

A Focal Point of Coordination: A Case Study of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat's Coordination Efforts

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Abstract

The research assessed the internalization of the 2007 Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or the ASEAN Charter into national legislation, particularly on the mandate stipulated in Article 13, to establish an ASEAN National Secretariat for each ASEAN member state. The case study provided an overview of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, to examine the regional-level to national-level policy transfer of ASEAN cooperation adopted by the Indonesian government and demonstrates the democratic foreign policy-making process in Indonesia. A qualitative content analysis was applied to assess the official and legal documents regarding the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat. The research finds that the Indonesian statutory provisions stipulate that the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat is a focal point of coordination for ASEAN cooperation in Indonesia, where the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the main supporting unit and functions as a public relation for advocating ASEAN awareness of the Indonesian people. The study is expected to contribute to the literature on international relations and public administration, where Indonesia's experience in constructing a coordinated policy network among governmental institutions for the implementation of ASEAN regional commitments in domestic settings could be a model for other ASEAN member states or other regional framework.

Keywords: ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, ASEAN Charter, Indonesian government, policy transfer, democratic foreign policy making

Introduction

Article 13 of the 2007 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Charter stipulates that each ASEAN member state shall establish an ASEAN National Secretariat within its respective country (ASEAN, 2008). The article also outlines the role and functions of the ASEAN National Secretariats as the national central point for coordination, administration of the ASEAN repository, management of ASEAN policy implementation at the national level, organizing national arrangements for ASEAN meetings, promoting ASEAN awareness, and supporting ASEAN community building (ASEAN, 2008).

To fulfil these responsibilities, ASEAN diplomats and officers in charge of ASEAN affairs must ensure close working relationships, accessible communication, and open consultations with the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN external partners, and other domestic stakeholders. Diplomats and civil servants from ASEAN member states must maintain coordination on key negotiation topics. Technical aspects, such as rules, procedures, and administrative tasks, are crucial for maintaining archives and records among related ASEAN bodies. However, the 2007 ASEAN Charter does not specify the institutional designs or working mechanisms for the ASEAN National Secretariats (see ASEAN, 2008, Art. 13), which provides flexibility for ASEAN member states to design their national secretariat.

The research examines two central questions. First, it examines how the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat facilitates the policy transfer process, specifically its collaboration with other national institutions and their constituents to implement ASEAN policies. Second, it examines the roles of the Indonesian government and other national-level institutions in contributing to democratic foreign policy-making on ASEAN issues.

Literature Review

Based on neoliberal institutionalism, Southeast Asian countries set aside their differences to cooperate within the ASEAN institution as an intergovernmental organization, aiming to achieve common goals for the region. Simon (1995, p. 7) argues that Southeast Asia's fundamental structure will maintain its member states' authority to varying degrees (realism perspective), while the process of member states' collaboration will be formalized through the establishment of customs and institutions (neo-liberalism perspective).

When it was established in 1967 during the Cold War, ASEAN was a mutual non-aggression pact between its five founding members, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore (Narine, 2017). With the signing of the ASEAN Charter in 2007, the now-ten ASEAN member states have taken steps toward becoming a more institutionalized intergovernmental organization and advancing further regional integration.

The 2007 ASEAN Charter ratification by ASEAN member states' domestic legislation is important for ensuring the readiness of a working mechanism to accomplish ASEAN's purposes at the state level. Zartner (2010, p. 6) emphasizes that, "the incorporation of

international law into the domestic understandings of appropriate standards of behavior and the structure of a state is necessary for these rules to act as influences on state and sub-state actors.”

Article 13 of the 2007 ASEAN Charter mandates the establishment of the ASEAN National Secretariats by each member state (ASEAN, 2008). Moreover, the creation of ASEAN departments within ASEAN member states’ government institutions is also expected to facilitate the implementation of ASEAN policies, particularly at the domestic level. Dolowitz and Marsh (1996, p. 344) described that, “Policy transfer, emulation, and lesson drawing all refer to a process in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions, etc., in one time and/or place is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, and institutions in another time and/or place.”

The current research on ASEAN mostly focuses on substantive international relations, encompassing the three pillars of political security, sociocultural, and economic communities. For instance, Acharya (2014, 2021) provides an in-depth overview of the construction of a political security community in Southeast Asia. Some research works also discuss the institutionalist process that takes shape in Southeast Asia, where ASEAN and its related agencies play a focal point within the region (Acharya, 2004; Natalegawa, 2018; Roberts, 2012). Moreover, previous research has discussed the differences between institutional models of multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations (UN), and regional organizations, including the European Union (EU), in comparison to ASEAN (Jetschke, 2017; Wunderlich, 2012). As the previous literature mainly covers the regionalization process and the regional-level institutions in ASEAN, this research focuses on discussing ASEAN institutionalization at the national level within an ASEAN member state, specifically the case of Indonesia.

