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Co. Reg. No. 193500026Z

News Release

UOB launches first regional Consumer Sentiment Index, revealing ASEAN consumers' confidence in the economy and personal finances

The study also found that youths in ASEAN fall behind in financial readiness, with Singapore's Gen Zs most at risk

Singapore, 2 September 2025 – In the sixth edition of the ASEAN Consumer Sentiment Study (ACSS)[1], the region's leading consumer confidence barometer, UOB launched ASEAN's first ***UOB ASEAN Consumer Sentiment Index*** (the Index). The Index was based on six key indicators from ACSS[2], covering consumers' confidence level of their countries' current and future economic conditions and their personal finances. The 2025 regional Index was 54, where a level above 50 reflected consumers' general optimism. The Index remained stable against the last two years[3], an encouraging sign for the region amid ongoing macroeconomic volatility and geopolitical tensions.

On macroenvironment, ASEAN consumers were more optimistic about the broader economy (sub-index rising by four points). 57 per cent and 58 per cent of respondents felt positive about the current economy and future economic outlook respectively, a year-on-year (yoy) increase of three percentage points each.

As for personal finances, consumers remained optimistic overall, but slightly less so than last year (sub-index dipping by one point). The proportion of respondents who expected themselves to fare as well or better financially next year dropped three percentage points to 56 per cent, and more respondents were worried about the prospects of a pay cut at work, an increase of four percentage points to 46 per cent. This worry over jobs was offset by an easing of concerns over increased household expenses (drop of four percentage points to 54 per cent), while expectations on long-term financial commitments remained flat at 48 per cent yoy. With an overall improvement in ASEAN consumers' confidence for their country's economy outweighing the small dip in optimism for their personal finances, the overall Index remained positive at 54 this year.

[1] Details of UOB ACSS 2025's research methodology can be found in the Annex.
[2] Details of the new Index's methodology can be found in the Annex.
[3] Based on the same six indicators from the ACSS from past two years, the Index for 2024 and 2023 was retrospectively calculated to be 53 and 55 respectively.

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Ms Jacquelyn Tan, Head of Group Personal Financial Services, UOB, said, "Consumer sentiment is a vital indicator of economic health. As a leading regional bank, we were driven to provide a simple and consistent measurement on consumer's optimism around the broader economy and their own financial situation. With the new regional Index, we hope to offer businesses insights to consumers' spending and behaviour in the near-term. Despite market uncertainty, we are heartened to see the resilience in ASEAN consumers' confidence in both the macroenvironment and their finances this year."

Of the five ASEAN countries surveyed, Vietnam led the index with a level of 67, an increase of three points from last year, strongly driven by buoyant sentiments on macroenvironment factors. Indonesia was ranked second at 55, despite a three-point dip. Malaysia clocked the highest jump of 11 points to hit a level of 53, driven by improvement across all indicators, most significantly in their optimism for their country's current economic environment and lesser concerns for household's increased expenses.

Singapore and Thailand were both at 47, with Singapore having the largest decline of 10 points. Singapore consumers expressed dampened sentiments across all indicators, with the largest drop in their optimism for the macroenvironment, while Thailand fared the lowest for sentiments on macroenvironment factors despite being relatively upbeat about their personal finances.

Financial preparedness in ASEAN holds strong, with Singapore showing improvement

Apart from the Index, ACSS findings also found that despite easing concerns on rising costs of living due to inflation (dropped by three percentage points), this remained the top worry for 59 per cent of ASEAN respondents, with Singapore consumers topping the list.

Spending data for UOB customers in Singapore showed that the average ticket size of daily living expenses such as dining and transport both increased by six per cent yoy for the first half of 2025 (1H25). Despite this, overall average ticket size of daily essentials dipped by five per cent yoy in 1H25, which could have been alleviated by government support measures introduced this year such as the various U-Save rebates and additional tranches of CDC vouchers.

