



MIGRATION WITHOUT BORDERS: IS IT A REALITY OR MYTH IN ASEAN BY 2015?

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INTRODUCTION

The work of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has predominantly been deliberated with reference to its political/security and economic cooperation. What has been less well examined is the functional cooperation of socio-cultural components, such as environment, culture and information, social development and human development. This changed when the ASEAN leaders, at their Ninth Summit in Bali, Indonesia in 2003, agreed to establish an ASEAN Community by 2020 which will stand on three pillars, namely the ASEAN Security Community (ASC), the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). This timeline to establish the ASEAN Community was subsequently accelerated to 2015 at the Twelfth ASEAN Summit in Cebu, the Philippines in January 2007, to increase ASEAN's competitiveness. One common element covered in all three pillars is Migration/Population Mobility.

Migration in ASEAN is often seen as particularly imperative, especially in view that modern Southeast Asia is arguably one of the most dynamic regions in the field of labour migration with large numbers of people, at all skills level, contributing significant extra- and intra-regional movement. A handful of ASEAN Member States are simultaneously sources and destinations for