The Policy Transfer Process and Democratic Foreign Policy Making

The 2007 ASEAN Charter Article 13 mandates the establishment of ASEAN National Secretariats (ASEAN, 2008). The arrangement reflects a policy transfer process from the ASEAN’s regional-level organs to the implementation at national level under the coordination of ASEAN National Secretariats. Knowledge diffusion is the core of transnational policy transfer (Stone et al., 2020). The process of transnational policy transfer involves three main aspects: knowledge actors (individuals), institutions (organizations), and networks. In addition, the direction of policy transfer could be within a ‘restricted set’ of countries, such as among member states of an international organization, or from the North to the South hemisphere as transfer of ‘best practices’ (Stone et al., 2020, p. 2).

Bulmer and Padgett (2005) discuss the policy transfer process within EU governance. Bulmer and Padgett (2005) emphasized that policy transfer in the EU depends on the type of institutions and their governance, which is not limited only to the Open-Method of Coordination (OMC). The EU’s negotiated transfer tends to opt for Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) for policy transfer and problem-solving (Bulmer & Padgett, 2005).

However, there are differences in ASEAN's policy-making culture, commonly referred to 'the ASEAN Way', which places great emphasis on non-interference in the domestic affairs of other member states and decision-making based on consensus (Acharya, 2014; Caballero-Anthony, 2022). Therefore, the localization of norms is expected in policy transfer and the adoption of norms within ASEAN (Acharya, 2004).

The 2007 ASEAN Charter does not specify the institutional model or framework of the ASEAN National Secretariats (ASEAN, 2008). Hence, it provides flexibility for each member state in designing its own model of the ASEAN National Secretariat. The domestic arrangements of the ASEAN National Secretariats would likely involve the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in each member state, which then coordinates and deliberates on the implementation of ASEAN policies with its national institutions, as well as with each department that handles a specific issue in the field. This may be an example of democratic foreign policy making.

Democratic foreign policy making should be built across various independent institutions, and a democratic process should be in place to resolve any disagreements over policy between these institutions (Pahre, 2006). Moreover, Pahre (2006, p. 2) emphasizes that "our understanding of democratic foreign policy making be built on variation across democratic institutions" and that "democracy is a process by which groups make decisions when they disagree with one another." Hammond and Prins (2006) also argue that a divided government and domestic veto institutions have some influence on international negotiations, particularly in international trade negotiations.

Several studies by Rüländ (2009, 2017) examine the democratization of Indonesia's foreign policy making process, focusing on the domestic strengthening of ASEAN cooperation and the promotion of democracy within ASEAN. According to Rüländ (2009), the Indonesian Parliament has a significant role, as it must ratify the ASEAN Charter. He further observes that the Indonesian Parliament, along with academia, the media, and civil society organizations, have been outspoken domestic actors and even be veto players (Rüländ, 2009).

However, Rüländ (2017) notes that the definition of democratization in Indonesia, particularly during reform era, differs from the Western-style of democracy. Indonesia still upholds the norms of *musyawarah* (consultation) and *mufakat* (consensus). These norms hold true to the localization concept. Acharya (2004) defines a customized policy adaptation that takes into account the regional 'ASEAN Way' and local norms in Indonesia.

Overview of the ASEAN National Secretariats

The ASEAN National Secretariats are responsible for advancing the national interests of the member states at the regional level, managing the interministerial implementation of ASEAN decisions and policies, and providing a repository of information on ASEAN at the national level (ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, n.d.; Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, 2023).

During the early years of ASEAN's establishment, Indorf (1975) discusses the initial considerations for establishing an ASEAN National Secretariat for each member state. While the continuance of international organizational work relies on an administrative apparatus, ASEAN shows a preference for decentralization and rotational chairmanship (Indorf, 1975).

The tasks and responsibilities of ASEAN National Secretariats are described in the 2007 ASEAN Charter, Article 13, as quoted:

Each ASEAN Member State shall establish an ASEAN National Secretariat which shall: (a) serve as the national focal point; (b) be the repository of information on all ASEAN matters at the national level; (c) coordinate the implementation of ASEAN decisions at the national level; (d) coordinate and support the national preparations of ASEAN meetings; (e) promote ASEAN identity and awareness at the national level; and (f) contribute to ASEAN community building (ASEAN, 2008).

ASEAN member states organize their ASEAN National Secretariat structures in different ways. In most ASEAN countries, the ASEAN National Secretariat is commonly housed within Ministry of Foreign Affairs and headed by the Director-General (ASEAN Secretariat, 2023). In Malaysia, the ASEAN National Secretariat operates within the Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed by the Director-General of the ASEAN-Malaysia National Secretariat (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, 2022, 2023). The ASEAN-Malaysia National Secretariat consists of three departments according to the ASEAN pillars (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, 2023). The secretariat functions as a focal point for ASEAN policy implementation at the domestic-level and acts as a liaison to the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta and other national secretariats (ASEAN, 2008; Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, 2023). Moreover, the ASEAN-Malaysia National Secretariat seeks to foster cooperation between Malaysia and other ASEAN member states, the ASEAN Dialogue Partners, and the Sectoral Dialogue Partners, including the Development Partners (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, 2023).

Similar arrangements for ASEAN National Secretariats can be found in other ASEAN member states, as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of ASEAN affairs undertakes the role of the national secretariat (ASEAN, n.d.-c; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam, 2018; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Thailand, 2019). For instance, the Department of ASEAN Affairs within the Thailand Ministry of Foreign Affairs plays a role as the ASEAN-Thailand National Secretariat under the leadership of the Director-General (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Thailand, 2019, 2020). The ASEAN-Brunei Darussalam National Secretariat is part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam, where the ASEAN Department assumes the role of the national secretariat (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam, 2018).