ASEAN consumers demonstrated strong financial preparedness while coping with these concerns, with 79 per cent of respondents declaring that they have sufficient emergency funds to cover

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unforeseen circumstances. Additionally, 78 per cent felt confident in managing and servicing existing debts, 76 per cent believed they had adequate insurance coverage for current and future needs, and 69 per cent considered themselves as having sufficient investments to fund their retirement and other financial goals.

More Singapore consumers were also taking proactive steps to secure their financial future. The study found that 17 per cent of respondents met three or all four rules of thumb identified by the Monetary Authority of Singapore and financial industry's Basic Financial Planning Guide (the Guide)[4], a seven-percentage-point increase from last year.

Singapore consumers remain generally well-equipped in terms of emergency funds. 61 per cent of respondents have at least three to six months' worth of expenses to buffer for unforeseen events, increasing by one percentage point from last year. Singapore consumers are also better protected, with an increase of six percentage points to 19 per cent in terms of insurance coverage. Legacy planning also saw an improvement, with 18 per cent of Singapore consumers meeting this rule of thumb, increasing by six percentage points from last year. However, investments discipline slipped nine percentage points from previous year, with only 47 per cent of Singapore consumers setting aside at least 10 per cent of their take-home pay for retirement and other financial goals.

In line with ACSS findings, UOB customers in Singapore were indeed saving more. Current and savings accounts (CASA) balances saw a strong growth of 25 per cent yoy in 1H25. On protection, overall number of UOB customers with insurance product holdings improved moderately by three per cent yoy in 1H25, although younger customers are trailing slightly behind. On a brighter note, UOB customers were investing more, with their invested assets under management (AUM) increasing 17 per cent yoy in 1H25.

Youth financial preparedness trails behind, particularly in Singapore

Financial preparedness among the younger generations in ASEAN was visibly lacking. Seven per cent of Gen Zs in the region felt completely unprepared in terms of emergency savings and

[4] ACSS 2025 polled consumers' financial allocations based on rules of thumb outlined in the Guide: (1) allocating at least three to six months' worth of expenses as emergency funds; (2) obtaining insurance protection for death, total permanent disability, and critical illness; (3) investing at least 10 per cent of take-home pay for retirement and other financial goals; and (4) making a will and CPF nomination.

insurance coverage. In Singapore, 35 per cent of Gen Zs did not meet any of the four rules of thumb outlined in the Guide, an increase of nine percentage points from last year.

The study also revealed a shift in younger consumers' financial priorities, with 73 per cent of Gen Zs and 71 per cent of Gen Ys in ASEAN preferring to spend for enjoyment now rather than worry about the future. More youths also classified experiential spending categories[5] as essential expenditures and were willing to spend more on these categories than the other age groups. 70 per cent of Gen Zs and 72 per cent of Gen Ys were also comfortable with borrowing to fund lifestyle goals such as going on a vacation or new purchases.

Younger UOB customers in Singapore displayed affection for experiential spending as well. UOB cardholders' overall card billings on experiential spending, across dining, entertainment and travel categories, increased by eight per cent yoy in 1H25. Gen Zs clocked in the highest uplift of 17 per cent yoy and Gen Ys at 12 per cent yoy.

Despite this, UOB's Gen Z customers did put aside savings and investments for their future. They also had the highest yoy growth for CASA balances in 1H25 among all age groups. Separately, the average ticket size of their online Unit Trusts investment grew by 76 per cent, at least two times higher than other age groups, a reflection of their focus on investment.

While many Gen Zs want to embrace the present, they can continue to do so while balancing the need to strengthen their financial foundations – across savings, insurance, investments, and legacy planning – for greater long-term security. UOB is committed to supporting its customers at every stage of their lives and offers an array of resources and solutions for customers to improve their financial preparedness across savings, investing and protection, including digital tools such as our UOB TMRW app and Wealth on TMRW, coupled with in-person advice through our trained financial advisors.

