

# SHAPING THE MIGRATION NARRATIVE:

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF MIGRANTS IN THAILAND

International Organization for Migration (IOM) | 2023



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From  
the People of Japan



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thailand is a key destination country for migrants in the Asia and the Pacific region. Economic opportunities have long attracted migrants particularly from neighbouring Cambodia, Myanmar and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. In addition, the instability and economic pressure in neighbouring Myanmar has further intensified migration to Thailand, resulting in complex cross-border mobility between Myanmar and Thailand. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) believes that well-managed migration benefits migrants and destination countries alike.

Nevertheless, migrants often face a myriad of challenges, which can include hostile attitudes based on misperceptions. Globally and in Thailand, migration has increasingly become a topic of debate in the news and on social media. Negative perceptions and xenophobic sentiment towards migrants can influence policy makers and public opinion, making it more difficult to adopt policies that allow for safe, orderly and regular migration. Public sentiment on migration ultimately impacts the environment migrants settle into. Whether the community is supportive and inclusive or hostile will impact migrants' rights and well-being.

IOM's public perception survey sought to take stock of current perceptions of migrants among the Thai population and how media reporting shapes the public discourse on migration. The goal was to identify potential misperceptions and threats of xenophobia, serving as a baseline for promoting more inclusive and ethical media coverage and balanced reporting on migrants in Thailand.



## KEY FINDINGS

Significant differences were found to exist between the three cities included in the survey, with those located in border areas (Mae Sot and Chanthaburi) showing much more positive attitudes than respondents in Bangkok.

- Acceptance of migrants varies significantly between cities located in border areas and Bangkok. Whereas overall, around 59 per cent agreed to welcoming different categories of migrants, acceptance was much higher in Chanthaburi (73%) and Tak (61%) than in Bangkok (43%). Respondents working in manual labour jobs hold the most favourable views towards migrants.
- The overall perception of migrants in Thailand suggests a stronger preference for migrants who come to Thailand seeking employment rather than for migrants seeking protection in the country. Additionally, a greater preference for migrants coming for longer-term stays from neighbouring countries as well as from poorer countries outside the region rather than for migrants from economically better-off countries was also indicated.
- While respondents overwhelmingly agree (78%) that migrant workers fill existing gaps in the Thai labour market, two in five (42%) disagreed that migrant workers should receive the same pay or benefits as Thai nationals for the same job.
- Direct exposure and familiarity with migrants serves as a strong predictor in the degree to which Thai respondents hold more welcoming attitudes towards migrants. In the border cities, the vast majority of respondents (84% in Tak, 76% in Chanthaburi) indicated encountering migrant workers in their local community, compared to only 26 per cent in Bangkok. This aligns with an ILO-UN Women (2019) study, “Public attitudes towards migrant workers in Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand” which also finds that frequency and quality of interaction with migrant workers were a stronger predictor of support for migrant workers than demographic variables.
- Social media, television and their families are respondents’ main sources of information on migration and migrants.
- Speaking ill of migrants is frowned upon in all assessed cities. The majority (90%) of respondents reported that they would disagree if their friend made fun of migrants (96% in Chanthaburi, 92% in Tak, 81% in Bangkok).
- There is willingness to help migrants. The majority (70%) of respondents reported that if they encountered a migrant struggling due to language barriers, they would help them. This was particularly the case in Mae Sot (82%), with two thirds (69%) agreeing in Chanthaburi and just above half (58%) in Bangkok.
- Willingness to dedicate some time to help migrants integrate into Thai society also varied by city, with two-thirds (66%) of the respondents from Mae Sot and 55 per cent from Chanthaburi reporting that they would help compared to 36 per cent of those from Bangkok.



Myanmar migrant worker participating in IOM's labour rights training in Mae Sot, Thailand. | © IOM 2023/Ploy Phutpheng

FIGURE 1: 5 KEY FINDINGS





## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the report's findings, the following key recommendations emerge:

- Support social interactions and community engagement with migrants to foster mutual understanding and empathy.
- Undertake targeted messaging and communications with priority to areas/population groups identified as holding less positive attitudes towards migrants (residents of Bangkok and populations lacking direct exposure to migrants).
- Build upon good examples of communities that have fostered a high degree of social cohesion and positive engagement with migrants.
- Address misperceptions and strengthen awareness of the struggles faced by migrants, as well as their contributions to Thai society by illustrating the diversity of migrants, their positive contributions to communities, and the migrant experience in Thailand.
- Promote balanced migration reporting in Thailand by tailoring training to journalists from traditional and new media.





MIGRANT WORKERS  
MAKE UP MORE THAN  
**10 PER CENT** OF  
THAILAND'S WORKFORCE.

*(Thailand Migration Report, 2019)*



IOM conducts surveys to understand the needs of migrant workers employed in the fishing and seafood industry in Chanthaburi, Thailand. | © IOM 2022/Anat DUANGCHANG



## CONTEXT

### BACKGROUND

As one of the largest regional migration hubs, Thailand hosts nearly half of all migrant workers in South-East Asia. According to the Thailand Migration Report (2019), approximately 4.9 million non-Thais reside in Thailand, including an estimated 3.9 million migrant workers from neighbouring countries (Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, and Viet Nam).<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, migrant workers make up more than 10 per cent of Thailand's 38.7 million people workforce (Thailand Migration Report, 2019). Thailand's status as a middle-income country and its expanding labour market continue to attract migrants from the region in pursuit of better economic opportunities. At the same time, the country also serves as safe space for people fleeing violence, including in the context of the February 2021 military takeover in Myanmar and continued clashes and security threats affecting civilians, which have underpinned both temporary influxes and longer-term migration to Thailand from Myanmar.

Migration cuts across Thailand's social and economic fabric; migrants contribute immensely to the country's development. Globally and nationally, migration has increasingly become a topic of debate in the news and on social media. IOM conducted a survey amongst the Thai population to understand the public perception of migrants and to help inform and guide the development of a media training on migration reporting.



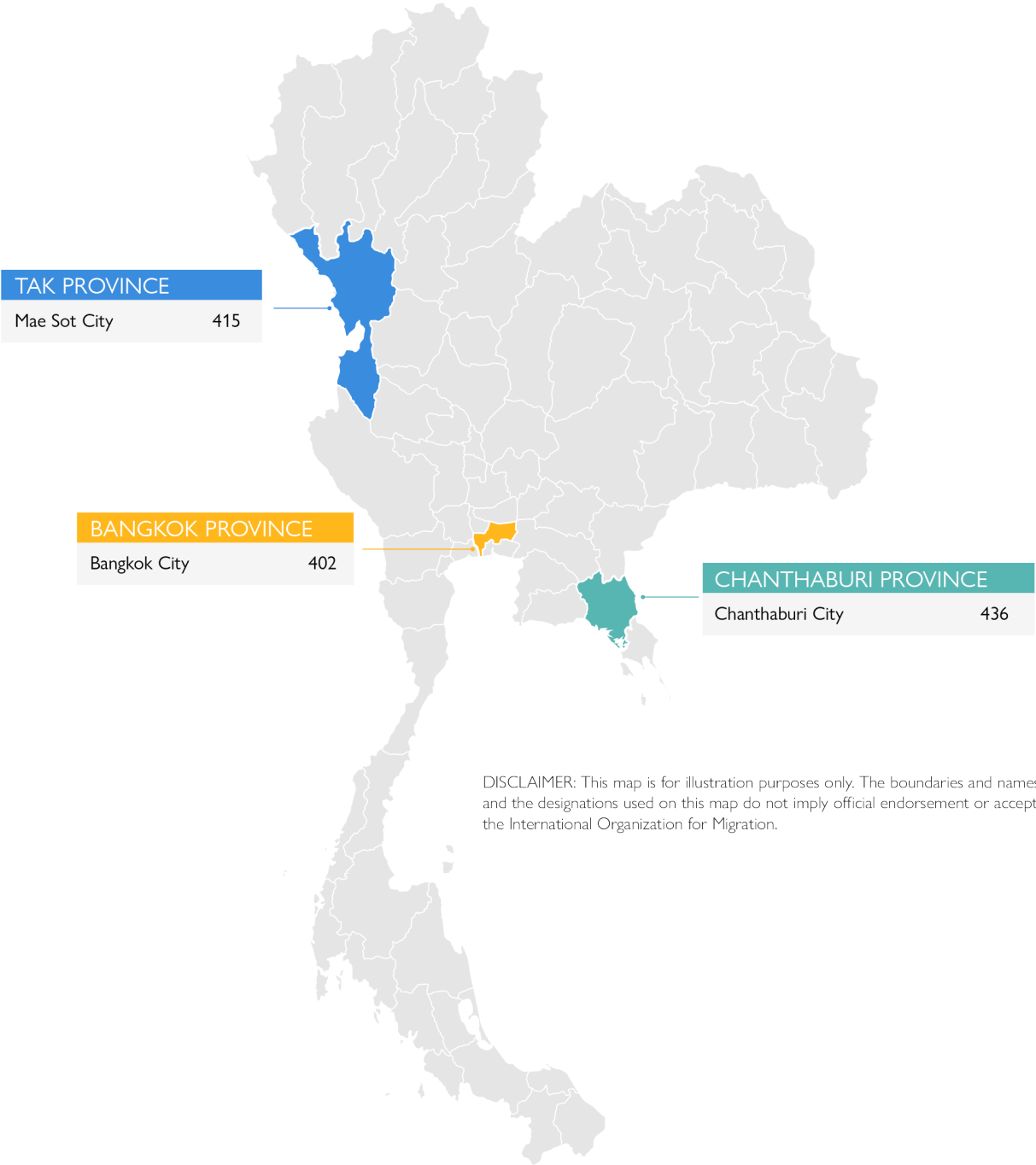
Migrant workers employed in the garment factory in Ayutthaya, Thailand. | © IOM 2022

<sup>1</sup> This estimate includes migrants holding both regular and irregular legal status.



