

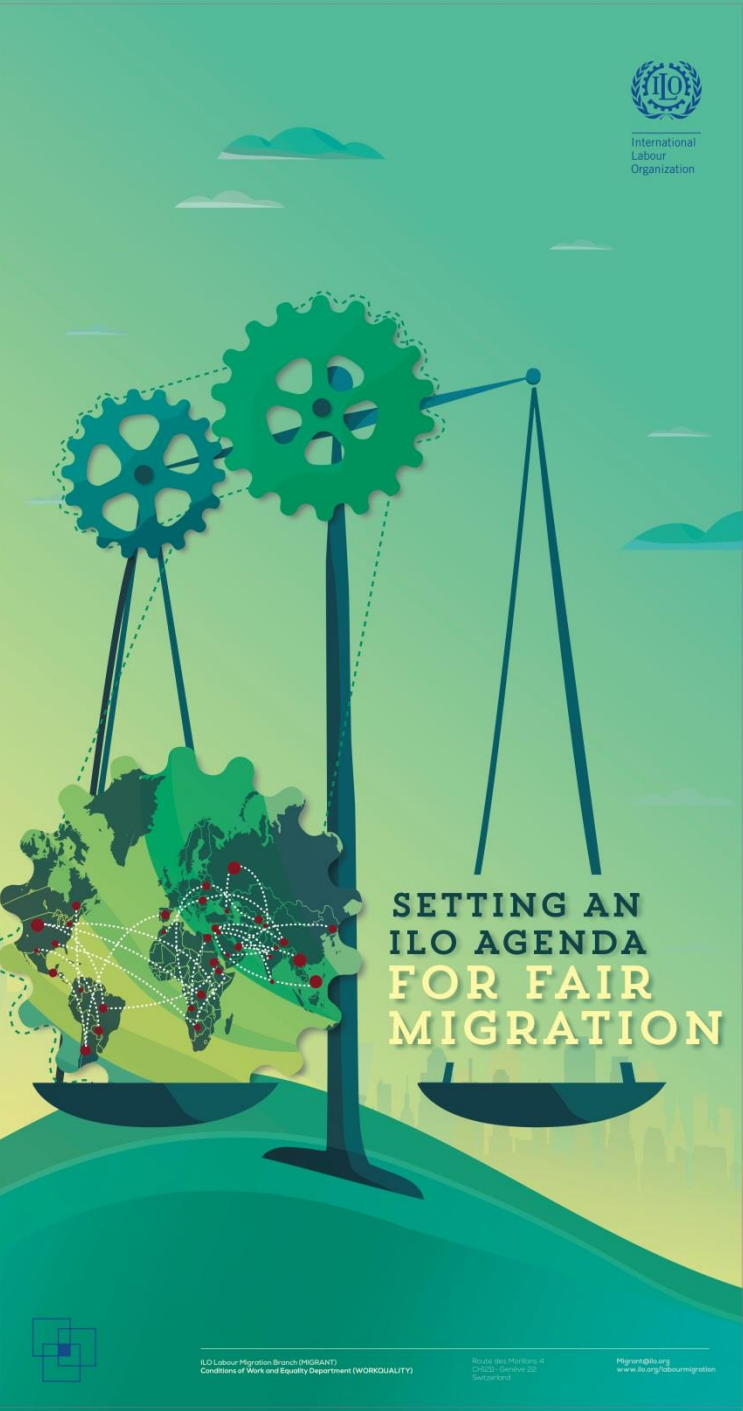
# Promoting Fair and Effective Labour Migration Policies

## Regional Training Course for Labour and Social Policies for Decent Work

June 2016, Bangkok

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Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific  
ILO



SETTING AN  
ILO AGENDA  
FOR FAIR  
MIGRATION

# Outline of presentation

**I. Nature of labour migration in APR and statistics**

**II. Labour migration in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

**III. Challenges and priority areas**

- **Protection and promotion of migrant workers' rights**
- **Economic development and inclusive growth - labour mobility, skills recognition, development impact**
- **Addressing irregular migration**
- **Regional and inter-regional dialogue on labour migration**

**IV. Role of the ILO**



## I. Nature of labour migration in APR and statistics

The world's stock of migrants, defined as persons residing outside their country of birth is estimated, as **244 million** in 2015 (UNDESA).

***75 million people (30 per cent of the world's migrants), are hosted in Asia (including Gulf Cooperation Council countries). Fastest growing region.***

