ASEAN student, academic mobility is patchy – Report

04 May 2018 University World News Global Edition Issue 504

Student and academic mobility, particularly within the Southeast Asian region, underpins the region’s globalisation of higher education, with concerted efforts to streamline visa procedures across the region to aid student mobility. But other social and political hurdles remain, according to a British Council study.

Student and academic mobility, particularly within the Southeast Asian region, underpins the region’s globalisation of higher education, with concerted efforts to streamline visa procedures across the region to aid student mobility. However, significant social and political hurdles are still to be overcome, according to a new report by the British Council.

The study, The Shape of Global Higher Education: Understanding the ASEAN region, released at the British Council’s Going Global conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia last week, looks at policies to promote internationalisation in higher education among the 10 ASEAN countries, plus Brunei.

It notes that nine out of the 10 countries score highly or very highly on cross-border openness generally. The scoring in the study measures national-level strategies supporting inbound and outbound mobility of students and academics, openness of academic programmes, and collaborative research.

Of the 10 ASEAN countries – Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam – only Myanmar scored ‘low’ on this measure while Malaysia and Thailand scored ‘very high’ on openness of the higher education system, including student and academic mobility.

This is why the region has been working to streamline visa procedures in recent years. But other social and political hurdles remain, according to a new report by the British Council.

In all the countries of the region, ‘research collaborations tend to be led by particular institutions which have the necessary capacity in their internal capacities if it leads to more academic staff moving abroad and not returning,’ the study says.

“Understanding, the recognition of TNE qualifications is not as advanced as that of foreign qualifications, although work is under way to improve this across the region,” the report says, referring to foreign qualifications delivered to local universities, known as transnational education or TNE.

Nonetheless, “despite Brunei, Cambodia and Vietnam all having relatively low numbers of international students, there is evidence of efforts being made to develop clarity in the entry and selection criteria for international students,” the study says, adding that “much of this work is being undertaken at the level of higher education institutions themselves in developing their own policies, rather than at the sector-wide level.”

The report says that in five ASEAN countries have some form of study-abroad scholarship programme, but these vary greatly in size and extent, the study says.

In Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam, the international fee-differential for MATRICULUS and postgraduate students is high. In all 10 ASEAN countries, the government is working with other countries to aid student mobility. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

“Understandably, there are anxieties from ASEAN nations regarding the impact of expansion of IHE [international higher education] on their internal capacities if it leads to more academic staff moving abroad and not returning,” the study says.

“Quality and standards are very obvious in the eye of the beholder – you can see clearly that this student has a higher quality education or TNE,” Choltis says. “If you accept this student, this will mean our higher education system is developing in the right direction.”

“In all the countries of the region, working opportunities in the ASEAN region”. Malaysia and Singapore are in the top 20 countries worldwide for incoming international students, with students entering from within ASEAN and from outside, according to the British Council report.

However, academic staff working abroad is seen as a way to improve the academic capacity of the domestic higher education system. The majority of countries have some form of programme in place to enable outbound academic mobility, or in the case of Myanmar, are developing them: “Whichever inbound academic mobility is concerned, there is less activity evident,” it says.

Many countries sending academics abroad have “safeguards” to ensure they return home. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

The study says that in five ASEAN countries have some form of study-abroad scholarship programme, but these vary greatly in size and extent, the study says.

In Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam, the international fee-differential for MATRICULUS and postgraduate students is high. In all 10 ASEAN countries, the government is working with other countries to aid student mobility. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

“In all the countries of the region, working opportunities in the ASEAN region”, Malaysia and Singapore are in the top 20 countries worldwide for incoming international students, with students entering from within ASEAN and from outside, according to the British Council report.

However, academic staff working abroad is seen as a way to improve the academic capacity of the domestic higher education system. The majority of countries have some form of programme in place to enable outbound academic mobility, or in the case of Myanmar, are developing them: “Whichever inbound academic mobility is concerned, there is less activity evident,” it says.

Many countries sending academics abroad have “safeguards” to ensure they return home. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

The study says that in five ASEAN countries have some form of study-abroad scholarship programme, but these vary greatly in size and extent, the study says.

In Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam, the international fee-differential for MATRICULUS and postgraduate students is high. In all 10 ASEAN countries, the government is working with other countries to aid student mobility. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

“In all the countries of the region, working opportunities in the ASEAN region”, Malaysia and Singapore are in the top 20 countries worldwide for incoming international students, with students entering from within ASEAN and from outside, according to the British Council report.

However, academic staff working abroad is seen as a way to improve the academic capacity of the domestic higher education system. The majority of countries have some form of programme in place to enable outbound academic mobility, or in the case of Myanmar, are developing them: “Whichever inbound academic mobility is concerned, there is less activity evident,” it says.

Many countries sending academics abroad have “safeguards” to ensure they return home. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

The study says that in five ASEAN countries have some form of study-abroad scholarship programme, but these vary greatly in size and extent, the study says.

In Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam, the international fee-differential for MATRICULUS and postgraduate students is high. In all 10 ASEAN countries, the government is working with other countries to aid student mobility. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

“In all the countries of the region, working opportunities in the ASEAN region”, Malaysia and Singapore are in the top 20 countries worldwide for incoming international students, with students entering from within ASEAN and from outside, according to the British Council report.

However, academic staff working abroad is seen as a way to improve the academic capacity of the domestic higher education system. The majority of countries have some form of programme in place to enable outbound academic mobility, or in the case of Myanmar, are developing them: “Whichever inbound academic mobility is concerned, there is less activity evident,” it says.

Many countries sending academics abroad have “safeguards” to ensure they return home. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

The study says that in five ASEAN countries have some form of study-abroad scholarship programme, but these vary greatly in size and extent, the study says.

In Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam, the international fee-differential for MATRICULUS and postgraduate students is high. In all 10 ASEAN countries, the government is working with other countries to aid student mobility. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

“In all the countries of the region, working opportunities in the ASEAN region”, Malaysia and Singapore are in the top 20 countries worldwide for incoming international students, with students entering from within ASEAN and from outside, according to the British Council report.

However, academic staff working abroad is seen as a way to improve the academic capacity of the domestic higher education system. The majority of countries have some form of programme in place to enable outbound academic mobility, or in the case of Myanmar, are developing them: “Whichever inbound academic mobility is concerned, there is less activity evident,” it says.

Many countries sending academics abroad have “safeguards” to ensure they return home. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

The study says that in five ASEAN countries have some form of study-abroad scholarship programme, but these vary greatly in size and extent, the study says.

In Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam, the international fee-differential for MATRICULUS and postgraduate students is high. In all 10 ASEAN countries, the government is working with other countries to aid student mobility. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

“In all the countries of the region, working opportunities in the ASEAN region”, Malaysia and Singapore are in the top 20 countries worldwide for incoming international students, with students entering from within ASEAN and from outside, according to the British Council report.

However, academic staff working abroad is seen as a way to improve the academic capacity of the domestic higher education system. The majority of countries have some form of programme in place to enable outbound academic mobility, or in the case of Myanmar, are developing them: “Whichever inbound academic mobility is concerned, there is less activity evident,” it says.

Many countries sending academics abroad have “safeguards” to ensure they return home. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

The study says that in five ASEAN countries have some form of study-abroad scholarship programme, but these vary greatly in size and extent, the study says.

In Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam, the international fee-differential for MATRICULUS and postgraduate students is high. In all 10 ASEAN countries, the government is working with other countries to aid student mobility. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.

“In all the countries of the region, working opportunities in the ASEAN region”, Malaysia and Singapore are in the top 20 countries worldwide for incoming international students, with students entering from within ASEAN and from outside, according to the British Council report.

However, academic staff working abroad is seen as a way to improve the academic capacity of the domestic higher education system. The majority of countries have some form of programme in place to enable outbound academic mobility, or in the case of Myanmar, are developing them: “Whichever inbound academic mobility is concerned, there is less activity evident,” it says.

Many countries sending academics abroad have “safeguards” to ensure they return home. For example, the Cambodian government offers scholarships for Vietnamese and Laotian students to study in Cambodia.