



**United Nations
Network on Migration**
Working Better Together

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MIGRANTS IN THAILAND SITUATION REPORT JUNE 2022



Myanmar migrant receiving a COVID-19 vaccination in Samut Prakarn (© IOM 2022)

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 Thailand Migration Report in 2019, 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 Viet Nam.

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, it has resulted in loss of employment, as well as limited access to services and facilities.

Highlights

- In Thailand, the CCSA announced on 17 June that all provinces were designated as surveillance areas or 'Green Zone', with entertainment venues permitted to open according to relevant regulations. It also agreed to discontinue the Thailand Pass registration for all travellers, both Thai and foreign nationals.
- On 5 July 2022, the CCSA reported that Thailand had passed the milestone of administering 140 million doses, with a second dose coverage of 76.5 per cent, and a third dose coverage of 43 per cent (the target is 60%).
- At the end of June 5.25 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine had been administered to foreign nationals in Thailand, of which 2.16 million were to Cambodia, Lao and Myanmar nationals.
- Cambodia announced the availability of the fifth dose of COVID-19 vaccination on 9 June 2022
- Authorities continue to monitor the proliferation of the BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron sub-variants.

THAILAND

COVID-19 SITUATION UPDATES

On 30 June Thailand's Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) reported that the cumulative number of cases had reached 4,522,915 (+72,458) with 30,648 (+629) fatalities.

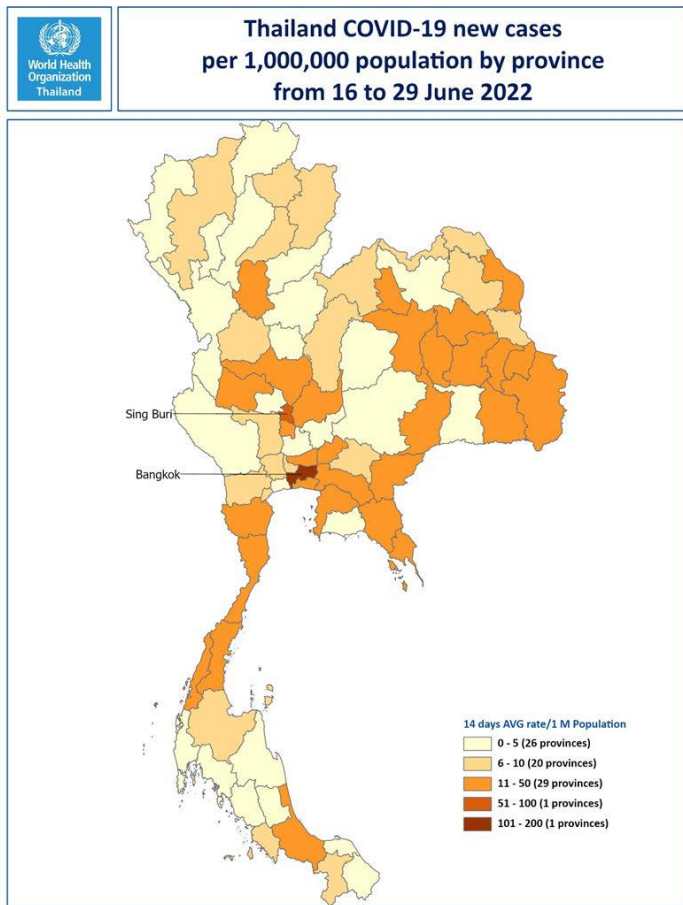


Figure 1: Distribution of new COVID-19 cases per million population by province (WHO)

According to WHO the average number of new cases per million population decreased across provinces in June, with lower average rates being reported far more widely across the country. On 26 June, most provinces (75) reported an average rate of less than 50 new cases per million population, and the rate in Bangkok remained stable at 189 cases per million population. Although nationally new cases were decreasing throughout June, the policy of not confirming all probable cases by PCR testing, as well as the widespread use of rapid antigen tests, continues to make it difficult to accurately monitor actual case counts.