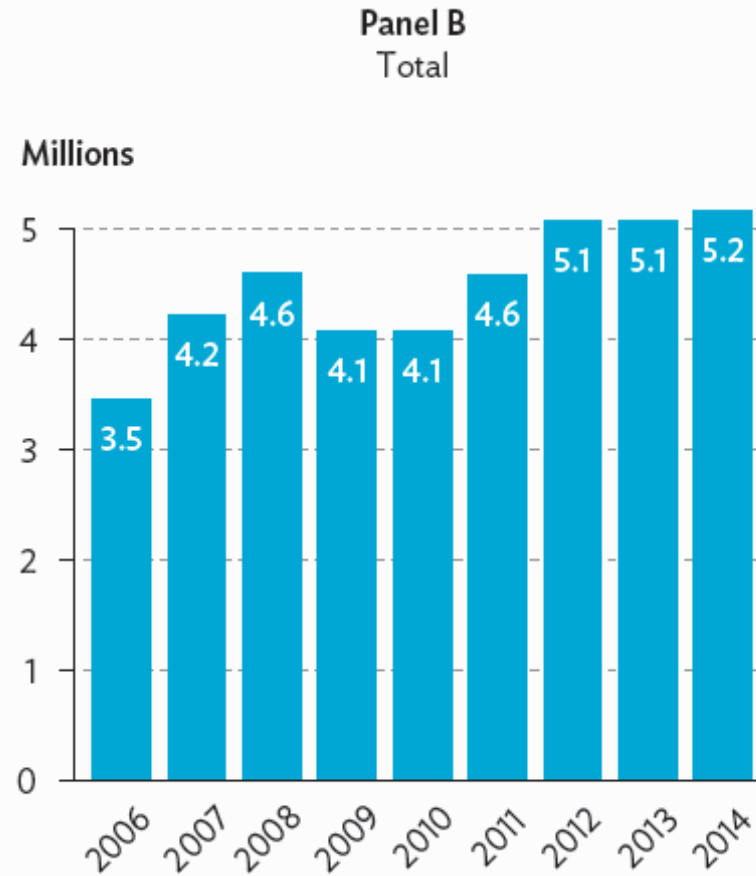
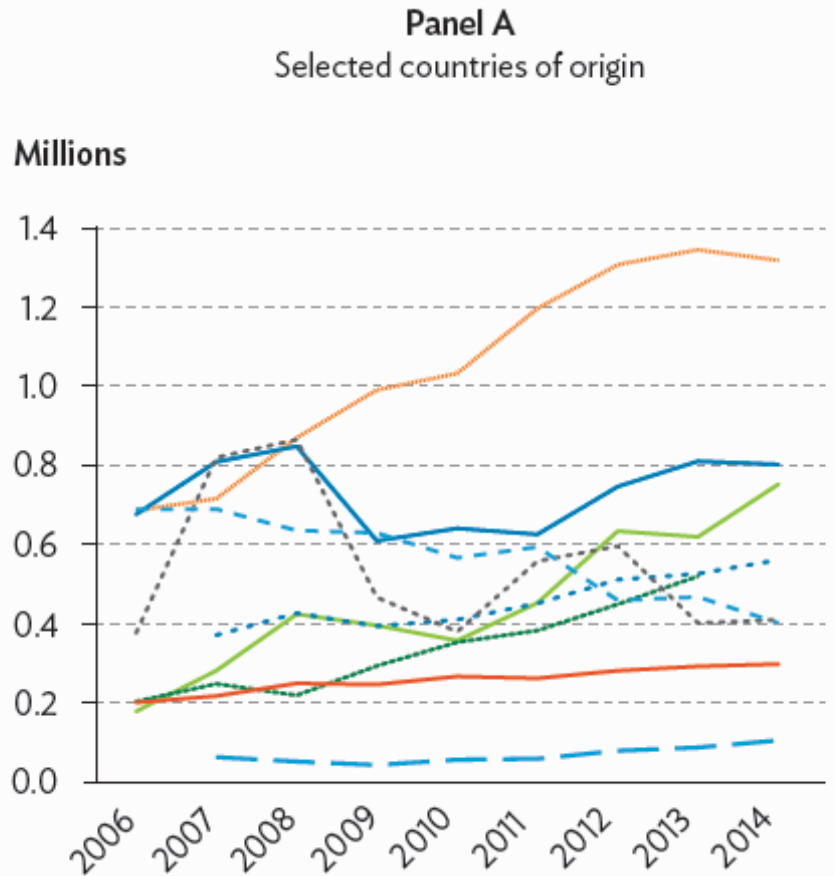
However, these numbers do not fully reflect the importance of the migrant labour-force in destination countries. In Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries 90 per cent of private sector jobs are taken up by migrant workers.

Labour migration largely occurs under temporary migration regimes and for less skilled work. Women comprise 42 per cent of the stocks (2013) and are concentrated in domestic work.

The region is marked by substantial remittance inflows. There were five Asian countries among the top 10 remittance receiving countries in 2014 (World Bank).

Skilled labour flows to OECD countries particularly from India, Philippines, China; and student mobility is significant.

# Outflows from workers from selected Asian countries, 2006-2014



- Philippines
- India
- Pakistan
- People's Republic of China
- Nepal
- Bangladesh
- Indonesia
- Sri Lanka
- Viet Nam

Source: National authorities. ADBI-  
OECD-ILO, 2016.

# Percentage of the foreign workforce by economic sector, 2009

| Sector                                | Bahrain | Kuwait | Qatar | Saudi Arabia | UAE  |
|---------------------------------------|---------|--------|-------|--------------|------|
| Construction                          | 89.9    | 95.2   | 99.8  | 91.0         | 94.7 |
| Households employing domestic workers | 87.9    | -      | 100.0 | 99.6         | 94.8 |



## **I. Nature of labour migration in APR and statistics**

**In the Pacific the overall numbers of migrants are much lower than in Asia. However, the importance of migration to the region remains critical. Oceania has the highest share of migrant stock among all regions in the world (21 percent in 2013). Seasonal worker programs in New Zealand and Australia provide the largest source of temporary work for Pacific Island Countries. PAILS countries are interested in expanding labour migration options. Low lying Atoll countries (Kiribati, Tuvalu, Marshall Islands) are vulnerable to climate induced displacement.**

