THE LONG ROAD AHEAD

STATUS REPORT
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASEAN
MUTUAL RECOGNITION ARRANGEMENTS
ON PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

MPI
MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE

50 YEARS

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Notes:
In this publication, "$" refers to US dollars.
ADB recognizes "China" as the People's Republic of China and "Laos" and "Lao" as the Lao People's Democratic Republic.
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Abbreviations

AA	–	ASEAN Architect
AAC	–	ASEAN Architect Council
AAR	–	ASEAN Architect Register
ACCSTP	–	ASEAN Common Competency Standards for Tourism Professionals
ACPE	–	ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineer
ACPECC	–	ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineering Coordinating Committee
ACPER	–	ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineers Register
AEC	–	ASEAN Economic Community
AJCCD	–	ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Dental Practitioners
AJCCM	–	ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Medical Practitioners
AJCCN	–	ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Nursing
AQRF	–	ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework
ASEAN	–	Association of Southeast Asian Nation
ATPMC	–	ASEAN Tourism Professional Monitoring Committee
ATPRS	–	ASEAN Tourism Professional Registration System
BNSP	–	*Badan Nasional Sertifikasi Profesi* (Indonesia Professional Certification Authority)
CATC	–	Common ASEAN Tourism Curriculum
CCS	–	ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Services
CPD	–	Continuing Professional Development
ILO	–	International Labour Organization
LEPPI	–	*Lembaga Profesional Pariwisata Indonesia* (Indonesian Institute of Tourism Professionals)
MRA	–	Mutual Recognition Arrangement
NRA	–	Nursing Regulatory Authority
NTPB	–	National Tourism Professional Board
NTO	–	National Tourism Organization
PDRA	–	Professional Dental Regulatory Authority
PMRA	–	Professional Medical Regulatory Authority
PRA	–	Professional Regulatory Authority
RFA	–	Registered Foreign Architect
RFPE	–	Registered Foreign Professional Engineer
TESDA	–	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TIBFI	–	Tourism Industry Board Foundation
TPCB	–	Tourism Professional Certification Board

Acknowledgments

Executive Summary

Nearly a decade ago, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)[1] signed Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) in seven occupations (accountancy, architecture, dentistry, engineering, medicine, nursing, and tourism) as well as a Framework Arrangement on Mutual Recognition in surveying,[2] designed to facilitate professional mobility within the region. MRAs are not easy to operationalize, however. ASEAN Member States face a new set of challenges in moving from the negotiation to the implementation stage.

There has been progress primarily in two areas: (1) the creation of implementing offices and bodies at the regional and national levels as outlined in the MRAs; and (2) the incorporation or transposition of MRA principles into national laws. There is a tremendous backlog, however, in a third key area: (3) the operationalization of MRA principles into detailed regulations, plans, procedures, and mechanisms that professionals can utilize now.

- At the regional level, five out of the nine regional bodies the MRAs envisioned have been created and are fully functioning. The coordinating committees in the seven occupations meet regularly between 2 and 4 times per year with the assistance of the ASEAN Secretariat, while the registries for engineering and architecture are also currently active with more than 1,000 professionals already in the system.

- At the national level, ASEAN Member States created or revised 12 offices after the MRAs were signed, with Myanmar creating the most new regulatory offices. Eight of the 10 countries in the region also enacted 29 laws since the signing of the MRAs. Some are revisions of existing laws, while the rest created entirely new sets of laws.

For the MRAs to be fully implemented, however, the laws must be translated into a clear working process of mutual recognition and registration. Progress in this area remains painfully slow and uneven across countries and for all occupations.

- *Accountancy, architecture, and engineering.* The MRAs on engineering and architecture have gone farthest in terms of creating a working process that ASEAN professionals can utilize in order to get recognized and registered in another ASEAN country. However, 10 years into implementation, just seven engineers had completed that process and registered in the country of destination. More importantly, none so far has moved and worked in the country in which they registered. Setting the recognition process has taken time, with some countries progressing faster than others. Only two countries—Malaysia and Singapore—have completed all the steps required to fully implement the engineering MRA. It took an average of about 2 years for countries to submit their notification of participation, 3 years to create the monitoring committees and submit the assessment statements needed for the recognition process, and 1 year to start registering engineers in the MRA system. Architecture is progressing at roughly the same pace as engineering. The backlog, to date, is on

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[1] The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) includes 10 countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

[2] Policymakers in the region are working toward a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) in the surveying field, but this agreement remains in the framework stage.

registering engineers and architects in the destination countries. In accountancy, no country has progressed beyond the first step: the submission of notification.

- **Tourism.** The tourism MRA has also envisioned a recognition process at the regional level, but many components are still missing. The registry is not yet operational and no ASEAN tourism professional has been registered in the MRA system. ASEAN Member States have focused on developing training toolboxes for common competencies in the six labor divisions identified in the MRAs. The toolboxes allow each country to develop its own national competency standards, curriculum, and tools based on the ASEAN standard. The alignment process, however, is far from complete. ASEAN member countries are in different states of readiness in developing the national framework and structures to implement the MRA.

- **Dental, medical, and nursing.** Unlike the other occupations under MRAs, the health sector has not created a recognition process at the ASEAN level. Health professionals interested in utilizing the MRA system go directly to the Professional Regulatory Authority (PRA) in the destination country in which they intend to work. Most of the progress on health occupations so far has focused on the exchange of information on how regulatory and registration standards vary across ASEAN Member States in order to increase transparency and encourage benchmarking in the medium to long run.

A. CHALLENGES TO FULL IMPLEMENTATION

ASEAN Member States face several key challenges as they transform the ambitious goals of the MRAs into practice, among them significant technical hurdles. More remains to be done in creating and revising domestic policies, regulations, and processes to make them consistent with the spirit of the MRAs: to facilitate recognition of qualifications and facilitate mobility. Professionals also face hurdles when seeking to practice in another ASEAN country, including:

- **Language proficiency requirements.** Seven countries impose local or English language proficiency requirements for doctors, and five countries do so for dentists.
- **Holding a degree from a recognized or accredited institution.** Four countries require that foreign doctors have earned their degree from a list of recognized or accredited institutions, drastically limiting the source of potential foreign licensees.
- **Minimum years of study.** In dental professions, seven countries require a minimum number of years of study, ranging from 4 to 8 years.
- **Passing national licensure exams.** Half of the countries in the region require dentists to pass the national licensure exams, which substantially reduces the value of going through the MRA system.

Among the three health occupations (dentistry, medicine, and nursing), nurses face the most restrictive domestic regulations. Nine countries require nursing professionals to pass national licensure exams, and all 10 ASEAN countries have language requirements.

Some of these additional requirements are also present in the accountancy, architecture, and engineering services, leading stakeholders to question whether the MRAs have led, in practice, to "double recognition" rather than mutual recognition. Many professionals are essentially going through the qualification process twice, first at the ASEAN level and then again with the destination-country regulatory authority.

A second key challenge is that many governments lack the institutional capacity to implement the MRAs. Some national regulatory authorities have yet to be created, while others that already exist do not have the financial and technical resources to fulfill their growing and increasingly complex mandates. Developing countries in the region face real spending and allocation constraints due to limited financial resources. Governments must also navigate a highly complex system with a wide range of stakeholders responsible for various aspects of the recognition process. Implementation

becomes even more difficult as many countries suffer from poor coordination between government agencies—a shortcoming that has even led to situations in which multiple government agencies provide the same applicant with multiple certifications. The frequent turnover of government personnel has also delayed implementation, hindered data collection and sharing, and resulted in incomplete legislative and regulatory frameworks.

Third, core development issues in the region affect whether professionals choose to seek recognition and take up practice in another ASEAN country. MRAs do not exist in a vacuum. Even if the technical and institutional challenges of implementation are fully addressed, there is no guarantee that professionals and employers will utilize MRA systems. Wage disparities and poor working conditions in some areas have generally discouraged professional movement.

B. OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION

Finding the way forward in MRA implementation requires policymakers to take into account the diversity of the region and draw guidance from the principles that underpin the "ASEAN Way": a diplomatic approach distinct to ASEAN and centered on consensus building and incremental progress driven from the bottom up. ASEAN governments and stakeholders would do well to focus on two areas ripe for regional cooperation.

First, real progress cannot be made without first addressing the restrictive domestic regulations that limit the ability of MRAs to facilitate mobility. Countries in the region may consider testing ways to lower barriers and bringing them to scale if proven effective. Such pilot programs might aim to build flexibility into the system (e.g., by offering professionals the opportunity to prove their skills through compensatory measures[3] or apply for conditional licenses) or to strengthen educational and regulatory infrastructure (e.g., by providing training faculty with professional development opportunities, creating shared accreditation lists, and establishing an implementation monitoring system).

Second, effectively implementing the MRAs also requires a concerted effort towards capacity building at both the national and regional level. Governments in the region, alongside other stakeholders, must commit to supporting the creation of necessary regulatory offices and fully funding existing ones. The cost will be high, especially for small and less-developed countries. There is wisdom in a coordinated approach, particularly among donors.

By taking advantage of these opportunities for cooperation, regional, national, and local stakeholders are one step closer to meeting the goals of mutual recognition and in reaping the undeniable advantages brought to the ASEAN region by skill mobility.

Box 1: About This Research Project

This report is one in a series of four produced through a research partnership between the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Migration Policy Institute (MPI). The project aims to improve understanding of the barriers to the free movement of professionals within the ASEAN region and to support the development of strategies to overcome these hurdles.

The reports in this series draw on the insights of 387 regional and international experts and practitioners through their participation in focus group discussions, meetings, and surveys. Contributors include ASEAN Member States officials directly responsible for Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) implementation, as well as private-sector employers, academics, training directors, MRA monitoring committee members, and current and former ASEAN Secretariat officials.

ADB and MPI convened 12 days of focus group discussions and meetings between May and September 2015 that were attended by more than 100 regional stakeholders. Additionally, ADB and MPI administered an extensive qualitative survey on the development and implementation of MRAs that was completed by more than 300 individuals directly involved in or affected by the MRAs. See the Appendixes of this report for more on the methodology of the study and for a complete list of stakeholders involved.

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[3]   Compensatory measures bridge the difference in the scope of practice rights or of formal qualifications between MRA parties, and may take various forms, including bridging courses, mentoring programs, on-the-job training, supervised or conditional work, and aptitude tests.

I. Introduction

In 2008, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a political and economic organization of 10 countries in Southeast Asia, agreed to fast-track the creation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), to be completed by the end of 2015. This agreement represents an historic milestone for the ASEAN region. Echoing, in some ways, the aims that led to the founding of the European Common Market in the 1950s, the ASEAN seeks to transform Southeast Asia into a single market and production base, characterized by the free movement of goods, services, and skilled labor.

In pursuit of this ambitious goal, ASEAN Member States have signed Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) to facilitate the movement of professionals in seven key occupations (accountancy, architecture, dentistry, engineering, medicine, nursing, and tourism; see Table 1), as well as a Framework Arrangement on Mutual Recognition in surveying. Yet, there is mounting evidence that professionals in these occupations across the ASEAN region are often unable to practice abroad because their qualifications, experience, and knowledge are not readily recognized in the destination country. If fully implemented, the MRAs would directly support the AEC goal of facilitating skill mobility by easing the often-onerous requirement that foreign professionals requalify in the destination country.

MRAs are not easy to operationalize, however. Despite progress in some key areas, barriers at the national and regional level persist. This report aims to illustrate how MRAs are currently functioning at the national and regional levels by exploring the experiences with implementation by ASEAN Member States.

Table 1: ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangements

ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement	Date of Signing
Engineering Services	9 December 2005
Nursing Services	8 December 2006
Architectural Services	19 November 2007
Dental Practitioners	26 February 2009
Medical Practitioners	26 February 2009
Tourism Professionals	9 November 2012
Accountancy Services	13 November 2014

Specifically, the report will address the following three sets of questions:

- **Progress in implementation.** How far have the MRAs progressed toward full implementation? Have the national and regional offices and bodies tasked with implementing the MRAs been set up, and if so, are they functioning well? To what extent have the terms of the arrangements been incorporated or transposed into national laws and regulations and, even more importantly, into processes and mechanisms that professionals can utilize?

- **Challenges to full implementation.** Why have MRAs not been fully implemented? Where substantial barriers remain, what technical and institutional reasons might explain them? And how do these barriers vary by country and by occupation?

- **Opportunities for cooperation.** How can ASEAN Member States cooperate to fully address the challenges that hinder the

recognition of professional qualifications and, in doing so, facilitate their mobility? What reforms to MRAs themselves, or to related policy areas, would help ensure that employers and governments alike can make the best of the skills ASEAN professionals have to offer, and thus support the AEC goal of broader economic integration?

In exploring these issues, Migration Policy Institute (MPI) researchers working in cooperation with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) consulted nearly 400 regional and international experts on mutual recognition and professional mobility. MPI and ADB convened 12 days of focus group discussions and meetings between May–September 2015 attended by more than 100 MRA stakeholders and experts, including a former Secretary-General of ASEAN, the Chair of the ASEAN Business Council, and officials from key ministries in MRA development across the ASEAN region.

ADB and MPI also administered a qualitative survey to examine the specific context of MRA implementation, including evolving bottlenecks to completion of the arrangements. Between August 2015 and February 2016, MPI, working with local researchers in the 10 ASEAN Member States, received responses from 311 individuals from relevant government ministries, the private sector, professional associations, educational institutions, and the human resources field. Appendixes 2 and 3 list the affiliations of all stakeholders who attended the convenings and completed the MRA implementation survey.

The report begins by discussing the objectives of the MRAs, and the expectations regional stakeholders have about the benefits these arrangements ought to bring professionals, Member States, and the ASEAN region as a whole. Sections II, III, and IV explore the institutional frameworks envisioned by the MRAs, as well as how the arrangements works in practice. Particular attention is paid to the progress made at national and regional levels, and to the remaining technical and institutional challenges. Section V identifies critical barriers that go beyond issues of mutual recognition, but that affect the ability and willingness of professionals to move within the region. The report concludes by outlining opportunities for cooperation among ASEAN Member States and other key regional stakeholders.

II. The Role of Mutual Recognition Arrangements in the ASEAN Economic Community: Ambitions and Expectations

The negotiation and conclusion of MRAs are always complex and require a tremendous amount of time and resources for all involved parties. Despite this knowledge, ASEAN Member States agreed to embark on such a course, knowing full well the critical role MRAs could play in strengthening the AEC, as this section discusses.

A. THE ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY'S GRAND AMBITIONS

Established in 1967 at the height of the Viet Nam War, the ASEAN bloc will enter its fifth decade a markedly different region. With more than 600 million consumers, Southeast Asia is a vibrant market with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of nearly $3 trillion. The region represents the seventh largest economy in the world and is widely predicted to be the fourth largest by 2050.[4]

For many observers, the creation of the AEC signaled an ambitious move towards fulfilling the vision of ASEAN as the new Asian power bloc. Indeed, a recent study by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and International Labour Organization (ILO) suggests that closer integration under the AEC could increase production in the region by as much as 7% and generate around 14 million additional jobs by 2025. Countries in the region could see significant productivity gains, allowing them to compete in global markets on the basis of this increased productivity rather than on lower labor costs.[5]

These developments, however, can only be achieved through much greater emphasis on regionwide skill development. Currently, skills shortages and mismatches are acute concerns for businesses and governments in the ASEAN region, and are only projected to grow worse in the coming decade. The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has noted that scarcity of qualified workers has caused significant issues for employers in Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam.[6] Indeed, a vast majority of the companies recently surveyed in the ASEAN region highlighted severe issues with attracting and retaining talent; the McKinsey Group, in a report on Indonesia and Myanmar, projects an undersupply of 9 million skilled and 13 million semiskilled workers by 2030,[7] while Grant Thornton highlights that 61% of business leaders in Singapore have difficulty hiring the skilled workers they need.[8]

B. GREAT EXPECTATIONS

If fully implemented, the MRAs could help address the widening skills gap in the ASEAN region through better allocation of labor. Indeed, the first and foremost objective of the MRAs is to facilitate professional mobility within the region. Additional goals include exchanging information and expertise on standards and qualifications, and promoting the

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4   Asian Development Bank (ADB), "ASEAN Economic Community: 12 Things to Know," 29 December 2015, www.adb.org/features/asean-economic-community-12-things-know.

5   International Labour Organization (ILO) and ADB, *ASEAN Community 2015: Managing Integration for Better Jobs and Shared Prosperity* (Bangkok: ILO and ADB, 2014), xii, www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/42818/asean-community-2015-managing-integration.pdf.

6   The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), "The Automotive Sector after the AEC" 30 July 2014, www.eiu.com/industry/article/1312109115/the-automotive-sector-after-the-aec/2014-07-30

7   Vinayak HV, Fraser Thompson, and Oliver Tonby, "Understanding ASEAN: Seven Things You Need to Know," May 2014, www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-sector/our-insights/understanding-asean-seven-things-you-need-to-know.

8   Grant Thornton, "62% Malaysian Businesses Find Hard to Hire Skilled Workers, Highest in ASEAN" (press release, 30 April 2013), www.grantthornton.com.my/press/press-releases-2013/62-percent-Malaysian-businesses-find-hard-to-hire-skilled-workers-~-highest-in-ASEAN/.

adoption of best practices that have been tried and tested within ASEAN. Except for the arrangements on engineering and accountancy, the MRAs also share an explicit focus on capacity building and the training of professionals.

Expectations are high among stakeholders in the region who hope the MRAs will meet these key objectives. For instance, in a survey conducted to inform this report, nearly 90% of the 168 regional stakeholders who answered the question of whether the MRA could facilitate the hiring of ASEAN professionals within the region answered positively. And, as Figure 1 shows, this sentiment is shared nearly equally among stakeholders from different sectors. Nearly 90% of respondents from governments and all respondents of professional associations said they believe in the potential mobility benefits of the MRAs, and the same is true of nearly 80 percent of respondents from the academic and business sectors.