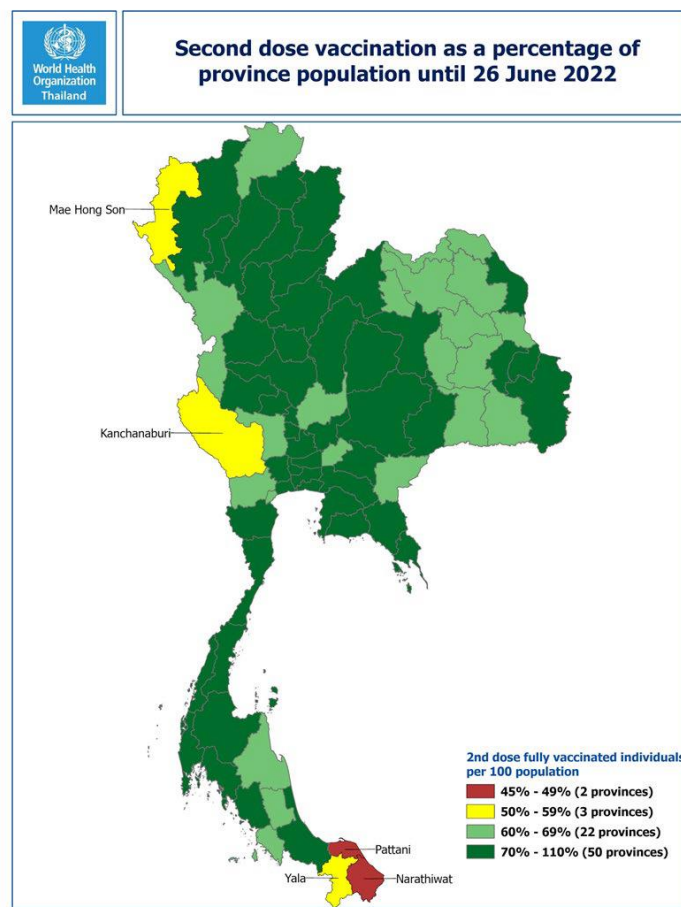
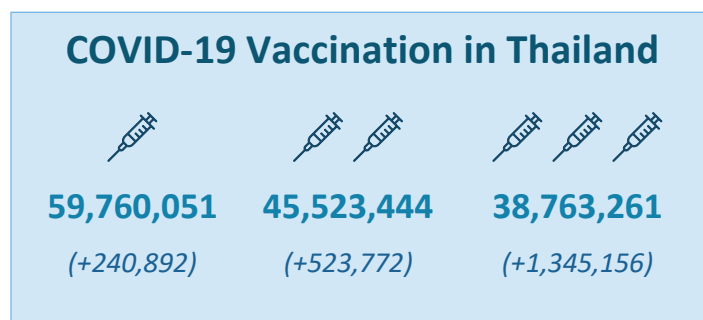
The Department of Medical Science at the Ministry of Public Health continues to monitor variants among positive cases. Between 18-24 June, from a sample of 812 cases, 447 (55%) were reported as the BA.2 sub-variant of Omicron, and 360 (44%) were BA.4/BA.5. On 4 July, it was reported that the BA.4 and BA.5 will

soon become the dominant sub-variants of COVID-19 in Thailand, however have so far not been shown to cause severe illness.



COVID-19 VACCINE ROLLOUT

By 30 June, 139,752,058 doses of COVID-19 vaccine had been administered in Thailand. Fifty out of seventy-seven provinces (+6) in Thailand reported more than 70 per cent second dose vaccination coverage by 26 June. Narathiwat and Pattani provinces continue to report less than 50 percent second dose coverage (see Figure 2).



Date of Map: 29 Jun 2022
 Date Source: Ministry of Public Health
 Date of Data: 26 Jun 2022
 WHO Thailand Country Office, IMST COVID-19 Response

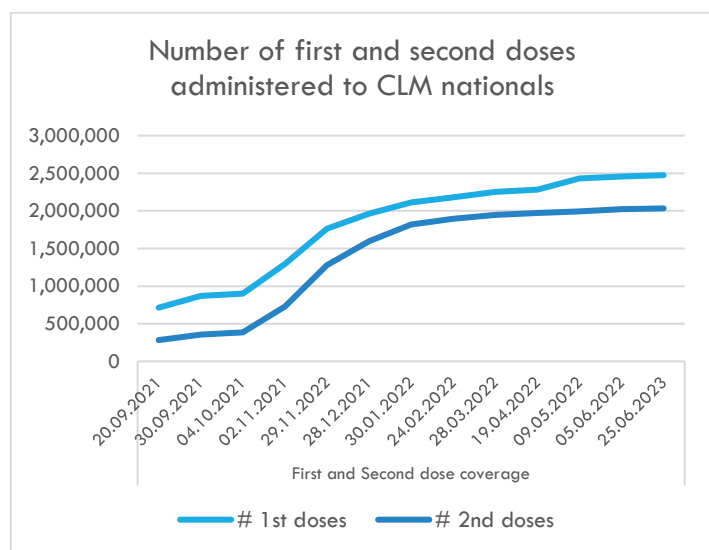


Figure 2: Second dose COVID-19 vaccination coverage by province (WHO)