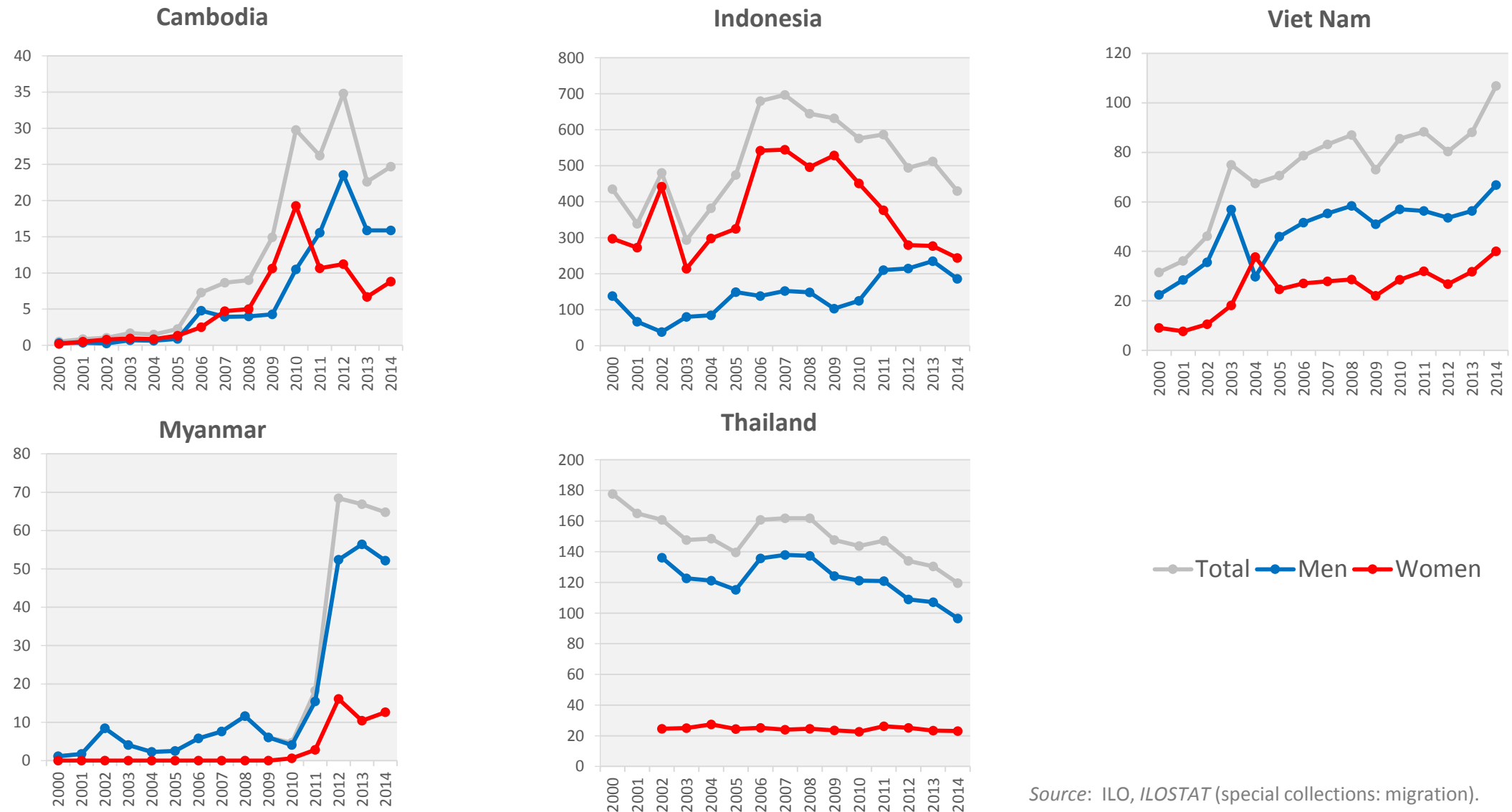
## Migration: ASEAN trends

The number of international migrants in ASEAN has roughly tripled since 1990: In 2013, there were an estimated **9.5 million international migrants in ASEAN** (UNDESA, 2013).

Around two thirds of international migrants in ASEAN come from other ASEAN Member States. The **top five countries of origin** for international migrants in ASEAN are:

- Myanmar (2.2 million)
- Indonesia (1.2 million)
- Malaysia (1.0 million)
- Lao PDR (0.9 million)
- Cambodia (0.8 million)

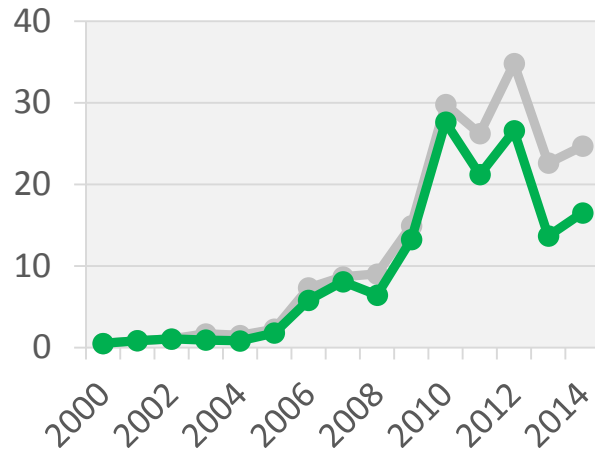
# Annual outflows of nationals registering to work abroad by sex, selected ASEAN Member States, 2000-14 (thousands)



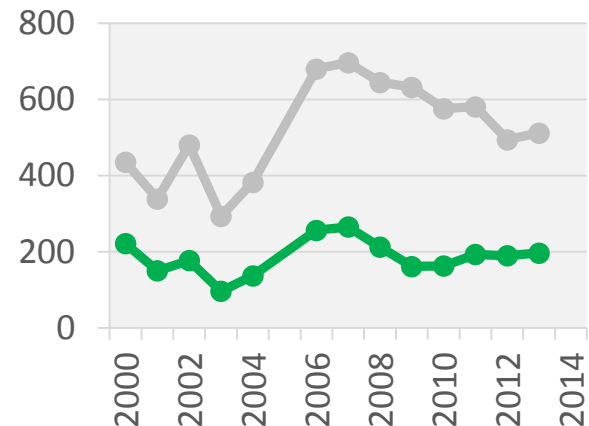
Source: ILO, *ILOSTAT* (special collections: migration).

# Annual outflows of nationals registering to work abroad – total and intra-ASEAN, selected ASEAN Member States, 2000-14 (thousands)