Interviews, discussions, and consultations with more than 300 stakeholders from the region, conducted to inform this report, point to various

Figure 1: Responses to the Survey Question "Do You Think that the Mutual Recognition Arrangement Will Facilitate the Hiring of Professionals from Other ASEAN Countries into Your Country, and Vice Versa?" by Respondents' Sector, 2015
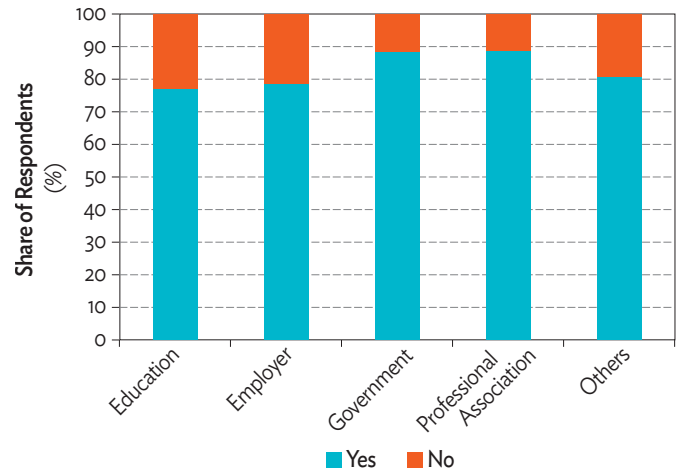
Notes: "Others" includes respondents who are practitioners, or work in hospital or other settings. Data based on the 171 respondents who answered the survey question.
Source: Asian Development Bank-Migration Policy Institute (ADB-MPI) Questionnaire – MRA Implementation, August 2015–February 2016, administered to respondents in Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

Table 2: Comparison of Mutual Recognition Arrangement Objectives across Occupational Sectors

Objectives	Facilitate Mobility of Professionals within ASEAN	Exchange Information and Expertise on Standards and Qualifications	Promote Adoption of Best Practices on Professional Services	Provide Opportunities for Capacity Building and Training of Professionals
Accountancy	X	X	X	
Architecture	X	X	X	X
Dentistry	X	X	X	X
Engineering	X	X	X	
Medical	X	X	X	X
Nursing	X	X	X	X
Tourism	X	X	X	X

Note: Surveying is not included in this comparison because it remains a framework arrangement.
Sources: Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Engineering Services," 9 December 2005, http://asean.org/?static_post=asean-mutual-recognition-arrangement-on-engineering-services-kuala-lumpur-9-december-2005-2; ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Nursing Services," 8 December 2006, www.asean.org/storage/images/2015/april/mra_nursing/MRA%20Nursing%20signed.pdf; ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Architectural Services," 9 November 2007, www.asean.org/storage/images/archive/21137.pdf; ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Dental Practitioners," 26 February 2009, https://cil.nus.edu.sg/rp/pdf/2009%20ASEAN%20Mutual%20Recognition%20Arrangement%20on%20Dental%20Practitioners-pdf.pdf; ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Medical Practitioners," 26 February 2009, https://cil.nus.edu.sg/rp/pdf/2009%20ASEAN%20Mutual%20Recognition%20Arrangement%20on%20Medical%20Practitioners-pdf.pdf; ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals," 9 November 2012, www.aseantourism.travel/media/files/20140508102208_mra_tourism_professionals_bw.pdf; ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Accountancy Services," 13 November 2014, www.asean.org/storage/images/2015/february/mra_on_accountancy/MRA%20on%20Accountancy%20(signed%20Nov%202014).pdf.

reasons for this optimism. Officials from Brunei Darussalam, for instance, said they expect that the MRAs will make the recognition process "easier, faster" and more "cost-effective," while their counterparts in Indonesia predict a "much easier and unrestricted" intraregional flow of professionals due to the creation of a "shared regional framework."[9] Similarly, officials of the Government of the Lao PDR said they expect that the MRA system would provide "full support" to professionals, including widening access to work and immigration permits, and thus increasing mobility.[10] A range of government officials across professional sectors in the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam share similar positive expectations.[11]

Some of this optimism can also be seen in the private sector. One private-sector leader in Cambodia, for instance, notes that his company has had problems hiring professionals from Singapore. Some candidates have claimed during the recruitment process that they have active licenses in Singapore, but these turned out to be expired. With an MRA in place, this stakeholder expects to more easily coordinate with the professional board in Cambodia to verify the licensing status of foreign professionals before hiring them.[12] Multinationals also anticipate benefits from the implementation of the MRAs when it comes to hiring foreign professionals. A partner at a leading firm in Brunei Darussalam, for instance, expects that the accountancy MRA will allow for the mobility of accountants "anywhere in ASEAN" and will "force countries to open up."[13]

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[9]   Responses to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 17 October 2015; 29 October 2015; 5 November 2015; and 24 December 2015.
[10] Responses to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 1 October 2015; 7 October 2015; and 17 December 2015.
[11] Responses to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 28 October 2015; 30 October 2015; 5 November 2015; 19 November 2015; Philippine consultant interview with expert familiar with the Philippine tourism industry, Manila, 23 November 2015.

[12] Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 4 December 2015.
[13] Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 3 January 2016.

III. Paper vs. Practice: Key Progress on Mutual Recognition Arrangements Implementation

Whether these high expectations are warranted is open to debate. What is clear though is that meeting high stakeholder expectations is especially difficult to achieve in a political and economic bloc as diverse as the ASEAN. Similar attempts in other regions of the world that are far more homogenous and integrated have encountered both technical and political barriers. In the Americas and Europe, MRAs have been signed but have never been fully implemented or have been implemented but have failed to reduce mobility barriers sufficiently to have a meaningful impact on movement.[14]

In the case of the ASEAN region, progress toward full MRA implementation has been made in two primary areas: (1) the creation of offices and bodies to implement MRA terms at regional and national levels; and (2) the incorporation or transposition of MRA principles into national legislation. However, there is considerable delay in a third key area: (3) making MRAs principles operational in practice through detailed regulations, plans, procedures, and mechanisms that professionals can utilize.

A. CREATING IMPLEMENTING OFFICES AND BODIES

The MRAs clearly outline the various offices and bodies needed at the regional and national levels within ASEAN Member States to facilitate

implementation, but progress in creating them varies by sector.

1. Implementing Structures on Paper

Although the MRAs share nearly identical objectives, it is interesting to note that they envision roughly three rather different implementing structures.

As Table 3 shows, all seven MRAs aim to create joint coordinating committees or bodies at the regional level as well as regulatory authorities or certification boards at the national level. The similarities, however, stop there. The MRAs on health-related occupations—dental, medical, and nursing services—propose the most basic implementing structure, while those on accountancy, architecture, and engineering envision a more elaborate set of offices and bodies at both regional and national levels.

a) Dental, Medical, and Nursing Services

The MRAs on health-related occupations envision creating joint coordinating committees that would facilitate and institutionalize implementation of the MRAs at the ASEAN level. Two appointed representatives from the professional regulatory authorities of each country make up the three committees—the ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Dental Practitioners (AJCCD), the ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Medical Practitioners (AJCCM), and the ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Nursing (AJCCN).

The committees are essentially what their names imply: coordinating bodies whose mandates are limited to facilitating the exchange of information

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14   For a review of international experiences on MRA implementation and their lessons for the ASEAN region, see Dovelyn Mendoza, Demetrios G. Papademetriou, Maria Vincenza Desiderio, Brian Salant, Kate Hooper, and Taylor Elwood, *Reinventing Mutual Recognition Arrangements for the 21st Century: International Experiences and Key Insights for the ASEAN Region* (ADB: Manila, forthcoming).

Table 3: Implementing Bodies and Offices, by Occupational Grouping

Office and Bodies		MRA on Dental, Medical, and Nursing Services	MRA on Architectural and Engineering Services	MRA on Accountancy Services	MRA on Tourism Services
Regional Level	Joint coordinating committee or body	X	X	X	X
	Professional registry		X	X	X
	Secretariat				X
National Level	Regulatory authority/ certification board	X	X	X	X
	Monitoring committee/body		X	X	X
	Government central authority			X	X

MRA = Mutual Recognition Arrangement.
Sources: ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Engineering Services;" ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Nursing Services;" ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Architectural Services," ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Dental Practitioners;" ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Medical Practitioners;" ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals;" and ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Accountancy Services."

among ASEAN Member States, particularly on existing domestic policies, procedures, and practices related to licensing and registration of health professionals. Their ultimate goal is to assist Member States as they adopt and align standards and procedures between countries—a critical step to fully implementing the MRAs (see Figure 2).

The coordinating committees are directly linked to the ASEAN Secretariat and operate under the Healthcare Services Sectoral Working Group (HSSWG). The HSSWG, one of the working groups under the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Services (ASEAN CCS), discusses issues related to cooperation within the health-care services, including the implementation of the MRAs.[15]

Figure 2: Implementing Structure of the Mutual Recognition Arrangements on Dental, Medical, and Nursing Services
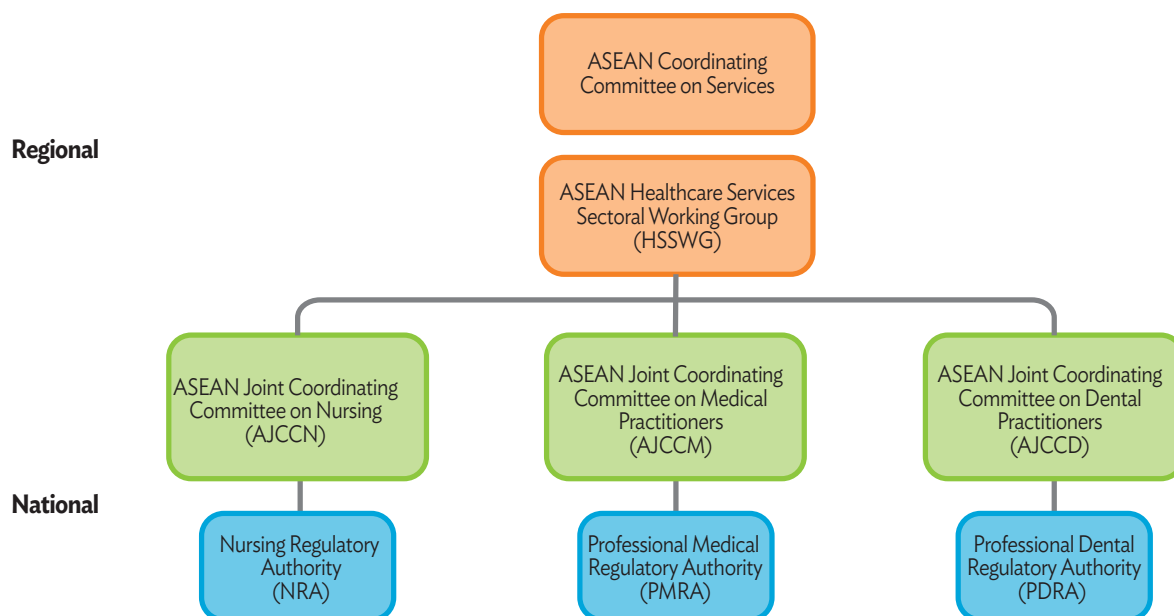
Sources: ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Nursing Services;" ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Dental Practitioners;" ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Medical Practitioners."

[15] ASEAN, "Healthcare Services Sectoral Working Group," accessed 2 August 2016, http://asean.org/asean-economic-community/sectoral-bodies-under-the-purview-of-aem/services/healthcare-services/.

At the national level, the MRAs envision the existence of regulatory bodies for each profession—a nursing regulatory authority (NRA), a professional dental regulatory authority (PDRA), and a professional medical regulatory authority (PMRA) —to review applications and regulate the practice of ASEAN foreign professionals within their respective countries.

b) Accountancy, Architecture, and Engineering

The MRAs that cover accountancy, architecture, and engineering go a step further than their health counterparts by creating ASEAN-level professional registries—the ASEAN Architect Register (AAR), the ASEAN Chartered Professional Accountants Register (ACPAR), and the ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineers Register (ACPER). The goal in creating the registries is to streamline and centralize recognition and certification processes at the regional level. The names of ASEAN professionals who have successfully completed the process set forth in the MRA will be entered into these registries and they will earn the special designation of ASEAN Architect (AA), ASEAN Chartered Professional Accountant (ACPA), or ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineer (ACPE) (see Figure 3).

Unlike their peer organizations in the health sector, the coordinating committees in these three occupations—the ASEAN Architect Council (AAC), the ASEAN Chartered Professional Accountants Coordinating Committee (ACPACC), and the ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineer Coordinating Committee (ACPECC)—take an active role beyond facilitating the exchange of information, conferring (and, if necessary, withdrawing) the special ASEAN-level professional designations.

At the national level, the accountancy, architecture, and engineering MRAs also created additional bodies—monitoring committees (MCs) and national accountancy boards (NABs)—that coordinate the implementation of the MRAs across various sectors and agencies, similar to the roles of the their counterparts in the health sector.

c) Tourism

Compared to the other six arrangements, the MRA on Tourism mandates the most elaborate implementing structure at the regional level. At the core of this structure is the ASEAN Tourism

Figure 3: Implementing Structure of the Mutual Recognition Arrangements on Accountancy, Architecture, and Engineering Services
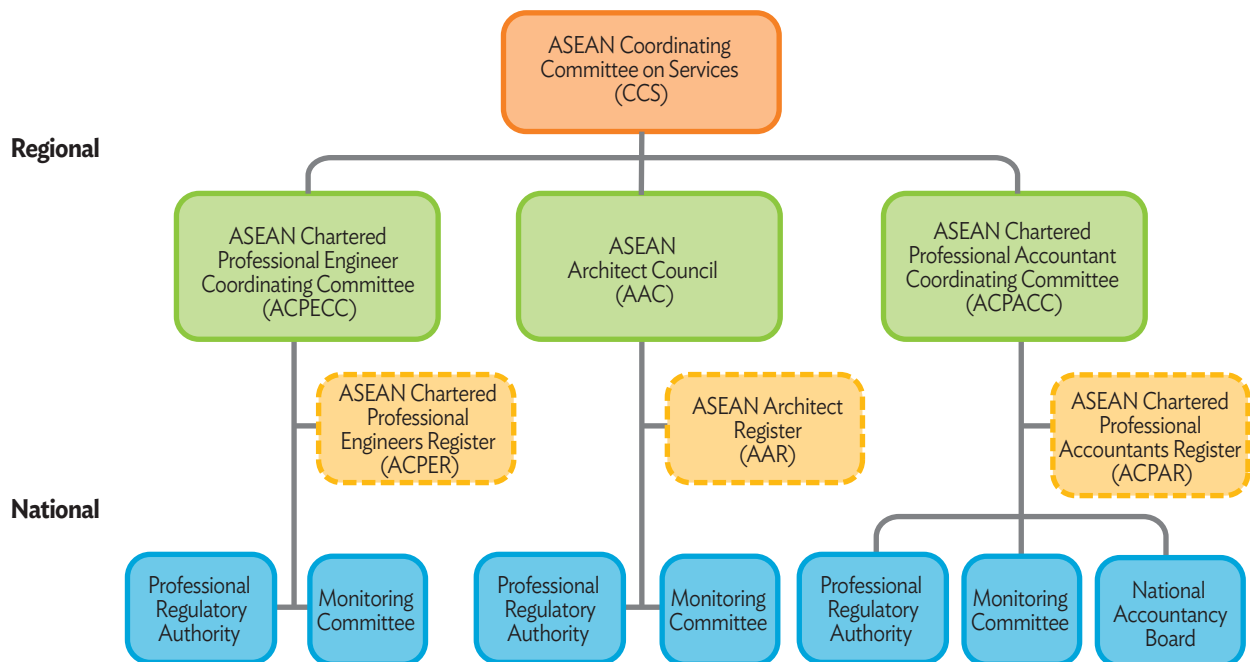
Sources: ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Engineering Services;" ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Architectural Services;" ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Accountancy Services."

Figure 4: Implementing Structure of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals
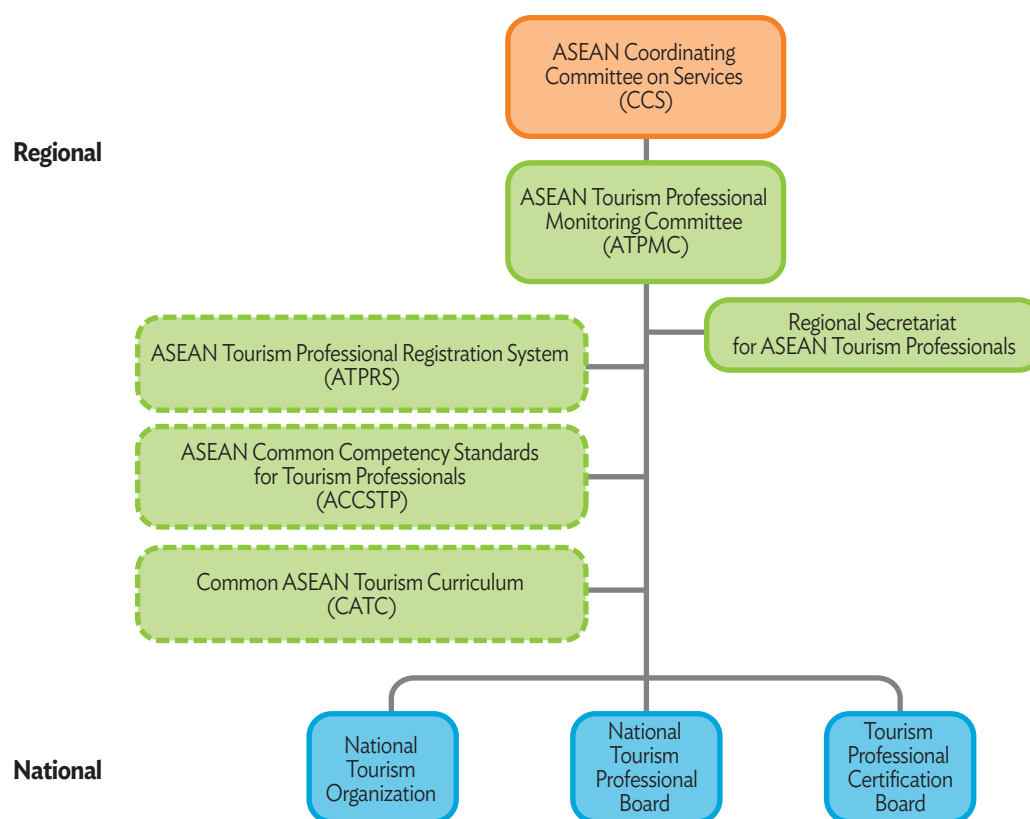
Source: ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals."

Professional Monitoring Committee (ATPMC), which is tasked with creating awareness and disseminating information about the MRA within ASEAN. Appointed representatives from the National Tourism Professional Boards (NTPBs) and National Tourism Organizations (NTOs) of each ASEAN Member States make up the ATPMC.

Unlike its counterparts in other occupations, the tourism MRA has a permanent regional secretariat and maintains not just a registry—the ASEAN Tourism Professional Registration System (ATPRS)—but is also responsible for promoting, updating, and monitoring two regionally agreed upon sets of standards: the ASEAN Common Competency Standards for Tourism Professionals (ACCSTP) and the Common ASEAN Tourism Curriculum (CATC). The ACCSTP refers to the minimum required competency standards in hotel and travel services, while the CATC refers to the common curriculum for ASEAN Tourism Professionals that is to be used by

training institutions both in and out of the workplace. The ATPRS is also unique in that it is designed to serve as a job bank: a common web-based platform connecting ASEAN tourism professionals directly to employers in the region.

2. Progress at the Regional Level

At the ASEAN level, nine out of the 12 regional bodies the MRAs envisioned have already been created. As Table 4 shows, the coordinating committees in the seven occupations (AA, AAC, AJCCD, AJCCM, AJCCN, ACPECC, and ATPMC) are fully functional and meet regularly, between 2 and 4 times per year, under the purview of the ASEAN CCS.

The registries for engineering (ACPER) and architecture (AA) are also active with more than 1,000 professionals already in the two systems, while the tourism registry (ATPRS) remained under development at the time of this report.

Table 4: Status of Mutual Recognition Arrangement-Mandated Regional Bodies, by Sector

Occupation/Sector	Name of Regional Body/Entity	Status
Accountancy	ASEAN Chartered Professional Accountants Coordinating Committee (ACPACC)	Pending, committee members being nominated
	ASEAN Chartered Professional Accountants Register (ACPAR)	Pending, upon creation of the ACPACC
Architecture	ASEAN Architect Council (AAC)	Both fully functioning, meeting four times yearly
	ASEAN Architect Register (AAR)	
Dental	ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Dental Practitioners (AJCCD)	Both fully functioning, meeting three times yearly
Engineering	ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineer Coordinating Committee (ACPECC)	Both fully functioning, meeting four times yearly
	ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineers Register (ACPER)	
Medical	ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Medical Practitioners (AJCCM)	Fully functioning, meeting three times yearly
Nursing	ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Nursing (AJCCN)	Fully functioning, meeting three times yearly
Tourism	ASEAN Tourism Professional Monitoring Committee (ATPMC)	Fully functioning, meeting twice per year
	ASEAN Tourism Professional Registration System (ATPRS)	Pending, system still being tested
	Regional Secretariat for ASEAN Tourism Professionals	Fully functioning

Sources: Author's analysis based on ASEAN, *Handbooks on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN (Accountancy, Architecture, Engineering, and Surveying Services)* (Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 2015), http://aadcp2.org/handbook-on-liberalisation-of-professional-services-through-mutual-recognition-in-asean-engineering-surveying-accountancy-and-architecture-services; ASEAN, ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangements on Accountancy, Architecture, Dentistry, Engineering, Medicine, Nursing, and Tourism; ASEAN, "Agreement on the Establishment of the Regional Secretariat for the Implementation of the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals," 13 December 2015, www.asean.org/storage/2016/01/6Jan/agreement/Agreement_on_the_Establishment_of_the_Regional_Secretariat.pdf; Comments made at the ADB-MPI-convened Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, Bali, Indonesia, 28–29 September 2015.

