



Recommendations from regional employers' preparatory meeting for the 12th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour 24 September 2019, Bangkok, Thailand

Changes in business models and markets, coupled with demographic realities, increasingly require businesses to hire, train and transfer the workforces across borders. Efficient migration systems should respond to labour market needs for the future of work. Now that businesses are frequent and important users of national migration systems, their experience in the practical workings of immigration policies, as well as knowledge of emerging market and staffing trends, can supply important information to governments and international organizations and enhance migration governance.

It's crucial for businesses to remain competitive while practicing sustainable and responsible business practices. Therefore, the business community has an important stake in working with governments in the development of coherent and consistent migration policies that facilitate the safe and orderly movement of labour across the entire skills spectrum.

In light of this background review, the ASEAN Confederation of Employers (ACE) would like to put forward the following key recommendations for consideration by ASEAN Member States at the 12th AFML meeting:

1. Ensure that the participation of EBMOs in public-private dialogue is essential to the development of well-regulated migration systems. If proper regulations are not in place, it becomes very costly for employers to hire workers from outside the country. When regulated appropriately, private employment and recruitment services improve labour-market functioning by matching jobseekers to a decent job, inside and across borders.
2. Promote tripartite social dialogue to put the right regulations on migrant workers at the national level. Appropriate and effective national regulation/deregulation is required to balance the interest of migrant jobseekers, workers and businesses on private labour-market allocation.

3. Take appropriate measures to reduce recruitment fees and related costs for employers taking it into consideration that migrant workers do not pay for job placements. The ever-increasing costs are particularly difficult to bear for SMEs.
4. Improve systems for assessing skill levels of migrant workers to inform admission policies in countries of destination, and share this information with countries of origin to inform their training programmes and preparation of outgoing migrant workers. Governments should speed up implementation of skills certification and mutual recognition to respond to the needs of the labour market.
5. Improve migrant workers' access to technical and soft skills training, reskilling and upskilling and improve systems for recognition of formal qualifications and informally gained skills at different stages of the migration cycle.
6. In balance with the obligations of employers to provide safe and responsible employment, sending government ministries should conduct pre-departure training so that migrant workers are fully aware of and committed to abide by contracts they sign.

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