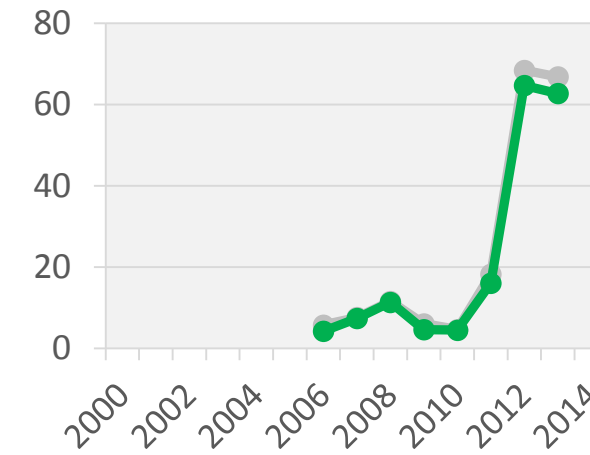
**Cambodia**



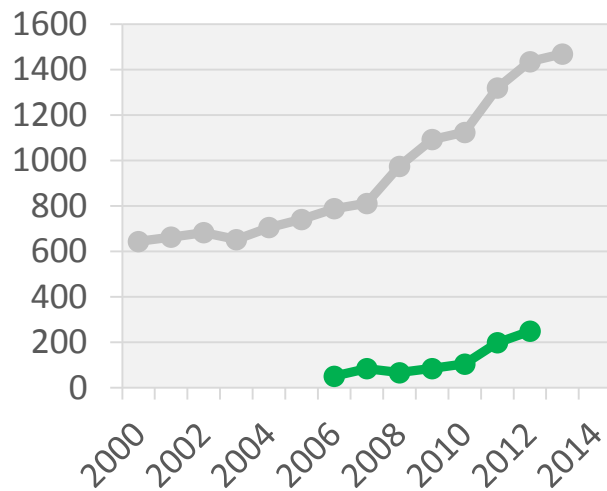
**Indonesia**



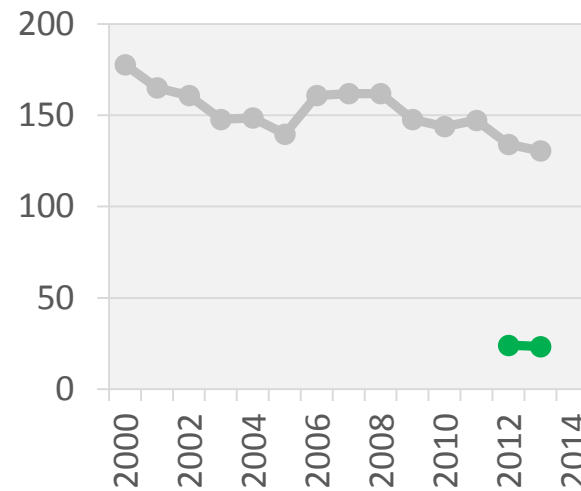
**Myanmar**



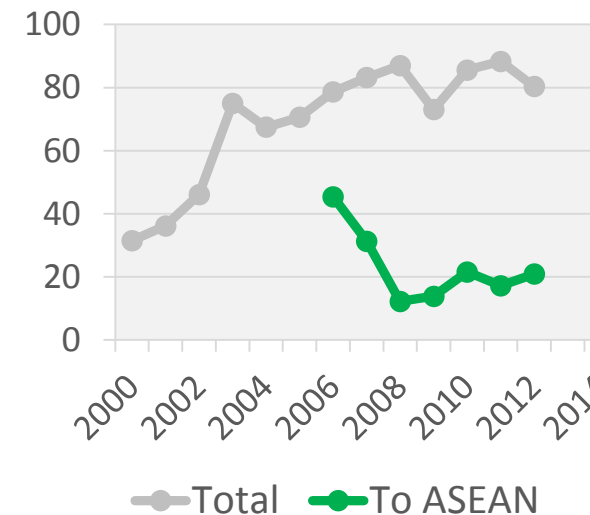
**Philippines**



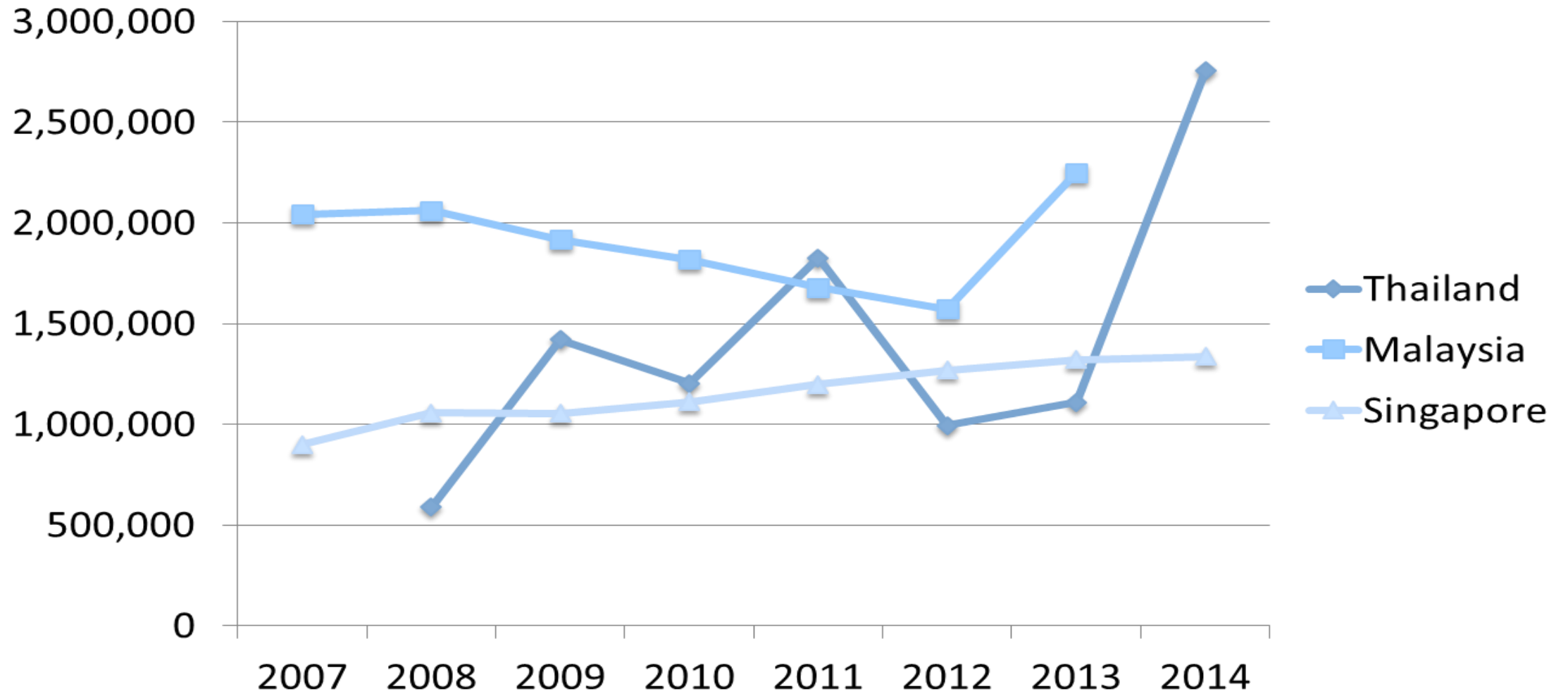