In the accountancy sector, neither the coordinating committee (ACPACC) nor the registry (ACPAR) is operational. The ASEAN CCS has arranged several meetings with Member State accountancy professional regulatory authorities to discuss and pursue the creation of these bodies, a process that could take at least 2 years according to regional stakeholders consulted for this report.[16]

Unlike the seven occupational sectors that have signed full MRAs, the field of surveying only has a framework arrangement, essentially an agreement among parties to start negotiating the actual MRA, and no specific offices have been created at the regional level. Since the framework was signed in 2007, the ASEAN Secretariat has convened a number of meetings among ASEAN Member States to facilitate the signing of a full MRA.[17] To expedite this process, the ASEAN Secretariat also contracted a consulting firm, Land Equity International (LEI),

to develop a roadmap.[18] Completed in January 2016, the roadmap detailed a set of activities over the next 3 years aimed first at better understanding and documenting the education and professional competencies of surveyors within the region and later, creating ASEAN-wide education standards.[19]

3. Progress at the National Level

As noted earlier, the MRAs envision the creation of a number of bodies within each ASEAN Member State: professional regulatory authorities (NAB, PDRA, PMRA, and PRA) and certification agencies (Tourism Professional Certification Board, or TPCB), as well as interagency monitoring committees (MCs), national accountancy boards (NABs), and national tourism organizations (NTOs).

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16   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 30 October 2015.
17   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 29 November 2015.

18   Ibid.
19   Land Equity International, *Development of Implementation/Action Plans to Enhance Mobility of ASEAN Professionals on Surveying Services: Final Report, The Road Map* (Wollongong, Australia: Land Equity International, 2016), www.coe.or.th/coe-2/download/documents/3_RoadmapReport-Final.pdf.

It is important to note that the majority of these offices already existed before the MRAs were signed. As Table 5 shows, the ASEAN 5—Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand—all had the required offices before the signing of the MRAs, while Viet Nam had all the requisite offices except for the one governing the tourism sector.

On the other hand, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar didn't have preexisting architectural regulatory bodies, and Cambodia and Myanmar lacked an engineering regulatory office. In the health sector, Lao PDR had yet to create dental and nursing regulatory authorities at the time of MRA negotiations, and Myanmar did not have one for dental services.

Indeed, after signing the MRAs, the ASEAN 5 now face the challenge of ensuring that the existing offices integrate MRA implementation into their work plans and operating procedures. On the other hand, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam face an even more daunting challenge: creating regulatory institutions from scratch.

There has been some progress on both fronts, especially in creating new regulatory structures. Table 6 lists both the existing institutions and the 12 offices that were either created or revised after the MRAs were signed. For instance, Brunei Darussalam established the Board of Architects, Professional Engineers, and Quantity Surveyor (BAPEQS) in 2011 specifically to meet the terms of the MRAs.[20] Cambodia likewise created the Board of Engineers and the Board of Architects 4 years after the MRAs were signed.

Among the 10 ASEAN Member States, Myanmar created the most regulatory offices after signature, including the Myanmar Dental Council in 2011, the Board of Architects in 2013, and the Myanmar Engineering Council in 2014. It has also revised the Myanmar Medical Council in 2015. With the exception of Indonesia and Thailand, the ASEAN 5 have not created new institutions or offices.

Table 5: Existing Offices and Bodies Prior to Mutual Recognition Arrangement Signing, by Country and Sector

Country	Accountancy		Architecture	Dentistry	Engineering	Medical	Nursing	Surveying	Tourism		
	PRA	NAB	PRA	PDRA	PRA	PMRA	NRA	Authority	NTO	NTPB	TPCB
Brunei Darussalam	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		
Cambodia	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Indonesia		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lao PDR	X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X
Malaysia	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Myanmar	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X
Philippines	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Singapore	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Thailand	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Viet Nam	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			

Sources: Author's analysis of institutions mentioned in ASEAN, *Handbooks on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN* (Accountancy, Architecture, Engineering, and Surveying Services), and responses to ADB-MPI Questionnaire—MRA Implementation, August 2015–February 2016, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam.

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[20] Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 31 October 2015.

Table 6: Establishment of Institutions Before and After Signing Mutual Recognition Arrangements, by Country

ASEAN Member State	Before MRA	After MRA
Brunei Darussalam	Brunei Medical Board, 1957 Land Surveyor Board, 1980 Ministry of Finance, Public Accountants Oversight Committee (PAOC), 2010 Nursing Board for Brunei, 2002 PUJA, Brunei Association of Surveyors, Engineers, and Architects, 1984	Brunei Board of Architects, Professional Engineers, and Quantity Surveyors (BAPEQS), 2011 Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, Tourism Development Department, 2015
Cambodia	Cambodian Dental Council, 2004 Medical Council of Cambodia, 2000 National Accounting Council, 2002 National Committee for Tourism Professionals, 2010	Board of Engineers, Cambodia, 2009 Board of Architects, Cambodia, 2011
Indonesia	Construction Services Development Board (LPJK), 1999–2000 Indonesia Medical Council, 2005 Indonesian Professional Certification Authority (BNSP), 2004 Indonesian Tourism Professional Institution (LEPPI), 2010	Professional Accountants Organization (PAO), 2014
Lao PDR	Medical Profession Council, 2005 Ministry of Finance, Accounting Department, 2013 Ministry of Public Works and Transportation, Council of Sciences and Technology (CST) (Assumed)*	
Malaysia	Board of Architects, Malaysia, 1967 Board of Engineers, Malaysia, 1972 Land Surveyors Board, 1958 Malaysia Nursing Board, 1985 Malaysian Dental Council, 1971 Malaysian Institute of Accountants, 1967 Malaysian Medical Council, 1971 Midwives Board, Malaysia, 1966	
Myanmar	Myanmar Accountancy Council, 1994 Myanmar Medical Council, 2000 Myanmar Nurse and Midwifery Council, 1990	Myanmar Engineering Council, 2014 Board of Architects, Myanmar, 2013 Myanmar Dental Council, 2011 Myanmar Medical Council, 2000 (revised 2015)
Philippines	Philippine Dental Association, 1945 Philippine Medical Association, 1903 Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), 1973 • PRC Board of Accountancy, 2004 • PRC Board of Architecture, 1973 • PRC Board of Dentistry, 1965 • PRC Board of Geodetic Engineers, 1965 • PRC Board of Medicine, 1969 PRC Board of Nursing, 1991 Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, 1994 Tourism Industry Board Foundation, 1992	
Singapore	Board of Architects, Singapore, 1991 Land Surveyors Board, Singapore, 1972 Professional Engineers Board, Singapore, 1971 Singapore Accountancy Commission, 2013 Singapore Dental Council, 1999 Singapore Medical Council, 1998 Singapore Nursing Board, 1999 Singapore Tourism Board, 1997	
Thailand	Architect Council of Thailand, 2000 Council of Engineers, 1999 Federation of Accounting Professions, 2004 Thailand Nursing and Midwifery Council, 1985 Dental Council of Thailand, 1994 Medical Council of Thailand, 1982	Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Tourism Professional Certification Board, 2013

Continued.

Table 6. Continued.

ASEAN Member State	Before MRA	After MRA
Viet Nam	Ministry of Construction (Assumed)* Ministry of Finance, Auditing, and Accounting Policy Department, 2013	Viet Nam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT), 2014 Viet Nam Tourism Certification Board (VTCB), 2014

* These institutions are assumed to establish a mechanism and reduce regulatory impediments to the mobility of professionals in accountancy, architecture, dentistry, engineering, medicine, nursing, and tourism across the ASEAN region.
Sources: Author's analysis of institutions mentioned in ASEAN, *Handbooks on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN* (Accountancy, Architecture, Engineering, and Surveying Services), and ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangements on Accountancy, Architecture, Dentistry, Engineering, Medicine, Nursing, and Tourism.

B. ESTABLISHING THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Member States have also made progress toward establishing the legislative framework needed for MRA implementation. Table 7 shows which countries have legislation and/or regulations on the occupations and sectors covered by the MRAs. Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand had existing laws and regulations for all seven professions prior to negotiating the MRAs. The other five states, however, lacked laws on two or more of the occupations.

Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam, for instance, did not have laws governing the licensing and regulation of engineering and architectural services. Additionally, Brunei Darussalam did not have laws covering tourism professionals, while Myanmar had yet to draft legislation concerning surveying and tourism.

After the MRAs were signed, eight out of 10 Member States focused on setting up the legislative frameworks needed to fully implement the MRAs. Table 8 lists 29 laws passed since the signing of the MRAs. Some, including those in Singapore and

Table 7: Countries with Existing Legislation before Signing Mutual Recognition Arrangements or Mutual Recognition Arrangement Framework, by Sector

	Accountancy	Architecture	Engineering	Health	Surveying	Tourism
Brunei Darussalam	X			X	X	
Cambodia	X			X	X	X
Indonesia	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lao PDR	X			X	X	X
Malaysia	X	X	X	X	X	X
Myanmar	X			X		
Philippines	X	X	X	X	X	X
Singapore	X	X	X	X	X	X
Thailand	X	X	X	X	X	X
Viet Nam	X				X	X

Note: "Health" category signifies all dental, medical, and nursing-related legislation.
Sources: Author's analysis of legislation found in ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Engineering Services* (Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 2015), www.asean.org/storage/images/2015/september/ASEAN-Handbook-Architechture-Services/FINAL%20ASEAN%20Handbook%2001%20-%20Engineering%20Services.pdf; ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Architecture Services* (Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 2015), www.asean.org/storage/images/2015/september/ASEAN-Handbook-Architechture-Services/FINAL%20ASEAN%20Handbook%2002%20-%20Architechture%20Services.pdf; ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Accountancy Services* (Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 2015), www.asean.org/storage/images/2015/september/ASEAN-Handbook-Architechture-Services/FINAL%20ASEAN%20Handbook%2003%20-%20Accountancy%20Services.pdf; ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Surveying Services* (Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 2015), www.asean.org/storage/images/2015/september/ASEAN-Handbook-Architechture-Services/FINAL%20ASEAN%20Handbook%2004%20-%20Surveying%20Services.pdf; and other legislation in the health and tourism fields across ASEAN Member Countries.

Malaysia, are revisions of existing laws, while others are entirely new sets of laws and regulations.

Brunei Darussalam, for instance, created the Architects, Professional Engineers, and Quantity Surveyors Order in 2011, a piece of legislation that defines what constitutes professional engineering services. The order also established the Board of Architects, Professional Engineers, and Quantity Surveyors under the Ministry of Development, and includes guidelines for creating a register, administering examinations, approving applications, and removing registrations. The Nurses Registration Act of 2014 amended existing legislation governing the Nursing Board for Brunei Darussalam, including by heightening monitoring requirements and by creating a more structured registration system, essentially bringing national nursing standards on par

with ASEAN Member States such as Singapore and the Philippines.

Likewise, Cambodia issued a law creating the Board of Engineers of Cambodia (BEC) and Board of Architects (BOA) in 2009 and 2011 respectively. The BEC and BOA register engineers and architects in Cambodia and set requirements for registration and licensing fees.

Some countries in ASEAN have focused on updating existing laws. In 2014, Indonesia passed two important laws: the Act on Engineering, which governs the registration and certification of engineers, and the Finance Minister Regulation No. 2, which gives a mandate and regulatory authority to the Professional Accountants Organization (PAO) and the Ministry of Finance.

Table 8: Legislation Introduced after Mutual Recognition Arrangements Were Signed, by Country

Country	Name of Legislation	Description
Brunei Darussalam	Architects, Professional Engineers, and Quantity Surveyors Order (2011) (yet to be enforced)	Defines professional engineering services and establishes the Board of Architects, Professional Engineers, and Quantity Surveyors under the Ministry of Development. Establishes guidelines for creating a register, administering examinations, approving applications, and removing registrations.
	Nurses Registration Act (Amendment) (2014)	Enforces mandatory registration of nurses with the Nursing Board for Brunei Darussalam and heightens the monitoring of nursing practices.
	Nurses Registration (Committee) Regulations (2014)	Requires individuals to register with the Nursing Board for Brunei Darussalam in order to be employed in the nursing services.
Cambodia	Royal Decree 0409/413 (2009)	Establishes the Board of Engineers of Cambodia (BEC), which registers engineers and prepares them to be certified as ASEAN recognized engineers.
	Decision on the Registration Requirements and Determination of Fees of the Board of Engineers Cambodia No. 44/99 (2009)	Sets the requirements for registration and licensing fees for professional engineers.
	Decision on the Registration Procedure of the Board of Engineers Cambodia No. 56/09 (2009)	Establishes registration procedures for professional engineers.
	Royal Decree No. NS/RKT/0908/1055 (2011)	Establishes the Board of Architects Cambodia under the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction to regulate architectural professions through ethics standards, registration conditions, registration procedures, and evaluation.
Indonesia	Act on Engineering, Act No. 11/2014	Governs the practice of engineering, including the registration and certification of engineers. Will require the enactment of implementing regulations to take effect.
	Finance Minister Regulation No. 25/PMK.01/2014	Provides guidance on becoming a professional accountant, and gives mandate and regulatory authority to Professional Accountants Organization (PAO) and Ministry of Finance.
Lao PDR	Law on Tourism (2013) (Revised)	Makes regulations more comprehensive to stimulate growth in the tourism industry, sets new food and beverage safety standards, and professional training for venue operators.
	Accounting Law (2013)	Adopts international financial reporting standards for public interest and nonpublic interest enterprises.

Continued.

Table 8. Continued.

Country	Name of Legislation	Description
	Independent Audit Law (2014)	Defines Certified Public Accountant (CPA) requirements such as continuing professional development (CPD) and practical training, in line with International Education Standards (IES) of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC). Allows foreign CPAs to apply for Lao PDR CPA status in order to practice.
Malaysia	Revision: Registration of Engineers Act (1967) (Revised)	Provides mechanisms for registering professional engineers and issuing practicing licenses in order to protect public safety, health, and welfare.
	Amendment: Architects Act (2014)	Establishes the Board of Architects to regulate the profession, register domestic and foreign architects, and create a professional register and procedure for removing individuals from the register who have lost eligibility for various reasons outlined under the law.
	Foreign Equity Participation Policy	Gives foreign practitioners who wish to practice in some private health-care facilities up to 100% equity
Myanmar	Myanmar Dental Council Law (2011)	Establishes Myanmar Dental Council to regulate the registration of dentists and establishment of standards.
	Registration of Engineers Regulations (2012)	Establishes initial guidelines for the registration of professional engineers in Myanmar until the completion of the Myanmar Engineering Council.
	Myanmar Engineering Council Law (2013)	Develops standard ethical principles and professional standards, the Myanmar Engineering Council, and guidelines for levels of practice and registration.
	Myanmar Architect Council Law (Union Parliament Law No. 39, 175/2013) establishing Board of Architects.	Regulates the architecture profession in Myanmar, and calls for creation of the Myanmar Architect Council to govern registration and standards of practicing architects.
	Myanmar Accountancy Law (Law No. 31, 2015)	Recognizes Myanmar Institute Of Certified Public Accountants (MICPA) as the national body responsible for implementing the accountancy MRA. Establishes Myanmar Accountancy Council as the national policy-making body with power to forge links with international accountancy bodies and enter into MRAs with foreign professional accountancy bodies.
	Myanmar Nurse and Midwifery Council Law (2015)	Establishes guidelines for licensing and regulates the standard of health-care services provided by nurses and midwives. Provides duties and powers of the Myanmar Nurse and Midwifery Council in dealing with regulatory measures.
	Myanmar Tourism Law (2015)	Provides provincial authorities more power over tourism development. Streamlines the process of obtaining government permission for tourism activities.
Singapore	Professional Engineers (Approved Qualifications) Notification (2009)	Specifies educational qualifications to be approved by the Professional Engineers Board.
	Dental Registration Act (2009) (Revised)	Establishes the Singapore Dental Council to register dentists and oral health therapists.
	Nurses and Midwives Act (2012) (Revised)	Establishes Singapore Nursing Board, provides for registration and enrollment of nurses, registration of midwives, and certification of Advanced Practice Nurses.
	Medical Registration Act (2014) (Revised)	Provides for the registration of medical practitioners.
	Singapore Tourism Board (Amendment) Act (2014)	Provides the Singapore Tourism Board greater power to prosecute violations and enforce rules related to unlicensed tour guides and illegal travel agents.
Viet Nam	Construction Law No. 50/2014/QH13	Regulates the rights and responsibilities of organizations and individuals involved in building construction, as well as practices in the field. Regulates the issuance of professional engineering certificates by relevant authorities.
	Law No. 40/2009/QH12 on Medical Examination and Treatment (2009)	Outlines the rights and obligations of patients and medical practitioners, sets the conditions of medical practitioners to obtain qualifications, determines requirements for examination and treatment, and creates processes for settling disputes.

Sources: Author's analysis of legislation found in ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Engineering Services*; ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Architecture Services*; ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Accountancy Services*; as well as direct consultation of national legislation related to dentistry in Myanmar and Singapore; medicine in Singapore and Viet Nam; nursing in Brunei Darussalam, Myanmar, and Singapore; and tourism in Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Singapore.

Similarly, in 2013, Lao PDR revised the Law on Tourism to make regulations more comprehensive and stimulate growth in the tourism industry. The law sets new food and beverage safety standards and mandated professional training for venue operators. Lao PDR also updated the Accounting Law in 2013 and the Independent Audit Law a year later. The Accounting Law adopted new international financial reporting standards for public interest and nonpublic interest enterprises, while the Independent Audit Law outlined requirements for Certified Public Accountants (CPA) in line with the International Education Standards set by the International Federation of Accountants.[21] The law also allows foreign CPAs to apply for a right to practice.

Among ASEAN Member States, Myanmar has created the most new laws, covering seven of the eightMRA and framework occupations. A senior official with knowledge of the architectural profession explained that this extraordinary push toward more comprehensive legislation emanates from a heightened awareness within Myanmar of the importance of professional licensing regulations, especially following the creation of the AEC (see Box 2).[22]

C.   OPERATIONALIZING A PROCESS OF MUTUAL RECOGNITION AND REGISTRATION

In order to fully implement the MRAs, the enacted laws must interpreted and adapted into clear working processes of mutual recognition and registration. The progress of ASEAN Member States in this critical next step has been slow and uneven, with some countries and occupations progressing faster than others.

1.   Accountancy, Architecture, and Engineering

Most of the progress so far in operationalizing a mutual recognition and registration process is evident in architecture and engineering. Architects and engineers who wish to move under the MRA system go through the following three-step qualification process:

- ***Country of origin.*** Professionals must first apply to their respective Professional Regulatory Authorities (PRAs), which will carry out a verification process according to the procedure laid out in an assessment statement. Those

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Box 2: Myanmar Postmutual Recognition Arrangement Legislation

After signing the MRAs, the Government of Myanmar enacted new legislation in all seven occupations—more than any other ASEAN Member State. Two of the laws deserve particular attention for their initiative to integrate domestic professional regulations with international standards.

