
Purpose: Information
Submitted by: APEC Secretariat
Multilateralism in the Era of COVID-19
Perception Survey -- Post-2020 APEC

Key Findings – Abridged version

March 2021
1. Help APEC policymakers formulate and communicate a post-2020 agenda
2. Provide supporting data to be used in crafting themes, priorities and messages that resonate with APEC stakeholders during the COVID-19 era and beyond
3. Understand specific challenges and opportunities of messaging on key APEC issues for the region
METHODOLOGY

Online survey amongst the general public:
Varied by age, gender, region, education, and income
7,600+ respondents in total (400 per market)*
Fieldwork was conducted
11 to 31 December 2020
Data margin of error: +/-5%

*Note: The survey was also distributed to members of the public in Brunei Darussalam and Papua New Guinea via the APEC Secretariat. While the data obtained was consolidated in the overall results, economy specific breakdowns are unavailable due to the small sample sizes in those two economies.
Do people know what multilateralism is?

Understanding of multilateralism

Question: How well do you understand the term “multilateralism”?
Question asked of all respondents.
Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
Is it important for economies to cooperate?

APEC Average

84%
Prefers cooperation

Attitude towards multilateralism

16%
Prefers competition

APEC Average
Can economies go solo and achieve future economic success?

APEC Average: 71%

Thinks **multilateralism** is the **only way** for success

APEC Average: 29%

Thinks an **economy can succeed by itself**
Economic integration or self reliance in a global crisis?

APEC Average

70% Prefers **closer economic integration**

30% Prefers **more self-reliance**
Cooperation or isolation to fight the pandemic?

**Attitude towards COVID-19 measures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APEC Average</th>
<th>Thinks cooperation can eliminate COVID-19</th>
<th>Thinks economies can eliminate COVID-19 alone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>73%</td>
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<td>27%</td>
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APEC Economic Co-operation
Cooperation between economies plays a critical role in overcoming a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Importance of cooperation in tackling COVID-19

- **Ensure stable supply of medical equipment and healthcare**: 75% Very important, 20% Somewhat important, 5% Don’t know, 0% Not so important, 0% Not important at all
- **Respond quickly and effectively to the pandemic**: 75% Very important, 20% Somewhat important, 5% Don’t know, 0% Not so important, 0% Not important at all
- **Ensure stable supply of food**: 65% Very important, 28% Somewhat important, 7% Don’t know, 0% Not so important, 0% Not important at all
- **Exchange data to track and contain the spread of the virus**: 67% Very important, 27% Somewhat important, 6% Don’t know, 0% Not so important, 0% Not important at all
- **Improving supply chains for COVID-19 vaccine distribution**: 65% Very important, 28% Somewhat important, 7% Don’t know, 0% Not so important, 0% Not important at all
- **Boost local economy and create jobs**: 60% Very important, 32% Somewhat important, 8% Don’t know, 0% Not so important, 0% Not important at all
- **Create travel bubbles/ facilitate safe travel**: 41% Very important, 36% Somewhat important, 13% Don’t know, 8% Not so important, 8% Not important at all
Awareness of APEC and peers

- United Nations (UN): 35% (A lot), 46% (Some), 15% (A little), 3% (Never heard of it)
- World Trade Organization (WTO): 23% (A lot), 48% (Some), 23% (A little), 2% (Never heard of it)
- World Bank: 21% (A lot), 43% (Some), 26% (A little), 1% (Never heard of it)
- International Monetary Fund (IMF): 20% (A lot), 42% (Some), 25% (A little), 3% (Never heard of it)
- Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC): 19% (A lot), 41% (Some), 25% (A little), 5% (Never heard of it)
- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): 18% (A lot), 32% (Some), 25% (A little), 5% (Never heard of it)
- Group of Twenty (G20): 12% (A lot), 36% (Some), 27% (A little), 5% (Never heard of it)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): 9% (A lot), 32% (Some), 30% (A little), 9% (Never heard of it)
- Asian Development Bank (ADB): 8% (A lot), 26% (Some), 28% (A little), 6% (Never heard of it)

Are people familiar with multilateral institutions?
APEC is the most mentioned when asked about organizations that promote cooperation between economies in Asia-Pacific.

Unaided awareness of organizations promoting cooperation between economies in Asia-Pacific

- APEC: 23%
- Other unspecified organization: 13%
- United Nations: 6%
- World Trade Organization: 3%
- World Health Organization: 2%
- Don’t know: 25%
Among those who are aware of APEC, the organization performs slightly better than peers for promoting cooperation between economies in Asia-Pacific.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>Somewhat effective</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Somewhat ineffective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)</td>
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APEC’s support for free and open trade and the interconnected global economy are the main topics the public associate with APEC.
Public key concerns vs expected future focus.

Areas of focus

- Poverty/ wealth inequality/ social inclusion
- Climate change/ sustainability
- Domestic economic development
- Public health/ healthcare
- Education
- Human capital development/ helping people upskill
- Interconnected global economy
- Free/ open/ fair trade & international investment*
- Supply chain resilience
- Migration
- Digital transformation
- Gender equality

More concerned areas

Less concerned areas

Current association with APEC

Expected future multilateralism focus of the economies
NEXT STEPS

• Present survey findings to key stakeholders for analysis and reactions

• Produce qualitative report with recommendations for APEC messaging, positioning and branding elements
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