sup> Brunei later recorded its first case on 9 March 2020, a 53-year-old male who returned from a religious event in Malaysia.<sup>31</sup>

The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Religious Affairs had collaborated closely to contain the spread of the pandemic, such as closing and sanitising mosques nationwide, and continuing the call to prayers over loudspeakers. The Ministry of Health had proactively embarked on an informational campaign to educate the public and dispel misconceptions on the virus.<sup>32</sup> On 16 March 2020, Brunei banned all departures of citizens and foreigners from the country, unless permission was granted from the Prime Minister's Office.<sup>33</sup> Public health measures such as limits to mass gatherings and out-

<sup>28</sup>See Ministry of Health of Brunei (2020a)

<sup>29</sup>See Abu Bakar (2020)

<sup>30</sup>See Ministry of Health of Brunei (2020b)

<sup>31</sup>See Ministry of Health of Brunei (2020c)

<sup>32</sup>See Bodetti (2020)

<sup>33</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Brunei section

door events were swiftly implemented. Strict punishments were enforced including a B\$10,000 fine and a jail term of six months.<sup>34</sup> As cases crossed the 100-mark on 24 March 2020, Brunei halted all arrivals of foreigners into the country.<sup>35</sup> Restrictions were gradually relaxed in four phases from mid-May 2020 as total cases remain largely stable.<sup>36</sup> Foreign arrivals were opened in tiers with the number of isolation days dependent on the risk categories of the countries of origin of travellers.

This first phase in the reduction of social distancing measures included driving schools, gyms and fitness centres, sports facilities (indoor and outdoor) and food centres. The second phase beginning in June 2020 increased the occupancy of these establishments from 30% to 60%. Phase 3, beginning on 6 July 2020, increased the number of people permitted at mass gatherings from 30 to 50, increased capacity of places of worship (besides mosques) and food establishments to 80%. Phase 4, which started on 27 July 2020, increased the number of persons permitted at mass gatherings from 50 to 100, allowed the resumption of normal operations at schools, increased the capacity of restaurants and cafes to 100%, allowed arcades and playgrounds (indoor and outdoor) to operate at 30% capacity, increased capacity of swimming pools, cinemas and activity centres to 60%, allowed places of worship (Muslim places of worship entered phase 4 on 3 August 2020) to operate at normal capacity.

Further relaxations of restrictions up to September 2020 allowed the number allowed at mass gatherings to reach 350 and most establishments to operate at 100%. In December 2020, the government announced that the annual December Festival will go ahead albeit scaled down to accommodate social distancing measures. Amid the rising cases in Malaysia, Brunei banned travellers entering from Malaysia via land and sea for two weeks starting from 13 January 2021, which was later extended until 10 February 2021.<sup>37</sup> Ahead of the Lunar New Year celebrations, the government allowed private events among family members. Large families are permitted to hold private events at banquet halls if Mass Gathering guidelines are adhered to, such as the provision of hand sanitisers and temperature checks.<sup>38</sup>

### 1.3.2 Cambodia

Cambodia recorded its first case on 27 January 2020, a 60-year old Chinese male who arrived on 23 January 2020 from Wuhan, China.<sup>39</sup> Cambodia allowed the cruise ship MS *Westerdam* to dock after the vessel was turned away by four other countries. The passengers were initially allowed to travel freely in Phnom Penh, but were later isolated following reports of a passenger being tested positive in Malaysia.<sup>40</sup> After the first positive case was confirmed on a Cambodian man on 7 March 2020, the government promptly closed

<sup>34</sup>See Ministry of Health of Brunei (2020d)

<sup>35</sup>Ministry of Health of Brunei (2020e)

<sup>36</sup>See AMRO (2021) under the Containment section of the Brunei chapter

<sup>37</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Brunei section

<sup>38</sup>See Ministry of Health of Brunei (2021)

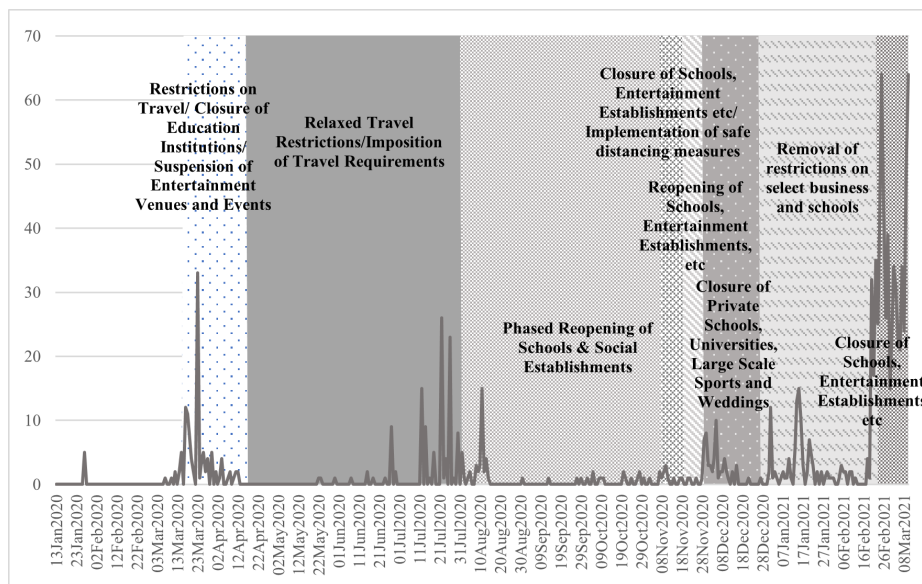
<sup>39</sup>See World Health Organization (2020a) - Ministry of Health responds to first positive case of new coronavirus

<sup>40</sup>See Paddock, Wee, and Rabin (2020)



schools in the capital city from 7 March 2020 for two weeks, and cancelled the Khmer New Year celebrations.<sup>41</sup> Despite this, travel restrictions were not imposed on arrivals from China, but were imposed on arrivals from several Western nations from 17 March 2020, later extended to Iran.<sup>42</sup>

**Figure 1.11: Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Cambodia, 13 Jan 2020 – 10 Mar 2021**



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on WHO data

As cases continued to climb, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports shut down all educational institutes in Phnom Penh starting from 16 March 2020, which would later be expanded to cover the entire country. Cinemas, concerts and religious gatherings were also banned from 17 March 2020.<sup>43</sup> In late March 2020, the government required all foreign arrivals to obtain a visa and provide a medical certificate prior to arrival, as well as proof of cash of US\$50,000.<sup>44</sup> On 9 April 2020, the government prohibited inter-province and inter-district travels within the capital until 16 April 2020.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, 15,000 garment workers in Phnom Penh who took time off following the Khmer New Year were quarantined for 14 days. The government's effective stance proved successful as Cambodia recorded near zero cases in May 2020.

Karaoke bars and nightclubs with city hall permits were allowed to reopen starting on 7 July 2020.<sup>46</sup> From 5 August 2020, cinemas and art facilities were reopened with strict standard operating procedures in place. Safe distancing measures, mask wearing and temperature checks were continuously enforced in the country. Restrictions on school

<sup>41</sup>See Chhengpor (2020)

<sup>42</sup>See Turton (2020)

<sup>43</sup>See World Health Organization (2020d) - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation Report 23

<sup>44</sup>See Vida (2020)

<sup>45</sup>See Sony (2020)

<sup>46</sup>See World Health Organization (2020b) - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation Report 9

reopening were gradually lifted in three phases. In the first phase, high-safety standard private schools in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Battambang were allowed to resume from 1 August 2020. The second phase, involving schools which had been checked by the ministry and had their applications for reopening approved by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, resumed from 2 September 2020. In the third phase which began on 2 November 2020, the ministry allowed all state and private schools, ranging from preschools to high schools, to resume operations.<sup>47</sup> September saw further relaxation in containment measures. Flights to China and Vietnam resumed on 3 September 2020 and 21 September 2020 respectively, while mosques and churches reopened on 12 September 2020.<sup>48</sup>

On 9 November 2020 amid a nudge in daily cases, the Health Ministry closed karaoke centres, museums, cinemas and other entertainment venues. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport also shut schools from 10 November 2020 in Phnom Penh and Kandal. On 11 November 2020, the Interior Ministry banned all state-organised events in Phnom Penh and Kandal for two weeks. The first community transmitted case in late November 2020, widely termed as “Nov 28 incident” prompted the government to again close all public schools, limit gatherings of more than 20, from 3 December 2020, mandate foreign and Cambodian arrivals into the country to be quarantined at designated government centres, and closed all cinemas, museums and theatres from 30 Nov 2020 to mid-December 2020<sup>49</sup>, as well as the controversial move to release the identities of positive test cases.<sup>50</sup> Also on 1 December 2020, two million face masks were distributed to vulnerable communities in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap<sup>51</sup>. After six weeks of lockdown, the government allowed schools and museums to reopen on 4 January 2021.<sup>52</sup>

On 7 February 2021, 600,000 doses of vaccines donated by China’s Sinopharm arrived in Cambodia. Sinopharm is expected to send another 400,000 doses, on top of one million doses via COVAX.<sup>53</sup> Prime Minister Hun Sen launched Cambodia’s vaccination drive on 10 February 2021, with his sons and the justice and environment ministers among the first recipients.<sup>54</sup> A new cluster, known as the February 20 Community Event, emerged in late February 2021 among the Chinese expatriate community in Phnom Penh. The origins linked to the outbreak remain unclear.<sup>55</sup> Accordingly, the government shut down all museums, cinemas, theatres, and all public and private schools, as well as technical and vocational institutes, in Phnom Penh and Kandal province for two weeks beginning 23 February 2021<sup>56</sup>.