Timor-Leste, as the aspiring 11th member state of ASEAN, has been preparing the necessary institutions to join ASEAN (Government of Timor-Leste, 2016). Some of Timor-Leste's efforts include the establishment of an ASEAN-Timor-Leste National Secretariat, the creation of focal points, and participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum, including other ASEAN meetings (Government of Timor-Leste, 2016). The ASEAN Secretariat and member

states support Timor-Leste with capacity building to prepare for their readiness as a full member of ASEAN (ASEAN Secretariat, 2022; Government of Timor-Leste, 2016).

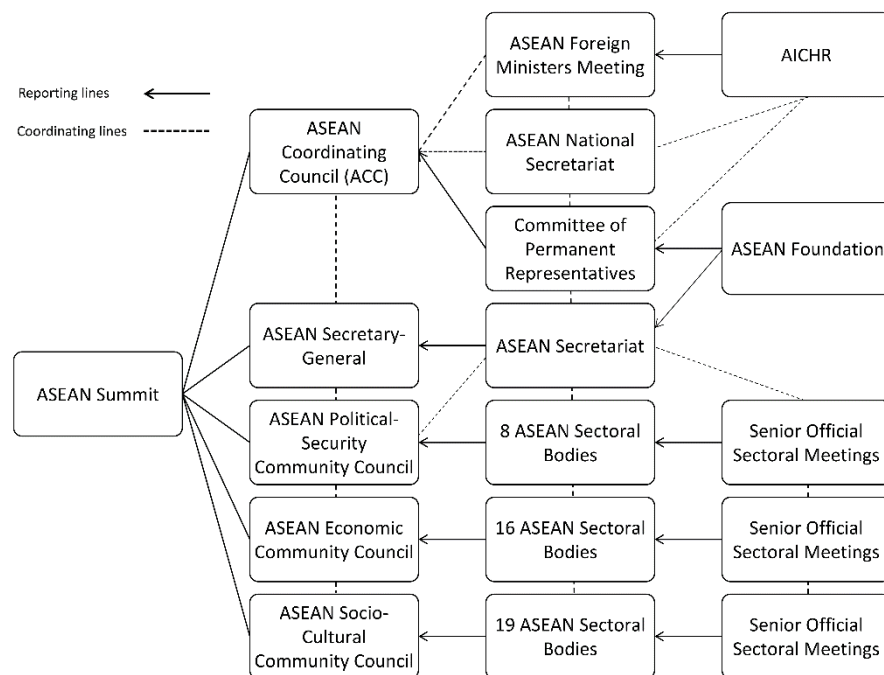


Figure 1. ASEAN Reporting and Coordination Line

Note. This chart is illustrated by the author and adapted from a presentation presented by Wahyuningrum (2013) and edited with updated information on the number of ASEAN Ministerial Sectoral Bodies from the ASEAN Charter Annex 1, which was updated on October 30th, 2023, pursuant to Article 10 (2) of the ASEAN Charter (ASEAN, n.d.-d).

Figure 1 shows that ASEAN Foreign Ministers, as part of the ASEAN Coordination Council (ACC), receive reports from their respective ASEAN National Secretariat and Permanent Missions to ASEAN. The ASEAN National Secretariats in each member state are preparing substantive materials and technical support, while maintaining close coordination with their respective ASEAN permanent representatives. The reports are given by the Director-General, who oversees the daily operations of each ASEAN National Secretariat, to the respective foreign ministers, and the reports are further deliberated with other ASEAN member states in the ACC to be implemented within the region.

Furthermore, in preparation for the ASEAN Summit and ASEAN Community meetings, the ASEAN National Secretariat and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) also coordinate with the ASEAN Secretariat, especially for projects involving ASEAN external partners such as the Dialogue Partners (see Figure 1).

The ASEAN Charter, signed in November 2007, was ratified by Indonesia through Law No. 38 of 2008 and took effect on December 15th, 2008, when all ASEAN member states submitted their instruments of ratification to the ASEAN Secretary General (Negara Republik Indonesia, 2008; PTRI ASEAN, 2025). The ASEAN pillar blueprints of 2025 were adapted to

be the 'National Plan of Action 2022–2025' by the Indonesian Government through the adoption of ministerial regulations of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry No. 1/2022 (Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2022a). The coordinating ministries are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 in Indonesia, including harmonizing and synchronizing national regulations with ASEAN regional policies (Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2022a).

Moreover, ASEAN National Secretariats play a major role in preparing of each member state's ASEAN chairmanship. The ASEAN Chairmanship rotates every year (ASEAN, n.d.-a). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the lead coordinator of the ASEAN National Secretariat, shall prepare timelines and substantive materials, such as recommendations for deliverables and priority areas as well as technical matters and logistics related to the ASEAN Chairmanship in their respective countries. In preparation for the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2023, the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat held plenary meetings with the ministries and institutions—members of the national secretariat—to prepare deliverables and priorities that Indonesia would pursue during the chairmanship period (Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia, 2022).

