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Philippines

LABOR MARKET INTELLIGENCE REPORT
ASEAN MRA
ON TOURISM PROFESSIONALS



ASEAN MRA ON TOURISM PROFESSIONALS



I. Background

One of the initiatives that is being pursued in the ASEAN is the Mutual Recognition Arrangements on Tourism Professionals (MRA-TP). The MRAs are arrangements between two or more parties to mutually recognise or accept some or all aspects of one another's conformity with assessment results. One of the objectives of the MRA-TP is to ease the mobility of tourism professionals within ASEAN based on a competency-based tourism qualifications/certificates. The MRA was signed by the ASEAN Member States on January 6, 2009 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The MRA objectives are: 1) to facilitate mobility of Tourism Professionals/Workers; 2.) to exchange information on best practices in competency-based education and training for Tourism Professionals; and 3) To provide opportunities for cooperation and capacity building across ASEAN Member States.

The MRA Infrastructure (please see figure 1) shows that it is governed at the regional level by the ASEAN Tourism Professional Monitoring Committee (ATPMC) and the ASEAN Tourism Professional Registration System (ATPRS). At the national level it is governed by the National Tourism Professional Board/Agency (NTPB) and the Tourism Professional Certification Board (TPCB). The ATPMC consists of the ASEAN National Tourism Organizations (NTOs) and appointed representatives from the National Tourism Professional Boards (NTPBs). One of its responsibilities is to facilitate the exchange of information concerning assessment procedures, criteria, systems, manuals and publications relating to the MRA.

Figure1. The MRA Infrastructure

REGIONAL LEVEL	
1. ASEAN Tourism Professional Monitoring Committee (ATPMC)	
2. ASEAN Tourism Professional Registration System (ATPRS)	
NATIONAL LEVEL	
1. National Tourism Professional Board/Agency (NTPB)	
2. Tourism Professional Certification Board (TPCB)	

The following are the key stakeholders in the Philippines that are collaborating in the successful implementation of the MRA on Tourism Professionals in the Philippines:

- The **Department of Tourism (DOT)** takes the lead as the National Tourism Organization (NTO) and represents the Philippines in the ATPMC. One of its responsibilities as NTO is to develop, coordinate and implement work programmes/plans to enhance cooperation in tourism. Moreover, as NTO it provides mechanism to promote participation from the private or business sector and non-government organizations.

- The **Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)**, is the lead as TPCB. The TPCB is primarily responsible in the assessment of qualifications and/or competencies of tourism professionals as specified in the ASEAN Common Competency Standards for Tourism Professionals (ACCSTP). Moreover, it issues certificates to tourism professionals whose qualifications and/or competencies comply with the ACCSTP; and develops, processes and maintains a registry of certified tourism professionals and job opportunities. Lastly, the TPCB notifies the NTPB when foreign tourism professionals are no longer qualified or have violated any technical, professional or ethical standards.
- The **Tourism Industry Board Foundation, Inc. (TIBFI)** is the NTPB. The NTPB refers to the Board for Tourism Professionals composed of representatives from the public and private sectors including the academia and other relevant tourism stakeholders as identified by the NTO. The NTPB is responsible in creating awareness and disseminating information about the ASEAN MRA. It is, likewise, responsible to promote, update, maintain and monitor the ACCSTP and the Common ASEAN Tourism Curriculum (CATC). Moreover, it is responsible to facilitate the exchange of information on assessment procedures, criteria, systems, manuals and publications relating to the MRA, and the exchange of best practices in the tourism sector.

