

Viet Nam Migration Profile 2016



International Organization for Migration

The UN Migration Agency

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Ha Noi, August 2017



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FOREWORD

Reflecting global trends, greater numbers of Vietnamese citizens are migrating with millions of departures each year to a broad variety of countries and territories. However, the opportunities and benefits for Vietnamese citizens' safe and legal migration have not been properly evaluated. For migration to be an appropriate choice for citizens, coherent government policy and close State management and coordination are needed, together with cooperation from all stakeholders.

To build a comprehensive people-centred policy to address migration from Viet Nam, the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took the lead in the development of the *Viet Nam Migration Profile 2016*, with financial and technical support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Dr Vu Manh Loi, from the Institute of Sociology, Viet Nam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), compiled this report with support from an advisory panel, comprised of migration experts from relevant ministries and branches.

The *Viet Nam Migration Profile 2016* was based on the successful *Review of Vietnamese Migration Abroad** report released in 2011. This earlier report sought to provide a general overview on international migration from Viet Nam and also sought to contribute to the development of a comprehensive migration policy suitable to the context and specific features of Viet Nam.

The relationship between migration and development, as well as the reasons for migration and the challenges faced during the process of migration, are presented in detail throughout this report based on an analysis of information and data provided by relevant agencies and branches of government. The analysis, comments and assessments of data focus on the period 2012–2016, and readers can gain a valuable overview of Viet Nam's role in the international migration process.

Sincere thanks goes to the participating ministries, branches, institutes, academies and research centres for their enthusiastic support during the entire development process of this report. Members of the advisory panel, experts and scholars are also acknowledged for their valuable comments and advice, especially Dr Vu Manh Loi for the compilation of this report.

* The Consular Department took the lead, in coordination with the IOM Mission Office in Ha Noi and VASS team, to develop the report with financial support from the European Union.

The Consular Department would also like to take this opportunity to express its sincere thanks to Mr David Knight, Chief of Mission, and Mr Nguyen Quoc Nam, Programme Officer from the IOM Mission Office in Ha Noi, for their close and effective coordination and cooperation during the development and production of this *Viet Nam Migration Profile 2016*. Thanks must also go to the IOM Development Fund for the financial support to facilitate the development of this profile.

Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting
DoLAB	Department for Overseas Labour
DoLISA	Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
FDI	Foreign direct investment
FTA	Free trade agreement
GDP	Gross domestic product
GSO	General Statistics Office
ICEF	International Consultants for Education and Fairs
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IOM MRTC	Migration Research and Training Centre of the International Organization for Migration in Republic of Korea
JASSO	Japan Student Services Organization
MoCST	Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
MoND	Ministry of National Defence
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MoPS	Ministry of Public Security
MHTC	Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

USD	United States dollar
VASS	Viet Nam Academy of Social Sciences
VND	Viet Nam dong
WTO	World Trade Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the landmark *Review of Vietnamese Migration Abroad*, conducted and published in 2011, this *Viet Nam Migration Profile 2016* was produced to provide up-to-date evidence on the situation of international migration and the relationship between migration and development in Viet Nam. Its findings can make meaningful contributions to policy planning, enhance capacity in data collection of statistics and information sharing among relevant agencies/organizations.

Situation of international migration

During 2012–2016, the number of Vietnamese citizens exiting and entering Viet Nam rose during 2012–2015 and decreased in 2015–2016. In 2016, approximately 6 million people exited and nearly 6 million people entered the country. If the number of estimated unofficial entries and exits through land borders is considered, the overall figure of Vietnamese people exiting (and entering) the country annually could reach more than 9 million people – approximately 10 per cent of the national population. Those who exited the country were often in the most active working age group of 20–40 years, with women having a slightly lower percentage of outmigration than men.

International departures for livelihood purposes is the most popular form of migration for Vietnamese, including those who work abroad under fixed-term contracts and self-funded migration of workers to neighbouring countries through land borders. These two types of migration were found to have climbed during 2012–2016, with the number of migrants under fixed-term contracts abroad having reached 126,296 during 2016, with 28 countries/territories as destinations. Just one third of migrants who moved overseas under fixed-term contracts during 2012–2016 were women, while residents from north-central Nghe An and northern provinces constituted the majority of migrant workers under fixed-term contracts. The top destinations for fixed-term contracted Vietnamese workers were Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia. Generally, migrants working abroad under fixed-term contracts enjoy higher salaries than for similar types of work domestically.

Many self-funded migrants, who pass through borders to neighbouring countries for work, travel with legal documents. However, a considerable percentage unofficially crossed borders via overland trails. These irregular migrants are more vulnerable and are shown to experience threats, lack of legal protection and exploitation. Such migrants might easily fall victim to human traffickers or be subject to administrative fines by authorities on both sides of the border.

Migration for study is common among school and college-age students. Most migrant students are self-funded and not included in statistics gathered by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) for policymaking. The number of students studying abroad under scholarships from the State budget or agreements between the Government of Viet Nam and foreign governments managed by the MoET only accounted for a small proportion of education migrants. In 2016, some 1,464 MoET-managed students went abroad to study in 41 countries/territories, and 737 students returned after completion of studies. The main receiving countries of Government of Viet Nam-supported students in 2016 were the Russian Federation (722 students), Australia (107), France (93), Hungary (67), Germany (52), China (51), Japan (51), United Kingdom (44), Lao People's Democratic Republic (41), the United States (32), New Zealand (27), Cambodia (25), Ukraine (22) and Belgium (20). Other countries had less than 20 Vietnamese students each.

The number of self-funded students is significant and increased during 2012–2016. In 2015, Viet Nam had the sixth highest number of students in the United States (17,875 students). Business administration was the most popular major for Vietnamese students in the United States, with one third of all Vietnamese students in the country during the 2014–2015 school year having studied business administration as a major. Other popular majors were engineering (8.9%), English (8.6%), mathematics and computer science (8.3%) and physics/biology (7.2%). Only 5.1 per cent of students tackled social sciences and 1.4 per cent humanities, while 4 per cent of students chose medical majors. In Japan, there were up to 38,880 Vietnamese students during 2015, making Viet Nam the second largest sender of students behind China. There were also approximately 45,000 Vietnamese trainees in Japan. In New Zealand, the number of Vietnamese students was 17,222 in 2015; in Australia, it was 10,282 and 5,618 in Canada. Vietnamese students also studied in a range of other countries; however, statistics are limited or non-existent. Overall, it is estimated that more than 100,000 Vietnamese were studying abroad during 2016, and this figure, as forecasted, will continue to increase as the country further integrates into the global community.

Another type of international migration stems from marriages between Vietnamese and foreign nationals. During 2012–2016, marriages with foreign nationals were recorded in all 63 provinces and cities nationwide. In 2016, 16,223 Vietnamese citizens (85% female) married foreigners. Overall, the percentage of women marrying foreigners has decreased, while that of men increased. The United States, Republic of Korea, Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China, China and Australia had the most significant numbers of citizens marrying Vietnamese nationals. International migration due to adoption of Vietnamese children by foreign nationals was also commonplace. In 2016, 551 cases of international child adoption were recorded across 46 provinces/cities. The total number of children adopted by foreign nationals during 2012–2016 amounted to 2,312 cases. Most adopted children were aged 1–5 years, with a slightly higher adoption rate for girls than boys – 53.3 per cent of total adoptions in 2014, 53.6 per cent in 2015 and 52.3 per cent in 2016. France received the highest number of adopted Vietnamese children during the past decade, followed by Italy, Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China, Spain, Canada, Republic of Korea, Ireland, Sweden, Germany and Denmark.

Human trafficking, which has become commonplace in Viet Nam since the 1990s, is another cause of international migration. According to the Steering Committee 138/CP, during 2008–2016, Viet Nam detected 3,897 cases of human trafficking with 6,188 traffickers and identified 8,366 survivors of trafficking, more than 85 per cent of whom were women and children. Nearly 90 per cent of transnational trafficking cases took place across Viet Nam’s borders with Cambodia, China and Lao People’s Democratic Republic, with 70 per cent of all cases involving crossings into China. In general, human trafficking has become more complex and has taken more diverse forms, with commercial sexual exploitation and forced marriage the most common causes. Trafficking in infants, fetuses and for removal of organs is also recurrent. The number of discovered survivors has generally tended to increase, reaching approximately 1,000 persons per year during 2012–2016. However, it must be noted that the figure is likely much higher, as victims of trafficking often choose not to disclose or report their situation to authorities or seek assistance from authorities; however, this crime has been detected in all of Viet Nam’s 63 provinces/cities, especially along Viet Nam’s borders with Cambodia, China and Lao People’s Democratic Republic.

Impact of international migration

The impact of international migration from Viet Nam is diverse and multidimensional with positive and negative effects on migrants themselves, their families and communities of origin and destination. Positive impacts for

migrants include opportunities for employment and higher income, improved education, skills and qualifications, as well as to learn foreign languages. For families in Viet Nam, international migrants are important sources of financial support as a result of remittances sent home. Most often, family members invest these funds in house repairs or construction, family business start-ups, children's education, health care or to facilitate other family members to migrate overseas for employment.

For communities in origin and destination countries, international migration of workers is seen to have positive impacts overall. International migration reduces employment pressures on the local labour market, and remittances help local communities and countries generate more investment resources for development.

However, international migration, particularly irregular migration occurring outside legal pathways, also has negative implications for migrants, their families, communities and countries. Irregular migrants or those who first migrate regularly, but then stay irregularly overseas are generally not protected by laws and can easily become victims of exploitation, abuse and human trafficking. Many migrant workers also face economic risks when employers encounter economic hardships or do not comply with previously signed labour contracts. For families, long periods of separation between husbands and wives, parents and children have unintended consequences that impact negatively on the spousal relationship, care, health and education of children, as well as care for the elderly.

In response, appropriate measures and institutions must be put in place to protect the legitimate rights and interests of all international migrants, to minimize risks and create conditions for international migration to make better contributions at individual, family and country levels.

Governance and international cooperation

The Government of Viet Nam has instituted numerous policies and programmes to support and promote international labour migration and overseas study, as well as create supportive conditions for marriages to foreign nationals and child adoption in compliance with international legislation. In addition, the Government has a number of policies and measures to deter, prevent and reduce the harmful effects of irregular migration, especially cross-border human trafficking. The Government of Viet Nam has actively promoted international cooperation with relevant countries to ensure a safe migration environment

and protect migrants' rights and interests. However, current institutional arrangements, agencies and policies on international migration have displayed distinct limitations in tracking, monitoring and managing international migration processes.

Recommendations

- The State is encouraged to appoint a migration management agency to act as a focal point to develop a database on international migration and periodical migration profiles for management and development. The most appropriate agency for this purpose is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).
- Ministries and branches, within their areas of responsibility and functions, should review current international migration policies and institutions to optimize migration procedures in Viet Nam. Optimization would include reduced migration costs and enhanced services to existing migrants and potential ones. At the same time, the control of border entries and exits should be better managed through the development of an electronic database to collect statistics according to set criteria, such as age, gender, place(s) of departure/destination and purpose(s) of migration, if possible.
- MoFA is recommended to instruct Viet Nam's diplomatic representatives abroad to effectively protect the rights and legitimate interests of Vietnamese citizens overseas.
- The Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs is encouraged to continue its review policies relating to contracted outward labour migration and related management mechanisms to manage this migration flow. It should also strengthen the supervision and evaluation of labour-sending enterprises to ensure overseas labour migration activities are safe and convenient with reduced costs and the rights and interests of workers, sending enterprises and employers are well protected.
- MoET is recommended to develop and propose an international education integration strategy to the Government to strengthen participation in the international education market through creation of favourable conditions to grow the market domestically and encourage Vietnamese to study abroad.
- Ministry of Public Security to continue its review of migration mechanisms and policies to create favourable conditions for Vietnamese citizens to go abroad for work, study, tourism and other legitimate purposes.
- Ministry of National Defence is encouraged to enhance measures to prevent different forms of irregular migration through land and sea borders.

- Ministry of Justice could closely cooperate with ministries, branches and local authorities to ensure marriages to foreign nationals and international child adoption are lawfully carried out, and cases of deception and abuse leading to trafficking in persons are minimized.
- Ministry of Information and Communication should enhance information and communications channels for dissemination of information on policies, regulations and practices related to Vietnamese migration abroad.
- Ministries/sectors and other social organizations have important roles in supporting these activities, as well as in the development of inter-agency mechanisms for international migration research, policy implementation and management. Information sharing and public awareness raising on the benefits and risks of international migration must also be enhanced.

I. BACKGROUND

I.1. Global migration

The International Organization for Migration's (IOM) *World Migration Reports* of 2013 and 2015 (IOM, 2015; IOM, 2013) stated that migration in general and international migration in particular were commonplace in developing and developed countries. Migrants from developing countries were often younger aged, and males migrated more than females. Most migrants travelled for improved livelihoods and to send remittances to support families. Those who migrated for educational purposes often went from developing countries to developed ones, but a reverse trend had become more evident as people migrated to seek economic opportunities, study, retire or return to home countries after a prolonged period abroad.

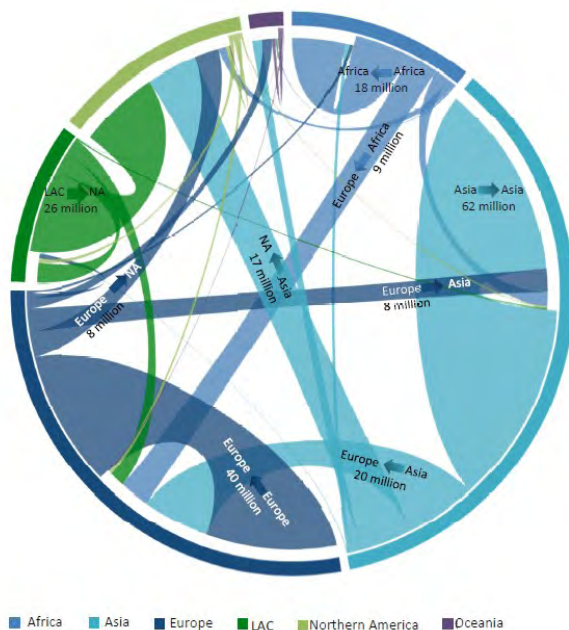
Generating accurate international migration statistics is challenging due to its complex nature in relation to times, locations, migrants' length of stays abroad and migration purposes. In fact, it has become increasingly difficult to estimate the number of international migrants globally, due to variations in national statistical systems in terms of availability of data and definitions to identify international migrants in each country/territory. To address this issue, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) has worked to use birthplace and nationality as identifiers of international migrants (including Vietnamese) at 1 July annually in all countries to develop a database on annual international migration between 1990–2015 (UN DESA, 2015).¹ In this database, migrants are those born abroad, but present in a specific country on 1 July. However, many countries do not have such data on foreign citizens, which means migrants in a country are those with a foreign nationality. Identification of migrants based on nationality has limitations as people born abroad, but complete citizenship procedures after returning home, will not be considered migrants. Moreover, the same can be said for a person considered an international migrant, who was born in a country, received a foreign nationality – but in fact had never migrated. Although there are shortcomings in identification of migrants based on birthplace or nationality, such databases generally reflect a comprehensive picture of international migration worldwide.

¹ The database is available online here: www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates15.shtml

Based on the UN DESA database and data from 213 countries/territories, there were 152,563,212 international migrants globally in 1990. This number increased to 172,703,309 in 2000, to 221,714,243 in 2010 and hit a record peak of 243,700,236 in 2015. This trend underlines the rapid rise in global international migration during the past 25 years. This figure is probably much lower if migration for periods less than a year is counted. A recent World Bank report using data from the Population Division of the United Nations in 2013, supplemented with data from new population censuses in numerous countries, gave an estimate of more than 247 million international migrants globally in 2013 and predicted the figure could exceed 251 million in 2015, 7 million people higher than the UN DESA figure (World Bank, 2016).

Figure 1 shows the number of international migrants according to main areas of origin and destination, using UN DESA data (the outermost circle refers to areas of origin). It reveals that in Africa, Asia and Europe, international migration flows within a continent are significant. Up to 62 million migrants moved between Asian countries/territories, while migration within Europe reached 40 million and flows within Africa hit 18 million (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2016). Besides, intercontinental migration flows were predominant. For Africa, migration to Europe (9 million people) was significant, while intercontinental migration from Asia was mainly to North America (17 million) and Europe (20 million). For Europeans, migration flows outside the continent were mainly to Asia and North America (8 million each).