SCOPE

MAP 1: GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE OF PUBLIC PERCEPTION SURVEY



## METHODOLOGY

Data was collected between 19 – 30 October 2023 among 1,253 respondents across three cities, Bangkok (in Bangkok province), Chanthaburi (in Chanthaburi province), and Mae Sot (in Tak province).<sup>2</sup> The results of the survey are a generalization to the population of each city with a 95 per cent confidence level and a five per cent margin of error. Chanthaburi and Mae Sot cities were selected due to their geographical locations bordering Cambodia and Myanmar, and serving as key entry points to Thailand, whereas Bangkok city was added to obtain perspectives from the country's capital and another area with a high concentration of migrants. 436 surveys were conducted in Chanthaburi, 415 in Mae Sot, and 402 were carried out in Bangkok.

*\* Text and visualizations that are denoted with an asterisk signify percentages that have been drawn from multiple-answer questions, or questions for which respondents were allowed to provide more than one answer. As a result, percentages may not equal 100. The designations for asterisks applies to the entirety of this report.*



Myanmar and Cambodian migrant workers in the seafood processing sector in Rayong Province, Thailand. | © IOM 2022/ Anat DUANGCHANG

<sup>2</sup> The respondent lived in a different location from where the survey was conducted in 110 of the surveys (64 of the surveys conducted in Bangkok, 27 in Chanthaburi, and 19 in Mae Sot).

# RESPONDENT PROFILE

Among the respondents surveyed, 52 per cent (655) were male, 47 per cent (586) were female, and one per cent (12) were of another gender. Few significant differences between male and female respondents were observed whilst conducting a gender-disaggregated analysis, though they are highlighted in text where significant differences were found.

FIGURE 2: GENDER & AGE PYRAMID OF RESPONDENTS

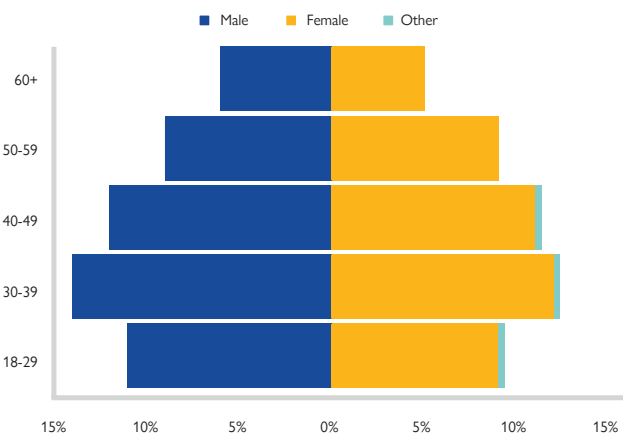
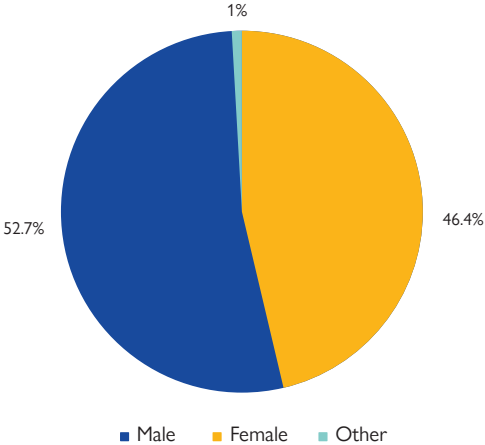


FIGURE 3: GENDER BREAKDOWN OF RESPONDENTS



As this survey was conducted amongst the Thai population, all respondents were Thai nationals. The average age was 42. Respondents primarily came from two income brackets: between THB 15,000 and 35,000 (46%) and below THB 15,000 (33%) (THB 15,000 = approx. USD 440) monthly. Some of the common types of jobs that respondents reported working in include owning a business (33%), service work (20%), desk-based/office work (19%), and manual labour (14%).

FIGURE 4: INCOME LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS

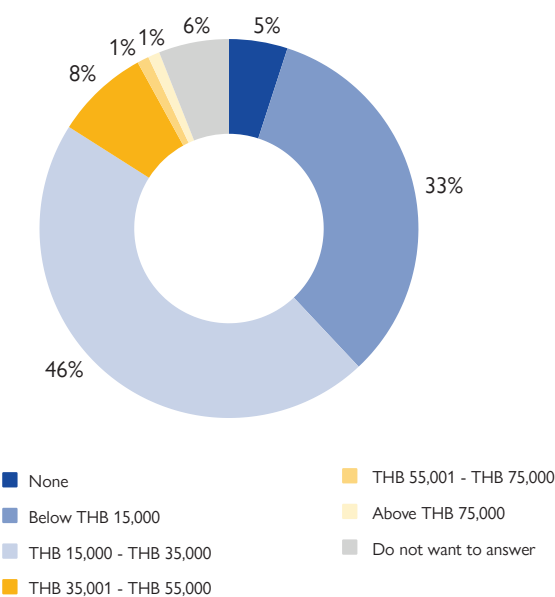
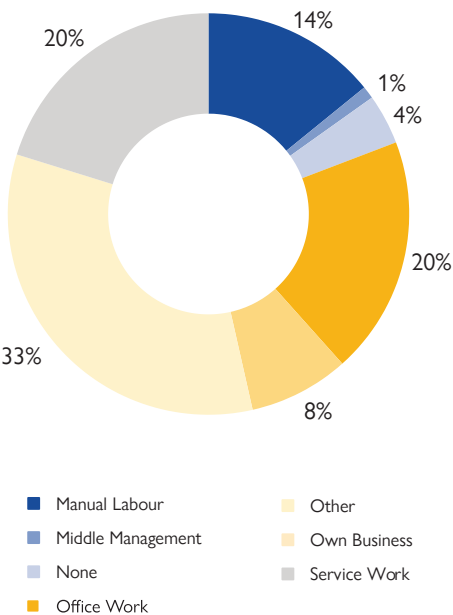


FIGURE 5: TYPE OF WORK OF RESPONDENTS





## PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF MIGRANTS

### MIGRATION KNOWLEDGE

Respondents were asked about their knowledge on migration and migrants in Thailand including the exposure and interactions they have with migrants as well as the media sources and reporting on migration they engage with. Myanmar (62%) and Cambodia (32%) are perceived as the top two nationalities of migrants in Thailand.

The survey showed that perceptions of which nationality dominates were strongly shaped by the location of the respondent, with nearly all respondents in Mae Sot identifying Myanmar as the top nationality (compared to only 64% in Bangkok), and 71 per cent of respondents in Chanthaburi believing Cambodia to be the top nationality of migrants in Thailand. De facto, Myanmar nationals account for 74 per cent, Cambodian nationals for 16 per cent, and Lao nationals for 10 per cent of the registered migrant population from these three top origin countries (Department of Employment, Oct 2023).

When asked about the size of the migrant population in Thailand, projections varied widely, with one in five respondents (20%) projecting there to be around a million or less migrants, two in five respondents (41%) indicating between two to four million, and the remaining two in five (39%) estimating five million or above. The United Nations (UN) estimates that 4.9 million migrants reside in Thailand as of 2019 (Thailand Migration Report, 2019).<sup>3</sup>

