



# PHILIPPINE HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALIZATION ROADMAP 2023-2027

*Bridging Philippine Higher Education to World-Class Status through Breakthroughs in Internationalization and Transnational Higher Education to Create Milestones in Nation-Building and Economic Recovery*  
PHE IZN ROADMAP 2023-2027

## HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALIZATION TOWARDS AMBISYON NATIN 2040

AmBisyon Natin 2040 anchors the Filipino people's **collective long-term aspirations for the Philippines**. "AmBisyon" is a play on words—it refers to both our ambitions and our collective vision, guiding us as we dream of a:

- prosperous, predominantly middle class society, where no one is poor by the target year of 2040;
- country that has a high-trust society where families thrive in vibrant, culturally-diverse, and resilient communities; and
- country wherein every Filipino lives a life that is *matatag, maginhawa, at panatag* (a stable, comfortable, and secure life).<sup>1</sup>

AmBisyon 2040 therefore anchors our development planning. It is a vision we hope to contribute to through the strategy of building a knowledge-based society—a community that is well-educated and relies on the knowledge of its citizens as a primary driver of innovation, entrepreneurship, and dynamism of the society's economy.

Aligned with our country's overarching aspirations, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) envisions a Philippine higher education system that is equitable and produces locally responsive, innovative, and globally competitive graduates and lifelong learners. Internationalization (IZN) has become more vital in paving the way to realize our vision by being the driver of quality, relevant, and sustainable trailblazing international opportunities for institutions, agencies, and other stakeholders that will transform the country into a globally competitive knowledge society by 2040.

Against this backdrop, we are now adopting the Philippine Higher Education Internationalization Roadmap 2023-2027 as the blueprint that not only guides the agency in contributing to major national and regional higher education priorities, but also mandates Philippine higher education institutions (PHEIs) to internationalize and continuously upgrade the quality of higher education in the Philippines through academic and knowledge transfer outcomes.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://2040.neda.gov.ph/about-ambisyon-natin-2040/>

## **INTERNATIONALIZATION OF PHL HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE ERA OF ASEAN ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The Philippine higher education sector has undergone significant expansion and growth over the past 10 years. Showing steady improvement among its ASEAN peers, the sector ushered in a groundbreaking development in 2016 with the issuance of the Policy Framework and Strategies on the Internationalization of Philippine Higher Education. Taking form as CHED Memorandum Order No. 55 s. 2016, the policy framework has been the PHEIs' source of direction and guiding principles on which they anchor their IZN goals and initiatives.

Pursuing IZN as a strategy has been both a welcome development and a challenge, not only to the PHEIs but to the Commission as well. In encouraging PHEIs to pursue a programmatic and holistic approach in developing and implementing their IZN strategies, the agency strives to remain consistent in underscoring that quality improvements, diversity in academic content and experience, and the attainment of international standards and recognition must remain as priorities. Through the years, these priorities stood as guideposts as the sector met various national and international developments in its collective move to internationalize.

### *ASEAN Community Building towards a Common Higher Education Space*

Taking off from initial efforts to prepare Philippine higher education for ASEAN integration, various reforms have been pursued by the Commission in the past few years on a wide range of areas such as referencing and alignment of qualifications frameworks, institutionalization of outcomes-based and typology-based quality assurance, and participation in major regional networks such as the ASEAN University Network, including its subnetworks and thematic centers. CHED has also been supporting various Philippine HEIs in taking the lead in select fields of study.

Guided by the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Higher Education adopted in 2015 and the ASEAN Education Work Plan on Education 2021-2025, we hope to sustain the gains we have made as we contribute to building an ASEAN Community that is people-oriented and people-centered. This imperative now holds even greater significance as the region moves towards a Common Higher Education Space.

### *Internationalization of Philippine Higher Education in the Duterte Administration*

Over the past five (5) years, the preceding administration invested heavily on the internationalization of higher education with the total approximate budget of Php 3 billion. Results have been exemplary, beginning with the awarding of thousands of scholarship and training grants, increase in government-to-government and institution-to-institution linkages, and the launching of various internationalization projects such as those funded by the Erasmus+ Programme. Dozens of Philippine HEIs were rated and ranked in globally-recognized international rankings systems, and we foresee this number to continue growing. We have also accessioned to the Tokyo Convention or the Asia-Pacific UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of

Higher Education, and continued active participation in prominent regional and international platforms of cooperation.