Figure 1. Number of international migrants according to origin and destination, 2015

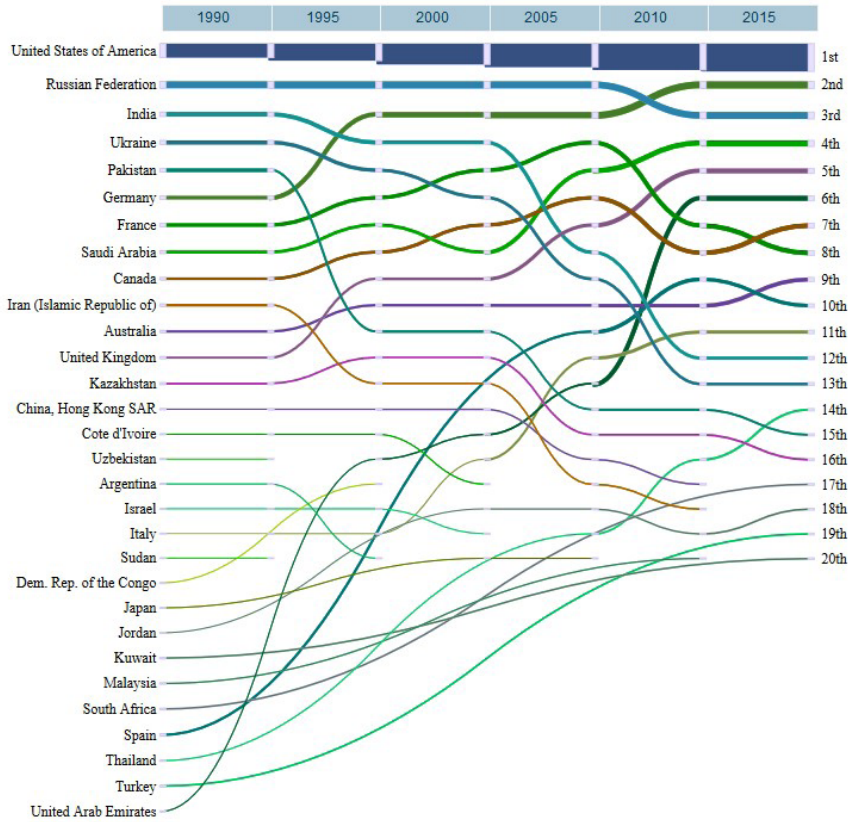


Notes: See note to figure 8. "LAC" stands for Latin America and the Caribbean and "NA" for Northern America.

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *International Migration Report 2015: Highlights* (United Nations, New York, 2016).

Figure 2 shows patterns of international migration in 20 countries/territories that had the highest numbers of international immigrants during 1990–2015. It is clear the United States has topped this list for the past 25 years. During this period, Germany had increasing numbers of international immigrants, jumping from sixth (1990) to second position. The Russian Federation ranked second during 1990–2005, but dropped to third. Other countries with a sharp rise in international immigrants in this period were Saudi Arabia (eighth in 1990 to fourth in 2015), Great Britain (twelfth to fifth) and especially the United Arab Emirates (thirtieth in 1990 to sixth in 2015). The rankings for Australia, Canada, France, Italy and Japan changed slightly. Countries with a sharp decrease in international migrants included India (third in 1990 to twelfth in 2015), Ukraine (fourth to thirteenth) and Pakistan (fifth to fifteenth).

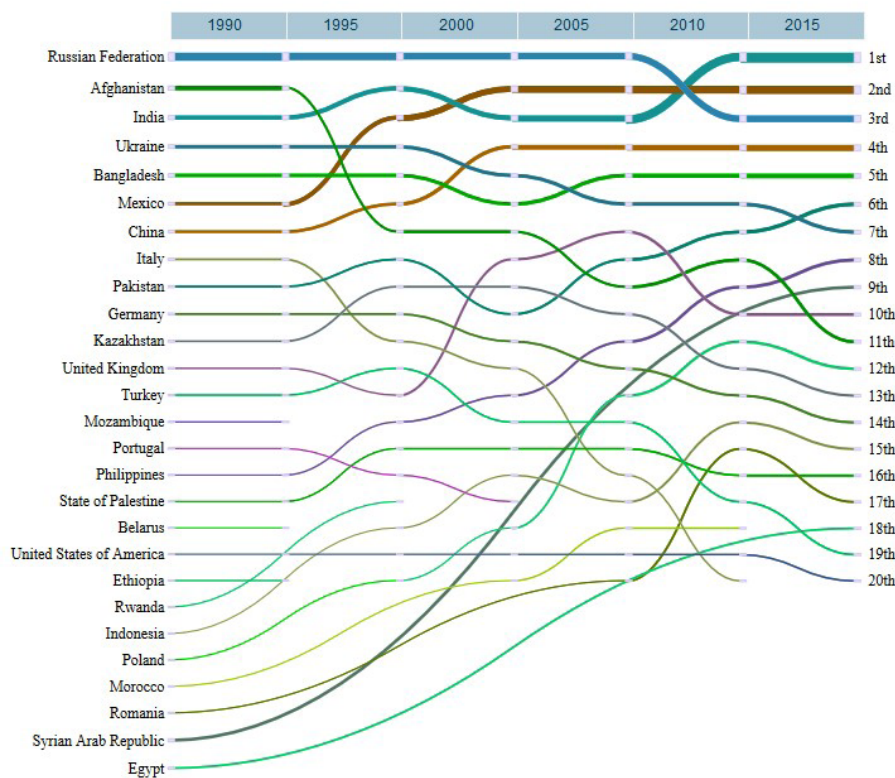
Figure 2. Twenty countries/territories with highest numbers of international immigrants (millions)



Source: UN DESA, *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2015 Revision* (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2015) (2015).

Figure 3 shows patterns of international migration of countries/territories with large numbers of citizens living abroad during 1990–2015. The Russian Federation topped the list during 1990–2005, then gradually dropped to third in 2015 behind India and Mexico. China also had a significant number of citizens living abroad, climbing from seventh in 1990 to fourth in 2015. In South-East Asia, high numbers of Filipinos and Indonesians lived abroad during 1990–2015.

Figure 3. Twenty countries/territories with highest numbers of citizens living abroad (millions)



Source: UN DESA, 2015.

A recent World Bank report also paints a similar picture of countries with high numbers of immigrants (World Bank, 2016). According to this report, the world’s greatest international migration flow is from Mexico to the United States, 13 million migrants in 2013, followed by flows from the Russian Federation to Ukraine, Bangladesh to India and Ukraine to the Russian Federation. It is estimated that 38 per cent of all international migrants travelled between developing countries/territories (“South–South” migration), while 34 per cent journeyed from developing to developed countries/territories (“South–North” migration) (World Bank, 2016).²

² In this document, the World Bank uses the country classification under the “South–North”. IOM recommends taking the classification of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to classify developed countries, countries in transition and developing countries (IOM, 2013:47). Classification of the Division of Statistics and UN DESA are also in this direction, but the database in Figure 1 of this organization states other “northern countries” and other “southern countries”, using the classification of “South–North”.

In 2015, it was estimated that remittances sent home by international migrants worldwide exceeded USD 601 billion. Of this figure, USD 441 billion was sent to developing countries, nearly threefold the total official development assistance (ODA) for these nations (World Bank, 2015). Countries receiving the highest number of remittances were India, China, the Philippines, Mexico and France. Comparing remittances to gross domestic product (GDP), Viet Nam (13.2%) was one nation among a number to have high ratios, including Tajikistan (42%), Nepal (29%) and the Republic of Moldova (26%). The highest value of remittances were sent from the United States (USD 56.3 billion), followed by Saudi Arabia, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, Germany and Kuwait (World Bank, 2015).

Overall, general international migration research results indicate that: (a) international migration is a growing trend; (b) it has positive socioeconomic and cultural impacts as well as on workers, families and communities in origin and destination places; and (c) there are negative impacts on sending and receiving countries, especially when migration takes place in an unregulated environment through, for example, human trafficking and people smuggling. As such, appropriate policy measures should be taken to minimize these latter impacts.

1.2. Socioeconomic background of Viet Nam

The year 2016 marked three decades since Viet Nam started a reform process that transformed the economy from a centrally subsidized system to a socialist-orientated market one. This reformed economy is characterized by private sector development, foreign investment attraction and expansion of markets alongside profound changes in State management institutions towards an enhanced rule of law and democracy.

Besides economic reforms, the Government has also focused on pressing social issues, such as hunger eradication and poverty alleviation, human resource development, education and training, health care, development of a social welfare system and the welfare of vulnerable groups, such as people living in remote areas, ethnic minorities, the disabled, children, women and the elderly.

Regarding external relations, Viet Nam has implemented open-door policies and cooperation with numerous countries. In 1995, Viet Nam normalized relations with the United States and joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). A year later, it participated in founding the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), joined the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in 1998

and the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2007, as well as signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the European Union in 2015. To date, Viet Nam has established diplomatic relations with 170 countries and been involved in establishing the group of participating countries in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Viet Nam has attracted foreign direct investment (FDI) from more than 100 countries/territories worth USD 250 billion in the past three decades (World Bank and Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), 2016).

In three decades of reform, Viet Nam has made great strides in numerous fields, including economically and in international integration. Annual average economic growth during this period was 6.4 per cent, high compared to other countries in the region (author's calculations based on mega data of World Bank data³). GDP growth per capita averaged 5.5 per cent annually since 1990, resulting in people's actual incomes rising 3.5-fold during this period. Compared to other regional countries regarding this indicator, Viet Nam stands second after China (World Bank and MPI, 2016). The rates of poor households and people have also been significantly reduced in Viet Nam, with the World Bank calculating that its poverty rate (based on a poverty line of USD 1.9/day per capita) had dropped from 50 per cent in the early 1990s to 3 per cent in 2016 (World Bank and MPI, 2016). Viet Nam escaped the group of the world's poorest countries to join the lower middle-income group in 2010 and by 2015, had achieved most of the Millennium Development Goals, with some targets such as poverty reduction, education and health care exceeded (Government of Viet Nam, 2015).

Migration and international migration are commonly seen as integral parts of a nation's development. As such, Viet Nam's three decades of reforms have been accompanied by increased internal and international migration by its citizens. The country's international integration has been reflected in policies encompassing study, work, research, tourism and foreign investment that have created favourable conditions for more Vietnamese to go abroad. The Review of Vietnamese Migration Abroad, produced by the Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) with IOM support in 2011, showed a dynamic picture of Vietnamese migrants abroad during 2000–2011 (Consular Department, MoFA, 2011). The following sections of this report examine Vietnamese citizens' international migration during 2012–2016.

³ See <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG/countries/1W?display=graph>

Box 1. Basic indicators on Viet Nam, 2016

Population:	92,700,000
Population growth rate:	1.1%
Proportion of urban population:	34.6%
Labour force aged 15 years and over:	54,557,900 (quarter IV, 2016)
Proportion of workers aged 15–24:	14.8%
Proportion of workers aged 25–49:	58.7%
Proportion of workers aged 50 and over:	26.5%
Proportion of trained workers:	21.4%
Proportion of trained male workers:	23.8%
Proportion of trained female workers:	18.9%
Total domestic product at comparative prices, 2010:	USD 3,054,470 billion
GDP per capita:	USD 2,215/person
Average life expectancy:	73.4
Human Development Index ranking in the world (2014)*:	116th out of 188 countries

Source: General Statistics Office (GSO), Socio-economic dynamics and status of Viet Nam in five years from 2011 to 2015 (Statistics Publishing House, Ha Noi, 2016).

* Viet Nam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS) and UNDP, *Growth That Works for All: Viet Nam Human Development Report 2015 on Inclusive Growth* (Social Sciences Publishing House, Ha Noi, 2016).

1.3. Migration profile

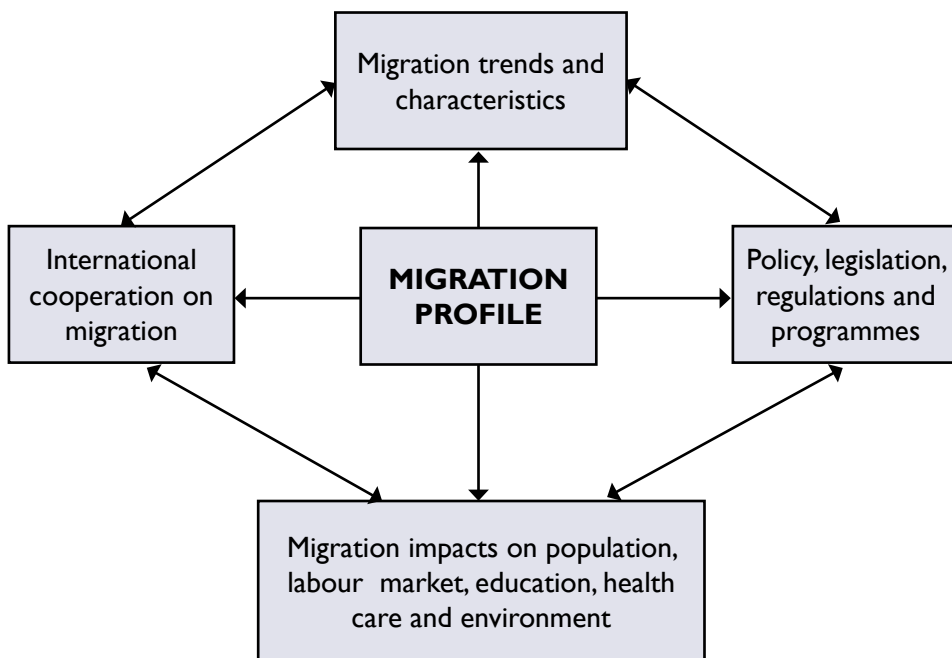
An increasing number of countries have developed Migration Profiles to lay a foundation to assist in building evidence-based policies on international migration, better manage migration processes and their impacts on migrant workers, families, communities and countries of origin and destination.

The concept of a migration profile, in general, was first developed by the European Commission in 2005 with the primary purpose to: (a) assess migration; (b) identify needs and issues to be addressed; and (c) design specific policy solutions (IOM, 2011). Initial migration profiles provided useful analysis of migration situations, but failed to link migration issues with development and policymaking nor contribute to promotion of intersectoral and inter-agency cooperation in building national migration databases, national migration profiles and activities in migration policymaking and management.

In 2008, drawing on experience from establishing initial migration profiles, the European Commission introduced a template for the *expanded migration profile* with a focus on core content encompassing: (a) trends and characteristics of migration processes; (b) impacts of migration; (c) migration policies and management; and (d) international cooperation in migration (Figure

4). These key topics are also fundamental chapters in the table of contents of the migration profile template recommended by IOM (IOM, 2011). However, when applied to the specific situations of each country, differences emerge in terms of country-specific forms of migration and underlying drivers. In general, countries commonly combine sections (3) and (4), with a subsection for international cooperation (IOM in 2008, IOM in 2015b, Jung-Eun Oh et al., 2011, Scalabrini Migration Centre and IOM in 2013).

Figure 4. Expanded migration model



Source: *Migration Profiles: Making the Most of the Process* (IOM, Geneva, 2011), 26. Available from https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migrationprofileguide2012_1oct2012.pdf

Development of a migration profile is a step-by-step process that requires strong inter-agency cooperation and cognizance of policies related to the dynamic and often cross-cutting migration process. Migration profiles are an increasing priority for governments, donors, researchers and citizens. The need to better understand international labour migration should not only focus on the stock of migrants at sending and receiving points, but also the multidimensional characteristics of the migration process as well as its impacts.

The most significant challenge in the development of a national migration profile is the collection of international migration data. IOM has underlined seven fundamental difficulties in gathering relevant data:

1. The complex and highly mobile nature of the migration process;
2. Limited availability of national information sources;
3. Inconsistent data in countries due to different legal regulations and statistics;
4. Lack of information and evidence on migration impacts, places of origin/destination and inadequate analysis frameworks;
5. Limited coordination, cooperation and information sharing among migration-related agencies and officials;
6. Inconsistent regulations on information security; and
7. Limited national capacity and resources, particularly in developing countries.

In Viet Nam, the Consular Department of MoFA utilized financial and technical support from IOM and the European Union to develop the *Review of Vietnamese Migration Abroad*, published in 2011. This was the first publication in Viet Nam structured towards a migration profile. This report provided concise information on the situation of Vietnamese migration for policymakers. Nevertheless, the report only focused on Vietnamese migration abroad, meaning only a part of overall migratory flows were taken into account. Moreover, collection and reporting of migration information was not standardized nor harmonized among agencies. None of these agencies applied comprehensive and consistent analysis of collected data.