The ASEAN National Secretariats are responsible for promoting ASEAN goals and educating society to support ASEAN efforts. In the case of the ASEAN Chairmanship of 2023, the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat (represented by the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the Indonesian State Secretariat held public outreach and public engagement events about the Indonesian ASEAN Chairmanship 2023 for the people, in particular, the business community and tourism professionals, as well as school students at Labuan Bajo, East Nusa Tenggara (Kementerian Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, 2023).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in ASEAN member states, including prospective member states, plays an integral role in ASEAN National Secretariat coordination efforts nationwide, regardless of its organizational structure or coordination lines. The ASEAN National Secretariats, in general, serve as the main liaisons between domestic ministries and institutions and the ASEAN regional architecture, supervising the implementation of cooperation programs with other ASEAN member states and partners in their respective countries.

Thus, this research identifies a gap in the literature concerning the policy transfer process and democratic foreign policy-making process of ASEAN cooperation at the national level. The existing literature on policy transfer has yet discussing a case of localization in designing regionally mandated institutions at the national level and how regional norms, in this case 'the ASEAN Way,' are maintained domestically in foreign policy making.

However, this research also finds a literature gap in the academic discussion of how ASEAN institutions and individuals work technically. There are very few references to how the roles are divided within the ASEAN organizational structure, particularly within the ASEAN National Secretariats, and how they work with ASEAN external partners. A review of the institutional design of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat could contribute to the discussion on how to establish the national level coordinating institution mandated by a

regional agreement, which may be relevant for other countries or in other regional settings. Questions also arise as to whether, at the national level, an ASEAN member state would still maintain the regional norms of “the ASEAN Way” and the traditional decision-making procedures of consultation and consensus or opt for adopting other decision-making procedures, such as voting mechanisms, which are present in other regional institutions.

This research applies Stone et al.’s (2020) framework of policy transfer, which highlights three main concepts: knowledge actors (individuals), institutions (organizations), and networks. It also points to the definition of democratic foreign policy making proposed by Pahre (2006). This research focuses on policy transfer from the regional to the national level, focusing on the domestic arrangements within Indonesia. Furthermore, this research identifies the potential challenges within the institutional model of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat.

Theoretical Framework

The research is expected to evaluate the policy transfer process of the 2007 ASEAN Charter to Indonesian national laws regarding the institutionalization of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat. It also seeks to assess the democratic foreign policy making process among domestic Indonesian institutions that participate in the coordination network of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat.

The research hypothesizes that the institutionalization of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat demonstrates policy transfer from the regional to the national level as a coordinated policy network for ASEAN cooperation in Indonesia. Furthermore, the democratic foreign policy making on ASEAN issues can be strengthened by the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, which upholds regional norms, the ASEAN Way, in its policy-making and decision-making procedures.

Due to limitation of space, it should be noted that there are other government institutions that are not yet included in the diagram. In addition, other specialized or ad hoc groups can also be established to be an ASEAN task force. As illustrated in Table 1, the process of policy transfer between institutions in Indonesia constitutes a democratic foreign policy making on ASEAN issues.

Table 1. Theoretical Framework

Policy Transfer from ASEAN-level to National-level in Indonesia			Democratic Foreign Policy Making in Indonesia
Knowledge Individuals	Knowledge Institutions	Knowledge Networks	
Members of Parliament	Legislative/Parliament	Plenary sessions	
Diplomats	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat (A coordinated policy network)	
Civil Servants	Coordinating Ministries		
	Ministry of Trade		
	Ministry of Internal Affairs		
Civil Servants, Teachers & Lecturers	Ministry of Education		
Military Personnel	National Armed Forces		
Police Personnel	National Police		
etc.	Other government institutions		
Academia/Lecturers		• ASEAN Studies Centers (in Indonesian: <i>Pusat Studi ASEAN</i>) • Academic conferences • University networks • etc.	
University Students	Universities		
Researchers	Think-tanks/ Research Institutes	• Academic conferences • Joint-research • etc.	
Society members	Civil society organizations	• Workshops • Seminars • Technical cooperation • etc.	
Activists	NGOs		
Journalists	Media	• Press Council (in Indonesian: <i>Dewan Pers</i>) • etc.	
etc.	etc.	etc.	

Note. Theoretical framework of policy transfer on ASEAN issues and democratic foreign policy making in Indonesia. Table prepared by the author

Research Method

This paper provides a case study of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat. The research method used in this study was a qualitative content analysis of the main data. Qualitative Data Analysis Software (QDAS), in this case Atlas.ti version 24 and 25, is utilized to help the author in the coding process. The documents are coded through an open coding process with an inductive approach.

The main data assessed are legal documents that stipulate the coordination and working mechanisms of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat (see Table 2).

