



## EU Support for ASEAN Economic Community

As part of its long-term partnership with ASEAN, The ARISE project (ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU) builds on the work of its previous programmes and reaffirms the EU's commitment to support ASEAN integration and development.

ARISE is based in the ASEAN Secretariat and will run until May 2017. The purpose of ARISE is to support the implementation of key regional integration initiatives prioritised in the ASEAN Economic Community blue print and ATIGA, to build the ASEAN single market and production base.

The ASSIST online interface was developed by ARISE in cooperation with the ASEAN Member States and the ASEAN Secretariat.

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# ASEAN Solutions for Investments, Services and Trade **(ASSIST)**

<http://assist.asean.org/>



## What is ASSIST?

The ASEAN Solutions for Investments, Services and Trade (ASSIST) is a non-binding and consultative mechanism for the expedited and effective solution of operational problems encountered by ASEAN-based Enterprises on cross-border issues related to the implementation of ASEAN economic agreements and within the framework of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) launched in 2015.

ASSIST can be accessed on this website:

<http://assist.asean.org/>

The ASSIST mechanism was established to implement the ASEAN Consultations to Solve Trade and Investment Issues (ACT) mandated under the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) and it is loosely based on the European Union's SOLVIT system. ASSIST reaffirms the consultative and non-binding characteristics of the ACT, while modernising its structure and enabling the mechanism to operate in a more effective and efficient manner.

## What types of issues does ASSIST deal with?

- Various tariff and non-tariff-related measures affecting goods;
- Issues in the area of cross-border services; and
- Measures limiting investment in various sectors of ASEAN integration.

## Who are the key actors within ASSIST?

### ASEAN-based Enterprise

This is the entity (or association representing an enterprise) that raises an issue/query/complaint through ASSIST.

### The Central Administrator

The ASEAN Secretariat is the Central Administrator of ASSIST and, in that capacity, manages the online proceedings.

### Home Contact Point

The national body (i.e., Focal Point) in the ASEAN Member State of the complaining ASEAN-based Enterprise.

### Destination Contact Point

The national body (i.e., Focal Point) in the ASEAN Member State where the issue is raised.

### Responsible Agencies

The agency(ies) or other government representative(s) that are tasked with finding a solution to the issue.

## What are the key features of ASSIST?

- User-friendly web-based portal that will be accessed through the ASEAN Trade Repository (ATR) gateway;
- An interactive 'tracking system' and 'traffic light' dashboard that allows the key actors to follow the online proceedings; and
- A public forum where data on the type and number of applications, case studies of resolved issues, and feedback from ASEAN-based Enterprises may be published.

## How does ASSIST work?

ASSIST is based on a simple and streamlined process that will largely unfold online:

- 1** The ASEAN-based Enterprise submits a complaint on the ASSIST website;
- 2** The Central Administrator reviews the complaint and may return it to the ASEAN-based Enterprise for possible amendment and re-submission, if necessary;
- 3** When accepted by the Central Administrator, the Destination Contact Point reviews the complaint and may reject it if ASSIST is not the appropriate forum for consultation or if it does not wish to address it. In this case, a justification must be given;
- 4** If the complaint is accepted by the Destination Contact Point, the Responsible Authority(ies) will search for a solution to the issue at stake, in some cases being assisted by the Home Contact Point of the ASEAN Member State where the ASEAN-based Enterprise is registered;
- 5** If a solution can be proposed, it will be notified by the Central Administrator to the complainant and the Home Contact Point; and
- 6** The ASEAN-based Enterprise may accept the proposed solution or reject it and seek other dispute resolution avenues.

ASEAN-based Enterprises can expect practical solutions to be found through ASSIST in 40 to 60 days maximum.