In 2015, with financial and technical support from the IOM Development Fund, the Consular Department of MoFA, in collaboration with relevant ministries and agencies, developed this *Viet Nam Migration Profile* to update the situation of Vietnamese migration abroad, as well as examine the characteristics of migrants and the links between international migration in the context of Viet Nam's development.

I.4. Objectives, methodology, sources of information, limitations of the report

I.4.1. Objectives

This report aims to:

- Provide practical evidence on international migration and links between migration and development in Viet Nam.
- Contribute to policymaking, strengthen capacity of government migration management agencies in information collection, statistics and the sharing of data.

I.4.2. Terminology and indicators of international migration and sources of information

The UN DESA has developed a database of international migration based on national population censuses and statistics related to citizens and refugees. According to this database, an “international migrant” is defined as a person born in another country (origin country), but has settled in a host country (destination country). In the event there is no information about the birthplace based on the status of citizenship, he/she will be defined as a citizen of another country (origin country), before resettlement in the host country (destination country).

a. Labour migration in this report consists of:

- **International labour migrants under termed labour contracts with foreign partners:** Are migrant workers working abroad under contract in accordance with article 6, *Law on Vietnamese Guest Workers Under Contract* passed by the National Assembly on 29 November 2006 (Law No.72/2006/QH11). Such migrants usually work under fixed-term contracts arranged by enterprises licensed under Vietnamese labour migration laws with employers of destination countries.
- **Self-funded migration through official or unofficial channels across Viet Nam’s borders with Cambodia, China and Lao People’s Democratic Republic:** This is the most complex and diversified form of migration in terms of occupation, duration of stay, number of exits–entries per year and purposes for travel. This form can be divided into two basic types: (a) migration for work or income-generating purposes (hired work, business, trading, services); and (b) migration for other purposes (marriage, family

visits, tourism). It is difficult to differentiate between these two types as data can be duplicated for the same travellers (exits–entries), and it is difficult to separate migrant workers from others. These data are available at the Border Gate Department, Border Guard Command, Ministry of National Defence (MoND) and Immigration Department, Ministry of Public Security (MoPS).

- b. Migration for study:** Consists of overseas pupils, students, those attending higher education (master’s or PhD courses) or colleges. Migration for study also includes trainees and interns who are international migrants for the purpose of vocational training and internships, respectively. Data on students sent overseas to study under the State budget or MoET-signed agreements with foreign countries are available at this ministry. In addition, data on overseas students can also be found at international organizations that compile statistics on international students.

Regarding data from foreign immigration agencies for this report (Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States) or from government agencies of host countries, migrants for study include those granted visas to attend full-time study or vocational training at schools, colleges and universities of host countries. Regulations on conditions for visa issuance vary from country-to-country, but have a common point that attendance should be full-time. For example, statistics on foreign students studying at colleges and universities from the US Department of Commerce (US Department of Commerce, 2016) and on those with F1 and M1 visas issued by the United States Immigration Bureau, State Department include those who met the following conditions:

- Should enrol in academic programmes, language or vocational training;
- Student-receiving institutions must be accepted by the Student and Scholars Exchange Programme (of the Government) and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement;
- Should attend as full-time students;
- Be fluent in English or take courses leading to English proficiency;
- Should have sufficient financial resources to live and study during an entire study programme; and
- Should be a permanent resident of a foreign country and not intend to change.

In Japan, Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) statistics include those with a “college student visa” attending universities, colleges, pre-university training schools and Japanese language schools under the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Law (JASSO, 2016). Student visa conditions include

full-time programmes (“at least 10 hours of class per week”), sufficient financial resources to live and study in Japan, knowledge of Japanese language and study at schools with full-time lecturers for training foreign students or study at Japanese schools specified by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).⁴

In Australia, there are eight types of study visas, from high school to college, undergraduate and graduate. To obtain student visas, students must be admitted to full-time courses at schools specified in the list of Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students. In addition, applicants must meet finance, medical insurance, English language and other requirements (Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Government of Australia, 2016). In New Zealand, student visa holders must attend full-time courses and fully meet financial requirements to live and study.

c. Marriage with foreign nationals: MoJ has figures on marriages involving “foreign elements”,⁵ including all cases of Vietnamese citizens who reside in Viet Nam and marry foreign nationals and Vietnamese citizens who reside in Viet Nam and marry Vietnamese resettled abroad. Such marriages often lead to international migration of such couples. However, not all marriages involving foreign nationals are associated with international migration, as a number of Vietnamese citizens who marry foreign nationals choose to continue living in Viet Nam. Such cases are defined as “social migration” (marrying foreign nationals), rather than “geographical migration”. No agency of the Government of Viet Nam has accurate and comprehensive data on migration abroad for marriage. In this context, this migration profile uses MoJ data and only data of Vietnamese citizens marrying foreign nationals.

To distinguish between marriages with foreign nationals and cases of international migration due to marriage, enhanced coordination is necessary between the MoJ and agencies, such as the Immigration Department (MoPS), High Command of National Border Guard (MoND) and Consular Department (MoFA) to review and enhance the database on entries–exits.

⁴ See explanation of the regulations for application for “college student visa” on the website: www.japanvisa.com/visas/japan-college-student-visa

⁵ “Marriage with foreign elements” means a marriage between:

- A Vietnamese national and a foreign national;
- Foreign nationals who reside in Viet Nam; and
- Vietnamese nationals where the foundation for establishment/change/termination of this marriage or property (related to this marriage) is based on legislation of a foreign country.

- d. Migration for child adoption:** Is defined as migration of Vietnamese adoptive children who migrate abroad with adoptive parents, who are foreign nationals or Vietnamese with foreign nationality. This data is available at the MoJ, Immigration Department (MoPS) and Consular Department (MoFA).

- e. Human trafficking-related migration:** Is mainly trafficking in women and children. In recent years, trafficking in men has emerged through deception and false promises for employment abroad, which result in forced labour. These data are available at MoPS units, such as the Standing Office of Combating Crime and Drugs, Staffing Department and Steering Committee 138/CP of the Government.

1.5. Information collection methodology and report limitations

Data collected for this report mainly relied upon MoET, MoFA, MoJ, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA), MoPS, MoND and other relevant agencies as sources. This report is also based on diversified data sources from research and reports from international and Vietnamese organizations. The research team studied numerous government policy documents on Vietnamese citizens' overseas migration.

To complement material from international migration documents, the team conducted qualitative field trips in An Giang, Ha Tinh and Lang Son provinces to collect further data regarding land border crossings by Vietnamese, as well as to examine the challenges and opportunities in gathering migration-related data in these localities.

Report limitations

The biggest difficulty encountered during the development of this report was gathering updated migration data and extracting data according to key characteristics of migrants, such as age, sex, migration purposes, places of origin–destination, migration costs and remittances. Available statistics from ministries and agencies were often insufficient, with many indicators in text format and difficult to export. With active collaboration of advisory panel members from ministries/agencies and research team efforts to seek information from published research and reports from local and international organizations, the drafting team made every effort to incorporate the most recent data on Vietnamese migration abroad into this report.

As with development of migration profiles in other countries/territories, Viet Nam faced difficulties related to the definition and classification of “migration” as a result of its diverse and complex nature. Often, definitions do not fit specific migration situations, such as migration for study omitting those who go abroad for short-term courses (less than six months). Unofficial migration, referred to as “irregular migration” in some profiles of other countries/territories, is difficult to define due to varied durations of stay and migration purposes. The drafting team has endeavoured to provide a comprehensive and realistic picture of migration flows, based on official data from Viet Nam and other reliable data sources.

2. SCALE AND TRENDS OF VIETNAMESE MIGRATION ABROAD

2.1. Entry–exit situation of Vietnamese by years

The Prime Minister in mid-2010 revoked the entry–exit registration form, through Note No.4850/VPCP-QHQT, to simplify entry–exit procedures for travellers. However, statistics on entries–exits to and from Viet Nam gathered by border checkpoints did not allow for differentiation of migration purposes.

As a result, such statistics only provide an understanding of cross-border mobility of Vietnamese citizens in simple terms, with the number of entries/exits reflected instead in the overall number of migrants as one person could exit/enter the country several times in a year. Therefore, the actual number of Vietnamese people exiting/entering annually post-2010 is less than the statistics presented in this report.

Table 1 shows Vietnamese citizens' entries–exits from their country by gender. While the number of entries–exits increased steadily during 2012–2014 for both sexes, it slightly decreased in 2015–2016 compared to 2014. By comparing the stock of exits–entries in one year against the previous one, the number of exits jumped by 800,000 (14.8%) in 2013, yet between 2013–2014, there was an increase of half a million of exits (7.1%). In 2015, exits decreased by 5.4 per cent against 2014 and in 2016 exits decreased by 4.8 per cent against 2015. The increase in entries was also substantial, 15.1 per cent during 2012–2013 and 4.5 per cent between 2013–2014. In 2015, the stock of entries declined by 2.7 per cent against 2014, and in 2016 it decreased by 1.7 per cent against 2015. These declines could be explained by economic difficulties in Viet Nam and globally.

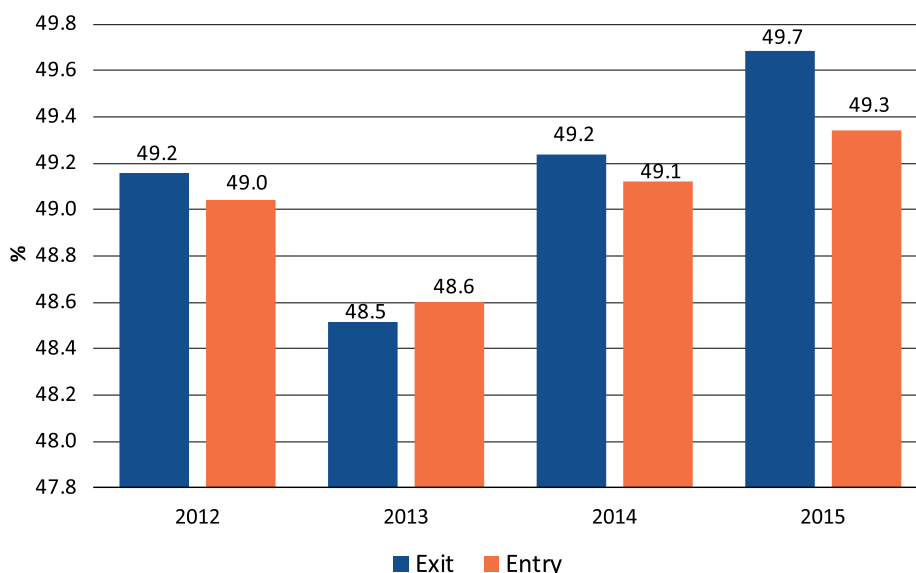
Table 1. Annual entry–exit trends of Vietnamese citizens, 2012–2016

Year	Exit			Entry		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2012	2,718,523	2,628,316	5,346,839	2,592,887	2,495,390	5,088,277
2013	3,159,123	2,977,092	6,136,215	3,010,391	2,846,461	5,856,852
2014	3,336,895	3,236,792	6,573,687	3,114,133	3,006,551	6,120,684
2015	3,129,549	3,090,034	6,219,583	3,018,031	2,939,434	5,957,465
2016 (air)	1,484,355	1,745,579	3,229,934	1,452,884	1,676,044	3,128,928
2016 (land border)			2,689,728			2,729,600
2016			5,919,662			5,858,528

Source: Immigration Department, MoPS and Border Gates Department, Border Guards Command, 2016, updated March 2017.

Figure 5 shows the gender-based percentage of exits–entries by year.⁶ In general, the exit–entry stock of female travellers was lower than males, and this trend remained unchanged.⁷

Figure 5. Percentage of exits–entries by females, 2012–2015



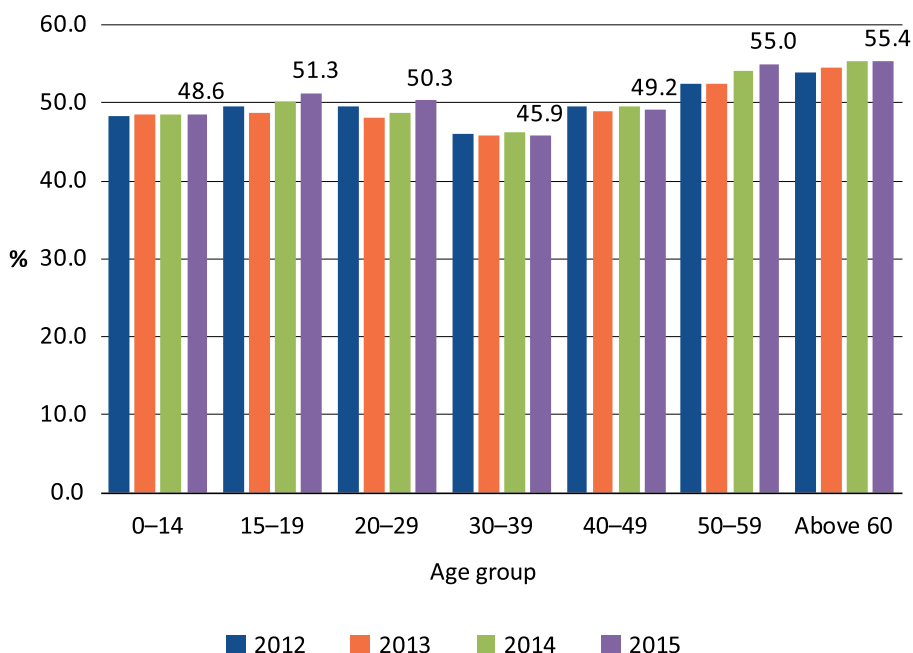
Source: Immigration Department, MoPS, 2015.

⁶ Data for 2016 is not presented here and in further figures due to the lack of specific data for males and females, as well as for age groups for air and land border exits/entries.

⁷ Data of exits/entries by air for 2016 showed a greater number of exits/entries by females than males, yet it is anticipated a greater number of males travelled across land borders during this period.

Figure 6 displays distribution by age percentage of exits of female travellers out of the total exit data in each age group. Generally, females made up a slightly lower percentage than males, especially those aged 30–39 years. However, females comprised a larger portion of those aged over 50 years, especially in 2014–2015. A similar situation was observed in entry statistics.

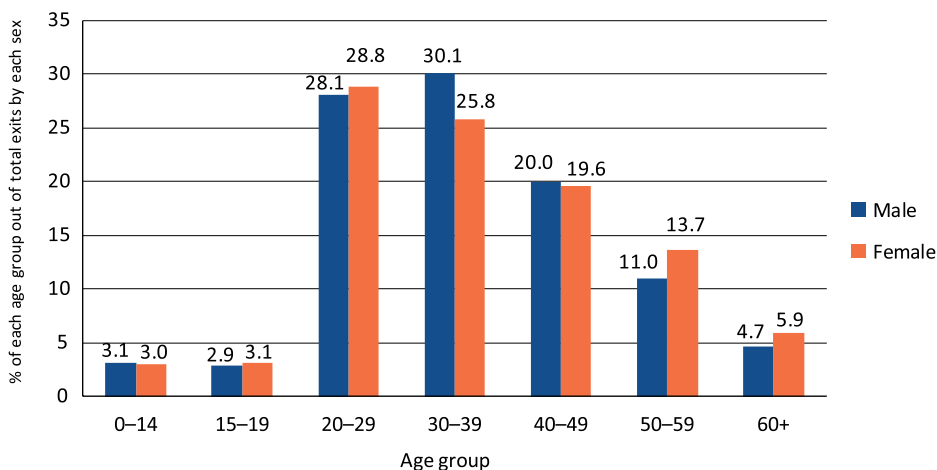
Figure 6. Percentage of exits by females by age group, 2012–2015



Source: Immigration Department, MoPS, 2015.

Figure 7 shows the distribution of exits by age groups of each sex in 2015. The majority of exiting travellers were concentrated among the 20–29 and 30–39 age groups. For the three youngest age groups, similar distribution patterns emerge. For the 30–39 and 40–49 age groups, the percentage of male exiting travellers was higher than females, but the opposite was observed for older age groups. Most males exiting the country were aged 20–39 years, whereas the percentage of exiting female travellers declined from the age of 29 years. Overall, people exiting the country were largely from younger working age groups, but there were generally less outward older working age travellers.

Figure 7. Percentage of border crossings by sex and age group, 2015



Source: Immigration Department, MoPS, 2015.

The data in Figure 7 reflects the number of official exits–entries through land, sea and air border checkpoints of Viet Nam, as recorded by authorities (Immigration Department, MoPS). Besides, there were many cases of exits/entries by residents living in border areas with Cambodia, China and Lao People’s Democratic Republic with specific border area travel documents.