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<sup>47</sup>See Dara (2020)

<sup>48</sup>See CSIS

<sup>49</sup>See CSIS (2021) on Cambodia section

<sup>50</sup>See UNHCR (2020)

<sup>51</sup>See Khmer Times (2020)

<sup>52</sup>CSIS

<sup>53</sup>See Turton (2021)

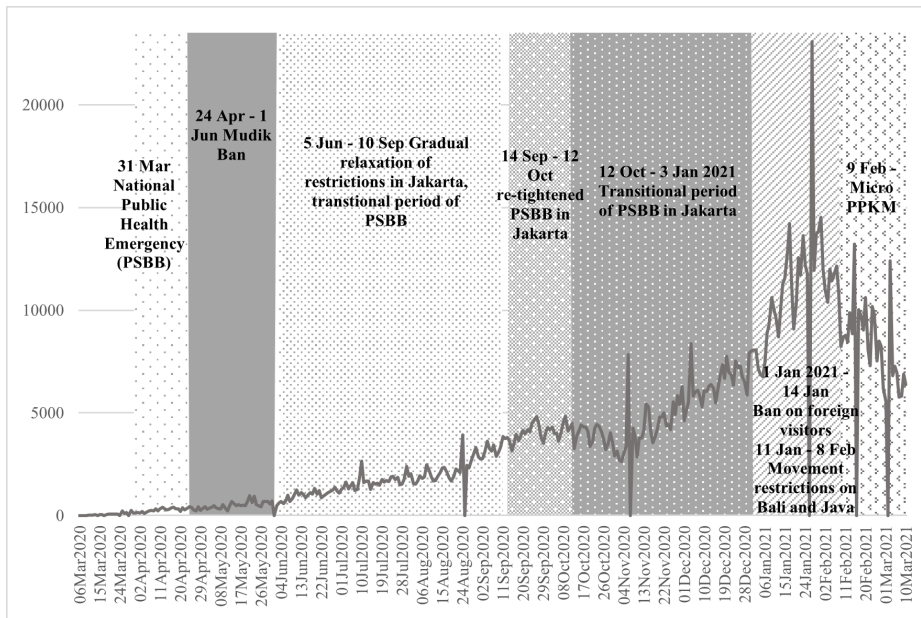
<sup>54</sup>See The Straits Times (2021a)

<sup>55</sup>See New Straits Times (2021)

<sup>56</sup>See Khmer Times (2021)

### 1.3.3 Indonesia

Figure 1.12: Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Indonesia, 6 Mar 2020 – 10 Mar 2021



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on WHO data

Indonesia recorded its first case of Covid-19 on 2 March 2020. As cases continued to soar towards the end of March 2020, several cities issued local lockdowns, a public health emergency was declared and the large-scale social distancing policy, known locally as Pembatas Sosial Berskala Besar (PSBB), was instituted on 31 March 2020.<sup>57</sup> The PSBB would be implemented by local governments with the approval of the Ministry of Health. From 2 April 2020, Indonesia restricted foreigner arrivals into the country, while citizens were required to provide a health report and undergo compulsory self-quarantine.<sup>58</sup> Additionally, the Justice and Human Rights Ministry released more than 30,000 prisoners to prevent mass infections in the nation's overcrowded jails.<sup>59</sup>

PSBB was imposed in Jakarta province starting on 10 April 2020, which would be extended to encompass the entire Jakarta metropolitan area on 18 April 2020. Shortly after, major cities in West Java, South Sulawesi, West Sumatra and Central Java entered PSBB. The annual Idul Fitri mudik, scheduled to begin on 24 April 2020, was banned.<sup>60</sup> The government barred all intercity bus transportation until 31 May 2020, while air, sea and rail transportation would be banned until mid-June 2020, except for passengers involved in essential business, repatriation or government purposes.<sup>61</sup> In end May 2020,

<sup>57</sup>See Widodo (2020a) - Report from COVID-19 Task Force, 30 March 2020 at the Bogor Presidential Palace

<sup>58</sup>See Widodo (2020b) - Handling of the Influx of Indonesian Citizens Returning from Overseas and Cross-border Restriction on Foreigners, 31 March 2020 at Bogor Presidential Palace

<sup>59</sup>See Widiyanto (2020)

<sup>60</sup>See See Widodo (2020c) - Additional Discussion for the Anticipation of Annual Exodus Tuesday, 21 April 2020 at the Merdeka Palace, Jakarta

<sup>61</sup>See Ministry of Transport of Indonesia (2020)

the government announced the “New Normal” which involved gradually re-opening the country according to epidemiological study and regional readiness.<sup>62</sup> This also involved the deployment of 350,000 army and police personnel to provinces with high case counts to manage public adherence to the PSBB from 26 May 2020. On 2 June 2020, the government also cancelled the annual hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, which 200,000 Indonesians were planning to make<sup>63</sup>.

In June 2020, several provincial governments allowed low-risk cities to transition from the PSBB to the New Normal, such as those in East Java (Greater Surabaya area from 8 June 2020) and West Java (all areas except Bogor, Depok and Bekasi from 26 June 2020).<sup>64</sup> Sinovac Biotech, in collaboration with state-owned Bio Farma, launched vaccine trials on Indonesian patients on 11 August 2020.<sup>65</sup> Rising cases in September in Jakarta prompted the Governor to reimpose the PSBB on 14 September 2020 which would later be extended to 11 October 2020<sup>66</sup>, in addition to setting up three new isolation centres by the end of September 2020. The central government deployed more military and police personnel to enforce mask-wearing on 16 September 2020 and signed an agreement with UNICEF to participate in the COVAX Facility. The Indonesian Mosque Council also instructed mosques in Jakarta to halt Friday prayer services. On 14 September 2020, West Java announced the implementation of “micro-scale” social restrictions in Jakarta’s satellite cities, namely Bogor, Depok and Bekasi.<sup>67</sup>

As cases fell in mid-October 2020, Jakarta moved to the transitional PSBB period and, on 21 October 2020, reopened two major cinema chains.<sup>68</sup> A reciprocal green lane was also established on 26 October 2020 between Indonesia and Singapore for diplomatic missions and essential business trips.<sup>69</sup> On 2 December 2020, the government announced that it would reduce the year-end holidays for Christmas and New Year celebrations<sup>70</sup>, while the regional elections proceeded on 9 December 2020 with election officials receiving Covid-19 tests. It was announced that all vaccines will be provided free for all Indonesians, with the working-age population prioritised.<sup>71</sup> Ahead of Christmas celebrations, the government restricted civil servants from travelling out of town from 21 December 2020, closed 84 tourist sites in Central Java from 24 December 2020 and imposed additional restrictions on arrivals from the United Kingdom, Europe and Australia. As part of the agreement with Sinovac, Bio Farma received four million doses of vaccines by 31 December 2020.

Indonesia closed its international borders for the first two weeks of 2021 to prevent the importation of the more contagious COVID-19 strains from the United Kingdom and Africa. Following another spike in cases, the Enforcement of Restrictions on Public Activi-

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<sup>62</sup>See Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia (2020)

<sup>63</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Indonesia section

<sup>64</sup>See AHK (2021)

<sup>65</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Indonesia section

<sup>66</sup>See Velarosdela (2020)

<sup>67</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Indonesia section

<sup>68</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Indonesia section

<sup>69</sup>See Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Singapore (2020)

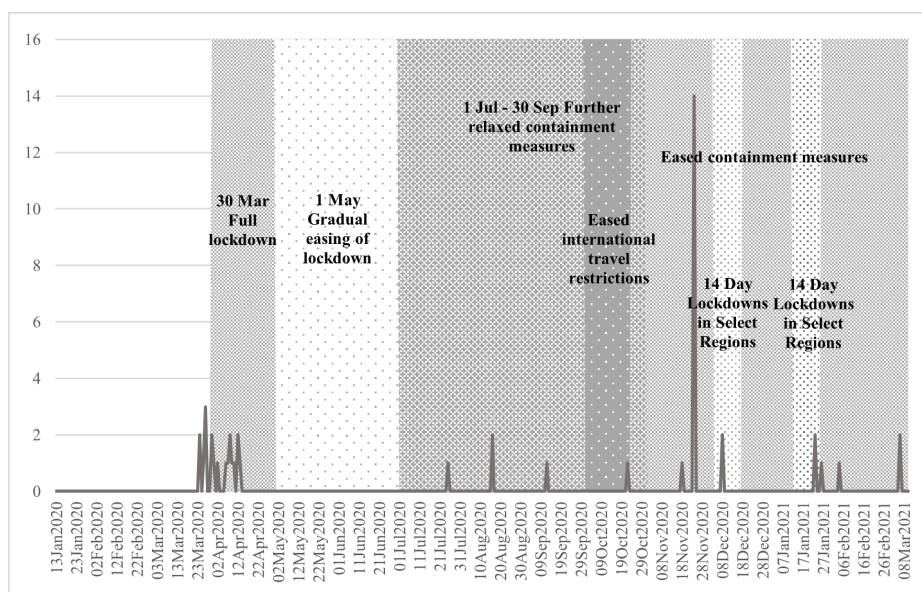
<sup>70</sup>See The Jakarta Post (2020)

<sup>71</sup>See Widodo (2020d)

ties or Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat (PPKM) was enforced in Jakarta, Banten, West Java, Central Java, Yogyakarta, East Java and Bali, effective from 11-25 January 2021, which was later extended to 8 February 2021.<sup>72</sup> Vaccines were approved for emergency use on 11 January 2021 and the President received the first dose of the vaccine on 13 January 2021, spearheading Indonesia's vaccination drive.<sup>73</sup> Indonesia started vaccinating elderly medical workers on 8 February 2021 and later launched its second vaccination drive on 17 February 2021. The second drive involved the elderly and workers most at risk, such as traders, teachers, police and civil servants.<sup>74</sup>