FIGURE 6: PERCEIVED TOP NATIONALITY OF MIGRANTS

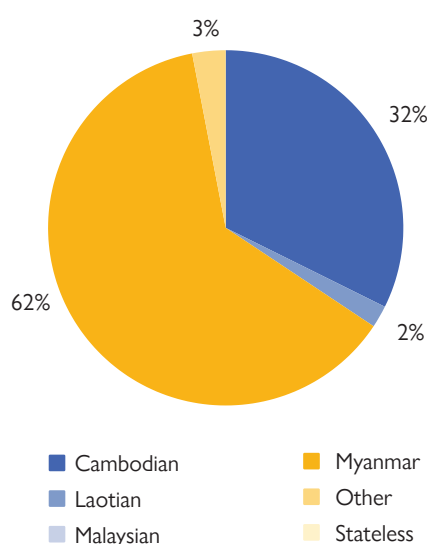
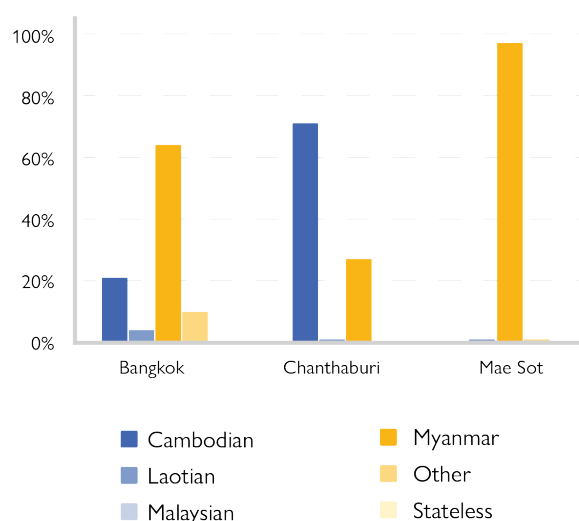
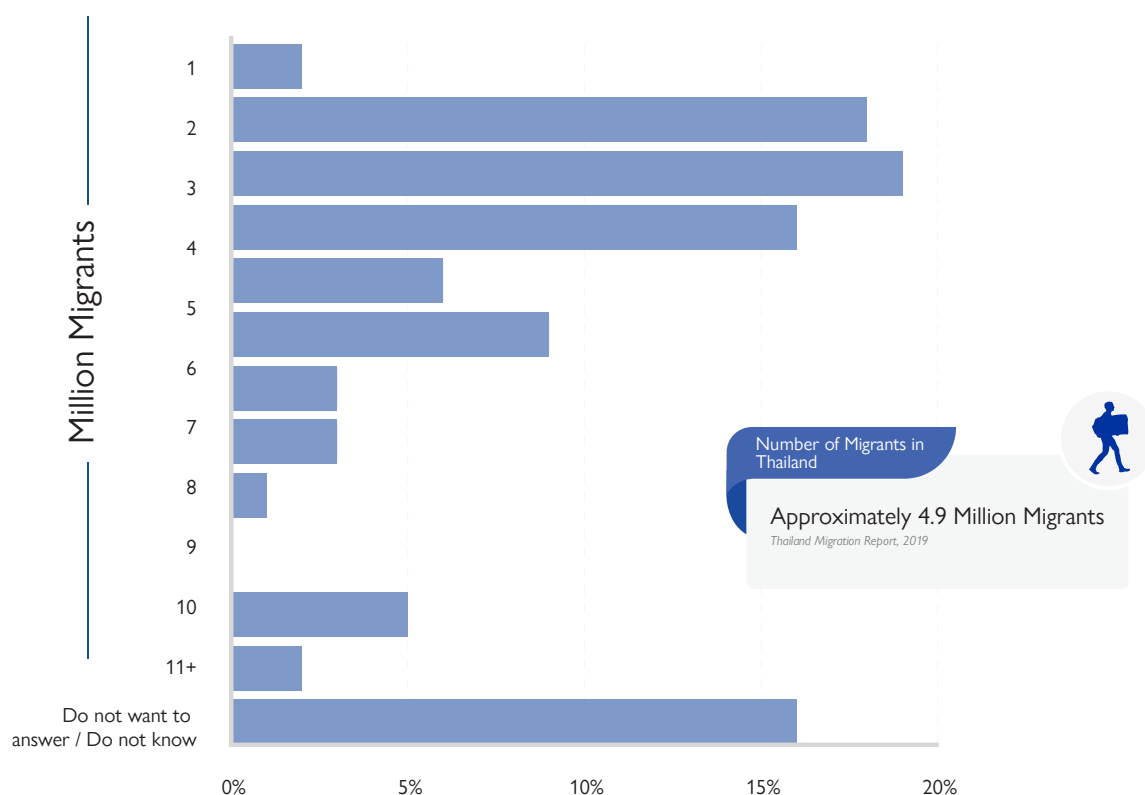


FIGURE 7: PERCEIVED TOP NATIONALITY OF MIGRANTS (BY CITY)



<sup>3</sup>The Ministry of Labour recognizes 2.3 million migrant workers from Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, and Viet Nam.

FIGURE 8: PERCEIVED NUMBER OF MIGRANTS IN THAILAND



The top perceived challenges facing migrants include employment (54%), basic needs (47%), work permit (41%), and language barriers (40%).\* Discrimination was also cited as a challenge, most frequently by respondents from Bangkok (34%), followed by those from Mae Sot (23%) and Chanthaburi (18%).\*

However, when respondents were asked whether, in the last 12 months, they have witnessed or experienced discrimination against migrants, only 12 per cent from Mae Sot, and nine per cent of respondents from Chanthaburi reported witnessing or experiencing frequent discrimination compared to two per cent from Bangkok.

Perceived challenges did not vary much by gender although female respondents reported health care (35%) and language barrier (42%) challenges slightly more than male respondents.\* Of the challenges and vulnerabilities, respondents were also asked whether they think some groups are disproportionately affected. Over half (57%) thought that migrant women are disproportionately affected, while 27 per cent believed men are.\*