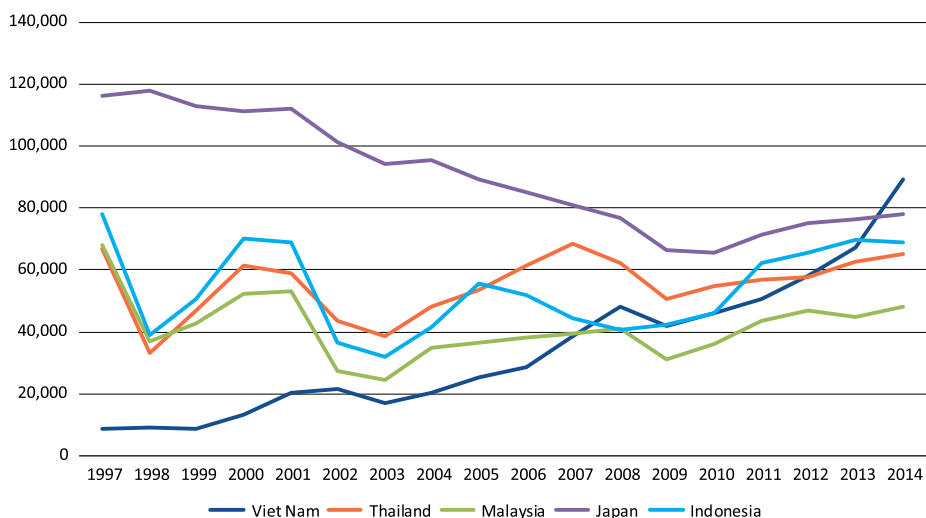
It is clear that millions of Vietnamese citizens exit–enter the country annually, with an upward trend in recent years. Taking into account exits–entries by travel documents for land border area residents (6,119,415 exits and 4,756,700 entries in 2015 and 4,379,463 exits and 3,888,042 entries in 2016), Vietnamese exiting and entering the country amounted to approximately 10 per cent of the total population (9 million people) per year. Most travellers exiting the country were of the most active working age (20–40 years). Female travellers made up a slightly lower percentage than males.

The number of Vietnamese travelling to foreign countries also increased, reflected in statistics of several countries issuing visas to Vietnamese citizens. According to the US Department of State,⁸ during 2010–2014, US visas granted to Vietnamese nearly doubled from 46,192 to 89,346, far exceeding US visas granted to other countries in 2014, such as Japan (77,860), Republic of Korea (73,200), Indonesia (68,768), Thailand (63,363), Malaysia (48,247) and Singapore

⁸ See <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/law-and-policy/statistics.html>

(10,674). Figure 11 shows the number of US-issued visas to people from several Asian countries during 1997–2014. This also encompassed a period after Viet Nam and the United States had normalized relations and when Viet Nam accelerated international integration. This is reflected in the high number of US visas granted to Vietnamese citizens during this period, while US visas issued to nationals of other Asian nations did not spike and in the case of Japan, even dropped. Among ASEAN countries, only the Philippines (179,777) had more US visas granted than Viet Nam in 2014.

Figure 8. Number of US visas granted to Asian country citizens, 1997–2014



Source: US Department of State.

2.2. Vietnamese labour migration abroad

a. Labour migration under fixed-term contracts abroad

According to the Department for Overseas Labour (DoLAB statistics), the total number of Vietnamese migrant workers sent abroad increased annually during 2012–2016, from 80,320 in 2012 to 126,296 in 2016 (Table 2).

Table 2. Vietnamese migrant workers sent abroad and receiving countries/territories by year of departure, 2012–2016

Year	Total	Number of receiving countries/territories
2012	80,320	33
2013	88,155	38
2014	106,840	29
2015	119,530	22
2016	126,296	28

Source: DoLAB, MoLISA, Document No.1379/QLLDNN-PCTH dated 16 September 2015 and Document No.821/QLLDNN-PCTH dated 17 May 2016. Data for 2016 was updated in March 2017.

Table 3 shows the top 15 destinations of Vietnamese labourers during 2012–2016, with Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China topping the table. During this period, the number of Vietnamese workers who arrived in Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China doubled, while Japan ranked second with annual increases of about 10,000 workers in the last three years. The Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia were also common destinations. In 2015–2016, Algeria emerged as receiving high numbers of Vietnamese workers (1,963 in 2015 and 1,179 in 2016). Meanwhile, a reverse trend emerged elsewhere such as Macao, China (2,516 in 2014 to 493 in 2015, and 226 in 2016) and United Arab Emirates (2,075 in 2013, 831 in 2014, 286 in 2015). No Vietnamese workers departed on fixed-term contracts for Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Cambodia and Libya in 2015, with just one to Lao People’s Democratic Republic in 2016.

Table 3. Top 15 receiving destinations for Vietnamese workers, 2012–2016

	Destination	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
1	Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China	30,533	46,368	62,124	67,621	68,244	274,890
2	Japan	8,775	9,686	19,766	29,810	39,938	107,975
3	Republic of Korea	9,228	5,446	7,242	6,019	8,482	36,417
4	Malaysia	9,298	7,564	5,139	7,454	2,079	31,534
5	Saudi Arabia	2,360	1,703	4,191	4,125	4,033	16,412
6	Lao People’s Democratic Republic	6,195	4,860	200	-	1	11,256
7	Cambodia	5,215	4,250	50	-	-	9,515
8	Macao Special Administrative Region of China (SAR)	2,304	2,294	2,516	493	266	7,873
9	United Arab Emirates	1,731	2,075	831	286	616	5,539
10	Algeria	38	158	547	1,963	1,179	3,885

	Destination	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
11	Libya	645	1,201	1,005	-	-	2,851
12	Qatar	105	206	850	455	702	2,318
13	Cyprus	1,699	143	56	43	34	1,975
14	Israel	210	141	484	268	250	1,353
15	Belarus	-	403	774	91	14	1,282
Total of 15 destinations		78,336	86,498	105,775	118,628	125,838	515,075
Percentage of these 15 among all destinations		97.5	98.1	99	99.2	99.6	98.8

Source: DoLAB, MoLISA, Document No.1379/QLDNN-PCTH dated 16 September 2015 and Document No.821/QLDNN-PCTH dated 17 May 2016. Data for 2016 was updated in March 2017.

As with the previous one, Table 3 only reflects the number of Vietnamese migrant workers deployed overseas in each respective year, not workers already in a country. For instance, the Vietnamese embassy in Japan reported 128,000 Vietnamese living, studying and working in Japan as of June 2015. The majority of whom were working age (71% aged 19–30 years and 21.1% aged 31–60), with 45,000 students and 45,000 trainees. As such, there were about 40,000 Vietnamese working in Japan, with an even greater amount if vocational trainees were included.

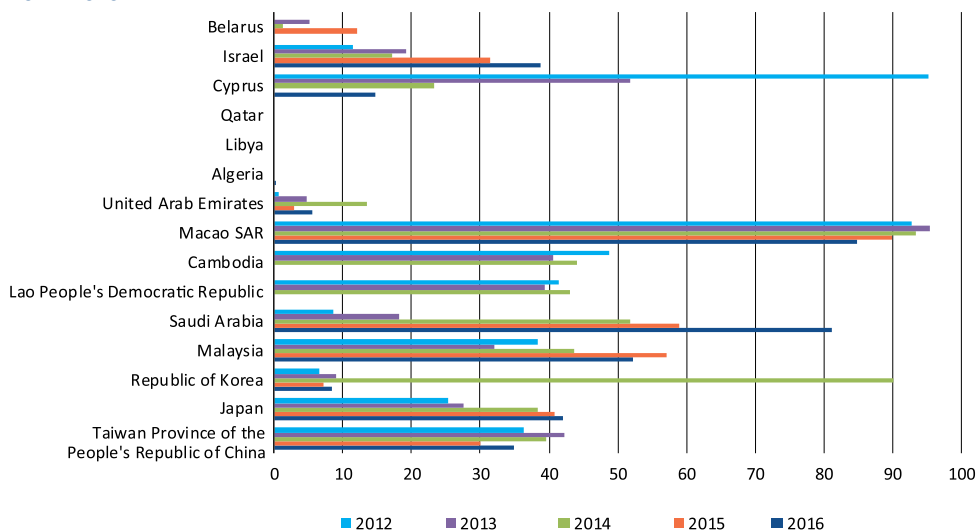
Although Australia is not listed in Table 3, some 483 skilled labour migrants were granted work visas to Australia during 2013–2014, and 537 skilled workers were employed in the country during 2014–2015, according to data from the Australian embassy in Ha Noi. In fact, this figure is higher than for many nations in Table 3.

The labour migration trend from Viet Nam to Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries increased during 1995–2012, and in 2012, it reached nearly 1.3 labourers per 10,000 citizens of working age (average ratio of 10 ASEAN State members was 1.9 labourers per 10,000 citizens of working age), just lower than Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Thailand (International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2015).

The proportion of women under contract labour abroad was relatively low and stable during 2012–2016. While women accounted for 33 per cent of labour migrants contracted abroad in 2012, 36 per cent in 2013 and 37.5 per cent in 2014, it dropped to 33.6 per cent in 2015, yet increased to 36.4 per cent in 2016. Figure 9 illustrates the low percentage of female migrant workers during 2012–2016, except for Macao, China (2012–2016), Cyprus (2012, 2013), Saudi Arabia (2014, 2015 and 2016), Republic of Korea (2014) and Malaysia (2015, 2016),

which have female-dominated domestic sectors and electronic industries. It is noteworthy that Belarus, United Arab Emirates and Republic of Korea (except 2014) had low percentages of female workers. There were no documented female workers in countries such as Algeria, Libya and Qatar.

Figure 9. Percentage of Vietnamese female migrant workers in top 15 receiving destinations, 2012–2016



Source: DoLAB, MoLISA, Document No.1379/QLLDNN-PCTH dated 16 September 2015 and Document No.821/QLLDNN-PCTH dated 17 May 2016. Data for 2016 was updated in March 2017.

Table 4 highlights Vietnamese migrant workers’ monthly income levels from 24 receiving countries in 2014.⁹ In general, migrants’ wages and other incomes earned abroad were significantly better than average domestic wages,¹⁰ especially for those in Australia, Japan, Germany and Republic of Korea. This underlines the considerable potential of migrant workers’ financial contributions to families and country. Based on figures in Table 4, estimated remittances from all migrant workers could have amounted to USD 3.27 billion in 2016.

⁹ The data on wages in 2015 provided by DoLAB in Document No.821/QLLDNN-PCTH dated 17 May 2016 is similar to that provided in 2014 by this agency in Document No.1379/QLLDNN-PCTH dated 16 September 2015. Data from 2014 was used because it aligned with data on Vietnamese people working in these countries in the same year.

¹⁰ According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the average wage in Viet Nam was USD 197/month (ILO, 2014). According to the GSO, the average wage for workers aged 15 and older in the first quarter of 2015 was VND 4,895,000/month (GSO, Report on labour force survey: Quarter 1, 2015 (Ha Noi, 2015), equivalent to USD 228.7/month (exchange rates by banks in January 2015 was USD 1 = VND 21,405; see <http://vietbao.vn/vn/ty-gia-ngoai-te/>).

Table 4. Vietnamese migrant workers working abroad and average monthly incomes, 2014

No.	Destination	Stock of migrant workers	Average wages (USD/month)	Average other incomes (USD/month)
1	Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China	138,926	650	200
2	Republic of Korea	54,392	1,000	250
3	Japan	26,164	1,400	200
4	Malaysia	20,108	300	111
5	Saudi Arabia	16,251	320	100
6	Lao People's Democratic Republic	15,532	300	113
7	Macao SAR	13,205	550	160
8	Cambodia	12,335	250	94
9	United Arab Emirates	9,137	320	100
10	Cyprus	2,809	491	200
11	Russian Federation	1,452	800	200
12	Qatar	1,153	320	100
13	Libya	883	350	130
14	Belarus	680	491	200
15	Singapore	399	700	
16	Italy	355	875	200
17	Portugal	145	620	100
18	United States (seamen)	129	400	300
19	Denmark	129		
20	Germany	102	1,137	
21	Australia	101	4,000	800
22	Slovakia	26	450	100
23	Malta	10	650	100
24	Poland	7	446	100

Source: Department for Overseas Labour, MoLISA.

Table 5 spotlights 25 provinces/cities that sent the vast majority (more than 90%) of migrant workers abroad during 2012–2016. This table also reveals that northern provinces dominated the fixed-term contract labour migration market. Among this number, 15 provinces have the highest number of migrant workers working abroad, except Ho Chi Minh City in 2015–2016 with a sudden increase probably due to it being a transit point for workers from other southern provinces. The other 14 top provinces are all northern and sent more than 74 per cent of all migrant workers overseas during 2012–2016. These provinces belong to the Red River Delta, the northern central and central coast areas where underemployment and unemployment rates were highest among

economic regions classified by the GSO (GSO, 2015). The Mekong Delta also had high numbers of unemployed and underemployed workers, but migrant worker stocks were low.

Table 5. Vietnamese migrant workers in foreign destinations from top 25 labour-sending provinces, 2012–2016

No.	Province/City	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
1	Nghe An	11,000	11,671	10,900	12,811	16,457	62,839
2	Thanh Hoa	11,000	8,092	10,596	9,925	8,119	47,732
3	Ha Tinh	6,000	5,361	5,759	6,150	11,194	34,464
4	Hai Duong	0	3,205	3,476	6,716	14,389	27,786
5	Bac Giang	5,000	4,068	4,860	4,374	6,963	25,265
6	Phu Tho	2,500	2,500	2,705	2,535	5,389	15,629
7	Ho Chi Minh City	0			13,599	1,886	15,485
8	Quang Binh	2,790	2,869	2,876		6,029	14,564
9	Ha Noi	4,400	1,500	1,850		6,286	14,036
10	Thai Binh	2,100	2,500	2,700		5,923	13,223
11	Nam Dinh	2,910	1,944	1,950	1,950	3,910	12,664
12	Hung Yen	2,700	2,700	2,900		4,190	12,490
13	Hai Phong	3,200	540	1,671	1,500	3,520	10,431
14	Bac Ninh	2,500	1,200	1,652	1,579	3,402	10,333
15	Vinh Phuc	2,000	2,030	2,247	2,148	1,682	10,107
16	Thai Nguyen	2,000	700	1,597	412	2,007	6,716
17	Ha Nam	1,000	947	848	1,029	1,912	5,736
18	Gia Lai	1,300	1,270	1,315	1,315	265	5,465
19	Quang Ngai	1,400	1,395	1,402		575	4,772
20	Ninh Binh	700	615	640	976	1,740	4,671
21	Quang Tri	0		750	1,497	1,275	3,522
22	Yen Bai	800	775	790	800	316	3,481
23	Dak Lak	650	778	650	580	706	3,364
24	Vinh Long	450	505	500	626	978	3,059
25	Ben Tre	377	339	516	504	1,188	2,924

Source: DoLAB, MoLISA, Document No.1379/QLLDNN-PCTH dated 16 September 2015 and Document No.821/QLLDNN-PCTH dated 17 May 2016. Data for 2016 was undated in March 2017.

In 2014, a milestone was reached when the number of Vietnamese migrant workers sent overseas to work under contract exceeded 100,000 for the first time and has since increased (almost 120,000 in 2015 and more than 126,000 in 2016).

b. Labour migration across land borders

According to statistics from the Border Gate Department, Border Guard Command, MoND, the number of Vietnamese who used travel documents to exit/enter the country through land borders sharply increased during 2012–2015. During this time, land border exits by travel documents jumped from 1,639,219 in 2012 to 6,119,415 in 2015. The increase between 2012–2013 was 17.6 per cent, 29.8 per cent in 2013–2014 and 144.4 per cent in 2014–2015, almost a 2.5-fold jump. The trend for land border travel document entries was similar. However, in 2016, land exits and entries by travel documents decreased in comparison with 2015, when exits declined by nearly 30 per cent and entries by 20 per cent. During the five-year period, the annual number of exits was always higher than entries (Table 6).

Table 6. Number of exits–entries with travel documents through land borders, 2012–2016

	Exit	Annual increase rate (%)	Entry	Annual increase rate (%)	Difference (exits–entries) (number)
2012	1,639,219		1,549,427		89,792
2013	1,928,527	17.6	1,835,673	18.5	92,854
2014	2,503,812	29.8	2,204,628	20.1	299,184
2015	6,119,415	144.4	4,756,700	115.8	1,362,715
2016	4,379,463	-28.4	3,888,042	-18.3	491,421

Source: Border Gate Department, Border Guard Command, Document No.972/CCK-TMTH dated 31 August 2015, Document No.556/CCK-TMTH dated 10 May 2016, and Document No.481/CCK-TMTH dated 4 April 2017.

