



Mobility of professional services Pacific Economic Cooperation Council FTAAP Project Taskforce Meeting 14 December 2023

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THE AUSTRALIAN
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Structure

Introduction

- Why professional services matter for regional trade
- Why recognition of professional qualifications and licensure matters

The current state of recognition of professional qualifications and licensure in the Asia Pacific:

- Types of recognition: unilateral, bilateral MRAs, multilateral MRAs, comprehensive MRAs
- Economies
- Occupations
- Gender

Recent developments

- Digital transformation
- FTAs

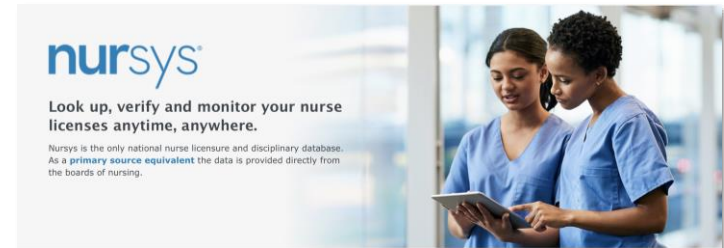
Advancing regional approaches

- Guiding principles
- Possible pathways

Digitalisation

What opportunities are afforded by digitalisation of professional services, both in relation to cross-border trade and in relation to recognition practices?

- Digital trade in services is growing rapidly, accelerated by Covid-19 disruption
- This shift includes professional services that don't require delivery via physical presence
- Mutual recognition agreements and recognition processes can and should evolve to take advantage of the efficiencies afforded by digitalisation and digital delivery



Guiding principles

New and expanded agreements should be:

- Non-discriminatory
- Transparent and predictable
- Not more burdensome than necessary to ensure quality of service
- Responsive to new and emerging developments

Possible pathways

- Where differences in professional practice and standards exist:
 - Promote the development and adoption of shared norms
 - Support engagement between regulators
 - Highlight benefits for consumers and for professional mobility
 - Establish expectation of harmonisation

- Where substantially equivalent practices and standards exist
 - Encourage competent authorities to establish multilateral agreements
 - Put onus on competent authorities to justify non-recognition
 - Call out duplication of equivalent processes
 - Move from unilateral recognition of initial professional educational qualifications to reciprocal recognition of licensing

- Where new developments are driving change
 - Explore creative ways to encourage alignment of standards that promote recognition