"Financial planning is most effective when started early, laying a strong foundation that grows over time. We understand that the younger generation today value experiences, and we are here to help them enjoy life now while building financial resilience for the future, because both can go hand

[5] Experiential categories such as travelling for vacations, fine dining, and concerts, events and festivals.

in hand. Through our comprehensive suite of solutions across saving, investing and payments, we support our customers at every life stage, from early adulthood to their golden years, ensuring their assets are protected and optimised so they can live everyday with confidence and comfort," said Ms Jacquelyn Tan.

– Ends –

About UOB

UOB is a leading bank in Asia. Operating through its head office in Singapore and banking subsidiaries in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, UOB has a global network of more than 470 branches and offices in 19 markets in Asia Pacific, Europe and North America. Since its incorporation in 1935, UOB has grown organically and through a series of strategic acquisitions. Today, UOB is rated among the world's top banks: Aa1 by Moody's Investors Service and AA- by both S&P Global Ratings and Fitch Ratings.

For nine decades, UOB has adopted a customer-centric approach to create long-term value by staying relevant through its enterprising spirit and doing right by its customers. UOB is focused on building the future of ASEAN – for the people and businesses within, and connecting with, ASEAN.

The Bank connects businesses to opportunities in the region with its unparalleled regional footprint and leverages data and insights to innovate and create personalised banking experiences and solutions catering to each customer's unique needs and evolving preferences. UOB is also committed to help businesses forge a sustainable future, by fostering social inclusiveness, creating positive environmental impact and pursuing economic progress. UOB believes in being a responsible financial services provider and is steadfast in its support of art, social development of children and education, doing right by its communities and stakeholders.

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Annex

About UOB ASEAN Consumer Sentiment Study 2025

UOB's ACSS 2025 surveyed 5,000 participants aged 18 to 65 years old from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The survey was conducted online from May to June 2025 in partnership with global management consulting firm Boston Consulting Group.

The survey broadly categorises respondents into four age groups, namely Generation Z (18 to 26 years old), Generation Y (27 to 42 years old), Generation X (43 to 58 years old) and Baby Boomers (59 to 65 years old).

About UOB ASEAN Consumer Sentiment Index

Launched in 2025, the UOB ASEAN Consumer Sentiment Index ("the Index") is designed to capture the pulse of consumer confidence across key ASEAN markets. It reflects consumer perceptions of both current and future economic conditions, alongside personal financial concerns and expectations.

The responses to the following six key indicators from the UOB ACSS 2025 form the basis of the Index. The six indicators are grouped into 4 sub-indices which are current and future sentiments, and outlook on macroenvironment and personal finances.

Current	Future	
• Perception of Current Economic Environment	• Perception of Future Economic Environment	Macro
• Concerns about Increased Household Expenses • Concerns about Possibility of Pay Cuts or Income Loss	• Concerns about Long-Term Financial Commitments • Expected Future Financial Situation	Micro (personal finances)

The methodology of the Index draws guidance from globally recognised consumer sentiment indices. The Index is computed by averaging the scores of the six indicators. The score of each indicator is calculated by taking the percentage of positive responses to the respective key indicator question from ACSS 2025.

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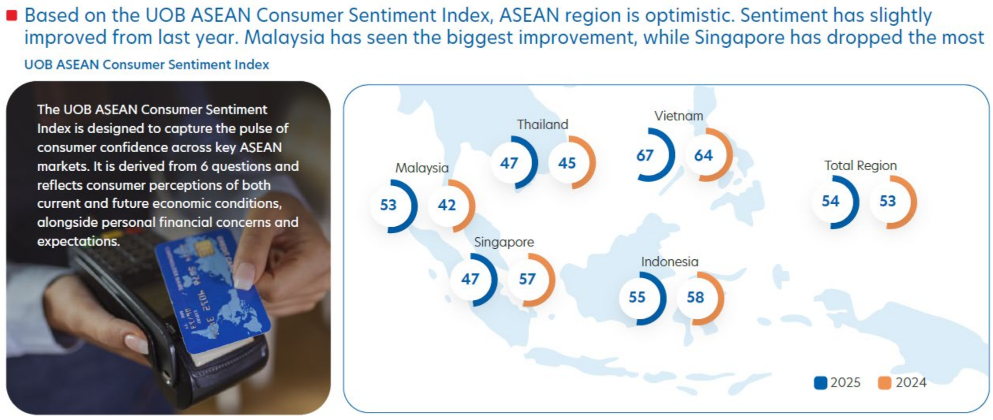
Appendix A – additional data from ACSS 2025[6] and UOB