II. The Key Elements of MRA – TP

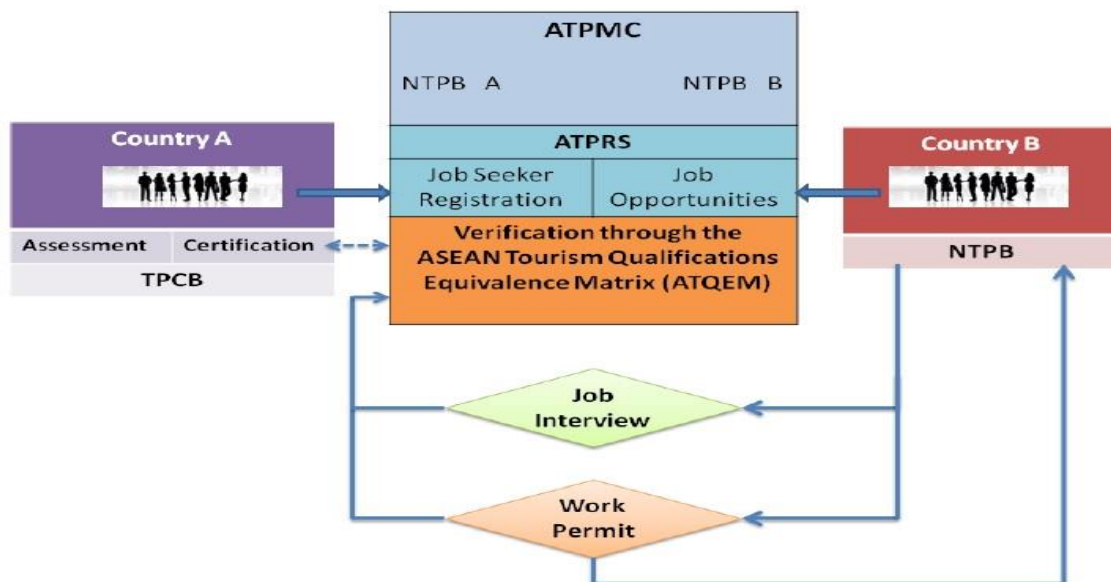
Every organization consists of different individuals that possess different responsibilities that are essential to attain the groups' aim. ASEAN MRA-TP, as an initiative of the ASEAN countries, has its key elements¹ as follows:

- a) The *ASEAN Tourism Professional Monitoring Committee (ATPMC)* consists of ASEAN National Tourism Organizations (NTOs) and appointed representatives from the National Tourism Professional Boards (NTPBs).
- b) The *ASEAN Tourism Professional Registration System (ATPRS)* is a web-based facility to disseminate details of certified Foreign Tourism Professionals within ASEAN. This registration system is still under development and will be launched in 2015.
- c) The National Tourism Professional Board (NTPB) refers to the Board for Tourism Professionals composed of representatives from the public and private sectors (including academia and other relevant tourism stakeholders) to be determined by the respective ASEAN NTOs.
- d) The Tourism Professional Certification Board (TPCB) refers to the government board and/or agency authorized by the government of each ASEAN Member State primarily responsible for the assessment and certification of Tourism Professionals.
- e) Tourism Professional refers to a person who holds the nationality of an ASEAN Member State certified by the Tourism Professional Certification Board.
- f) The ASEAN Common Competency Standards for Tourism Professionals (ACCSTP) refers to the minimum requirements of competency standards in hotel and travel services which aim to upgrade tourism services and facilitate the development of MRA between ASEAN Member States.

¹ ASEAN MRA on Tourism Professionals Handbook

- g) The Common ASEAN Tourism Curriculum (CATC) refers to the common curriculum for ASEAN Tourism Professionals as mutually agreed upon by the ASEAN Tourism Ministers upon recommendation by the ASEAN NTOs.
- h) Assessment refers to the process of appraising the qualification and/or competencies of Tourism Professionals.
- i) Certification refers to the issuance of a certificate to the Tourism Professional whose qualification and/or competencies have met the standards specified in ACCSTP.
- j) Verification is the means by which a certificate or qualification is checked against ACCSTP to ensure its compatibility and validity.

Figure 2. Schematic Outline of ASEAN MRA on Tourism Professional Mechanism



Source: ASEAN MRA on Tourism Professionals Handbook

III. Benefits from the ASEAN MRA-TP

1. For governments, MRAs ensure commitment and agreement to international trade, and encourage the sharing of good practices and information between and among partners. This can lead to:
 - Reduced costs;
 - Increased competitiveness;
 - Increased market access; and
 - Freer flow of trade.

2. For tourism professionals and the industry, MRAs provide the following benefits:
 - Facilitate mobility of tourism professionals based on the tourism competency qualification/ certificate
 - Enhance conformity of competency based training/education
 - Recognise skills of tourism professionals
 - Improve the quality of tourism human resources producing work/job-ready graduates
 - Enhance the quality of tourism services.

