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# Labour migration trends and policies in Asia

## 9<sup>th</sup> ADBI-OECD-ILO Roundtable on Labour Migration in Asia Innovative Approaches for the Effective Management of Labour Migration in Asia

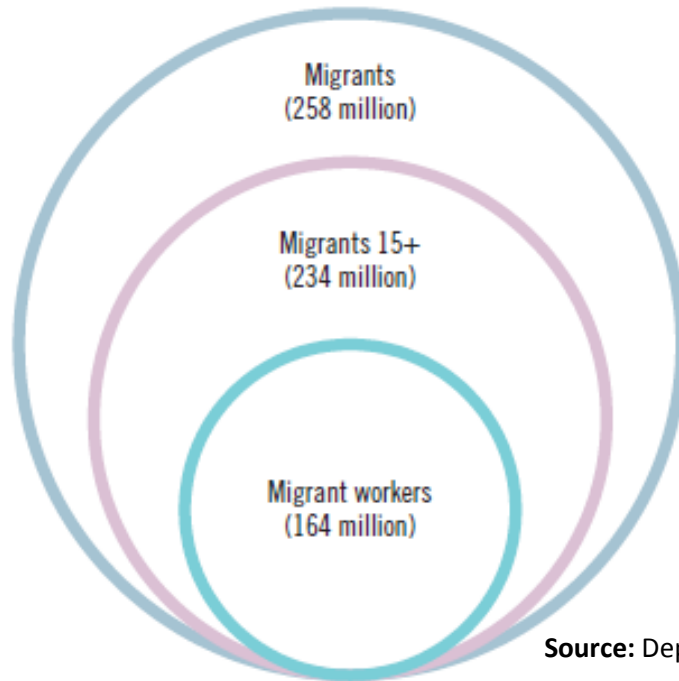
**Jointly organized by: Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI)  
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)  
International Labour Organization (ILO)**  
January 24<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Tokyo, Japan

# Global estimates of migrant workers



## Global estimates of the stock of international migrants and migrant workers in 2017

Among migrant workers, 96 million are men and 68 million are women



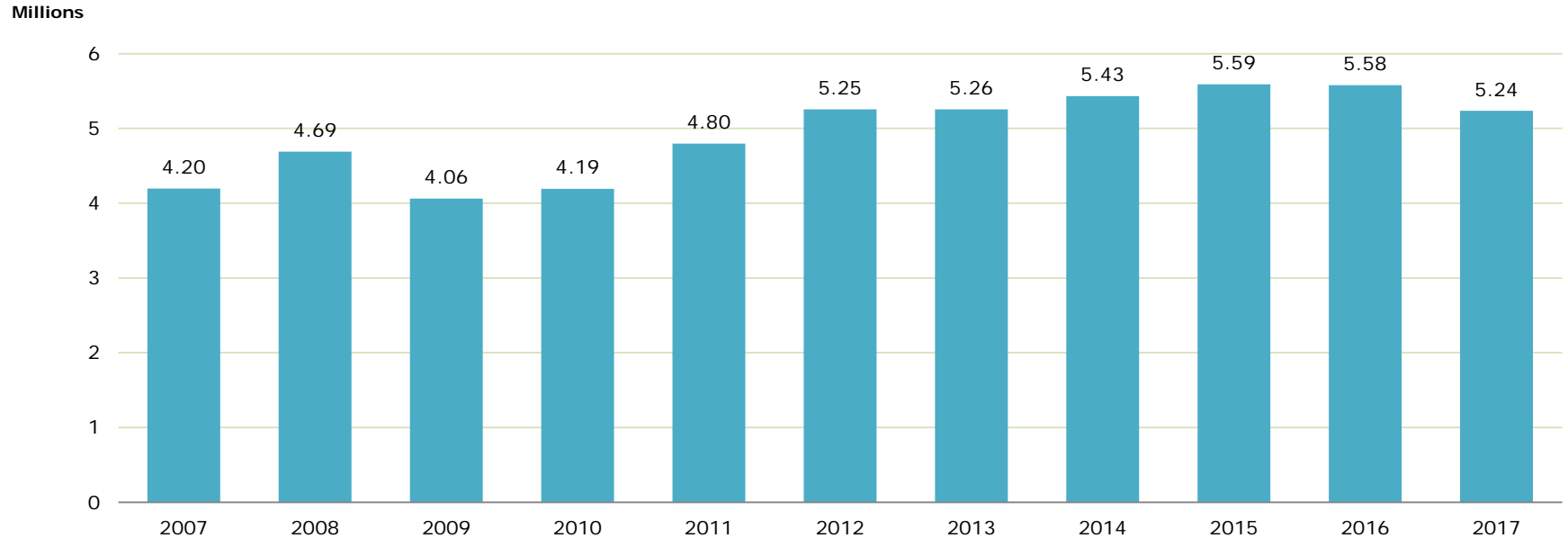
Source: Department of Statistics – ILO Labour Migration Branch, 2018