**Thailand**



**Viet Nam**

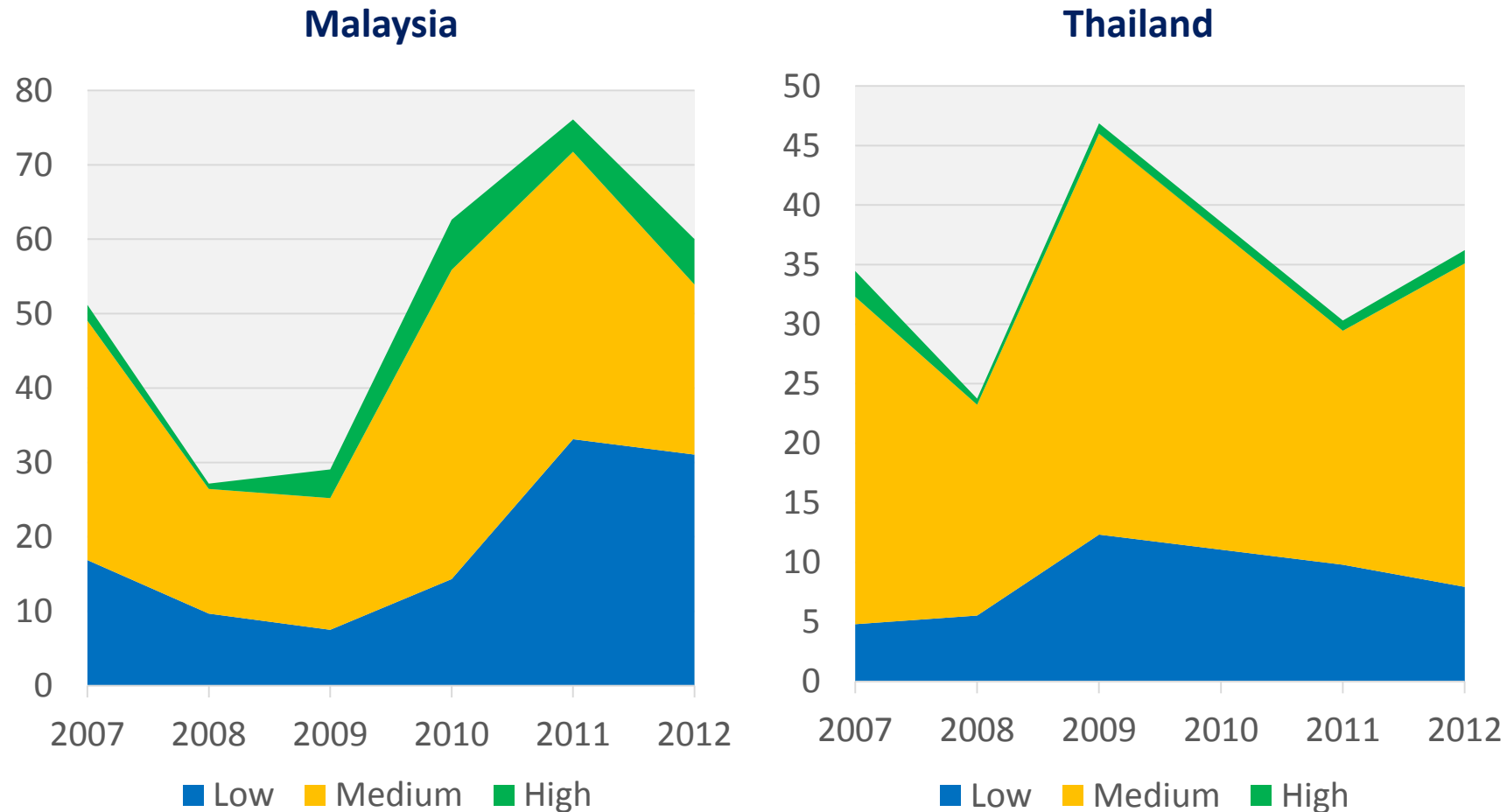


## Stocks of foreign workers in destination countries in ASEAN



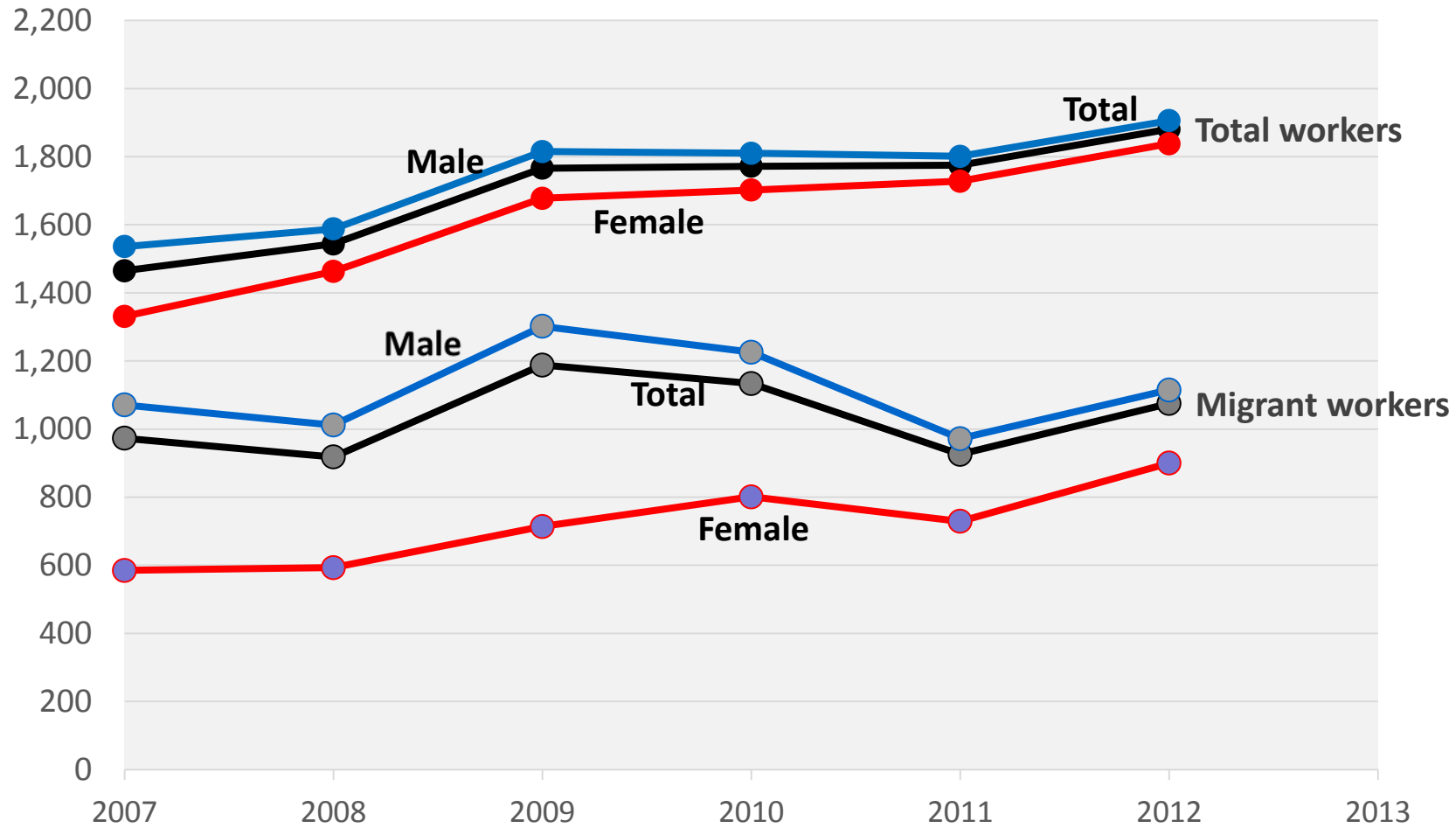
Sources: Ministry of Manpower, Singapore; Ministry of Human Resources, Malaysia; Ministry of Labour, Thailand