On 5 July 2022, the CCSA reported that Thailand had just passed the milestone of administering 140 million doses, with a second dose coverage of 76.5 percent, and a third dose coverage of 43 per cent (the target is 60%).

COVID-19 VACCINATION AMONG MIGRANTS

Data released by the MOPH Department of Disease Control (DDC) on 25 June reported that a total of 5,254,451 (+50,950) doses of COVID-19 vaccine had been administered to foreign nationals residing in Thailand. The chart below shows how the number of doses administered to foreign nationals has progressed since September 2021, with an evident increase between October 2021 and January 2022 following the announcements of the CCSA and MOPH that they were committed to scaling up vaccination coverage among the migrant population in Thailand.



The latest data also indicates that 2,168,776 (+16,742) doses were to CLM nationals, who continue to represent the top three nationalities as follows:

	Myanmar	Cambodian	Lao
			
Total	1,503,710	445,474	219,592
Since April	(+13,303)	(+2,521)	(+918)

The total number of second doses administered to non-Thais remains at 20 percent of the total number of foreigners registered as residing in Thailand (2,032,666). Data from 25 June for CLM nationals shows that:

- First dose coverage is at 56 percent (2,168,776)
- Second dose coverage is at 46 percent (1,781,844)
- Third dose coverage is at 14 percent (565,037)

Coverage is based on a CLM population denominator of 3.9 million as estimated in the 2019 Thailand Migration Report. While there is ongoing discussion regarding the size of the CLM population currently in Thailand, and that considerations need to be made about whether migrants had received a dose prior to their arrival in Thailand, there remains significant scope to scale up vaccination coverage.

NUMBER OF DOCUMENTED MIGRANT WORKERS (as of 31 May 2022)

The Foreign Workers Administration Office of the Department of Employment released updated data of the total number of documented migrant workers in Thailand on 31 May. The total from Myanmar, Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic had reduced since March, and stood at 1,934,934 (-189,819):

Myanmar



1,377,624
(-126,789)

Cambodian



382,626
(-53,309)

Lao



174,684
(-9,721)



POLICY UPDATE

Policy updates: Migrant workers

According to Cabinet resolution 5 July 2022 on the management of migrant workers from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam:

- Workers whose work permits expire on February 13, 2023, may extend their stay until February 13, 2025.
- Workers whose visa/work permit has expired and irregular migrant workers employed by employers can extend their stay until February 13, 2025.

MOU worker procedures changed on 1 June 2022, and the workers are not required to stay in the quarantine facility as the following;

- Before arrival, employers must provide health insurance for migrant workers.
- After arrival, migrant workers are required to undergo health examinations for six diseases, including ATK tests, in accordance with ministerial regulations specifying qualifications and prohibited diseases. If COVID-19 is not

found, workers can obtain a work permit by following the necessary steps. However, if the workers test positive for COVID-19, they must remain in the quarantine facility.

Interceptions at the border with Thailand

Data released by the Thai Immigration Bureau on 30 June shows 2,963 persons were intercepted from Myanmar, 52 from Cambodia, 170 from Lao PDR, and 14 other nationalities. The total number is 3,199 cases.

Updates on border control measures



THAILAND - CAMBODIA BORDER

On 23 June 2022, it was reported that Sakaeo Governor and counterparts in Cambodia discussed the full reopening plan of Ban Khlong Luek Point of Entry (POE), Aranyaprathet, Sa Kaeo. Full reopening is estimated in 1-2 months. Currently, daily trade using trolleys are still not allowed between Thailand-Cambodia as of 1 July 2022.



THAILAND - MYANMAR BORDER

On 31 May, Kanchanaburi governor announced it planned to reopen the Ban Phu Nam Ron checkpoint in Kanchanaburi Province on 1 June to travelers and vehicles.

