ASEAN+3 Regional Economic Outlook – October 2023 Update

Trade Turnaround to Support ASEAN+3 Growth in 2024 Amid Rising Inflation Risks

Hoe Ee Khor, Chief Economist
October 4, 2023
Growth in the US and euro area remain resilient

Spending on durables has picked up, offsetting the moderating demand for services

Source: S&P Global and US Bureau of Economic Analysis via Haver Analytics, and AMRO staff calculations.
Note: A reading above 50 indicates an expansion in activities, while a reading below 50 indicates a contraction. Reading represents the simple average of PMI for US and euro area. Retail sales of motor vehicles is indexed to average monthly sales in 2019.

Core inflation continues to moderate, while headline inflation picked up following higher global commodity prices

Source: S&P Global via Haver Analytics.
Note: A reading above 50 indicates an expansion in activities, while a reading below 50 indicates a contraction.
Distressed real estate sector weighed on China’s growth

Except real estate, fixed asset investment continued to expand

Swift announcement of wide-ranging government policies has eased financial market uncertainty

Source: National authorities via Haver Analytics.

Source: Haver Analytics; and AMRO staff estimates.
However, gradual improvement in manufacturing activities and firm consumer spending would support growth in China.
The worst may soon be over for ASEAN+3 goods exports

Export contraction is gradually easing

Lower contraction in non-tech exports mitigate the weakness in chips-related exports

Selected ASEAN+3: Export Growth
(Percent, year-on-year)

Selected ASEAN+3: Export Growth, by Product Type
(Index, Q2 2022 = 100)

Source: National authorities via Haver Analytics; AMRO staff calculations.
Note: Goods exports data are up to July 2023 and are 3-month moving averages; services exports data (quarterly) are up to Q1 2023.

Source: IHS Markit; and AMRO staff calculations.
Note: Data refers to export values in US dollars. "Tech" covers goods that fall under HS codes 8541–42 and 8486 (all semiconductor-related). Data excludes Cambodia, Myanmar, and Lao PDR.
Exports will benefit from the expected turnaround in the global tech cycle amid continued recovery in tourism

Chips exports should be an additional growth driver next year as the global semiconductor cycle gradually improves

Brisk tourism activity continues to lift the region’s service exports

Source: Haver Analytics; WSTS Inc.; and AMRO staff estimates.
Note: Semiconductor data represent actual global billings up to July 2023 and estimated monthly billings next year using WSTS forecasts. Capex data are for Germany (as proxy for euro area), Japan, and the United States.

Source: National authorities via Haver Analytics; AMRO staff calculations.
Note: Excludes Lao PDR due to data unavailability. ASEAN-5 = Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. CMV = Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam. June-July 2023 arrivals data for Malaysia and Myanmar are AMRO staff estimates.
Domestic demand remains the main engine of growth

Firm household spending was underpinned by strong employment conditions and improving household income

Retail sales has also been bolstered by the robust recovery in travel and tourism

Selected ASEAN+3: Contribution to Real GDP Growth
(Percent, year-on-year)

Selected ASEAN+3: Retail Sales Volume
(Percent, year-on-year)
Headline inflation rose recently following the increase in global commodity prices

Inflation across the region rose towards the end of the third quarter…

…driven mainly by higher energy and food prices

Source: National authorities via Haver Analytics; AMRO staff calculation.
Note: Core inflation excludes food and energy. For Singapore, core inflation refers to the MAS core inflation.
Data excludes Lao PDR and Myanmar, are up to August 2023, except Brunei and Cambodia (up to June 2023).

Source: Energy Information Administration; Wall Street Journal; Thai Rice Exporters Association, via Haver Analytics; AMRO staff calculations.
Regional markets have come under renewed pressure on concerns about China and the global interest rate outlook.

**Equity markets weakened amid fears of a systemic crisis in China**

**Most regional currencies depreciated against a strong US dollar**

**Bond yields increased following interest rate hikes in advanced economies**

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**Selected ASEAN+3: Equity Market Indices**
(Change in index from Dec 31, 2019)

**Selected ASEAN+3: Currencies against USD**
(Percentage change from Dec 31, 2019)

**Selected ASEAN+3: 10-year Government Bond Yields**
(Basis point change from Dec 31, 2019)

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Source: National authorities via Haver Analytics and AMRO staff calculations. Note: ASEAN-5 (average) is simple mean of returns since December 31, 2019 in benchmark equity indices of Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore. Data as of September 28, 2023.

Source: National authorities via Haver Analytics and AMRO staff calculations. Note: ASEAN-4 (average) is the simple mean of changes in bilateral exchange rate against the US dollar of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Data as of September 28, 2023.

Source: National authorities via Haver Analytics and AMRO staff calculations. Note: ASEAN-4 (average) is the simple mean of changes for Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand. Data as of September 28, 2023.

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Concerns about China, global rates outlook

SVB collapse

Appreciating
Depreciating

Bond yields increased following interest rate hikes in advanced economies

Concerns about China, global rates outlook

SVB collapse

Source: National authorities via Haver Analytics and AMRO staff calculations. Note: ASEAN-4 (average) is the simple mean of changes for Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand. Data as of September 28, 2023.
Growth will strengthen in 2024

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economy</th>
<th>2022e</th>
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<th>AREO 2023 Quarterly Update (October 2023)</th>
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Source: AMRO staff estimates.
Notes: e = estimates, f = forecast. Regional aggregates for growth are estimated using the weighted average of 2022 GDP on purchasing power parity basis. Myanmar’s numbers are based on its fiscal year which runs from October of the previous year to September 30 of the current year.
Inflation is expected to be slightly higher next year

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Source: AMRO staff estimates.

Notes: e = estimates, f = forecast. Regional aggregates for inflation are computed using simple averaging. Myanmar's numbers are based on its fiscal year which runs from October 1 of the previous year to September 30 of the current year.
Some risks could impact the 2023–24 baseline forecasts

Slower growth in major trading partners and spike in commodity prices could impact growth and inflation

Source: AMRO staff.

Regional Risk Map (October 2023)

Legend: Low impact, Medium impact, High impact

Perennial Risks
- Climate change transition
- Natural disasters
- Cyber attacks
- Pandemics

Short Term (up to 2 years)
- Financial spillovers from tight(er) US monetary policy
- Slower economic recovery in China
- Recession in US and Europe
- US-China geopolitical tension

Medium Term (2 to 5 years)

Long Term (> 5 years)

Impact to GDP

Impact to inflation

Source: AMRO staff.

GDP for ASEAN+3 could dip below 3 percent—lowest in two decades outside pandemic slowdown—if major adverse risks materialize

Impact on ASEAN+3 excluding China

Recession in the US and euro area
(-0.5 growth in 2024)

Slower growth in China
(4.3 percent in 2024)

Impact on ASEAN+3 excluding China


Note: Selected ASEAN+3 refers to Plus-3 and ASEAN-5. Other economies are omitted due to data unavailability. Impact to GDP is presented as the 2022 PPP-weighted average while impact to inflation is a simple average of the selected economies.
Key messages

• Growth for ASEAN+3 is weighed down by weak manufacturing exports in 2023 but is expected to strengthen in 2024, underpinned by resilient domestic demand and a recovery in the manufacturing sector.

• Growth in China should gain momentum as domestic activities stabilize and recently announced policy support measures gain traction.

• Export growth—which has been supported by tourism recovery thus far—will be further lifted by the expected turnaround in goods exports.

• Downside risks remain, with the risk of higher inflation becoming more salient.
Thank you

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