## Outflows from selected Asian countries



- Overall labour migration flows continued to decline from 5.59 million workers (2015) to 5.24 million workers (2017) – 6% decrease and **lowest stock since 2011**
- **Reduced recruitment in the GCC countries** - the top destination for Asian workers, is the main driver behind this downward trend
- Decrease in flows in 2017 – All except **Bangladesh (33%)**, Cambodia (13%), Indonesia (12%), Myanmar (11%), Vietnam (7%), and People’s Republic of China (PRC) (6%); **highest outflow from Bangladesh** with more than half went to Saudi Arabia
- Countries of origin vary significantly in the **proportion of women deployed**
- **Irregular migration** occurs in parallel with regular migration

# Workers outflow from selected Asian countries (2007-2017)



**Note:** Total of twelve countries presented in this figure

**Source:** ADBI-OECD-ILO, 2019

## Workers outflow from selected Asian countries (2007-2017)



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2016/17 % change
Philippines	716	870	991	1 124	1 319	1 435	1 469	1 431	1 438	1 670	1 520	-9%
Bangladesh	820	875	475	391	568	608	409	426	556	758	1 009	33%
PRC	372	427	395	411	452	512	527	562	530	494	522	6%
Pakistan	282	425	396	358	453	635	620	752	947	839	496	-41%
India	809	849	610	641	627	747	817	805	781	521	391	-25%
Nepal	205	249	220	294	355	385	451	520	499	404	383	-5%
Indonesia	690	636	630	567	594	460	469	430	276	235	262	12%
Sri Lanka	218	250	247	268	263	282	293	301	263	243	212	-13%
Viet Nam	64	87	73	86	88	80	88	107	116	126	135	7%
Cambodia	9	9	15	30	26	35	23	25	41	85	96	13%
Lao PDR	3	2	4	19	34	7	23	8	51	58	49	-15%
Myanmar	8	12	6	5	18	68	67	65	95	146	162	11%

**Note:** PRC stands for People's Republic of China

**Source:** ADBI-OECD-ILO, 2019

# Recruitment context



## Migration costs are high in Asia/GCC and differ according to corridor

Destination	Origin	Total migration costs		Average monthly earnings in destination country (US\$)
		Average (US\$)	In months of earnings in destination (averages)	
Saudi Arabia	<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>4,395</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>469</b>
Qatar	India	1,149	1.9	592
	Philippines	480	1.0	469
	Nepal	1,054	3.1	339
Kuwait	<b>Bangladesh</b>	<b>3,136</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>347</b>
	India	1,248	2.5	494
UAE	Pakistan	2,351	6.0	394
Spain	<b>Bulgaria</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>1,300</b>
	Ecuador	1,032	0.8	1,300
	Morocco	333	0.3	1,300
Malaysia	<b>Vietnam</b>	<b>1,374</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>428</b>

Source: KNOMAD World Bank / ILO Surveys, 2014-2015

# ASEAN Labour migration trends



## Employment of migrant workers in ASEAN destination countries

ASEAN Member State	Migrant Workers Stock		
	Total	% from ASEAN	% of women
Brunei Darussalam (2014)	52 161	79.5	35.8
Malaysia (2017)*	1 797 377	50.4	29.1
Singapore (2017)**	1 368 000	N/A	N/A
Thailand (2017)	2 062 807	91.2	N/A