FIGURE 9: PERCEIVED TOP CHALLENGES OF MIGRANTS

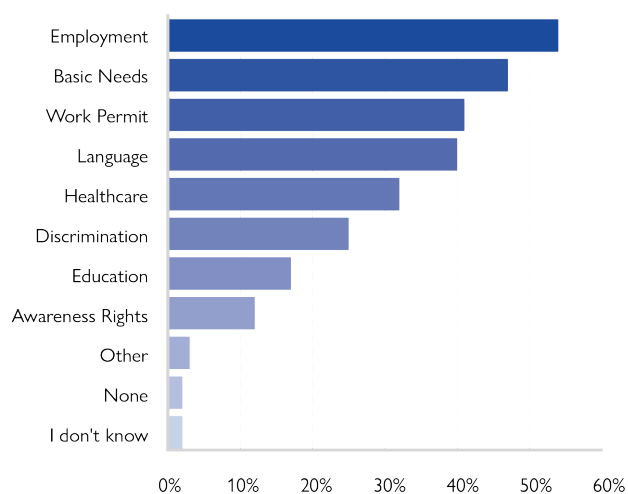


FIGURE 11: PERCEIVED GROUP OF MIGRANTS MOST AFFECTED BY CHALLENGES

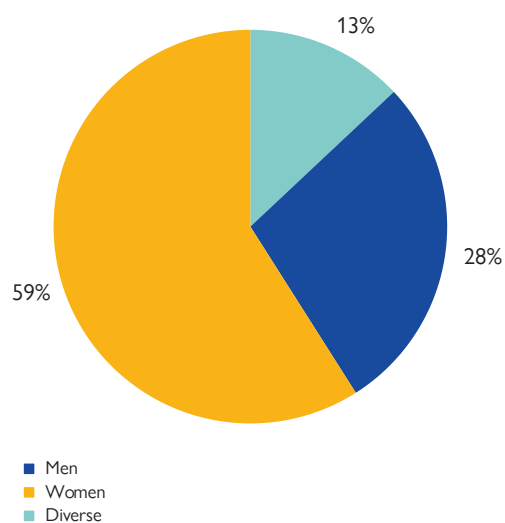


FIGURE 10: PERCEIVED TOP CHALLENGES OF MIGRANTS BY CITY

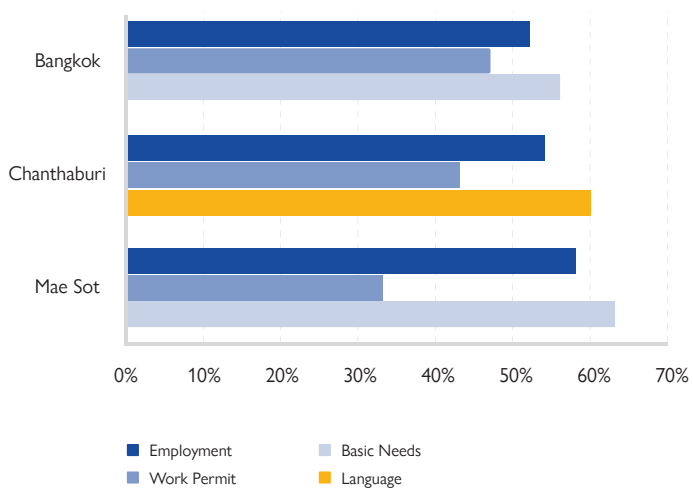
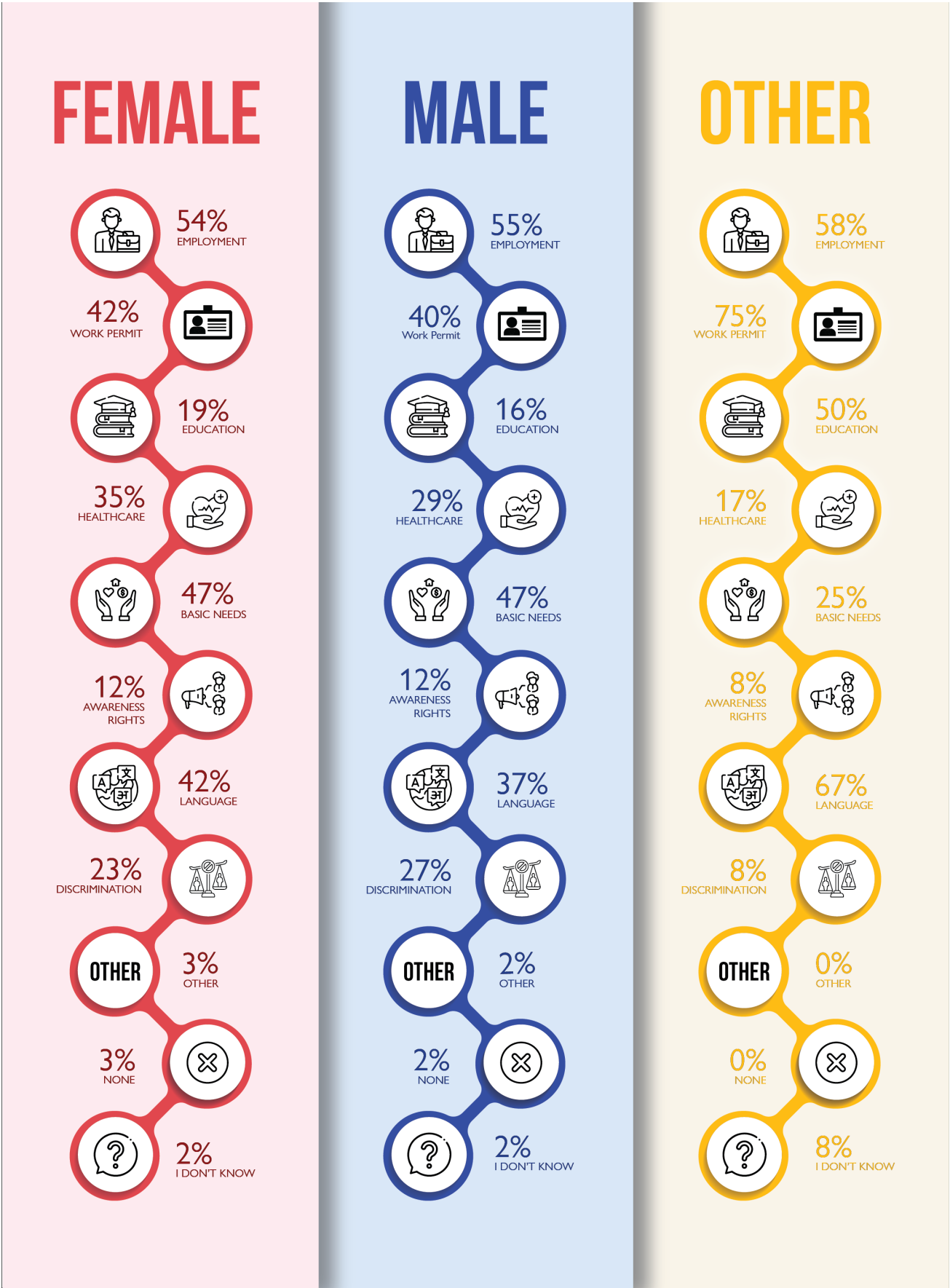




FIGURE 12: PERCEIVED TOP CHALLENGES OF MIGRANTS ACCORDING TO GENDER OF RESPONDENTS



There were wide discrepancies on whether respondents have regular encounters with migrant workers. Whilst in Mae Sot, 84 per cent of respondents reported regular encounters, in Bangkok only eight per cent do. In Chanthaburi, 44 per cent encountered migrant workers regularly. Respondents working in manual labour jobs indicated the highest proportion (62%) of regular encounters with migrant workers compared to other types of work. Over half (55%) of respondents who owned businesses also reported regular encounters. Additionally, a slightly higher proportion of males (49%) than females (42%) cited encountering migrant workers regularly.

The survey also inquired about encounters with migrant workers in the local community. The majority of respondents from Mae Sot (84%) and Chanthaburi (76%), reported encountering migrant workers in their local community.\* By contrast, only a quarter (26%) of those in Bangkok reported such encounters. Work (52%) was reported as another common location where encounters with migrants take place.\* Mae Sot also stood out as the city where most respondents (58%) reported that they know migrant workers personally, with 35 per cent reporting that they are friends with migrant workers.\* Comparatively, over a fifth (21%) of respondents from Chanthaburi and 10 per cent of respondents from Bangkok reported that they are friends with migrant workers.\*