# Annual inflow of migrant workers by skill of occupation ('000)



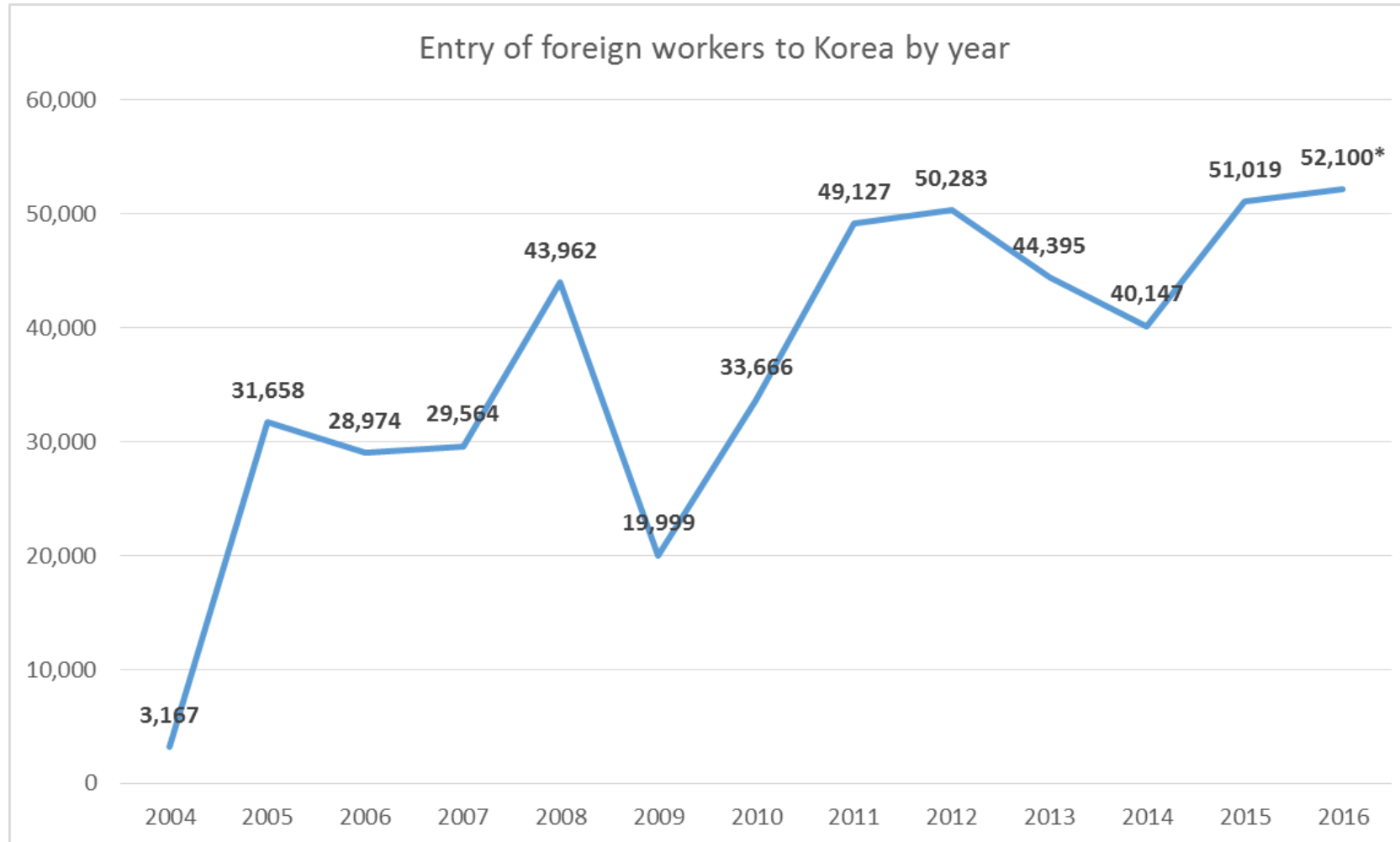
**NOTES:** Malaysia covers only those residing in private living quarters. Thailand data measure those who migrated to Thailand within the previous year so may include some Thai-born or native 'return migrants'; series break between 2009 and 2011 – figure for 2010 was interpolated assuming a linear trend.  
**Sources:** **Malaysia** – Department of Statistics Malaysia, *Migration Survey* (various); **Thailand** – National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, *Labour Force Survey* (module on migration, 2007-2009) and *Migration Survey* (2011 and 2012). ADB/ILO 2014.

# Average monthly wages of migrants and all residents by sex in Malaysia, 2007-12



Sources: Labour Force Survey 2007-12, ILMS/ILO.

