

## **Trends on Student Mobility**

### *Outbound Student Mobility*

Filipinos participating in outbound student mobility has increased constantly over the years. Data showed that the number of students studying abroad almost doubled in 2017 compared to 9 years ago (2017 = 16,308; 2008 = 8,443). Population growth and the continuing economic prosperity will lead to a continuing rapid increase in tertiary education with the Philippines expected to be among the world's top 20 countries in terms of tertiary enrolment by 2035 (Macha, Mackie, Magaziner, 2018,). Top out-bound country destinations for Filipino students are 1) Australia with 5,075; US with 3,037; New Zealand with 1,105; UK with 763 and Saudi Arabia with 747. Surprisingly, Japan and China are not yet in there.

With the recent adoption of the K-12 education reform, Filipino students are now better suited for international mobility with their English Language abilities their advantage.

### *Inbound Student Mobility*

As early as year 2000, the Philippine Government, through the issuance of Executive Order No. 285, have encourage and supported the entry and stay of foreign students in the Philippines. This was enhanced by globalisation where countries are more interdependent and higher education made more open. Thus, the number of foreign students in the Philippines, though small by international comparison, almost doubled in the last ten years (2017 = 14,132; 2007 = 7,316).

## **Challenges Related to Student Mobility**

While the government encourages and supports outbound and inbound student mobility, much still has to be done to streamline bureaucratic processes needed to legalise the entry of foreign students (e.g. student visas and study permits) and exit of Filipino students to study abroad (e.g. clearance needed from CHED and immigration). The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) was mandated to regulate and develop higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines, however they seem to be stuck and remain fixated on their regulatory role at the expense of the their developmental role. The recognition process of HEIs' international programmes (e.g. Transnational Education) is both tedious and takes a long time with very slow support system for HEIs to acquire the capacity to send and accept foreign students.

## **National Strategy to Enhance Student Mobility in the Philippines**

The Philippine Education System is constantly updating and changing specially in the last 5 years. Major shift in strategy to enhance student mobility can be seen in the following:

1. The implementation of vital education reform laws such as the a) The K+12 Basic Education Reform (2013); b) The Open Distance Learning Act (2014) and c) The Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act enhance opportunities for student mobility.
2. The efforts to increase the number of HEIs in the ASEAN University Network and strengthen ties with international organisations such as the SEAMEO-RIHED and the UMAP network (with its SSTP and UMAP Discovery Camp programs).
3. Exchange programs for students and faculty;
4. Fostering research collaborations with partners in other countries;
5. Facilitating and supporting on-the-job (OJT) training;
6. Internationalization of the curricula.

Reference:

Macha, M., Mackie, C., Magaziner, J. (2018, March 6). Education in the Philippines. Retrieved from <https://wenr.wes.org/2018/03/education-in-the-philippines>

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