Table 2. List of Documents on the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat

No.	Name of Documents
1.	The 2007 ASEAN Charter (ASEAN, 2008)
2.	Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 38/2008 on the Ratification of the ASEAN Charter (Negara Republik Indonesia, 2008)
3.	Indonesian Presidential Regulations No. 53/2020 on ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2020)
4.	Indonesian Presidential Decree No. 23/2012 on the Members of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2012)
5.	Ministerial Regulations of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry No. 2/2014 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat (Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2014)
6.	Ministerial Regulations of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry No. 6/2021 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2021)
7.	Ministerial Regulations of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry No. 1/2022 concerning the Implementation of Meetings and Coordination Mechanisms of ASEAN National Secretariat (Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2022b) <i>*without its addendum</i>

Note. List of documents coded with qualitative content analysis (Source: author).

The research faces two initial limitations. First, except for the ASEAN Charter, the main documents in this research are available only in the Indonesian language. Second, academic literature is scarce on ASEAN's administrative arrangements and institutional management on the national level.

While the ASEAN Secretariat's official documents are accessible in English, the official records of ASEAN National Secretariats are predominantly available in the member states' respective national or official languages. Due to language skill limitations, the research focuses on assessing official documents written in Indonesian and other Malay-rooted languages (such as Malaysian and Bruneian Malays), apart from the English materials. Automatic language translation machines, such as Google Translate, are occasionally used to translate secondary data written in other languages to gain a general comprehension of the information. However, the legal documents are coded in their original language, either in English or in Indonesian, to maintain originality and avoid misinterpretation.

Documents number 4 and 5 have been repealed following the new amendments. The addendum to Document 7, the National Action Plan 2022-2025, which pertains to the ASEAN Community Blueprint 2025, falls outside the scope of this research. Document number 6 has been repealed with the latest Ministerial Regulations of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry No. 4/2025 (Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2025). However, this document is outside the scope of this study, and these amendments do not change the main structure of the Directorate-General of ASEAN Cooperation (see Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2025). The research focuses on assessing the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat as a network of policy transfers. The assessment period covers the arrangements of the ASEAN-

Indonesia National Secretariat after the establishment of the ASEAN Community in 2015 and until the completion of Indonesia's ASEAN Chairmanship in 2023.

Findings

Based on the qualitative content analysis of the main documents, Table 3 presents the selected themes and their related subcodes along with the frequency for each code, in relation to the research questions and objectives. Several themes and codes have been translated from the original codes in Indonesian into English due to limited space and practicality.

Table 3. Key Findings from The Qualitative Content Analysis

Themes	Codes	Number of Frequency
<i>Tasks of the ASEAN National Secretariats</i>	Promote ASEAN Identity & Awareness	16
	National Focal Point	11
	Support ASEAN Integration & Community Building	10
	Repository of Information	8
	Preparation of Meetings	8
<i>Objectives of the Legal Documents</i>	Determining the Membership Composition of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat	13
	Strengthening the coordination and synergy of the three pillars of ASEAN	6
	Implement the Mandates of the ASEAN Charter	5
	Establishing the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat	4
	Carrying out the Mandates of the 1945 Constitution	2
<i>Duties of the Directorate-General of ASEAN Cooperation (Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs)</i>	Implementing evaluation and reporting of ASEAN foreign policy	11
	Implementing coordination of ASEAN foreign policy	7
	Formulation of foreign policy and implementation of ASEAN cooperation	6
	Drafting of legal documents	5
	Providing substantive guidance and facilitation of ASEAN policies	4
<i>ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat Meetings Mechanism</i>	Plenary Meeting	10
	Coordination Meeting	8
	Working Meeting	6
	Meeting Results in the form of Minutes/Meeting Report	6
	Plenary Meetings can be led by the chief of staff for the daily operations/representing the Minister of Foreign Affairs	4
<i>Coordination Efforts</i>	National Level	24
	Working with External Partners	20
	Regional level	4
<i>Decision-Making</i>	Consensus	12
	Consultation	9

Note. Selected key themes and subcodes from the coding process (Source: author).

Discussions and Analysis

The Policy Transfer Process of ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat

The tasks and responsibilities of the ASEAN-Indonesian National Secretariat are directly derived from the 2007 ASEAN Charter, with details of its roles being nearly identical. As illustrated in Table 2 and Table 3, the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat is a knowledge network consisting of individuals and organizations that promote and implement ASEAN policies in Indonesia. The forums of coordination within this network consist of meetings held throughout the year (see Table 3), where the policy transfer process mainly occurs domestically. However, the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a role in supervising the policy transfer process of ASEAN policies to other institutions in Indonesia (see Table 3). The details of roles and responsibilities, including the structure of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, are stipulated in Presidential Decree Number 23 of 2012, which was later amended by the Presidential Regulations Number 53 of 2020 (ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, n.d.; Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2012).

