



TRANSFORMING CONSUMER LANDSCAPES IN ASEAN

What does it take to build a safer marketplace for more than 680 million consumers in ASEAN?



From 2023 to 2026, **the Consumer Protection in ASEAN (PROTECT) II** project has worked collaboratively with the ASEAN Committee on Consumer Protection (ACCP), Competition, Consumer Protection and IPR Division (CCPID) of the ASEAN Secretariat and national partners to enhance consumer protection initiatives.

This initiative builds on a predecessor project from 2018, aimed at enhancing consumer protection across the ASEAN Member States (AMS) by bridging the gaps between regional and national initiatives. This 11-page infographic highlights the achievements over the past three years, reflecting the same number of Member States involved in the ACCP, each playing a crucial role in this collaborative effort. Scroll down to learn more!



“Germany and ASEAN share a strong partnership building on mutual respect and cooperation across political security, economic, and social culture. Since the establishment of ASEAN-German Development Cooperation, Germany has been a leading contributor in the building of the ASEAN community.”

H.E. Stefan Messerer, Ambassador, German Embassy Phnom Penh during the 4th ASEAN Consumer Protection Conference.



11 ASEAN countries are joining forces to build a people-centred community where consumers and businesses can trade with confidence across borders.

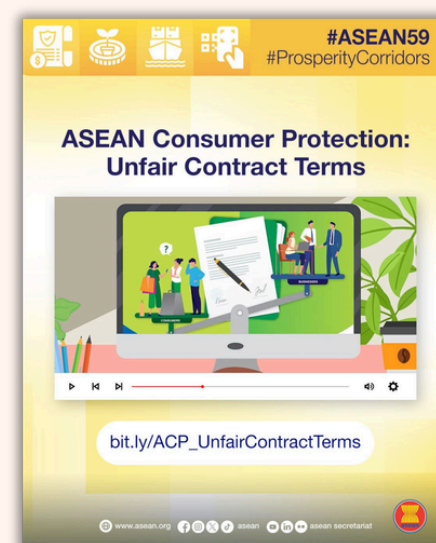
Under the ASEAN Blueprint 2025, [the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan on Consumer Protection \(ASAPCP\) 2016-2025](#) was implemented by the ACCP. Key regional deliverables have been successfully delivered, directly paving the way for the development and formulation of the [ASAPCP 2026-2030](#).

1. ASEAN Voluntary Peer Review on Consumer Protection

Following a successful initial pilot with [the Philippines in 2021](#), a second Peer Review took place with Thailand in 2023-2024, focusing closely on the Digital Economy. Strategic insights from experts and peer review countries targeted consumer vulnerabilities in the digital landscape. These exercises supported the enhancement of national legislation.

2. ASEAN Guidelines

The ACCP has released several comprehensive guidelines to enhance consumer protection laws across ASEAN Member States (AMS), aligning with regional standards. Recent notable publications include the [ASEAN Guidelines on Unfair Contract Terms \(2024\)](#) and [the ASEAN Guidelines on Consumer Impact Assessment \(2023\)](#).



3. Dispute Resolution & Redress

An assessment of dispute resolution mechanisms for consumer cases across AMS has been completed. For further details, see the [Report on the Needs and Gaps](#). Additionally, improvements were made to the [ASEAN Consumer Complaint Function](#) to enhance transparency in the complaint settlement process.

4. Consumer Information Tools

Consumer protection policies must remain relevant to ensure benefits for citizens and other stakeholders. To facilitate this, consumer protection information should be accessible to everyone. Key platforms and tools were developed, such as the ACCP Web Portal (<https://aseanconsumer.org/>), [the ASEAN Handbook on Consumer Protection Laws and Regulations](#) (with revised version currently in progress), and [online interactive and distance learning tools \(LMS\)](#).



From 2023-2025, the ACCP website <https://aseanconsumer.org/> served as a reliable resource on consumer protection for consumers, businesses and regulators, drawing **strong yearly page views (over 100,000)**. The ACCP has continually improved the website and enhanced its key functionalities.

To raise awareness of crucial issues in the digital economy and cross-border consumer protection, the ACCP has launched a series of **Regional Information Campaigns** comprising [short animated videos](#) and infographics. Published topics include [“Dark Patterns and Deceptive Designs”](#) and [“Unfair Contract Terms”](#). Awaiting publication are “Financial Literacy”, “Vulnerable Consumers”, “ACCP Promotional”, “ASEAN Complaint Function” and “ASEAN Product Alerts Portal”.