- The Myanmar Engineering Council Law of 2013 establishes classifications, standards, assessments, registration procedures, and ethical principles for professional engineers, and provides a special status for registered foreign engineers in accordance with MRA provisions.
- The Myanmar Accountancy Law of 2015 accords the Accountancy Council the power to communicate and forge links with international professional accounting bodies, and even enter into MRAs with government approval.

Beyond legislation directly relating to occupations covered by the MRAs, the Ministry of Education has also undertaken a comprehensive review of the education sector and enacted reforms that enhance the ability of future generations to compete in a knowledge-based economy. For instance, the Employment Skills Development Law of 2013 and the National Education Law of 2014 aim to train Myanmar professionals to international standards, and engage employers to foster alignment between training curricula and labor market demand for certain professional skills.

Sources: Myanmar Engineering Council Law, Pyidaungsu Hlttaw Law No. 37/2013, 28 November 2013, www.burmalibrary.org/docs18/2013-10-28-Myanmar_Engineering_Council_Law-37-en.pdf; Myanmar project consultant interview with an expert familiar with the governance of the accounting profession in Myanmar, 27 October 2015; UNESCO Bangkok, "Myanmar: TVET as Key to Educational Opportunities for All Learners," accessed 31 March 2015, www.unescobkk.org/education/news/article/myanmar-tvet-as-key-to-educational-opportunities-for-all/; National Education Law [of the Union of the Republic of Myanmar], 2014, Parliamentary Law No. 41, 30 September 2014, www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/100493/120566/F28507983/MMR100493%20Eng.pdf.

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21   Chris Austin, "An Overview of the International Education Standards," International Federation of Accountants video, 29 May 2015, www.ifac.org/publications-resources/overview-international-education-standards.

22   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 13 January 2016.

who meet PRA criteria can then apply to the industry Monitoring Committee (MC), which will decide whether or not to recommend their admittance into the ASEAN-level registry— AAR or ACPER.

■ **ASEAN level.** AAC and ACPECC meet around 4 times a year to review MC recommendations, admit successful applicants, and accord them the special designation of AA or ACPE.

■ **Country of destination.** In the third and final stage, AAs and ACPEs apply to be recognized as Foreign Registered Professionals (FRPs) to the country of destination and may have to meet any additional requirements required by local laws and regulations.

For this three-stage process to work, ASEAN Member States have to accomplish a number of steps, as illustrated in Figure 5.

In order to take part in this process as a country of origin, a Member State must first submit a notification of participation, which is the official declaration of government intent to implement an MRA. The next step is to prepare and submit an assessment statement, which serves as the basis for completing steps 3 (screening domestic applicants) and 4 (approving domestic applicants). Once applicants have been vetted domestically, the process move to the ASEAN level (step 5) where the regional coordinating committees officially confer the ASEAN-level professional titles.

In order to register ASEAN professionals as a country of destination, Member States must also establish a system to review and register the AAs, ACPAs, and ACPEs who seek to practice within their borders (step 6), and to screen (step 7), approve (step 8), and monitor (step 9) them as ASEAN FRPs.

Figure 5: Steps for ASEAN Members States to Fully Implement Mutual Recognition Arrangements on Accountancy, Architecture, and Engineering Services
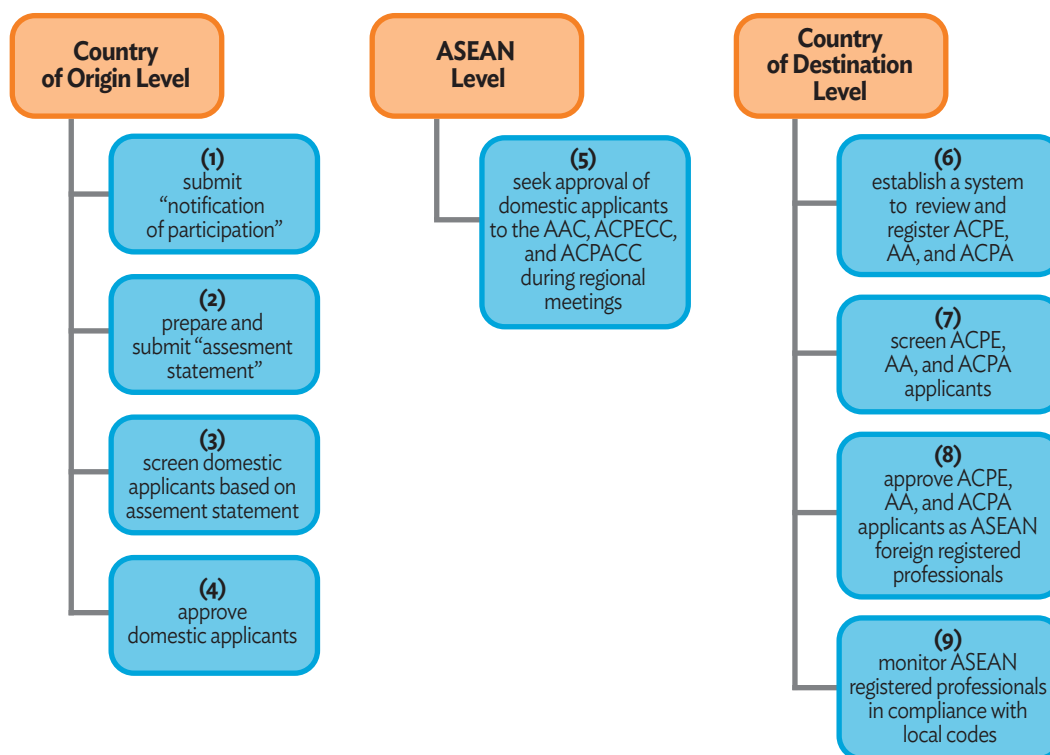
Sources: ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Engineering Services;" ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Architectural Services;" ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Accountancy Services."

Figure 6 illustrates the progress Member States have made as they move through these steps. Engineering has moved further than accounting and architecture, which is not surprising since it was the first MRA signed by Member States.

In engineering, every country except Cambodia has reached step 5 and registered ACPEs in the system. However, only two countries—Malaysia and Singapore—have completed the remaining steps. The backlog is in registering ACPEs at destination.

The Philippines has a system in place to register ACPEs, but has not received any applications, while Malaysia has registered five Registered Foreign Professional Engineers (RFPEs) and Singapore has registered two—all coming from Malaysia, the Philippines, or Singapore (see Table 9).

Figure 6: Progress in Mutual Recognition Arrangement Implementation in Accountancy, Architecture, and Engineering, by Country

Legend:
- (1) submission of notification of participation
- (2) preparation and submission of Assessment Statement
- (3) screening of domestic applicants
- (4) approval of domestic applicants and recommendation to the ACPER, AAC and ACPAR
- (5) approval of ACPE, AA, and ACPA at the regional level
- (6) establishment of a system to register ACPE, AA and ACPA
- (7) screening of ACPE, AA, and ACPA by the country of destination
- (8) approval of ACPE, AA, and ACPA as ASEAN registered professionals
- (9) monitoring of ASEAN registered professionals in compliance with codes

Sources: Author's analysis based on ASEAN Architect Council (AAC), *AAC 27 Comparative Matrix – ASEAN Architect Council (as of AAC 27)*, May 2016, http://aseanarchitectcouncil.org/pdf/AAC2703.xls; ASEAN Chartered Professional Coordinating Committee (ACPECC), "Download," accessed 5 May 2016, http://acpecc.net/v2/index.php?query=download; ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Engineering Services*; Participant comments during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015; ASEAN, "ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Accountancy Services," 13 November 2014.

For one senior official with in-depth knowledge of the MRA on Engineering Services, the arrangement has had little effect on mobility as of yet since the majority of member countries have not even started accepting applications from ACPEs.[23]

In architecture, every country except Cambodia has reached step 5 and has created an AA in the registry. However, unlike in the engineering field, no one has registered as a Registered Foreign Architect (RFA) as of the writing of this report. Similarly, in accountancy, no country has progressed beyond the first step: the submission of notification. This is not surprising given that Member States only signed the MRA on accountancy in 2014—9 years after the engineering MRA and 7 years after the one on architecture.

Overall, as Table 9 shows, nearly 1,800 ASEAN engineers and architects have been registered through the MRA system, an overwhelming majority of whom are engineers. Almost 40% of engineers are from a single country—Indonesia—while another 33% are from either Malaysia or Singapore. Indonesians also topped the list in the architecture registry, comprising nearly one-third of all AAs, followed by architects from Singapore and the Philippines.

A Slow Process

Moving from one step to the next takes time, and some countries are progressing faster than others. Figure 7 and 8 show the number of years each Member State has taken to reach key milestones in architecture and engineering.

It took an average of about 2 years for countries to submit their notifications of participation after signing the engineering MRA. Brunei Darussalam, Myanmar, and Cambodia took the longest—7, 6, and 5 years respectively—while Lao PDR, Singapore, and Malaysia took the shortest amount of time, with less than 2 years each (see Figure 7).

After sending official notification of participation, it took Member States, on average, another 3 years to create monitoring committees and submit assessment statements, and another 1 year after that to begin registering ACPEs.

Overall, it took nearly a decade for two countries in the region—Malaysia and Singapore—to complete all of the steps envisioned in the engineering MRA. It is also import to note that none of the seven

Table 9: Number of Registered Professionals, by Occupation and Country, February 2016

Country	Engineering		Architecture		Accountancy	
	ACPE	RFPE	AA	RFA	ACPA	RFPA
Brunei Darussalam	6	0	4	0	0	0
Cambodia	30	0	4	0	0	0
Indonesia	746	0	90	0	0	0
Lao PDR	11	0	7	0	0	0
Malaysia	261	5	35	0	0	0
Myanmar	200	0	12	0	0	0
Philippines	174	0	53	0	0	0
Singapore	235	2	78	0	0	0
Thailand	123	0	24	0	0	0
Viet Nam	196	0	10	0	0	0
Total	**1,483**	**7**	**300**	**0**	**0**	**0**

AA = ASEAN Architect; ACPA = ASEAN Chartered Professional Accountant; ACPE = ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineer; RFA = Registered Foreign Architect; RFPA = Registered Foreign Professional Accountant; RFPE = Registered Foreign Professional Engineer.
Sources: ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineer Coordinating Committee, "Home," accessed 24 August 2016, http://acpecc.net/v2/index.php; AAC, "ASEAN Architect Register," accessed 24 August 2016 , http://site.aseanarchitectcouncil.org/main/3000/index.asp?pageid=167531&t=asean-architect-register; Participant comments during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015.

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[23]   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 10 November 2015.

Figure 7: Engineering Mutual Recognition Arrangement Milestones Achieved,
by Country and Number of Years

ACPE = ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineer; MC = Monitoring Committee; RFPE = Registered Foreign Professional Engineer.
Sources: Author's analysis of data found on ACPECC, "Download," accessed 5 May 2016, http://acpecc.net/v2/index.php?query=download;
ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Engineering Services*; Participant comments
during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015.

RFPEs registered in Malaysia and Singapore has actually moved to these countries to practice their profession.[24] In other words, 10 years after the MRA in Engineering Services was signed, no applicant has moved through the full system and taken up practice in another ASEAN country.

The variation in the length of time it has taken different countries to meet certain milestones is considerable. Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore each registered their first ACPEs in late 2008 or early 2009, 3 years after signing the engineering MRA, while Brunei Darussalam, Lao PDR, and the Philippines registered their first ACPEs much later, between 2014 and 2015, or 8 to 9 years after signing the MRA. As noted earlier, only Malaysia and Singapore have registered RPFEs—something that happened 5 years after the first ACPEs were registered in their respective countries of origin.

The architectural field is progressing at roughly the same phase as engineering. It took an average of about 2 years for countries to submit their notifications of participation. As Figure 8 shows, the variation between countries is, as was the case with engineering, also considerable. Brunei Darussalam

and Myanmar took the longest (more than 5 years), while Lao PDR and Singapore each submitted their notifications of participation within a year of signing the MRA.

After countries submitted their notifications to ASEAN, it took an average of 3 years for countries to create monitoring committees and submit assessment statements, and 1 more year to begin registering AAs. Malaysia registered the first AA 3.5 years after the signing of the MRA, while Indonesia, Lao PDR, and Thailand took approximately 6 years to achieve the same milestone. Unlike in engineering, no country, as of yet, has reported registering an RFA.

If the timeframe for progress in the engineering field is indicative of the pace of future movement in the architectural field, as it has been thus far, it will likely take another 2 years before an RFA is registered.

2. Tourism

The tourism MRA also envisions a recognition process at the regional level, but many of the necessary components are still missing. As noted earlier, the tourism MRA proposes a much more elaborate institutional framework, involving a larger set of offices and bodies at both regional and national levels than has been proposed by MRAs in other fields.

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24   Author analysis of data from ACPECC, "Download," accessed 5 May 2016, http://acpecc.net/v2/index.php?query=download.

Figure 8: Architecture Mutual Recognition Arrangement Milestones Achieved, by Country and Number of Years
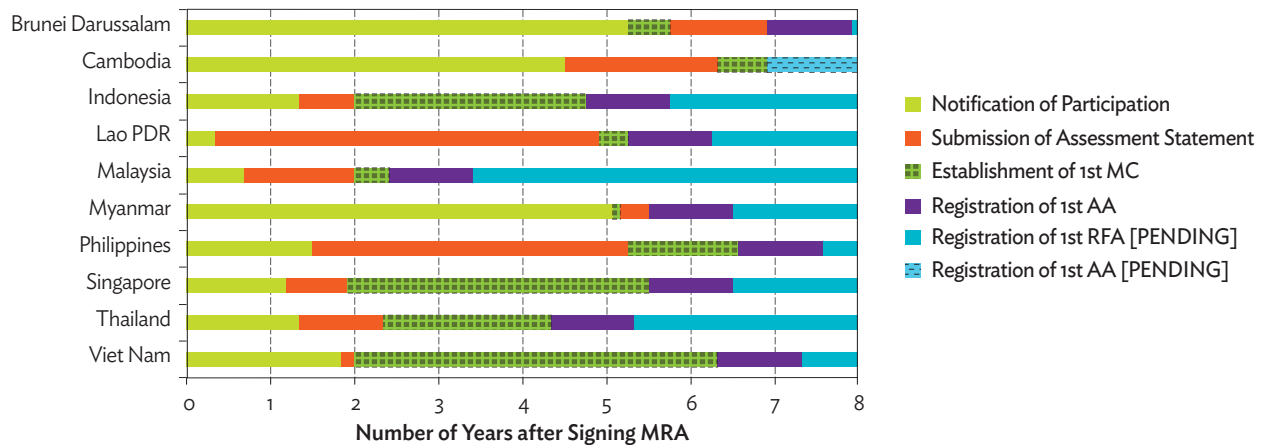
AA = ASEAN Architect; MC = Monitoring Committee; RFA = Registered Foreign Architect.
Sources: Author's analysis of AAC, *AAC 27 Comparative Matrix – ASEAN Architect Council* (as of AAC 27); AAC, *AAC 27 AAC Roadmap and Implementation Plan* (as of AAC 27), May 2016, http://aseanarchitectcouncil.org/pdf/AAC2709.pptx.

ASEAN Member States laid a great deal of groundwork in the decade preceding the signing of the tourism MRA. In August 2002, ASEAN signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Australia, in which the latter committed AU $45 million to the ASEAN–Australia Development Cooperation Program (AADCP).[25] Over the next 14 years (see Figure 9), AADCP developed the following three resources that became the basis of the MRA framework:

■ **Common Competency Standards for Tourism Professionals (ACCSTP).** Completed in 2005, these standards describe the skills, knowledge, and attitude required for 32 relevant job titles. The ACCSTP also outlines the 242 competency units in the primary divisions of hotel and travel of the tourism sector. The competency units identify the certifiable knowledge and skills required to meet the performance standards within the workplace.

■ **Common ASEAN Tourism Curriculum (CATC).** Based on the ACCSTP, and completed in 2008, the CATC outlines the competency standards that aim to promote uniformity and consistency between tourism training programs across Member States.

■ **Regional Qualifications Framework and Skills Recognition System (RQFSRS).** Developed in 2008, the RQFSRS is the common yardstick that ASEAN countries can use to set up national accreditation systems for tourism qualifications and skills recognition.

Since signing the tourism MRA, Member State focus has shifted to developing training modules, called toolboxes, for common competencies within the six tourism labor divisions—housekeeping, food production, food and beverages service, front office, tour operation, and travel agencies. In 2012, the Member States identified housekeeping as a priority area due to significant employment opportunities for housekeepers across the region. By the end of 2015, 242 toolboxes had been developed, each corresponding to one of the 242 competency units described in the ACCSTP.

The toolboxes allow each country to develop its own national competency standards, curriculum, and tools based on the ASEAN standard. There has been clear progress in a number of countries to this end. For instance, Cambodia has created the Cambodian Competency Standards for Tourism Professionals (CCSTP) in Hotel Services and in Travel Services.[26]

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25   ASEAN – Australia Development Cooperation Program – Phase II (AADCP II), "About Us," accessed 5 May 2016, http://aadcp2.org/about-us/.

26   Cambodia project consultant interview with expert familiar with the governance of the national tourism industry, 7 December 2015.

Figure 9: Development and Implementation Milestones of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals
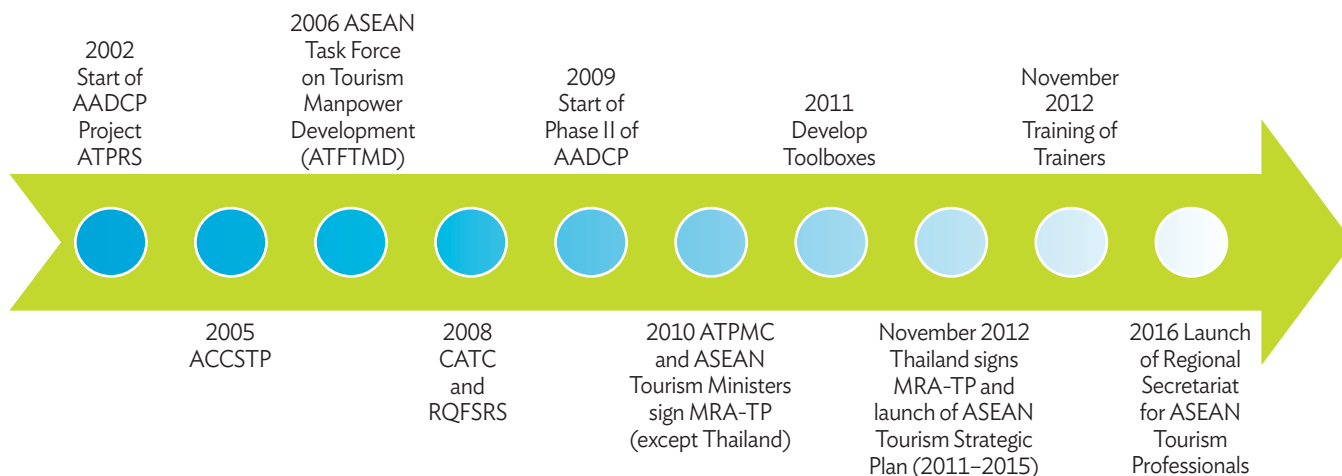
Sources: Author's analysis of various sources, including Australian Aid, ASEAN – Australia Development Cooperation Program – Phase II (AADCP II), "About Us," accessed 5 May 2016, http://aadcp2.org/about-us/; ASEAN, *ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) on Tourism Professionals – HANDBOOK* (Jakarta: ASEAN, 2013), www.asean.org/storage/images/2013/economic/handbook%20mra%20tourism_opt.pdf; ASEAN – Australia Development Cooperation Program – Phase II (AADCP II), ASEAN Secretariat, *National Implementation of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) on Tourism Professionals: Success Stories and Best Practices* (Jakarta: AADCP II, 2013), www.asean.org/storage/images/2013/economic/National%20Implementation%20of%20the%20MRA%20on%20Tourism%20Professionals-Success%20Stories.pdf; ASEAN, "Agreement on the Establishment of the Regional Secretariat for the Implementation of the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals;" author interview with an expert on the region's tourism industry, 17 April 2016.

