



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

2018/GOS/SYM/013

Benefits of Open and Fair Recognition of Professional Qualifications

Submitted by: RMIT University



**Symposium on Services Trade
Singapore
30 May – 1 June 2018**

Benefits of Open and Fair Recognition of Professional Qualifications

Professor Christopher Ziguras

APEC Workshop on Best Practice Recognition
of Professional Qualifications

Kuala Lumpur, 12 April 2018

Why?

APEC commitment to liberalisation of trade and investment:

- Trade in services dependent upon skilled staff, increasingly through cross-border provision
- Foreign direct investment dependent upon sourcing staff with skills aligned with international standards

Economies, to differing degrees, are focused on:

- Filling skill shortages through immigration (temporary and permanent)
- Enhancing the outward mobility of their citizens (at higher skill levels) and service providers
- Developing an internationally competitive workforce

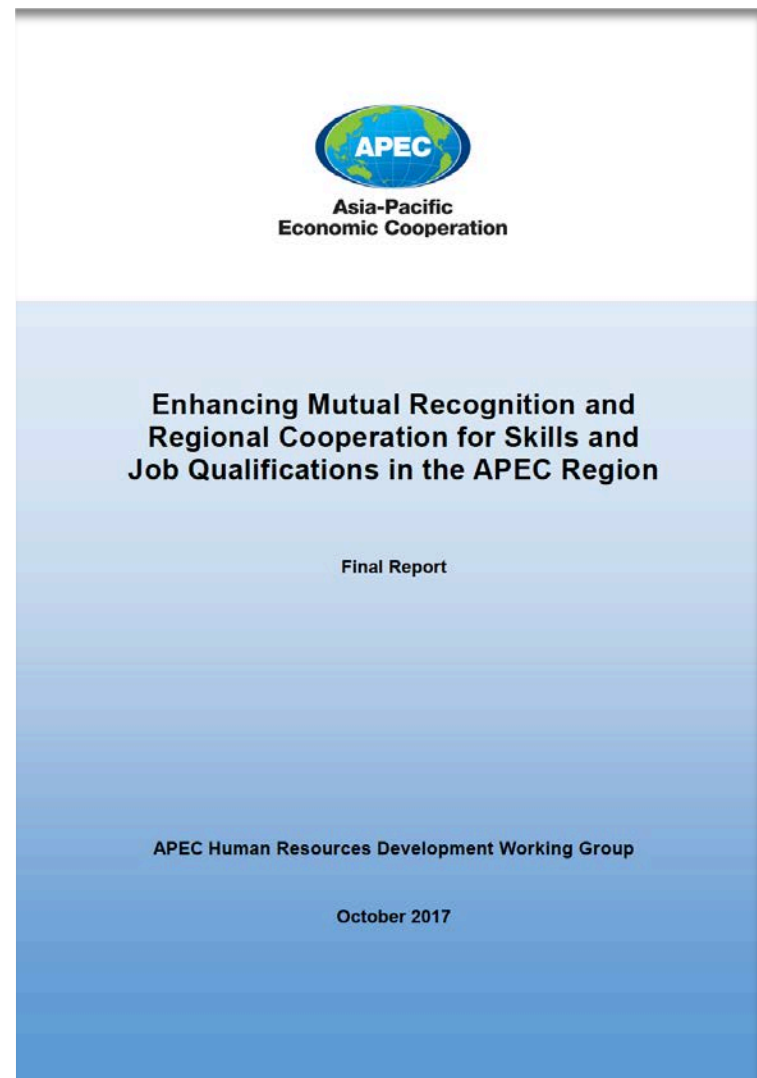
Challenges

Globalization is making occupational requirements more similar, and yet:

- Within economies professional registration processes and standards vary enormously – by state/province, by occupation
- National and regional differences persist, in definitions, standards and registration processes (eg. social worker, psychologist, translator, interpreter, urban planner, first aider)
- Incumbents in some professions resist new entrants to the field, especially from abroad (regulatory capture is common)
- Regulatory bodies are often not sufficiently engaged with global developments in professional practice

What has been achieved by mutual recognition initiatives in the APEC region?

- Little progress in facilitating physical mobility of workers at scale (domestic regulations and immigration restrictions remain)
- Improvements in professional education standards
- Increasing cooperation between governments, education providers, professional associations and industry partners



Strategies

- Ensure that educational qualifications and professional accreditation standards are benchmarked against international norms, with a view to increasing alignment
- Work with professional/occupation groups to identify key economies with a high degree of alignment to prioritise for mutual recognition agreements, educational collaboration, partnerships between professional associations
- Align processes for assessing foreign professional qualifications with international norms