Mae Sai Point POE (Chiang Rai – Tachileik) did not reopen as planned on 1 June 2022.



THAILAND - LAO BORDER

On 16 June 2022, it was reported that the reopening of an additional 5 POEs (Check Point Border Trade) bordering Thailand-Laos is in the plan. The POEs are in Chiang Saen, Chiang Khong and Wieng Kaen District in Chiang Rai province. Currently, POEs that have reopened between Thailand-Laos include Buck Pier (Chiang Khong PoE), Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge IV (Chiang Khong-Huay Xai), Golden Triangle PoE (Chiang Rai Province), Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge III (Nakhon Phanom -Khammouan), Mueang Nakhon Phanom Pier, Chong Mek PoE in Ubon Ratchathani.



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

As of 3 July 2022, Border Patrol Police reported that there are in total 83 Myanmar migrants in 2 OQs (M=27, F= 56), and 1 Lao migrant (M).

- Mae Sot, Tak: 53 (M=15, F=38)
- Mae Chan, Chiang Rai: 30 (M=12, F=18)

All in OQs tested negative for COVID-19.

CAMBODIA



POLICY UPDATE

No new COVID-19 related policies or control measures were introduced in Cambodia in June. Vaccination of fifth doses has started and the government is encouraging the population to give priority to vulnerable groups. Donations and procurement of new vaccines continue, with China due to provide new vaccines in June and at the beginning of July, and Poland to donate Pfizer vaccines to the Royal Government of Cambodia.

On 5 June, commune elections were held in Cambodia. Cambodians living abroad returned to the country to vote but no major influx of migrants through Points of Entry was detected.

COVID-19 CASES IN CAMBODIA

On 29 June the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) announced the first positive COVID-19 case since 8 May 2022, ending the 52-day run of zero reported cases. Most of them come from community transmission.

By the end of June, 17 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases were reported and zero deaths, bringing their cumulative totals to 136,279 and 3,056 respectively. No positive cases were reported in Treatment Centres in border areas.

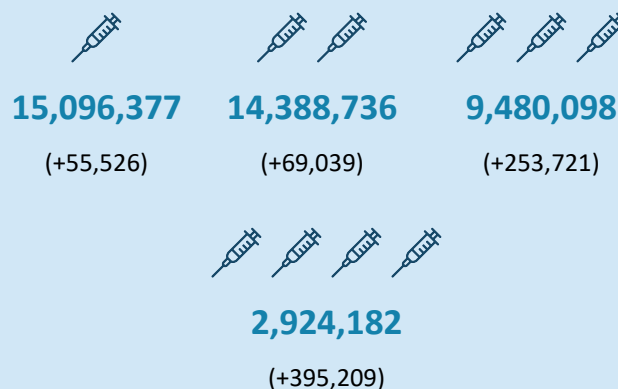


COVID-19 VACCINE ROLLOUT

Samdech Prime Minister announced that the fifth COVID-19 vaccination dose campaign would start on 9 June 2022 to all healthcare workers, frontline Government workers, elderly (≥60 years old), people with comorbidities, the armed forces, diplomats, UN staff, etc. who completed 4 doses with an interval of 3 months from since the fourth dose.

At the end of June, the Royal Government of Cambodia reported vaccination coverage as follows:

COVID-19 Vaccination in Cambodia





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

As reported previously, only unvaccinated migrants need to take a rapid test and complete 7 days quarantine on arrival in case they test negative. If they test positive, they will need to go to a Treatment Centre in one of the following locations:

- 2 Quarantine Centres and 1 Treatment Centre in Battambang
- 1 Quarantine Centre and 1 Treatment Centre in Oddor Meanchey
- 1 Quarantine Centre and 2 Treatment Centres in Banteay Meanchey

MYANMAR



POLICY UPDATE

On 15 June 2022, the Myanmar Ministry of Health (MOH) revised the public health requirements for travelers who enter Myanmar through cross border points of entry (POE). In this guideline, RDT negative travelers who are fully vaccinated can continue their trip. RDT negative, unvaccinated travelers are required to complete three days of quarantine. This guideline has been applied at the POE in Tachileik and Myawaddy since the third week of June 2022.