The same can be said of the Philippines, where a common system for recognizing the skills and qualifications of prospective ASEAN nationals has been set up.[27] At the same time, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), which is in charge of recognizing the certifications of tourism professionals trained in the Philippines, has focused its efforts on promoting the revised standards and regulations, particularly in Philippine colleges, universities, and training institutes.[28]

Likewise in Indonesia, an official familiar with professional certification practices noted that the ACCSTP and CATC have been used when developing vocational education and training, and in particular, the Tourism Professional Certification.[29] A notable example of this integration is the use of the ASEAN-level competency standards in designing the vocational program curriculum at Universitas Indonesia.[30]

The alignment process, however, is far from complete. ASEAN countries are in different stages of developing the national frameworks and structures needed to implement the MRA.[31] As Table 10 shows, only Thailand has fully aligned its national tourism curriculum with the CATC; education and training providers in Cambodia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, and Viet Nam are still in the process of creating or aligning their national curricula to CATC.

As far as training is concerned, a number of countries have made progress in locally rolling out the toolboxes developed at the ASEAN level.[32] For instance, Cambodia launched a workshop and training program with nearly 600 participants who received instruction on the toolboxes. It has also trained 463 National Master Trainers and Master Assessors who will train others in their respective countries.[33] Cambodia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam have also conducted similar trainings in four of the six tourism labor divisions—housekeeping, food and beverage, front office, and food production—using the ASEAN

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[27]   Philippine consultant interview with expert familiar with the Philippine tourism industry, Manila, 23 November 2015.
[28]   Participant comments at a focus group discussion organized by ADB and MPI, Manila, 3 September 2015.
[29]   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 27 October 2015.
[30]   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 24 November 2015.

[31]   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 10 November 2015.
[32]   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 29 October 2015.
[33]   Cambodia project consultant interview with expert familiar with the governance of the national tourism industry, 7 December 2015.

Table 10: Key Milestones Achieved in Implementation of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement
on Tourism Professionals, Select Countries

| Milestones	Cambodia	Lao PDR	Philippines	Thailand	Viet Nam
National tourism curriculum is in place	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
National tourism curriculum is aligned with CATC	No	No	Ongoing	Yes	No
Education and training providers have aligned their curricula with CATC	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Yes	Ongoing
Toolboxes for all labor divisions have been implemented	Yes	Ongoing	Yes	Ongoing	Ongoing
Labor divisions for which ASEAN master trainers have been trained	Housekeeping, front office, food and beverage, and food production	Housekeeping, front office, food and beverage, and food production	Housekeeping, front office, food and beverage, and food production	Housekeeping, front office, food and beverage, and food production	Housekeeping, front office, food and beverage, and food production

Source: ADB–MPI Questionnaire – MRA Implementation, August 2015–February 2016, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

toolboxes (see Table 10).[34] There are plans to conduct trainings in the final two labor divisions (travel agencies and tour operation) in the Philippines for Master Trainers and Assessors.[35]

Countries in the region have reported sharing best practices in training. For instance, in the Philippines, to showcase its local training institutions, TESDA hosted Tourism Professional Certification Board (TPCB) representatives from other ASEAN countries and also visited their counterparts in Cambodia, Malaysia, and Thailand.[36]

A few countries have also started to pilot test the registry for tourism professionals. Lao PDR, for instance, has 125 names in its local registry and expects that its national registration system will be ready by the end of the 2016.[37] Meanwhile, the Philippines has started testing the registration of housekeepers.[38]

Despite this progress, the tourism MRA is actually moving more slowly toward its goals than the architecture and engineering MRAs. If 2010 is taken as the date of inception—the year when

all ASEAN countries except Thailand signed the tourism arrangement—it is entering its sixth year of implementation. If it had followed a similar trajectory to that of the architecture and engineering MRAs, the first ASEAN tourism professional should have been registered by the end of 2014. This lag may be explained by the tourism MRA's more elaborate framework, which involves a wider range of regional and national institutions and more ambitious goals to create harmonized regional training standards.

3. Dental, Medical, and Nursing

As already noted, unlike the other occupations covered by ASEAN MRAs, the health sector did not create ASEAN-level registries or ASEAN-level professional designations (similar to AA or ACPER). The MRAs only outline the minimum eligibility criteria that health professionals must fulfill to apply for recognition in another ASEAN country.[39] Health professionals interested in utilizing the MRA system apply directly to the PRA of the destination country in which they intend to work.

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34   Philippine consultant interview with expert familiar with the Philippine tourism industry, Manila, 23 November 2015.
35   Participant comments during a focus group discussion organized by ADB and MPI, Manila, 3 September 2015.
36   Ibid.
37   Ibid.
38   ibid.

39   These criteria include a valid license to practice issued by the country of origin Professional Regulatory Authority (PRA), a minimum number of years of experience in the origin country and compliance with continuing professional development regulations and professional and ethical standards.

In order to be fully recognized and registered at destination, health professionals will still need to meet the additional requirements that vary from country to country. Most of the progress made in the health occupations has focused on the exchange of information about how regulatory and registration standards vary across Member States—an effort to increase transparency and encourage benchmarking in the medium to long run.

Since signing the health-sector MRAs, Member States have mainly shared information with their counterparts during CCS meetings in the ASEAN Secretariat. Table 11 lists topics covered in documents released by the AJCCD, AJCCM, and AJCCN that essentially comparing different national rules and regulations in Member States. Topics include national requirements for the temporary or permanent licensing and registration of local and foreign professionals, and rules governing malpractice insurance and Continuous Professional Development (CPD). A number of government stakeholders consulted for this report identified the collection and dissemination of this information as a key achievement for the health-sector MRAs. [40]

Beyond the exchange of information, the health-sector MRAs have also inspired some countries to develop national standards and guidelines. For instance, the Myanmar Nurse and Midwifery Council (MNMC) has developed core competency standards on nursing and midwifery, and has drafted and revised accreditation guidelines for nursing education in response to the MRA on Nursing Services. [41] Likewise an ADB-MPI survey respondent with knowledge of the Bruneian nursing industry noted that the nursing MRA has been the "document of primary reference" as the country develops its recognition and registration regulations. [42]

Lao PDR is also working towards developing a recognition system aligned with ASEAN standards, but aims to create a common system that covers all health sectors. [43] A new institution called the Office of the Health Care Professional Regulatory Body is under development, according to stakeholders consulted for this report, and will jointly regulate the practice in all three occupations—dental, medical, and nursing.

Table 11: Topics Covered by Comparative Documents Released by the ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committees

Document Topics	AJCCD	AJCCM	AJCCN
Temporary licensing and registration requirements for foreign professionals	X	X	X
Permanent licensing and registration requirements for foreign professionals	X	X	X
Permanent licensing and registration requirements for local professionals		X	
Malpractice insurance requirements	X	X	
Continuous Professional Development requirements	X		X
Language requirements			X

AJCCD = ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Dental Practitioners; AJCCM = ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Medical Practitioners; AJCCN = ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Nursing.
Sources: ASEAN, "Dental Practitioners (AJCCD)," accessed 6 July 2016, http://asean.org/asean-economic-community/sectoral-bodies-under-the-purview-of-aem/services/healthcare-services/dental-practitioners-ajccd/; ASEAN, "Medical Practitioners (AJCCM)," accessed 6 July 2016, http://asean.org/asean-economic-community/sectoral-bodies-under-the-purview-of-aem/services/healthcare-services/medical-practitioners-ajccm/; ASEAN, "Nursing Services (AJCCN)," accessed 6 July 2016, http://asean.org/asean-economic-community/sectoral-bodies-under-the-purview-of-aem/services/healthcare-services/nursing-services-ajccn/.

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40   Responses to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 11 November 2015; 28 November 2015.

41   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 23 December 2015.
42   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 3 November 2015.
43   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 25 September 2015.

IV. Towards Full Implementation: Key Challenges

While it is undeniable that progress has been made toward implementing the MRAs, particularly in the creation of implementing offices and legislation, the speed of this progress has been slow and the extent uneven.

As noted above, even in the case of the engineering MRA, dubbed the "grandfather of the MRAs," by one expert,[44] only seven ACPEs have been registered in another ASEAN country 10 years into implementation, and none have moved to the country in which they registered. The other occupations, as explained in the previous section, are in varying earlier stages of implementation. The current lack of professionals using the MRA systems to move within the region is worrisome given that mobility is a primary aim of MRAs.

These delays can be attributed in part to two key challenges Member States face as they seek to translate the ambitious goals of the MRAs into practice. There is little doubt that the technical hurdles are significant. More remains to be done in creating and revising domestic policies, regulations, and processes to make them consistent with the MRAs. The second set of challenges comprises much deeper institutional hurdles that make professional mobility within the region difficult.

A. TECHNICAL CHALLENGES

There are two technical problems affecting MRA implementation. On one hand, the restrictive domestic regulatory regimes in many countries have yet to align to the MRAs for certain sectors. On the other hand, some domestic regimes are already more liberal than the MRAs.

1. Double and Not Mutual Recognition?

In negotiating the MRAs, Member States have reserved the right to add requirements that reflect domestic rules, regulations, and practices—even though many of these domestic regulations are not in line with MRA objectives. As one expert on recognition practices lamented, "There should have been a higher level of ease in mobility if current domestic laws are not that much restrictive."[45] Moreover, another expert on regional policy acknowledged that these additional domestic requirements are a problem and that it is important to keep them to a minimum.[46]

The concern over restrictive domestic rules is particularly strong for the regulated occupations covered by MRAs and less so for tourism professionals. Many stakeholders consulted in the accountancy, architecture, engineering, and health sectors expressed the belief that tight domestic regulations need to be resolved before real progress can be made.[47]

Tables 12, 13, and 14 identify the additional requirements for permanent licensing of dental, medical, and nursing professionals in all 10 ASEAN countries.

In the medical field, the most common additional requirements pertain to language, with seven

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44   Participant comment during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015.

45   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 30 October 2015.
46   Participant comment during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015.
47   This view was expressed by 29 practitioners from six ASEAN countries in response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire.

countries requiring local or English language proficiency (see Table 12). Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Thailand all require foreign doctors to speak the local language, while Singapore requires fluency in English. Viet Nam has a local language requirement, but makes an exemption for foreign doctors who can work with an interpreter.

Four countries in the region—Lao PDR, Malaysia, Thailand, and Viet Nam—also require foreign doctors to have earned their degree from a list of recognized or accredited institutions, drastically limiting the potential sources of foreign licensees. Indonesia, Malaysia, and Myanmar also restrict the entry of general practitioners by limiting licensing to those with a specialization, while Brunei Darussalam requires an initial work experience in government hospitals.

Interestingly, although the Philippines does not have any of these additional requirements, it is arguably the most restrictive of all ASEAN countries because it

has a constitutional provision that limits the practice of medicine to citizens. The only way for foreign doctors to practice in the Philippines is to get a special temporary permit, which significantly restricts both the length and type of practice.

Shifting to look at the additional requirements Member States impose on foreign dentists, language is slightly less common. Only Cambodia requires both local and English language proficiency, Thailand require local language proficiency, while the Philippines, and Singapore require fluency in English. A more common requirement is a minimum length of study, ranging from 7 years for Cambodia to 4 years for Singapore (see Table 13). Even more importantly, half of the countries in the region—Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Thailand—require dental practitioners to pass a national licensure exam, which substantially reduces the value of going through the MRA system altogether.

Table 12: Additional Requirements for Permanent Licensing of Foreign Medical Practitioners, by Country

Country	Citizenship Requirement	Limited to Specialists	Limited to Work in Government Hospitals	Local Language Requirement	English Language Requirement	Degree from Recognized/ Accredited Institution	Pass National Licensure Exam
Brunei Darussalam	No	No	Initially*	No	No	No	No
Cambodia	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Indonesia	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Lao PDR	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes**	No
Malaysia	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Myanmar	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Philippines	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Singapore	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Thailand	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Viet Nam	No	No	No	Conditional***	No	Yes	Yes

* Brunei Darussalam requires foreign practitioners to work for the government before working in the private sector.
** Lao PDR requires foreign practitioners to have graduated from institutions listed in the World Health Organization directory.
*** Viet Nam requires foreign practitioners to either pass local language requirements or use an interpreter.
Source: ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Medical Practitioners (AJCCM), *Registration/Licensing for Foreign Medical Practitioners,* accessed 1 July 2016, www.asean.org/storage/2016/01/6Jan/ajccm/AJCCM_3-Registration_Licensing_Period_(foreign).pdf

Table 13: Additional Requirements for Permanent Licensing of Foreign Dental Practitioners, by Country

Country	Citizenship Requirement	Internship Requirement	Local Language Requirement	English Language Requirement	Minimum Years of Study	Must Pass National Licensure Exam
Brunei Darussalam	No	No	No	No	n/a *	No
Cambodia	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	Yes
Indonesia	No	No	No	No	6	Yes
Lao PDR	No	No	No	No	6	Yes
Malaysia	No	No	No	No	5	No
Myanmar	No	No	No	No	5	Yes
Philippines	Yes	No	No	Yes	6	No
Singapore	No	No	No	Yes	4	No
Thailand	No	Conditional**	Yes	No	No	Yes
Viet Nam	No	No	No****	No	n/a***	n/a***

* No information is available on whether Brunei Darussalam requires a minimum number of years of study.
** An internship is only required in Thailand for those who have not completed what are considered basic curriculum elements.
*** No information is available on whether Viet Nam requires a minimum number of years of study or that applicants pass the national licensure exam.
**** Foreign dental practitioners in Viet Nam must work with an interpreter if they do not speak Vietnamese.
Source: AJCCD, *Requirements for Temporary Registration/Licensing Process,* as of 16th AJCCD, January 2016 www.asean.org/storage/2012/05/02-Requirements-for-Registration-Licensing-Process-AJCCD-16.pdf

Among the three health occupations, nurses face the most restrictive domestic regulations. Nine countries in the region require nursing professionals to pass national licensure exams, and all 10 have language requirements. Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, and Thailand require proficiency in the local language, while Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Singapore require English proficiency. Viet Nam offers an exemption for nurses who can provide an interpreter during their practice. Cambodia, Indonesia, and Singapore also require foreign nurses to pass a competency assessment (see Table 14).

Table 15 summarizes the previous three tables by showing the number of Member States that imposes each type of additional requirements.

It is noteworthy that at least half of the countries in the region require foreign dentists and nurses to pass a national licensure exam, but only two require the same of doctors. It is also evident that language requirements—either for local language or English proficiency—are quite common in the medical and nursing services, but less so in the dental field.

Far from an exhaustive list, there are other requirements that individual countries impose and that change over time. Commenting on the increased difficulty of hiring foreign nurses following recently introduced "postbasic" training and qualification requirements, a senior medical professional in Malaysia explained:

> We used to recruit nurses from Philippines and India but these have now been stopped by the Ministry of Health. This is not an issue of supply exceeding demand but rather a fundamental issue of competency and caliber. Permits to bring in foreign nurses are governed by the Ministry of Health and the policy that has been imposed in the past 2 years is that only nurses with "postbasic qualifications" can be approved. The Nursing Board has to approve and provide the Annual Practicing Certificate (APC) to the nurse. Without the APC, the nurse cannot perform nursing duties. Few ASEAN countries have this sort of "postbasic" training and qualifications, so this almost automatically cuts out our ability to bring them in.[48]

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[48] Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 29 September 2015.

Table 14: Additional Requirements for Permanent Licensing of Foreign Nurses, by Country

Country	Competency Assessment	Local Language Requirement	English Language Requirement	Educational Qualifications	Minimum Years of Study	Pass National Licensure Exam
Brunei Darussalam	No	Malay	Yes	Diploma/Bachelor	No	n/a *
Cambodia	Yes	Khmer	No	Diploma/Bachelor	No	Yes
Indonesia	Yes	Bahasa Indonesia	No	Bachelor	No	Yes
Lao PDR	No	Laotian	No	Diploma	3	Yes
Malaysia	No	No	Yes	Diploma/Bachelor	3	
Myanmar	No	No	Yes	Diploma/Bachelor	3	Yes
Philippines	No	No	Yes	Bachelor	No	Yes
Singapore	Yes	No	Yes	Diploma/Bachelor	No	Yes
Thailand	No	Thai	No	Diploma	3	Yes
Viet Nam	n/a **	Conditional***	No	n/a **	n/a **	n/a **

* The national licensure exam in Brunei Darussalam has been listed as "currently N/A."
** Viet Nam has not yet confirmed requirements of competency assessment, educational qualifications, minimum years of study, nor the necessity of passing a national licensure exam.
*** In Viet Nam, foreign nurses may either pass the language requirement in Vietnamese or use an interpreter.
Sources: ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Nursing (AJCCN), *Registration Requirements Process for Overseas-qualified Nurses,* as of 18th AJCCN, accessed 10 September 2016, www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Registration-Licensing-Requirements-21st-AJCCN.pdf; AJCCN, *Language Requirements for Licensing and Registration,* as of 18th AJCCN, accessed 10 September 2016, www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/2015/september/ajccn/AJCCN%20web-5%20Language%20Requirements%20for%20Licensing%20%20Registration%2018th%20AJCCN.pdf

Table 15: Number of ASEAN Countries with Additional Requirements, by Occupation

Requirements	Medical	Dental	Nursing
Practice limited to specialists	3	0	0
Local language requirement	6	2	6
English language requirement	1	3	5
Degree must be earned from a recognized or accredited institution	4	0	0
Minimum years of study	0	7	4
Must pass national licensure exam	2	5	7

Note: Local language requirements in the medical and dental fields both include Viet Nam, although its requirement is conditional and applies only if the practitioner cannot work with an interpreter.
Source: Data compiled from Tables 12, 13, and 14.

Some of these additional requirements are also present in the accountancy, architecture, and engineering fields, leading some stakeholders to question whether the MRAs have led, in practice, to "double recognition" rather than mutual recognition.[49] Professionals are essentially going through the qualification process twice, first with the ASEAN-level coordinating committee and then again with the destination-country PRA.

Indeed, in both engineering and architecture, some ASEAN countries have imposed significant additional barriers that severely limit the ability of the MRAs to facilitate mobility. The level of restrictiveness varies from country to country. At one end of the spectrum is Viet Nam, where foreign engineers are eligible to practice independently as long as they are in a possession of a valid practicing certificate issued by a relevant authority in their country of origin (see Figure 10).

Philippine regulations, on the other end of the scale, are the some of the most restrictive. As was the case in the medical and dental fields, the Philippine Constitution limits the practice of engineering to Filipino citizens. Although there are exceptions to this blanket rule, each engineering discipline has its own laws and regulations, and some are more restrictive than others.

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49   Participant comments during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015.

Figure 10: Engineering Licensing Requirements in the ASEAN Region, by Level of Restrictiveness, Select Countries

Brunei Darussalam
Cambodia
Lao PDR
Myanmar
Singapore
Thailand

Viet Nam

Philippines

Least Restrictive

Most Restrictive

Source: Author's analysis of national regulations listed in ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Engineering Services.*

In the middle of the spectrum are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Singapore, and Thailand, where foreign engineers can practice only if they meet additional requirements, some of which are more onerous than others. For instance, foreign engineers wishing applying to practice in Brunei Darussalam for the first time must provide proof of 1 continuous year of residence, while applicants for renewal must prove residence for at least 90 days for every calendar year. Similarly, Cambodia requires at least 3 months of residency and Lao PDR requires permanent residency.