In border areas with Cambodia and Lao People’s Democratic Republic, the number of people who crossed and remained in the host country for work was not high, with most further travelling to Thailand or other countries in the region. Not all those who crossed land borders with travel documents did so for work. Many went shopping or visited relatives. However, a research team investigation in border areas of An Giang and Lang Son provinces, in the southern and northern ends of the country respectively, revealed that most crossed borders with travel documents for work or income-generating activities.

Besides official land border crossings with travel documents, many Vietnamese without correct documentation also crossed land borders into Cambodia, China and Lao People’s Democratic Republic along informal forest trails for work, income-generating activities or other purposes.

The team’s research in Lang Son also revealed dynamic mobility by Vietnamese with passports (from outside the border province), travel documents (border district residents) and without proper documents through forest trails. Table 7 shows the number of exits–entries by Vietnamese through the Huu Nghi border checkpoint with China in northern Lang Son province from 2012 to mid-2015. Exits–entries with passports tended to reduce over time in contrast to a significant increase in journeys with travel documents. The marginal difference in exits–entries suggests the majority of travellers returned within a calendar year.

Table 7. Number of annual exits–entries by Vietnamese through Huu Nghi border checkpoint

	With passport		With travel document	
	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry
2012	138,046	131,905	46,900	41,818
2013	130,085	123,950	41,764	41,365
2014	107,582	105,618	103,288	94,198
Jan–June 2015	64,332	64,475	104,839	101,083

Source: Huu Nghi border checkpoint, Lang Son, 22 August 2015.

In 2014, Yen Khoai commune, Loc Binh district, Lang Son province with 757 households and 3,353 residents (1,671 females), recorded 604 cases of travel to China for labour purposes, of whom 281 were female (46.5%). Group discussions with border commune and village officials revealed it was common for residents and those from other provinces to pass through Loc Binh district commune en route to China for work. Loc Binh officials estimated that 40–50 per cent of commune households had family members who travelled to China for work annually.

Irregular migrant workers to China via footpaths were also assisted by social networks in Viet Nam and China, with safe remittance systems in place to avoid robberies or fines while travelling.

According to figures from Lang Son authorities, the province’s 231-km border stretches through 20 communes and one township, with 11,000 exits during 2011, 19,218 in 2012 and a significant jump to 30,831 in 2013. Due to tensions in relationship between the two countries in 2014, exits fell to 25,300. Group discussions with local officials revealed that the real number of exits to China was probably significantly higher. In general, most Vietnamese labourers in China had safe work environments, with limited risks of deception and robberies. However, irregular crossings to China for work placed migrants in vulnerable positions without legal protection where they could be exploited, arrested and repatriated back to Viet Nam at any time.

In order to curb irregular labour migration through land borders, Ha Giang People's Committee signed an Agreement on Management of Manual Labour with Van Son People's Authority, China on 18 December 2014. However, implementation difficulties have emerged, as Vietnamese labourers accepted by Chinese employers who work in localities far from the border are not covered by the agreement and are ineligible to receive work permits and residence cards.

The agreement only covers those sent and received by authorities on both sides in batches and not those who live in border areas and return home within a day. However, the latter category is the majority along the Viet Nam–China border. However, the labour agreement between Ha Giang province and Van Son district has set a precedent for other border localities to complete similar future agreements. Currently, Cao Bang, Lang Son and Quang Ninh provinces are in the process of developing labour agreements with Chinese border local authorities.

At Vinh Xuong border checkpoint, in southern Tien Giang province, numerous people cross into Cambodia with travel documents and irregularly. Border crossings by citizens of the two countries are under the 1983 Agreement on Border Regulations between Viet Nam and Cambodia. Since 2012, Cambodian authorities have applied stricter border control measures and increased penalties, which have reduced illegal crossings. During October 2014 to 20 October 2015, Cambodian authorities handed over 286 Vietnamese illegal immigrants through this checkpoint and unofficially returned a total of 25 people on four instances.

In north-central Ha Tinh, its people's committee invested VND 3.4 billion in development of a database on labour migration flows, including labour migration with and without contracts. The provincial DoLISA instructed communes to make quarterly and annual reports on migrant workers heading overseas to work to update the database. As a result, the province has a comprehensive database on migrant workers classified by locality, sex, destination and qualification(s).

Challenging terrain means there are no footpaths near Ha Tinh's Cau Treo border checkpoint with Lao People's Democratic Republic. Manual workers usually go to the Lao People's Democratic Republic for work or travel further to Thailand for employment in restaurants, hotels or as traders. A labour migrant hired to work in a food processing establishment in Thailand stated his monthly savings, after deductions for meals, was 8,000–9,000 baht (VND 5–6 million). A female migrant who worked as a street flower seller in Thailand said her average monthly income after meal and accommodation costs was 15,000–20,000 baht (VND 10 million). Travelling to the Lao People's Democratic Republic or Thailand is relatively easy with well-developed transportation services, especially low-priced commuter buses.

However, labourers entering the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand face many risks. According to Thailand's immigration regulations, tourists from ASEAN Member States can only stay for one month at a time and are not allowed to work. Overstaying can result in sanctions from Thai law enforcement, including deportation and/or imprisonment. To stay longer, some workers make return trips to Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic to renew visas at an approximate cost of 3,000 baht (VND 2 million) per trip. In general, according to interviewed officials and residents in Ha Tinh, Vietnamese labour migrants reported being well treated by Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand employers.

To address spontaneous cross-border migration and marriages without registration between Viet Nam and Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Agreement between the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and Government of the Laos Democratic Republic on Solving the Spontaneous Migration and Marriages without Registration in Border Areas of the two Countries was signed on 8 July 2013 and valid for three years from 14 November 2013. After almost three years' implementation, insufficient progress meant the agreement was extended a further three years.

On 3 February 2017, Viet Nam's Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc signed a decision to implement the agreement after its extension. So far, border provinces from the two sides have completed surveys on spontaneous migration and marriages without registration. On the basis of pilot implementation, border agencies from the two countries agreed on the design of plans, procedures, formalities and files for implementation of surveys, statistics, classification and listing of spontaneous migration and marriages without registration in Viet Nam–Lao People's Democratic Republic border areas and issue guidance to local authorities to coordinate implementation. Presently, ministries, branches and local authorities from the two countries are working to ensure effective implementation of the agreement after its extension.

Overall, surveys conducted by the research team in the three border provinces revealed a complex migration situation that was dynamic, yet challenging to manage with hidden risks for migrants. An important finding is the need for enhanced business and trade exchanges between Viet Nam and its neighbouring countries. In response, the Government of Viet Nam is encouraged to enter into negotiations with border countries to develop appropriate policies that meet people's needs and create conditions for legal cross-border travel and improved statistical systems to track entries–exits. The development of Ha Tinh's labour migrant database should be replicated by other provinces to allow authorities to better manage labour migration and associated social risks.

2.3. Migration for study

According to MoET statistics on Vietnamese returning from State-sponsored study or scholarships under agreements between the Government of Viet Nam and foreign governments abroad in 2015, 440 students completed education in 20 countries and 1,223 were sent to study in 30 countries/territories. The total number of departing and returning students in 2015 was 1,666, with female students comprising 38.2 per cent. Top host countries were the Russian Federation (662 students), France (65), China (62), Hungary (53), Australia (52) and Germany (52). High ratios of female students were observed in New Zealand (70.4%), Belgium (65.4%) and the United Kingdom (53.1%).

In 2016, the numbers of departing and returning students increased from 2015. Table 8 shows that 1,465 students were sent abroad for study in 41 countries/territories in 2016, while 737 students returned after completion of studies that year. The 19 countries with the highest numbers of Vietnamese State budget-funded students or ones with scholarships under agreement in 2016 are also shown. Countries with high numbers of inbound female students include New Zealand (77.8%), Belgium (65%), the United States (62.5%) and Canada (60%). In general, countries that received high numbers of students in 2016 also had high numbers of returnees.

Table 8. State-sponsored Vietnamese students departing/returning in 2016 by destination countries/territories and sex

No.	Country/Territory	Departing students in 2016	Percentage of departing females in 2016	Returning students in 2016	Percentage of returning females in 2016
1	Russian Federation	722	48.6	356	41.3
2	Australia	107	53.3	47	42.6
3	France	93	29.0	60	38.3
4	Hungary	67	55.2	8	50.0
5	Germany	52	28.8	33	33.3
6	China	51	35.3	60	40.0
7	Japan	51	51.0	23	30.4
8	United Kingdom	44	45.5	18	50.0
9	Lao People's Democratic Republic	41	34.1	21	33.3
10	United States	32	62.5	15	13.3
11	New Zealand	27	77.8	6	33.3
12	Cambodia	25	12.0	0	
13	Ukraine	22	45.5	17	29.4

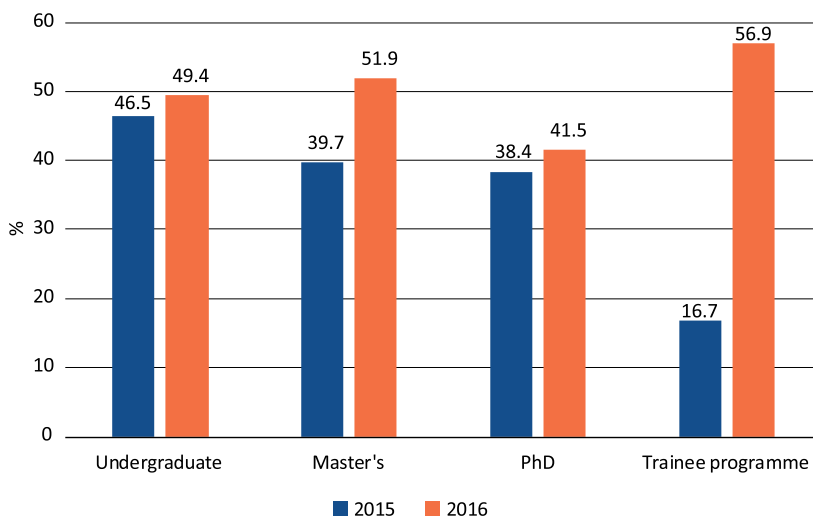
No.	Country/Territory	Departing students in 2016	Percentage of departing females in 2016	Returning students in 2016	Percentage of returning females in 2016
14	Belgium	20	65.0	10	30.0
15	Cuba	15	33.3	0	
16	Poland	12	25.0	8	25.0
17	Republic of Korea	12	50.0	3	33.3
18	Romania	11	45.5	3	33.3
19	Canada	10	60.0	3	66.7
	Other countries/territories	51	64.7	46	28.3
	Total	1,465	47.1	737	38.4

Source: Data provided by Viet Nam International Education Development, MoET in March 2017.

The age of students overseas ranged from 17–46 years for males and 16–45 for females, with an average age of 25.6 years for the former and 24.9 for the latter in 2015 (departing students). In 2016, the average ages of departing male and female students were 26 and 25.3, respectively. Of the departing and returning students in 2015, 22 males (2.1%) and 20 females (3.1%) were ethnic minority, with the remainder Kinh people. In 2016, 33 males (4.3%) were ethnic minority, among the 775 departing male students, while 18 females (2.6%) were ethnic minority among 690 departing female students.

Figure 10 shows the female proportion by education level among students going overseas to study during 2015–2016. The ratio of females increased during 2015–2016 at all four educational levels. In 2015, the female ratios for all four levels were less than 50 per cent and relatively low at the trainee programme, master’s and PhD levels. In 2016, the ratios of females were close to 50 per cent at undergraduate, 51.9 per cent at master’s and 56.9 per cent at trainee levels. The ratio of females at PhD level in 2016 was less than 50 per cent, but higher than 2015’s. Figures for the two years did not display a stable long-term trend, instead reflected increased participation from females in overseas study under State budget-funded scholarships or ones under government agreements with other countries/territories.

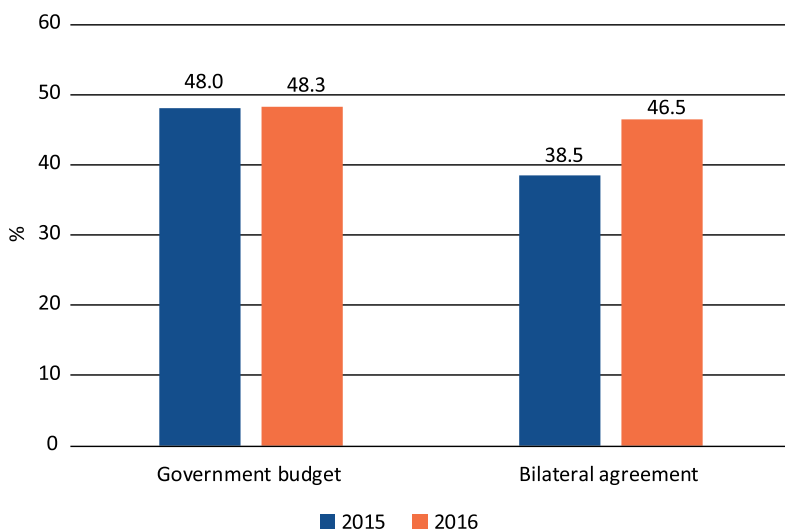
Figure 10. Percentage of female students at different education levels among students going overseas to study, 2015–2016



Source: Data provided by Viet Nam International Education Development, MoET in Official Letter No.1917/ĐTVNN dated 6 November 2015 and Official Letter No.652/ĐTVNN dated 2 June 2016. Data for 2016 was updated in March 2017.

These students studied overseas with State budget-funded scholarships (42.5%) or ones under bilateral agreements (57.5%).

Figure 11. Percentage of female students going abroad to study under State scholarship programmes, 2015–2016



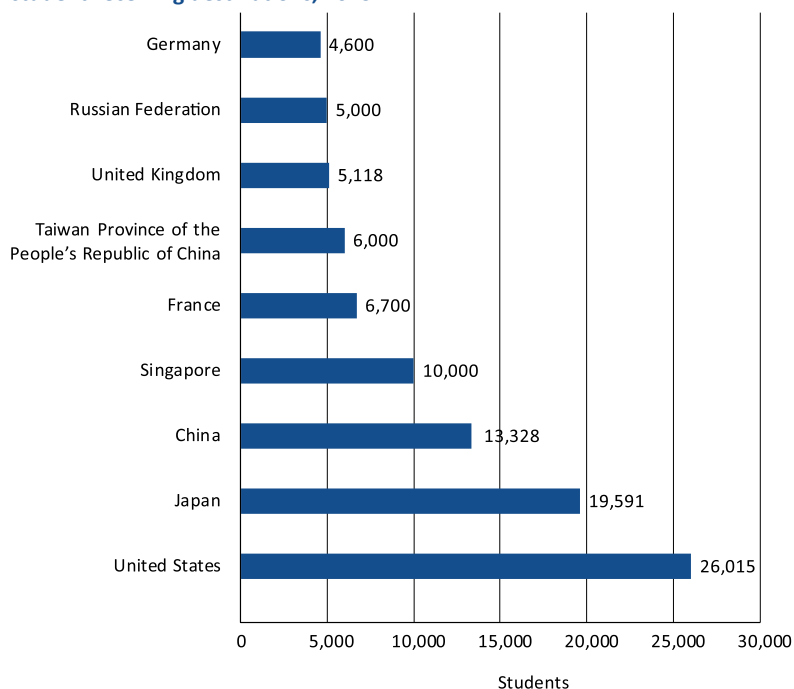
Source: Data provided by Viet Nam International Education Development, MoET in Official Letter No.1917/ĐTVNN dated 6 November 2015 and Official Letter No.652/ĐTVNN dated 2 June 2016. Data for 2016 was updated in March 2017.

Figure 11 shows the percentage of female students going overseas to study under scholarship programmes during 2015–2016, with State budget sponsorship students remaining static at 48 per cent and those sent overseas under bilateral agreements jumping considerably from 2015 to 2016. It is important to note that many self-funded overseas students are not covered by MoET statistics and is estimated to only account for 10 per cent of the real total.

Figure 12 illustrates the number of Vietnamese school and university students in the top 10 receiving countries in 2013, according to the International Consultants for Education and Fairs (ICEF), in Bonn, Germany. The most popular destination was Australia, followed by the United States, Japan, China, Singapore and France (ICEF, 2014).

Numerous Vietnamese school students study in the United States, 2,289 secondary school ones in 2013, making Viet Nam the sixth largest sender of students to the United States after China, Republic of Korea, Germany, Mexico and Brazil (Farrugia, 2014). In Australia, Vietnamese were the second most common foreign students behind Chinese, with 10.3 per cent (1,721 students) out of 16,693 international secondary school students in the country (ibid.).