<https://mohs.gov.mm/page/18258>

COVID-19 CASES IN MYANMAR

In June the MOH reported 259 confirmed COVID-19 cases and zero deaths, bringing the cumulative totals to 613,596 and 19,434 respectively. Between the first and second quarter of the year, the test positivity rate is 5.0 percent and 0.2 percent in Myanmar.

COVID-19 VACCINATION

As of 28 June 2022, a total of 29,871,687 people over 18 years of age and 4,452,304 people under 18 years received a COVID-19 vaccination in Myanmar. This brings the overall total to 34,323,991 (+738,472). MOH expanded its COVID-19 vaccination programme to include persons from the age of 12, targeting students from early June 2022.

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

COVID-19 CASES IN LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

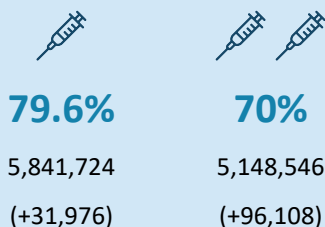
The Lao Ministry of Health reported 266 new COVID-19 cases in June, with 1 death. The cumulative number of cases reached 210,292 at the end of June, with 757 deaths.



COVID-19 VACCINE ROLLOUT

The Lao Ministry of Health continue to attain high vaccination coverage in first, second and booster doses among its population from the age of 6:

COVID-19 Vaccination in Lao PDR



ACTIVITY UPDATES FROM UN NETWORK ON MIGRATION MEMBERS



RESPONSE

IOM

IOM Thailand

With funds from WHO and the Australian Government, IOM and its partner World Vision Foundation of Thailand continue to support migrants in four provinces around Bangkok receive a dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. By 10 July, activities had achieved the following:

- 227 Migrant Health Volunteers received capacity building training in COVID-19 vaccine safety
- 7,178 migrant workers participated in outreach activities
- 2,437 migrant workers received support to access vaccination sites (55% male, 45% female)
- 1,514 migrants were monitored for Adverse Effects Following Immunisation (AEFI)

In parallel, IOM continues to support the national COVID-19 1422 Hotline, available in three migrant languages, aiming to increase the availability of, and access to information about vaccine safety among migrants in Thailand.



Figure 3: MHVs in Pathum Thani conducting information sessions on COVID-19 prevention and self-care, and vaccine safety

IOM Cambodia

On 30 June, ILO, IOM and WFP in coordination with the Resident Coordinator Office has a Leave No One Behind (LNOB) consultation with two target groups, women and rural poor, including returning migrants, tourism and construction workers, ID Poor households and farmers among others. The activity was held in Pouk District, Siem Reap and key development issues and their root causes/drivers and the people's aspirations emerged during the discussions with participants. IOM supported the

consultation with the organization, coordination, and distribution of hygiene kits.

With the support of the Government of Japan, IOM Cambodia is implementing a COVID-19 Response in three provinces along the border with Thailand; Battambang, Banteay Meanchey and Oddor Meanchey. This is a UN Joint Project together with UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF which is targeting returning migrants and local government at Points of Entry Level, Quarantine and Treatment Centers and areas of return. By the end of June IOM Cambodia had delivered packages of dry food reaching 2,902 (F: 1,37) returnees, including 210 children. This was done in four points of entry (Doung, Ou Beichoan, Osmach, Poipet Transit Center) in 3 provinces (Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Oddor Meanchey). The packages include crackers, water and noodles.



Figure 5: Distribution of dry food under COVID-19 UN joint project with the kind support of the Government of Japan. Ou Beichoan POE, Banteay Meanchey Province (IOM Cambodia @2022)

IOM Myanmar

In June IOM Myanmar reached 1,644 returnee migrants who entered Myanmar through border gates. IOM supported food allowance during quarantine days and provided a transportation allowance from the POE to quarantine centres in Tachileik, Myawaddy, Muse, and Kan Pi Ti border gate.

To support COVID-19 screening, IOM distributed personal protection items to Rakhine State and POE officials including 4,000 antigen test kits 37,850 surgical masks and 916 hand sanitizer bottles. Also, IOM provided support for transportation and per diem allowance for the screening team that includes health staff and volunteers from the POE and quarantine centres. Among this group, 22 COVID-19 positive cases were supported with food and further treatment during hospitalization.

In Rakhine, IOM supported the provision of 31,528 first doses of COVID-19 vaccine, 17 second doses, and 14,916 booster doses to the community, including students over the age of 12.