

Labour Migration and Regional Changes in East Asia: Outflows of Thai Workers to Taiwan*

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Paper for presentation the IUSSP Conference "Southeast Asia's Population in a Changing Asian Context", Siam City Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand, 10-13 Jun 2002

* This paper was written while the author was a visiting fellow at the Australia National University, September 2000 - March 2001, with a grant (38280F) from

the National Science Council of Taiwan. Supports from both institutions were deeply appreciated.

Abstract

The international labour migration (ILM) has been an important aspect of East Asian development since the turn to 1980's. Japan, the Asian NIEs (Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore) and Malaysia and Thailand have begun to absorb increasing numbers of workers from other countries at earlier stages of demographic and economic transitions. The ILM is the third wave of economic internationalisation in the region, following trade and capital flows. The emerging trends of intra-regional labour movements bear major implications for the process of industrial restructuring in labour receiving societies, the changing pattern of economic interdependence among states in the region, and the international relations between labour exporting and importing countries.

Between 1960 and 1995, the Thai economy grew dramatically at an average rate of 7 percent per year. The performance is particularly remarkable in the decade of 1985-95. In the same period, Thailand has changed from a labour exporting society to a country of both sending workers abroad and receiving foreign labour force. As a result of rapid economic development, there is a significant shortage of skilled manpower. The number of foreign professionals working in the Kingdom is over 200,000. In the meanwhile, the stock of workers from neighbouring countries was close to one million before the 1997 crisis. On the contrary, Thai labourers started moving overseas in the early 1970s to work in the Gulf Area. The direction of labour flow shifted to East Asia, while Japan and the NIEs entered a stage of labour shortage. In light of the Thai experience, the link between ILM and regional economic changes becomes self-evident and challenging for research.

This paper aims to investigate the existing migration systems between Thailand and the destination countries in East Asia. The focus will be placed on the migrant flows to Taiwan before and after the legalisation of labour importation in the early 1990s. In this context, the labour market segments into which Thai workers are recruited will be identified. The main concern is on the consequences of the labour movements on individual workers in terms of their earnings as well as working and living conditions in Taiwan. The research will also ascertain the costs and benefits for Thailand from labour exports. This issue appears to be particularly crucial in the light of the 1997 economic crisis. On the one hand, it has to be expected that the prospects of working abroad may not be so promising as the Asian economies are slowing down. On the other hand, the Thai authority is interested in sending more labourers overseas due to economic pressures at home. A parallel growing interest of Thai workers can also be anticipated as the domestic employment rate has been decreasing. In this sense, this research could address key policy implications for both Thailand and Taiwan, which are also closely linked by trade and direct investment.

I. Introduction

The movement of workers is a natural response of them to the existing differences in labour conditions between different markets. In other words, labour migration is an adjusting mechanism for the supply of and demand for workforce across economic sectors or geographic divisions. In the case of international migration of workers, it is distinct in having close relations with boarder controls, institutional setups, and cultural backgrounds of countries. In addition to economic elements, cross-boarder mobility of human resources is influenced by many non-economic factors, as well. Compared to internal migration, the market adjustment mechanism is offer more limited at the cross-national level of worker flows.

The international migration of workers is affected by political, social and economic conditions in the sending and receiving countries. Additionally, the mobility of manpower is further influenced by international relations and by regional interactions. The study of cross-country labour migration should take a broad perspective at the regional level on various political, economic and cultural considerations. It can not be limited to the conditions of the labour sending and receiving countries only.

In the past two decades, Japan and the Asian NIEs of Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong experienced rapid economic development and demographic transition. As a result, they all entered a stage of labour shortage and sharp increase in the cost of production. The situation, reinforced by the appreciation of currency, included significant labour flows in East and Southeast Asia. According to ILO (1998) estimates, the volume reached 6.5 million in 1997.

Between early 1980s and mid 1990s, Southeast Asian nations enjoyed significant economic growth. Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia earned the reputation of the Four Asian Little Tigers. Since mid 1997, the countries have been seriously hitted by the financial crisis and experienced a negative growth. In the meanwhile, Japan and the NIEs have also been affected by the turmoil. The regional dynamics might have exerted strong impacts on international labour migration, which deserves to be thoroughly investigated.

Thailand has a long history of labour exportation. In the early years, most Thai workers headed for the oil rich countries in the Middle East. More recently, the major labour flows out of Thailand have been re-directed to such East Asian countries as Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia. From the early 1990s, the Kingdom has also become a receiving country of workers from her neighbouring

less developed nations. Such a unique status makes the case of Thailand theoretically interesting and practically important in the study of international labour migration. For Taiwan, Thailand is the largest supply country of foreign contract workers, accounting for about a half of the total number. Among the destination countries of Thai labourers, Taiwan has the biggest share (1/3 to 1/2). At the same time, Thailand and Taiwan have close linkages in terms of trade and foreign direct investment. For these reasons, this paper attempts to investigate the relationship between labour migration and structural changes in East Asia by examining the outflows of Thai workers to Taiwan.

II. Background and Changes in Labour Outflows

On an area of about 14 times that of Taiwan, Thailand has a population of 61 million with a labour force of 3.3 million. In the earlier stages of development, the unemployment was around 3.5 percent. For the employed, slightly over a half of them were engaged in the agricultural sector. As agricultural activities are very seasonal, there has been substantial number of under-employed labour force in rural Thailand. Furthermore, the educational level of Thai working population is rather limited. Over 80 percent of them received no more than the six years of basic schooling. Most of them can do only manual work, which has a limited demand. As a result, the problem of labour under-utilization has been common in the Kingdom, especially in rural places.

Due to the limited job opportunity and the low wage level, the life of Thais was difficult in the early years. According to the Thai National Statistical Office, it was estimated that about 60 percent of the total population were under the poverty line in the early 1960s. The proportion poor decreased to 40 percent in late 1960s and to one third in the mid 1970s, which then persisted through the 1980s. With the rapid economic growth in the early 1990s, however, the percentage of poor further slid from 27 in 1990 to 13 in 1998 (Soonthorndhada, 2001). The difficulties in life of the earlier years, especially in rural Thailand, created a strong pressure to push out the active labour force of young adults. The employment opportunities and higher wages in the Gulf and other overseas countries were the main pull factors.

Thai workers have started moving overseas for employment since the 1970s. In the early days, most of them headed for the Middle East countries, especially Saudi Arabia. It was said that by mid 1980s there were 400,000 Thais working in the Gulf area. However, this number was not confirmed by official records. According to the register at the Thai Ministry of Labour and Social

Welfare, 117,341 persons went to work overseas in 1982 (Table 1). The majority of them landed in the Middle East and North Africa (97%). The major host country is Saudi Arabia (nearly 40%), to be followed by Libya (nearly 10%), Iraq and Qatar. In 1989, the registered number of Thai migrant workers to the Middle East and North Africa was 86,761, representing 76 percent increment from the 1982 figure. Its share in the total volume of Thai workers abroad, however, declined significantly from 97 to 71 percent. In the same period, the share of ASEAN and East Asia increased substantially (3% to 25%).