3. For education and training providers, MRAs provide the following benefits:
 - A clear set of standards for development of training programs
 - A competency-based training and assessment system for preparing trainees for the tourism industry
 - A range of job-based tourism qualifications based on common labour divisions
 - An opportunity to become one of the preferred education and training providers for the range of ASEAN Common Competency Standards for Tourism Professionals (ACCSTP) qualifications.²

IV. TESDA's Role in the ASEAN MRA on Tourism Professionals

In 2011-2012, TESDA, together with the TIBFI and the DOT, reviewed its existing Training Regulations (TRs) and Competency-based Curriculum (CBC) against equivalent job titles under the MRA. There are thirty-two (32) job titles categorized into six (6) common labour divisions identified as illustrated in Figure 3.

Referring to the schematic outline of the ASEAN MRA on Tourism Professionals, a Philippine Tourism Professional Certification Board (TPCB) is needed in the facilitation of the assessment and certification of the tourism professionals. In view of TESDA being responsible in the assessment and certification of the skilled workers in the Philippines, TESDA was officially designated as the *Philippine Tourism Professional Certification Board (TPCB)* in 2013. As discussed earlier, the TPCB is responsible for the assessment and certification of Tourism Professionals in the respective ASEAN member state. To facilitate the mobility of tourism professionals on competency-based tourism qualifications within ASEAN countries, TESDA's National Certification serves as a medium for the free movement of skilled and certified tourism labour across the ASEAN region.

For the past five years, TESDA has produced 700,537 and 611,034 assessed and certified individuals, respectively, for the tourism sector (Please refer to Annex 1). Being designated as the Philippine TPCB, TESDA will continuously assess and certify competent individuals complying with the ASEAN Common Competency Standards for Tourism Professionals.

² <http://mra.esrt.vn/>

Figure 3. Six (6) Labor Divisions and Thirty (32) Job Titles

32 Job Titles - Six Labour Divisions					
HOTEL SERVICES				TRAVEL SERVICES	
Front Office	House Keeping	Food Production	Food and Beverage Service	Travel Agencies	Tour Operation
Front Office Manager	Executive Housekeeper	Executive Chef	F&B Director	General Manager	Product Manager
Front Office Supervisor	Laundry Manager	Demi Chef	F&B Outlet Manager	Assistant General Manager	Sales & Marketing Manager
Receptionist	Floor Supervisor	Commis Chef	Head Waiter	Senior Travel Consultant	Credit Manager
Telephone Operator	Laundry Attendant	Chef de Partie	Bartender	Travel Consultant	Ticketing Manager
Bell Boy	Room Attendant	Commis Pastry	Waiter		Tour Manager
	Public Area Cleaner	Baker			
		Butcher			

Source: ASEAN MRA on Tourism Professionals Handbook

TESDA has corresponding TVET qualifications and Training Regulation to some of these jobs that will be used in the assessment and certification of tourism professionals in compliance of the ASEAN MRA, as follows:

- Front Office Services NC II
- Housekeeping NC II, III and IV
- Commercial Cooking NC III and IV
- Cookery NC II
- Bread and Pastry Production NC II
- Food and Beverage Services NC II, III and IV
- Bartending NC II
- Travel Services NC II
- Tourism Promotion Services NC II

Identification of these TVET qualifications will facilitate the mobility of workers in the country. Furthermore, this will ensure that workers will enjoy similar benefits and treatment from other workers from other country.

V. Progress of Implementation of the MRA Work Plan⁸

MRA Work Plan	Target Dates	Status
1. Establishment of ATPMC	2010	Done
2. Review of ACCSTP Framework & CATC	Implemented continuously	On-going
3. Development of Training Toolbox for Housekeeping	2011-2012	
4. Development of ATPRS including ASEAN Tourism Qualifications Equivalent Matrix (ATQEM)	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project on “Gap Analysis on the Implementation of MRA on Tourism Professionals” is now on-going, funded by AADCP II The Development of ATPRS would be conducted through a separate project in 2013
5. Feasibility Study for development of regional secretariat to implement MRA of Tourism Professional	2012	On-going, funded by AADCP II
6. Development of training toolbox (functional competencies: Front Office, Food and Beverage Services, and Food Production)	2012-2013	On-going, funded by AADCP II
7. Training Programme for ASEAN Master Trainer and Master Assessor for Housekeeping Division	2012-2013	Funding for this activity from AADCP II has been secured for implementation after toolboxes for housekeeping are completed.
8. Development of training toolbox (functional competencies: Travel Agents and Tour Operators)	2013	Funding for this activity from AADCP II has been secured.
9. Training of Trainer Programme for Master Trainer and Master Assessor for Front Office, Food and Beverage Services, Food Production, Travel Agents, and Tour Operators	2013	To be implemented after toolbox of respective division is finalized.
10. Implementation of CATC for 6 tourism labour division	2013	To be implemented after toolbox of respective division is implemented.
11. Establishment of Regional Secretariat for ATPMC	2013	Some Member States had indicated its readiness to host the Regional Secretariat.
12. Soft Launching of the Implementation of MRA on Tourism Professionals	2014	
13. Assistance to Least Developed Countries in Implementing MRA	2014	
14. Grand Launching of the Implementation of MRA - TP	2015	

