

Abstract

For 30 years Thai women have set off for international labour migration. Germany and Japan are among the most important receiving countries. Until today the number of Thai women entering these two countries has permanently increased. Many of them face difficulties. The International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) recognizes the rights of women to move or choose the place to stay. It is therefore the duty of Thai State to provide assistance and devise measures for prevention and protection.

The main objective of this study, *The Rights of Thai Women to Migrate to Work Abroad*, was to examine the migration process itself, and to look at migration motivation and factors associated to emigration. It attempts to draw recommendations for prevention programmes, as well as for support to Thai migrant women, in a way that is acceptable for women. This was done through analysis of narrative biographical interviews with 33 Thai women in Germany and 16 in Japan, as well as published documents.

The findings indicate that international female migration has hardly changed in most aspects during these 30 years. The main traits of migrant women are as follows: they are mostly from the Northern and North-Eastern provinces of the country and can be divided into single mothers, commercial sex workers for foreign men and young unmarried women affected by relative economic deprivation searching for economic and social advancement. The relative economic deprivation and the emergence of cultural migration as well as the existence of social networks facilitating international migration are important factors affecting migration motives of the women. Lack of information about the destination and of language skills are among the difficulties many women face in Germany and Japan. In order to provide help to the women and avert problems the study draws some suggestions for the Thai government and governments of the receiving countries.