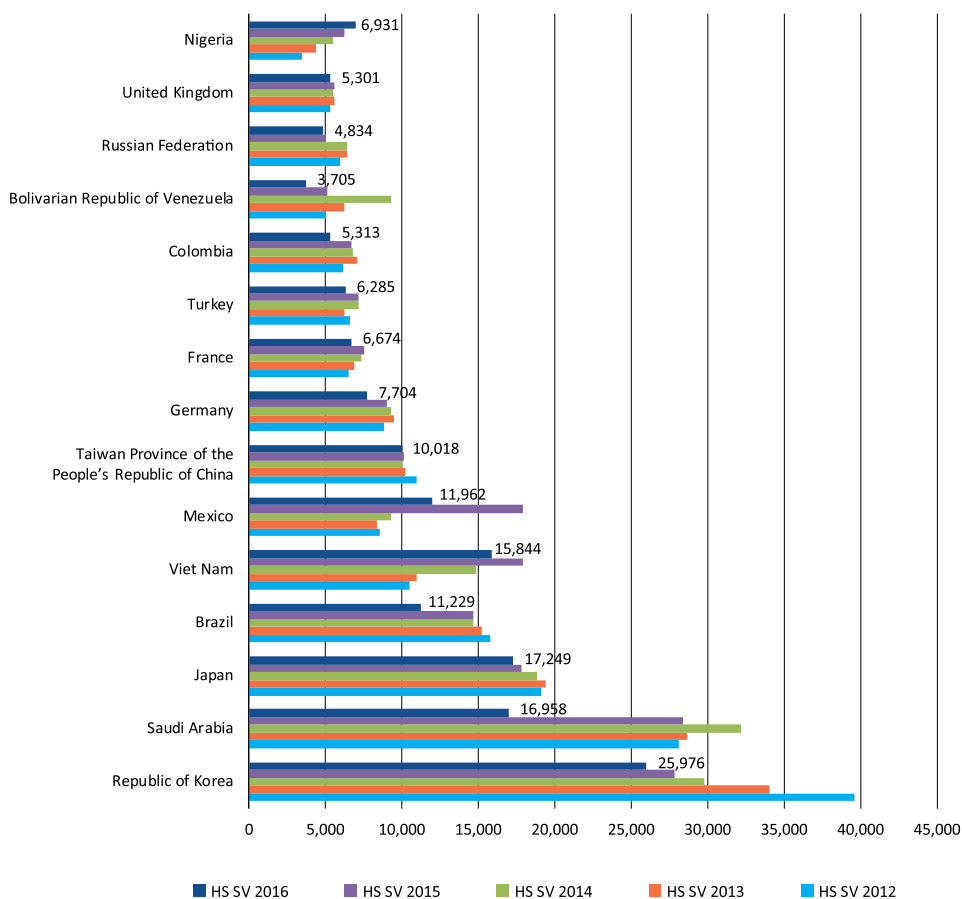
Figure 12. Vietnamese students overseas (secondary and higher education) in top Vietnamese student-receiving destinations, 2013



Source: ICEF, “Number of Vietnamese students abroad up 15% in 2013”, 4 November 2014, available from <http://monitor.icef.com/2014/11/number-vietnamese-students-abroad-15-2013/>

According to the US Department of State statistics,¹¹ the number of Vietnamese school and college students granted F1 (students) and M1 visas (vocational training) for entry into the United States continuously increased during 2012–2015, from 10,443 in 2012 to 17,875 students in 2015 (99% with F1 visas). In 2015, Viet Nam had the sixth largest number of students granted US visas behind China, India, Saudi Arabia, Republic of Korea and Mexico (Figure 13).

Figure 13. International students from top 15 places of origin (except China and India) granted US visas, 2012–2016 (Data on charts for 2016)

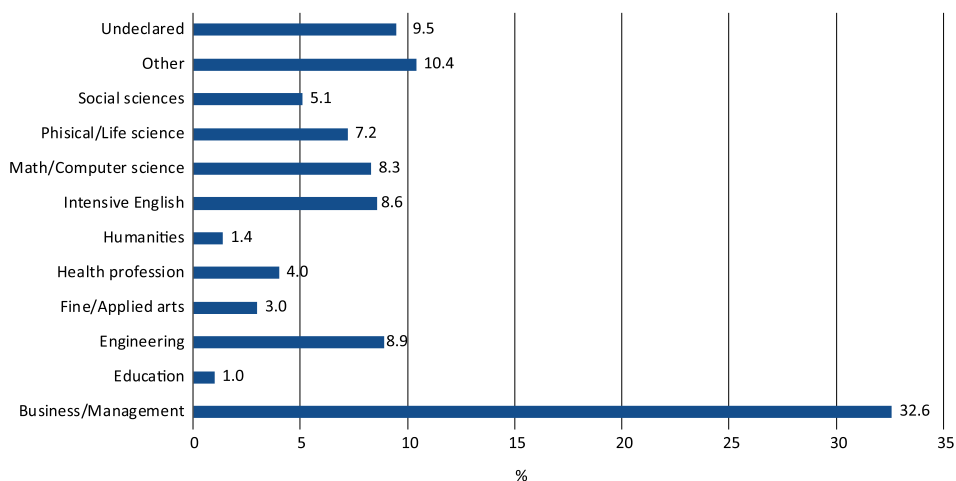


Source: US Department of State.

¹¹ See US Department of State: <https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/law-and-policy/statistics/non-immigrant-visas.html>

The stock of Vietnamese students in the United States is probably even greater as the figures do not include those who accompanied students (with F2 and M2 visas, and other dependants) who could also study at American colleges. This could be a reason why US Department of Commerce statistics on Vietnamese students at American colleges and universities are based on the school year, rather than the financial year, and are higher in 2012–2015 than figures on granted F1 and M1 visas. According to the US Department of Commerce, there were 15,572 Vietnamese students in the country during the 2011–2012 school year, which climbed to 16,098 people during 2012–2013, 16,579 during 2013–2014 and 18,722 during 2014–2015 (US Department of Commerce, 2016), making Viet Nam the ninth among 10 countries with the highest numbers of students in the United States.¹² This agency also forecasted that by the 2019–2020 school year, the number of students leaving Viet Nam for the United States would increase to 27,000 (US Department of Commerce, 2016). Business administration was the favourite major for Vietnamese, with one third of students in the United States during the 2014–2015 school year pursuing this type of study (Figure 14). Other popular courses included technical sector studies (8.9%), English (8.6%), mathematics and computers (8.3%) and physics/biology (7.2%). Only 5.1 per cent of students studied social sciences, 1.4 per cent humanities and 4 per cent medicine.

Figure 14. Distribution of Vietnamese students in the United States regarding majors in 2014–2015 school year



Source: US Department of Commerce, 2016 *Top Markets Report: Education, A Market Assessment Tool for U.S. Exporters* (International Trade Administration, 2016).

¹² Ten places of origin with students studying in the United States in 2015, China, India, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Brazil, Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China, Japan, Viet Nam and Mexico.

According to JASSO statistics, the number of Vietnamese studying in Japan had sharply risen, from 13,799 in 2013 to 26,439 in 2014 and a record peak of 38,882 in 2015, making Viet Nam the second highest exporter of students to Japan behind China (JASSO, 2015 and 2016). Besides students, numerous Vietnamese undertake training courses in Japan. According to data from Japan's MoJ provided by Viet Nam's Embassy in Japan, there were 45,000 Vietnamese trainees in Japan by June 2015, in contrast to the number in Figure 12.

Australia is another major destination for Vietnamese students. According to data provided by Australia's Department of Immigration and Border Protection in 2014, the number of visas granted to Vietnamese students increased rapidly from 8,161 in the 2011–2012 school year to 10,722 during 2012–2013 and up to 12,495 in 2013–2014. However, the 2014–2015 academic year saw a decrease to 10,283 (Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Government of Australia, 2016). It is worth noting these figures are for each school year only, while the stock of Vietnamese students in Australia might be higher than shown in Figure 12.

According to a research team estimation based on actual entries to Australia in 2015 published by Australia's Department of Immigration and Border Protection on its website,¹³ there were 9,028 short-term entries (less than a year) by Vietnamese into Australia to study, with 50.3 per cent being females. Such short-term visits usually involve less than two entries annually with short-term visas. In 2015, there were 11,881 Vietnamese entries into Australia with long-term visas (more than one year) for study, with 57 per cent being females. Overall, there were 20,909 short and long-term Vietnamese entries into Australia for study.

New Zealand is also home to many Vietnamese students. According to statistics on the Immigration Bureau of New Zealand's website,¹⁴ there were 18,651 Vietnamese students with valid study visas in New Zealand in 2012. This figure slightly decreased to 17,680 in 2013, 17,239 in 2014 and 17,222 in 2015. It should be noted that these figures refer to Vietnamese school and college students studying in New Zealand with valid visas in a particular year, not the number of new students arriving that year.

¹³ See www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3401.0Jun%202016?

¹⁴ Source: www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/research-and-statistics/statistics

The number of students arriving from Viet Nam to study in Canada annually, according to the Government of Canada,¹⁵ increased from 3,002 in 2010, to 3,616 (2011), 4,113 (2012), 4,788 (2013) and 5,618 (2014).

Overall, these statistics compiled from different sources point to increased numbers of Vietnamese heading abroad to study, which is forecast to further rise. This is due in part to more open policies of the Government of Viet Nam on overseas study, a stronger domestic economy, low-cost travel and greater Internet-based global communication, especially active social networks to support students abroad. Many of the more than 100,000 Vietnamese students currently pursuing study in different countries will return home and make valuable contributions to the local economy and Viet Nam's development, while those who remain abroad provide vital sources of financial support to families and communities through remittances and contributions in different forms. However, overseas study requires considerable expenses that students and their families must cover.

2.4. Marriage migration

Vietnamese marrying foreign nationals including overseas Vietnamese¹⁶ and migrating is now commonplace in Viet Nam to such an extent that in 2014 and 2015, such cases were recorded in all 63 provinces and cities nationwide.

Table 9 shows the gender-based division of Vietnamese marrying foreign nationals (including overseas Vietnamese). The ratio of Vietnamese nationals marrying foreign nationals (not Vietnamese living overseas) accounted for 63 per cent of marriage relations involving foreign elements in 2013. This ratio has risen in recent years from 62.4 per cent in 2014 to 71.4 per cent (2015), with the vast majority involving Vietnamese women. In 2015, 18,726 cases of marriages with foreign nationals were recorded nationwide, in which 85.4 per cent were female Vietnamese. Interestingly, the number of marriages involving Vietnamese men has risen, while that of women has dropped. However, due to the high proportion of women's marriages, the overall number of both genders'

¹⁵ Source: Website of the Government of Canada, available from http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/052642bb-3fd9-4828-b608-c81dff7e539c?_ga=1.165552764.2146858583.1465320394

¹⁶ "Overseas Vietnamese" refers to Vietnamese who settle outside the territory of Viet Nam and who may have Vietnamese citizenship or/and citizenship of the country of current residence. "Vietnamese settled abroad" are those who are Vietnamese citizens or people with Vietnamese origin currently residing and working abroad permanently. "Person of Vietnamese origin settled abroad" are those who used to have Vietnamese citizenship by birth and now live and work abroad with citizenship of the country of residence. Overall, "Vietnamese overseas" is a blanket term for these three definitions, as well as Vietnamese who are staying temporarily abroad for different purposes.

marriages involving foreign elements has decreased. In 2016, the number of marriages with foreign nationals reduced to 16,223 cases, in which 85 per cent were female Vietnamese.

Table 9. Gender-based division of Vietnamese marriages with foreign nationals by year

Year	Total	Men	Women	Ratio of women (%)
2008	21,805	1,624	20,181	92.6
2009	19,795	1,527	18,268	92.3
2010	20,802	1,520	19,282	92.7
2011	18,420	1,730	16,690	90.6
2012	17,891	1,550	16,341	91.3
2013	18,636	2,318	16,318	87.6
2014	17,746	2,572	15,174	85.5
2015	18,726	2,733	15,993	85.4
2016	16,223	2,441	13,782	85.0

*Data for 2008–2012 not inclusive of Nghe An province.

Source: Data provided by the Department of Civil Status, Nationality, Authentication, MoJ, 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Most Vietnamese marrying foreign nationals were from the majority Kinh ethnic group, in contrast to 6.3 per cent of ethnic minority people from 2008 to June 2013.

Table 10 shows the number of Vietnamese marrying nationals from several places of origin, with the United States, Republic of Korea, Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China, China and Australia the most common and Canada emerging during 2013–2016 with 737 nationals marrying in 2013, 533 (2014), 599 (2015) and 557 (2016). Fewer Vietnamese married nationals from neighbouring Cambodia and Lao People’s Democratic Republic. According to data from the Australian Embassy in Ha Noi, the country granted visas for family reunions to 2,140 Vietnamese (including 606 dependants, often children) in 2014 and in the first 10 months of 2015, the figure was 843 (261 dependants). These figures are much higher than in 2008–2012, as shown in Table 10. Though Japan is not listed in the table, data from the Vietnamese Embassy in Japan estimates 3,400 Vietnamese nationals had married Japanese and settled in Japan in 2015.

Table 10. Division of Vietnamese nationals marrying foreign nationals by places of origin, 2008–2016

Year	Total	China	Cambodia	Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China	Republic of Korea	Malaysia	Europe	United States	Australia	Canada	Others
2008	21,805	222	10	4,055	7,655	30	1,887	4,472	874		2,600
2009	19,795	206	26	3,252	6,623	36	1,763	4,569	901		2,419
2010	20,802	257	17	3,139	8,425	43	1,793	4,198	905		2,025
2011	18,420	210	22	3,019	6,957	61	1,345	3,925	698		2,183
2012	17,891	270	15	2,579	6,343	53	1,246	4,136	771		2,478
2013	18,636	255		2,950	6,066		,	5,105		737	3,523
2014	17,746	339		3,208	4,374			4,786		533	4,506
2015	18,726	555		3,840	4,158			5,119		599	4,455
2016	16,223	294		4,344	1,492			4,516		557	5,020

* Data collected between 2008–2012 is not inclusive of Nghe An province.

Source: Data provided by Department of Civil Status, Nationality, Authentication, Mol, 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Tables 11, 12, 13 and 14 highlight provinces with large numbers of Vietnamese who married American, Taiwanese, Korean and Chinese nationals during 2013–2016. It should be noted these are not accumulative numbers of marriages and do not necessarily reflect the number of citizens residing in these provinces/cities, as procedures to marry foreign nationals allow citizens to register in provinces/cities of their temporary residence registration. Twenty provinces with the highest number of marriages with Americans are provinces in the east of the southern region, Mekong Delta and coastal areas in the southern central region, with Ho Chi Minh City topping the list during these four years. Dong Nai, Thua Thien-Hue, Tien Giang and Ba Ria-Vung Tau provinces are in the top five with the highest number of Vietnamese tying the knot with American nationals. Of note, during 2013–2016, only Bac Kan and Dien Bien Phu did not record cases of Vietnamese nationals marrying American citizens. The 20 provinces listed in Table 11 accounted for 84.2 per cent of all marriages with US citizens in Viet Nam during 2013–2016.

Table 11. Vietnamese marrying Americans in 20 major provinces, 2013–2016

No.	Province/City	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total 2013–2016
1	Ho Chi Minh City	1,896	1,083	1,091	934	5,004
2	Dong Nai	376	510	555	466	1,907
3	Thua Thien-Hue	276	287	346	288	1,197
4	Tien Giang	207	192	198	161	758
5	Ba Ria-Vung Tau	151	195	181	191	718
6	Khanh Hoa	232	154	128	183	697
7	Da Nang	127	149	182	196	654
8	Binh Thuan	130	180	120	138	568
9	Vinh Long	136	148	146	129	559
10	Kien Giang	151	161	151	76	539
11	Lam Dong	91	120	130	149	490
12	Soc Trang	96	118	120	126	460
13	Dong Thap	100	137	109	93	439
14	An Giang	51	123	138	125	437
15	Can Tho	0	164	130	140	434
16	Ben Tre	90	72	129	90	381
17	Tay Ninh	96	89	79	79	343
18	Phu Yen	59	83	78	71	291
19	Binh Duong	76	50	85	72	283
20	Tra Vinh	111	7	101	58	277
	Total of Vietnamese nationals marrying American citizens nationwide	5,105	4,786	5,119	4,516	19,526

Source: Data provided by the Department of Civil Status, Nationality, Authentication, MoJ in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Table 12 shows that eastern provinces of the southern plain and Mekong Delta have high numbers of nationals who married Taiwanese, as did central Nghe An and northern Bac Giang, Hai Duong, Hai Phong and Ha Noi. Twenty provinces with high numbers of nationals walking down the aisle with Taiwanese accounted for 73.3 per cent of all marriages to these nationals during 2013–2016 in Viet Nam.