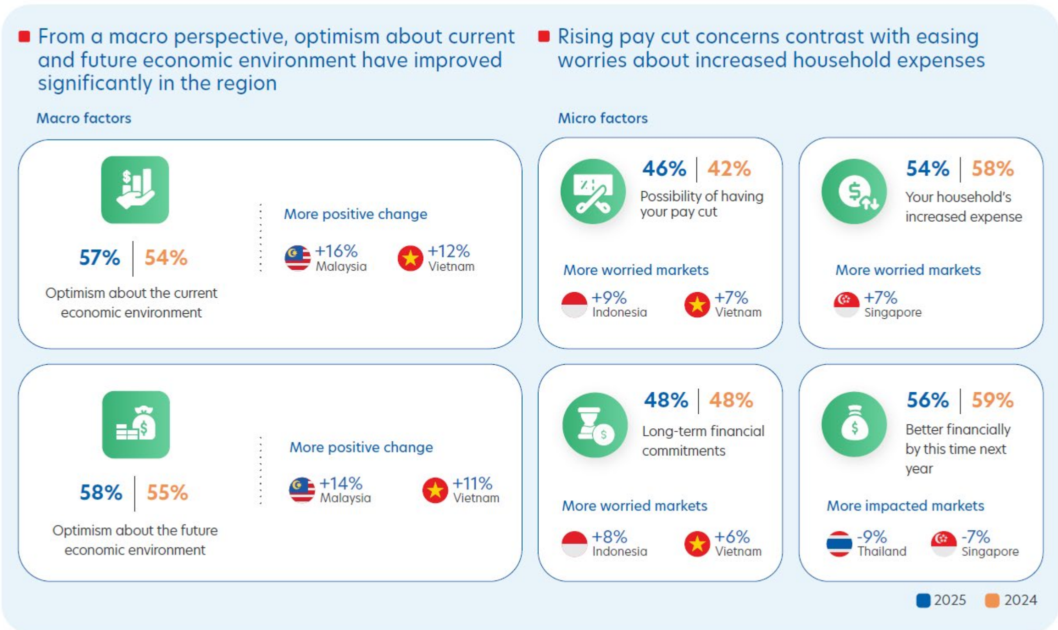
UOB ASEAN Consumer Sentiment Index



The regional 2025 Index was 54. Based on the same six indicators from the ACSS from past two years, we retrospectively calculated the Index for 2024 and 2023 to be 53 and 55 respectively.

Among the two countries with the lowest Index in 2025:

- Singapore consumers' optimism on macroenvironment fell 17 points while confidence on personal finances declined six points.
- Thailand fared the lowest on sentiments on macroenvironment (sub-index at 39, up four points) though they were relatively upbeat about their personal finances (sub-index at 51, stable yoy).



