



Migrant family in Mae Sot community in Thailand © IOM 2021/Anat Duangchang

Background

South-East Asia is comprised of source, transit and destination countries and is characterized by migration inflows and outflows. Due to its unparalleled economic growth in the last decade, Thailand is a lucrative destination for labour migrants, mainly from South-East Asia. According to the UN Migration Report, in 2018, the number of migrants in Thailand reached 4.9 million. The majority of the migrant population are from bordering countries, namely, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Vietnam.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and containment measures put in place across Thailand, migrant communities have faced an array of challenges. For many, the recent lockdown has resulted in loss of employment, as well as limited access to services and facilities.

HIGHLIGHTS

As Thailand emerges from its fourth wave of COVID-19 infections, the most significant and relentless since the start of the pandemic and driven by the delta variant, the situation appears to be improving since its peak on 13 August. With infection rates stabilizing, and the national vaccination campaign continuing, the UN Network on Migration presents its monthly overview of how the pandemic has impacted migrants in Thailand with contributions from its members.

- In September 2021, there were a total of 28,810 COVID-19 cases among migrants from Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar (CLM) in Thailand.
- Data from 30 September 2021 shows the cumulative number of positive cases among CLM migrants (138,487) accounted for 9% of the total nationwide (1,603,475).
- Data indicates that migrants from Myanmar have been most impacted in terms of number of COVID-19 infections, in both adults and children, from the wider migrant community in Thailand.
- The Ministry of Public Health Immunization Centre reported on 30 September that 1,339,761 doses had been administered to foreign nationals residing in Thailand. Myanmar nationals were the largest group to have been partially vaccinated with 481,546 doses (55% of the total), with Cambodian nationals as the second largest (135,297 persons), and third, Lao nationals (78,129 persons).
- The number of doses administered to foreign nationals represents 3% of the total administered at national level.
- IOM can report that vaccines were provided to detainees in Phangnga Immigration Detention Centre (IDC).

CONTACTS

THAILAND

NUMBER OF DOCUMENTED MIGRANT WORKERS
(As of August 2021)

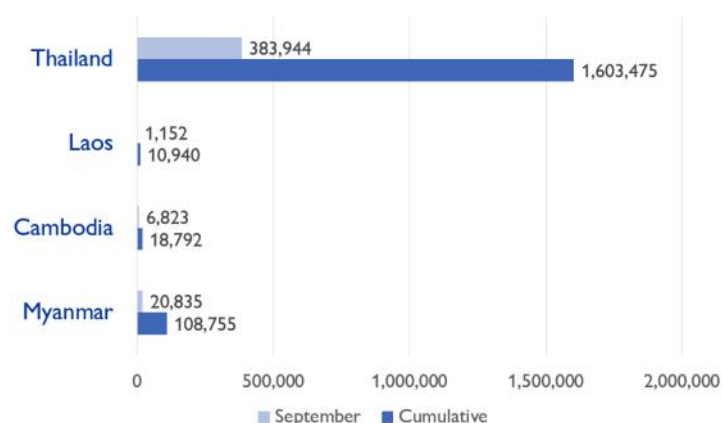
Source: The Foreign Workers Administration Office of the Department of Employment

COVID-19 CASES IN THAILAND

On 30 September Thailand reported a cumulative total of 1,603,475 positive cases since the start of the pandemic, with 13,727 deaths. The highest number of confirmed daily cases was reported on 13 August with 23,418 cases, marking the peak of the fourth wave. Since then, a downward trend in community cases continued and has been closely monitored. While there still remains considerable community transmission across the country, the need to diligently following public health and social measures to reduce COVID-19 transmission remains.

NUMBER OF COVID-19 CASES AMONGST MIGRANTS

In September, 28,810 migrants from Myanmar (72%), Cambodia (24%) and Laos (4%) tested positive for COVID-19. Cumulative totals since the pandemic for each group are as



Source: WHO

The total number of cumulative cases amongst Myanmar, Cambodian and Lao migrants in Thailand (138,487) accounts for 9% of the total number of cases reported nationwide. Consistent with data from August 2021, this represents a high proportion on a per capita basis, indicating that migrants continue to be disproportionately affected.

COVID-19 CASES AMONGST MIGRANT CHILDREN

The total number of accumulated COVID-19 cases amongst children up to 18 years of age is 93,391, including 4,483 migrant children (4.8%). 93% of these migrant children were from Myanmar, Cambodia and Lao People's Democratic Republic. Data from 1 April and 11 August 2021 shows that there were 4,035 infected migrant children from CLM, indicating that the vast majority of cases occurred during the third and fourth waves of the pandemic in Thailand.