Table 12. Vietnamese marrying Taiwanese citizens in 20 major provinces, 2013–2016

No.	Province/City	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total 2013–2016
1	Ho Chi Minh City	646	233	2	232	1,113
2	Can Tho	0	318	130	504	952
3	Dong Nai	253	258	85	290	886
4	Hau Giang	243	240	27	367	877
5	Tay Ninh	135	143	15	331	624
6	Dong Thap	136	176	85	189	586
7	Ba Ria-Vung Tau	44	54	439	43	580
8	Bac Giang	60	120	296	97	573
9	An Giang	37	79	301	143	560
10	Bac Lieu	56	67	320	114	557
11	Hai Duong	121	186	37	189	533
12	Vinh Long	152	163	0	195	510
13	Hai Phong	106	82	76	109	373
14	Binh Thuan	41	50	186	65	342
15	Nghe An	40	91	29	113	273
16	Kien Giang	61	71	5	129	266
17	Binh Phuoc	15	10	191	19	235
18	Binh Dinh	4	1	220	5	230
19	Ha Noi	77	41	30	79	227
20	Ben Tre	41	38	97	43	219
	Total of Vietnamese marrying Taiwanese nationals nationwide	2,950	3,208	3,840	4,344	14,342

Source: Data provided by the Department of Civil Status, Nationality, Authentication, MoJ, 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Data on Vietnamese citizens marrying Korean nationals is illustrated in Table 13. These cases were mainly from delta plains or coastal area provinces/cities from north to south, with a small number from mountainous or Central Highland provinces. Twenty provinces with the highest numbers of marriages to Koreans accounted for 88.1 per cent of all unions with such nationals in Viet Nam during 2013–2016.

Table 13. Vietnamese marrying Koreans in 10 major provinces, 2013–2016

No.	Province/City	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total 2013–2016
1	Can Tho	943	658	616	212	2,429
2	Hai Phong	744	506	641	207	2,098
3	Hau Giang	594	395	327	51	1,367
4	Quang Ninh	465	377	366	134	1,342
5	Kien Giang	431	307	285	45	1,068
6	Hai Duong	272	472	255	55	1,054
7	Ca Mau	319	192	161	37	709
8	Ho Chi Minh City	465	57	122	63	707
9	Tay Ninh	209	158	135	57	559
10	Bac Lieu	172	147	99	15	433
11	Binh Thuan	108	95	180	19	402
12	An Giang	148	94	93	35	370
13	Vinh Long	119	74	85	27	305
14	Ha Noi	78	43	83	59	263
15	Dong Thap	89	64	49	31	233
16	Ba Ria-Vung Tau	89	54	49	31	223
17	Dong Nai	12	53	76	44	185
18	Nghe An	86	39	21	25	171
19	Bac Ninh	40	37	32	16	125
20	Thai Binh	49	38	17	21	125
	Total of Vietnamese marrying Korean nationals nationwide	6,066	4,374	4,158	1,492	16,090

Source: Data provided by Department of Civil Status, Nationality, Authentication, MoJ in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

MoJ data reveals the 20 provinces with most nationals marrying Chinese during 2013–2016 shared borders with China (Lai Chau, Lao Cai, Lang Son and Quang Ninh) along with provinces/cities in the Red River Delta (Ha Noi, Hai Duong, Hai Phong, Thai Binh, Bac Giang and Bac Ninh), Nghe An in the central region, Dong Nai and Ho Chi Minh City in the south. The 20 provinces presented in Table 14 accounted for 3.2 per cent of all marriages to Chinese during 2013–2016.

Table 14. Vietnamese marrying Chinese in 20 provinces/cities, 2013–2016

No.	Province/City	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total 2013–2016
1	Dong Nai	10	21	128	16	175
2	Ho Chi Minh City	35	31	44	32	142
3	Ha Noi	34	24	36	13	107
4	Hai Duong	14	54	14	3	85
5	Hai Phong	16	15	35	18	84
6	Lai Chau	0	1	44		45
7	An Giang	2	7	10	22	41
8	Binh Duong	12	10	11	7	40
9	Quang Ninh	3	9	12	11	35
10	Tay Ninh	5	9	15	5	34
11	Bac Giang	8	8	7	9	32
12	Thai Binh	8	9	10	5	32
13	Nam Dinh	9	4	2	15	30
14	Phu Tho	1	9	5	13	28
15	Lao Cai	5	7	11	3	26
16	Nghe An	8	5	6	6	25
17	Vinh Long	9	8	5	2	24
18	Soc Trang	2	3	16	3	24
19	Ninh Binh	0	0	9	15	24
20	Kien Giang	4	7	9	3	23
	Total of Vietnamese marrying Chinese nationals nationwide	255	339	555	294	1,443

Source: Data provided by the Department of Civil Status, Nationality, Authentication, MoJ, 2015, 2016 and 2017.

It is clear that each year, tens of thousands of Vietnamese women marry foreign nationals, including overseas Vietnamese. However, in the past five years, the number of women tying the knot with non-Vietnamese has declined, in contrast to local men taking this step. The United States, Republic of Korea, Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China and China have high numbers of nationals marrying Vietnamese. The Mekong Delta and southern coastal areas have more nationals in union with American citizens or Taiwanese, while those who marry Chinese and nationals of the Republic of Korea are scattered nationwide.

2.5. International child adoption

International child adoption in Viet Nam increased during 2012–2015, with 278 adoption cases in 20 provinces/cities in 2012, rising to 318 in 38 provinces/cities in 2013 and 555 in 45 provinces/cities in 2014. In 2015, 575 cases in

48 provinces/cities were recorded, in contrast to 551 cases in 46 provinces/cities during 2016. In total, 2,312 cases of child adoption were reported during 2012–2016. Slightly more girls were adopted, with 53.3 per cent of cases in 2014, 53.6 per cent (2015) and 52.3 per cent (2016).

Table 15 shows the stock of international adoptive children by destination during 2012–2015. France, Italy, Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China, Spain, Canada, Republic of Korea, Ireland, Sweden, Germany and Denmark were the top 10 destinations of adopted Vietnamese children.¹⁷

Table 15. Children adopted by foreign nationals by destination, 2012–2016

No	Destination	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total	% per total adoption cases
1	France	76	78	124	110	81	469	20.6
2	Italy	40	76	136	104	122	478	21.0
3	Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China	50	44	92	118	114	418	18.4
4	Spain	38	43	95	121	105	402	17.7
5	Canada	37	44	62	31	33	207	9.1
6	Republic of Korea	14	10	10	21	9	64	2.8
7	Ireland			16	30	17	63	2.8
8	Sweden	2		7	14	12	35	1.5
9	Germany	3	4	2	9	10	28	1.2
10	Denmark	5	5	2	5	2	19	0.8
11	Switzerland	2	3	5	2	4	16	0.7
12	United Kingdom	4	1	1	3	3	12	0.5
13	Australia		5	1	2	2	10	0.4
14	United States	5			1	25	31	1.4
15	(the) Netherlands		1	1	0		2	0.1
16	New Zealand		1		1	1	3	0.1
17	Romania		2		0		2	0.1
18	Austria	1			1		2	0.1
19	Poland		1		0		1	0.0
20	Hungary			1	0		1	0.0
21	Czech Republic	1			0		1	0.0
22	Slovakia				1	1	2	0.1

¹⁷ Currently, Viet Nam has bilateral agreements with France, Denmark, Italy, Switzerland and Spain. It has also established cooperative relations on child adoption on the basis of a Bilateral Memorandum of Understanding on the application of administrative procedures for international adoption or in the form of notes exchanged with 10 countries/territories, such as Canada, Ireland, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, Norway, Luxembourg, United States, Quebec and Malta.

No	Destination	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total	% per total adoption cases
23	Norway				1	1	2	0.1
24	Belgium					1	1	0.0
25	Luxembourg					4	4	0.2
26	Japan					2	2	0.1
27	Finland					1	1	0.0
28	Israel					1	1	0.0
	Total	278	318	555	575	551	2,277	100.0

Source: Statistics of the Child Adoption Bureau, MoJ in 2015 and Official Letter No.213/CCN-VP dated 12 May 2016 and updated in March 2017.

Table 16 shows the stock of Vietnamese children adopted by foreign nationals in 15 major provinces, which accounted for 76.4 per cent of all international adoptive children during 2012–2016. Ho Chi Minh City and Ha Noi were the top two sources; however, it should be noted that many of the children were likely to have originally come from other locations.

Table 16. Registered international child adoption in top 15 provinces, 2012–2016

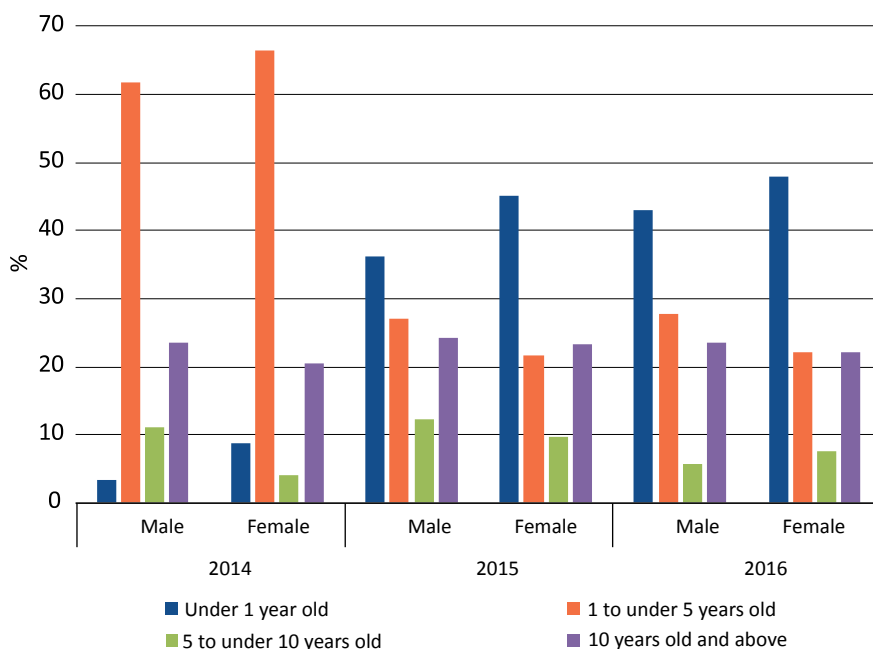
Province/City	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total	Percentage	Accumulated percentage
Ho Chi Minh City	74	103	202	173	138	690	39.1	39.1
Ha Noi	27	27	36	53	46	189	10.7	49.8
Hai Duong	23	21	33	35	35	147	8.3	58.1
Bac Kan	5	26	33	25	21	110	6.2	64.3
Bac Ninh	6	10	16	30	32	94	5.3	69.6
Ba Ria-Vung Tau	28	21	6	4	2	61	3.5	73.1
Quang Nam	1	12	22	13	9	57	3.2	76.3
Tuyen Quang	5	11	22	10	12	60	3.4	79.7
Hai Phong	15	4	10	15	9	53	3.0	82.7
Bac Giang	11	3	11	16	15	56	3.2	85.9
Da Nang	2	4	18	13	16	53	3.0	88.9
Thai Nguyen	4	6	14	13	13	50	2.8	91.7
Binh Duong	2	3	14	15	14	48	2.7	94.4
Can Tho	0	1	19	13	19	52	2.9	97.3
Lang Son	11	11	2	7	15	46	2.6	99.9
Total	214	263	458	435	396	1,766	100.0	

Source: Statistics of the Child Adoption Bureau, MoJ in 2015 and Official Letter No 213/CCN-VP dated 12 May 2016 and updated in March 2017.

Figure 15 shows percentages of international adoptive children according

to age and sex (2014–2016). The majority of adoptive children were aged up to 5 years. In 2015–2016, the percentage of adoptive children aged under 1 year increased and that of children aged up to 5 years decreased compared to 2014 ratios, respectively. More than 20 per cent of adoptive children were aged more than 10 years during 2014–2016.¹⁸

Figure 15. Percentages of international child adoption by sex and age, 2014–2016



Source: Statistics of the Child Adoption Bureau, MoJ in 2015 and Official Letter No.213/CCN-VP dated 12 May 2016, updated in March 2017.

In summary, a rising number of Vietnamese children were internationally adopted during 2012–2016. Currently, 48 provinces/cities in Viet Nam are involved in the adoption process, with Ho Chi Minh City and Ha Noi the most common sources of adopted children. Adoptive parents commonly come from France, Italy, Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China, Spain, Canada, Republic of Korea,¹⁹ Ireland, Sweden, Germany and Denmark.

¹⁸ Most children adopted by foreign nationals are aged up to 5 years. Older adoptive children are usually those adopted at special request from adopting parents indicating the name of the child (stepchildren, niece or nephew of the adopting person or a small number of foreign families asking to adopt older children due to the age factor and other characteristics related to the ability and conditions of the adoptive family).

¹⁹ Republic of Korea and Taiwan Province of the People’s Republic of China did not sign conventions or cooperation agreements with Viet Nam for adoption. Adoption cases settled for these two countries are those specially requested by adopting parents, who are step-parents or aunt/uncles of adoptive child.

2.6. Human trafficking

In general, varied data sources paint different pictures of trafficking cases and survivors in Viet Nam.

According to data released by Steering Committee 138/CP, a national committee within the MoPS to prevent trafficking, from 21 November 2010 to 20 November 2015, some 2,205 cases of human trafficking were detected nationwide, with 3,342 traffickers and 4,495 survivors, of which 85 per cent were women and children (Steering Committee 138/CP, 2015a). The majority were cross-border cases. Nearly 90 per cent of cross-border trafficking took place from Viet Nam to Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and China. In particular, the border with China was a trafficking hotspot that accounted for 70 per cent of detected cases during this period (Steering Committee 138/CP, 2015a).

To implement the Government's anti-trafficking action plan during 2011–2015, Steering Committee 138/CP issued Plan No.114/KH-BCD to commission a nationwide survey in Viet Nam on human trafficking and related crimes during 2008–2013. This is the most significant activity to collect trafficking information in Viet Nam thus far. Report No.571/KH-BCD, dated 7 November 2013 on the survey results provided a comprehensive examination of people trafficking during this period.

Table 17 shows that from 2008–2016, authorities detected 3,897 cases with 6,188 traffickers and 8,336 survivors (Office 138/CP, 2014a; Office 138/CP, 2014b; Office 138/CP, 2015a). The table reveals the number of detected cases increased from 2008 and peaked in 2013 with 507 cases. After 2013, trafficking cases decreased, but the number of victims climbed. While survivors slightly decreased in 2015, they spiked in 2016.

Table 17. Total number of trafficking cases, traffickers and victims, 2008–2016

Year	Cases	Traffickers	Survivors
2008	375	718	981
2009	395	748	869
2010	429	683	671
2011	454	670	821
2012	478	809	883
2013	507	697	982
2014	469	685	1,031
2015	407	655	1,000
2016	383	523	1,128
Total	3,897	6,188	8,366

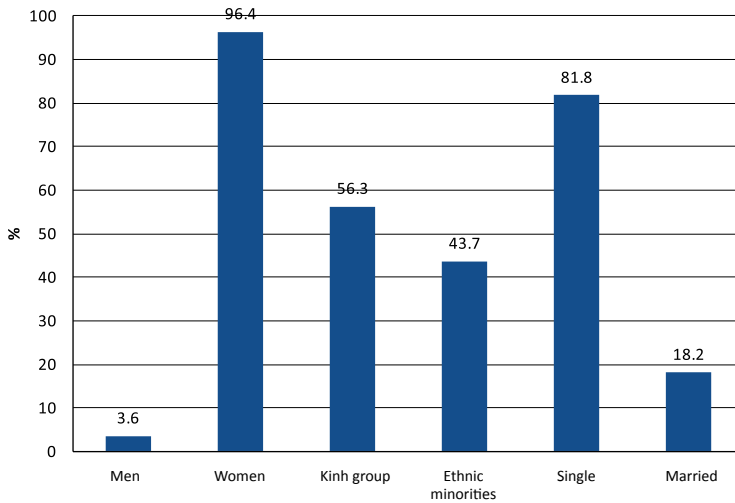
Source: Report No.571/BC-BCD, 7 November 2013 on Results of the General Survey on Situation of Trafficking and other Related Crimes during 2008-2013; Report No.680/BC-BCD, 29 December 2014 on Results of Implementation of Plan of Action to Prevent Trafficking in Persons 2014; statistics for 2015 taken from Report No.451/BC-BCD, 18 December 2015 of Steering Committee 138/CP on Results of Implementation of Plan of Action to Prevent Trafficking in Persons 2015.

