

**20th APEC ECONOMIC LEADERS' Declaration**  
**Vladivostok, Russia**

**ANNEX D**

**PROMOTING CROSS-BORDER EDUCATION COOPERATION**

Education is the pre-eminent source of economic development in the 21st century, creating more and higher quality jobs and bolstering productivity growth. Education is also a fundamental component of economic activity. Cooperation in the education sectors of APEC economies fosters innovative growth as students, researchers and education providers build scientific, technological and linguistic communities.

All APEC economies stand to gain from enhancing collaboration on cross-border education. Many developing economies in the Asia-Pacific region are rapidly moving into higher value-added manufacturing and knowledge intensive industries driven by innovation. Access to a wide range of quality higher education services is critical for sustainable growth on this development pathway. The APEC region also contains some of the world's largest exporters and consumers of education services. Facilitating the flow of students, researchers and education providers, and reducing the transaction costs involved provides opportunities for a significant expansion of cross border education services to the benefit of all economies.

Increasing cross-border student flows will strengthen regional ties, build people to people exchanges, and promote economic development through knowledge and skills transfer. High quality cross-border education equips students with the 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies they need for their full participation in a globalized and knowledge based society.

Therefore, we, the APEC Leaders, agree that strengthening collaboration among APEC economies is crucial for facilitation of the work on specific policies, including those relating to quality assurance, accreditation, cross-border exchange and data collection. Such work will have a significant impact on the education sector in APEC economies. Important steps were made by economies in 2012 to enhance practical and sustainable educational cooperation, exploring a number of proposals for cross border education within the region as well as research, information, and knowledge sharing. We encourage further development, on a voluntary basis, consistent with individual economies' circumstances, of cross-border education cooperation and facilitation of exchange in education services within APEC in the following areas:

- a) Enhancing ***the mobility of students***. This may be achieved, but not limited by the following:
  - identifying, comparing and implementing best practices among APEC economies for course accreditation and quality assurance systems, as well as targeted capacity building projects;
  - developing models to guide reform and implementation of good regulatory practices, drawing on case studies of domestic education providers;
  - exploring ways to increase the transparency of student visa requirements.
- b) Enhancing ***the mobility of researchers***. This may be achieved, but not limited by the following:
  - developing existing academic exchanges and joint research activities between and among universities in APEC economies;
  - exploring ways to improve the mobility of the academic workforce.
- c) Enhancing ***the mobility of education providers***. This may be achieved, but not limited by the following:
  - exploring ways to enhance transparency of regulation of foreign providers and to remove unnecessary barriers to market access;
  - mapping of existing regulations for the establishment of foreign providers;
  - benchmarking and identifying best practices in APEC on quality assurance systems.
- d) Enhancing ***the existing network of bilateral agreements***. This may be achieved by, but is not limited by the following:
  - examining issues related to the flexible design and delivery of educational content (such as online courses) among APEC economies;
  - enhancing availability of data on educational programs in APEC economies.

We instruct Ministers and officials to take forward these priorities on cross-border student, researcher and education provider mobility to develop cross-border educational cooperation in the APEC region while taking into consideration the circumstances of individual economies.