In 2019, the Republic Act No. 11448 or the “Transnational Higher Education Act,” was passed into law which was followed by the issuance of its Implementing Rules and Regulations. This groundbreaking development introduced unprecedented opportunities to explore new international relations and dynamic partnerships for continuously enriched collaborations, more effective systems, and deepened commitments. The expansion of academic linkages and partnerships abound, bringing a bounty of opportunities to the Philippines and to the world.

#### *Internationalizing in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic*

2020 could have been a banner year for the IZN of Philippine higher education with the approval of its highest budget planned at approximately Php 1 billion. However, due to the persistent effects and wide-reaching impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission had to recalibrate and reimagine education through the lens of this unprecedented global crisis.

As part of the agency’s efforts to ensure learning continues, webinars were held and partnerships were pursued to create virtual mobility opportunities. Guidelines for flexible learning were issued and platforms for online learning were created: the PHL CHED Connect and CHED HiEd Bayanihan. The former is an online platform storing higher education course materials in various forms that can be used in teaching, learning, and research. Contributors can submit materials which, after review and approval, can be freely accessed by stakeholders. The latter is a virtual, cooperative learning environment dedicated for training, capacity-building and resource-sharing.

The international and local partnerships of the Commission remained steadfast, if not stronger. In fact, it created a bigger, diverse, and connected classroom of global citizens redefining and charting higher education under the new normal.

### **THE PHILIPPINE HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALIZATION ROADMAP 2023-2027**

“The Philippine higher education is a recognized world-class higher education system and higher education hub that prepares its students, learners and graduates to live and work in multicultural communities as responsible ASEAN and global citizens, while contributing to the national innovation agenda as a driver of economic development and global competitiveness.”

This is the outcome we shall continue pursuing through the advancement of the internationalization of Philippine higher education—one of the five Key Result Areas (KRAs) in the Commission’s upcoming five-year strategic plan. Due to the enormity of this task, an internationalization roadmap has been crafted with the following objectives in mind:

1. Advance Philippine higher education's international reputation and visibility in the ASEAN region;
2. Position the Philippines as a regional and global education hub for quality higher education
3. Develop Philippine HEIs as productive members of the international academic community;
4. Produce graduates with 21<sup>st</sup> Century competencies to enable them to live and work in a diverse multicultural setting as ASEAN and Global Citizens; and
5. Align CHED's policies to international and regional normative standards, international commitments, and global frameworks.

Building on the internationalization gains made during the Duterte Administration, the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. will continue the former's successes by reinforcing the sectoral, institutional, and capacity development mechanisms through his "Friends to All, Enemies to None" foreign policy. A whole-of-nation approach will be pursued in developing internationalization and transnational higher education in support of the President's key priorities of nation-building, sustained and inclusive economic growth, and digital transformation.

In implementing this five-year roadmap, the Commission through its International Affairs Service will be guided not only by its vision for the future and what came before, but also the presence of gaps and opportunities noted by various studies, such as the ANTENA Project's 2019 Needs Assessment Study and the results of the Quacquarelli Symmonds' (QS) Assessment of our universities' performance in its rankings. Focus on creating internationalization opportunities and providing various forms of support for all groups of stakeholders will remain a priority, alongside more targeted approaches in select areas such as mobility and exchanges, partnership-building, and international assessments/accreditations. Strengthening the Philippines' presence in the Higher Education Common Space in the ASEAN region will be a key priority area. With this in mind, the roadmap is divided into four pillars, each with its own sets of priority initiatives:

### **PILLAR 1: SECTOR**

Key Result Area: Elevated Reputation of Philippine Higher Education

A central element to all internationalization initiatives is the promotion of the country's higher education (HE) sector in its entirety. The accomplishments of any of its institutions, people, or systems are reflections of the quality of the Philippine HE sector as a whole. Under this pillar, priorities would be strengthening the participation of Philippine higher education in the ASEAN Higher Education Common Space through greater presence in ASEAN platforms and continued support for Philippine HEIs included in international rankings and league tables.

Under this Pillar, we will **build bridges and missions** through strengthening bilateral/multilateral ties with countries anchored on national interest, identity, and priorities i.e., mutual recognition of qualifications, quality assurance and assessment, diversity in student and academic engagement, institutional sustainability by

collaborative research and participation in global knowledge and innovation networks, improving teaching force management and incorporating new pedagogies employing technology.

## **PILLAR 2: INSTITUTIONS**

Key Result Area: Stronger Internationalized Higher Education Institutions

In light of the need to keep in step with, if not be at the forefront of, rapidly advancing international standards and practices, initiatives to strategically build capacities among Philippine higher education institutions (HEIs) will involve the development and operation of individualized internationalization plans and offices, establishment of international technical and research collaborations, and incentivization of efforts advancing internationalization.

