



Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

Sample Position Paper

Represented Economy: The Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Committee: Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation—Business & Cultural Partnership

Topic: Strengthening business collaboration through youth and cultural exchange across the Asia-Pacific

Group:

i. Background Issue

The rapid globalization and convergence of cultures have opened up new development opportunities as well as presents new sets of challenges for nations around the world. Recognizing that the younger generation is a key pillar of growth and change, nations must take heed to foster and cultivate a strong youth workforce, one capable of navigating the complexities of Society 5.0, where technology, identity, and employment are evolving rapidly alongside an incredibly diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious landscape. In light of this, the promotion of youth and cultural exchange becomes even more imperative as deep and resilient economic collaboration necessitates a foundation of trust and cross-cultural understanding. Cultural exchanges achieve this goal by fostering cross-communication and critical thinking, hence producing a global pipeline of innovative talent equipped to engage in an open and cooperative regional environment.

This paper affirms Vietnam's strong advocacy for cultural exchange not just as symbolic gestures but as concrete pillars for business collaboration. Vietnam hereby calls on APEC economies to come together to further push for deeper cultural and economic exchanges, and closely work together to overcome regulatory and regional gaps that currently limit this potential.

ii. The Socialist Republic of Vietnam's Economic Position

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam recognizes the importance of youth and cultural exchange and strongly champions it, positioning youth and business engagement as central to its regional diplomacy—an ambition now formalised through its selection to host APEC 2027. As one of the fastest-growing economies globally, Vietnam is using this platform to deepen business collaboration within the Asia-Pacific through youth exchange, aiming to elevate its standing in global supply chains and human development.

Despite the profound importance of youth and cultural exchange in business collaboration, there are significant setbacks that hinder Vietnam from realising the full potential of these initiatives. Most notably, youth-business exchange initiatives are still disproportionately concentrated among urban and privileged demographics, while mentorship and cross-border networking opportunities remain inaccessible to young people in rural provinces and smaller enterprises. For instance, roughly 90 percent of the country's IT talent pool is concentrated in Vietnam's two major cities, Hanoi and Ho Chi

Minh City. Meanwhile, Vietnam's Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region and the Central Highlands report low levels of startup and innovation activity nationwide. This regional disparity is compounded by Vietnam's own history of illegal migration, which has, in practice, made it harder for legitimate students and young professionals from certain disadvantaged provinces to access international exchange opportunities. Following surges in visa overstays originating from specific localities, several destination countries have moved toward blacklisting entire Vietnamese provinces from entry or employment, or applying heightened, target-based visa screening. While a rational response by destination countries, this practice risks collectively penalising an entire province's students and entrepreneurs for the actions of a minority

iii. The Socialist Republic of Vietnam's Existing Policies

To counteract these disparities, the Government of Vietnam has committed to expanding the scope of youth cultural exchange more broadly, shifting emphasis from a small elite academic cohort¹ toward mass-participation entrepreneurship and innovation programs that more directly serve business collaboration goals. Domestically, Vietnam has begun translating its long-standing educational strengths into entrepreneurial infrastructure. In February 2026, the Prime Minister approved a national Program to Support Student Entrepreneurship for 2026–2035, which explicitly seeks to build mentor-investor-commercialisation chains, attract international mentors and startup coaches, and organise international student exchange programs to draw overseas talent into Vietnam's domestic startup activity. This sits alongside existing regional programs which promote entrepreneurial skills through grassroots workshops, university-led initiatives, and mass open online courses (MOOCs) that link training, innovation, and business networking directly to student exchange.

The Government of Vietnam has also stepped up its regional and international cooperation to advance youth-driven business and cultural exchange. In April 2026, Vietnam approved an action programme to implement the ASEAN Economic Community Strategic Plan. At the bilateral level, Vietnam has actively hosted dialogues with key partners, explicitly framing youth and business exchange as a pillar of the broader

¹ Historically, formal education in Vietnam was reserved for a tiny elite group, infamously solidified through its specialized high school system.

bilateral relationship. Vietnam has likewise participated in multilateral youth platforms such as the ASEAN–China Youth Exchange Visit, which convened over 130 delegates from ASEAN member states to advance youth engagement in digital and technological development.

iv. Proposed Solutions

- a. Expanding existing domestic frameworks and partnering with fellow APEC nations to reach a common consensus.

Vietnam supports greater APEC-wide coordination on mutual recognition frameworks and cross-border mentorship networks, while expanding its own bilateral and multilateral youth-business platforms. Citing that the absence of a shared, cross-border verification standard obstructs lawmakers from designing exchange programs that are both open and secure, Vietnam therefore urges fellow APEC nations to draft comprehensive guidelines on how to better distinguish genuine youth-exchange participants from those misusing exchange visas for undocumented labour.

- b. Applying technological advances to strengthen labour migration systems

Countries should explore available tools, including but not limited to digital verification systems, AI-assisted credential screening, and existing APEC labour-mobility data-sharing arrangements. This concept of pre-screening and credential verification could also be extended to digital marketplaces and online recruitment platforms to strengthen oversights on labour brokers. Laws and regulations on illegal migration, illegal work, and the use of cultural exchange as cover for undocumented labour still remain a gray area warranting further specification, and Vietnam believes this should be discussed in this APEC conference.

- c. Calls on Member Economies to pa

Finally, Vietnam further supports broadening cultural exchange and entrepreneurship education through the responsible use of AI and mass digital learning platforms, and expresses its aspiration for continued coordination among Member States to achieve success on this matter.

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