\* Administrative records of the Malaysia Immigration Bureau

\*\* Administrative records of the Singapore Department of Statistics

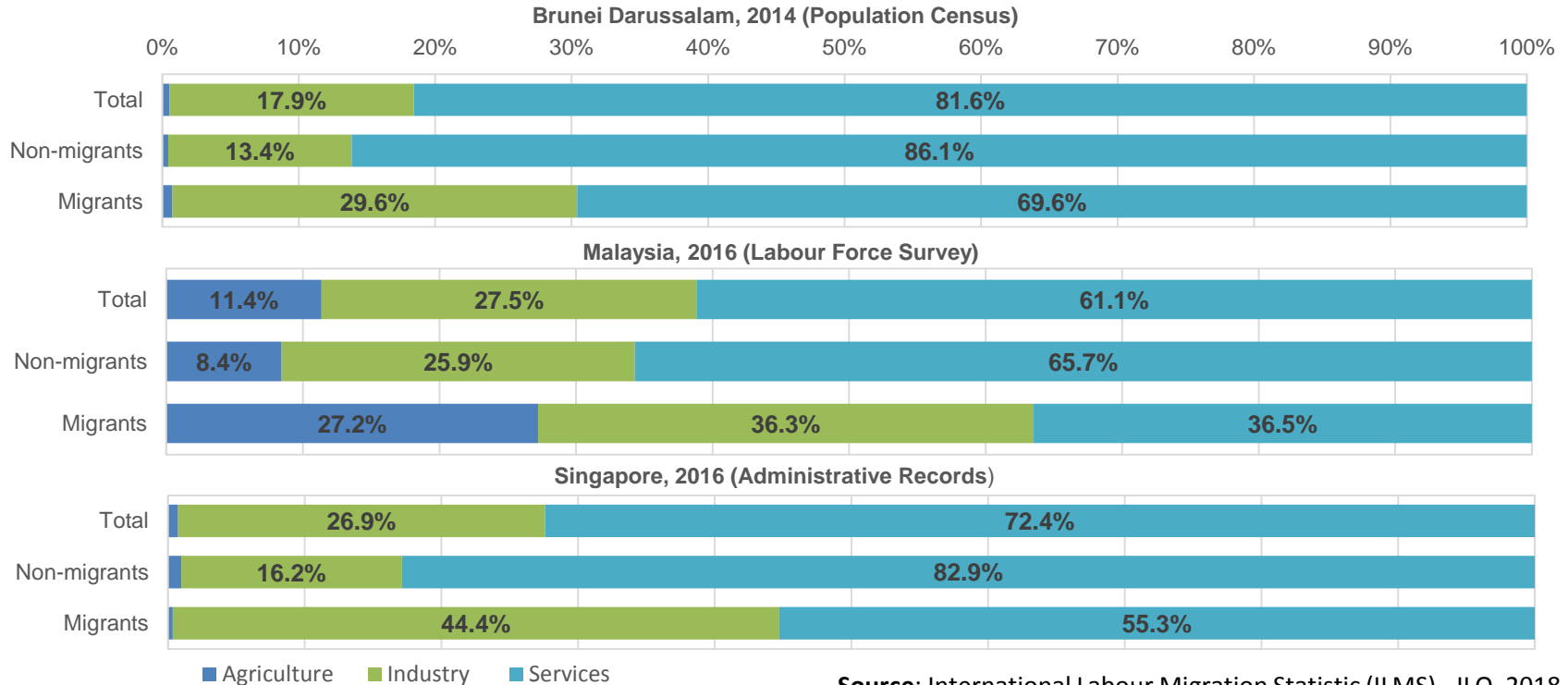
**Note:** N/A indicates data not available