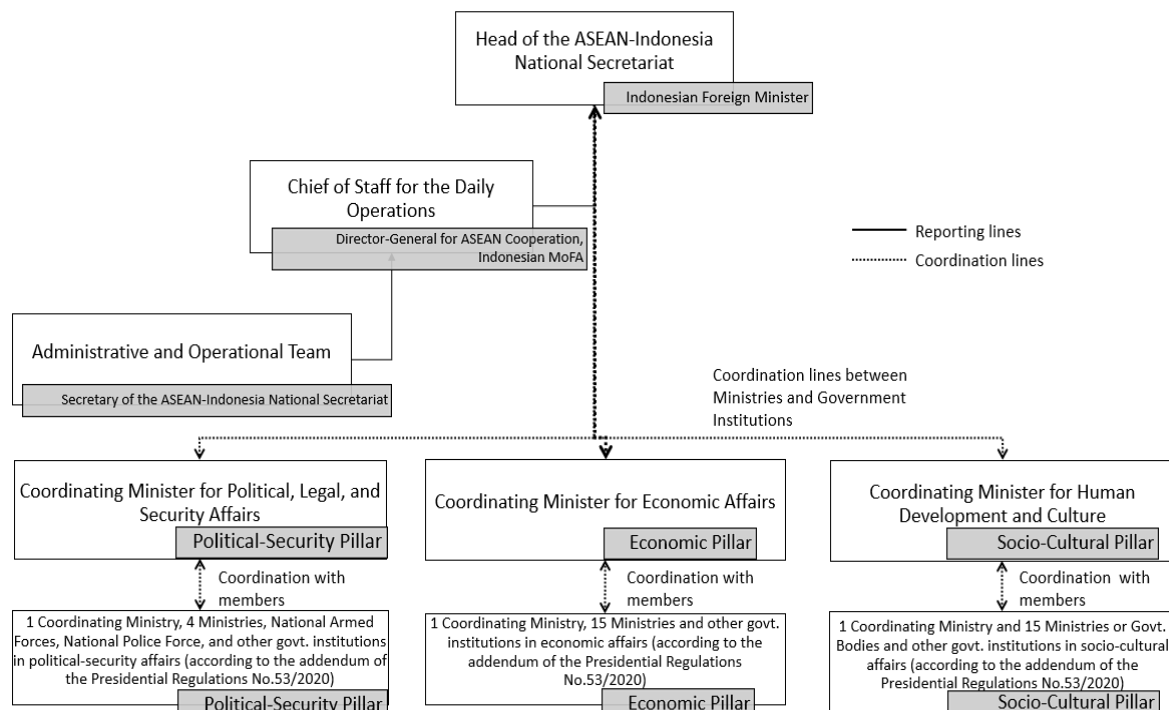


Figure 2. ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat Coordination Structure

Note. This graph is illustrated by the author and mainly adapted from Presidential Regulations No. 53/2020 and its addendum, in addition to that, the Ministerial Regulations of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry No. 1/2022, and the Ministerial Decree of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry No. 06/B/KA/VII/2022/01 of 2022 (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2020) and the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2022a, 2022b).

According to the Presidential Regulations No. 53/2020 Articles 6 and 7 (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2020), the Head of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat is the Indonesian Foreign Minister, and the Director-General of ASEAN Cooperation will serve as the ex officio chief of staff for the daily operations of the national secretariat (Figure 2). Article 8 and the Appendix indicate that the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat clusters groups and government institutions, including the National Police and the National Armed Forces, according to the three ASEAN pillars, as members of the ASEAN cooperation coordination structures at the national level (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2020). Furthermore, according to the Ministerial Regulations of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry, No. 2/2014 and No. 1/2022, the focal point of each pillar of cooperation is led by the Indonesian coordinating ministries, clustered according to the three pillars of the ASEAN Community (Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2014, 2022a). Administrative and operational support for the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat was provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as stipulated in the Presidential Regulations No. 53/2020, Article 9 (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2020).

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia to ASEAN (Perutusan Tetap Republik Indonesia untuk ASEAN/PTRI ASEAN) is headed by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to ASEAN, with the rank of ambassador (PTRI ASEAN, 2025). Within the Directorate-General of ASEAN Cooperation in the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the organizational structure is categorized based on ASEAN's three pillars. These comprise the Directorate of ASEAN Political-Security Cooperation, the Directorate of ASEAN Economic Cooperation, and the Directorate of ASEAN Social-Cultural Cooperation. In addition, the Directorate of ASEAN External Cooperation and the Secretariat of the Directorate-General of ASEAN Cooperation oversee external partnerships and administrative arrangements (Kementrian Luar Negeri Indonesia, n.d.). Figure 3 illustrates the coordination structure of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

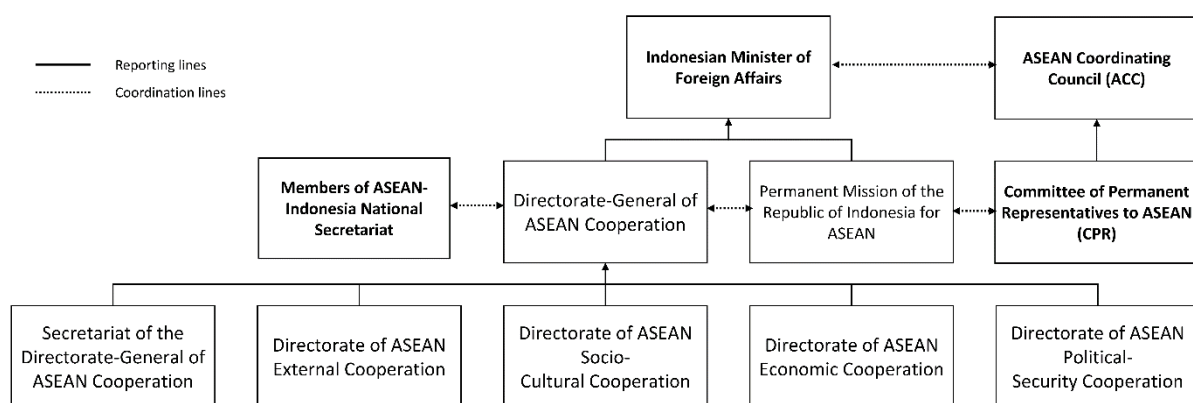


Figure 3. The Coordination Structure of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and PTRI ASEAN with ASEAN bodies