FIGURE 13: FREQUENCY OF REGULAR ENCOUNTERS WITH MIGRANTS

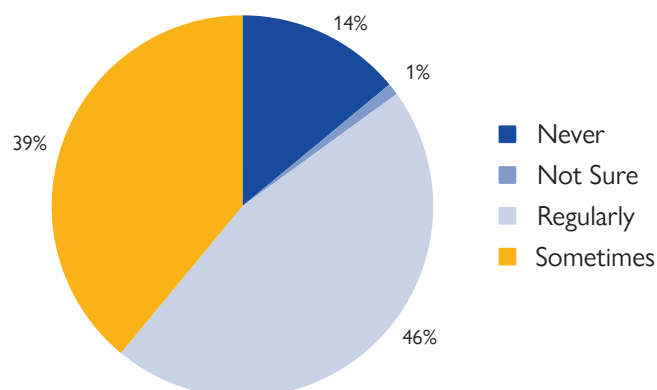


FIGURE 14: FREQUENCY OF REGULAR ENCOUNTERS WITH MIGRANTS BY CITY

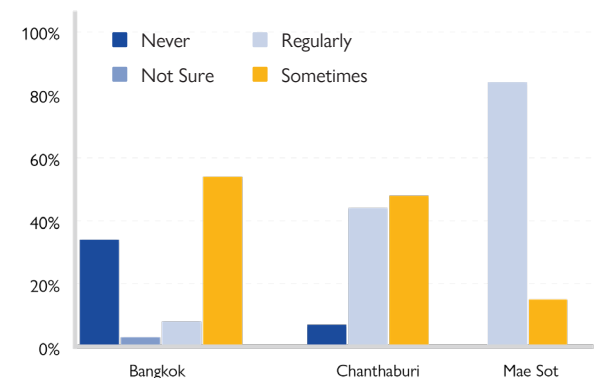


FIGURE 15: LOCATION OF ENCOUNTERS WITH MIGRANTS

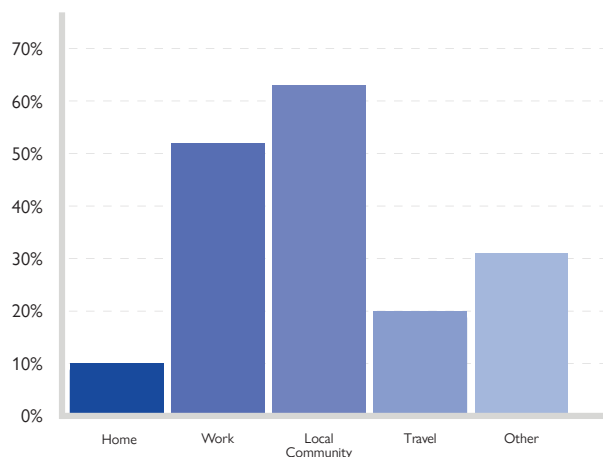


FIGURE 16: LOCATION OF ENCOUNTERS WITH MIGRANTS BY CITY

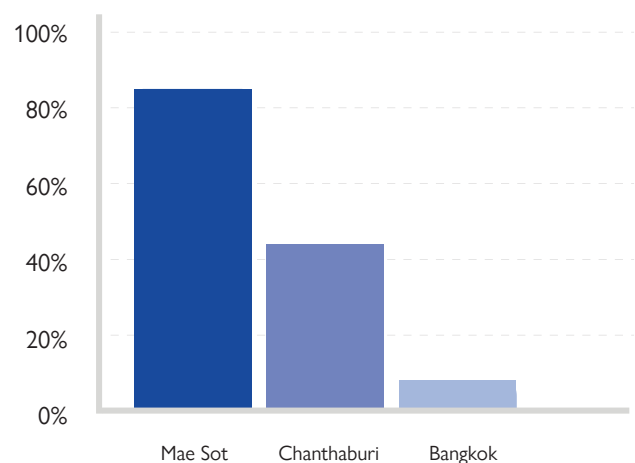


FIGURE 17: LOCATION OF ENCOUNTERS WITH MIGRANTS IN LOCAL COMMUNITY

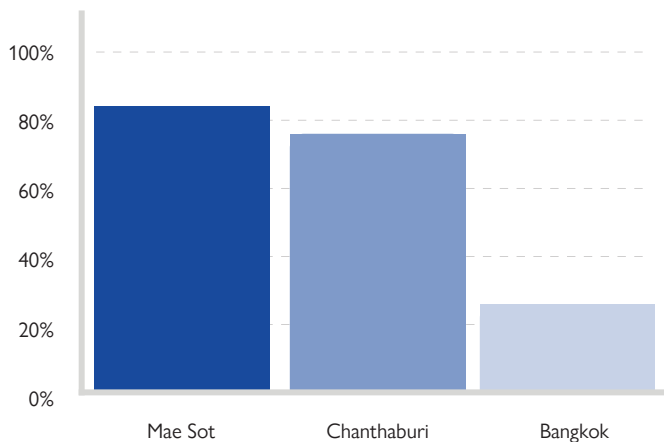
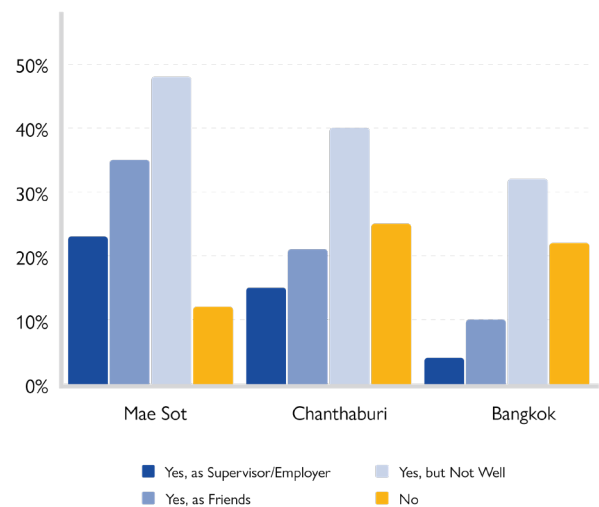
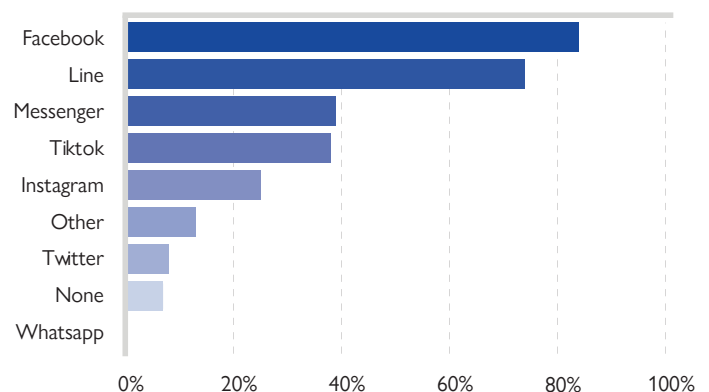


FIGURE 18: RELATIONSHIP WITH MIGRANTS BY CITY



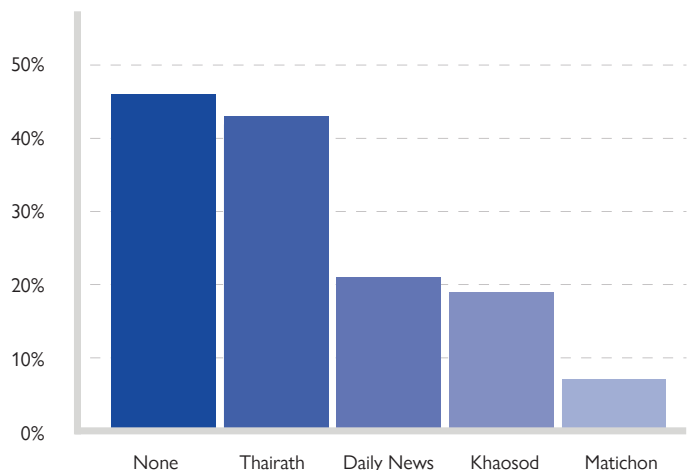
The survey additionally highlighted the different media platforms respondents interact with to gauge the types of sources the Thai population uses to obtain information on migration and migrant workers. Facebook (84%) and Line (74%) are the most common social media platforms used by respondents.\* In addition, when asked about which local newspaper (either online or print) respondents most often read, 46 per cent reported that they do not read any local newspaper while 43 per cent read Thairath.\*

FIGURE 19: TOP SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS USED



Moreover, over two-thirds (69%) of respondents from Bangkok, 47 per cent from Mae Sot, and 22 per cent from Chanthaburi do not read any local newspapers.\* Sixty-three per cent of respondents from Chanthaburi read Thairath and 45 per cent read Khaosod.\* Forty-five per cent of respondents from Mae Sot and 20 per cent of respondents from Bangkok read Thairath.\* Respondents from the three cities watch similar television stations, with the majority watching Channel 3 HD (60%) and Channel 7 HD (50%).\*

FIGURE 20: TOP 5 LOCAL NEWSPAPERS MOST OFTEN READ



The main sources of information about migrants are social media (77%), television (68%), and family (39%).\* Sources did not differ much between genders outside of the 43 per cent of males who cited family a main information source, compared to 35 per cent of all females, and 25 per cent of respondents of another gender.\*

Additionally, the most common news topics respondents often encounter on migration and migrant workers are irregular entry (71%), smuggling (61%), deportation (38%), and trafficking in persons (35%).\*



FIGURE 21: TOP 5 TELEVISION STATIONS (OVERALL)  
(for full list of television stations watched, see Annex II)

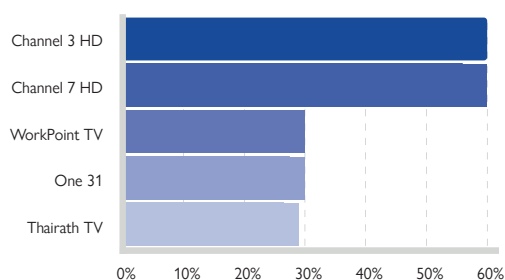


FIGURE 22: TOP INFORMATION SOURCE ON MIGRATION

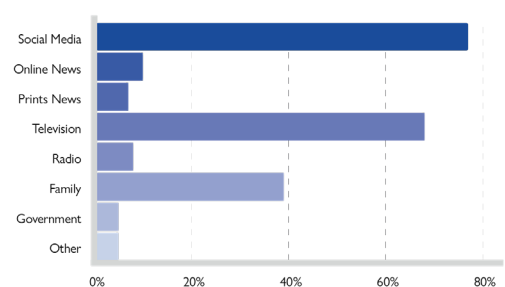


FIGURE 23: MOST COMMON NEWS TOPICS ON MIGRATION

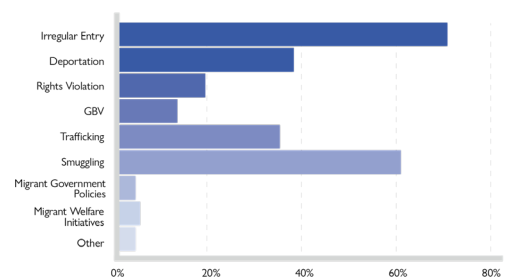
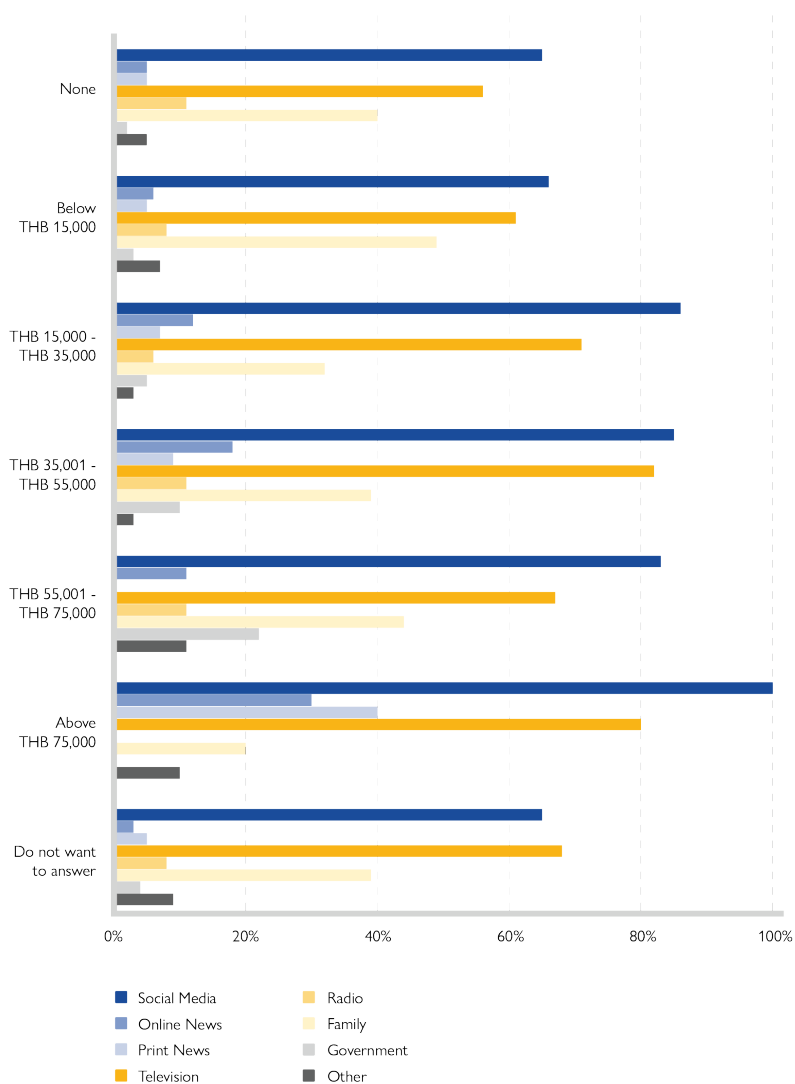


FIGURE 24: TOP INFORMATION SOURCE ON MIGRATION ACCORDING TO INCOME OF RESPONDENTS



PUBLIC SENTIMENT

Respondents were asked whether they are in favour of Thailand allowing in migrants for longer-term stays from neighbouring countries, from poorer countries outside the region, from economically better-off countries outside the region, or migrants who are fleeing violence and conflict. The majority (70%) expressed being in favour of allowing in migrants for longer-term stays from neighbouring countries. Almost two-thirds (64%) are in favour of allowing in migrants from poorer countries outside the region, and over half (55%) are in favour of allowing in migrants from economically better-off countries outside the region. However, only 49 per cent are in favour of allowing in migrants who are fleeing violence and conflict, thereby suggesting a stronger preference for migrants who come to Thailand seeking employment than for migrants seeking protection.