In the early 1990s, demand for labour in the oil producing countries decreased due to the drop in oil price. More importantly, Saudi Arabia closed the door of Thai workers to enter that country due to some serious non-economic incidents. There were reported cases of theft by Thai maids in the royal families of Saudi Arabia. In the meanwhile, three officials in charge of labour business in the Saudi Arabia Embassy in Bangkok were murdered. Consequently, the registered number of Thai workers to Saudi Arabia dropped to 9,970 in 1990. Afterward, the figure continued to shrink constantly and reached 1,392 in 1999. For the Middle East and North Africa as a whole, the size of migrant workers from Thailand declined sharply from 86,761 in 1989 to 27,392 in 1990. The corresponding market share dropped from 71 to 43 percent (Table 1).

In the 1980s, the East Asian countries experienced rapid economic growth and structural transformation. This fact, along with demographic, social and cultural influences, brought Japan and the Asian NIEs of Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and Korea into a stage of labour shortage. In these countries, the demand for foreign workers increased rapidly and a large number of Thai workers came to take the jobs (Tsai and Tsay, 2000). As shown in Table 1, the combined share of Thai workers in East Asia and ASEAN (47%) took over the dominant role of Middle East and North Africa (43%) in 1990. The shift in the major migration flows out of Thailand is well depicted in Figure 1. As the trends continued, the market shares of the three regions of Middle East and North Africa, East Asia, and ASEAN became very close to each other in 1992, ranging from 30 to 35 percent. Afterward, the importance of East Asia increased rapidly, while the Middle East and North Africa continued to lose its weight and the share of ASEAN remained roughly the same. In 1994-2000, East Asian countries hosted 60 percent or more of the registered Thai workers in the world. Among them, Taiwan played the key role in the shift of the direction of Thai labour migration. As detailed by Tsay (1995b) and Tsay and Lin (2001), Taiwan started to officially import contract workers from Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia in

1990.

Generally speaking, Taiwanese employers like to use Thai migrant workers as they are diligent, cooperative and friendly. Since the legalization of labour importation in the early 1990s, Thailand has been the most important source country of contract workers in Taiwan. At the same time, Taiwan replaced Saudi Arabia as the biggest host nation of Thai migrant workers. According to the Taiwanese records, the market share of Thais was 69 percent in 1994 with a size of 105,152. In 1995-2001, the number fluctuated between 127 and 141 thousand while the share declined constantly from 67 to 43 percent (Tsay, 2000 and Table 8 of this paper). The biggest stock of slightly over 141 thousand was observed in 1996 and January 2001. Besides Taiwan, other destinations of Thai workers include Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Hong Kong, Japan and Korea (Table 1). The size of the legally imported Thai migrant workers to each of the countries is far smaller than that to Taiwan. It is evident that the market of foreign contract workers in Taiwan has played an important role in the process of labour exportation from Thailand.

III. Recent Development in Labour Migration

3-1. Destinations and Volumes

Thailand registered an average rate of annual economic growth at 7 percent or higher for 1960-95. In particular, the records of 9.9 percent in 1985-90 and 8.3 percent in 1990-95 are most remarkable. The Kingdom has been recognized as a NIC (newly industrialized country). However, the rapid development in the past one and a half decades did not evenly spread across national sub-divisions and over economic sectors. The manufacturing industry, especially the medium and high technology manufacturing, has developed with a high degree of concentration in and around the capital city of Bangkok. The existing wage gap between Bangkok and other *Changwats* (provinces) began to expand substantially further in the 1980s. At the same time, the economic development has benefited mostly the well educated, by providing them with good opportunities of a rapid increase in earnings and other kinds of income. The improvement in earnings has been relatively much slower for workers with low or limited education (Sussangkarn, 1995).

Due to the factors stated above, the rural-urban income difference has increased. In terms of GNP per capita, the figure for Bangkok was 4.8 times that of other parts of the Kingdom in 1981. The corresponding figure for 1991 and 1995 was 5.6 and 5.5, respectively. For the low-income Thai workers, especially the

rural workforce and the less educated, it is important to search aggressively for overseas job opportunities with expected high pay. The chance of working abroad is a major hope to improve their economic position and social status. As discussed in the last section, the region of East Asia and ASEAN has replaced the Middle East and North Africa as the major destination of Thai migrant workers since the early 1990s. The main host countries include Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong and Korea.

To provide background for discussion, Table 2 presents some economic and population indicators for major labour exporting and importing nations in East Asia. Compared to most labour receiving countries, Thailand appears to have a population with a slightly higher percentage of the non-working ages. At the same time, the Thai population is clearly more migratory. The data clearly reveal a relative push factor existing in the Thai population structure. Economically speaking, Thailand is far behind the labour importing countries. In terms of GNP per capita in 1995, the highest country of Japan has a level 14.5 times that of Thailand. The corresponding figure is over 4 times for Taiwan, which has the lowest GNP per capita among the labour importing countries. For Singapore and Hong Kong, the difference ranges between 8 to 10 times. Malaysia, the other labour exporting and importing nation, also has a GNP per capita 42 percent higher than Thailand. It is evident that all these countries have exerted a pull force on Thai workers.

According to the registration data in Table 1, the volume of labour outflow in 1995-99 is around 200 thousand each year. Due to coverage problems and the confusions in the concepts of *stock* and *flow*, the registration data probably have under-estimated the actual situation. As labour importing countries have different policies and regulations (to be discussed later), there are quite sizable numbers of illegal Thai workers in those nations. According to the estimates for 1996-98 presented in Table 3, the number of illegal workers in Japan is almost 40 thousand. The figure for Malaysia, Taiwan and Korea is 8, 6 and 2.5 thousand, respectively. Taking into account the incompleteness in registration coverage and the prevalence of illegal workers, it is believed that the number of Thais working abroad is about a half million in 1995-97. About 30 percent of them are in Taiwan, with the majority been legally imported (130-140 thousand) and a few thousand of illegal workers.

Due to difference in immigration policy, most foreign workers in Japan are illegal ones. For Thailand, the official records show that the volume of annual flows to Japan is close or around 10,000 in 1994-98 (Table 1). Based on the

number of over-stayers, Watanabe (1998) reported that the volume of illegal Thai workers in Japan is 38,191. In Thailand, it is believed that the number could well be the double (around 80,000) (Sussangkarn, 1995). The data discussed above indicate a big variation and ambiguity in terms of the number of Thai workers in Japan.