### 1.3.4 Lao PDR

Figure 1.13: Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Lao PDR, 13 Jan 2020 – 10 Mar 2021



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on WHO data

Laos recorded its first case on 24 March 2020. The government swiftly announced a full lockdown to take effect on 30 March 2020.<sup>75</sup> All land borders with neighbouring countries were closed and the last flights departed Luang Prabang and Vientiane on 1 April 2020.<sup>76</sup> Citizens were barred from leaving their houses except for buying food, medicines and other essentials, or to work at 'essential organisations'. Medical facilities, supermarkets, banks, petrol stations, hotels and restaurants were allowed to remain open with some restrictions. Inter-province travel was barred, requiring approval from the local authorities until 18 May 2020. Public servants were instructed to work from home until 11 April 2020,

<sup>72</sup>See Hartarto (2021)

<sup>73</sup>See BPOM (2021b)

<sup>74</sup>See CNA (2021c)

<sup>75</sup>See Tilleke Gibbins (2020)

<sup>76</sup>See Savankham (2020)

later extended to 19 April 2020. All festival celebrations were cancelled, while gatherings of more than 10 people were prohibited.<sup>77</sup>

On 1 May 2020, the government ordered the gradual easing of lockdown measures, while ensuring precautionary measures such as safe distancing, mask wearing and office space rotations. Final-year students at all levels of schools were allowed to resume on 20 May 2020.<sup>78</sup> Further relaxation of measures took place on 1 July 2020, such as the resumption of sport competitions and social gatherings. However, entertainment venues would remain closed, as well as custom border crossings. International border crossings would remain closed, except for Lao citizens or foreigners with urgent needs. Additionally, visa issuances to individuals departing from countries with COVID-19 outbreaks would be suspended, except for diplomats, investors, entrepreneurs, experts and workers on important projects. For departures, all travellers, including locals, were required to produce a medical certificate. This was later tightened to only allow technical experts, diplomats and students to travel overseas, with authorisation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>79</sup>

From 1 October 2020, tour groups and charter flights from countries without community outbreaks were allowed entry.<sup>80</sup> Cross border transportation for necessary import and export measures were eased on 23 October 2020. From 26 October 2020, Laos temporarily reopened several local border crossings to revive the economy, notably the Ban Vang and Nongmar crossings which were essential for the country's mineral exports.<sup>81</sup> Beginning November 2020, there was further relaxation of containment measures, such as the re-opening of entertainment venues and launching of a fast-track immigration lane with China for diplomats and individuals involved in major projects. Non-essential international travel and most land borders remained closed for the rest of 2020.<sup>82</sup> A rise in imported cases prompted the government to place some areas under lockdown, specifically Ton Pheung on 4 December 2020, Boten on 7 December 2020, and strengthened measures on Bokeo on 14 December 2020.<sup>83</sup>

The first round of vaccinations took place in late November 2020 with frontline medical staff, followed by the second round on 22 December 2020. The government planned to roll out the third round in mid-January 2021 after receiving 2,000 and 500 doses from China's Sinopharm and Russia's Gamaleya Institute respectively. On 12 January 2021, Ton Pheung district went under lockdown for the second time, while the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone in Bokeo was also put in lockdown after a Chinese worker tested positive, both from 12-25 January 2021.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> *ibid*

<sup>78</sup> See AMRO (2021) under the Containment section of the Lao PDR chapter

<sup>79</sup> *ibid*

<sup>80</sup> See Rajah Tann Asia (2020)

<sup>81</sup> See CSIS (2021) under Laos chapter

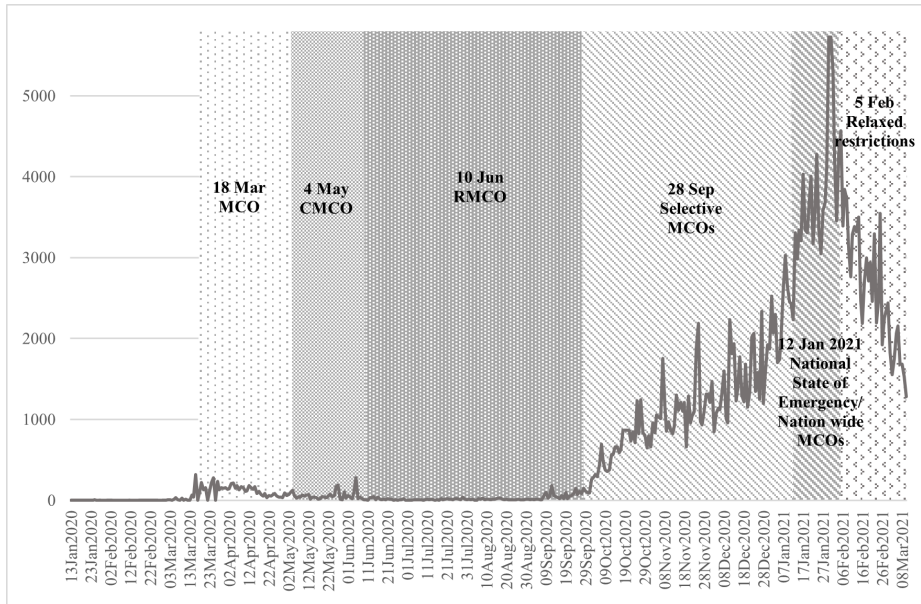
<sup>82</sup> *ibid*

<sup>83</sup> *ibid*

<sup>84</sup> *ibid*

### 1.3.5 Malaysia

Figure 1.14: Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Malaysia, 13 Jan 2020 – 10 Mar 2021



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on WHO data

Malaysia recorded its first case on 25 January 2020. Flights between Wuhan, China, and the state of Sabah were stopped indefinitely from 30 January 2020, while non-Sabah residents arriving from China were not allowed to enter from 8 February 2020. Meanwhile, the northern states of Kedah and Penang tightened borders and mandated temperature screenings at all international checkpoints from 25 January 2020, following the increase in number of cases in Thailand<sup>85</sup>. Cases continued to increase in the following weeks as international borders remained open. A religious conference in Kuala Lumpur between 27 February 2020 and 1 March 2020, with 16,000 attendees, resulted in more than 620 new cases linked to the event, with spill-over into other ASEAN countries.<sup>86,87</sup> Cases in the community soared as the infected returned to their respective states and communities. Malaysia imposed a national lockdown, with the Movement Control Order (MCO) effective for two weeks beginning on 18 March 2020<sup>88</sup>, and later extended to mid-May 2020. The MCO includes a ban on gatherings, domestic and international travel restrictions, and closure of schools, government and private premises except for essential services such as public utilities, banking and medical facilities.<sup>89</sup>

On 27 March 2020, certain locations were subjected to the Enhanced Movement Con-

<sup>85</sup>See Hilmy (2020)

<sup>86</sup>See Beech (2020)

<sup>87</sup>See Sipalan (2020)

<sup>88</sup>See Yassin (2020a) - The Prime Minister's Special Message on COVID-19 – 16 March 2020

<sup>89</sup>ibid

trol Order (EMCO), if a large cluster was detected in the area.<sup>90</sup> The EMCO barred residents from exiting their homes, the closure of all businesses and roads, and the provision of adequate food supply by authorities to residents.

The nationwide MCO was relaxed on 1 May 2020 with the introduction of the Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO)<sup>91</sup> starting on 4 May 2020. The CMCO allowed most businesses to reopen subject to safe distancing and contact tracing procedures, resumed outdoor non-contact sport activities in small groups and interstate travel for work purposes.<sup>92</sup> Several state governments postponed the implementation of the CMCO or enacted stricter relaxation phases according to the situation in the respective states. As new cases fell, Malaysia shifted to the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) from 10 June 2020 to 31 August 2020, which would later extend to the rest of 2020.<sup>93</sup> Under the RMCO, interstate travel between non-EMCO states, gatherings up to 150 people, public and private schools, and certain religious activities were allowed to resume. Meetings, conventions and domestic tourism were also allowed to reopen subject to a limit of 200-250 people.<sup>94</sup> The wearing of face masks was made compulsory, as well as launching a public awareness campaign in the first week of August 2020. Malaysia also reopened borders with Singapore for visitors on essential businesses via the Periodic Commuting Arrangement (PCA) and the Reciprocal Green Lane (RGL) respectively. Applications for the schemes opened on 10 August 2020 and travel commenced on 17 August 2020.<sup>95</sup>

Following the Sabah state election in late September 2020, new clusters emerged in Peninsular Malaysia as cases surged.<sup>96</sup> The EMCO was reinstated and a travel ban was put in place between Sabah and the rest of the country from 29 September 2020 to 12 October 2020. The spill-over from the Sabah outbreak into Peninsular Malaysia led to the reimposition of CMCO in several districts throughout the country, namely in the Klang Valley and Labuan from 14-27 October 2020. As cases continued to spike throughout October, public servants in Labuan, Sabah and Klang Valley were ordered to work from home.<sup>97</sup> From 9 November 2020, the CMCO was reinstated in every state and federal territory in the country except for Kelantan, Pahang and Perlis, effective until 6 December 2020. All schools nationwide were told to close for the remainder of 2020 with students continuing their lessons at home, while all government employees were also told to work from home.<sup>98</sup> On 23 November 2020, several Top Glove factories were ordered to shut down following a spike of 1,889 cases among workers.<sup>99</sup>

On 6 December 2020, most states exited the CMCO except for Kuala Lumpur, Sabah and several districts in Selangor, Johor, Negeri Sembilan, Kelantan and Perak, which were

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<sup>90</sup>See Nursyazwani Saiful Sham (2020)

<sup>91</sup>See Yassin (2020b) - Perutusan Khas Perdana Menteri (10 Mei 2020)