Under this Pillar, we will **break barriers to mobility** by creating and sustaining capacity building opportunities for institutions to advance internationalization, including but not limited to: providing support for the development and implementation of strategic internationalization plans, establishment of partnerships and collaborations, and incentivizing efforts to internationalize such as through participating in partnership and mobility networks, niche-building, and securing national and international accreditations.

## **PILLAR 3: PEOPLE**

Key Result Area: Global, Future-Proof Citizens in and of Philippine Higher Education

A variety of approaches and modalities provide opportunities for learning with a global perspective and that ensures adaptability to changing times and environments. The development of persons in Philippine HE would thus respond to the necessary integration of internationalized curricula and programs, both abroad and at home, while mitigating the barriers to wider participation in learning opportunities. The revitalization of fundamental skills will ensure that persons as products of Philippine higher education are top employment choices while lifelong learning ensures continuity of excellence.

Under this Pillar, we will **support the development of brilliant and better manpower** through the provision of scholarships in new and emerging fields and growing higher education services as key export services sector to drive sustainable and economic growth, underpinning the key initiatives of the administration to improve employability and entrepreneurship, develop start-ups, and spur innovation and creativity which will generate at least one billion dollars in foreign reserves.

#### **PILLAR 4: SYSTEMS**

Key Result Area: Globally Aligned Higher Education Governance, Policies, and Standards

Best practices of institutions with internationalization experiences have not been cascaded in a far-reaching fashion while governance of internationalization activities have not been entirely consistent across agencies. Moreover, alignment with international standards as well as regional and global development goals is yet to be fully assimilated in quality assurance and educational policy measures. The systems to be developed for higher education intend to be rejoinders to the needs for alignment with international standards, for domestic policy harmonization, and for revitalization of governance structures and capacities in internationalization of higher education.

Under this Pillar, we will **boost breakthroughs and milestones** in higher education by sustaining an enabling environment covering various facets (legal, financial, policy-based, program-based, etc.) that is globally-oriented, internationally benchmarked, and locally responsive.

<b>Pillar 1: SECTOR</b> <b>KRA: Elevated Reputation of Philippine Higher Education</b> <b>Messaging Element: Building Bridges and Missions</b>		
Key Performance Indicators	Action Plans	Initiatives
<b>1.1</b> Expand Philippine presence and cooperation partnerships in the Southeast Asian Higher Education Common Space	<b>1.1.1</b> Increase and sustain ASEAN awareness in the sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASEAN and Internationalization in the Regions Project (ASEAN Celebration)</li> <li>• ASEAN Regional Awards</li> <li>• ASEANWave 2022 National Awarding</li> </ul>
	<b>1.1.2</b> Increase awareness of ASEAN-related policies and guidelines in the sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dissemination of the APT Guidelines</li> <li>• Support for seminars, trainings, and workshops</li> </ul>
	<b>1.1.3</b> Develop a Strategic Communication Plan for the promotion of the Philippine higher education sector in ASEAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement of an expert to draft the CHED Strategic Communication Plan for ASEAN</li> <li>• Support for seminars, trainings, and workshops</li> </ul>
	<b>1.1.4</b> Increase the number of active agreements with ASEAN Member Countries and other priority countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for participation in international meetings and delegation visits</li> </ul>
	<b>1.1.5</b> Develop at least one new partnership between established regional networks/cooperation platforms and Philippine HEIs annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for AUN-QA trainings and assessments</li> <li>• Implementation of mentoring partnerships by AUN Member Universities for potential new members (MSU-IT, VSU, CLSU)</li> <li>• Support for new Philippine members in AUN Thematic Centers</li> </ul>
	<b>1.1.6</b> Fulfill Philippine commitments in major regional action plans on higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for participation in regional and international meetings</li> <li>• ASEAN Policy Dialogue on Building Access to Higher Education (incl. through Digital Transformation)</li> <li>• Support for ASEAN Commitments</li> </ul>
<b>1.2</b> Establish at least five (5) Philippine HEIs as	<b>1.2.1</b> Provide financial and technical niche-building support for identified lead institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for Niche-Building in ASEAN</li> </ul>

