



Migrant Information Note

Issue #17 – October 2012

This issue of the IOM Migrant Information Note (MIN) details the latest developments in migration issues and regulations in Thailand, including information relating to victims of trafficking, labourers working in the fishing industry, a possible new import of migrant workers and a new strategy to combat irregular migration.

1. Establishment of a working group on providing assistance, therapy and rehabilitation to victims of human trafficking

According to the Ministry of Public Health's (MOPH) order no. 841/2555 dated 5 June 2012, the MOPH has set up a working group on developing ways to provide assistance, therapy and rehabilitation for victims of human trafficking. This working group will meet on a monthly basis and will work in close collaboration with One Stop Crisis Centers (OSCCs) which have been set-up in several provinces in Thailand. Deputy Permanent Secretary of MOPH will serve as an advisor to the working group which is chaired by the Bureau of Health Administration. Representatives from various agencies are included as members of this working group, such as representatives from Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Royal Thai Police, the MOPH and hospitals in many provinces.

Responsibilities of the working group include:

- Make a plan for a manual on assistance, therapy and rehabilitation for victims of human trafficking including and in collaboration with the OSCCs.
- Conduct trainings on the contents of the manual for OSCC personnel involved in the rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking.

- Develop the reporting system of service provision for victims of human trafficking who receive services at OSCCs.
- Coordination, monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the manuals' instructions.
- Report on the results of implementation.
- Other tasks as assigned.

2. Establishment of Coordination Centers for Seafarers in seven pilot provinces - an initiative of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security

Following on from a meeting of a sub-committee concerning the problems and impact of the fishing industry which is chaired by the Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, the General Director of the Fisheries Department unveiled that the meeting focused on issues related to labourers in the fishing sector. The problem of human trafficking in the fishing sector is being addressed by many concerned agencies such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, private sector and NGOs. The Thai government has set up a national committee on the prevention and suppression of human trafficking. The Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives has proposed an implementation plan to prevent and, to some degree, solve human trafficking. The plan is in cooperation with ILO and other relevant agencies. *ILO* is working with the Department of Labour Protection and Welfare and other Government departments and the National Fisheries Association of Thailand on a set of Operational Guidelines on the Recruitment, Employment and Working Conditions in the Fishing Sector.

In addition, the General Director of the Fisheries Department explained that it is also in the process of establishing 7 coordination centers for seafarers in 7 pilot provinces: Samut Sakorn, Rayong, Trad, Choomphon, Songkhla, Ranong and Satun to facilitate the employment of regular labourers to work only on fishing boats.

At present, the Minister of Social Development is waiting for approval from the Cabinet and continues to work closely with all the relevant sectors to combat human trafficking within the fishing industry.

3. Thailand May Import Workers Under G-to-G Agreements

Pravit Khiengpol, Director-General of the Ministry of Labour's Department of Employment, told journalists that Government-to-Government labour import will save time and money, and that the number of imported workers will be based on demand from the local private sector.

Meanwhile, the National Fisheries Association of Thailand has sought official permission to bring in about 50,000 foreign workers from Bangladesh. The Royal Thai Government is in on-going discussions with the Embassy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh regarding this issue.

4. National Security Council's Paper of the Comprehensive Strategy on Irregular Migration

The National Security Council (NSC) has published a new Comprehensive Strategy seeking to address the problems relating to irregular migration. The strategy focuses its different proposals on four target groups, which are stated to be the following:

- A group of approximately 680,000 long-stay, mainly ethnic minority, migrants who are in a stateless situation;
- A group of approximately 2 million illegal migrant workers of Myanmar, Laos and Cambodian nationality;
- A group of approximately 100,000 migrants who are perceived as being threats to national security, such as persons fleeing fightings from Myanmar/Burma, North Koreans and Myanmar Muslims from Northern Arakan State;
- Finally, the group of illegal immigrants such as those who have forged entry documents or overstayed their legal entry permits.

The document sets out specific actions to be taken in regards to all four target groups.

Secondly, the document discusses strategies to prevent the smuggling of persons. The strategy is focused on preventing illegal entries from neighbouring countries through information systems and data sharing among different agencies. In addition, the strategy will work to create a strong community along the border and sea coast to cooperate with the RTG to prevent smuggling and other forms of illegal border entry. Finally, the strategy seeks to promote further collaboration between neighbouring countries, international organizations, ASEAN and the international community to tackle smuggling and other forms of illegal border entry.

Statistics

Table 1.1 – Total stock of migrants recruited through MOU working in Thailand as of August 2012

Nationality	No. of migrants working with active work permits and valid passports
Cambodia	71,548
Lao PDR	17,407
Myanmar/Burma	33,895
Total	122,850

Source: Website of Office of Foreign Workers Administration, Ministry of Labour, Thailand
<http://wp.doe.go.th/monthly-statistics>

Table 1.2 – Total stock of migrants who completed nationality verification (NV) as of August 2012

Nationality	No. of migrants working with active work permits and completed NV
Cambodia	74,612
Lao PDR	45,371
Myanmar/Burma	623,555
Total	743,538

Source: Website of Office of Foreign Workers Administration, Ministry of Labour, Thailand.
<http://wp.doe.go.th/monthly-statistics>

NOTE!

The total number of migrant workers with temporary work permits (Table 1.2) is not finalized by the Ministry of Labour as many migrants are still renewing their work permits and there are hence not captured in the above figures. It is expected that figures should be available in November 2012.

*The Migrant Information Note is produced by the Labour Migration Programme, IOM Thailand Office.
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