**Source:** International Labour Migration Statistic (ILMS) – ILO, 2018

# ASEAN Labour migration trends



## Employment by economic activity in selected ASEAN Member States



Source: International Labour Migration Statistic (ILMS) - ILO, 2018

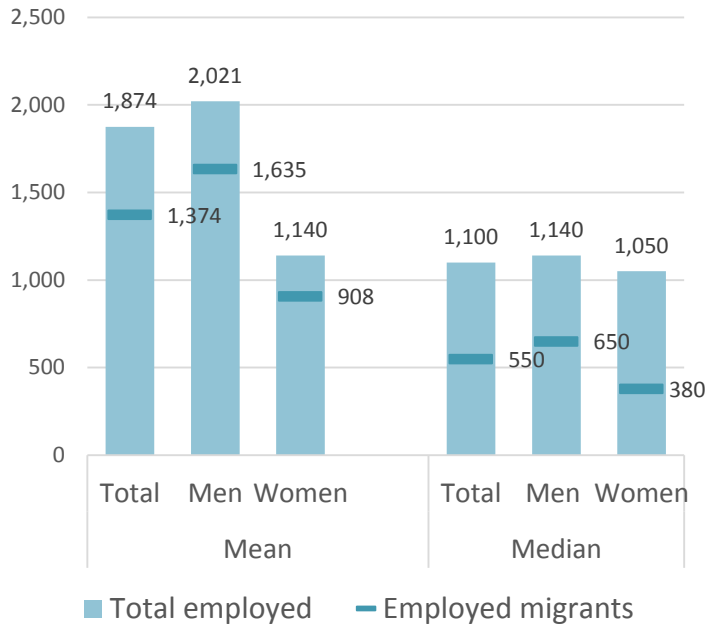


# ASEAN Labour migration trends



## Average and median monthly wages

Brunei Darussalam, 2014  
(Population Census) (BND)



Malaysia, 2017  
(Labour Force Survey) (RM)