Singapore and Malaysia are the two neighbouring countries of Thailand, which received some amount of Thai workers. Since 1989, the registered number of Thais going to work in Singapore has been around 10 thousand or more per year (Table 1). In 1993-99, the annual amount was between 14 and 18 thousand, and reached 24.5 thousand in 1999 accounting for 12 percent of the total number of Thai workers abroad. Table 1 also indicates a sharp increase of Thais in Malaysia from 2 to 18 thousand in the decade of 1990s. As in the case of Singapore, the increment was particularly remarkable in 1992-93 and 1998-99. With a long boarder between the two nations, it would not be difficult for Thai migrants to enter and work in Malaysia illegally. Based on regularization information, the stock was estimated at 80 thousand in 1996 (Kassim, 1998).

Brunei is another important destination of Thai migrant workers. The registered volume of annual flow has been over 8 thousand since 1989 (Table 1). It increased gradually and reached the peak of almost 21 thousand in 1996. Afterward, the number fluctuated between 18 and 16 thousand and then suddenly dropped to 7,657 in 1999. For Hong Kong, the registered number of Thai migrant flow was about 8 thousand in the early 1990s, and then decreased to around 4 thousand in the rest of the decade. Despite the need for foreign workers, Korea has accepted them mainly as trainees in a limited amount. The size of Thais going to work in Korea legally has been far below a thousand until 1996. It then increased to almost 2,000 in 1999 and should be over 3 thousand for 2000 (Table 1).

The data clearly pointed to the major shift in the direction of Thai labour outflows. East Asia, including Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Hong Kong and Korea, has replaced Middle East as the major destination of Thai overseas workers. In addition to the registered legal workers, there are also a large number of undocumented Thais working illegally in the receiving countries. The significance of the illegal Thai migrant workers and their wellbeing should not be over looked.

3-2. Foreign Workforce in Thailand

There are two types of foreign workforce in Thailand: (1) the white collar

workers of professionals and technicians, and (2) the foreign labourers. Some of the foreign professionals and technicians have lived in the Kingdom for a long period of time. Some are recent arrivals working for multinational corporations or large enterprises, especially when the economy was booming between the middle of 1980s and that of 1990s. The size of the long-stayed foreign white collar workforce has remained at around 140 thousand. For the new arrivals, the number increased from 17,881 in 1988 to 30,186 in 1991. This trend reflects the economic development and structural change of Thailand in the 1980s-1990s (Chalamwong, 1998; Sussangkarn, 1995).

In terms of the value of manufacturing exports, the annual growth rate was 25 percent in the early 1990s (Table 4). For the manufacturing exports of middle and high technology, the rate was as high as 40 percent, while that of the labour intensive commodities was 12 percent. As a result, the share of the middle and high technology commodities in the total value of manufacturing exports (37.4%) became bigger than that of the labour intensive commodities (34.5%) in 1993. With these development and changes, there has been a strong demand for skilled workers and the professionals. As the level of education and training can not be upgraded instantly for the labour force, it was not surprising to observe a serious manpower shortage at the high level. The situation is particularly acute in the fields of scientific and industrial research and development as well as business management.

The economic development and structural change in Thailand has also induced huge flows of foreign workers from its neighbouring countries, mainly Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos. As shown in Table 2, the three countries are far behind Thailand in terms of economic conditions. Demographically, they all reveal a high potential in labour out-migration. The foreign workers, some of them are refugees, scatter around the borders on land initially and then spread into the Kingdom. The most well known place of foreign workers is *Changwat Ranong* on the Burmese boarder. Most of the foreign workers are engaged in employment in agriculture, construction, cottage industry and small manufacturing, and personal service. The majority of them entered Thailand illegally and then stayed and worked in the Kingdom without a proper status.

The size of the undocumented foreign workers is believed to be quite large. It was estimated at 200 to 300 thousand in the early 1990s (Stern, 1997). The estimated number for 1996, the year before the 1997 financial crisis, was one million (Chalamwong, 1998). Among them, 810,000 are from Myanmar, 80,000 from Cambodia, and 110,000 from Laos and other countries (Table 3). Due to

influences of the financial crisis, the number of foreign workers in Thailand was estimated to have reduced by 460,000 in the second half of 1998 (ILO, 1998).

3-3. Labour Importation Policies

Just as the world is acknowledging East Asia's success in the 1970s and 1980s in managing national economies to achieve rapid economic growth, most of the Asian nations face a new challenge---managing migration. There are about three million foreign workers in the major labour importing countries in East and Southeast Asia (Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Brunei, Malaysia and Thailand). Most of them come from the five main exporting nations in the region (Indonesia, the Philippines, China, Thailand and Malaysia). Will Asian nations provide the world with another "miracle" in the management of labour migration? Abella (1995) notes that the process through which Asian nations opened their doors to foreign workers was very similar to that of Western Europe and North America. When countries found themselves short of labour in particular sectors after domestic reservoirs of flexible labour were exhausted, they permitted or tolerated the entry of foreign workers.

Asia may have simply delayed rather than avoided the dilemmas involved with importing foreign workers. However, countries now importing foreign workers can be ranked along a spectrum ranging from denial to management, for the benefit of the host country (Martin, Mason and Tsay, 1995). At the denial end of the spectrum are Japan and Korea, whose immigration laws do not permit the importation of unskilled foreign workers. Instead, unskilled foreign workers are students, trainees, or illegal workers. At the other end of the spectrum, Singapore announced that it considers foreign workers an instrument of economic policy making. Foreign workers are to be imported when needed, charged significant fees that increase government revenues, and sent home when they are not needed.

In between are countries such as Taiwan and Hong Kong. They recognize the need for guest workers. However, their policies zig zag as they are tugged first by labour-short employers to permit more foreign workers to enter, or to let those already there stay longer, and then persuaded by unions and other critics of foreign workers to reduce the number of foreign workers or to tighten restrictions on them. Malaysia and Thailand represent special cases of countries that both import and export labour. Both countries' workers seek high-wage jobs abroad but the number of workers from poorer countries seeking to enter these fast-growing countries is rising sharply. Both countries have long borders with

poor neighbours, making it hard to see how they could keep out unskilled foreign workers without great effort.

The emigration countries of the Philippines, Indonesia and China have announced that exporting labour is a crucial part of their economic development plans for the next decade. All three countries would like to upgrade their labour exports, to export higher wage skilled labour rather than unskilled workers, and to better protect unskilled workers abroad. However, it is hard to see how they can achieve this goal in a world of countries eager to compete to supply workers to the international labour market.

East Asian nations have credibility in economic policy making - they have earned worldwide acclaim for their ability to promote rapid economic growth. But these nations today confront new challenges, including the challenge of managing migration, an area in which they have little credibility. Asian immigration nations will have to establish their credibility in immigration matters. There is a growing gap between policies that prohibit the importation of unskilled foreign workers, but the reality is that such workers comprise over 1 per cent of their workforces. Similarly, in emigration nations, governments have little credibility when they promise to prevent the exploitation of migrants, but find migrants exploited by recruitment agents at home and employers abroad.

