

Meeting of Focal Specialists on International Labour Migration Statistics in ASEAN

Amari Watergate Hotel, Bangkok, 26 May 2014

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

The International Labour Organization's (ILO) ASEAN TRIANGLE Project¹, with generous support from the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD), recently developed the International Labour Migration Statistics (ILMS) Database to gather statistical information on migrant workers in the ten member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). By collecting relevant, comparable and tractable data (including a range of previously unpublished sources), the ILMS Database provides a coherent and powerful research tool for policymakers and others to profile and monitor the migrant labour force within the region.

The work comes at a critical time for ASEAN, as economic development, regional integration and demographic factors continue to drive intra-regional labour mobility. In order to manage this trend more coherently, the ILMS Database fills an important knowledge gap. Indeed, the importance of improved data collection and sharing regarding international labour migration among member states have already been emphasised as recommendations and commitments under the *ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers* (2007)²; the *ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint* (2009)³; the *ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour* (AFML) (2013)⁴; and at the *International Conference of Labour Statisticians* (2013)⁵.

The ILMS Database will soon be hosted on ILOSTAT⁶ – the world's leading portal for labour market statistics – as a unique information source, freely available to users online.

In order to strengthen and better sustain this process within the region, ILO is hosting a meeting of focal specialists from within ASEAN to update them on the progress of the work; discuss outstanding issues; identify remaining gaps and national capacity needs; and discuss the next steps in this collaborative project.

Objectives

The overall objectives of the Meeting are thus to:

- ❖ Brief focal specialists on the progress of the ILMS Database and the success it is already having.
- ❖ Present and share countries' experiences of data collection and discuss how any outstanding problems with the overall process and scope of the work can be resolved.
- ❖ Identify national capacity-building needs and ways to ensure data collection is more harmonised, consistent and accurate in the future.

¹ For more information, see: www.ilo.org/asia/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_193023/lang--en/index.htm

² Online, see Article 18: www.asean.org/communities/asean-political-security-community/item/asean-declaration-on-the-protection-and-promotion-of-the-rights-of-migrant-workers-3

³ Online (.pdf): www.asean.org/archive/5187-19.pdf

⁴ For more information, see: www.ilo.org/asia/whatwedo/events/WCMS_209146/lang--en/index.htm

⁵ Online, see Final Report, Articles 76-80 and Resolution IV (.pdf): www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/publication/wcms_234124.pdf

⁶ See: www.ilo.org/ilostat

- ❖ Discuss remaining gaps in the work (including the sources that are still missing) and ways of sustaining and streamlining it in 2014 and beyond.

Agenda

The Meeting will be organised around four sessions:

Session 1: Overview of the ILMS Database – its progress, relevance, uniqueness and strength among other existing sources and the remaining gaps that need to be filled.

Session 2: Country presentations – sharing of national experiences on data collection, problems or delays encountered, and strategies for future improvements:

- Malaysia – collecting data from labour force surveys
- Thailand – using multiple sources
- Philippines – collection of emigration data under the new organisational structure
- Singapore – ...

Session 3: Group work – discussion on training or capacity needs for countries in building better labour market information systems in the region and cooperating in data collection and sharing.

Session 4: Consultation on the next steps ahead in the work and how to best sustain it after 2014.

Venue and Date

The Meeting will take place in Bangkok over the course of one day on **Monday 26 May 2014** at the Amari Watergate Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand.

Participants

The Meeting will bring together representatives from national governments, the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Statistics, the Scalabrini Migration Centre, UN ESCAP and ILO. Member states' participants will ideally be the original (or prospective future) focal specialists from each country, including one or both of the Ministry of Labour and another Ministry responsible for data collection (e.g. National Statistical Office, Office of Immigration, etc.).

The Meeting will thus include the following participants:

- *Member states' focal specialists:* ~20 representatives from national ministries
- *ASEAN Secretariat:* 1 representative
- *ASEAN Statistics:* 1 representative
- *Scalabrini Migration Centre:* 1 representative
- *UN ESCAP* 1 representative
- *ILO Bangkok technical support staff:* 6 participants
- *ILO Geneva technical support staff:* 2 participants