5. Learning Tools for Consumers

The LMS e-learning has demonstrated significant momentum, reaching a milestone of **546 total course completions** as of October 2025.

The Basic Module accounts for 36% of all completions, serving as the primary gateway for consumer education.

Prior to participating in the LMS module and the Southeast Asia Youth Forum on Consumer Protection, Rafachrist, a delegate from Indonesia, had little knowledge of consumer rights. However, he has since learned how to design consumer advocacy campaigns in collaboration with his peers.



6. Engagement of Consumer Associations/Groups in ASEAN

Consumer associations/groups play a crucial role in advancing education. The ASEAN Consumer Associations Network (ACAN) is actively involved in ACCP events and regional exchanges, collaborating with a wider network of consumer associations/groups in the area to share insights and coordinate joint initiatives.

This collaboration facilitated the establishment of **new consumer associations/groups** in Cambodia and Lao PDR, allowing consumers in these countries to have representation.

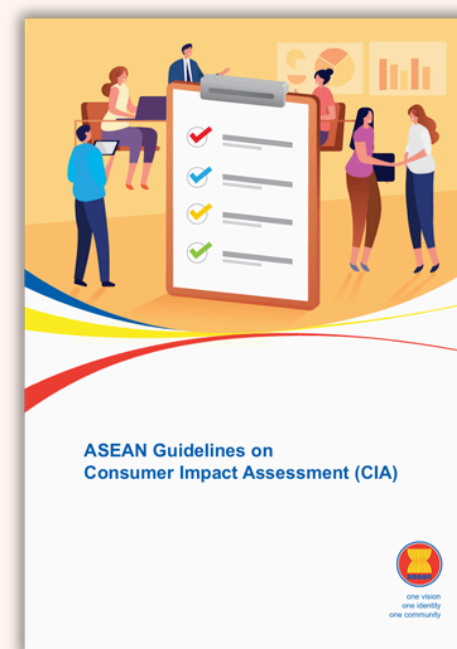


7. ASEAN Consumer Empowerment Index

The ASEAN Consumer Empowerment Index (ACEI) measures consumer empowerment across ASEAN Member States. Based on a pilot exercise conducted in 2020, the degree of consumer empowerment in the region was only moderate. Further improvements were made by integrating more questions about the digital economy in the second exercise, conducted in 2025. The final report for this second exercise is to be published soon.

8. Consumer Impact Assessment

Following the launch of the ASEAN Guidelines on Consumer Impact Assessment (CIA) in 2023, a pilot exercise took place with the Philippines in 2025 focused on product safety. This topic is especially timely given the global momentum surrounding consumer safety, spotlighted during World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) 2026.



9. End-Term Review and Development of ASAPCP 2026-2030

As one chapter concludes with numerous accomplishments, the new ASAPCP for the period of 2026–2030 has been created. This plan builds upon successful practices from the previous one (based on the End-Term Review result) while also introducing new topics, such as vulnerable consumers, product liability, and promoting broader adoption of tools by businesses.

10. ASEAN Consumer Protection Conference

Held biennially, the ASEAN Consumer Protection Conference (ACPC) is the main event for the ACCP. It gathers key stakeholders to address consumer issues in the digital economy and highlight regional cooperation milestones.

In 2024, Cambodia hosted the 4th ACPC in Phnom Penh. The event was led by the Directorate-General of Consumer Protection and Competition (DGCC), formerly the CCF. Centered on the theme "Empowering Consumers in the Digital and Green Economy: Innovate, Protect, Sustain," the conference successfully drew 190 participants.



"Our choices in everyday consumption resonate through the ecosystem, shaping the world we inhabit. It is our collective duty to consume responsibly. Empowering consumers through public-private dialogue and inclusive business practices is essential for fair markets. By protecting vulnerable consumers and collaborating with partners like GIZ under PROTECT II, we build a transparent, trusted marketplace where businesses and consumers thrive together."

H.E. Cham Nimul, Ministry of Commerce Cambodia



Fair dispute resolution matters!

As digital transactions and the ASEAN Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) Network evolve, regional judiciaries are adopting technologies like e-filing and e-courts. Collaboration with the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) aims to strengthen judicial capacity and develop e-learning tools, ultimately improving consumer access to redress across ASEAN.