Source: Open Government Data

COVID-19 VACCINATION

As of 30 September 2021 there were 51,496,084 doses of the COVID-19 vaccines administered in Thailand.

- 31,785,716 persons have received a single dose (48.02% of the population)
- 18,486,111 persons are fully vaccinated (27.93% of the population)
- 1,224,257 persons have received a booster dose.

The Ministry of Public Health Immunization Center also reported on 30 September that 1,339,761 doses had been administered to migrants residing in Thailand. The number of migrants receiving at least one dose was 878,862 (65.6%), while 355,591 migrants (26.5%) had received two doses. Myanmar nationals were the largest group to have been partially vaccinated with 481,546 doses (55% of the total), with Cambodian nationals as the second largest (135,297 persons), and third, Lao nationals (78,129 persons).

The number of doses administered to foreign nationals represents only 3% of the total administered at national level. Further, the total number of Myanmar, Cambodian and Lao migrants who have received a dose of vaccine (694,972) represents 30% of the total registered migrant population in Thailand based on MOL figures from November 2020.

IOM can report that vaccines were provided to detainees in Phangnga IDC. The decision to vaccinate detainees in IDCs is taken at Provincial level, between the IDC and the Provincial Public Health Office. IOM provided interpretation support during the awareness raising and explanation about vaccines.

The Ministry of Labour has opened two worker camp vaccination centres in Din Daeng District of Bangkok. The two centres can vaccinate a total of 3,500 people per day.

Members of the UN Network on Migration continue to monitor the progress of the National Vaccination Programme and seek information regarding its timeline for migrant workers. Currently migrant domestic workers are not eligible to enroll in the Social Security Fund (SSF), and thus cannot register for a vaccine. For migrant workers who are enrolled in the SSF, their employers can register them to receive a vaccination. At Provincial level, it has been reported that some have opened registration to migrant workers, however this has not yet happened in Bangkok outside the Social Security Scheme.



POLICY UPDATE

From 1 October the Prime Minister transferred the powers and duties of handling the COVID-19 pandemic back to the responsible Ministers and local authorities (Provincial Governors). Further to this, the Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) approved the extension of the Emergency Decree until 30 November 2021. It further announced changes to a number of restrictions from 1 October, including:

- Reduced curfew hours (from 21.00 – 04.00 to 22.00 – 04.00) for at least 15 days, and the opening of shopping malls, convenient stores, and markets until 9pm.
- Child development centres, libraries, museums, learning centres, tattoo parlours, nail salons, health establishments, indoor sports and movie theatres can open.
- Quarantine requirements for vaccinated travellers to Thailand are expected to be reduced to 7 days from 1 October, however for those unvaccinated, the compulsory 14 day quarantine will remain in place.

Finally, CCSA approved a four-phase timeline for the country's reopening plan. The third phase will see the reopening of 13 border provinces from 1 January 2022.

In parallel, on 28 September [the Cabinet approved](#) the latest round of registration for migrant workers already in Thailand. All migrant workers without valid work permits will be allowed to register themselves with employers within 30 days after the announcement is made in the Royal Thai Government Gazette. Registered migrants must enroll in the Social Security Fund or purchase a Migrant Health Insurance as well as have their biometric data collected by 31 March 2022 in order to stay and work in Thailand until 28 February 2023. Failing to complete these steps will shorten their stay in Thailand only until 1 August 2022. Migrant workers registered through the Cabinet Resolution on 29 December 2020, whose work permits are valid until 31 March 2022, can re-register for the new round of registration by completing a health check by 18 October 2021 and their employment status updated by 31 March 2022.



UPDATES ON CONSTRUCTION SITE CAMPS AND FACTORIES

No further lockdowns in construction camps/factories have been reported. Factories were granted permission to reopen on the condition of using a '[Bubble and Seal](#)' policy. Construction camps are required to request permission from CCSA to reopen, and CCSA have issued the following prerequisites for this approval:

- In case workers live within the construction camp:
 - ◆ Provide 3 meals per day
 - ◆ Collect worker's contact and information
 - ◆ Delegate a staff to monitor worker's entry and exit.

- In case the workers live outside the construction camp then the employer should:
 - ◆ Delegate a staff to manage worker's route home and not allowing them to stop in the middle of the trip
 - ◆ Provide transportation for workers from construction site to their community.
 - ◆ Create the QR code for workers to scan once exit and enter the construction site for monitoring purposes.

