

YOUTH STATEMENT

ASEAN YOUTH DIGITAL FORUM “YOUTHS AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: A STEP TOWARDS DIGITAL COMMUNITY”

ASEAN Youth Organization as the largest youth-led non-profit organization in the Southeast Asia region has the commitment to support the Digital Transformation agenda in ASEAN, which we have shown by organizing the **ASEAN Youth Digital Forum (AYDF) 2021**. The AYDF 2021 aims to help spread knowledge, encourage, and prepare young people to be digital talents ready that understand their role and capable of tackling arising challenges in a digital era. The AYDF 2021 includes a series of webinars and workshops that offer four different important topics of discussion, including **digital literacy, cybersecurity, ASEAN cross-border virtual internship, and gig economy.**

Acknowledging and supporting the current efforts of ASEAN to further enhance digital transformation in the region;

Having gathered youths from across ASEAN countries and beyond virtually on August 7 to 8, 2021 in the ASEAN Youth Digital Forum (AYDF) 2021 series of events, we have collected hopes and thoughts from AYDF participants about future digital transformation progress in ASEAN, especially in the four AYDF topics;

Having discussed and received knowledge and views shared by respective speakers and experts in the AYDF 2021 on the challenges and opportunities in digital literacy, cybersecurity, cross-border virtual internship in ASEAN, as well as gig economy;

Recognizing the importance of the role of youths as the current and future leaders for the ASEAN Community that have the opportunity to solve challenges and maximize opportunities in the digital era through practical actions;

Considering the fact that youths make up a vast majority of social media users and are digital natives in this rapid digital environment;

Agrees to propose youths statements regarding the four AYDF topics of digital literacy, cybersecurity, ASEAN cross-border virtual internship, and gig economy:

DIGITAL LITERACY:

1. Notes to educate ASEAN citizens about the impact of the internet and social media platforms by instilling a culture of respect and mindful engagement online;
2. Affirms the importance of digital literacy skills for ASEAN citizens particularly youths in the region through the provision of accessible learning platforms by ASEAN related stakeholders;

3. Reaffirms ASEAN's commitments in equal opportunities to access and obtain digital literacy skills for everyone regardless of their gender, race, age, and religion;
4. Supports the role of youths to help other age groups in mitigating misleading news in the cyberspace;
5. Recommends continuous development of internet access and related infrastructure in all ASEAN member states to ensure inclusive improvement of digital literacy skills, especially for youths in rural areas;
6. Further recommends ASEAN stakeholders in mainstreaming digital literacy in the education systems in ASEAN countries through two means: 1) formal (e.g. school curricula) and 2) informal (e.g. events, capacity building programs, training, workshops, and etc.).

CYBERSECURITY:

1. Calls upon ASEAN stakeholders engagement to safeguarding youths population and the underage from arising cyberthreats in a digital setting;
2. Affirms the importance of raising awareness of youths across the region regarding the potential cyberthreats in the digital space;
3. Encourages the youths to create meaningful engagement in a safe online space;
4. Recommends the dissemination of knowledge and sharing best practices on how ASEAN citizens particularly the youths can protect their data on the internet;
5. Take note of the importance of a secure digital environment by raising awareness of youths related to personal data protection in an online environment.

VIRTUAL CROSS BORDER INTERNSHIPS:

1. Affirms the importance of equal opportunities for all youths to access virtual cross border internship opportunities, regardless of their gender, race, age, and religion;
2. Request to promote wider opportunities for youths to be able to take a part in virtual cross border internship programs through the establishment of regional platforms that provide information of virtual internship programs;
3. Takes note of the importance of youth work readiness by providing them with mentorship and assistance for all interns to improve their skills and employability in facing changes of future jobs in the digital age;
4. Calls for ASEAN governments to provide a better legal framework to secure the rights of interns (remuneration, insurance, etc.);
5. Further invites companies to provide equal learning opportunities for all interns.

GIG ECONOMY:

1. Further invites related ASEAN stakeholders to foster a safer and more conducive environment in gig economy by providing a necessary regulatory framework;
2. Requests the ASEAN companies and employers to protect the rights of gig workers;
3. Calls for action by ASEAN governments to promote wider access for gig workers to gain better job opportunities;
4. Calls for the support to offer youths with necessary digital skills to increase their adaptability and employability in the current digital workspace;
5. Further encourages ASEAN member states to provide more programs that focus on reskilling, skilling, and upskilling for youths to enhance their readiness in entering the digital workforce.

Prepared and agreed on Saturday, 14 August 2021 by:

The representation of ASEAN Youths participated in the AYDF 2021.