Three general trends in Asian labour migration affect prospects for labour exporting nations. First, it appears that the "need" for additional skilled and unskilled labourers will persist throughout the region. Second, labour-short nations such as Korea and Japan may try to hire foreign workers as trainees, both to avoid acknowledging their dependence on foreign workers, and to pay migrant workers lower wages. Third, migrant workers seem to be staying abroad much longer, a reminder of the axiom that there is nothing more permanent than temporary workers.

3-4. The Financial Crisis

In July 1997, the financial crisis started in Thailand. It spread rapidly over most East and Southeast Asian countries, and was called the *Dom Yam Kuong Disease*. The extent of a financial crisis can be expressed by the misery index, which is the percentage sum of currency devaluation and decline in stock prices. The upper panel of Table 5 shows that, in both June-December 1997 and June 1997-June 1998, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand were the four most affected countries. The data further indicate a recovery period of 1999 for the

heavily suffered economies of Korea and Indonesia. In the meanwhile, Taiwan and the Philippines did not perform as well. Indonesia, Korea, Thailand and the Philippines were hit by the economic downturn again in 2000. Over the period of mid 1997 to the end of 2000, Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan suffered relatively less in the crisis than other economies.

Due to the crisis, Thai economy grew -0.4 percent in 1997, -5.5 percent in 1998, and did not registered a positive growth (1%) until 1999. Compared to other countries in the region, the economic performance of Thailand has been unsatisfactory in the whole period of June 1997 to December 2000 (Table 5). As the economic conditions deteriorated, the unemployment rate surged to 5.6 percent and the volume of the jobless is close to 2 million. The problem of underemployment was very serious, as well. According to the Thai Labour Force Surveys, the number of the employed who work for less than 35 hours a week increased from 2.43 million in February 1997 to 4.41 million in February 1998, representing an increment of 2 million in the year. In terms of unemployment, the size was 290 thousand in August 1997 with a rate of 0.87 percent. The corresponding figures for August 1998 were 1.13 million jobless people and an unemployment rate of 3.45 percent. In the year from mid 1997, about 630 thousand workers were laid off by 7,537 enterprises.

To ease the impacts of the crisis on the labour market, Thai government took a strong position to crack down the illegal foreign workers in the Kingdom. At the same time, the labour authority was keen on sending more Thai workers abroad to earn the urgently needed foreign reserve. The two approaches were all aiming at releasing the pressure of unemployment and underemployment. For the Thai labour force (especially those in rural places), there was a high desire during the crisis of obtaining overseas job opportunities. As revealed by Table 5, however, all the host countries of Thai migrant workers in East Asia were also affected by the crisis and suffered from negative or little growth. The regional situation was so unfavourable for the Program of Encouraging Labour Exportation adopted by Thai government that its effects were very limited (Chantavanich, 2000; Soonthorndhada, 2001).

In 1997-99, Malaysia was seriously hit by the crisis as well. In the country, the size of illegal migrant workers was estimated at 800 thousand in 1996 (Table 3). As in Thailand, the government of Malaysia took aggressive actions to apprehend and expel undocumented foreign labourers during the economic turndown. In the long run, however, Malaysia will need workers from abroad after the crisis (Kassim, 1998; Pillai, 1998). As stated in the previous section,

Singapore has a positive policy in the utilisation and management of foreign workers. In the meanwhile, the island state was much less affected by the crisis. The volume of foreign workers to be taken by Singapore will continue to be determined by two major factors. They are the economic benefits to be created by the guest workers and the social cost associated with the labour importation.

In Japan, the policy has been denying the entry of unskillful workers from abroad. At the same time, foreigners are permitted to be *trainees* in Japan to work at discounted wage rates. Despite the strict regulations, there has been substantial amount of irregular foreigners working illegally in Japan. The estimated number for 1997 was 281,157. About 14 percent of them are Thais (Table 3). It is believed that some of the illegal foreign workers in Japan are the trainees who run away from their original employers to take higher pay jobs elsewhere. According to Watanabe (1998), the recent decline in the number of illegal workforce was mainly due to a tighter immigration control rather than the effect of the economic crisis. It was true, however, that the wage of foreign workers (especially the illegal ones) was affected by the crisis.

Relatively speaking, Taiwan was less hit by the financial crisis among countries in East and Southeast Asia except for 1999 (Table 5). As Taiwan has a rather open policy of labour importation, its labour market has been exerting a strong pull force on foreign workers (particularly Thai workers). In 1999, Taiwan had the highest misery index among the East and Southeast Asian countries, partly due to the disaster of earth quake in September 1999. The economic position of Taiwan improved only very moderately in 2000. However, the stock of contract workforce increased from 270,620 at the end of 1998 to 324,909 in January 2001. Given the labour importation policy and the existing economic conditions and trends, Taiwanese manufacturing industry will continue to demand foreign workers. For some time, the demand could be particularly strong for the low skilled labourers.

As a result of industrial restructuring, the strong demand is expected to shift to the high skilled professionals (Lee, 1998). With the relocation of traditional manufacturing to overseas, the share of demand for low skilled workers will decline. At the same time, the demand for health care and household services will continue to grow as the Taiwanese population aging and living arrangement changing. This pattern has been observed in the most recent statistics (Tsay and Lin, 2001). In response to the 1997-98 Asian crisis, Taiwan initiated the Program of Enlarging Domestic Demand. A major portion of the program is the construction of public infrastructures which needs a lot of

labourers. This demand is reinforced by and compounded with the reconstruction projects after the September 1999 earth quake. As pointed out earlier, Thailand supplies over 90 percent of the total imported construction workers in Taiwan. Unfortunately, the continued economic downturn in 2001 with an unemployment rate of record high (3.78%) has forced Taiwan to review its labour importation policy and schemes. It was decided to keep the volume of foreign contract workers under 300,000.

IV. Foreign Workers in Taiwan

4-1. Labour Importation

The inflows of migrant workers to Taiwan became significant in mid-1980s, when a sizeable number of labourers from Southeast Asian and other countries was observed in the manufacturing and construction industries and in the household sector. Almost all of them entered as tourists and then over-stayed their visas and illegally engaged in paid employment. According to demographic estimations, the volume of the illegal foreign workforce was over 50,000 at the end of 1989 (Tsay, 1992). However, some believed that there were as many as 100,000. The existence of this big number of undocumented foreigners working in the country created tough challenges for deportation and management. In the meanwhile, there was a general acceptance of the need to augment the labour supply. The authorities were pressured to grant special permissions to import contract labourers to expedite several major public construction projects and to alleviate labour shortage in local manufacturing firms. Taiwan officially opened its labour market to foreign workers in 1989.