6 For the full insights from the UOB ACSS 2025, please visit: uobgroup.com/acss2025.

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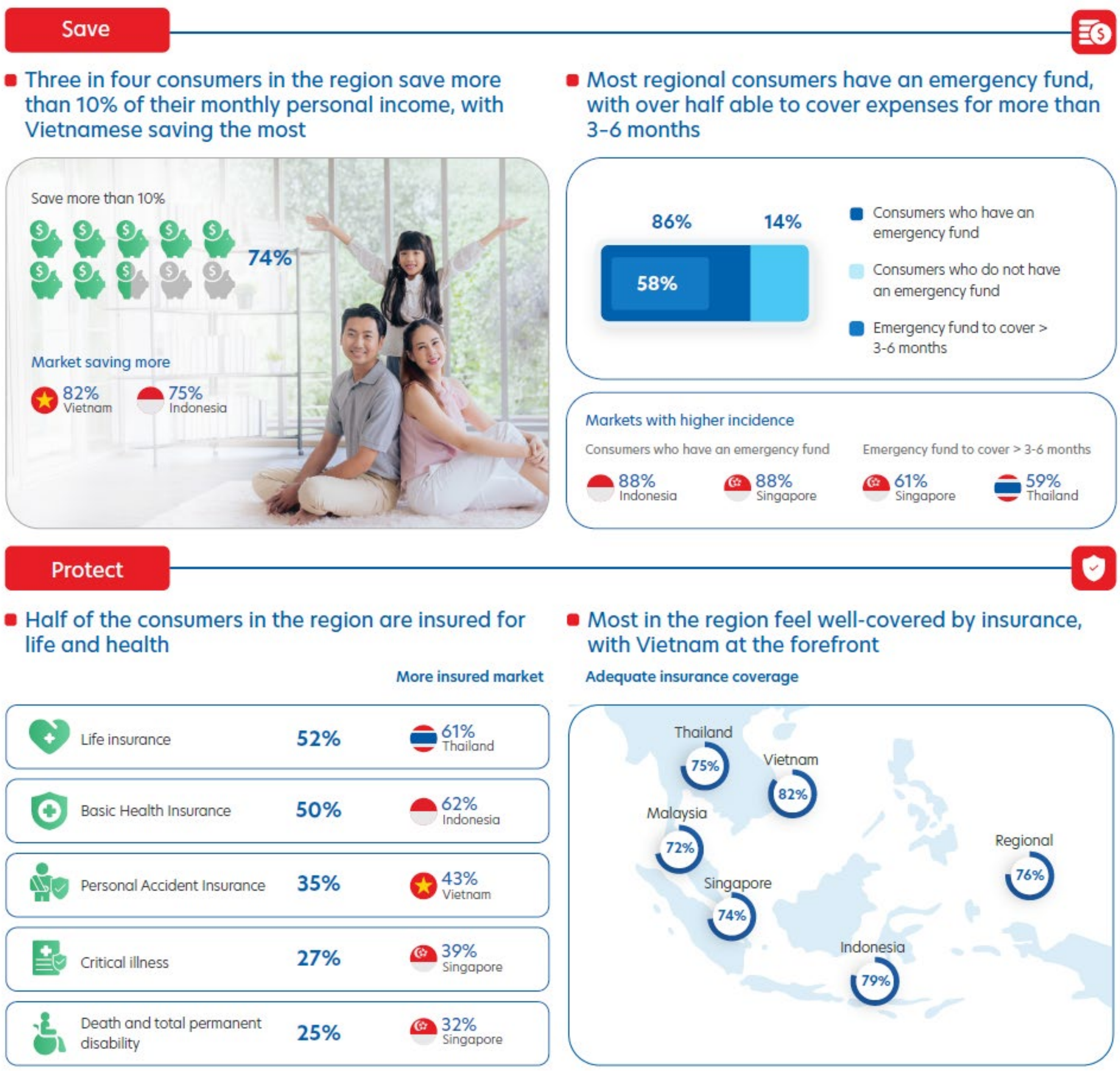
ASEAN's strong confidence in financial planning despite inflation concerns

Close to nine in 10 ASEAN respondents (88 per cent) expressed confidence in their financial planning. Indonesia and Vietnam led with an overwhelming 94 per cent, while Singapore ranked the lowest at 78 per cent.



The strong consumer confidence is supported by the close alignment of ASEAN consumers' allocation of total household budget to the general 50-30-20 rule – 50 per cent of savings allocated for essential expenses such as groceries and utilities; 30 per cent saved or invested; and 20 per cent for other general expenditure. This is an encouraging indication that consumers were prioritising their budgeting to manage rising costs of living and economic uncertainties.