Perceptions on allowing in migrants for longer-term stays in Thailand varied by geography and type of work. Respondents in favour of allowing in migrants from poorer countries are primarily from Chanthaburi, as 94 per cent of those who live in Chanthaburi are in favour of allowing migrants from these countries in compared to 60 per cent from Mae Sot and 37 per cent from Bangkok. Additionally, respondents from Mae Sot (69%) are much more in favour of welcoming migrants fleeing violence and conflict than respondents from Bangkok (25%). Respondents from Bangkok (58%) are more in favour than the other two cities of accepting migrants from economically better-off countries outside the region.

FIGURE 25: RESPONDENTS IN FAVOUR OF THAILAND ALLOWING IN MIGRANTS FOR LONGER-TERM STAYS

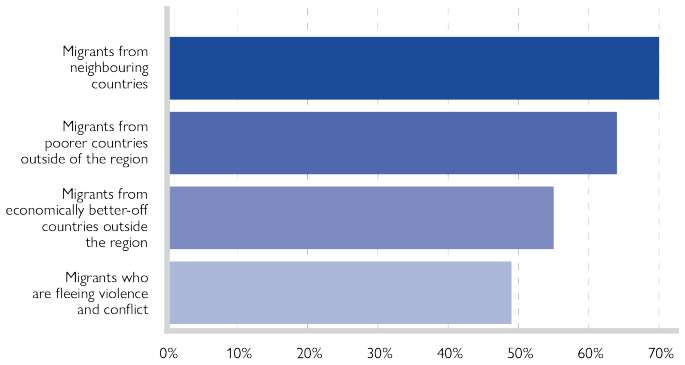


TABLE 1: RESPONDENTS IN FAVOUR OF THAILAND ALLOWING IN MIGRANTS FOR LONGER-TERM STAYS BY CITY

In favour of Thailand allowing in migrants for longer-term stays for:	Bangkok	Chanthaburi	Mae Sot
Migrants from neighbouring countries	53%	96%	60%
Migrants from poorer countries outside of the region	37%	94%	60%
Migrants from economically better-off countries outside the region	58%	52%	54%
Migrants who are fleeing violence and conflict	25%	51%	69%

Besides the geographic disparities, respondents working in manual labour jobs are generally more favourable than those working in other types of roles towards allowing migrants into Thailand. Moreover, compared to the other work types, respondents working in manual labour jobs were the most in favour of allowing in migrants from neighbouring countries, poor countries outside the region, and those who are fleeing violence and conflict. The exception were migrants from economically better-off countries, whom respondents working in office jobs were more favourable towards.

The overall favourability towards allowing migrants into Thailand amongst respondents working in manual labour jobs can be linked to the direct exposure people working in this profession may have to migrants, compared to respondents working in other types of work where direct exposure is less common. Similarly, those working in office jobs may be more favourable towards accepting migrants from economically better-off countries due to their more frequent interactions with this migrant group.

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with several statements about migrant workers in Thailand. The results found perceptions in Chanthaburi and Mae Sot to be overall more favourable than in Bangkok, with no significant differences observed by gender of respondent. The large majority agreed (either completely or slightly) that migrant children should be allowed to go to public school in Thailand (84%), that migrant workers fill existing gaps in the Thai labour market (78%), and that women migrant workers should receive equal pay and opportunities compared to men migrant workers (75%).

Despite attitudes leaning more positive, two in five (42%) disagreed that migrant workers should receive the same pay or benefits as Thai nationals for the same job, with 67 per cent from Bangkok, 43 per cent from Mae Sot, and seven per cent from Chanthaburi sharing this sentiment. Forty-three per cent also perceived that cultural diversity brought by migrants threatens Thai society. These findings are similar to findings from an ILO-UN Women (2019) report on the “Public attitudes towards migrant workers in Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand” where 52 per cent of the public surveyed in Thailand were of the opinion that migrants cannot expect the same pay or benefits as nationals for the same job and 58 per cent perceived that migrant workers threaten their country’s culture.

In addition, two-thirds (66%) perceived that migrant workers make it difficult for Thai workers to find jobs. Fifty-eight per cent of respondents working in manual labour jobs agreed with this statement while 65 per cent or more of respondents working in other types of work agreed. Overall, 78 per cent reported that migrant workers fill existing gaps in the Thai labour market. This perception was more prevalent in border cities, with 88 per cent of respondents from Chanthaburi and 87 per cent from Mae Sot agreeing, compared to only 57 per cent from Bangkok. More than two-thirds (68%) of respondents from Bangkok perceived that cultural diversity brought by migrants threatens Thai society, while only a third (33%) of respondents from Chanthaburi and 28 per cent from Mae Sot shared this sentiment.

A greater exposure to migrant workers was found to be correlated to a more positive outlook towards migrants in the cities observed. This is further underscored by the aforementioned regular encounters with migrant workers among 84 per cent of respondents from Mae Sot and 44 per cent of respondents from Chanthaburi (compared to 8% of those from Bangkok), as well as the 84 per cent of respondents from Mae Sot and the 76 per cent of respondents from Chanthaburi reporting encountering migrant workers in their local community\* (compared to 26% of those from Bangkok).



TABLE 2: SENTIMENT TOWARDS MIGRANTS BY CITY

	Agree			Disagree		
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:	Bangkok	Chanthaburi	Mae Sot	Bangkok	Chanthaburi	Mae Sot
Migrant workers make it difficult for Thai workers to find jobs.	76%	70%	53%	23%	24%	44%
Migrant workers fill existing gaps in the Thai labour market.	57%	88%	87%	33%	5%	9%
Migrant workers help to boost the country's economy - making significant contributions of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).	41%	61%	80%	32%	7%	10%
Women migrant workers are a key part of Thai workforce.	35%	57%	57%	51%	20%	34%
Cultural diversity brought by migrants threatens Thai society.	68%	33%	28%	27%	38%	66%
Migrant workers should receive the same pay or benefits as Thai nationals for the same job.	31%	76%	52%	67%	17%	43%
Women migrant workers should receive equal pay and opportunities compared to men migrant workers.	74%	89%	62%	21%	7%	35%
Migrant children should be allowed to go to public school in Thailand.	66%	97%	88%	27%	3%	9%
Migrant workers deserve access to social security fund and workers compensation.	27%	67%	71%	66%	13%	21%

## ACTION FOR MIGRANTS

To further understand the perception of migrants among the Thai population, respondents were asked about their willingness to engage in actions that support migrants. The responses align with the above findings that show a more favourable outlook of migrants amongst respondents from Chanthaburi and Mae Sot than amongst those from Bangkok.

The large majority (90%) reported that they would disagree if their friend made fun of migrants. Ninety-six per cent of respondents from Chanthaburi and 92 per cent from Mae Sot reported that they would disagree with their friend compared to 81 per cent of those from Bangkok. The majority (70%) also reported that if they encountered a migrant struggling due to language barriers, they would help them. Eighty-one per cent of male respondents reported they would help, while 67 per cent of female respondents said they would help. Eighty-two per cent of respondents from Mae Sot said they would help compared to 69 per cent from Chanthaburi and 58 per cent from Bangkok.

Over half (52%) of respondents reported that they would consider dedicating some time to help migrants integrate into Thai society (54% males and 50% females). Additionally, two-thirds (66%) of the respondents from Mae Sot and 55 per cent from Chanthaburi reported that they would help compared to 36 per cent of those from Bangkok. Finally, 18 per cent of respondents (31% from Mae Sot, 15% from Chanthaburi, and 8% from Bangkok) reported that they would consider contributing to addressing challenges faced by migrant workers even if it had financial implications for them.