<sup>92</sup>ibid

<sup>93</sup>See Yassin (2020c) - Teks Ucapan Pelaksanaan Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan Pemulihan (PKPP)

<sup>94</sup>ibid

<sup>95</sup>See Lai (2020)

<sup>96</sup>See Sukumaran (2020)

<sup>97</sup>See AMRO (2021) under the Containment section of the Malaysia chapter

<sup>98</sup>See World Health Organization (2021c)

<sup>99</sup>See CNA (2020b)



later extended to 14 January 2021.<sup>100</sup> Additionally, from 7 December 2020, the government removed the limit on the number of people allowed to dine on the same table in restaurants, allowed businesses serving food and beverages to extend their hours and began permitting social gatherings. Inter-state and inter-district movements were also relaxed.<sup>101</sup>

Cases skyrocketed again in January 2021, prompting the Prime Minister to announce a nationwide MCO from 13 January 2021 for two weeks. 2021's MCO allowed more sectors to operate compared with 2020's MCO, namely, manufacturing, construction, services, trading and distribution, as well as plantations and commodities. On the advice of the Prime Minister, the King concurrently declared a state of emergency nationwide, halting all parliamentary sittings or elections.<sup>102</sup> On 21 January 2021, MCO was extended to all Malaysian states and federal territories except Sarawak until 4 February 2021, with an increase in fines and jail terms for individuals caught flouting COVID-19 measures. On 26 January 2021, the Health Ministry reached an agreement with local pharmaceutical companies Pharmaniaga and Duopharma to jointly supply 18.4 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines from China and Russia, with the vaccination drive scheduled to begin on 26 February 2021.<sup>103</sup> As cases remained high throughout January 2021, the nationwide MCO was again extended to 18 February 2021.<sup>104</sup>

Most states transitioned to the CMCO on 19 February 2021, with tourism and cultural sectors being allowed to partially open with CMCO operating procedures, while students were told to return to schools from 1 March 2021. With effect from 5 March 2021, CMCO was reinstated in the states of Selangor, Johor, Penang and the federal territory of Kuala Lumpur, all of which were previously under MCO. The states of Kedah, Kelantan, Negeri Sembilan, Sarawak and Perak remained under CMCO, while the restrictions in the states of Melaka, Pahang, Sabah, Terengganu, and the federal territories of Labuan and Putrajaya were relaxed to the RMCO. Inter-district travel was permitted in all states except Sabah, but inter-state travel remains prohibited.<sup>105</sup>

### 1.3.6 Myanmar

Myanmar suspended visas on arrival from China from 1 February 2020<sup>106</sup>, and later restricted travellers from China, South Korea and some parts of Europe from 14 March 2020. Myanmar confirmed its first case on 23 March 2020 and launched a community lockdown in Chin state effective the next day.<sup>107</sup> The government also instituted additional restrictions on foreign arrivals from 25 March 2020, namely, all incoming Myanmar nationals to be subjected to a 14-day quarantine and all foreign nationals to require a negative Covid-

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<sup>100</sup>See the Edge (2020)

<sup>101</sup>See CSIS (2021) under the Malaysia section

<sup>102</sup>See Yassin (2021)

<sup>103</sup>See CSIS (2021) under the Malaysia section

<sup>104</sup>ibid

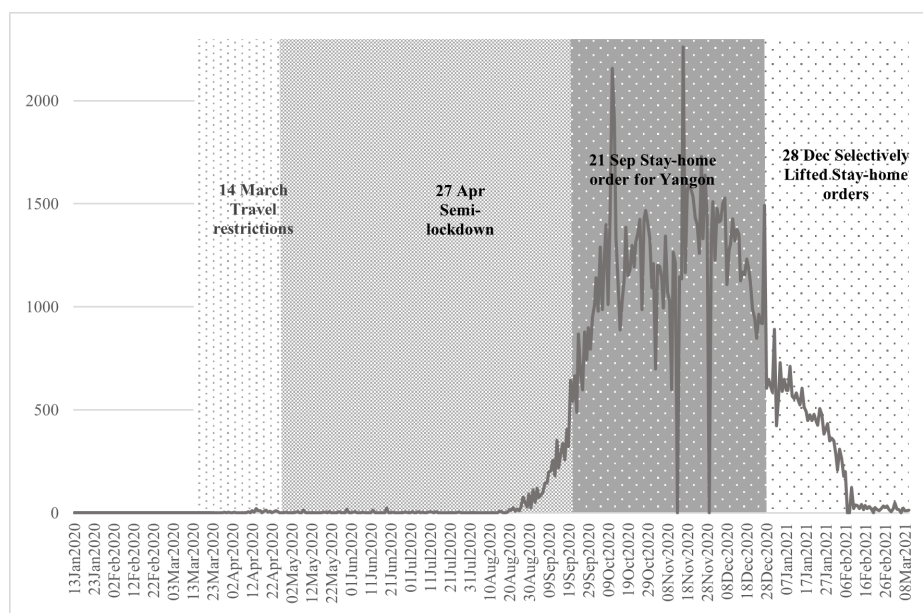
<sup>105</sup>See Yusof (2021)

<sup>106</sup>Aung (2020)

<sup>107</sup>See Mann (2020)

19 test result as well as a 14-day quarantine.<sup>108</sup> Effective 30 March 2020, all non-essential government staff were to work from home from 1-19 April 2020 and all residents to remain indoors except for purchasing necessities or visiting the hospital, gatherings of more than 10 people were prohibited, there was continued closure of entertainment venues, sports centres and spas, while allowing the continued operations of essential utilities including banks, hospitals, telecommunications, water supply and supermarkets.<sup>109</sup> On 3 April 2020, Mandalay prohibited entry and exit of all vehicles, all shops were ordered to close except for those supplying medical items, and residents were advised to stay indoors.

**Figure 1.15: Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Myanmar, 13 Jan 2020 – 10 Mar 2021**



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on WHO data

From 19 April 2020 to 18 June 2020, a partial lockdown, including a curfew, was imposed in some townships in Yangon amid rising cases.<sup>110</sup> Shan, Karen and Kachin states, and Mandalay, Sagaing, Ayeyarwaddy and Bago regions also adopted curfews. On 15 May 2020, the lockdown measures were extended, including the ban on public gatherings, school and cinema closures, and visa and international flight suspensions.<sup>111</sup> As cases fell in June 2020, the lockdown in Yangon and several regions were gradually lifted with relaxation of social restrictions such as the re-opening of schools and allowing more people in mass gatherings. The last remaining township in Yangon lifted its stay-home order on 30 June 2020. On 21 July 2020, the government allowed around half of all schools to reopen, while the remaining half would reopen in August 2020.<sup>112</sup> The government

<sup>108</sup>See Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar (2020)

<sup>109</sup>See Sisoulith (2020)

<sup>110</sup>See CSIS under Myanmar section

<sup>111</sup>ibid

<sup>112</sup>ibid

also allowed outbound air travel for citizens with urgent business abroad on 29 July 2020. Myanmar relaxed social restrictions on 16 August 2020, allowing outdoor gatherings of fewer than 30 people. All of Rakhine state came under lockdown effective from 26 August 2020, after its first reimposition of curfew in its capital Sittwe on 21 August 2020. From 27 August 2020, all government and private high schools were shut down again due to a surge in Covid-19 cases.<sup>113</sup>

From 1 September 2020, parts of Yangon were placed under lockdown, while a quarantine and coronavirus test for individuals entering Yangon was mandated effective from 3 September 2020. Despite heavy restrictions on campaigning ahead of the November elections, Myanmar experienced its second wave in mid-September 2020. The surge in cases forced the government to build new field hospitals in Yangon and instituted a stay-at-home order effective from 21 September 2020. On 24 September 2020, more than 45,000 people were housed in schools, monasteries, government offices and tower blocks, mostly run by volunteers.<sup>114</sup> Lockdowns were gradually reimplemented in 11 townships in Ayeyarwaddy, Bago and Mandalay regions, and Mon state from 26 September 2020.<sup>115</sup> Amid a rise in cases, a stay-home order was instituted for Yangon from 21 September 2020. Most private-sector employees were instructed to work from home and government staff to work on a rotation of two weeks at home and two weeks at the office. Schools had already been closed under previous lockdown measures.<sup>116</sup> On 14 October 2020, Yangon garment factories were permitted to reopen amid fears of a loss in foreign investment. On 27 October 2020, the government announced that Myanmar's private hospitals and clinics would begin treating Covid-19 patients. Domestic flights resumed on 16 December 2020, as Rakhine state restricted residents from travelling without approval from village administrators.