[The Cebu Declaration \(2024\)](#) connects CACJ's efforts to ASEAN's "rules-based agenda," ensuring legal systems can effectively manage redress and investigation mechanisms. To support this, 30 judges gathered at a Regional Workshop in Jakarta (February 2024) and a Pilot Training in Manila (January 2026) to enhance their skills and share expertise on critical consumer protection issues.



“Despite the different languages, we share the same principles that consumers should be protected and treated fairly. The group discussions and case studies pushed us not only to study the case or the ruling, but also how each judiciary enable their access to justice for consumers.” - **Jarimjit Pantawee, Thailand**



Fairness includes ensuring accessibility for everyone, including persons with disabilities.

Inclusive business is not a cost; it's an **investment**.

Inclusive business is not corporate social responsibility; it's **human rights**.



Germany champions **global disability rights** by co-hosting the 2025 Global Disability Summit (GDS) in Berlin, a landmark driving international commitments to inclusion.

Since then, regional stakeholder exchanges have been conducted alongside the ASEAN Disability Forum and various Organisations of People with Disabilities (OPDs) to mainstream disability-inclusive consumer rights across Southeast Asia.

Tran Thi Dung, Vice Chairman of Viet Nam Consumer Protection Association (VICOPRO), noted that while Viet Nam's consumer protection law acknowledges the importance of including persons with disabilities, practical implementation is still a learning process. The Regional Workshop on Inclusive Business Practices have provided insights on collaborating with businesses and organisations to better safeguard consumers with disabilities.





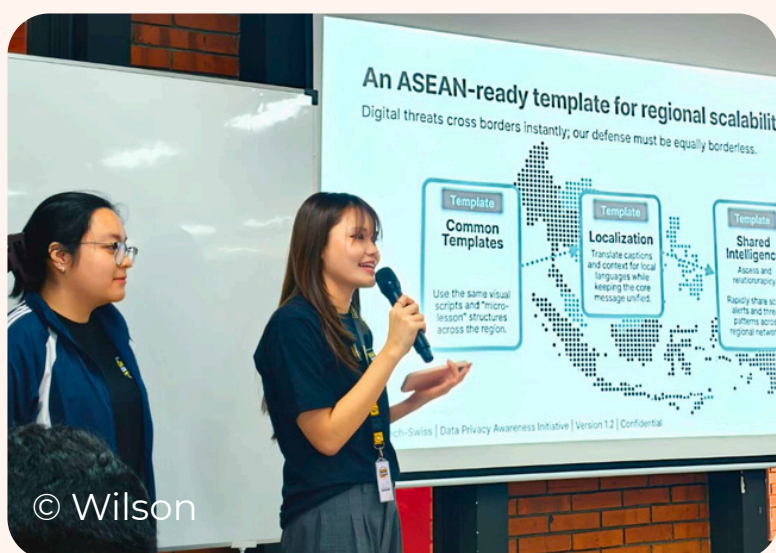
36 next-gen “Consumer Champions” from Southeast Asia convened in Jakarta to address the risks associated with digital transactions, advocate for gender-sensitive and inclusive consumer rights, and develop youth-led cross-border campaigns.

Participants selected for the Forum successfully completed the e-learning modules on <https://aseanconsumer.org/>.

In Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam, the participants were winners of national Consumer Champions Competitions.



Young Consumer Champions visited **ASEAN Headquarters** to learn about consumer protection initiatives and Germany’s collaboration with ASEAN.



An interactive workshop on consumer advocacy at the forum featured Young Champions brainstorming ways to raise awareness about consumer challenges in the digital era. They presented their ideas at Universitas Indonesia to share with peers.

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As PROTECT II ended on 31 March 2026, we want to thank our partners from ACCP and CCPID, national line ministries in ASEAN Member States, consumer associations as well as civil society, academia and the private sector in achieving lasting results.

We hope our initiatives will continue to thrive under the ASEAN Vision 2045 and related sectoral action plans.

Stay tuned for further project highlights on consumer empowerment, digital economy and inclusive business practices.

- PROTECT II Team



About this publication

This summary outlines main regional achievements and highlights supported by the Consumer Protection in ASEAN (PROTECT) II project, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. The activities were conducted in close coordination with the ASEAN Committee on Consumer Protection (ACCP) and the ASEAN Secretariat ASEAN Secretariat Competition, Consumer Protection and IPR Division (CCPID).