# Entry of foreign workers to Republic of Korea by year



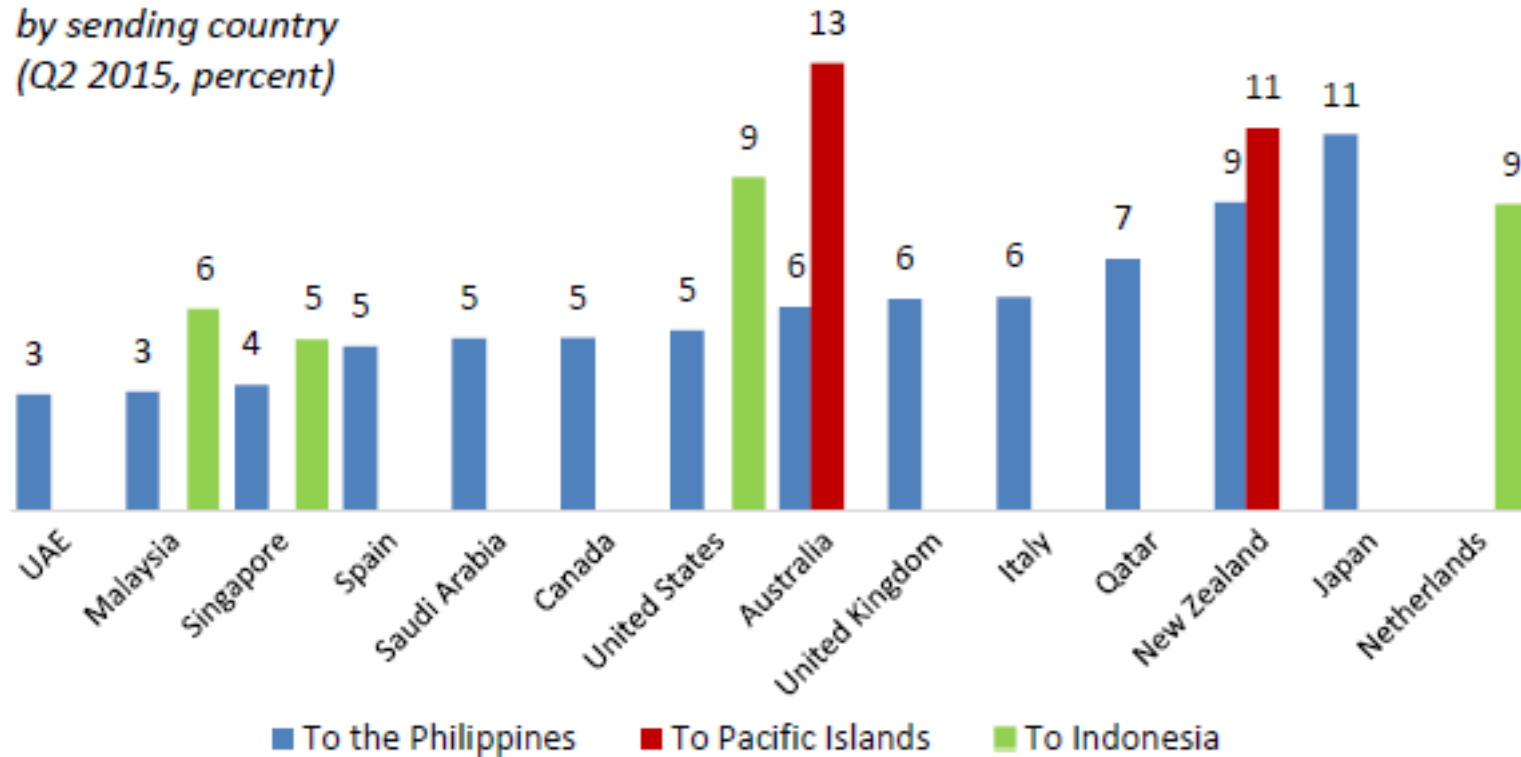
Source: Ministry of Employment and Labour, Republic of Korea

*\*Note: 2016 figure is the quota for EPS entrants that year*

# Remittance Costs

**Figure A3: Costs of sending \$200 are the highest in Pacific Island countries**

*by sending country  
(Q2 2015, percent)*



Source: Remittance Prices Worldwide, the World Bank.

# Ratification of migrant & related Conventions AP

| Country                 | ICRMW       | C097             | C143        | C181        | C189       |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Bangladesh              | 24 Aug 2011 |                  |             |             |            |
| Fiji                    |             |                  |             | 21 Jan 2013 |            |
| Hong Kong, SAR          |             | 22 Jan 1951 (UK) |             |             |            |
| Indonesia               | 31 May 2012 |                  |             |             |            |
| Japan                   |             |                  |             | 28 Jul 1999 |            |
| Mongolia                |             |                  |             | 17 Apr 2015 |            |
| New Zealand             |             | 10 Nov 1950      |             |             |            |
| Philippines             | 5 Jul 1995  | 21 Apr 2009      | 14 Sep 2006 |             | 5 Sep 2012 |
| Sabah State of Malaysia |             | 3 Mar 1964       |             |             |            |
| Sri Lanka               | 11 Mar 1996 |                  |             |             |            |
| Timor Leste             | 30 Jan 2004 |                  |             |             |            |

Source: Wickramasekara (2016): International Instruments and Good Practices on Labour Migration with Relevance to the Republic of Indonesia

## **II. Labour migration in the Sustainable Development Goals**

### **SDG Goal 8 on economic growth and decent work**

– Targets 8.5, 8.7 and 8.8

- Full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men.
- Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking ....
- Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants and those in precarious employment.

## II. Labour migration in the Sustainable Development Goals

### SDG Goal 10 on reducing inequality within and among countries

– Target 10.7

- facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies



### III. Challenges and priority areas

#### Protection and promotion of migrant workers' rights

- While labour migration in Asia generates substantial benefits for countries of origin in terms of jobs, and remittances and for countries of destination, abuses such as **high financial costs and fees during recruitment** are common and are well documented. Private recruitment agencies play a primary role in matching job seekers and employers.
- World bank (KNOMAD), in partnership with ILO, has developed standard survey methodology to measure migration economic costs.