From 21 December 2020, Yangon closed public gardens and parks ahead of Christmas and New Year celebrations.<sup>117</sup> Effective from 28 December 2020, Myanmar lifted stay-home orders in all townships in Yangon except for Kungyangon, Seikkyi Khanaungto and Twante townships. Stay-home orders were also lifted for some townships in Mandalay, Bago, Ayeyarwady regions, and Mon and Kachin states. However, stay-home orders would be imposed in four townships in Mandalay: Aungmyaythazan, Chanmyathazai, Pyigyidagun and Patheingyi.<sup>118</sup> On 8 January 2021, Myanmar ordered 30 million doses of vaccines from India which were expected to arrive by February 2021. 1.5 million doses of Serum Institute of India's Covishield vaccines arrived on 22 January 2021, with healthcare personnel receiving the first doses on 27 January 2021.<sup>119</sup> Following the military coup on 1 February 2021 which resulted in the ouster of the National League for Democracy-led government, COVID-19 testing collapsed nationwide. As health workers were at the forefront of a civil disobedience campaign, daily tests dropped to below

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<sup>113</sup>ibid

<sup>114</sup>ibid

<sup>115</sup>See Open Development Mekong (2020)

<sup>116</sup>See Al Jazeera (2020)

<sup>117</sup>See Open Development Mekong (2020)

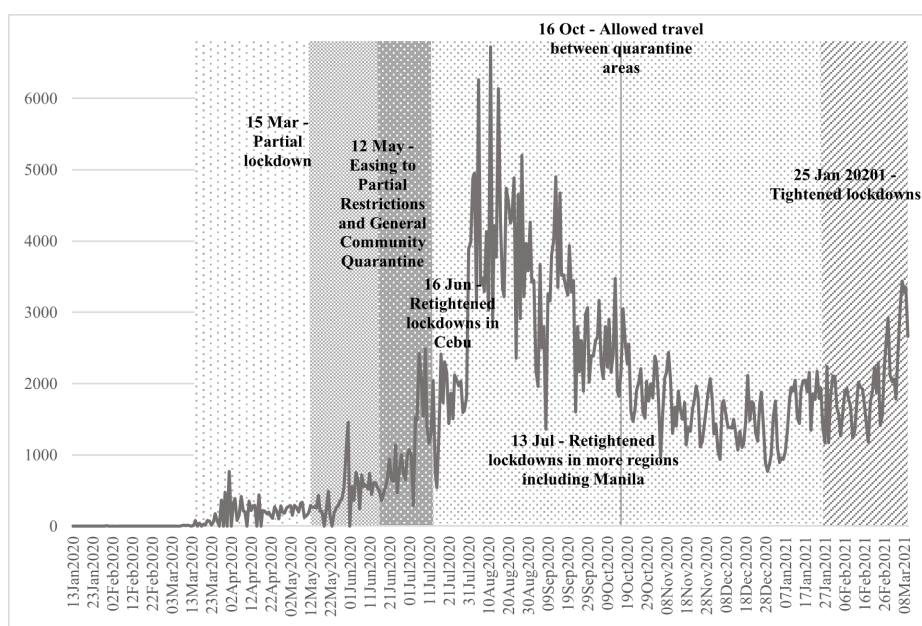
<sup>118</sup>See Xinhua (2020d) - Myanmar to lift stay-at-home order in some townships

<sup>119</sup>See Htwe (2021)

2,000 on 8 February 2021, compared with a daily average of more than 17,000 in the days preceding the coup.<sup>120</sup>

### 1.3.7 Philippines

Figure 1.16: Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Philippines, 13 Jan 2020 – 10 Mar 2021



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on WHO data

Philippines confirmed its first case on 30 January 2020. A temporary travel ban was imposed from 31 January 2020 on all foreign arrivals from Hubei province in China.<sup>121</sup> On 2 February 2020, the government also banned travel to and arrivals from the entire People’s Republic of China, Hong Kong and Macau. Citizens and permanent residents were allowed in the country subjected to a mandatory 14-day quarantine.<sup>122</sup> Following a steady increase in the number of cases, a national public health emergency was declared, putting Metro Manila under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) from 15 March 2020 to 14 April 2020, which was later expanded to the entire Luzon region.<sup>123</sup> Land and domestic sea and air travel from Metro Manila was tightened.<sup>124</sup> International arrivals from countries with localised Covid-19 transmissions were restricted, except for citizens and holders of permanent resident and diplomat visas. Metro Manila and several neighbouring areas were also put under curfews. Under the ECQ, mass gatherings and public transport ceased, non-essential businesses were closed, movement of people was prohibited except

<sup>120</sup>See CNA (2021b) - COVID-19 testing collapses in Myanmar after coup

<sup>121</sup>See Gita-Carlos (2020)

<sup>122</sup>See Andanar (2020)

<sup>123</sup>See Duterte (2020a) - 12 March 2020

<sup>124</sup>See Duterte (2020b) – 16 March 2020

to obtain essential goods, and government officials and the population were instructed to work from home.<sup>125</sup>

Beginning on 1 May 2020, low-risk to moderate-risk areas were gradually transitioned to the general community quarantine (GCQ).<sup>126</sup> GCQ further relaxed restrictions, allowing public transport at reduced capacity, businesses to operate at 50% to 100% of their capacity depending on their industry, schools to reopen minimally and shopping malls were allowed to operate, although only select stalls were allowed to open. Metro Manila and other high-risk areas in Luzon were later elevated to the MECQ from 16-31 May 20.<sup>127</sup> Under the MECQ, mass gatherings were slightly relaxed to allow five people, biking and non-motorised transport were encouraged, while inter-island travel was prohibited.<sup>128</sup> Manila transitioned to the GCQ on 1 June 2020<sup>129</sup>. Several Highly Urbanized Cities and Independent Component Cities such as Cebu, Quezon and Davao reverted to the ECQ on 15-30 June 2020.<sup>130</sup> A spike in cases in August 2020, with cases crossing the 85,000-mark, prompted Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal to revert to MECQ from 4-28 August 2020 and then GCQ from 19-31 August 2020.<sup>131</sup> The government on 15 August 2020 announced the extension of GCQ in provinces on Luzon, Panay and Cebu islands until end August. Public transportation resumed in Metro Manila on 19 August 2020, while several businesses resumed operations on 1 September 2020 under GCQ rules.<sup>132</sup>

By end September 2020, most of the country was under the MGCQ except for Metro Manila, Batangas, Bulacan and a few other high-risk areas which remained under GCQ.<sup>133</sup> The government on 19 October 2020 shortened curfew hours in Manila<sup>134</sup>, while non-essential overseas travel resumed on 21 October 2020 and foreign nationals on investment visas were allowed entry beginning on 1 November 2020. On 19 November 2020, it was announced that the approval time for vaccines already greenlit by other nations would be shortened from six months to three weeks and, on 23 November 2020, President Duterte approved pre-payment for the Pfizer vaccine<sup>135</sup>. From 4 December 2020, the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) allowed workshops, consumer trade shows and board meetings to be conducted at 30% capacity of venues in areas under GCQ.<sup>136</sup> All flights to the United Kingdom were suspended from 24 December 2020 following the emergence of the new UK strain, while foreign travellers and citizens arriving from countries where the new strain was detected were barred entry.<sup>137</sup> The travel ban was extended to arrivals from the US on 3 January

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<sup>125</sup>See Ranada (2020a)

<sup>126</sup>See Roque (2020a) - GCQ to be imposed May 1 in areas removed from ECQ list: Palace

<sup>127</sup>See World Law Group (2020)

<sup>128</sup>See Ranada (2020a) - EXPLAINER: What's modified ECQ and modified GCQ?

<sup>129</sup>See Ranada (2020b) - Duterte approves GCQ for Metro Manila starting June 1

<sup>130</sup>See Duterte (2020c) - 15 June 2020

<sup>131</sup>See Roque (2020b) - August 3, 2020

<sup>132</sup>See CSIS under Philippines section

<sup>133</sup>See Kravchuk (2020)

<sup>134</sup>See Duterte (2020e) - October 19, 2020

<sup>135</sup>See Duterte (2020f) - November 23, 2020

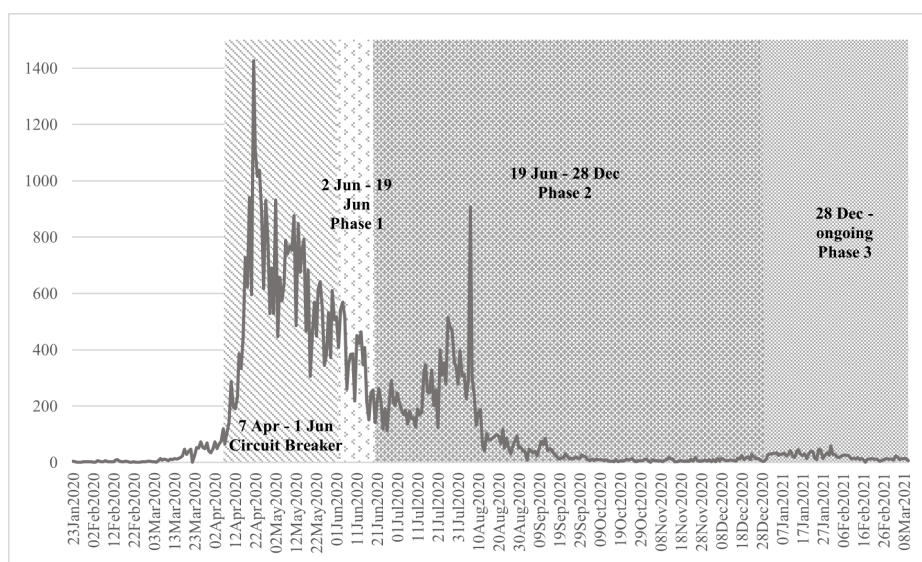
<sup>136</sup>See Aguilar (2020)

<sup>137</sup>See Duterte (2020g) - December 26, 2020

2021.<sup>138</sup> As of 14 January 2021, Philippines had secured 30 million doses from Novavax, 25 million from Sinovac, and an expected 20 million and 10 million from AstraZeneca and Moderna respectively<sup>139</sup>. On 25 January 2021, it was announced that individuals aged 10 to 65 are no longer allowed to leave their homes in MGCQ areas.<sup>140</sup> The Manila City government also cancelled all Chinese New Year celebrations and activities, in addition to banning the sale of liquor and other alcoholic beverages.<sup>141</sup> Partial curbs under the GCQ in Manila which were instituted in August 2020 were extended to 31 January 2021<sup>142</sup>, which was later extended until the end of March 2021<sup>143</sup>, or until mass vaccinations begin. The Cordillera Administrative Region, in addition to Batangas, Tacloban City, Davao City, Davao del Norte, Lanao del Sur and Iligan City, were also elevated to GCQ status for the entire month of February as the UK variant of the virus was detected in the northern region.<sup>144</sup>

### 1.3.8 Singapore

Figure 1.17: Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Singapore, 13 Jan 2020 – 10 Mar 2021



