



MEDIA STATEMENT

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ASEAN MALAYSIA CHAIRMANSHIP 2025

Malaysia Elected as Chair of Working Group on Data Sharing, Analysis, Dissemination and Communication of Statistics (WGDSA), 2026–2027

Uniting ASEAN Voices for a Data-Inclusive Future

PUTRAJAYA, 11 June 2025 – Under the banner of Malaysia’s ASEAN Chairmanship 2025 themed “Inclusivity and Sustainability,” the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) successfully hosted the 23rd Meeting of the Working Group on Data Sharing, Analysis, Dissemination and Communication of Statistics (WGDSA23) from 10 to 11 June 2025 in Putrajaya.

As a mark of continued trust and recognition, **Malaysia was unanimously elected as Chair of the WGDSA for the 2026–2027 term** during the 23rd WGDSA Meeting. This significant appointment reaffirms the DOSM’s leadership role in advancing regional statistical collaboration, communication and innovation within ASEAN.

WGDSA brought together 18 delegates from ASEAN Member States (AMS) and the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEANstats), including virtual participation from Myanmar, to advance regional statistical cooperation, promote data transparency, and strengthen communication strategies under the ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS).

In his opening remarks, YBhg. Dato’ Sri Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin, Chief Statistician of Malaysia and Chair of ACSS15, reaffirmed Malaysia’s strong commitment to fostering innovation, inclusivity and resilience in the regional statistical ecosystem. He emphasised the central role of accessible, reliable and timely statistics in enabling evidence-based policymaking and supporting ASEAN’s integration and development goals.

“As we move forward together, it is our collective responsibility to ensure that statistics are communicated clearly, shared meaningfully and used effectively to support ASEAN’s progress. Malaysia as ASEAN Chair 2025, remains committed to promoting statistical cooperation, capacity-building, and innovation across the region,” he said.

The WGDSA23 served as a strategic platform for AMS to review progress and advance key regional statistical initiatives. Discussions at the meeting centred on the

implementation of the WGDSA Multi-Year Plan (MYP), expansion of the ASEAN Statistical Indicators – Consolidated Template (ASI-CT), integration of Application Programming Interfaces (API) for real-time data access, and the expansion of statistical outreach through initiatives such as the ASEAN Virtual Learning Academy and targeted awareness programmes. Specifically, the meeting discussed the enhancement of ASI-CT data collection template for indicators in the areas of MSME, manufacturing industry, inflation, population, and employment.

Between 2016 and 2023, ASEAN demonstrated robust growth across multiple sectors. The region's nominal GDP rose by 42.2%, from USD 2.66 trillion to USD 3.79 trillion, while the population increased from 644.1 million to 677.6 million. Trade in goods expanded by 32.6%, reaching USD 2.94 trillion from USD 2.22 trillion, and trade in services saw a strong rise of 61.5%, from USD 670.5 billion to USD 1.08 trillion. Intra-ASEAN trade also grew significantly, from USD 542.9 billion to around USD 810 billion. Moreover, internet penetration surged from approximately 46% to nearly 78%, underscoring ASEAN's accelerating digital transformation and connectivity across the region.

These efforts have formed the backbone of ASEAN's commitment to inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development. WGDSA's efforts, along with other ACSS working groups, have helped increase the number of indicators compiled in ASEANstats database. The ASI-CT now houses over 700 harmonised indicators, including those in emerging domains such as informal employment, MSME, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Although the data availability is still varied between AMS, the availability rate is improving overtime.

Malaysia's recognition as the top-ranked country in the Open Data Inventory (ODIN) 2023/2024 by Open Data Watch further underscores the nation's commitment to transparency, data quality, and open access. "This recognition is not only a national milestone, but a regional call to action to build public trust in official statistics and foster a culture of openness and statistical literacy," Dato' Sri Dr. Uzir added.

"As members of the statistical community, we recognise the critical importance of transparency, openness, and accessibility in supporting evidence-based decision-making whether by policymakers, businesses, investors, or the public at large," said YBhg. Dato' Sri Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin, Chief Statistician of Malaysia.

"In today's world, statistics and data have become some of the most valuable assets. When we have quality data and reliable statistics, we hold powerful tools for making informed decisions. These resources enable us to optimise planning and ensure that every decision is guided by evidence. This is key to achieving national development goals and ensuring that no one is left behind."

“From a simple economic perspective, we know that human wants are infinite. That is why it is vital for us to allocate our limited resources wisely, based on accurate data and sound analysis. In this context, statistics serve not just as numbers—but as a strategic compass for sustainable and inclusive growth,” he added.

A key milestone of WGDSA23 was the presentation of Malaysia’s initial 2025 Action Plan for the Awareness Initiative, an ACSS Annual Priority under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) reporting framework. The initiative was previously endorsed by the Heads of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) at the 14th Session of the ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS14) in Lao PDR. As the lead country, Malaysia announced the establishment of a dedicated Task Force on Statistical Awareness and Engagement under WGDSA to steer its implementation. The initiative seeks to strengthen statistical literacy, visibility, and public trust in ASEAN statistics through a series of regional activities, including flagship events in conjunction with ASEAN Day (8 August) and World Statistics Day (WSD) 2025.

Looking ahead, WGDSA remains focused on enhancing the ASEANstats website and mobile application; accelerating development of the ASEAN Data Intelligence and Exchange (ADIX) platform, Strengthening inter-agency collaboration frameworks for integrated data governance, expanding technical capacity through the ASEAN-Help-ASEAN Framework (AHAF). WGDSA remains steadfast in its mission to promote statistical innovation, improve data communication, and ensure that ASEAN statistics serve as a strategic asset for policymaking and public trust. As ASEAN forges a path toward Vision 2045, the continued investment in high-quality, harmonised statistics will be key to realising the region’s shared aspirations. Malaysia also reiterated its commitment to regional capacity-building by leading joint programmes and offering technical expertise for exchanges and knowledge sharing.

Reflecting the ASEAN spirit of solidarity, delegates also enjoyed Malaysia’s warm hospitality, fostering constructive dialogue and stronger ties.

The outcomes of WGDSA23 will directly inform the implementation of the ACSS Action Plan 2026–2030 which aligned with the broader ASEAN Community’s post-2025 vision, reinforcing the role of statistics in regional integration and policy development. As Chair of ACSS15, Malaysia continues to lead by example in promoting data transparency, inclusivity and evidence-based governance across ASEAN.

ASEAN-Malaysia 2025 Chairmanship: The Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) will chair the 15th ASEAN Community Statistical System Committee (ACSS15) which aims to strengthen the statistical cooperation towards sustainable regional development.

The Government of Malaysia has declared October 20th as National Statistics Day (MyStats Day), with the theme 'Statistics is the Essence of Life'. Meanwhile, the Fourth

World Statistics Day will be celebrated on 20th October 2025, with the theme 'Driving Change with Quality Statistics and Data for Everyone'.

OpenDOSM NextGen is a medium that provides data catalogue and visualisations to facilitate users' analysis and can be accessed through <https://open.dosm.gov.my>.

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