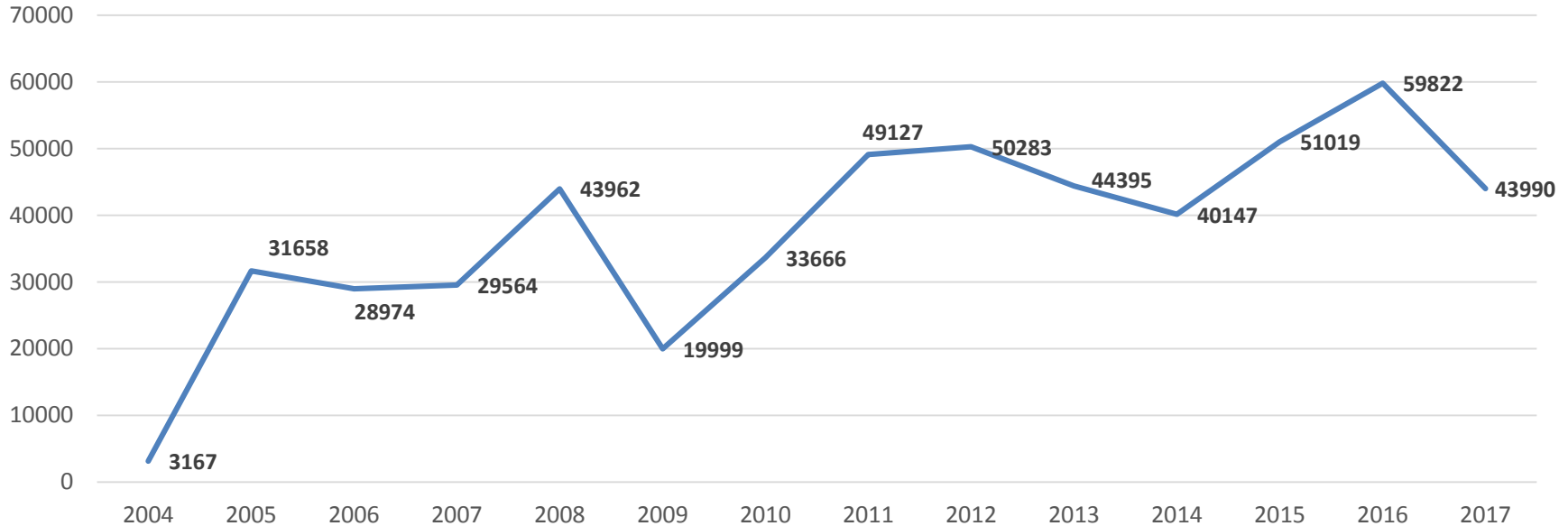


Source: International Labour Migration Statistic (ILMS) – ILO, 2018

# Republic of Korea labour migration trends



## Entry of foreign workers to Republic of Korea (2004-2017)



Source: Ministry of Employment and Labour, Republic of Korea

# Global migration governance frameworks



## Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



### Target 8.8

Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including **migrant workers**, particularly **women migrants**, and those in precarious employment

### Target 10.7

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

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



### Target 10.c

By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of **migrant remittances** and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent

# Global migration governance frameworks



## Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

10 REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES



### Indicator 10.7.1

Recruitment cost borne by employee as a proportion of yearly income earned in country of destination

- This indicator ties closely with the ILO Fair Recruitment Initiative and the drive to **bring down the cost of recruitment** and **promote employer-pays models**
- Guidelines for collecting statistics for SDG Indicator 10.7.1 have been developed by ILO and World Bank. The indicator has been upgraded from Tier III to Tier II
- ❖ **Call for action: Data collection on Tier II indicators so that they can move to Tier I**

# Global migration governance frameworks



## Ratification and Application of ILO Standards

- **Thailand** signed the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention in June 2018
- **Qatar** – the ILO Governing Body closed the complaint procedure for noncompliance with the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) in November 2017
- **Convention 19 (Equality of Treatment, Accident Compensation)** - Report of the Committee of Conventions and Recommendations (CEAR) in June 2018 has urged Malaysia to take immediate steps to conclude its work on reinstating equality of treatment of migrant workers
- **ILO General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment (2016)** - A Technical Tripartite Meeting has agreed a definition of recruitment fees and related costs in November 2016

# Global migration governance frameworks



## Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Developed under the auspices of the UN

23 objectives

Strong links to 2030 Agenda

Number of references to Decent Work

Comprehensive guidelines, non-binding

Adopted in December 2018, Morocco

## Regional labour migration governance frameworks



### ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers

*November 2017, Manila, Philippines*

- Rights of migrant workers and their families
- Non-binding
- National discretion in how rights and obligations are implemented
- The Action Plan (2018-2025) to implement the ASEAN Consensus was developed during 2018 and was notated (i.e. adopted) at the 33rd ASEAN Summit on 13 November 2018 in Singapore



# Regional labour migration governance frameworks



## ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML)

*Annually and Hosted by ASEAN Member States*

- Regional platform of governments, workers and employers organizations, CSOs and international organizations that gathers annually since 2008
- 11<sup>th</sup> AFML was held on 29-30<sup>th</sup> October 2018 in Singapore with thematic discussion  
**“Digitalisation to promote decent work for migrant workers in ASEAN”**





# Regional labour migration governance frameworks



## Abu Dhabi Dialogue

- Voluntary and non-binding inter-government consultative process engaging seven countries of labour destination and 11 countries of origin
- Adopted the Colombo Declaration during the Fourth Ministerial Consultation on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2017 in Colombo, Sri Lanka

## Colombo Process

- Regional Consultative Process on the management of overseas employment and contractual labour for 12 countries of origin in Asia
- Adopted the Kathmandu Declaration during the Sixth Ministerial Consultation on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2018 in Kathmandu, Nepal

## Concluding remarks



- ❖ The importance of labour migration and its governance is reflected in the ILO global estimates of migrant workers, and global and regional governance frameworks
- ❖ Outflows from Asia continued to decline since 2015 but remain highly significant
- ❖ The Global Compact on Migration was adopted by 152 States in December 2018
- ❖ ASEAN countries have deepened cooperation on protection of migrant workers



# Thank you

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