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on WHO data

Singapore recorded its first confirmed case and initiated contact tracing on 23 January 2020.<sup>145</sup> Travellers from Hubei, China, were banned from entering from 29 January 2020,

<sup>138</sup>See Tomacruz (2021)

<sup>139</sup>See CSIS under Philippines section

<sup>140</sup>See Aguilar (2021) - Duterte recalls IATF rule allowing persons aged 10-14 to go out in MGCQ areas

<sup>141</sup>See Gonzales (2021)

<sup>142</sup>See CNA (2020c) - Philippines prolongs partial COVID-19 curbs in Manila to Jan 31

<sup>143</sup>See CNA (2021d) - Philippines extends partial COVID-19 curbs in capital until end-March

<sup>144</sup>See CNN Philippines (2021)

<sup>145</sup>See Goh (2020)

while returning residents (Singaporeans, Permanent Residents and Long-Term Pass Holders) were quarantined.<sup>146</sup> Cases rose steadily until the end of January 2020, all from Wuhan, China. From 1 February 2020, visitors with recent travel history to mainland China were denied entry or transit. Local clusters emerged on 4 February 2020, involving shops frequented by Chinese tourists.<sup>147</sup> In the same week, the Ministry of Health raised the Disease Outbreak Response System Condition (DORSCON) level to orange, the first time since the H1N1 pandemic.<sup>148</sup>

In March, safe distancing measures were announced as cases continued to accelerate. Students from local institutes of higher learning who were on overseas internships or exchange programmes were recalled. The increase in returning residents led to an increase in the number of imported cases. Singapore's borders were gradually tightened, ranging from an outright ban to conditional entry, depending on the source of arrival. All short-term visitors were banned from arriving in or transiting through Singapore from 23 March 2020, except for people involved in essential services such as healthcare and transport.<sup>149</sup> Safe distancing measures were also further tightened with closure of entertainment venues and crowd restrictions on retail, attractions and FB outlets.<sup>150</sup>

In April 2020, cases spiked in migrant worker dorms, forcing authorities to impose a mandatory quarantine of 19,800 migrant workers.<sup>151</sup> A national partial lockdown, known as the "circuit breaker," was put into effect from 7 April 2020.<sup>152</sup> All non-essential workplaces were closed and all schools transitioned to home-based learning, while food establishments were only allowed to cater for take-aways and the wearing of masks was made compulsory. The circuit breaker was tightened on 21 April 2020, with more services being categorised as non-essential and certain high-density locations being restricted to public access. The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) also instructed migrant workers in dormitories to stop working until 4 May 2020. The government created temporary community care facilities to treat patients in low-risk categories, allowing hospitals to cater to those in higher risk categories.<sup>153</sup>

As community and dormitory cases stabilised, the government began transition to a three-phased resumption of activities.<sup>154</sup> Phase 1 was implemented from 2 June 2020, in which (1) some businesses reopened with safe management measures, (2) households were allowed to receive two visitors per day, (3) primary and secondary school graduating cohorts were to attend school daily, (4) essential care services would continue. Phase 2, which began on 19 June 2020, gradually allowed (1) most businesses to resume, with safe management measures, group size and capacity limits in place, (2) small-group gatherings of up to five persons will be allowed and households may receive up to five visitors per day, (3) schools to fully reopen and institutes of higher learning to gradually

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<sup>146</sup>See Ministry of Health Singapore (2020a)

<sup>147</sup>See Khalik and Chang (2020)

<sup>148</sup>See Ng (2020)

<sup>149</sup>See Ministry of Health Singapore (2020b)

<sup>150</sup>See Ministry of Health, Singapore (2020c)

<sup>151</sup>See Tang and Co (2020)

<sup>152</sup>See Ministry of Health Singapore (2020d)

<sup>153</sup>See Lim (2020)

<sup>154</sup>See Multi-Ministry Taskforce Singapore (2020)

increase the number of students back on campus, (4) retail businesses, public facilities, clubs and societies, and food and beverage outlets to reopen.

On 28 June 2020, Singapore established the PCA with Malaysia to allow residents who hold long-term immigration passes of either country to transit between both countries. This was later extended to include the RGL scheme on 10 August 2020 for the commute of short-term business travellers. As imported cases increased in early August 2020, inbound travellers were required to wear quarantine monitoring devices starting on 11 August 2020. As migrant workers returned to work in August 2020, a new cluster of cases was detected at Sungei Tengah Lodge, one of Singapore's largest dormitories.<sup>155</sup>

Singapore announced the establishment of RGLs with Brunei on 1 September 2020 and with Japan on 18 September 2020, after the success of its RGL with Malaysia in August 2020.<sup>156</sup> The government also started the distribution of the TraceTogether contact-tracing tokens nationwide on 14 September 2020.<sup>157</sup> Entry restrictions to four popular markets were lifted on 12 September 2020, while more groups of people were allowed to return to work on 28 September 2020.<sup>158</sup> Singapore established RGLs with Germany and Indonesia on 23 October 2020 and 26 October 2020 respectively. Additionally, all travellers from China and Victoria, Australia, would be granted entry without being quarantined starting on 6 November 2020.<sup>159</sup> On the same day, a limited number of nightlife establishments was allowed to reopen under a pilot programme.

A resurgence of cases in Malaysia prompted further tightening of borders on 20 November 2020.<sup>160</sup> For similar reasons, the Singapore-Hong Kong Air Travel Bubble announced earlier in November was deferred indefinitely and border restrictions for travellers from Hong Kong were tightened on 13 December 2020.<sup>161</sup> Restrictions on arrivals were tightened for travellers from the United Kingdom and New South Wales, Australia, on 23 December 2020<sup>162</sup>, and travellers from South Korea on 24 December 2020.<sup>163</sup> Singapore entered Phase 3 on 28 December 2020, in which (1) group gatherings were expanded to eight persons, (2) capacity limits of premises could increase up to 65%, (3) congregations and worship services could increase up to 250 people, (4) international borders could gradually reopen.

As of 13 January 2021, 6,200 people, including the Prime Minister and Health Minister, were vaccinated after the roll-out of vaccines for frontline healthcare personnel on 30 December 2020.<sup>164</sup> From 27 January 2021, seniors in Tanjong Pagar and Ang Mo Kio constituencies received their first shots of vaccines, starting the vaccination drive for the community. Besides polyclinics and selected Public Health Preparedness Clinics, more

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<sup>155</sup>CSIS

<sup>156</sup>See Ministry of Foreign Affairs Singapore (2020)

<sup>157</sup>See Ministry of Health Singapore (2020e)

<sup>158</sup>CSIS

<sup>159</sup>See CAAS (2020a)

<sup>160</sup>See Raguraman (2020)

<sup>161</sup>See CAAS (2020b)

<sup>162</sup>See Ministry of Health Singapore (2020f)

<sup>163</sup>See Ministry of Health Singapore (2020g)

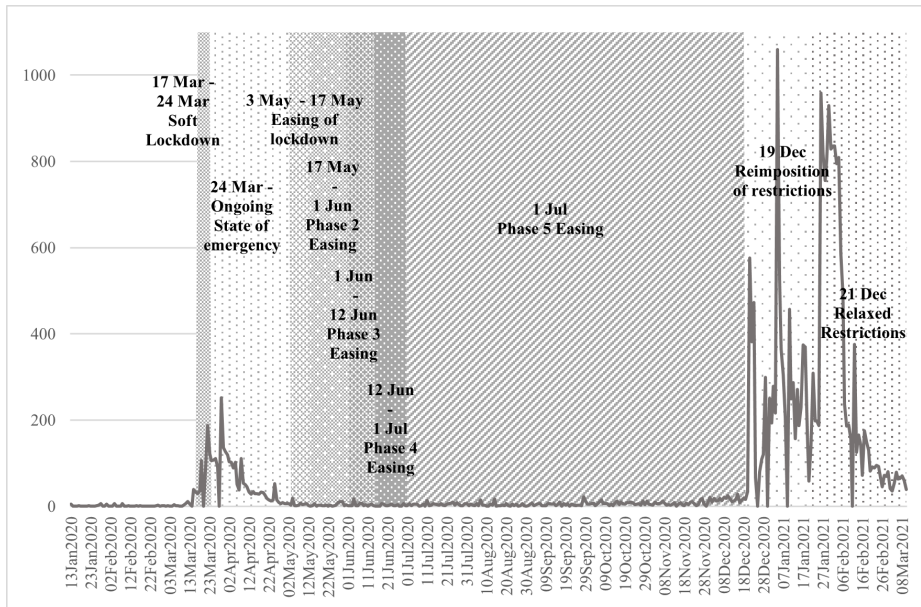
<sup>164</sup>See Yuen (2021)



vaccination centres were planned to be set up to increase accessibility.<sup>165</sup>

### 1.3.9 Thailand

Figure 1.18: Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Thailand, 13 Jan 2020 – 10 Mar 2021



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on WHO data

Thailand's first case was confirmed on 12 January 2020. Thailand's main airports screened passengers arriving from China as cases increased.<sup>166</sup> On 31 January 2020, Thailand recorded its first locally transmitted case. Over the next week, Thailand dispatched flights to Wuhan to bring back its students there. Cases continued to increase gradually but remained low throughout the month. Additionally, beginning on 3 January 2020, the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) announced that it would screen all passengers from Wuhan, China, in all major airports.<sup>167</sup> Temperature screening was later extended to Japan and Singapore from 18 February 2020<sup>168</sup>, South Korea and Taiwan from 21 February 2020.<sup>169</sup>

On 1 March 2020, MOPH confirmed its first death. Cases steadily increased throughout the month before spiking on 21 March 2020. Bangkok's Governor promptly ordered all Bangkok markets, beauty salons, entertainment venues, exhibition and convention centres, educational institutions at all levels, spas and malls to close from 22 March 2020 to 12 April 2020, only allowing supermarkets, pharmacies and take-away restaurants to

<sup>165</sup>See Ministry of Health Singapore (2021)

<sup>166</sup>See Department of Disease Control Thailand (2020a)

<sup>167</sup>See Department of Disease Control Thailand (2020b)

<sup>168</sup>See Wipatayotin (2020a) - Japanese and S'pore arrivals screened

<sup>169</sup>See Wipatayotin (2020b) - Thailand expands virus detection

open.<sup>170</sup> With effect from 26 March 2020, Thailand banned entry to all foreigners, with the exception of work permit holders, those on diplomatic missions or those in essential services.<sup>171</sup> Places where people congregate such as malls, internet cafes, spas, entertainment venues and massage parlours were also told to shut down.<sup>172</sup> Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha declared an Emergency Situation effective from 26 March 2020<sup>173</sup>, which would later be extended to January 2021. From mid-April to mid-May 2020, travel bans were instituted at the province level, while mask-wearing and temperature checks were made mandatory.