Likewise, to apply for registration as a Graduate Engineer in Malaysia, an applicant must be a permanent resident and hold an engineering degree that is accredited or recognized by a national professional body that is a signatory to the Washington Accord—an international agreement among professional bodies in 15 countries that recognize each other's engineering programs.[50] If a country is a provisional member of the Washington Accord, Malaysia will recognize degrees accredited within that country on a case-by-case basis. Singapore, which is also a member of the Washington Accord, applies similar rules.

In Thailand, all registered engineers must be citizens. Foreign professionals, however, may apply to become Adjunct Engineers, as long as they can pass examinations

conducted in Thai. After signing the engineering MRA, Thailand also began to allow ACPEs to work as RFPEs, but only in collaboration with a Thai engineer.

Myanmar and Malaysia also permit temporary registration for foreign engineers who have a minimum of 8 year of experience and a job offer for a position that lasts less than 180 days. The temporary engineer, however, is only allowed to submit plans and drawings for a specific project cannot practice as a director or shareholder of a local company, or set up an independent consultancy practice.[51] As Table 16 shows, of the 12 regulated engineering disciplines in the Philippines, chemical, electronics, mining, and electrical engineering have the least restrictive rules. Foreign professionals in these four disciplines may take licensure examination if their countries of origin accord Filipinos the same privilege (in other words reciprocity). Exemptions, however, are provided to certain occupations or sub-groups. For instance, foreign chemical engineers who are "recognized as experts" and "have distinguished themselves in their fields of specialization" are exempted from registration requirements.[52] Foreign electrical engineers also enjoy exemptions from registration if

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50 For a discussion of the Washington Accord's recognition system, see Mendoza, Papademetriou, Desiderio, Salant, Hooper, and Elwood, *Reinventing Mutual Recognition Arrangements for the 21st Century*.

51 ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Engineering Services* (Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 2015), www.asean.org/storage/images/2015/september/ASEAN-Handbook-Architechture-Services/FINAL%20ASEAN%20Handbook%2001%20-%20Engineering%20Services.pdf.

52 ACPECC, "Philippines: Matrix on Licensing and Professional Practice for Professions Under the Supervision of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)" in *Requirement for Provision of Professional Services: Engineering Services* (Jakarta: ACPECC, 2012), www.acpecc.net/dl/07.%20Licensing%20&%20Registration%20Rules%20-%20Engineering%20-%20Philippines%20-%20CCS%2044.pdf.

Table 16: Additional Requirements for Foreign Engineers in the Philippines, by Discipline

Level of Restriction	Type of Engineer	Reciprocity	Requirements			
			Exemption from Registration for Certain Occupation or Groups	Exemption from Registration for Certain Occupation/Group if there is..		
				No Qualified Filipino Engineer Available	Limited Scope of Work	An Understudy Hired
Least Restrictive	Chemical	X	X			
	Electronics	X	X			
	Mining	X	X			
	Electrical	X		X	X	X
Restrictive	Aeronautical	X				
	Agricultural	X				
	Civil	X				
	Naval Architect and Marine	X				
Most Restrictive	Sanitary		X			
	Mechanical			X		
	Metallurgical			X		X

Sources: *ASEAN, Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Engineering Services.*

there is no qualified Philippine engineer available for the position and as long as the scope of work is limited. At least one understudy or trainee must also be employed for every foreign engineer contracted.

The other engineering disciplines are more restrictive. Aeronautical, agricultural, civil, and naval architect and marine engineers require reciprocity and provide no exemptions from registration. The most restrictive disciplines—sanitary, mechanical, and metallurgical engineering—do not even recognize reciprocity arrangements and only allow exemption from registration for a few, select groups of people. For instance, U.S. armed forces military and civilian personnel are the only foreign professionals can work as sanitary engineers in the Philippines.[53]

Some observers have attributed the "double recognition" that occurs in certain fields to two reasons: variation in either the number of years of training engineers receive in different Member States or in the amount of hands-on experience required before engineers can apply for a license in their country of origin. For instance Brunei Darussalam, unlike other countries in the region, follows the United Kingdom system that requires 4 years of

practical experience or internship before an individual can sit for a licensing examination.

The accountancy sector, which has the youngest MRA and is in the early process of creating monitoring committees, faces similar issues. Six ASEAN countries—Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore—want to set higher standards for academic qualifications and experience, which, if implemented, could mean that accountants trained in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam would not meet standards.

Indeed, local regulations and levels of competency in accountancy vary across ASEAN countries. As one leader in the regional accounting industry explained, accountancy is different from the other professions because the audit process has different procedures and standards in different Member States.[54]

Local language requirements are also an important issue as the accountancy MRA moves further toward implementation. Cambodia, for instance, doesn't impose language requirements but Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, and Viet Nam have indicated they plan to

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[53]   ASEAN, *Handbook on Liberalisation of Professional Services Through Mutual Recognition in ASEAN: Engineering Services.*

[54]   Participant comment during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015.

do so.[55] It is not clear at this point how negotiations will unfold. What is clear, though, is the importance in finding the right balance between restrictive and flexible rules. As the experience in engineering and architecture suggests, too much of one or the other will greatly undermine implementation.

2.   MRAs: A More Restrictive System?

Some stakeholders have also voiced concern that the MRAs may have actually created a more restrictive system. For instance, in engineering, the MRAs require RFPEs to work in collaboration with a local partner before they can be registered. Conceptually, the requirement makes sense. Collaboration allows professionals to share and learn about country-specific professional rules and regulations as well as local cultures and customs.[56] In practice, however, the requirement is a high bar to meet. Under the MRAs, the local partner has to assume liability should problems arise.[57] Professionals are generally risk averse, and many will not want to be made responsible for mistakes their foreign partners may make. Thus, finding a collaborator in another ASEAN country is extremely difficult for would-be professional migrants. This may go a long way toward explaining why only seven ACPEs have successfully registered in a destination country.

The MRAs also set a higher bar in terms of years of experience. In Singapore and Thailand, professionals can apply to be a member of the Dental Council even without the 5 years of experience stipulated in the dental MRA. An official with in-depth knowledge of the MRA on Dental Practitioners explained that the appropriate amount of experience was discussed extensively during the MRA negotiations. Thailand and Singapore wanted to see the MRA system have a higher level of openness, but more countries preferred the stricter 5-year minimum rule.[58] Thus,

the MRA limited, instead of widened, the route toward recognition for ASEAN dental providers in Singapore and Thailand.

Some in the private sector have also highlighted the difficulty of meeting multiple MRA requirements in fields such as engineering: migrant professionals must have both 7 years of experience and English proficiency. As one ADB-MPI survey respondent explained, in the case of Cambodia some senior professionals "may have enough experience but are not good at English," while younger professionals "may be better in English but do not have enough experience."[59] Finding the perfect candidate who meets both requirements is much more difficult.

Finally, a number of regional stakeholders described the difficulty of trying to furnish the documentation required to prove applicant qualification. In the Philippines, for instance, there are many experienced engineers who would like to register as ACPEs, but who cannot submit the required transcripts of records simply because of poor recordkeeping at some universities. As a result, many experienced and otherwise qualified engineers were denied admission to the ACPER.

One expert in ASEAN professional qualifications recognition noted that documentation requirements create a significant bottleneck. Many Filipino engineers are qualified, but it takes time before they can gather and submit their documents for recognition purposes. This expert explained further that a number of qualified Filipinos who are interested in applying through the MRA system are already working abroad, asking: "How do we facilitate their registration and the submission of their documents when they are not even living in the country?"[60] This is a challenge professionals from other Member States face as well, and for which an appropriate solution remains to be found.

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[55]   Participant comments during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015; Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 7 December 2015.

[56]   Participant comments during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015; Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 21 August 2015.

[57]   Participant comments during a focus group discussion organized by ADB and MPI, Manila, 3 September 2015.

[58]   Ibid.

[59]   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 20 October 2015.

[60]   Participant comments during a focus group discussion organized by ADB and MPI, Manila, 3 September 2015.

B. INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

Aside from the technical challenges that slow MRA implementation, there are also a number of deeper issues pertaining to institutional capacity. While governments in the region acknowledge the importance of mutual recognition and professional mobility, many still lack the capacity to fully implement the MRAs. Indeed, MRAs are only as successful as the national and regional institutions tasked to implement them.

The main challenges center on five issues relating to capacity: (1) inadequate funding, (2) lack of coordination among government agencies, (3) missing offices and bodies, (4) frequent turnover of personnel, and (5) poor data collection and sharing.

1. Inadequate Funding

For many governments in the region, one of the most pressing challenges is how to implement the MRAs without draining already limited public coffers. Developing countries often face real spending and allocation constraints due to limited financial resources.

For instance, Indonesia has budgeted 35 billion rupiah (US $2.5 million) per year to implement the tourism MRA, but stakeholders in the process have suggested this will not be enough.[61] Full implementation of the MRA requires forging a stronger collaboration between central and local governments, particularly on the sharing of financial resources. Increasing the participation of professional groups and the private sector is also critical, as is creating professional communities in the regions, although that too will require a significant amount of resources.[62] One survey respondent in the industry pointed to the limited availability of funds to disseminate the ACCSTP, CATC, and MRA nationwide.[63]

Likewise in Lao PDR, stakeholders have pointed to inadequate government funding as a key barrier to implementing the tourism MRA. For instance, the budget for conducting the training sessions and

publishing training handbook and other materials is extremely limited. Since the ASEAN tourism curriculum is in English, it also important to translate documents into the local language, although the Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism does not currently have the financial resources to cover this extra cost.[64]

Cambodia faces a similar problem. Stakeholders consider "budget constraints as the biggest challenge" in MRA implementation.[65] Currently, there is inadequate funding to fully support workshops and other training and certification programs. Cambodia has more than 600,000 employees in the tourism sector, but only around 80,000, or 13%, are certified. One industry expert lamented: "This is a huge amount of employees" who need certification, and who cannot take advantage of the MRA until they are certified.[66]

Budget constraints also affect the regulated occupations. In Myanmar, stakeholders note the need to strengthen the capacity of the Myanmar Medical Council (MMC), raising concerns about both human resources and infrastructure. Similarly, because practitioners have "different familiarity and understanding of regional regulatory initiatives," stakeholders raised concerns that "dissemination efforts and technical workshops, seminars, and knowledge are not adequate."[67] Additional financial resources could help remedy these inconsistencies since they can be used to conduct various activities geared at improving technical and institutional capacity. Another survey respondent also noted the need for resources to engage in national and regional discussions, such as on national qualification standards.[68]

Human resource shortages are one of the key issues that affect the ability of the Myanmar Architect Council to fully implement the MRA. Government staff currently represent the council in meetings abroad, demonstrating the need for

61   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 21 October 2015.
62   Ibid.
63   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 23 October 2015.

64   Participant comments during a focus group discussion organized by ADB and MPI, Manila, 3 September 2015.
65   Cambodia project consultant interview with expert familiar with the governance of the national tourism industry, 7 December 2015.
66   Ibid.
67   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 30 December 2015.
68   Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 2 November 2015.

extensive capacity building to link the council more effectively with its counterparts in the ASEAN region and beyond.[69]

Similar issues have also arisen in the Cambodian and Indonesian accountancy sectors. Sustainable constraints in Cambodia include limited organizational capacity, lack of qualified individuals, and a limited budget for implementation.[70] Likewise in Indonesia, implementation of the MRA requires large funding for both regulators and relevant PAOs. Currently, both actors face funding constraints. For one Indonesian accounting expert, "PAOs need to improve their capacity and capability to develop, maintain, and monitor their members;" but without additional funds, their reach is rather limited.[71]

The engineering sector in the Philippines also faces resource constraints. One industry expert raised concerns over the limited funding available to the Philippine Regulation Commission (PRC) to market and implement the MRAs. This expert commented that "[i]t's a pity because most of the activities started with the PRC," but that inadequate funds constrained further progress.[72]

The lack of adequate resources is not just an issue at the national level; it has slowed regional-level progress as well. For instance, in the engineering sector, ACPECC meets once every quarter to approve applicants for admittance to ACPER, the engineering registry. This may present a major problem since the number of meetings essentially limits the number of applicants ACPECC can review in any given year. This problem is expected to get worse. The ASEAN Labor Ministers are considering cutting one of the four annual ACPECC meetings, despite appeals from the committee. As one expert explained, "The approvals of applications are only tabled at every meeting." Thus, if ACPECC "approve about 200 applications per meetings, in total [the committee] can only approve 800 engineers per year. If you cut the

meetings down by one, there is a maximum of 600 ASEAN Engineers that can be approved per year."[73]

2. Lack of Coordination between Government Agencies

Budgets alone, however, are imperfect measures of institutional capacity. For many countries, lack of coordination between government agencies presents an even larger hurdle.

Governments seeking to simplify and reduce barriers to professional practice face a complex system with a wide range of stakeholders who are responsible for various aspects of the recognition process. Even at the national level, several government departments may have a stake in the process, including those responsible for education, employment, trade, and international relations. This multiplies the number of entities involved in implementing the MRAs and creates complex divisions of labor among them. Without coordination among these groups, implementation becomes even more difficult.

For instance, several regional experts consulted for this report noted that in Viet Nam each ministry is essentially in charge of a single profession, that there is insufficient coordination between them, and that having the commitment of other ministries was important. And while Viet Nam has many of the structures needed to improve coordination, some stakeholders described the value that could be added by creating a clear action plan.[74]

The same sentiments can be heard in Lao PDR and Myanmar. In Lao PDR, one expert pointed out that in the engineering sector, "cooperation between concerned parties has to be effective and closer."[75] Similarly, an expert in Myanmar highlighted negotiating with other ministries as one of the key obstacles to implementation.[76]

[69] Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 23 January 2016.
[70] Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 26 January 2016.
[71] Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 7 November 2015.
[72] Participant comments during a focus group discussion organized by ADB and MPI, Manila, 3 September 2015.

[73] Participant comments during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015.
[74] Participant comments during a focus group discussion organized by ADB and MPI, Manila, 3 September 2015.
[75] Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 17 December 2015.
[76] Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 21 August 2015.

Indeed, close coordination with other ministries is particularly important in Myanmar where many existing laws and regulations running in parallel. For instance, aside from the main law governing the engineering profession in Myanmar—the Myanmar Engineering Council Law—a number of departments and authorities have retained power over certain categories of engineering and maintain separate regulations and codes of practices. For instance, the Ministry of Rail Transportation governs railways related engineering, while the Ministry of Construction deals with infrastructure related engineering. Likewise, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and the Ministry of Electric Power preside over engineers working in irrigation and power distribution respectively. Despite these subfields being closely interlinked, each ministry has its own structure, regulations, and processes—few of which overlap. Engineering activities are also governed regionally by City Development Committees found in Myanmar's largest cities, such as Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, and Mandalay, adding another layer to the already complicated mix of national regulators.

The issue of coordination is particularly pressing for a country as big as Indonesia. One expert familiar with the engineering field noted that "each government ministry works for its own benefit." For this expert the limited coordination among various ministries leads to inconsistent policies.[77] Another stakeholder remarked upon similar issues in the tourism sector. This expert explained that there is room for better coordination between the Ministries of Education, Manpower, and Tourism, as well as with the National Tourism Professional Board and the Tourism Professional Certification Board.[78]

Lack of Mutual Recognition within Countries

Poor intergovernmental coordination directly impacts recognition processes, and has led to situations where multiple government agencies offer multiple certifications for the same profession.

For example, in Indonesia, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Manpower have two different sets of competency standards for individuals with fewer than 4 years of postsecondary education. As one education administrator described, this can be quite confusing for students interested in entering the tourism sector, noting that the vocational program at Universitas Indonesia follows both standards.[79]

Similar issues are present in Thailand. In the tourism sector, three government offices produce similar certifications: the Department of Skill Development under the Ministry of Labor, the Vocational Education Department under the Ministry of Education, and the Office of Tourism Personnel under the Ministry of Tourism and Sports. Thailand also has an independent organization called the Office of National Vocational Standard, which has a fourth set of standards. One regional expert described these four organizations as "doing very similar things," but each with "their own kind of practices." Each body invited different countries, such as Australia, Germany, and New Zealand, to help them develop their competency standards.[80] For this stakeholder, the result is four competing systems within one country that budding professionals must weigh up when charting their career path. Not all standards are recognized both domestically and internationally, making the choice particularly difficult for professionals eyeing opportunities locally and abroad.

Clearly, the problem of mutual recognition is not just a pressing issue at the regional level; it is one that must be addressed at the country level as well.

3. Missing Offices, Bodies, and Legislations

Capacity is further constrained if key regulatory authorities and implementing regulations are missing. Although progress has been made in creating the legislative and institutional frameworks the MRAs envisioned, the process is far from complete in some countries and sectors.

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77   Response to ADB–MPI research questionnaire, 30 November 2015.
78   Response to ADB–MPI research questionnaire, 21 October 2015.

79   Response to ADB–MPI research questionnaire, 24 November 2015.
80   Participant comments during a focus group discussion organized by ADB and MPI, Manila, 3 September 2015.

a) Missing Regulatory Authorities

There has been a lot of discussion within Myanmar on how to implement the Myanmar Accountancy Law, including setting up the procedures and standards necessary to make examinations operational. Although the National Accountancy Council regularly attends government meetings, no specific body or institution has sole responsibility for implementing the accountancy law.[81]

Similarly, in the Bruneian tourism sector, the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism has discussed the possibility of combining the NTPB and the TPCB, but no agency has voiced a willingness to take on the implementation of this merger. As one expert in the tourism industry explained: "There are real difficulties in identifying proper agencies that would be suitable as implementing agency. Frequent meetings and discussions with relevant government and private agencies are needed to get them on board."[82] This expert also noted that the frequent replacement of senior appointed officials within the agencies further complicates the identification process by introducing a revolving cast of leaders each with different interests.[83]

b) Missing Laws

There are also critical laws that have yet to be enacted in a number of countries and sectors. For instance, Viet Nam and Lao PDR do not have laws governing the licensing of all engineering professions. The Vietnamese government, through the Ministry of Constructions (MoC), only regulates engineers in the construction industry. Similarly, in Lao PDR, the Council of Sciences and Technology (CST) under the Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT) only accredits architects and engineers working in the public works and transport sectors.

Indeed, in several ASEAN countries, regulatory authorities only regulate certain types of engineering practice. The Council of Engineers in Thailand, for instance, only covers seven engineering disciplines: chemical, civil, electrical, environmental, industrial, mechanical, and mining.

c) Laws Waiting to Be Implemented

Across the region, there are also a number of pieces of legislation that have been enacted, but not implemented. One example is the Indonesian Act on Engineering, which was enacted in 2014, but cannot be fully implemented because the implementing regulations are still being developed. Similarly in Brunei Darussalam, the Architect, Professional Engineers, and Quantity Surveyors Order 2011 has not been enforced because the relevant authority has not approved the implementing regulations.

4. Frequent Turnover of Personnel

The frequent turnover of personnel has also delayed implementation. In ACPECC, for instance, the delegates are replaced every 3 years. Very often, there is no clear transition phase to ensure that information and practices are passed on to the new delegates. As one expert familiar with the workings of ACPECC explained, new delegates usually don't know what to do or are doing things that are remarkably different than their predecessors. For this expert this lack of continuity has slowed down ACPECC's progress.[84]

Similar concerns can also be heard among dental professionals. One industry expert explained that since representatives to the AJCCD are not permanent, "agreements previously made were superseded" by new delegates leading to a lack of continuity in the negotiations.[85]

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81 Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 20 October 2015.
82 Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 29 October 2015.
83 Ibid.