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Singapore consumers showing signs of improvements in financial preparedness

Rule of thumb: Allocate at least three to six months' worth of expenses as emergency funds

Singapore consumers are generally well-equipped in terms of emergency funds, with 61 per cent having at least three months' worth of expenses to buffer for unforeseen events. Boomers (82 per cent) were the most financially prepared for rainy days, followed by Gen Y (63 per cent) and Gen X (61 per cent). Gen Z fared the lowest at 45 per cent, a significant decrease of 14 percentage points from last year.

Rule of thumb: Obtain insurance protection for death, total permanent disability, and critical illness

Insurance coverage is improving among Singapore consumers, increasing by six percentage points to 19 per cent meeting this rule of thumb. The Boomers, who require greater protection due to their life stage, are well covered for basic health insurance at 68 per cent, but less than half are covered for critical illness (44 per cent) and death and total permanent disability insurance (32 per cent), which is an imminent concern.

Not surprising, less than half of Gen Zs respondents (48 per cent) had basic health insurance, only 24 per cent had critical illness coverage, and a mere 23 per cent were covered for death and total permanent disability. Notably, 17 per cent of Gen Zs did not have any insurance.

Rule of thumb: Invest at least 10 per cent of take-home pay for retirement and other financial goals

Investments discipline slipped nine percentage points from previous year, with only 47 per cent of Singapore consumers setting aside at least 10 per cent of their take-home pay for retirement and other financial goals. Gen Zs dipped most by 18 percentage points to 37 per cent. Gen Ys and Gen Xs both decreased by seven percentage points to 55 per cent and 44 per cent respectively. Only Boomers increased slightly by two percentage points to 41 per cent.

Rule of thumb: Make a will and CPF nomination

More Singapore consumers have done their legacy planning, with 18 per cent of them meeting this rule of thumb. Boomers was the highest at 43 per cent, likely due to their stage of life, followed by Gen Xs at 26 per cent and Gen Ys at 13 per cent. Gen Z, understandably the lowest, only had seven per cent who have done their legacy planning.

Additional UOB data on savings, investments, insurance and spending
Note: Regional markets refer to Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam.

Savings
Singapore: Customers' savings across all age groups have increased, with CASA balances for Gen Zs registering the highest increase at 33 per cent yoy in 1H25, followed by Boomers (+27 per cent yoy), Gen Xs (+26 per cent yoy) and Gen Ys (+25 per cent yoy).

Region: CASA balance for regional customers saw a growth of 11 per cent yoy in 1H25. A similar trend is observed in the four markets where youths showed the strongest growth. Gen Ys saw the highest increase at 15 per cent yoy, followed closely by Gen Zs (+12 per cent yoy), Gen Xs (+10 per cent yoy), and Boomers (+six per cent yoy).

Investments
Singapore: Invested AUM across all age groups increased in 1H25, except for Gen Zs (flattish yoy). (Boomers: +18 per cent yoy, Gen Xs: +17 per cent yoy, Gen Ys: +11 per cent yoy)

Total number of customers who invested in Unit Trusts online increased by 26 per cent, with total online sales close to double of last year's amount, signaling a growing preference among our customers towards digital wealth.

Region: Invested AUM for regional customers saw a growth of six per cent yoy in 1H25.

Insurance
Singapore: Overall number of UOB customers with insurance product holdings improved moderately by three per cent yoy in 1H25, although the younger customers are trailing slightly behind. The number of Gen Zs and Gen Ys customers with insurance product holdings remained flattish yoy. (Gen Xs +three per cent yoy, and Boomers +five per cent yoy).

Robust cross-border and experiential spending
According to ACSS 2025, 35 per cent of Gen Zs and 42 per cent of Gen Ys were spending more on experiential categories such as going on vacation and concerts/festivals, higher than other age groups (Gen Xs at 18 per cent and Boomers at five per cent).

UOB data echoed these trends.
Singapore: UOB cardholders' overall card billings on experiential spending, across dining, entertainment and travel categories, increased by eight per cent yoy in 1H25. (Card billings for entertainment +18 per cent yoy; travel +12 per cent yoy). Gen Zs clocked the highest uplift for experiential spending at an increase of 17 per cent yoy in 1H25. (Gen Ys +12 per cent yoy, Gen Xs + three per cent yoy, and Boomers +four per cent yoy).