leaders in niche programs in the ASEAN region		
1.3 Elevate the international profile and competitiveness of the Philippine HEIs	1.3.1 Establish a monitoring system for existing IZN programs of HEIs	
	1.3.2 Provide technical and financial support to Philippine HEIs participating in international rankings/league tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fostering World-Class Project</li> </ul>
<b>Pillar 2: INSTITUTIONS</b> <b>KRA: Stronger Internationalized Philippine Higher Education Institutions</b> <b>Messaging Element: Breaking Barriers to Mobility</b>		
<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Action Plans</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>
2.1 Increase the number of Philippine HEIs provided with internationalization support	2.1.1 Provide technical and financial support to Philippine HEIs in formulating and implementing Strategic Internationalization Plan (SIP) with a fully functioning International Relations Office (IRO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication of the Internationalization Scoping Report</li> <li>Publication of the Philippine Higher Education Internationalization Roadmap 2023-2027</li> <li>Dissemination of the IRO Management Guide</li> <li>Support for the Philippine Internationalization Network (PHL IN-Net)</li> <li>Quality Assurance in Internationalization (QA Indicators)</li> </ul>
	2.1.2 Provide technical and financial support to Philippine HEIs in establishing their niche programs in support of education tourism as a driver of the economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Study in the Philippines Program</li> </ul>
	2.1.3 Conduct roadshows on internationalization and related policies and plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for seminars, trainings, and workshops</li> </ul>
2.2 Increase the number of transnational higher education programs on an annual basis	2.2.1 Establish a reliable, transparent and quality-assured system of approved/authorized transnational higher education programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TNHE Needs Analysis and Scoping Study</li> <li>Publication of the CHED Memorandum Order on TNHE</li> <li>Code of Good Conduct on International Agents</li> <li>Toolkit on TNHE</li> </ul>



<p><b>2.3</b> Increase the number of adult education program offerings and opportunities</p>	<p><b>2.3.1</b> Develop a national platform and roadmap for adult education programs in higher education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for seminars, trainings, and workshops</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pillar 3: PEOPLE</b>  <b>KRA:</b> Global, Future-Proof Citizens in and of Philippine Higher Education  <b>Messaging Element:</b> Brilliant and Better Manpower</p>		
<p><b>Key Performance Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Action Plans</b></p>	<p><b>Initiatives and Activities</b></p>
<p><b>3.1</b> Increase the number of scholarships awarded per year</p>	<p><b>3.1.1</b> Institutionalize the CHED Philippine International Learning Grants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarships for Graduate Studies Abroad</li> <li>• Transnational Higher Education</li> <li>• International Continuing Professional Education</li> </ul>
	<p><b>3.1.2</b> Institutionalize the Asian International Mobility for Students (AIMS) Program under the General Appropriations Act (GAA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asian International Mobility for Students (AIMS) Program</li> </ul>
	<p><b>3.1.3</b> Implement ODA-funded Foreign Scholarship and Training Programs (FSTP)</p>	
	<p><b>3.1.4</b> Develop and implement an ASEAN Scholarships Initiative for CLMV students</p>	
<p><b>3.2</b> Increase the percentage of graduates with CFR Level B2 in identified priority programs</p>	<p><b>3.2.1</b> Implement the National Roadmap for Global Competitiveness in Communication Skills (NRGCCS) Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Roadmap for Global Competitiveness in Communication Skills (NRGCCS) Project</li> <li>• English-Medium Education (EME)</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.3</b> Increase the number of students participating in exchanges</p>	<p><b>3.3.1</b> Create a registry of exchange students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of the Guidelines on Higher Education Mobility (including virtual mobility and COIL/GNL)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>3.3.2</b> Provide technical and financial support for institutional partnerships supporting the ecosystem of higher education</p>	

	mobility (covering mobility (virtual and on-site), study and training, immersion, internship, and research)	
<b>Pillar 4: SYSTEMS</b> <b>KRA: Globally Aligned Higher Education Governance, Policies, and Standards</b> <b>Messaging Element: Boosting Breakthroughs and Milestones</b>		
<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Action Plans</b>	<b>Initiatives</b>
4.1 Increase the number of national standards aligned with regional and international standards	4.1.1 Issue a Joint Memorandum Circular on Transnational Higher Education with various partner agencies	
	4.1.2 Issue separate CHED Memorandum Orders for the Policies, Standards, and Guidelines on the different modes of Transnational Higher Education	
	4.1.3 Create an information packet and establish advocacy and promotion mechanisms in support of the Senate Concurrence of the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (Tokyo Convention)	
	4.1.4 Institutionalization of the National Information Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Center for Academic Information for Mobility (NCAIM)</li> </ul>
	4.1.5 Integrate recognized internationalization metrics in quality accreditation systems	
	4.1.6 Implement Philippine commitments relating to the ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework (OIQAG)	
	4.1.7 Implement Philippine commitments relating to the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (OPSD)	