The history of legal importation of foreign workers to Taiwan is rather short, but the liberalization process is quite rapid¹. The rapid liberalization of the labour market has resulted in a huge surge of contract workers from the four designated source countries of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. Vietnam was added to the list of labour providing countries in 1999. The total volume of imported workers jumped from 3,000 in 1991 to 16,000 in 1992, almost 100,000 in 1993 and then 152,000 in 1994. The sharp increment was due to both the expansion of the importation schemes and the increase in the number of

¹ In May 1992, the Employment Services Act was promulgated to provide a legal base for labour importation. Before that, two waves of contract labourers were brought to Taiwan in late 1989 and 1991 to meet the need of the construction industries involved in key national development projects, and to supplement the shortages of manufacturing labour. Strictly speaking, these two waves of labour importation are unlawful.

imported workers of some major existing schemes (Tsay, 2000).

Between the end of 1995 and January 2001, the size of imported labourers continued to increase by 71 percent from 189 to 325 thousand. With regard to the source of the contract workers, data in Table 6 reveal that Thailand is the biggest provider, to be followed by the Philippines and Indonesia. At the end of January 2001, Thai workers (141,179) accounted for 43 percent of the total 324,909 contract labourers while the share of Filipinos and Indonesians is 30 and 24 percent, respectively. The number of Malaysian workers has declined significantly and become trivial in recent years. On the contrary, the Vietnamese workers have just entered the market for a year and accounted for nearly 2.5 percent of the total imported workforce.

The data in Table 6 clearly indicate a sharp contrast between the industrial structure of Thai workers and that of Filipinos and Indonesians. The proportion of Thais engaged in manufacturing employment is 73 percent while 23 percent having construction jobs and 4 percent being service workers. In the case of Filipinos, 62 percent are in the manufacturing sector and 2 percent in the construction industry while 35 percent are working as health care or household service providers. The industrial structure of Indonesian workers is very similar to that of the Filipinos, in having a huge proportion in the service sector (82%) and a small share in construction (1%). In the case of Vietnamese, almost two thirds (59%) are manufacturing workers and one third service providers (34%).

A further investigation on Table 6 suggests a segregation of the contract workers by nationality. Among the 36,065 contract workers employed by the construction sector, 91 percent are Thais. The share of Filipinos and Indonesians is only 6 and 2 percent, respectively. On the contrary, the majority of the 106,479 imported service workers are Indonesians (60%) or Filipinos (32%). For the manufacturing employment, the market share is 57 percent for Thais, 33 percent for Filipinos and 7 percent for Indonesians. Thai labourers are more widely distributed across the manufacturing industries, with some concentration in textiles, fabricated metals, electrical and electronics, and basic metals. For the Filipinos, 56 percent of the manufacturing workers are in the electrical and electronics industry, to be followed by the 11 percent in the textiles. The distribution of Indonesians in the manufacturing industries is a pattern between the Thai and the Filipino compositions.

In sum, irregular migrant workers emerged in the labour market of Taiwan in the mid-1980s. In late 1989, the market was opened for the first time to contract labourers from Southeast Asia. However, the legal base for importing

workers was not provided until the Employment Services Act was promulgated in May 1992. After that, the industrial coverage of importation schemes expanded and the number of contract workers increased vary rapidly. Virtually, all the industries in the manufacturing and construction sectors, as well as households in need of service are not difficult to be qualified for permissions to use workers from abroad. In just a decade, the number of foreign workforce rose up to the current level of about 325 thousand. The rapid increase in the size of care providers in recent years was particularly remarkably.

After the legalization of labour importation and the subsequent sharp increase in the volume of foreign workers, the labour market in Taiwan changed significantly. In the past few years, the unemployment rate shot up and the length of unemployment prolonged, evidently. At the same time, the growth rate of wage clearly slowed down. All the changes in the labour market occurred at a timing of about two years after the rapid expansion in labour importation schemes. It is thus reasonable to suspect some possible impacts of foreign workers on the unemployment of local workers. This hypothesis was partly supported by recent analyses based on survey data (Tsay and Lin, 2001).

4-2. Thai Contract Workers

Taiwan is the major destination of Thai nationals working abroad, accounting for near one third of the total. In Taiwan, Thai contract workers represent a half of the whole imported labour force. For both the sending and receiving countries, it is important to understand the migration outcomes of Thai workers. As the main reason for moving to work in Taiwan is the pursuit of higher pay, the 1999 Survey of Thai Migrant workers in Taiwan was conducted to examine the working and living conditions of the workers. Additionally, the survey data will be used in comparison with the situation of Thai workers in Japan, Singapore and Malaysia.

As reported in Tsay and Lin (1999), the study examines the characteristics of Thai migrant workers in two major industries: manufacturing and construction. The survey data indicated that all Thai workers are under age 40. But, construction workers are on average older than manufacturing workers. The level of educational attainment is limited. The majority (71%) of all workers received no more than primary education. The level is especially low among the construction workers. Almost all Thai workers did not participate in any skill training programs before coming to Taiwan. Most of them had no experience of working in another country, either.

Most of the workers are not household heads, indicating that they are probably not the only breadwinner in the family. This is particularly true among construction workers. With regard to household income, the largest group (58%) is the one below Bhat 10,000 a month, to be followed by 10-20 thousand (25%). With regard to job in Thailand, the evidence shows that Thai workers in Taiwan are characterized with a strong rural-agricultural background. A part of them might be in fact underemployed or even unemployed. As a result, over a half of the respondents were hesitant to reveal their individual income and the reported ones indicated a low level. The estimated monthly income is around Bhat 5,000.

As contract workers, most Thai migrants (78%) have been in Taiwan for less than a year. Their travel and job arrangements were all made by recruiters in Thailand. They were well informed about the working and living conditions in Taiwan. But, the amount of money they paid for going to work in Taiwan is extremely high. Over 90 percent of them paid over Bhat 80 thousand, with 48 percent of over 140 thousand and 43 percent of 80-140 thousand. The cost of migration is substantially higher for construction workers than those in the manufacturing sector. Just to pay back the migration cost, the Thai workers would have to work for at least half a year, without spending any of the income.

Given the low income level in Thailand, almost all Thai workers became in debt due to migration. They were mostly financed by the private lenders or through some informal channels. The high interest rates charged by the private lending agencies in the underground market should explain a part of the high migration cost. It is very likely that the migrant workers did not have the required guarantee to apply for loans from the formal financial institutions. One way to solve the problem is the involvement of the Thai authority in charge of labour exportation. The government should be able to play as a guarantee to the banks for the migrant workers to obtain credit loans at the market rate. Without having the loans from the underground market, the cost of migration should be able to be substantially reduced.