FIGURE 26: WILLINGNESS TO SPEAK UP FOR MIGRANTS BY CITY

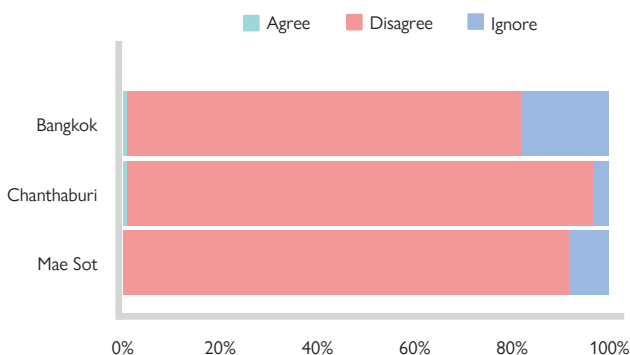


FIGURE 28: WILLINGNESS TO DEDICATE TIME TO HELPING MIGRANTS BY CITY

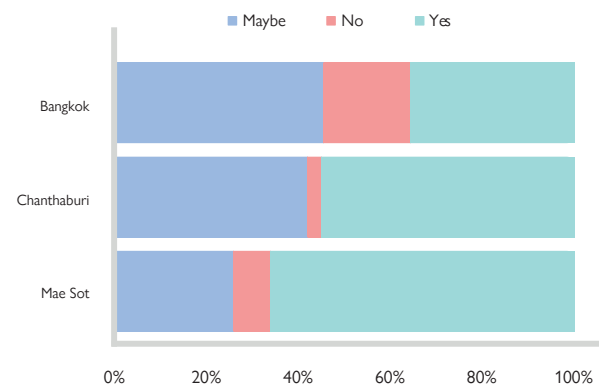


FIGURE 27: WILLINGNESS TO HELP MIGRANTS BY CITY

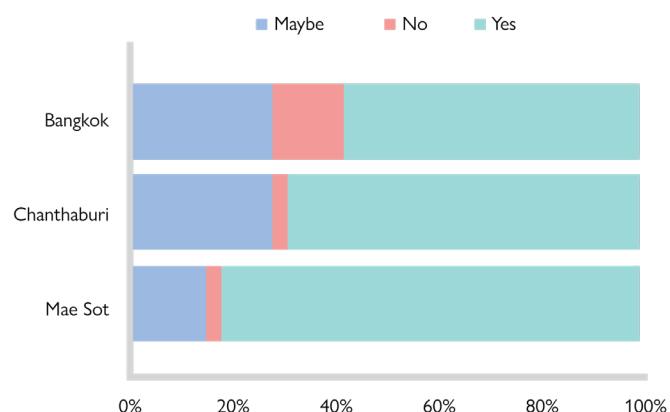
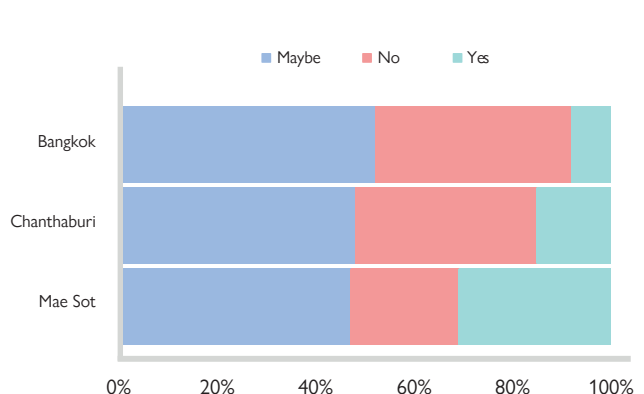


FIGURE 29: WILLINGNESS TO CONTRIBUTE TO HELPING MIGRANTS BY CITY







As one of the **largest** regional migration hubs, Thailand hosts nearly half of all migrant workers in South-East Asia.

Migrant workers employed in garment factory in Ayutthaya, Thailand. | © IOM 2021/ Javier VIDAL



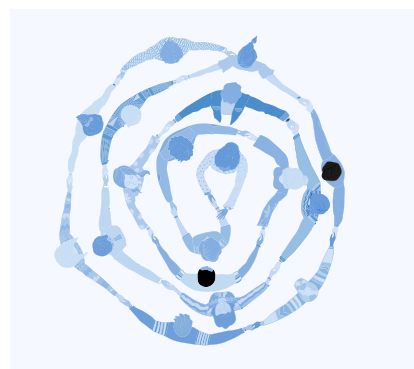
## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings presented in this report seek to highlight the public perception of migrants in Thailand. As shown in this report, the Thai public holds diverse and varying attitudes towards migrants based on their geographic location, profession, and frequency of interactions with migrants. Respondents living closer to border areas and working manual labour jobs showed greater willingness to support and welcome migrants, in particular migrant workers from neighbouring countries.

The report presents important findings in relation to public information, communications, and reporting on migration.

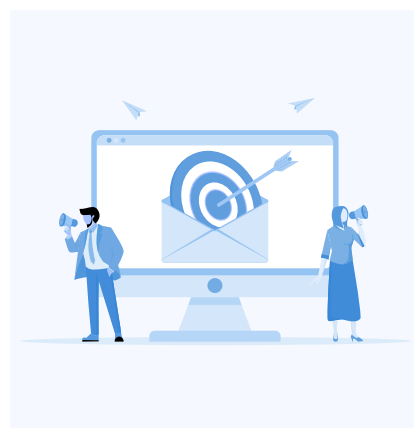
- **Support social interactions and community engagement with migrants to foster mutual understanding and empathy.**

Greater exposure to migration issues and opportunities for regular interaction with migrants create opportunities for host communities to better understand migrants' experiences, challenges and aspirations. Mutual understanding and increased personal familiarity with migrants help dispel negative stereotypes and misconceptions, fostering a sense of shared humanity and increased compassion.



- **Undertake targeted messaging and communications with priority to areas/population groups identified as holding less positive attitudes towards migrants (residents of Bangkok and populations lacking direct exposure to migrants).**

Targeted communication and awareness raising campaigns featuring the complexity and diversity of migration and migrant experiences can bridge knowledge gaps among host communities with less exposure to migrants. Messages should be tailored to and targeting highly segmented audiences as identified in this report to improve the public perception of migrants. Content for communications campaigns should build on existing positive attitudes towards, in particular, among specific population groups and priority areas identified in the report.



- **Build upon good examples of communities that have fostered a high degree of social cohesion and positive engagement with migrants.**

In areas and in professions reporting regular encounters with migrants, respondents were not only more aware of migration and more welcoming towards migrants, but also more willing to act for migrants. Focusing public information on the presence and contributions of migrants within workplaces and communities could increase the recognition of migrants living and working in close proximity to Thai nationals and thereby positively influence their perception and actions towards migrants.



- **Address misperceptions and strengthen awareness of the struggles faced by migrants, as well as their contributions to Thai society by illustrating the diversity of migrants, their positive contributions to communities, and the migrant experience in Thailand.**

In areas with limited interactions and encounters with migrants, investments in broadening general knowledge on migration and migrant experiences should be increased. Misperceptions are more likely to spread when limited information is available. Balanced, ethical, and fact-based information as well as profiles on migrants will improve overall knowledge on migration.



- **Promote balanced migration reporting in Thailand by tailoring training to journalists from traditional and new media**

A key objective of this survey was to gauge the impact of media reporting on migration on the attitudes and sentiment towards migrants. The findings show that both traditional media and new media need to be considered among the factors that shape public attitudes. Equipping media professionals with accurate information and knowledge on migration can help strengthen their capacities to cover migration issues ethically and help to foster better informed public debates regarding migrants.



IOM staff interviews migrants to understand their perception on COVID-19 vaccines in Rayong Province, Thailand. | © IOM 2022/ Anat DUANGCHANG

# ANNEX I

## SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

### Background

As one of the largest regional migration hubs, Thailand hosts nearly half of all migrant workers in South-East Asia. Migration cuts across the country's social and economic fabric with migrants contributing immensely to socioeconomic development in Thailand.

As migration becomes a topic of debate in recent news, we are doing a survey amongst the Thai population and your opinion is very important to us. The survey will take around 15 minutes to complete.

All the information and answers you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

### Part I

1.	Nationality	
2.	Gender	
3.	Age	
4.	Which province do you live in?	
5.	Income level (per month)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Below THB 15,000</li> <li>THB 15,000 – THB 35,000</li> <li>THB 35,001 – THB 55,000</li> <li>THB 55,001 – THB 75,000</li> <li>Above THB 75,000</li> </ul>
6.	Type of Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manual labour (construction, agriculture, manufacturing etc)</li> <li>Service work (tourism, household, etc)</li> <li>Desk-based / office work</li> <li>Middle management</li> <li>Senior management</li> <li>Other (Please specify)</li> </ul>



7.	Have you ever migrated to another country and for which purpose?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work</li> <li>• Study</li> <li>• Accompanying family</li> <li>• Other (Please specify)</li> <li>• Never</li> </ul>
8.	A migrant is someone who is moving from their habitual place of residence, regardless of:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the person's legal status</li> <li>• whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary</li> <li>• what the causes for the movement are</li> <li>• what the length of the stay is</li> </ul>
9.	What is your main source of information about migrants? (Select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Online newspapers</li> <li>• Print newspapers</li> <li>• Television</li> <li>• Radio</li> <li>• Friends/family</li> <li>• Government</li> <li>• Other (please specify)</li> </ul>

## Part II

### Knowledge

1.	Do you know approximately how many million migrants reside in Thailand?	
2.	What is the top nationality of migrants in Thailand?	