Singapore customers' overall cross-border card billings overseas grew by nine per cent yoy in 1H25. They spent more in the four ASEAN markets compared to non-ASEAN countries, with an increase of 17 per cent yoy. Similarly, Singapore customers saw a strong growth of 121 per cent yoy in 1H25 for Scan-to-Pay transaction volume across Indonesia (QRIS), Malaysia (DuitNow) and Thailand (PromptPay), and increase of 93 per cent yoy for Scan-to-Pay transaction amounts.

Region: UOB regional cardholders' total card billings on experiential spending increased by nine per cent yoy in 1H25. (Entertainment +14 per cent yoy; dining +10 per cent yoy, and travel +eight per cent yoy). Gen Zs in the region also saw the largest growth for experiential spending at an increase of 14 per cent yoy in 1H25, outpacing other age groups (Gen Ys +nine per cent yoy, Gen Xs +eight per cent, Boomers +eight per cent yoy).

Regional customers' overall cross-border card billings overseas grew by 12 per cent yoy in 1H25. They spent more in the five ASEAN markets (including Singapore) compared to non-ASEAN countries, with an increase of 22 per cent yoy.

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Appendix B – UOB Economist's analysis on regional markets

To be attributed to Suan Teck Kin, UOB Head of Research, Global Economics and Markets Research

Despite rising geopolitical tensions globally and pressures from US trade tariffs affecting exports and manufacturing sectors, major ASEAN economies — such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam — have generally performed well in the first half of 2025. They are expected to remain resilient in the second half of 2025 and into 2026.

This resilience is reflected in overall consumers' optimism and confidence found in ACSS 2025. Overall, the region's economic growth rate is estimated to exceed 4 per cent annually in 2025 and 2026, extending the average pace of 4.4 per cent in 2023-2024.

Key growth drivers underpinning this outlook include ASEAN's ability to attract investment inflows amid global supply chain realignment driven by deglobalisation and regionalisation. Domestic demand remains firm, supported by favourable demographics, rising income and the expansion of urban middle-class consumers. Additionally, enhanced cooperation and collaboration among ASEAN members — exemplified by strategic initiatives such as the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone— are expected to further enhance regional competitiveness and unlock new business opportunities.

Based on ACSS 2025, Singapore's consumers were notably less optimistic than their regional peers. The shift in sentiment is likely to be in response to the US tariff announcement on 2 April, which triggered one round of financial market volatility ahead of the survey period of May to June. This reaction underscores the open and trade-dependent nature of Singapore's economy, which is highly sensitive to developments in the external environment. Nonetheless, Singapore's diversified base — ranging from manufacturing, technology, logistics, to financial services — will help cushion the impact from tariff pressures.

Thailand's subdued consumer sentiment mirrors its economic outlook, with growth expected to moderate to 2 per cent in 2025 — the lowest among ASEAN members.

Other ASEAN members face similar headwinds, although lower trade-dependence, large and growing domestic markets, and stable fundamentals will help to mitigate some of the external pressures. Vietnam stands out with its consumer sentiment underpinned by positive prospects of the economy. Its economic growth is anticipated to be fastest in region at around 6.9 per cent in 2025, close to the 7.1 per cent increase in 2024, largely driven by strong exports and manufacturing sector's performance in the first half, and the government's plans to invest in infrastructure projects for as much as 13 per cent of GDP.

Malaysia's economy has weathered tariff pressures well so far, which helped to boost overall confidence, though its economic growth rate is expected to ease to 4 per cent in 2025 from 5.1 per cent in 2024. In contrast, Indonesia is the least exposed to external demand among ASEAN members, and hence consumers are largely shielded from global volatility. Indonesia's economy is projected to expand by 4.9 per cent in 2025, from 5 per cent in 2024.