As new cases fell, Thailand eased restrictions from 3 May 2020. The first stage of easing allowed businesses such as markets, street hawkers, supermarkets, barbers, public parks and pet grooming shops to re-open.<sup>174</sup> The next stage, which took off on 17 May 2020, allowed more businesses to reopen, such as libraries, fitness centres and convention halls, in addition to shortening curfew hours by one hour.<sup>175</sup> Thailand entered the third phase beginning on 1 June 2020, which entailed longer business hours for malls, further shortening of the curfew and more business venues to reopen<sup>176</sup>. Thailand's fourth phase of easing began on 15 June 2020, which involved (1) re-opening of schools, (2) increasing the capacity of businesses such as exhibition halls, spas, sports venues, elderly care centres, (3) repeal of the curfew, (4) relaxation of restrictions on the operation of buses, trains, vans and domestic flights.<sup>177</sup>

On 1 July 2020, Thailand entered its fifth phase. All entertainment businesses, shopping malls, convention centres and saunas were allowed to resume normal operations, with the sale of food and beverages in restaurants, food parks and hotels allowed past midnight.<sup>178</sup> Thailand also lifted its ban on incoming flights and reopened 37 checkpoints along its borders with Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia and Malaysia to facilitate cargo transport.<sup>179</sup> A temporary suspension of international flights was put in place on 14 July 2020 after the daughter of a Sudanese attaché tested positive. Migrant workers from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam were allowed to return to Thailand on 23 July 2020.<sup>180</sup>

In phase 6 which started on 1 August 2020, business operators such as tour agencies, business representatives and diplomats were allowed to bring in foreign visitors.<sup>181</sup> All schools resumed in-person classes on 13 August 2020, with more than 3,000 foreign teachers allowed entry.<sup>182</sup> On 3 September 2020, Thai Airways announced that it would operate 18 special flights to European and Asian cities to repatriate Thai citizens through-

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<sup>170</sup>See Wacharoen (2020)

<sup>171</sup>See Artis et al. (2020)

<sup>172</sup>See Satrusayang (2020)

<sup>173</sup>See Ministry of Foreign Affairs Thailand (2020)

<sup>174</sup>See Bangprapa (2020a)

<sup>175</sup>See the Nation (2020)

<sup>176</sup>See Xinhua (2020a) - Thailand's third phase of lockdown relaxation to take effect on June 1

<sup>177</sup>See Khaosod (2020)

<sup>178</sup>See Tourism Authority of Thailand (2020)

<sup>179</sup>See Xinhua (2020b) - Thailand reopens 37 border checkpoints for cross-border cargo transport

<sup>180</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Thailand section

<sup>181</sup>See Bangprapa (2020b)

<sup>182</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Thailand section

out September 2020<sup>183</sup>. Following a surge of cases in Myanmar and the illegal entrance of three Cambodians, Thailand tightened security on its northern borders.<sup>184</sup>

Thailand welcomed its first foreign tourist on 20 October 2020 under the Special Tourist Visa programme.<sup>185</sup> In November 2020, clusters were detected along the Myanmar border due to the influx of illegal border crossings, prompting the government to erect barricades along Thailand's borders with Myanmar.<sup>186</sup>

In December 2020, an outbreak occurred in Samut Sakon which prompted the government to test thousands of migrant Myanmarese workers connected to a seafood market.<sup>187</sup> The Office of the Private Education Commission on 22 December 2020 closed more than 100 schools in Bangkok and Samut Sakhon<sup>188</sup>, while the Department of Health Service Support instructed private hospitals nationwide to offer free Covid-19 tests for at-risk individuals.<sup>189</sup> New clusters that emerged in Bangkok in late December 2020 prompted a ban on betting businesses and midnight closures for its bars, nightclubs and music venues ahead of New Year celebrations.<sup>190</sup>

With effect from 4 January 2021, new restrictions on 28 red zone provinces were issued. The new measures included (1) closure of educational institutions, (2) closure of entertainment venues, (3) ban on high-risk activities such as banquets, meetings and seminars, (4) a limit on dine-in patrons at eateries, as well as mandating eateries to only allow take-aways from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m., (5) granting of authority to provincial governors to close premises, (6) encouraging employees to work from home, (7) strict health screening of interprovincial passengers.<sup>191</sup> On 5 January 2021, the cabinet approved plans to procure 35 million doses of vaccines on top of 28 million to be shipped in the first half of 2021<sup>192</sup>, with the first lot of 200,000 doses going to health personnel in red zones and people in high-risk groups in February 2021.<sup>193</sup>

From 22 January 2021, subject to restrictions, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration reopened game arcades, care centres for the elderly, fitness centres, beauty and tattoo salons, and party venues, among others.<sup>194</sup> Starting on 1 February 2021, restaurants in Bangkok were allowed to serve diners until 11 p.m., although consumption of alcoholic beverages in the premises was still banned. Education institutions may also resume classes, with a cap of 25 students per physical classroom.<sup>195</sup> Escalating cases in two major fresh food markets on the northern outskirts of Bangkok prompted authorities to close the markets in Thanyaburi district, Pathum Thani province from 12-25 February 2021. The closure also covered commercial buildings in the vicinity of the two markets.

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<sup>183</sup>ibid

<sup>184</sup>See Bangkok Post (2020a)

<sup>185</sup>See Harmer (2020)

<sup>186</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Thailand section

<sup>187</sup>See Yuda (2020)

<sup>188</sup>See Bangkok Post (2020b)

<sup>189</sup>See Bangkok Post (2020c)

<sup>190</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Thailand section

<sup>191</sup>See Bangprapa (2021)

<sup>192</sup>See Bangkok Post (2021a)

<sup>193</sup>See Bangkok Post (2021b)

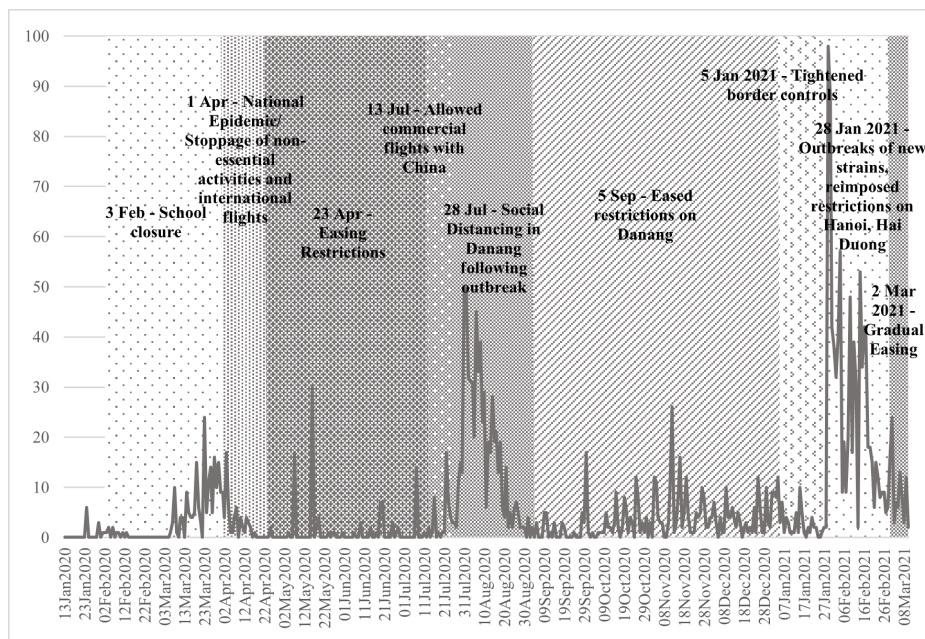
<sup>194</sup>See Wanchaoren (2021)

<sup>195</sup>See Khaosod (2021)

The cases were linked to the Samut Sakhon wave in December 2020.<sup>196</sup> On 28 February 2021, Thailand officially kicked off its vaccination programme with Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and a group of healthcare workers receiving the first doses from Sinovac.<sup>197</sup>

### 1.3.10 Vietnam

Figure 1.19: Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Vietnam, 13 Jan 2020 – 10 Mar 2021



Source: Asia Competitiveness Institute based on WHO data

Vietnam confirmed its first case on 23 January 2020. A week later, Vietnam assembled the National Steering Committee to coordinate the government’s strategy, with meetings planned every other day.<sup>198</sup> On 29 January 2020, the Ministry of Health established 40 mobile rapid response teams in affected locations, to quarantine, disinfect and transport patients or suspected patients.<sup>199</sup> On 1 February 2020, Prime Minister Ngyuen Xuan Phuc declared the COVID-19 pandemic as an epidemic, as the Civil Authority of Vietnam revoked all permits granted for flights between Vietnam and China, as well as closing all land borders with China.<sup>200</sup> From 3 February 2020, the Ministry of Education and Training suspended all school activities in more than 50 provinces and cities.<sup>201</sup> Strict containment measures were gradually implemented, including airport health screenings,