Note. This graph is illustrated by the author and adapted from the organizational structure stipulated in the Ministerial Regulations of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry No. 6/2021 and the Ministerial Regulations of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry No. 1/2022 (Menteri Luar Negeri Indonesia, 2021, 2022b). The adjustments made on this graph connect the coordination lines from the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Permanent Missions and Permanent Representatives for ASEAN.

Presidential Regulations No. 53/2020, Article 11(3) stipulates that the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat shall hold at least one annual coordination meeting, chaired by the Foreign Minister, and attended by all related ministries and institutions, with the outcomes reported to the president (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2020). The plenary meeting of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, chaired by the Director-General of ASEAN Cooperation, as an ex officio chief of staff for the daily operations, shall invite high-ranking officials from the ministries and agencies in the national coordination clusters (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2020). In reference to the mandates provided by Presidential Regulations No. 53/2020 and the Ministerial Regulations of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry No. 6/2021, the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat is also responsible for the promotion and awareness of ASEAN cooperation at the national level (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2020; Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2021). The findings also show that this role is reiterated significantly in the Indonesian legal texts (see Table 3)

The ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat assumes the role of public relations in engaging its target audience and ensuring communication channels such as websites, social media, and publications. Key documents, such as the ASEAN Community blueprints, have been published and translated into Indonesian to reach a broader domestic audience (ASEAN, 2015). Additionally, the national secretariat publishes the magazine '*Majalah Masyarakat ASEAN*' to promote ASEAN Community awareness in Indonesia and encourage regional cooperation (ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, n.d.).

The ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat maintains relations with civil society, particularly with educational institutions, such as universities. Through its Directorate-General of ASEAN Cooperation, the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs establishes a nationwide university network of ASEAN Studies Centers (Pusat Studi ASEAN/PSA) in Indonesia (ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, n.d.). These universities are expected to publish work on ASEAN cooperation and organize campus activities that focus on outreach, teaching, and public advocacy for the ASEAN Community (ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, n.d.).

In collaboration with the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology at that time, the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, represented by the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, coordinated the adoption of the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook in primary and secondary schools (BBPMP Jawa Timur, 2023). In 2021, the Indonesian Government published ASEAN Teaching Materials for primary and secondary education, based on the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook, as a reference for teachers in teaching ASEAN studies and fostering awareness among students (BBPMP Jawa Timur, 2023; Setiawan, 2021).

In addition to liaising cooperation between Indonesian national institutions, the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat also liaises with the implementation of ASEAN policies to be transferred and adapted to the national policy. Referring to the policy transfer model by Stone et al. (2020), the ASEAN-Indonesia Secretariat upholds the theory of knowledge diffusion in policy transfer, but within the limited scope of ASEAN level to the

national level in Indonesia, rather than encompassing transnational or global diffusion. The internalization of the 2007 ASEAN Charter into the Indonesian legislation creates a coordinated policy network through the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, which consists of related institutions and individuals responsible for the implementation of ASEAN cooperation.

Democratic Foreign Policy Making of ASEAN Policies in Indonesia

The findings from the studied documents show that coordination is the main role of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat (see Table 3). As the coordination of its institutions is conducted mainly through meetings (see Table 3), this arrangement may provide an opportunity for other national institutions to express their opinions, support, or even have reservations regarding the Indonesian position or policies on ASEAN. Individuals involved in these meetings, as personal representatives or representatives of their institutions, may be able to convey their thoughts or even express disagreements on the issue at hand. Moreover, the main documents also explicitly mentioned that the decision-making process within the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat should be conducted through consultation and consensus (see Table 3). There is no voting mechanism in place.

This demonstrates that the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat can cater to and facilitate the democratic foreign policy making on ASEAN issues in Indonesia. In addition, the decision-making process directly adopted ASEAN norms of consultation and consensus. The 'ASEAN Way' norms make their way in the internalization of the 2007 ASEAN Charter to the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat internal processes. In other words, ideally, Indonesia shall not proceed with a proposed ASEAN policy unless all parties in the national secretariat have consented to accept the decision. This arrangement equipped the institutions in ASEAN-Indonesian National Secretariat with some degree of veto power. However, the extent to which other parties can block a decision in a meeting should be the future research.

Some research works have criticized the decision-making mechanism in ASEAN, where consensus is seen as slow and hindering prompt necessary actions (Aggarwal & Chow, 2010; Limsiritong et al., 2019). These issues could potentially arise in the decision-making process within the ASEAN-National Secretariat which could pose a challenge in the long run. However, due to limitations of the research methods and the availability of secondary data on ASEAN National Secretariats, this research cannot address this issue in an in-depth manner. Thus, further research should also cover these issues.