The Ministry of Labour's [Factory Sandbox](#) scheme has also been introduced with requests for the following to be implemented at worksites:

- Provide and conduct regular ATK tests
- Create Factory Isolation and hospital facilities for workers with positive cases with not severe condition [Green case category]
- Create field hospital for worker with positive cases with some severe condition [Yellow case category]
- Create ICU for worker with positive cases with severe condition [Red case category]
- Provide the vaccination to worker especial ones with chronic health conditions and pregnant women worker. The complied factory will receive a certificate called 'Rong Ngha Si Far' issue by the Royal Thai government.
- Comply to Bubble and Seal as well as Distancing, Mask Wearing, Hand Washing, Testing, Thai Chana (DMHTT) policy.



UPDATES ON BORDER CONTROL MEASURES

Thailand-Cambodia

A lockdown was announced in two villages in Haad Lek sub-District, Khlong Yai District in Trat Province from 23-29 September following an increase in COVID-19 cases. Movements in and out of the villages were not permitted, however from 21 September movement was restricted. Boat operators and seafarers were asked not to leave from the pier area to the village. Negative Antigen Test Kit (ATK) results are required for boat operators and sea farers should they want to dock the boat at the pier.

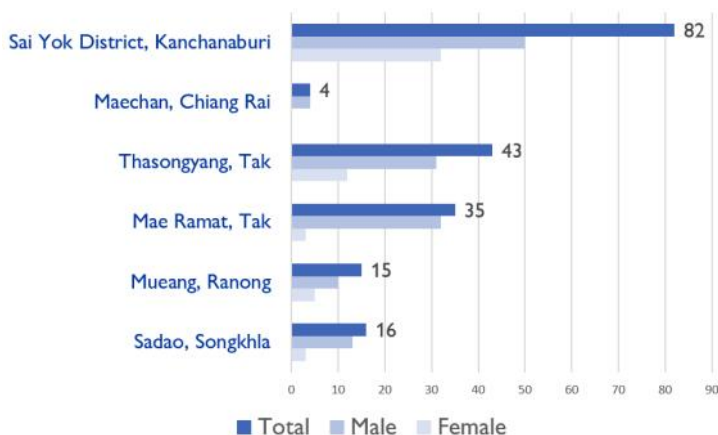
Thailand-Myanmar

No changes have been put into place with regards to border crossings between Thailand and Myanmar since the previous SitRep. The Governor of Kanchanaburi Province continues to implement stringent measures to control the spread of COVID-19. On 28 September he revoked the order imposed on 30 July and issued a new Provincial Communicable Disease Committee Order (no. 4726/2564) which now permits movement across five districts (Dan Makhm Tia, Baan Kao in Muang, Sangkhla Buri, Thong Pha Phum and Sai Yok).

The lockdown in Three Pagoda Village was also lifted in September. The changes allow the resumption of border trade at Three Pagoda Pass in Sangkhlaburi District. Only 2 persons are allowed in any vehicle crossing the border (driver and one passenger), and both must pass COVID-19 screening at the border which is conducted by public health officials. Transport of goods is to be done swiftly through the back of the vehicles, and disinfection of both vehicles is required.

IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTERS (IDCs) AND ORGANIZATIONAL QUARANTINES (OQs)

Border Patrol Police reported on 1 October 2021 that there are 200 migrants currently in 6 OQs (M=144, F=56). The majority of these are Myanmar migrants (195, M=140, F=55) and are located as follows:



On 22 September, IOM was informed by the authorities that IDCs had been experiencing an increase in positive COVID-19 cases. IOM continues to monitor the situation, and has been supporting detainees through the provision of medicine, hygiene items and PPE for vulnerable migrants. With new arrivals reported in Chumpon, the Provincial Health Office is active with testing and referrals to local quarantine facilities.

MYANMAR

MYANMAR-THAILAND BORDER

IOM Thailand continues with its Mobility Monitoring at the Thailand-Myanmar border area using a network of key informants in seven border provinces. Data for September is estimated as follows:

- Number of returnees from Thailand – 4,562
- Number of Myanmar migrants crossing to Thailand – 1,540

CAMBODIA

CAMBODIA-THAILAND BORDER



The total number who have returned since March 2020 has now reached



Migrant workers continue to return to Cambodia from Thailand, albeit in decreased numbers compared to the figures from August 2021. On average since 13 August, 611 migrants arrived daily at several Points of Entry (PoEs) in four provinces: Pailin, Banteay Meanchey, Oddor Meanchey and Battambang.