Most of Thai workers in Taiwan are satisfied with their migration outcomes, by indicating a fitness of job expectation and the higher income. All the Thai contract workers are paid more than minimum wage (NT\$15,840 a month) in Taiwan. Most of them earn over the level by working extra time. The median earnings is close to NT\$ 25,000 a month, which is remarkably higher than their income in Thailand. The construction workers earn more than their manufacturing counterparts by taking more overtime work. Probably due to the difference in the nature of work, construction workers are far less satisfied in

terms of fitness of job expectation than manufacturing workers.

Almost all the Thai workers (89%) are satisfied with their earnings in Taiwan. The percentage is higher in the construction group than in the manufacturing category. Although the construction workers earn more than the manufacturing workers, they show a much lower percentage of high satisfaction with their income. Most construction workers (77%) indicated that they are paid fairly for their work. The findings reflect the hardship of the construction job and the high extent of overtime work in the industry. Compared to construction workers, the proportions of being highly satisfied with earnings and dissatisfied with earnings are both higher among the manufacturing workers. This fact is probably related to the less hardship of the manufacturing work and the less opportunities to work overtime for extra income in this industry.

Thai workers have some problems in their workplace in Taiwan. The construction workers experienced more difficulties with their job and workplace than manufacturing workers. Construction workers also have more health problems. Over a half of the construction workers claimed that their health conditions have deteriorated, while the figure for the manufacturing workers is only 9 percent. The most serious problem of the Thai workers as a whole is the feeling of loneliness. This feeling represents an important component of the psychic cost of migrating to work in Taiwan. The mental health condition of Thai workers deserves more attention in labour management.

In short, the migration outcomes of Thai workers in Taiwan are satisfactory. Of course, there are some problems with the work, the workplace and the living environments. The problems are particular serious among the construction workers, even though their earnings are higher than the manufacturing workers. The recent group conflicts between the Thai and Filipino construction workers in central Taiwan represent an important signal of the need for concern. More efforts should be made by all the employers, the recruiters, the governments and the workers themselves to avoid similar tragedies.

V. Concluding Remarks

International labour migration represents an adjustment mechanism in responding to differences in labour market conditions across countries. The cross-border movement is also affected by non-economic factors such as international relations and regional conditions. The study of international labour migration should not be limited to the economic and labour market considerations in the sending and receiving countries. The migration systems need to be

understood in a regional perspective. In addition to economic elements, the research should also touch social and cultural background, as well as the policy and regulations of foreign workers. Using the case of Thai migrant workers to Taiwan, this paper investigates the relationship labour migration and regional changes in East and Southeast Asia.

Due to internal economic, social and demographic factors, Thais have a long history of working abroad. In the 1970s and 1980s, the majority took employment in the Middle East. Between late 1980s and early 1990s, East Asia including ASEAN countries replaced the Gulf area as the major destination of Thai workers. The shift in migration direction was partly due to the decline in oil prices and some major non-economic reasons. At the same time, Japan, Asian NIEs (Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea), Malaysia and Brunei entered a stage of labour shortage because of rapid economic growth and demographic transition. The problem was particularly serious in the area of low skilled labourers for jobs with hardship. There are about 0.5 million Thai workers in the countries mentioned above. At least a half of them are working illegally. This fact creates a great challenge in the management of foreign workers and the protection of their proper rights. It is also a sensitive issues in international relations, which deserves more concern and understanding.

In the one and half decades before the 1997 financial crisis, Thai economy grew very rapidly, resulting a significant shortage of skilled manpower. The number of foreign professionals working in the Kingdom is over 200,000. In the meanwhile, the stock of undocumented migrant workers was close to one million before the 1997 crisis. Most of them came from the less developed neighbouring countries of Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos. During the period, Thailand changed from a labour exporting society to a country of both sending workers abroad and receiving foreign labour force. In light of the Thai experience, the link between labour migration and regional change becomes self-evident and challenging for research.

The impacts of the 1997 financial crisis are tremendous. An immediate response in Thailand was to expel illegal foreign workers out of the Kingdom and to encourage more Thais to work abroad. In practice, the two programs were all difficult to implement. In the long run, the East Asian labour importing countries will continue to demand foreign workers for various economic and socio-demographic reasons. It is anticipated that the temporary migration of workers will continue to remain a permanent phenomenon in East and Southeast Asia as in other parts of the world.

The available data indicate that between one third to one half of the total Thai workers abroad are in Taiwan. At the same time, Thai migrant workers account for almost a half of the total labour import to Taiwan. Among them, 73 percent are engaged in manufacturing employment and 23 in construction. But, over 90 percent of foreign workers in the construction industry of Taiwan are Thais. The labour migration from Thailand to Taiwan clearly represents a close relation between the two countries. Results of a survey indicate that the migration outcomes of Thai workers in Taiwan are satisfactory in terms of income gains and working and living conditions. Not surprisingly, there are some problems identified with respect to the work, the workplace and the living environments. Given the socioeconomic conditions and regional factors, the Thai labour migration to Taiwan will continue to be beneficial to both countries, and to the individual workers and their families.

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Table 1 : Share of the Registered Number of Thai Migrant Workers for Selected Hosting Countries and Regions, 1982-2000