Regarding the policy making in ASEAN, the ASEAN member states and their domestic institutions are not the sole actors. There are ASEAN external partners that are also involved through the partnerships under the ASEAN framework. Furthermore, ASEAN's external partners, particularly the dialogue partners, to some extent, have an influence on policy making in ASEAN (Müller, 2023). Therefore, this research also argues that external partners have some degree of influence to shape the outcomes of ASEAN policies in Indonesia, although they are not involved in the decision-making process.

The ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat is also responsible for maintaining contact and coordination with ASEAN external partners' missions and ambassadors located at their embassy compounds in Jakarta, particularly in fulfilling their commitments to achieve the National Action Plan 2022-2025 on the ASEAN Community Blueprint 2025, such as cooperation with the East Asian Summit (EAS) participating members (see the addendum of Indonesian Foreign Ministry Regulations No. 1/2022) (Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2022b). For instance, the National Action Plan specified that the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is assigned to follow up on important issues in the ASEAN region and to draft the new EAS Plan of Action (PoA) (Menteri Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2022b). This also demonstrates that individuals from ASEAN National Secretariats play a role as a bridge with representatives or diplomats from other foreign countries.

In reference to Article 42 of the 2007 ASEAN Charter, each ASEAN member state should oversee ASEAN External Relations Coordinatorship as a country coordinator for each dialogue partner on a rotating basis (ASEAN, 2008; ASEAN, n.d.-b). The ASEAN National Secretariats shall support the application and the achievement of the dialogue partnership cooperation PoA with the designated partner, while also representing ASEAN in strengthening relations, including aiding conflict resolution with external partners as needed.

Pitakdumrongkit (2016) argues that a country coordinator can influence negotiation outcomes, particularly in conflict resolution within the ASEAN region. By studying Thailand as a country coordinator for China (July 2012–June 2015), several roles of a country coordinator can influence the bargaining results in the negotiations on the South China Sea (Pitakdumrongkit, 2016). Those roles are (1) initiating a dialogue and inviting external partners to the discussion; (2) framing substantive material and creating issues linkages to cooperative projects; and 3) turning the momentum through agenda-setting and keeping the issue on consecutive ASEAN meetings (Pitakdumrongkit, 2016).

In principle, the ASEAN National Secretariats retain their duties as the central coordination point of ASEAN cooperation between the member states' government institutions, the ASEAN Secretariat, other ASEAN bodies, and external partners. The influence between ASEAN member states and the external partners is reciprocal. The external partners can express their thoughts on the implementation at the national level, but the ASEAN National Secretariats and their representatives at ASEAN meetings can also influence negotiations on partnerships at the regional level.

Additionally, the key findings (see Table 3) indicate an overlapping role of diplomats, referring to the roles of diplomats stipulated in the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (United Nations, 2005), in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat. The arrangement creates a duality of diplomats' roles in ASEAN: representing a member state in the regional-level ASEAN meetings and simultaneously representing the 'ASEAN Identity' as public relations to the domestic stakeholders and constituents. Hence, some diplomats perform traditional functions at the regional level, and other diplomats work as civil servants that coordinate domestic stakeholders at the national

level. While this situation seems practical and efficient, further research is needed to assess the effectiveness and challenges of the arrangement.

Conclusion

This research examines the internalization of policies mandated by the 2007 ASEAN Charter into the domestic legislation of an ASEAN member state, with a focus on the establishment of the ASEAN National Secretariat in Indonesia. Moreover, this research discusses how the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat, as a coordinated policy network, can play a significant role in the policy transfer of ASEAN issues from the regional to the national level in Indonesia. These arrangements have also facilitated democratic foreign policy making in Indonesia, as the meetings of the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat provide opportunities for other Indonesian domestic institutions to express their thoughts and reservations. The decision-making, however, still retains the norms of 'the ASEAN Way' of consultation and consensus.

The adoption of institutional designs and administrative arrangements in the Indonesian legal system may strengthen its role as a coordinated policy network among Indonesian government institutions and ministries as well as ASEAN bodies and external partners for the domestic implementation of ASEAN targets. The ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat maintains a repository of ASEAN cooperation at the national level and serves as the public relations office, promoting ASEAN awareness and regional cohesion. The ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat can be a model institution for other ASEAN member states, particularly in enhancing the participation of domestic stakeholders and strengthening democratic foreign policy making on ASEAN issues at the national level.

Since the ASEAN National Secretariats are closely tied to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, their roles overlap with the traditional functions of diplomats. National laws heavily govern the ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat's rules and procedures at the working level. The ASEAN-Indonesia National Secretariat is a consortium of Indonesian institutions that coordinates the implementation of ASEAN policies at the national level, with the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs serving as its spearhead. The national secretariat is also responsible for harmonizing domestic laws and policies following ASEAN agreements and recommendations.

This research opens several questions for future research regarding the possible challenges of reaching consensus, the varying degrees of veto power between institutions, and the dual roles effectiveness of the diplomats. Close coordination between the organizational structures of ASEAN—the ASEAN Secretariat, the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), and the ASEAN National Secretariats—is instrumental in the implementation of ASEAN regional policies and external cooperation at the national level.

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