84 Participant comments during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015.
85 Response to ADB-MPI research questionnaire, 28 November 2015.

5. Poor Data Collection and Sharing

Lastly, existing occupation-specific data on professionals are often patchy, making MRA implementation even more difficult without undertaking new data-collection efforts. For instance, in Lao PDR, there are data-collection and information-sharing mechanisms at the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Social Welfare. However, this system is decentralized all the way down to the provincial level, and the linkages between system levels do not function as well or as effectively as expected. The system also lacks connections to the appropriate professional regulatory agencies.[86] Such patchy and often decentralized systems for sharing professional information mean that even basic information on the number, and most importantly in the context of the MRA, the extent of mobility of professionals is hard to collate.

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86   Participant comment during the Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, organized by ADB and MPI, Bali, 28–29 September 2015.

V. Beyond Issues of Mutual Recognition: Linking Development and Mobility

When evaluating the implementation of MRAs, it is important to keep in mind the larger sociopolitical context in which they exist. Even if the MRA-specific technical and institutional challenges are fully addressed, there is no guarantee that ASEAN professionals and employers will immediately begin to utilize the MRA systems. Economic and social conditions within the ASEAN region have been, and will continue to be, key factors that affect MRA implementation. Indeed, to fully understand the difficulties Member States grapple with as they implement the MRAs, it is important to step back and understand how core development issues affect professionals and inform their decisions about whether to move and seek recognition in another ASEAN country.

For a number of stakeholders consulted as part of this report, above and beyond slow and uneven MRA implementation, wage disparities in some corridors are responsible for discouraging professional movement. For instance, some practitioners doubt

that many foreign dentists will be interested in coming to Thailand because of its low professional fees.[87] Interviewees in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and the Philippines raised similar concerns in all seven MRA occupations.

To illustrate this point, Table 17, using the most recent available data, from the mid-2000s, compares the average net monthly income of accountants, engineers, and nurses in Australia, the United States, and three ASEAN countries—Philippines, Thailand, Singapore. It is interesting to note that while the differences in monthly income for engineers and accountants is less dramatic within ASEAN when compared to salaries in the United States and Australia, differences do exist from country to country. Given these wage disparities, it is less likely that Thai and Singaporean professionals will choose to move to the Philippines for economic reasons. On the flip side, Filipino nurses may have some incentives to migrate to Singapore or Thailand since the average monthly income in those countries is almost double

Table 17: Average Net Monthly Income of Accountants, Engineers, and Nurses, in Purchasing Power Parity $ 2005, Select Countries, Various Years

Occupation	Australia	Philippines	Thailand	Singapore	United States
Accountants	2,626	1,253	1,948	1,835	3,370
Engineers	3,375	1,827	2,369	1,889	4,710
Nurses	2,703	647	1,122	1,350	3,168

Note: The average net monthly income is tabulated in 2005 international dollars, a hypothetical unit of currency that has the same purchasing power parity that the U.S. dollar had in the United States in 2005. The benchmark year varies per country and occupation as follows: Accountants—Australia (2004), Philippines (2004), Thailand (2005), Singapore (2004), United States (2005); Engineers—Australia (2004), Philippines (2004), Thailand (2005), Singapore (2004), United States (2005); Professional Nurses—Australia (2004), Philippines (2004), Thailand (2005), Singapore (2004), United States (2005).
Source: WorldSalaries.org, "International Average Salary Income Database," accessed 5 May 2016, www.worldsalaries.org/.

[87] Participant comments during a focus group discussion organized by ADB and MPI, Manila, 3 September 2015.

what nursing professionals receive in the Philippines. However, migration to Australia or the United States offers a much larger increase in income. Indeed, available migration data show that the majority of ASEAN professionals migrate to high-income countries outside of the region, and that those who move within ASEAN chose Singapore as the main destination.

Factors other than salary also affect whether professionals decide to move within the region. These include the availability of affordable and appropriate accommodation, and access to quality schools for their children. Infrastructure that supports continuing professional growth and offers a dynamic environment is also an important factor for many highly skilled professionals.

One expert in the medical field commented on the poor working conditions nurses face in the

Philippines, capturing the difficulty of enticing professionals to work within the region when the labor market situation is far from ideal and other opportunities may be available elsewhere.

> *We have been visiting hospitals and seeing more contractual nurses being hired and they don't have employer-employee relationships.. Some are in a training program but are working three shifts. It's unthinkable really… So how can you attract foreigners here when our salaries and working conditions are not very good?*[88]

In order to encourage increase adoption of the MRA system, ASEAN Member State governments need not only implement a functional recognitions system, they must also consider other factors that determine the interest of ASEAN professionals in moving within the region, such as salary and work conditions.

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[88]   Participant comments during a focus group discussion organized by ADB and MPI, Manila, 3 September 2015.

VI. Conclusion: Taking the "ASEAN Way" Forward

Given the immense challenges ASEAN countries face in seeking to fully implementing the MRAs, finding feasible and practical ways forward requires, at a minimum, a healthy amount of cautious optimism and utmost consideration of the realities on the ground.

ASEAN as a political and economic bloc is widely known for its distinctive style of diplomacy.[89] Often referred to as the "ASEAN Way," countries in the region respect the following four rules of engagement:

- decisions are reached through consultation and consensus;
- the group does not interfere in the internal affairs of its Member States;
- the execution of its decisions relies on the authority and resources of Member State governments; and
- there is no cession of national sovereignty to a supranational institution.

With this in mind, it is not surprising that revision of domestic rules, regulations, and practices has remained the biggest challenge to date. Arguably, the ASEAN Way may have contributed to the slow progress of MRA implementation by placing limitations on what the region can achieve together, and on what timeframe and through what means implementation happens.

The ASEAN Way does, however, reflect the varied needs and capacities of its members. ASEAN is arguably one of the most diverse regional blocs in the world. Its Member States are spread across the entire length of the development spectrum. Wealthy and well-established economies such as Brunei Darussalam and Singapore—as well as emerging global players such as Indonesia and Thailand— coexist alongside fragile developing economies, such as Lao PDR and Myanmar.

Finding a feasible way forward in MRA implementation requires taking into account the diversity of the region and drawing guidance from the same principles that underpin the ASEAN Way: an approach centered on consensus building and incremental progress that is driven from the bottom up.

In considering next steps, ASEAN governments and stakeholders would do well to focus on two areas: (1) learning by doing through the testing of new ideas about how to best overcome restrictive domestic regulations, and (2) getting back to the basics by building the institutional capacity required to fully implement the MRAs (see Figure 11).

A. LEARNING BY DOING

Almost all regional stakeholders consulted to inform this report agreed that real progress cannot be made without first addressing the restrictive domestic regulations that limit the ability of MRAs to facilitate mobility. In addressing this issue, countries in the region may consider testing ideas with certain agencies or small groups of professionals first and bringing them to scale later if proven effective. MRAs are living documents that require continuous revision,

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89 For a discussion of the ASEAN style of diplomacy, see Logan Masilamani and Jimmy Peterson, "The "ASEAN Way": The Structural Underpinnings of Constructive Engagement," *Foreign Policy*, 15 October 2014, www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2014/10/15/ the-asean-way-the-structural-underpinnings-of-constructive- engagement/.

Figure 11: The Long Road to MRA Implementation: Progress, Challenges, and Opportunities

Progress in Implementation   **Barriers to Full Implementation**

Significant progress on the creation of implementing offices and bodies at the regional and national level and incorporation of MRA principles into national laws

Limited progress in the operationalization of MRA principles into detailed plans, procedures and mechanisms that professionals can utilize now

- Technical hurdles in creating and revising domestic regulations to aligh with MRA principles
- Lack of government insitutional capacity to implement the MRAs
- Core development issues: wage disparities and poor working conditions discouraged movement

Full MRA Implementation

Opportunities for cooperation
- Learning by doing: Address the restrictive domestic regulations through experimentation
- Back to basics: Invest in concerted efforts towards capacity building at national and regional levels

Source: Authors' rendering.

improvement, and renegotiation. Through a feedback loop of experimentation and adjustment, ASEAN Member States need not move in lockstep but could make sustained progress through demonstrating what works and how.

Some of the many issues that may be resolved through careful experimentation include:

■ *Testing compensatory measures*. To make MRAs work, it is important that Member State professional authorities accept that in most cases the mutual recognition of qualifications will be partial—applicants may meet most, but not all, requirements because of variations in national training systems and difficulty providing key documents. This need not be an absolute barrier as long as countries offer reasonable and cost-effective compensating measures that would-be migrants can use to demonstrate or strengthen the missing skills. Governments could jointly test the effectiveness of

different compensatory measures, such as introducing tailored professional exams for foreign-qualified applicants, bridging courses, mentoring programs, on-the-job training, supervised or conditional work, and reasonable adaptation periods.

■ *Offering conditional licenses*. Language is one of most common additional requirements ASEAN Member States impose on foreign professionals, especially in the nursing and medical fields. Governments may consider testing the viability of offering conditional licenses that would, for instance, allow ASEAN professionals to provide services to clients with a similar language background or to practice with the assistance of a translator. Viet Nam, for instance, already offers health-sector professionals the option of working with an interpreter if they do not speak Vietnamese. It would also be interesting to consider more closely experiences from the dental profession, since most countries in the

region do not impose language requirements on foreign dentists.

■ *Linking MRAs to labor market access*. MRAs are likely to be most effective when they are negotiated as part of a set of policy measures that aim to facilitate labor market, for instance through visa and work-permit policies. ASEAN governments could test collaborative solutions that allow for the circulation of particular professionals for which demand in a given labor market.

- **Skill mobility schemes connecting cities.** One option is to explore skill mobility schemes at the city level. More than 40% of ASEAN GDP growth through 2025 is expected to come from 142 cities that have between 200,000 and 5 million residents.[90] There is great potential in more fully exploring the priorities, needs, and training opportunities of these cities and in identifying the role the increased mobility of skilled ASEAN professionals can play in meeting them.

- **Linking development goals with mobility.** It may also be beneficial to include development goals in the discussion on qualifications recognition. ASEAN governments could pilot-test professional mobility schemes to directly address core development needs. For instance, several countries in the region are seeking to improve their health services, particularly in rural areas. There is ample room for ASEAN governments to greater cooperation assist the mobility efforts of ASEAN professionals who intend to work in these critical locations. This could be done by reducing or eliminating certain entry restrictions, waiving additional registration requirements, sharing the cost of training, and fast-tracking the recognition process. There are many examples of similar initiatives in other parts

of the world. For instance, the German international development agency, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, has a partnership with the Philippines to facilitate the recruitment and recognition of its nurses under the Triple Win program.[91]

■ *Initiating faculty immersion programs.* One of the key challenges, particularly in the tourism industry, is the lack of trainers and educators with industry experience. Beyond enticing industry practitioners to teach, governments in the region could explore the viability of immersions programs that allow instructors who lack industry experience to work for a certain period of time, for instance, in a five-star hotel within the country or, even better, in another ASEAN country. This type of immersion has the potential to give instructors a richer understanding of current practices and workplace challenges, and in turn to better prepare students for professional work—both within and between Member States.

■ *Creating shared accreditation lists.* A number of countries require ASEAN professionals to earn their degree from a list of recognized or accredited institutions. One idea is to test the value in negotiating a shared list of recognized and accredited institutions between two or more ASEAN countries in particular occupations.

■ *Establishing and implementing a monitoring system.* The lack of easily accessible and regionally aggregated information on the implementation process is also a major shortcoming of the current MRA system. There is no clear understanding of the extent to which MRA commitments are being translated into the domestic laws and regulations of Member States. A monitoring system could be introduced that would track the implementation MRA terms by Member States,

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90   HV, Thompson, and Tonby, "Understanding ASEAN: Seven Things You Need to Know."

91   For more on the program, see Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, "When Everyone's a Winner," accessed 5 May 2016, www.giz.de/en/workingwithgiz/11666.html.

including through information provided state, private-sector, and regional parties.

Far from exhaustive, these are just a few examples of areas that are ripe for cooperation and careful experimentation. In parallel, governments in the region might also consider investing in a way to document progress made and lessons learned through these initiatives. These records could then be shared in an ASEAN-wide learning community as a way to inform future efforts. Information on existing activities tends to be scattered, with many resources available only in local languages or as unpublished administrative records. A more centralized, open system for documenting progress could take the form of a useful website that ASEAN stakeholders can use to view project results, discuss initiatives, and explore and offer potential solutions.

B. GETTING BACK TO BASICS

Effective MRA implementation will also require a concerted effort towards capacity building at both national and regional levels. For the MRAs to be fully implemented, ASEAN countries must have domestic systems in place to regulate the professions, uphold quality standards, protect consumers, and ensure a sufficient number of licensed professionals. As described earlier, some regulatory authorities have yet to be created, while others that do exist lack the financial and technical resources to fulfill their ever-growing and increasingly complicated mandates.

Governments in the region, alongside other stakeholders, must commit to supporting the creation of the necessary regulatory offices and to fully funding existing ones. It may benefit governments in the region to conduct a staffing audit to identify personnel needs, which could then be used to justify larger budget allocations in future funding cycles. An organizational development review could also help to better align human resources with organizational goals, including MRA implementation. A long-term objective for MRA-implementing agencies and bodies could be to achieve some form of management

certification, for instance that of the ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management System, which would put them in line with international standards. The ISO 9000 family of quality management standards "provide guidance and tools for companies and organizations who want to ensure that their products and services consistently meet customers' requirements, and that qualify is consistently improved."[92]

For sustainable progress to be made, however, substantial technical assistance and financial support will be required over the medium and long term. The cost of setting up necessary regulatory and institutional infrastructure will be high, especially for small and less-developed countries. Currently, much of the support for MRA implementation is provided to individual countries rather than across the region, and, in many cases it is ad hoc and not prioritized or sequenced in a way that creates continuity between implementation efforts. There is wisdom in a more coordinated approach, particularly among donors.

A strong emphasis on monitoring, evaluation, and frequent adjustment is also key in improving institutional capacity. For policymakers, understanding when to make necessary adjustments is critical to effective implementation. It is extremely important to evaluate outcomes and explore whether the measures used meet policy aims and maximize available resources. Monitoring and evaluation can also prevent a system from bending unduly to the interests of certain groups and maintain trust among the full range of partners. For instance, comments during focus group discussions conducted to inform this report highlighted the concerns of businesses and professionals alike that the issuance of ASEAN-level certifications could turn into just another source of corruption.

Even though evaluations may be expensive, having demonstrable evidence that implementation measures are working is money well spent. Governments in the region may choose to adopt simple and cost-effective monitoring and evaluation systems that do not require specialists or grand

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92   International Organization for Standardization (ISO), "ISO 9000 – Quality Management," accessed 15 August 2016, www.iso.org/iso/home/standards/management-standards/iso_9000.htm.

calculations, but that still provide critical measures of success that can inform future progress in implementation. Indeed, most evaluations use a combination of tools, such as interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, and small-scale surveys, to minimize costs while collecting information and feedback from a wide range of sources and actors.

C. THE LONG ROAD AHEAD

Regardless of the scope or the depth of recognition envisaged, implementation of any MRA requires time and a great deal of sustained trust-building and mutual learning among signatories. The same observation applies to the larger regional project to which the MRAs aim to contribute: the building of the ASEAN Economic Community.

Ong Keng Yong, ASEAN Secretary-General from 2003 to 2007 and one of the main architects of the AEC, has long argued that regional integration is an incremental process, akin to building a house. Speaking in 2008, he said:

By 2015 we should have this house. Whether or not we have enough furniture in this house to declare this a beautiful house, we do not know… The challenge for us today is to put in all the necessary comforts in this house… By 2015 I think we can have a basic house with a kitchen to survive, but I don't think we can have a very luxurious ASEAN house… But if we keep on working we should be able to make this ASEAN into a very concrete regional body.[93]

Indeed, the road to full implementation of a robust and smoothly functioning system that will allow ASEAN professionals to have their qualifications recognized in other Member States is long one, currently riddled with many missing sections that will take years to complete. Like Ong Keng Yong's ASEAN house, much work has been done, but not nearly enough to declare the system finished. With a renewed focus on capacity building and an appetite to learn by doing, however, the ASEAN region can create a strong foundation now, even though key building blocks are not yet in place.

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[93]   Ong Keng Yong quoted in United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Advancing Human Development Through the ASEAN Community: Thailand Human Development Report 2014* (Bangkok: UNDP, 2014), 8, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/thailand_nhdr_2014_0.pdf.

Appendixes

APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY

A total of 387 individuals from the ASEAN region and beyond directly contributed to the findings of this report. The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) consulted with officials in all ministries in the 10 ASEAN Member States directly responsible for Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) implementation, as well as with private-sector employers, academics, training directors, members of MRA monitoring committees, and current and former ASEAN Secretariat officials.

The research employed a three-pronged approach:

■ *First,* in cooperation with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), MPI convened 12 full days of focus group discussions and meetings between May and September 2015. These forums engaged regional and international experts on mutual recognition and professional mobility, and featured specific presentations on progress and challenges to MRA implementation at national and regional levels. More than 100 MRA stakeholders and experts, including a former Secretary-General of ASEAN, Chair of the ASEAN Business Council, and officials from key ministries in MRA development across ASEAN, attended the convenings. Appendix 2 lists the names and affiliations of all participants in the formal meetings and interviews.

■ *Second,* MPI administered a qualitative survey on the development and implementation of MRAs in each Member State The survey examined the specific context of MRA implementation, including evolving bottlenecks to completion. Between August 2015 and February 2016, MPI, working with local researchers in the 10 Member States, received responses from 311 individuals from relevant government ministries, the private sector, professional associations, educational institutions, and the human resources field. Appendix 3 lists the affiliations of all stakeholders who completed the MRA implementation survey (*Note: Several respondents chose to omit their names in order to answer more openly*).

■ *Third,* MPI reviewed key documents and presentations relating to the conclusion and implementation of the ASEAN MRAs on professional services. These included guides and reviews published by ASEAN; handbooks on implementation progress; and studies conducted by the International Labour Organization, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia, and ASEAN-Australian Development Cooperation Program Phase II.

