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Mutual recognition on qualifications: facilitating skilled labor mobility

by

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The Importance of Skilled Labor Mobility

- The free flow of skilled labor becomes necessary to allow countries get an easy access to needed skills and talents within the region.

- Intended to help filling the shortage of skilled labor of certain occupations and at same time, helps countries with excess supply of certain professions to export services under Mode 4

- Allows transfer of skills, knowledge and experience
To facilitate the skilled labor mobility, the ASEAN, established “mutual recognition agreements” (MRAs) that acknowledges a system of equivalency and recognition related to qualifications and competence of various professions.

This includes recognition on Education, Skills and Training, Years of Experience and Professional Certification and Licenses across the region.

The Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF) is Critical in order to facilitate the implementation of MRA to create universal measures of qualifications.
Framework Agreements of Professions are currently limited to only 8 type of occupations (Engineering, Architecture, Medical Professionals, Nurse, Dentistry, Tourism workers, Surveyor and Accountants) – which represents approx. only 1.5% of ASEAN's workforce.

The ‘ASEAN single certification’ currently only applies to selected occupations ie: certified engineers and architects will be registered under ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineers and ASEAN Architects – as per Feb 2019, there are 3547 engineers, 534 architects and 2548 accountants from different ASEAN countries are currently registered)
The Challenges

- Education Accreditation differences
- Standardization vary by professions
- Restrictive Labor Policies, Protectionism & Preferential regulation towards local labor
- Working permit requirements are not uniform across region – further limits employer’s ability to hire
- Lack of database
- Lack of Information re: available job and project opportunities in the region

Concerns from Private sectors

- Relocation Cost & Different sets of renumeration system
- Return on Investment
- Skills Gap remaining
- Cultural differences, Language barriers
Addressing the Challenge:
Key Points in MRA implementation

- Implement MRA and facilitate the skilled labor mobility require strong commitments and political will.
- Need to reform domestic regulations that may become barrier in skilled labor movement.
- Set-up complementary measures to reach a universal qualification standard beyond education level or education accreditation. The measures may come in different forms: mentoring, apprenticeship, training, capacity building, working experience.
- Synchronize qualification standards, certification and training requirements.
- Link-up MRA with existing professional mobility in the region to create synergy between MRA and actual labor market movement.
- Databank set-up of skilled labors across regions.
- Information Portal on jobs and projects opportunities.
Promoting Growth and Greater Efficiency of Indonesia Services Sector

Thank You