In Cambodia, COVID-19 measures implemented to control the spread of the virus, particularly the Delta Variant of Concern, are still in place such as mandatory 21 day of quarantine on arrival in the border provinces, with the option of being transferred for the last 7 days to the home province. Rapid tests are conducted for all migrants arriving at PoEs. The percentage of imported cases has dropped during September to approximately 8-10% (1 October) compared to 35% at the beginning of the month.

Moreover, several interventions in border areas have been implemented during September such as market closures, alcohol ban, curfews, and localized lockdowns in response to an increase in cases. Red zones in the border districts in Oddor Meanchy Provinces and Siem Reap Province have were extended until 30 September.



Rapid tests being conducted for all migrants arriving at Beung Trakoun POE, Banteay Meanchey Province. © IOM 2021

IOM and partners continue to identify challenges, needs and gaps in the current response as follows:

- ⇒ Lack of food available for migrants at PoEs
- ⇒ Insufficient infection prevention and control measures
- ⇒ Irregular and inconsistent data collection procedures
- ⇒ Increase in community cases
- ⇒ Inadequate temporary shelter arrangements (rainy season)
- ⇒ Lack of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) at quarantine centres
- ⇒ Information available to migrants at Points of Entry
- ⇒ Insufficient oxygen supplies at treatment centres

VACCINATION



Returning migrants being vaccinated at Pichenda High School Quarantine Center, Phnom Proek, Battambang Province. © IOM 2021

Migrant workers staying in Quarantine Centres (QCs) in border provinces received their first COVID-19 vaccinations in September. In Battambang by 23 September, 94 (F:42) returnees had been vaccinated in Kamrieng and Phnom Proek Districts using the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. The Provincial Health Department is hoping to vaccinate 500 people. In Oddor Meanchey, 200 migrants had been vaccinated by 21 September in Krong Samroang and Choung Kal Districts, using both the Johnson & Johnson and Sinovac vaccines. Banteay Meanchey decided to vaccinate 517 migrants using Johnson & Johnson starting on 24 September at QC level in four operational districts: OD Mongkoulborei, OD Seriesophon, OD Poipet, and OD Thmor Pouk.

New quarantine and treatment centers are now in use in Siem Reap (capacity of 1,500), Oddor Meanchey (6,000 capacity) and Banteay Meanchey (6,000 capacity). In Sampov Loun, Battambang, a new centre is under construction and it is expected to accommodate 2,500 beds. In Oddor Meanchey, the new Krong Samroung Treatment Centre has already received over 600 patients. Another newly built QC in Provincial Sport

received over 600 patients. Another newly built QC in Provincial Sport Field (Krong Samroung) already accommodated over 1,325 migrants referred from O Smach POE. Provincial authorities continue to build new facilities and expand the capacity of existing ones, using big warehouses with new infrastructure such as toilets, water tanks, beds, and security cameras.

QC and TC capacity per province	No. of QCs	People	No. of TCs	People
Banteay Meanchey	21	3,713	11	4,281
Battambang	8	1,955	11	1,220
Siem Reap	6	594	3	139
Oddar Meanchey	11	2,731	13	3,719
TOTAL	46	8,993	38	9,359



New Treatment Center in Mongkoul Borey, Banteay Meanchey Province. © IOM 2021

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC-THAILAND BORDER

IOM Laos has noted a fall in the number of imported COVID-19 cases, however community transmission in the country increased during September. A number of cases originated in a factory in Chanthabouly District in Vientiane and was considered to pose a risk to the wider area. In response, the Vientiane Mayor ordered a lockdown alongside a number of preventive, control and response measures in 7 Districts in Vientiane Capital from 19-30 September. These have since been extended until 15 October.

COVID-19 data for Lao People's Democratic Republic in September is as follows:

- Total number of positive cases reported to date: 24,310 (includes 8,705 during September)
- Total number of persons receiving treatment: 5,691 (228 in September)
- Total number of deaths to date: 20 (5 in September)

Areas that recorded the highest number of cases in September are Vientiane Capital, Luang Prabang, Champasak and Bokeo Provinces. The number of imported cases is also being monitored by IOM colleagues, with 162 cases reported during September. A number of these were located in Salavan (21), Champasak (15) and Savannakhet (12), Provinces which share borders with Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. Overall, there are 112 Quarantine Centres (QC) and 15 Quarantine Hotels nationwide. Data from 16 September shows that there were 7,505 persons staying at a QC. There were no indications of reopening the borders or a relaxation of quarantine restrictions at the end of September.