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN FORMAL MEETINGS AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Roundtable of High-Level Experts, Bali, Indonesia, 11–12 May 2015, Convened by Asian Development Bank and Migration Policy Institute	
Abella, Manolo	International Labour Organization MIGRANT Unit
Batalova, Jeanne	Migration Policy Institute
Bedford, Richard	AUT University, Auckland, New Zealand
Chia, Siow Yue	Singapore Institute of International Affairs
Desiderio, Maria Vincenza	Migration Policy Institute
Doutriaux, Yves	Government of France
Fix, Michael	Migration Policy Institute
Govindasamy, Jeevakumar	Talent Corporation Malaysia, Government of Malaysia
Hasan, Rana	Asian Development Bank
Ishikura, Yoko	Hitotsubashi University; World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Education and Skills
Majid, Tan Sri Munir	CIMB ASEAN Research Institute and Bank Muamalat Malaysia
Mendoza, Dovelyn Rannveig	Migration Policy Institute
Narjoko, Dionisius	Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)
Nicolas, Imelda M.	Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Office of the President of the Philippines
Papademetriou, Demetrios G.	Migration Policy Institute
Santoso, Megawati	ASEAN Task Force on the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework
Sugiyarto, Guntur	Asian Development Bank
Tambo, Ichiro	Japan International Cooperation Agency Research Institute
Theroux, Eric	Ministry of International and Francophone Relations of Québec, Québec Ministry of International and Francophone Relations
Pereira, Ana Carla	DG Employment, European Commission
Yeoh, Brenda	National University of Singapore

Focus Group Discussion, Manila, Philippines, 3–4 September 2015, Convened by Asian Development Bank and Migration Policy Institute	
Abaquin, Carmencita	Professional Regulatory Board of Nursing, Professional Regulation Commission, Republic of the Philippines
Aldaba, Fernando T.	Department of Economics, Ateneo de Manila University, Republic of the Philippines
Alipio, Arlene	Department of Tourism , Republic of the Philippines
Ang, Alvin	Department of Economics, Ateneo de Manila University, Republic of the Philippines
Baromey, Neth	Royal University of Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Batalova, Jeanne	Migration Policy Institute
Bulaong, Ofelia	Professional Regulation Commission, Republic of the Philippines
Chalamwong, Yongyuth	Thailand Development Research Institute
Chantavanich, Supang	Faculty of Political Science and Director, Asian Research Center for Migration, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand
Chanthavong, Panya	Ministry of Education and Sports, Lao PDR
Dacuycuy, Lawrence	School of Economics, De La Salle University, Republic of the Philippines
Dalalom, Phouthone	Institute of Mass Media, Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Lao PDR
Dethoudom, Somphone	Council of Sciences and Technology, Ministry of Public Works & Transportation, Lao PDR
Hasakool, Ruangsang	Office of the Vocation Education Commission, Thailand
Isaac, Irene	Policies & Planning, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, Republic of the Philippines
Korwanich, Narumanas	Dental Council of Thailand

Focus Group Discussion, Manila, Philippines, 3–4 September 2015, Convened by Asian Development Bank and Migration Policy Institute	
Kuouch, Somean	National Employment Agency, Cambodia
Leakhena, Sim Chan	National Committee for Tourism Professionals, Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia
Lwin, Kyaw	Ministry of Construction, Myanmar
Mai, Thanh Tong	Viet Nam Association of Accountants & Auditors
Malindog-Uy, Anna	Asian Development Bank, Consultant
Manzala, Teresita	Professional Regulations Commission, Republic of the Philippines
Myint, Win	Ministry of Construction, Myanmar
Navallo, Katrina	Asian Development Bank, Consultant
Nguyen, Ba Ngoc	Institute of Labor Science and Social Affairs, Viet Nam
Nguyen, Bich Luu	Viet Nam Nurse Association
Nguyen, Lan Huong	Ministry of Health, Viet Nam
Nguyen, Thi Thai Lan	University of Labor and Social Affairs, Viet Nam
Ochoa-Moreno, Anabelle	Tourism Industry Board, Republic of the Philippines
Oum, Sothea	Ngee-Ann Adelaide Education Centre, Cambodia
Pham, Ngoc Toan	Institute of Labor Science and Social Affairs, Viet Nam
Phan, Thi Dung	Viet Hue University Hospital
Phousinghoa, Sengxay	National Implementation Unit, Department of Planning and Cooperation, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR
Phuengkwamchomb, Atinart	Medical Council of Thailand
Sriwatanawongsa, Adirek	Dental Association of Thailand
Suan, Eric	Asian Development Bank
Ta, Bao Luu	Nhatviet Investment Consulting Co., Viet Nam
Tran, Viet Hung	Ministry of Health, Viet Nam
Tullao Jr., Teresito	De La Salle University Manila, Republic of the Philippines
Waikakul, Saranatra	Faculty of Medicine, Sriraj Hospital-Mahidol University, Thailand
Win, Zaw	Myanmar Knowledge Management Co.
Yorm, Khim	Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, Cambodia
You, Virak	Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, Cambodia

Focus Group Discussion, Bali, Indonesia, 26–27 September 2015, Convened by Asian Development Bank and Migration Policy Institute	
Ananta, Aris	University of Indonesia
Ariyanto, Tetty DS	Inspire Travel and Tourism Learning Centre
Aung, Aye Aye	Asia Mega Link Company Limited
Batalova, Jeanne	Migration Policy Institute
Chan, Chong Kong	Human Capital, PriceWaterhouse Coopers
Desiderio, Maria Vincenza	Migration Policy Institute
Djajadihardja, Yusuf Surachman	Geospatial Information Infrastructure, Badan Informasi Geospasial
Fahmi, Zita Mohd	Malaysian Qualifications Agency, ASEAN Quality Assurance Network Executive Board
Fix, Michael	Migration Policy Institute
Hasan, Chotib	University of Indonesia
Hasan, Isnarti	Ministry of Labor, Indonesia
Htoon, Ye Swe	Border Areas Development Association, Myanmar
Lwin, Kyi	Myanmar Engineering Society
Marhzan, Nurmazilah Dato	Malaysian Institute of Accountants
Mendoza, Dovelyn Rannveig	Migration Policy Institute
Omar, Amir	Economic Planning Unit, Malaysia

Focus Group Discussion, Bali, Indonesia, 26–27 September 2015, Convened by Asian Development Bank and Migration Policy Institute	
Paryono	SEAMO VOCTECH Brunei Regional Centre
Salleh, Adinin Md	Brunei Darussalam National Accreditation Council , Ministry of Education
Salant, Brian	Migration Policy Institute
Santoso, Megawati	ASEAN Task Force on the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework
Shahima, Wan Yon	Human Resources Development Fund, Ministry of Human Resources, Malaysia
Suprajaka	Indonesia Geospatial Information Board
Sumaryono	Human Resources and Industry for Special Information, Indonesia
Sugiyarto, Guntur	Asian Development Bank
Thangavelu, Shandre Mugan	University of Adelaide, Centre for International Economic Studies
Tjiptoherijanto, Prijono	University of Indonesia
Zakaria, Aminuddin	Malaysia Airlines Berhad

Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, Bali, Indonesia, 28–29 September 2015, Convened by Asian Development Bank and Migration Policy Institute	
Aguirre, Estelita C.	ASEAN Federation of Accountants (AFA)
Aldaba, Fernando T.	Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines
Ananta, Aris	University of Indonesia
Batalova, Jeanne	Migration Policy Institute
Bui, Thuy Anh	Ministry of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam
Chansompheng, Chanthaly	International Financial Institutions Division, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Lao PDR
Chantavanich, Supang	Asian Research Center for Migration (ARCM), Chulalongkorn University
Chanthavong, Panya	Ministry of Education and Sports, Lao PDR
Chen, Lurong	Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)
Chia, Siow Yue	Singapore Institute of International Affairs
Chong, Wai Kit	Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Malaysia
Conti, Leandro A.	ASEAN Chartered Professional Engineering Coordinating Committee (ACPECC)
Cordero, Rolando	Professional Regulation Commission, Republic of the Philippines
Fahmi, Zita Mohd	Malaysian Qualifications Agency, ASEAN Quality Assurance Network Executive Board
Fix, Michael	Migration Policy Institute
Gagni, Oth	Asian Development Bank
Gajaseni, Nantana	ASEAN University Network
Hawthorne, Lesleyanne	Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne
Hasan, Rana	Asian Development Bank
Herliza	Directorate General of International Trade Cooperation, Ministry of Trade, Indonesia
Ho, Quang Trung	ASEAN Secretariat
Hongrat, Kanjana	Ministry of Education, Thailand
Htoon, Ye Swe	Border Areas Development Association, Myanmar
Kato, Hiroshi	Japan International Cooperation Agency
Le, Dong Phuong	Institute of Education and Vocational Training, Ministry of Education and Training, Viet Nam
Lin, Kyaw Kyaw	Ministry of Labor Employment and Social Security, Myanmar
Long, Simon	The Economist
Malang, Lyndree	Asian Development Bank, Consultant
Majid, Tan Sri Munir	CIMB ASEAN Research Institute and Chair, Bank Muamalat Malaysia
Mendoza, Dovelyn Rannveig	Migration Policy Institute
Metiranan, Pornpimol	Office of Education Council, Ministry of Education, Thailand
Miao, Mabel	Center for China and Globalization

Bali Forum on Skill Mobility in ASEAN, Bali, Indonesia, 28–29 September 2015, Convened by Asian Development Bank and Migration Policy Institute	
Navallo, Katrina	Asian Development Bank
Nguyen, Thi Thai Lan	University of Labor and Social Affairs, Viet Nam
Nicolas, Imelda M.	Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Office of the President of the Philippines
Noh, Nirwan	Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Malaysia
Ong, Keng Yong	S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
Oum, Sothea	Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia
Papademetriou, Demetrios G.	Migration Policy Institute
Paryono	SEAMO VOCTECH Brunei Regional Centre
Perdiguero, Alfredo	Asian Development Bank
Phan, Oun	Risk Management Unit, Directorate General, Ministry of Commerce, Kingdom of Cambodia
Phousinghoa, Sengxay	National Implementation Unit, Department of Planning and Cooperation, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR
Pisoth, Khem	Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, Kingdom of Cambodia
Pratama, Aucky	ASEAN Federation of Accountants (AFA)
Roostiawati	Ministry of Manpower, Indonesia
Salant, Brian	Migration Policy Institute
Santoso, Megawati	ASEAN Task Force on the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework
Sideth, Dy Sam	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Kingdom of Cambodia
Singdala, Inthavone	Skills Development and Employment, Ministry of Labor and Welfare, Lao PDR
Skeldon, Ronald	Sussex Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex
Sumarna	Ministry of Manpower, Indonesia
Tasaka, Takuro	Embassy of Japan in Indonesia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan
Thangavelu, Shandre	University of Adelaide, Centre for International Economic Studies
Thol, Nara	Directorate General for International Trade, Ministry of Commerce, Kingdom of Cambodia
Win, Zaw	Department of Education, Ministry of Education, Myanmar
Winters, L. Alan	Department of Economics, University of Sussex; formerly, Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom
Yulistyawati, Ika	Directorate of Trade in Services Negotiation, Ministry of Trade, Indonesia

APPENDIX 3: AFFILIATIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS WHO COMPLETED MRA IMPLEMENTATION SURVEY

Brunei Darussalam	
Brunei Darussalam National Accreditation Council	KPMG Brunei
Brunei Institute of Certified Public Accountants – FTMS Accountancy Academy	Lee and Raman, CPA
Brunei Medical Board	Ministry of Health
Brunei Shell Petroleum Co.	Ministry of Primary Resources & Tourism
Deloitte	Nursing Board for Brunei
Institut Teknologi Brunei	Nursing Services Unit, Suri Seri Begawan Hospital, Kuala Belait
Juntera OMC (OMC Engineering)	Pengiran Anak Puteri Rashidah Sa'datul Bolkiah Institute of Health Sciences, UBD
Juruukur Bahan Dan Pengurusan Utamacon	VSL Systems (B)

Cambodia	
Aplus Consulting Co.	KPMG Cambodia
Board of Engineers	Moha Engineering & Consulting Co.

Cambodia	
Cambodia Society of Architects	National Accounting Council
Cambodian Mekong University	National Committee for Tourism Professionals, Ministry of Tourism
Cambodian University for Specialties	Norton University
Central Hospital, Phnom Penh	PSE Institute
Chenla University	Roomchang Dental Hospital
Dara Airport Hotel	Sakal Dental Clinic
HRDP & Associates	Secret Villa
HR Cambodia	University of Puthisastra, Department of Dentistry
International SOS	University of Puthisastra, Department of Midwifery
Kampuchea Dental Clinic	Urban Architect of CTS Group
Kampuchea Institute of Certified Public Accountants and Auditors	

Indonesia	
University of Bina Nusantara	Lembaga Profesional Pariwisata Indonesia (LEPPI)
BNP2TKI (National Board of Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Worker)	Ministry of Tourism
BNSP (Indonesian Professional Certification Authority)	National Professional Certification Board, Ministry of Manpower (BNSP)
Committee on Human Resources in Health	Obat24.com
Faculty of Agriculture, Bogor Agricultural University	Persuatan Insinyur Indonesia (Indonesia Association of Engineers) – PII
Faculty of Dentistry, University of Indonesia	Program Pendidikan Vokasi (Vocational Training Programme), Universitas Indonesia
Faculty of Economics, University of Indonesia	PT Hagalink (HAGALINK)
Badan Geospatial Information Board	School of Business and Management, Institut Teknologi Bandung
Ikatan Akuntan Indonesia (Indonesian Accountant Association)	The ASEAN Secretariat
Indonesian Institute of Science (LIPI)	Master of Accounting and Accounting Profession Program, University of Indonesia
Inspire Travel and Tourism Learning Centre	Vocational Programme, University of Indonesia
Institution of Indonesia Chartered Accountants	

Lao PDR	
Burapha Agro-Forestry Co.	Faculty of Nursing Services, University of Health Sciences
Children's Hospital	Friendship Hospital
Council of Sciences and Technology, Ministry of Public Works and Transport	Geographic Department, Ministry of Home Affairs
Dental Clinic Department, Ministry of Health	Health Care Department, Ministry of Health
Dental Clinic, University of Health Sciences	Institute of Mass Media, Culture, and Tourism
Dental Department, Mahosot Hospital	Lao Development Bank
Dental Faculty, University of Health Sciences	Lao Hotel and Restaurant Association
Department of Electrical Engineering, National University of Laos	Lao Institute of Certified Public Accountants
Department of Geology and Minerals	Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Department of Land Administration	Lao Toyota Service Co.
Department of Mines, Ministry of Energy and Mines	Ministry of Finance, Accounting Department
Department of Nursing Service, Ministry of Health	MMG LXML Sepon

Lao PDR	
Department of Roads, Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT)	National Audit Organization
Educational Standards and Quality Assurance Center, Ministry of Education and Sports	Nursing Service Faculty, University of Health Sciences
Exo Travel Laos	National University of Laos, Faculty of Engineering, Dean Office
Fa Jewelry	Pakpasak Technical College
Faculty of Architecture, Department of Architecture, National University of Laos	Polytechnics Institute
Faculty of Architecture, Department of Environment and Urban Planning, National University of Laos	Survey and Mapping Center, Ministry of Home Affairs
Faculty of Dentistry, University of Health Sciences	Tourism Development Department, Ministry of Information, Cultures, and Tourism
Faculty of Engineering , Department of Electrical Engineering, National University of Laos	Vientiane Plaza Hotel
Faculty of Hotel and Tourism, National University of Laos	Wonderful Garment

Malaysia	
Berjaya University College of Hospitality	Malaysian Dental Association
Department of Skills Development	Malaysian Institute of Accountants (PRA/NAB)
International Islamic University of Malaysia	Malaysian Medical Association
International Medical University	Medical Practice Division, Ministry of Health
JobStreet.com	Melorita Healthcare
JUBM	Ministry of Tourism and Culture
Land Surveyors Board of Malaysia	Prince Court Medical Centre
Lincoln University College	Robert Walters of Malaysia
Malaysian Accountancy Research and Education Foundation	Westports Malaysia
Malaysian Accounting Standards Board	

Myanmar	
Asia Mega Link Company Limited	Ministry of Social Welfare
Asia Royal Hospital	Myanmar Academy of Medical Science
Association of Myanmar Architects	Myanmar Accountancy Council
City Development Council	Myanmar Architect Council
Department of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Transport	Myanmar Business Executives Association
Defense Services Medical Academy	Myanmar Dental Council
Dental Association	Myanmar Engineering Council
Engineering Council	Myanmar Engineering Society
Insein General Hospital	Myanmar Institute of Certified Public Accountants
Institute of Dental Medicine	Myanmar Medical Association
MAT Audit and Professional Services	Myanmar Medical Council
MC Audit	Myanmar Nurses and Midwifery Association
Military Nursing Paramedical and Pharmacy Institute	Myanmar Nursing and Midwifery Council
Ministry of Construction	National Skill Standards Authority
Ministry of Education, Higher Education	Nursing University

Myanmar	
Ministry of Education	People's Health Foundation
Ministry of Health	Tourism Promotion Department
Ministry of Health, Department of Medical Services	Tourism Training School
Ministry of Industry	Win Htut Aung and Associates
Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Security	

Philippines	
Asian Institute of Management	Professional Regulatory Board of Nursing
Ateneo de Manila University School of Medicine	School of Economics, De La Salle University
Board of Accountancy, Professional Regulation Commission	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)
Department of Tourism	The Medical City
Health Alternatives for Total Human Development (HEALTHDEV) Institute	Tourism Industry Board Foundation
Professional Regulation Commission, Board, Mechanical Engineering	University of Santo Tomas
Professional Regulation Commission, Regulatory Board of Architecture	University of the Philippines Asian Institute of Tourism
Professional Regulation Commission, Board of Geodetic Engineering	University of the Philippines College of Dentistry
Professional Regulation Commission, Board of Dentistry	University of the Philippines College of Nursing

Thailand	
17th Somdejprasangkaraj Hospital	Medical Association of Thailand
Architect Council of Thailand	Medical Council of Thailand
Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital	Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Sports
Council of Engineers	Office of the Vocational Education Commission, Ministry of Education
Dental Association of Thailand	Pan House Travel / Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA)
Dental Council of Thailand	Siriraj Hospital
Department of Skill Development	Somsilp Co.
Director of Business Development, Ministry of Commerce	SSC Rental & Engineering Co.
Dusit International	Thai Red Cross College of Nursing
Faculty of Accountancy, Chulalongkorn University	Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI)
Faculty of Dentistry, Chulalongkorn University	Thailand Medical Council
Faculty of Engineering, Chulalongkorn University	Thailand Nurses Association of Thailand
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Suansunandha Rajabhat University	Thailand Nursing and Midwifery Council
Faculty of Medicine, Chulalongkorn University	Thammathorn Accountancy
Faculty of Medicine, Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University	Tourism Professional Training Institute, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Sports
Federation of Accounting Professions	Tripple P Accounting
King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital	V.S.P. Construction Co.
Kopfun Co.	

Viet Nam	
Administration for Medical service, Ministry of Health	Ministry of Construction
Central Public Hospital of Odonto and Stomatology	Ministry of Health
Department of International Cooperations, Ministry of Construction	Ministry of Health, Department of Healthcare Examination Management, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
Department of International Relations, Ministry of Construction	Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs (MOLISA)
Department of Managing Construction Activities, Ministry of Construction	Nhat Viet Investment Consulting Company Limited
Department of National Remote Sensing	Sapio Tourism
Department of Surveying and Mapping	Southern Transportation Consultancy and Designing Company
Dong Hung Accounting Services Co.	VietDuc Hospital
European Union–funded Environmentally and Socially Responsible Tourism Capacity Development Programme (ESRT)	Viet Nam Association of Accountants and Auditors (VAA)
Faculty of Accounting, University of Labor and Social Affairs	Viet Nam Consultancy Construction Company
GITES JSC	Viet Nam Institute of Geodesy and Cartography
Ha Noi Tourism College	Viet Nam National Administration of Tourism
Ha Noi Medical University	Viet Nam Nursing Association
Institute of Labor Science and Social Affairs (ILSSA)– Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs (MOLISA)	Viet Nam Tourism Certification Board
JSC Developed Architecture and Construction KINESIS	Viet Nam Young Physician Association
Khanh Hoa Mental Health Hospital	Viet Nam, Odonto, Stomatology Association (VOSA)
KTV Advisory and Auditing	

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The Long Road Ahead
Status Report on the Implementation of the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangements on Professional Services

Over the past decade, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) signed Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) in seven occupations, all designed to facilitate professional mobility within the region. MRAs are not easy to operationalize, however. Despite progress in key areas, member states face complex challenges as they move toward full implementation. This report is the latest in a project by the Asian Development Bank and the Migration Policy Institute to improve understanding of the barriers to the free movement of professionals within ASEAN and to support the development of strategies to overcome these hurdles. The report draws on the insights of nearly 400 ASEAN and member state officials, private sector employers, training directors, and others who participated in focus group discussions, meetings, and surveys.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to a large share of the world's poor. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.

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