<sup>196</sup>See Wongyala (2021)

<sup>197</sup>See The Straits Times (2021b)

<sup>198</sup>See Our World in Data (2020)

<sup>199</sup>See NLD (2020)

<sup>200</sup>See Reuters (2020a)

<sup>201</sup>See AMRO (2021) under the Containment section of the Vietnam chapter

physical distancing, travel bans on foreign visitors, a 14-day quarantine period for international arrivals and public event cancellations.<sup>202</sup> The government also released information channels on its website and sanctioned those spreading fake news and rumours regarding Covid-19.<sup>203</sup>

Following the emergence of a cluster in Binh Xuyen district in Vinh Phuc province in February 2020, the government immediately locked down the district until 4 March 2020.<sup>204</sup> The province leadership later activated mobile food shops and handed out free masks. From 15 March 2020, a travel ban on flights from 27 European countries, including the UK, was put in place, visa issuance to all foreigners was suspended and foreign arrivals were required to be quarantined for 14 days.<sup>205</sup> From 28 March 2020, strong restrictions were implemented, including banning gatherings of more than 20 people for religious, sports or entertainment activities; limiting communication and transportation among provinces; suspending all service-related non-essential businesses.<sup>206</sup>

A nationwide social distancing measure was implemented from 1-15 April 2020, following the Prime Minister's declaration of the outbreak as a nationwide pandemic. Residents were prohibited from leaving their houses unless for "essential needs," gatherings of more than two people in public areas, other than schools, hospitals or workplaces, were banned and public transportation was suspended.<sup>207</sup> On 23 April 2020, the national lockdown was eased, allowing the re-opening of non-essential services and restaurants. "Unnecessary major events" remained banned and non-essential public services suspended.<sup>208</sup> Schools were also gradually reopened according to the severity in each province. Schools and universities begun re-admitting students from 4 May 2020, subject to safe distancing measures.<sup>209</sup> On 7 May 2020, the Ministry of Transport announced that all public and commercial transport could begin to operate at full capacity and frequency.<sup>210</sup> On 5 June 2020, Vietnam Airlines announced its full restoration of domestic flights, while the first international flight from Japan arrived in Vietnam on 25 June 2020.<sup>211</sup> Cross-border travel with Cambodia resumed on 22 June 2020.<sup>212</sup> On 25 July 2020, a positive case was detected in Da Nang, three months after the previous positive case. The Prime Minister implemented a social distancing order in the city starting on 28 July 2020.<sup>213</sup> The government ordered a suspension of all international flights at Da Nang International Airport, and enforced social distancing in the city. Festivals, religious ceremonies, sports and other events that gather a large number of people were banned, while 80,000 tourists were evacuated from the city.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>202</sup>See IMF (2020)

<sup>203</sup>See Open Development Vietnam (2020)

<sup>204</sup>See Ministry of Health Vietnam (2020)

<sup>205</sup>See Reuters (2020b) - Vietnam to refuse visitors from UK, Schengen countries: government

<sup>206</sup>See Reuters (2020c) - Vietnam bans big gatherings, cuts flights in coronavirus battle

<sup>207</sup>See Nguyen and Nguyen (2020)

<sup>208</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Vietnam section

<sup>209</sup>See Vietnamnet (2020)

<sup>210</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Vietnam section

<sup>211</sup>See VnExpress (2020)

<sup>212</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Vietnam section

<sup>213</sup>See Xinhua (2020c)

<sup>214</sup>See Vietnam Government Portal (2020a)

With the second-largest outbreak after Da Nang, neighbouring Quang Nam province extended the suspension of non-essential services from 29 July 2020<sup>215</sup> to 28 August 2020.<sup>216</sup> From 19 August 2020, all restaurants in Hanoi were required to adopt safe distancing measures and the wearing of masks<sup>217</sup>. Da Nang eased social distancing from 5 September 2020 after 14 days of zero cases, with restaurants and coffee shops allowed to reopen subject to safe distancing measures. Further easing took place on 11 September 2020 with more shops and restaurants allowed to open.<sup>218</sup> Additionally, international students and foreign family members of citizens were allowed to enter Vietnam as commercial flights to Guangzhou, Seoul, Tokyo, Taipei, Phnom Penh and Vientiane resumed in late September 2020.<sup>219</sup> Pending the issuance of updated quarantine procedures, Vietnam temporarily suspended inbound flights on 8 October 2020.<sup>220</sup> Vietnam and Japan lifted mandatory quarantine for short-term visits for businesspeople and officials from 1 November 2020.<sup>221</sup> On 1 December 2020, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc announced a temporary halt to all inbound international commercial flights except for repatriation flights<sup>222</sup>, while Ho Chi Minh City instructed 2,000 students to stay home after a teacher was found to be tested positive.<sup>223</sup> Vietnam's homegrown Nanocovax vaccine was administered to volunteers on 17 December 2020.<sup>224</sup>

Following the emergence of the new strain, Vietnam suspended inbound flights from the United Kingdom and South Africa on 5 January 2021. Additionally, it would limit inbound flights until the end of the Lunar New Year holiday in mid-February 2021.<sup>225</sup> On 28 January 2021, Vietnam saw its first outbreak after nearly two months in Hai Duong and Quang Ninh provinces. The outbreak, which infected more than 276 people in 10 provinces and cities, was found to be the more contagious British strain.<sup>226</sup> Accordingly, Hai Duong, the country's biggest hotspot in the outbreak, was placed under a 21-day lockdown from 28 January 2021.<sup>227</sup> Public activity and passenger transportation out of the town was prohibited, apart from exceptional cases. Several communes and towns in the provinces of Bac Giang, Gia Lai, Binh Duong and Quang Ninh, as well as several areas in the cities of Hanoi and Hai Phong, were also locked down.<sup>228</sup> Hanoi authorities decided to shut down all entertainment venues and schools, as well as instructing residents to avoid non-essential gatherings from 1 February 2021.<sup>229</sup> Hai Duong was put under stay-home orders from 16 February 2021, with people and goods prohibited from exiting

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<sup>215</sup>See Nguyen (2020)

<sup>216</sup>See Thanh (2020)

<sup>217</sup>See Vo (2020)

<sup>218</sup>See Vietnam Government Portal (2020b)

<sup>219</sup>See Viet (2020)

<sup>220</sup>See Garda (2020)

<sup>221</sup>See Dezan Shira Associates (2021)

<sup>222</sup>See Viet and Huu (2020)

<sup>223</sup>See Manh (2020)

<sup>224</sup>See CSIS (2021) under Vietnam section

<sup>225</sup>ibid

<sup>226</sup>See CNA (2021a) - Vietnam confirms latest COVID-19 outbreak is caused by more contagious UK variant

<sup>227</sup>See Nguyen (2021)

<sup>228</sup>ibid

<sup>229</sup>See Viet Nam News (2021a)

the city.<sup>230</sup> Meanwhile, Ho Chi Minh City instructed the temporary closure of all cultural, sports and entertainment outlets from 9 February 2021.<sup>231</sup> Ho Chi Minh City and some northern localities also mandated compulsory isolation for people returning from COVID-19 hotspots in the country following the Lunar New Year celebrations. Places under social distancing include the communes of Thuy An, An Sinh, Binh Duong, Nguyen Hue in Dong Trieu Town in the northern province of Quang Ninh and the entire Hai Duong Province.<sup>232</sup> March 2021 saw the gradual easing of restrictions with Ho Chi Minh City on 1 March 2021<sup>233</sup>, Hanoi on 2 March 2021<sup>234</sup> and Hai Duong on 3 March 2021.<sup>235</sup>

## 1.4 Concluding Remarks

In the course of this chapter, it is found that ASEAN entered 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic on solid ground. Given the impact of US-China trade disputes, the ASEAN region has appeared to be an increasingly attractive destination for FDI. This FDI inflow and trends in exports provide an indicator of shifting global value chains and a pivot towards the region as a production base for China and the US.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the policies documented in this chapter have several key implications. Firstly, the collective response of the AMS, chiefly under the ACRF, will have implications beyond the pandemic. A successful, coordinated and inclusive response by ASEAN will serve as a strong signal to a turbulent world that ASEAN is a region of stability, open and attractive to global trade and investment.

Secondly, the continued urbanisation of the region as economies develop has implications on disease transmission and quality of life. Chapter 2 will discuss in further detail the dimensions of development that countries should keep in mind as urbanisation spreads to mitigate the negative impacts. The analysis of COVID-19 in Chapter 2 will be conducted using the results of the 2020 Annual Competitiveness Analysis for ASEAN-10 economies. The chapter will also update the results based on latest available data at the time of the study, bringing the coverage of the index to cover the years of 2000 to 2017. The indices in Chapter 2 provide a rounded and comprehensive analysis of the various facets of economic competitiveness in ASEAN.

Thirdly, the repeated waves of COVID-19 infections highlight the importance of good governance and responsive policy in the future as economies start to strain under pandemic restrictions and pressure for re-opening grows. This will be expanded upon in Chapter 3, the concluding chapter detailing the economic policies and economic impact of the pandemic on the AMS using a modified version of the Annual Competitiveness Index in Chapter 2.

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<sup>230</sup>See Viet Nam News (2021b)

<sup>231</sup>See Viet Nam News (2021c)

<sup>232</sup>See Le Phuong et al (2021)

<sup>233</sup>See Viet Nam News (2021c)

<sup>234</sup>See Viet Nam News (2021d)

<sup>235</sup>See Viet Nam News (2021e)

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