3.	What challenges do migrants in Thailand face? [Select all that apply]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding employment</li> <li>• Obtaining a work permit</li> <li>• Accessing education</li> <li>• Accessing healthcare</li> <li>• Basic needs/living conditions</li> <li>• Awareness/understanding of their rights</li> <li>• Language barriers</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Other (Please specify)</li> <li>• None</li> <li>• I don't know</li> </ul>
4.	Of the vulnerabilities listed previously, do you think some groups are disproportionately affected?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men</li> <li>• Women</li> <li>• People of diverse gender</li> </ul>

## ATTITUDE

1.	Are you in favour of Thailand allowing migrants for longer-term stays:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From neighbouring countries?</li> <li>• From poorer countries outside of the region?</li> <li>• From economically better-off countries outside the region?</li> <li>• Who are fleeing violence and conflict?</li> </ul>
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Migrant workers are people from abroad who come to this country for the main purpose of work.

2.	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:				
Statements	Disagree strongly	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree completely	Not sure
Migrant workers make it difficult for Thai workers to find jobs.					
Migrant workers fill existing gaps in the Thai labour market.					

Migrant workers help to boost the country's economy – making significant contributions of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).					
Women migrant workers are a key part of Thai workforce.					
Cultural diversity brought by migrants threatens Thai society.					
Migrant workers should receive the same pay or benefits as Thai nationals for the same job.					
Women migrant workers should receive equal pay and opportunities compared to men migrant workers.					
Migrant children should be allowed to go to public school in Thailand.					
Migrant workers deserve access to social security fund and workers compensation.					

Practices		
1.	Where have you encountered migrant workers? (Select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At home</li> <li>• At work</li> <li>• In my local community</li> <li>• When I travel to other provinces</li> <li>• Other place</li> </ul>
2.	How often do you encounter migrant workers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly</li> <li>• Sometimes</li> <li>• Never</li> <li>• Not sure</li> </ul>
3.	Do you know any migrant workers personally? (Select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes I have supervised or employed migrant workers</li> <li>• Yes I have friends or colleagues who are migrant workers</li> <li>• Yes but I don't know them well</li> <li>• No</li> </ul>
4.	In the last 12 months, have you ever witnessed or experienced discrimination against migrants?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, frequently</li> <li>• Yes, but rarely</li> <li>• No, never</li> <li>• I don't know</li> </ul>



5.	What kind of news do you often encounter on migration and migrant workers in the media? [Select all that apply]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irregular entry</li> <li>• Deportation and apprehension</li> <li>• Human and labour rights violation</li> <li>• Gender-based violence</li> <li>• Trafficking</li> <li>• Smuggling</li> <li>• Migrant-inclusive government policies</li> <li>• Migrant welfare initiatives</li> <li>• Others [Please specify]</li> </ul>
6.	How would you react if your friend makes fun of migrants?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would ignore/not engage</li> <li>• I would agree</li> <li>• I would disagree</li> </ul>
7.	If you encounter a migrant struggling due to language barrier, would you help them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No</li> <li>• Maybe</li> </ul>
8.	Would you consider dedicating some time to help migrants integrate into Thai society?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No</li> <li>• Maybe</li> </ul>
9.	Would you consider contributing to addressing challenges faced by migrant workers, even if it has financial implications for you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No</li> <li>• Maybe</li> </ul>

### Part III

1.	What social media platforms do you use most often?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facebook</li> <li>• Instagram</li> <li>• TikTok</li> <li>• Twitter</li> <li>• Line</li> <li>• Messenger</li> <li>• WhatsApp</li> <li>• Others (please specify)</li> <li>• I don't use social media</li> </ul>
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2.	What local newspapers (either online or print) do you most often read?	Bangkok Post Nation Thailand Thai PBS/Thai PBS World Bangkok Biz Thansettakij Matichon Prachatai/Prachatai English Khaosod/Khaosod English Daily News Thairath Kom Chad Luek Siam Rath The Cloud The Thaiger The Matter The Standard The Momentum 101 World The Active WorkpointTODAY Others (please specify) I don't read newspapers
3.	What television stations do you most often watch?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Channel 5 (Royal Thai Army Radio and Television)</li> <li>• MCOT</li> <li>• NBT</li> <li>• Thai PBS</li> <li>• Workpoint TV</li> <li>• True4You</li> <li>• GMM 25</li> <li>• Channel 8</li> <li>• MONO 29</li> <li>• ONE 31</li> <li>• Thairath TV</li> <li>• Channel 3 HD</li> <li>• Channel 7 HD</li> <li>• Amarin TV</li> <li>• PPTV</li> <li>• TNN 16</li> <li>• Others (please specify)</li> <li>• I don't watch television</li> </ul>

## ANNEX II

### MEDIA MOST CONSUMED BY THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS

FIGURE 30: LOCAL NEWSPAPERS MOST OFTEN READ

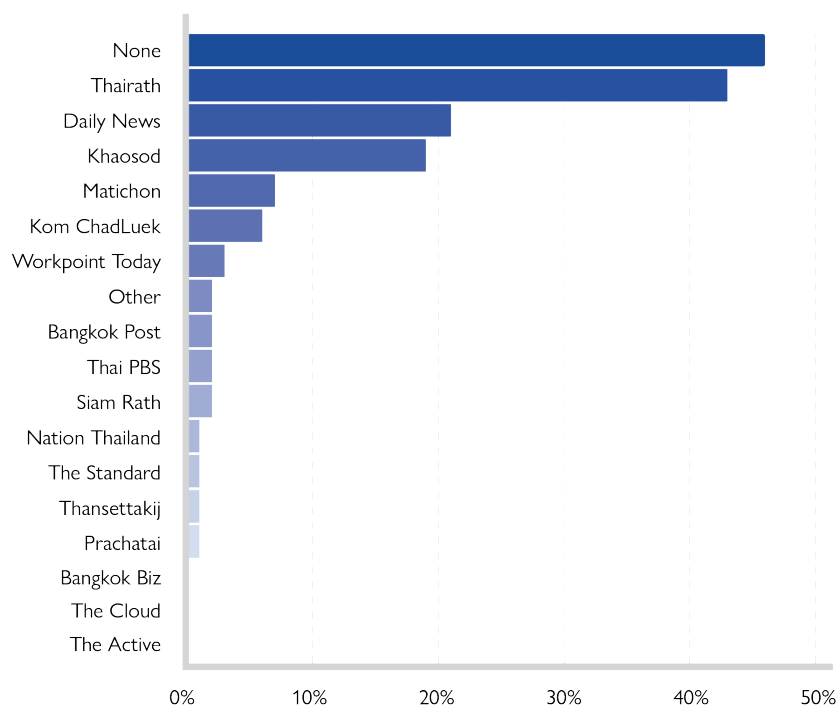
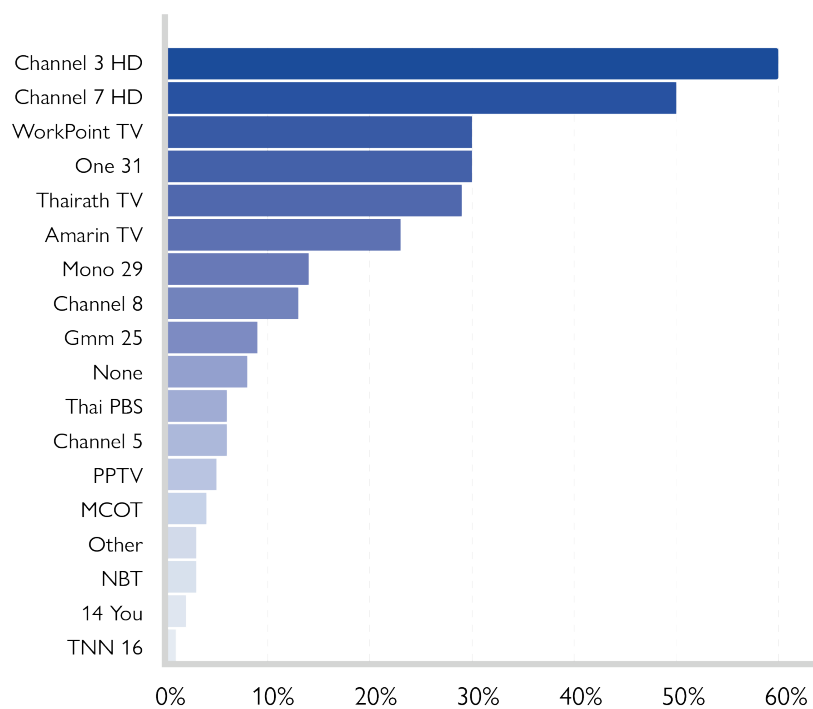


FIGURE 31: TELEVISION STATIONS MOST OFTEN WATCHED







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Tel: +66 2 343 9300 | Web: [thailand.iom.int](http://thailand.iom.int)  
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