<i>Region / Country</i>	<i>1982</i>	<i>1989</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>1992</i>	<i>1993</i>	<i>1994</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000*</i>
	Persons												
1. Middle East **	114,135	86,761	27,392	22,356	23,027	18,816	25,248	19,987	22,607	17,421	17,783	18,890	9,652
2. East Asia	72	10,723	12,229	17,676	25,147	78,321	106,602	136,035	113,263	119,631	126,652	129,209	84,212
Japan	41	3,825	4,210	6,263	6,748	5,588	8,848	8,303	10,118	10,099	10,790	5,278	3,186
Taiwan	-	-	111	2,237	-	66,891	91,162	120,360	96,097	100,916	106,828	115,096	73,031
Hong Kong	-	-	7,908	8,431	-	5,182	5,851	5,861	4,301	3,906	4,709	4,339	3,547
Korea	-	-	-	-	-	126	186	453	994	1,455	1,234	1,871	2,726
Others	31	6,898	-	745	18,399	534	555	1,058	1,753	3,255	3,091	2,625	1,722
3. ASEAN	3,134	20,580	17,263	20,801	21,505	40,279	43,885	44,746	47,678	44,301	41,346	49,898	40,471
Singapore	1,975	11,056	6,464	9,488	6,510	14,171	15,100	15,624	17,601	17,770	17,069	24,525	16,893
Malaysia	199	611	2,087	2,473	2,151	11,358	12,232	11,830	9,363	8,860	9,031	17,716	18,370
Brunei	960	8,630	8,009	8,840	12,729	14,750	16,553	17,292	20,714	17,671	15,246	7,657	5,208
Others	-	283	703	-	115	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. All Others #	-	4,990	6,140	3,890	2,031	2,331	1,663	1,528	1,888	2,206	5,954	4,059	3,467
Total	117,341	123,054	63,024	64,723	71,710	139,747	177,398	202,296	185,436	183,559	191,735	202,056	137,802
	Percentage (%)												
1. Middle East **	97.27	70.51	43.46	34.54	32.11	13.46	14.23	9.88	12.19	9.49	9.27	9.35	7.00
2. East Asia	0.06	8.71	19.40	27.31	35.07	56.04	60.09	67.25	61.08	65.17	66.06	63.95	61.11
Japan	0.03	3.11	6.68	9.68	9.41	4.00	4.99	4.10	5.46	5.50	5.63	2.61	2.31
Taiwan	0.00	0.00	0.18	3.46	0.00	47.87	51.39	59.50	51.82	54.98	55.72	56.96	53.00
Hong Kong	0.00	0.00	12.55	13.03	0.00	3.71	3.30	2.90	2.32	2.13	2.46	2.15	2.57
Korea	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.10	0.22	0.54	0.79	0.64	0.93	1.98
Others	0.03	5.61	0.00	1.15	25.66	0.38	0.31	0.52	0.95	1.77	1.61	1.30	1.25
3. ASEAN	2.67	16.72	27.39	32.14	29.99	28.82	24.74	22.12	25.71	24.13	21.56	24.70	29.37
Singapore	1.68	8.98	10.26	14.66	9.08	10.14	8.51	7.72	9.49	9.68	8.90	12.14	12.26
Malaysia	0.17	0.50	3.31	3.82	3.00	8.13	6.90	5.85	5.05	4.83	4.71	8.77	13.33
Brunei	0.82	7.01	12.71	13.66	17.75	10.55	9.33	8.55	11.17	9.63	7.95	3.79	3.78
Others	0.00	0.23	1.12	0.00	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4. All Others #	0.00	4.06	9.74	6.01	2.83	1.67	0.94	0.76	1.02	1.20	3.11	2.01	2.52
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

* As of August 2000.

** Including North Africa

Including U.S.A., U.K., Germany, Denmark, Italy, Australia and others.

Source : Department of Emploment, Royal Thai Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

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Tag Name : Table 1

Table 2 : Economic and Population Indicators of Major Labor Exporting and Importing Countries in East Asia

<i>Countries\ Status of Labor Export and Import</i>	<i>Per Capita GNP (1995)^a</i>	<i>Rank of Human Development Indicator (HDI)^b</i>	<i>Mid-year Population, 1998^a (000)</i>	<i>Annual Pop. Growth (%)^a</i>	<i>% of Working Age (15-64) Population^c</i>		<i>% of Migratory Age (15-34) Population^a</i>		<i>Projected Population, 2020^a (000)</i>
					<i>1995</i>	<i>2050</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>2050</i>	
Labor Import Countries									
Brunei	9,386(est.)	35	325	3.1	62.8	62.8	35.2	26.0	428
Hong Kong	22,990	25	6,700	3.0	70.7	52.6	33.1	19.3	6,543
Japan	39,640	8	126,380	0.2	69.6	54.1	28.3	20.4	123,809
Singapore	26,730	28	3,929	1.2	70.5	58.9	34.5	24.4	4,280
Taiwan	11,280	N.A.	21,894	0.8	68.6	61.2 *	35.7	23.6 *	25,025
Labor Import and Export Countries									
Malaysia	3,890	60	22,174	2.3	58.1	65.3	33.9	26.8	29,787
Thailand	2,740	59	61,201	1.0	66.7	61.6	39.5	24.3	70,503
Labor Export Countries in Southeast Asia									
Cambodia	270	140	11,662	2.4	52.4	68.7	32.1	29.1	19,295
Indonesia	980	96	204,336	1.4	62.7	64.2	37.3	26.5	263,802
Laos	350	136	5,354	3.0	52.2	68.7	31.6	30.4	9,339
Myanmar	765(est.)	131	47,602	1.8	58.5	66.9	36.5	27.1	64,319
Philippines	1,050	98	72,070	2.0	58.3	66.1	35.2	27.0	99,948
Vietnam	240	122	78,925	1.8	57.8	66.9	36.9	26.5	104,170
Labor Export Countries in South Asia									
Bangladesh	240	147	124,178	1.6	57.5	66.5	34.1	26.7	104,170
Pakistan	460	138	141,680	2.7	52.7	67.5	33.9	28.8	247,802
Sri Lanka	700	90	18,459	1.0	63.5	61.7	35.5	25.0	23,072

Sources : ^a ESCAP (1998), 1998 Population Data Sheet, Bangkok: UNESCAP.

^b *Human Development Report* (1998), New York: Oxford University Press for the World Bank.

^c Hugo, Graeme (1998b), "The Demographic Underpinnings of Current and Future International Migration in Asia," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 7(2-3): 1-26.

* Taiwan data for 2036 (CEPD.1996. *Projections of the Population of Taiwan Area : 1995 to 2036*).

File Name : Thai.xls

Tag Name : Table 2

Table 3 : Estimates of Illegal Foreign Workers in Some Major East and Southeast Asian Countries by Source of Workers

<i>Source of Workers</i>	<i>Japan</i> ¹ (1997)	<i>Korea</i> ² (1998)	<i>Taiwan</i> ³ (1996)	<i>Malaysia</i> ⁴ (1996)	<i>Thailand</i> ⁵ (1996)
1. East Asia					
China	38,957	53,429	-	-	-
Korea	52,854	-	-	-	-
Taiwan	9,403	-	-	-	-
2. Southeast Asia					
Cambodia	-	-	-	-	81,000
Indonesia	-	1,013	2,700	475,200	-
Malaysia	10,926	-	400	-	-
Myanmar	5,957	-	-	25,600	810,000
Philippines	42,627	6,302	5,150	9,600 ⁶	-
Thailand	38,191	2,528	6,000	8,000	-
Vietnam	-	3,181	-	-	-
3. South Asia					
Bangladesh	5,865	6,940	-	246,401	-
Pakistan	4,766	3,350	-	12,000	-
Others	72,242	18,285	5,750	23,200	109,000
Total	281,157	95,627	20,000	800,000	1,000,000

Notes : ¹ Overstayers, end of 1997 (Watanabe, 1998).

² Overstayers, June 1998 (Park, 1998).

³ Estimate based on overstayers and apprehensions (Lee, 1998).

⁴ Estimate based on 1996 regularization (Kassim, 1998).

⁵ Estimate based on 1996 regularization (Chalamwong 1998).

⁶ Add approximately 150,000 Filipinos still irregular in Sabah.