VACCINATION

The Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic has scaled up its vaccination campaign in light of the situation, and data from 1 October is as follows:

- Completed 1st dose: 2,946,298 people (40% of the total population)
- Completed 2nd doses: 2,053,441 people (28% of the total population)

ACTIVITY UPDATES FROM UN NETWORK ON MIGRATION MEMBERS

IOM

As members of the UN Network on Migration in Thailand continue their response to the COVID-19 pandemic during September, some highlights include:

IOM THAILAND

Migration Health

Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions that banned inter-provincial travel and public gatherings, challenges were encountered for IOM's Implementing Partners to conduct certain activities as planned. In response, some of these challenges were overcome by delivering trainings online via its network of Migrant Health Volunteers, for example. IOM was able to deliver:

- 239 relief packages and food support were distributed to 150 migrant families and 125 individuals in home and quarantine facilities in Chiang Mai, Mae Sot, and Ranong.

- 1,600 ATKs and hygiene items were provided to officials to support COVID-19 testing and case finding among migrant workers in Songkhla and Chiang Mai.
- In collaboration with Public Health Officials, IOM partners conducted COVID-19-related health education sessions to more than 2,300 migrants, and produced IEC materials about COVID-19 and quarantine, domestic violence caused due to the pandemic, HIV, and migrant health volunteer (MHV) manuals, with more than 1,000 copies of each material in Burmese and Shan languages to distribute to migrants.

Labour Mobility and Human Development

Under the CREST Fashion Programme, IOM's partner in Mae Sot, World Vision, distributed non-food items to 631 impacted Myanmar migrant workers employed in garment factories (F=367, M=264).



World Vision Foundation of Thailand providing relief packages in Mae Sot, Tak Province. © World Vision Foundation of Thailand

Emergency and Post-Crisis

IOM delivered PPE including surgical masks, hand sanitizers and disinfection solution as well as around 1,000 sets hygiene kits to 11 IDCs in Ranong, Songkhla, Phangnga, Chiang Rai, Trat, Chanthaburi, Nonthaburi, Kanchanaburi, Prachuap Khiri Khan and Tak provinces.

IOM LAOS

Lao People's Democratic Republic is the only country in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region that does not have a Migrant Health Policy in place. IOM Laos is advocating with the Ministry of Health and its Centre for Disease Control to develop one, and is working closely with partners and stakeholders who are interested in supporting its development.

UNICEF

- UNICEF has developed a home isolation booklet. A total of 13,000 (10,000 in Myanmar and 3,000 in Cambodian) copies were distributed to migrant communities through the network of UNICEF partners. The booklet has also been translated into Lao language by IOM allowing it to reach more people.
- UNICEF supported Department of Health, Ministry of Public Health, to translate a survey into Khmer that is aimed at pregnant migrant women to address concerns about receiving COVID-19 vaccine. Results will address vaccine hesitancy, and will be used for promoting COVID-19 vaccination acceptance amongst pregnant migrant women.
- UNICEF continues its work with World Vision Thailand conducting Risk Communication and Community Engagement activities (RCCE) in 10 camp sites (713 persons in September). UNICEF supported 153 migrants with Health Case Management (screening, tracking, first aid consultation, referral, and follow up until cases are closed). It continues to support Community Mass Rapid Testing in migrant communities, and in September a total of 2,333 persons were tested, of which 153 persons were detected positive and referred to take a Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) test. UNICEF also worked with partners to distribute essential non-food items and hygiene supplies to migrant communities affected by lockdown or in home or community isolation. This activity reached 4,581 persons.



World Vision Foundation of Thailand providing relief packages in Community Isolation facilities. © World Vision Foundation of Thailand

UN WOMEN

- 3,000 sets of PPE were distributed to migrant communities, health personnel and volunteers in Samut Sakhon and Samut Songkram in collaboration with Proud Association.
- 3,750 sets of face masks, safety planning cards and service directories were distributed to women migrant workers in Bangkok, Mae Sot, Chiang Mai and Chonburi provinces in collaboration with the Foundation for Labour and Employment Promotion FLEP, Migrant Women Project, MAP Foundation and Raks Thai as part of UN Women's Safe and Fair Programme.

ILO

As part of their TRIANGLE in ASEAN programme, ILO, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, concluded their 14th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour at the end of August. The theme was "Recovery and labour migration in the post pandemic future." The tripartite-consultation took stock of the new and emerging COVID-19 related challenges faced by migrant workers and stakeholders, and discussed immediate and longer-term shifts in labour migration governance and reform that will better meet the challenges anticipated in the region in the medium term. With participants including MOL, MOPH, the Employer Confederation of Thailand, trade Unions and Civil Society representatives, the Forum concluded and adopted a [set of 19 national recommendations](#).