References:

Bueno, Rica. *Tourism Development Roadmap*. Presentation during the 2nd National TechVoc Congress. 29 October 2013.

ASEAN MRA on Tourism Professionals Handbook. December 2012.

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<http://mra.esrt.vn/>. Accessed on 25 November 2013

<http://www.tourism.gov.ph>. Accessed 25 November 2013

Table 1. Number of Assessed and Certified in Tourism Sector (2008-Mid 2013)

SECTOR	QUALIFICATION	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013 (Jan - June)		TOTAL	
		ASSESSED	CERTIFIED	ASSESSED	CERTIFIED	ASSESSED	CERTIFIED	ASSESSED	CERTIFIED	ASSESSED	CERTIFIED	ASSESSED	CERTIFIED	ASSESSED	CERTIFIED
Tourism														0	0
	Attraction & Theme Parks Operation NC II							0	0	0	0			0	0
	Baking/Pastry Production NC II	3976	3208	12908	11115	11996	9971	4374	3919	1105	901	4	4	34359	29114
	Bartending NC II	1628	1334	12373	9170	11611	9043	14902	11467	17850	15324	8995	7910	58364	46338
	Bread and Pastry Production NC II					538	385	8679	7649	15848	14440	7711	7017	25065	22474
	Commercial Cooking NC II	7845	6849	26324	24015	27294	24119	27334	24800	42401	39278	19510	18257	131198	119061
	Commercial Cooking NC III	29	23	136	127	49	45	248	217	264	200	38	28	726	612
	Commercial Cooking NC IV					34	34	6	2	6	6	0	0	46	42
	Events Management Services NC III			80	55	139	109	375	244	915	627	613	436	1509	1035
	Food and Beverage Services NC II	15782	12457	40065	32312	38387	31162	37738	32841	56538	50560	23518	21097	188510	159332
	Food and Beverage Services NC III							1453	1264	2924	2537	1240	1165	4377	3801
	Food and Beverage Services NC III (Restaurant and Fine Dining)			142	35	72	68	57	54	4	3	0	0	275	160
	Food and Beverage Services NC III (Restaurant and Coffee Shop)			1687	1469	1032	877	1093	914	1713	1587	639	594	5525	4847
	Food and Beverage Services NC III (Restaurant, Fine Dining and Coffee Shop)			1494	0	60	54	128	114	249	234	337	309	1931	402
	Food and Beverage Services NC IV									39	39	0	0	39	39
	Food and Beverage Services NC IV (Restaurant)			37	20	124	80	6	6	0	0	0	0	167	106
	Food and Beverage Services NC IV (Restaurant and Coffee Shop)			17	4	2	2	8	5	0	0	0	0	27	11
	Front Office Services NC II	724	482	4383	3227	6112	4340	6107	5174	9155	7717	3520	3235	26481	20940
	Housekeeping NC II	12128	11144	36229	33524	37790	33778	40337	37040	54145	50002	23248	21851	180629	165488
	Housekeeping NC III	107	93	18	18	62	51	451	371	533	441	49	46	1171	974
	Housekeeping NC IV									0	0	0	0	0	0
	Tour Guiding Services NC II	205	145	760	507	1187	1005	1516	1044	2275	1779	1017	911	5943	4480
	Tourism Promotion Services NC II	12	10	51	44	160	112	112	73	83	81	211	184	418	320
	Travel Services NC II	6	5	157	139	172	106	102	40	418	254	266	256	855	544
	Messman, Cook							14907	14202	18015	16712	9003	8731	32922	30914
	TOTAL	42442	35750	136861	115781	136821	115341	159933	141440	224480	202722	99919	92031	700537	611034

Source: CACO, TESDA



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