#### Migration cost paid by Vietnamese workers in Malaysia

- Most of the workers earned between **USD300 to USD499** per month. The mean total expenditure paid by Vietnamese workers to work in Malaysia is USD 1,367. This means it takes workers **2.7- 4.5 months' salary to pay back their migration cost**

#### Migration cost paid by Pakistani workers in UAE and KSA

- The median total migration costs is **USD3,100 for 24-month contracts**: a median **USD2,300 for visa costs**, a median **USD350 for international transportation**, **USD245 for agent costs**. In terms of months of earning abroad after deductions the cost is **7- 9 months' salary**.

### III. Challenges and priority areas

- **During employment overseas, many migrants are concentrated in sectors with inadequate labour legislation and enforcement.** Female domestic workers in private households and male migrants working in the fishing industry, agriculture and construction are among the least protected.

General issues and challenges include:

1. Contracts – lack of and substitution
2. Travel documents retention
3. Social protection: The strict temporary nature of migration in the region does not allow low-skilled workers to acquire the minimum conditions for entitlement to social protection schemes.
4. Skilled–low-skilled divide: the divide in the treatment of skilled and low-skilled workers keeps increasing. The consequences of this phenomenon are increasing levels of inequality;
5. Representation: organization of migrant workers and their membership in trade unions is low.
6. Wages: of migrants are substantially lower than the wages of national workers and there is a wide disparity of wages according to the nationality of the migrant (in GCC) and between skilled and low-skilled workers.
7. Occupational safety and health: Construction continues to be a sector prone to accidents.
8. Stringent restrictions on job changes for admitted migrants result in an imbalanced employer-employee relationship.

### III. Challenges and priority areas

#### Economic development and inclusive growth - labour mobility, skills recognition, development impact

- Perceived labour shortages are the *raison d'être* for creating a labour migration system. However, labour shortages are not easy to forecast. Most destination countries in the region rely on one source of information (employer applications for hiring migrant workers) for assessing labour market requirements. **A more accurate estimate of labour market requirements for foreign workers can be derived from a variety of sources – employer requests, labour force surveys, vacancy and economic data.**
- **Countries in the ASEAN are moving towards free movement of professionals under the ASEAN Economic Community and have taken steps on recognition of qualifications.** Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) have been completed for 7 professions and for tourism professionals between 2005 and 2012. Only the MRAs in architecture and engineering prescribe eligibility to apply for a license in another MS. In addition the MRA-TPs also provides a mechanism for equivalence of certification procedures and qualifications. ***The 7 occupations account for only 0.3% to 1.4% of total employment in ASEAN.***
- As noted in the ILO DG's Fair Migration report, there is a need to ensure that **remittances** can be made securely and at a minimal cost. There is a need explore how they can be best used to promote jobs and development while bearing in mind that remittances are private funds.

### III. Challenges and emerging priorities

#### Addressing irregular migration

**Large irregular migration flows in the region between neighbouring countries with differing levels of economic development and long land borders is common.** Irregular migration is also abetted by smugglers and corrupt officials and politicians, and as witnessed last year recently in the **Andaman Sea** has well established routes with origin, transit and destination countries. While addressing irregular migration requires a comprehensive approach, a key element is developing a migration policy that is grounded in the labour market and is prepared in consultation with social partners.

### III. Challenges and priority areas

#### Regional and inter-regional dialogue on labour migration

Successful governance of international migration is an inherently **multilateral concern** requiring cooperation between various stakeholders. There are several types of **partnerships** in the APR, including MOUs, regional integration, regional processes and cooperation among trade unions, CSOs.

## IV. Role of the ILO

**Outcome 9 (2016-17):** Promoting fair and effective labour migration policies

**Outcome statement:** Labour migration governance is strengthened to ensure decent work for migrant workers, meet labour market needs and foster inclusive economic growth and development.

- Labour migration governance is a ***regional priority of constituents*** in Asia-Pacific as reflected in the AP Regional Meeting (Busan, 2006) and reaffirmed at the meeting in Kyoto (2011).
- 11 ILO ***technical cooperation projects***, funded by the governments of Australia, Canada, Switzerland and the European Union as well as IOM and UNW cover most of the sub-regions, including South Asia, South East Asia, the Pacific Island Countries and China.
- They provide the main means through which ILO programme objectives are realized. In the '14-'15 biennium, 42 percent of the achieved results globally under *Outcome 7* (migration) in the programme and budget were in the Asia-Pacific.
- In the current biennium there are 11 ***target CPOs in nine countries*** in the region.

## IV. Role of the ILO

- The ILO in the region works on the challenges and priorities described in Section II (irregular migration is partly addressed).
- ***Key strategies*** are:
  - development of national policies and legislation e.g. Tuvalu, Kiribati, Cambodia, Thailand, Bangladesh.
  - capacity building of governments and social partners e.g. Sri Lanka, GMS, ASEAN
  - labour migration statistics and increasing knowledge base e.g. ASEAN, PICs, fishing, recruitment cost
  - development of tools and guides e.g. evaluation policy impact, MRCs operations manual
  - regional and inter-country partnerships; and inter-regional dialogue based on the Fair Migration Agenda. ASEAN and SAARC.

# Migration Research

## Purpose:

Increase knowledge base for evidence based policies: e.g. ILMS, Migration cost surveys, sector studies (work in fishing in Thailand), country profiles (Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan), annual publication with OECD/ADBI on labour migration in Asia

Plus advocacy: Public attitudes to migrant workers; Working conditions and attitudes experienced by migrant domestic workers in Thailand and Malaysia

Project M&E: Baseline studies

SDGs: Methodology development and baseline (Recruitment cost)

## IV. Role of the ILO

- The ILO is engaged in ***inter-agency collaboration*** throughout the Asia-Pacific with members of the Global Migration Group and other institutions. These include partnerships with IOM, World Bank, OECD, ADBI, ESCAP and UN Women.
- ***ILO's comparative advantage*** – as a tripartite and standard setting organization having expertise across the spectrum of the world of work – needs to be constantly communicated & leveraged.
- Best global guidance still provided by the ***ILO Multilateral Framework*** on labour migration
- **Tripartite experts meetings (Geneva) in 2016** – Guiding Principles on Access of Refugees to the Labour market; Fair Recruitment.



# Thank you

**For more information, please contact:**

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