File Name : Thai.xls

Tag Name : Table 3

Table 4 : Value of Manufacturing Exports from Thailand

Unit : Million Baht

<i>Type of Export Commodities</i>	<i>1989</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>1993</i>	<i>1996*</i>
Labor Intensive Commodities				
Export Value	177,527	223,761	259,602	324,409
Annual Growth (%)	-	12.27	7.71	7.71
Middle and High Technology Commodities				
Export Value	90,182	176,314	281,441	567,595
Annual Growth (%)	-	39.82	26.34	26.34
Others				
Export Value	86,445	153,113	211,514	343,423
Annual Growth (%)	33.09	17.53	17.53	17.53
Total				
Export Value	354,154	553,188	752,557	1,235,427
Annual Growth (%)	-	24.98	16.64	17.97
Percentage Distribution				
Labor Intensive Commodities	50.13	40.45	34.50	26.26
Middle/High Tech. Commodities	25.46	31.87	37.40	45.94
Others	24.41	27.68	28.11	27.8
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source : Bank of Thailand for 1989-1993

* : Estimate based on the Average Growth Rate of 1991-1993.

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Tag Name : Table 4

**Table 5 : The Extent of Currency Devaluation and Decline in Stock Prices
in Some East and Southeast Asian Countries, June 1997- Dec. 2000**

Unit : %

<i>Country</i>	<i>Currency Devaluation*</i>	<i>Decline in Stock Prices</i>	<i>Total Variation (Misery Index)</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Currency Devaluation*</i>	<i>Decline in Stock Prices</i>	<i>Total Variation (Misery Index)</i>	<i>Rank</i>	
<i>June 1997 - Dec. 1997</i>					<i>June 1997 - June 1998</i>				
Korea	47.6	49.5	97.1	1	35.3	60.0	95.3	3	
Indonesia	52.3	44.6	96.9	2	83.6	38.5	122.1	1	
Malaysia	34.9	44.8	79.7	3	39.0	57.7	96.7	2	
Thailand	46.1	29.3	75.4	4	38.7	49.3	88.0	4	
Philippines	34.3	33.5	67.8	5	37.3	40.9	78.2	5	
Japan	12.0	25.9	37.9	6	18.3	23.2	41.5	8	
Singapore	14.7	23.0	37.7	7	15.4	46.3	61.7	6	
Hong Kong	0.0	29.4	29.4	8	0.0	43.8	43.8	7	
Taiwan	14.8	9.3	24.1	9	19.0	16.4	35.4	9	
<i>Dec. 1998 - Dec. 1999</i>					<i>Dec. 1999 - Dec. 2000</i>				
Korea	-5.5	-82.8	-88.3	9	10.4	50.9	61.4	2	
Indonesia	-13.4	-70.1	-83.5	8	26.0	38.5	64.5	1	
Malaysia	0.0	-38.6	-38.6	4	0.0	16.3	16.3	8	
Thailand	2.4	-35.4	-33.0	3	13.3	44.1	57.4	3	
Philippines	0.0	-8.8	-8.8	2	19.2	30.2	49.4	4	
Japan	-13.3	-36.8	-50.1	5	10.8	27.2	38.0	6	
Singapore	0.4	-78.0	-77.6	7	3.9	22.3	26.2	7	
Hong Kong	0.3	-68.8	-68.5	6	0.4	11.0	11.4	9	
Taiwan	-2.5	-2.3	-4.8	1	3.2	36.0	39.2	5	

* : In terms of the exchanging rate against U.S. \$.

- : Increase of data.

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Table 6 : Foreign Contract Workers in Taiwan by Nationality and Industries (Jan. 2001)

Industry	Indonesia		Philippines		Thailand		Vietnam		Total		Foreign Workers as % of Employees
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Total	78,251	100.00	97,285	100.00	141,179	100.00	8,194	100.00	324,909	100.00	5.61 *
Agriculture (Crewmen)	514	0.66	525	0.54	9	0.01	125	1.53	1,173	0.36	
Manufacturing	12,867	16.44	60,512	62.20	102,992	72.95	4,821	58.84	181,192	55.77	7.44
Food manufacturing	372	0.48	1,440	1.48	2,661	1.88	198	2.42	4,671	1.44	4.38
Textiles mill products	2,147	2.74	6,370	6.55	22,804	16.15	830	10.13	32,151	9.90	21.76
Wearing apparel	173	0.22	1,374	1.41	1,183	0.84	420	5.13	3,150	0.97	3.56
Leather & fur products	140	0.18	315	0.32	1,431	1.01	23	0.28	1,909	0.59	5.46
Wood & bamboo products	631	0.81	196	0.20	796	0.56	10	0.12	1,633	0.50	5.86
Furniture & fixtures	24	0.03	26	0.03	246	0.17	0	0.00	296	0.09	0.61
Pulp,paper & paper products	503	0.64	736	0.76	2,501	1.77	49	0.60	3,789	1.17	5.69
Printing processings	20	0.03	38	0.04	164	0.12	0	0.00	222	0.07	0.37
Chemical matter	184	0.24	395	0.41	1,281	0.91	111	1.35	1,971	0.61	2.63
Chemical products	125	0.16	454	0.47	1,106	0.78	57	0.70	1,742	0.54	2.56
Rubber products	154	0.20	427	0.44	4,022	2.85	182	2.22	4,785	1.47	11.65
Plastic products	767	0.98	2,665	2.74	7,602	5.38	412	5.03	11,446	3.52	6.34
Non-metallic mineral	516	0.66	1,223	1.26	4,881	3.46	247	3.01	6,867	2.11	8.10
Basic metal industries	955	1.22	1,666	1.71	8,320	5.89	105	1.28	11,046	3.40	10.32
Fabricated metal	1,218	1.56	3,604	3.70	13,076	9.26	155	1.89	18,053	5.56	6.93
Machinery & equipment	574	0.73	1,475	1.52	5,651	4.00	62	0.76	7,762	2.39	4.42
Electrical & eletronics	3,426	4.38	34,114	35.07	14,518	10.28	1,621	19.78	53,679	16.52	8.87
Transportation equipments	390	0.50	1,356	1.39	5,954	4.22	128	1.56	7,828	2.41	5.89
Precision instruments	44	0.06	551	0.57	280	0.20	86	1.05	961	0.30	3.04
Miscellaneous industrial products	504	0.64	2,087	2.15	4,515	3.20	125	1.53	7,231	2.23	10.09
Construction	727	0.93	2,013	2.07	32,893	23.30	432	5.27	36,065	11.10	8.36
Social & person services	64,143	81.97	34,235	35.19	5,285	3.74	2,816	34.37	106,479	32.77	25.01

Source : Council of Labour Affairs, The Executive Yuan.

* : Non-agriculture employees only.

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Tag Name : Table 6

Figure 1 : Registered Number of Thai Migrant Workers and the Shares for Selected Host Countries and Regions, 1982-2000