The specific characteristics of people trafficking and its victims are detailed in Report No.571/BC-BCD dated 7 November 2013 on results of the nationwide trafficking survey. However, the report only provides data up to mid-2013. During this period, 2,390 cases were detected, 88.1 per cent featured survivors 16 years and older, 7.4 per cent with children under 16 years and 4.5 per cent with adults and children. Some 2,293 cases were classified as cross-border trafficking and 97 cases internal trafficking. Of note, 72 per cent of all cases were China-related. Out of 2,390 trafficking cases detected during 2008 to mid 2013, 1,392 were related to sex work (58.2%), 398 to forced marriage (16.7%), 13 to forced labour (0.5%) and 587 to other purposes (16.7%) (Office 138/CP, 2013). In 2014, the Report on Results of Implementation of the Plan of Action to Prevent Trafficking in Persons 2014, produced by Steering Committee 138/CP, estimated the number of trafficking cases through illegal exits to China for work accounted for 20 per cent of total cases, while child and infant kidnapping, appropriating for trafficking abroad cases accounted for 13 per cent of total cases (Office 138/CP, 2014b). Human trafficking for prostitution and marriage purposes were most common, and the main cross-border trafficking route was from Viet Nam to China, as confirmed by Steering Committee 138/CP's latest reports (Steering Committee 138/CP, 2015a and 2015b) and 138/CP, 2016).

While human trafficking violations have been detected nationwide, localities bordering Cambodia, China and Lao People's Democratic Republic face obtrusive cross-border trafficking, particularly to China in women for fraudulent marriages and prostitution, in men for forced labour, in infants and unborn babies and for organ removal. Land border trafficking from Viet Nam to Cambodia was mainly in women for prostitution and forced labour, surrogacy or for forced marriages in a third country. Along the Viet Nam–Lao People's Democratic Republic border, there was smaller-scale trafficking for prostitution or forced marriage (Steering Committee 138/CP, 2013). These findings are consistent with previous reports showing that Vietnamese women and young girls were trafficked to work in brothels in Cambodia; China; Malaysia; Macao, China; Singapore; and Thailand (Consular Department, MoFA, 2011) among others or for forced marriage.

Overall, the human trafficking situation in Viet Nam is complex. According to a Steering Committee 138/CP report, 338 human trafficking cases with 523 traffickers and 1,128 survivors were detected in 2016 and about 200,000 persons irregularly exited the country to China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Cambodia and Thailand for seasonal works that were subject to potential risks of trafficking. Localities with high numbers of cases include Dien Bien, Ha Giang, Lao Cai, Lang Son, Quang Ninh, Nghe An, Ho Chi Minh city, Son La, Dong Thap and Kien Giang with a total of 734 survivors of trafficking and about 394 cases that were thought to be trafficked. Trafficking in the form of illegal marriage brokering and false marriages to Malaysia, China, Republic of Korea, and Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China occurred more often in southern provinces, while cases of child trafficking, substitution and appropriation (including in infants and children) were more prevalent in northern border provinces (Office 138/CP, 2015b). Figure 16 shows the vast majority of survivors were women (96%), with 56.3 per cent from the Kinh ethnicity and 43.7 per cent ethnic minorities. Most survivors were single (81.8%).

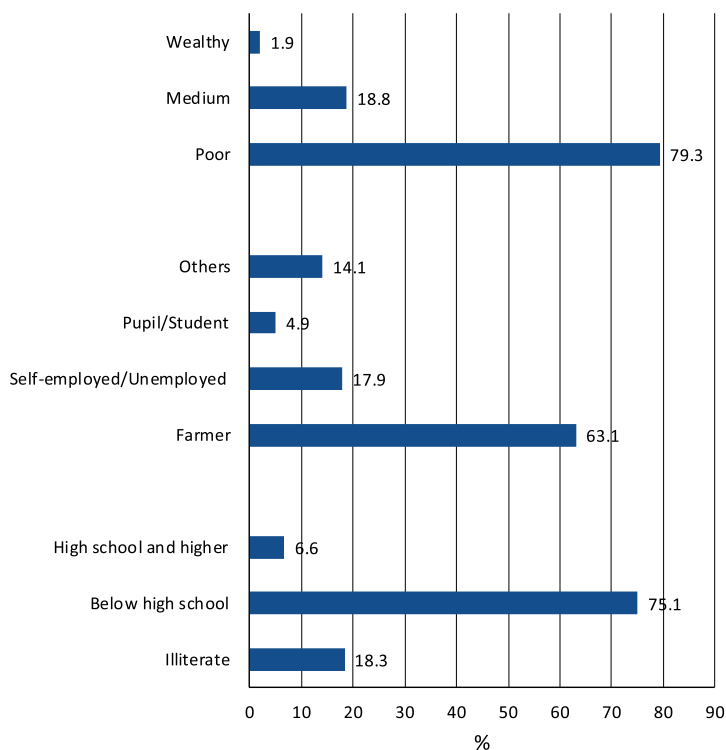
Figure 16. Percentage of trafficking survivors by sex, ethnic group and marriage status, 2008–June 2013



Source: Report No.571/BC-BCD dated 7 November 2013.

Figure 17 shows that most survivors were from poor families, unskilled or farmers with low education levels (18.3% were illiterate and 75.1% have primary or secondary education levels).

Figure 17. Percentage of trafficked victims by education levels, employment and well-being status, 2008–mid 2013



Source: Report No.571/BC-BCD dated 7 November 2013.

Of concern, the scourge of human trafficking is also increasingly encompassing men, infants and unborn babies.

Box 2. Men, infants and unborn babies are also made victims

“NVT”, residing in Soc Trang province, was a ring leader in deceiving and trafficking dozens of young men from southern localities to China to sell their kidneys. Among the victims was To Luan Cong, a 20-year-old student who died on return to Viet Nam. In early 2011, Can Tho city police arrested 10 traffickers who had brought 75 young men from western provinces to China and Singapore to sell their kidneys. Authorities also assisted with onward transportation of 15 Vietnamese women who were trafficked to Thailand for surrogacy. Other cases of child trafficking, substitution or appropriation were detected (in Ha Giang province alone, from 2008 to 7 November 2013, some 115 cases of child appropriation with 142 victims were detected).

Source: Report No.571/BC-BCD dated 7 November 2013.

In March 2014, Ho Chi Minh City police broke an infant trafficking ring of seven traffickers headed by Tuong Dinh Thuong, who trafficked 20 infants from 2013 until early 2014. From 2008 until the second quarter of 2014, 159 cases were detected with 324 traffickers and 249 child victims.

Source: Report No.680/BC-BCD dated 29 December 2014.

Out of 3,961 traffickers arrested between 2008 and mid-2013, 58.7 per cent were men and 84.7 per cent Kinh. Most traffickers were lowly educated, 13.3 per cent illiterate and 67.4 per cent had secondary education or lower. More than one third (37.7%) were farmers and 36.9 per cent self-employed or unskilled. Most were Vietnamese citizens (98.3%), and 85.2 per cent had no previous criminal record (Office 138/CP, 2013).

During 2011–2015, the People’s Procuracy prosecuted 1,024 cases with 2,023 traffickers, and the People’s Court conducted hearings on 1,032 human trafficking cases with 2,084 defendants. Among sentences passed, there were three life imprisonments or death penalties, 152 imprisonments for 15–20 years, 667 imprisonments for 7–15 years and 1,050 imprisonments for less than seven years (Office 138/CP, 2015a). While Vietnamese authorities have diligently investigated and prosecuted trafficking cases, punitive measures are still light compared to the severity of this crime.

Of all the methods used to traffic women and children abroad, engaging in false marriage or emotional deception resulting in being trafficked abroad is commonplace.

Box 3. Women being trafficked abroad under the form of marriages

Can Tho police arrested Lee Chung Chen (Korean citizen) and Vietnamese who gathered 130 Vietnamese women for 13 Korean men to meet and select as brides. In 2013, police arrested four traffickers who deceived 11 women from western provinces with false marriages and sold them to China for sex work.

Source: Report No.571/BC-BCD dated 7 November 2013.

Many women and children were lured by the promise of high-paying jobs abroad then forced into prostitution or forced labour (Consular Department, MoFA, 2011; Doan, 2009; US Embassy to Viet Nam, 2014).

Box 4. Promise of well-paid jobs

Traffickers establish networks to smuggle people abroad in the form of seasonal work, tourism or family visits. Once abroad, traffickers sell or force them into prostitution or forced labour. If victims want to return, they must pay significant amounts of money as ransom. Quang Ninh province police detected two cases and arrested four traffickers who brought 90 people to China who showed signs of trafficking.

Source: Report 230/BC-BCD 29 June 2015.

3. MOTIVATING FACTORS AND IMPACTS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

3.1. Motivating factors for international labour migration

Economic factors are key drivers of international labour migration. The Review of Vietnamese Migration Abroad (Consular Department, MoFA, 2011) stated:

Economic factors, such as low income, poverty and the lack of employment opportunities and livelihood options, are major motivating factors in making migration decisions. Inherent disparities in living standards, opportunities for well-paid employment and income within the country have motivated migrants to look for new, even temporary, opportunities abroad. Migration for economic reasons is particularly prevalent, especially in the context of globalisation and free trade.

This statement remains valid. An oversupply of domestic labour, especially in rural areas of the Red River Delta, north central and central coastal regions and Mekong Delta (GSO, 2015) pushes migrants to seek livelihood opportunities in overseas labour markets.

Whereas receiving countries face labour shortages, especially in skilled positions or sectors unattractive to local people due to low prestige or income, the comparatively higher wages on offer are a compelling reason for Vietnamese labour migration.

At the same time, Viet Nam has created increasingly more international labour migration-friendly policies to reduce the costs and risks, as well as enhance recruitment agencies' operations and legal migration of workers, while the economic benefits of such migration has increased. Improved transportation, banking and money transfer services have further created favourable conditions for development of international labour migration.

Migrant networks also provide important support, with receiving countries' immigrant communities having built networks to facilitate integration of newcomers in such destinations (Portes and DeWind, 2007a).

3.2. Motivating factors for migration for study overseas

Numerous factors that trigger overseas migration for study feature in international migration theories, as well as studies and articles in the media.

Among the many motivations is education's place within Vietnamese society as a highly respected value that is increasingly recognized in State policies to encourage overseas migration for study. The State has traditionally taken advantage of international cooperation in education and training to promote the country's development, with thousands of nationals sent abroad to study and train.

Viet Nam's reform process and international integration during the past 30 years, accompanied by rapid development in information technology, has also created more favourable conditions for Vietnamese to interact globally and explore education, training and research opportunities. Private sector development has resulted in foreign firms operating in Viet Nam to participate in sponsoring or providing services for Vietnamese nationals to migrate abroad for study. This has been supported by Vietnamese people's significantly improved incomes to enable families to afford tuition fees and living costs for children's overseas study.

Communities of Vietnamese overseas play a significant role in promoting international exchanges and cooperation in education and training. Many overseas Vietnamese professors have directly trained or sought scholarships for Vietnamese nationals. According to the Diplomatic Academy of Viet Nam website, the Vietnamese diaspora has 4 million people residing in more than 101 countries and territories.²⁰ International migrants have created social networks in countries of origin and destination that actively support migrants to reduce migration costs and increase opportunities to study abroad.

Lastly, increasing numbers of Vietnamese are learning foreign languages to meet enrolment requirements of foreign educational institutions and seek scholarships for overseas study.

²⁰ See www.tgvn.com.vn/Item/VN/KieuBao/2012/8/AC00DE8998409F1F/ (last accessed August 2012).

3.3. Motivating factors for marriages with foreign nationals

Research into marriages involving foreign nationals in the past 15 years has highlighted two distinct types of unions.

The first is marriages between Vietnamese and foreign nationals (including those of Vietnamese origin) for economic purposes. These people consider marriage as a means for financial gain, often a result of family pressure. Many women from the Mekong Delta, Quang Ninh and Hai Phong engage in marriages with Chinese, Taiwanese or Koreans for financial gain (Le Nguyen, Nguyen Van and Nguyen Thi, 2012; Vu and Vu, 2006). Such marriages can quickly occur through brokerages, yet brides and grooms often face language and communication challenges. The second form of unions is a result of rapid international integration. People from different countries meet, work and live together and form relationships that lead to marriage. A common feature of these marriages is that husbands and wives can communicate well in a common language or mother tongue.

3.4. Motivating factors for international child adoption

Most adopted children were abandoned, orphans or in special circumstances. In the language of supply–demand regarding child adoption, there are two groups of factors impacting on international child adoption. The supply factor relates to the number of children in need of adoption and demand is from foreign nationals (including overseas Vietnamese).

The existence of abandoned children or those in special circumstances was often related to poverty, with families unable to meet their basic needs or births by unmarried or young girls. Another common scenario is the high number of parents in rural remote areas who leave home to seek employment indefinitely, which increases the likelihood of unplanned pregnancies or those outside marriage. Globally, the majority of countries that receive adopted children were developed ones characterized by small families and residents attempting to have children at a later age. In general, the need for children available for adoption is high, with developing countries like Viet Nam often rich sources.

3.5. Motivating factors for migration relating to human trafficking

Research on transnational human trafficking and information gathered from anti-trafficking programmes revealed that deception was the chief reason for cross-border trafficking. Victims often have no choice but to be submissive to traffickers as they were often isolated, have no local language, controlled by debt bondage, have personal documents withheld, were threatened by traffickers and afraid of local laws (Office 138/CP, 2013; Doan, 2009, US Embassy to Viet Nam, 2014).

Reasons for victims deceived by traffickers include poverty, unemployment, limited knowledge, family care and the temptation for financial gain (Office 138/CP, 2013; Doan, 2009). Huge financial profits were reported as the most common incentive for traffickers. Notably, some traffickers were victims of trafficking themselves.

Structural factors in countries of origin and destination – such as poverty, gender inequality, gender imbalances, unemployment and a booming sex industry – interact to create an enabling environment for trafficking (Wang, 2005).

While legal regulations on prevention and combating human trafficking in Viet Nam are comprehensive, their implementation and preventive policies still encounter difficulties in preventing cross-border trafficking.

3.6. Impacts on migrants

Economic factors are accepted by global and domestic research as primary drivers of international migration. Migrants often wish to find better employment opportunities and incomes than on offer at home. In addition to better employment opportunities and higher incomes, labour migrants can learn numerous things in destination countries, such as foreign languages, professional and living skills, as well as broaden their views of the world by working in developed nations' advanced industrialized societies (Dang et al., 2010).

Vietnamese students, trainees and interns who travel abroad to study usually head to countries with better education and training standards than Viet Nam's. After completing studies, aside from language skills, knowledge and qualifications, migrants can also participate in international networks of friends and colleagues that can leave them more well-rounded people.

Besides economic benefits, immigrants in foreign labour markets also face many challenges with regards to integration into foreign societies, social stigmatization and sometimes confusing legal procedures that impact on their lives abroad. Furthermore, many migrant workers encounter employers who violate labour contracts, reduce salaries and allowances, assign inappropriate work duties different from those defined in labour contracts or mistreat them.

Recent examples of maltreatment by employers include the case of 52 Vietnamese migrants sent to Algeria to work in July 2015. They were beaten, maltreated and left without food one month after starting employment and had to return home in early November 2015.²¹ According to an article, "Beaten Vietnamese migrant workers in Algeria are crying for help" on 6 October 2015 in *VNExpress*, a worker's family had to give its land and house ownership certificate as security for a loan and paid more than VND 47 million for the husband to make the journey, but by October had only received July's wages equivalent to more than VND 2 million. This case resulted in a State-level intervention with the Prime Minister ordering each worker be compensated with USD 1,700.²² In many cases, economic benefits gained from migration are insufficient to cover huge debts workers incur to migrate.

Vietnamese people residing illegally abroad due to irregular migration, overstaying permits or quitting valid labour contracts for other work are not protected by laws and as such, are vulnerable to becoming victims of international crime rings (Le Duc, 2016).

Vietnamese whose migration purpose is not marriage nor family reunions, often leave for long periods away from families, spouse and children, which can loosen family ties and lead to high risks of divorce due to separation (Dang et al., 2010).

²¹ See <http://vnexpress.net/tin-tuc/thoi-su/lao-dong-viet-nam-o-algeria-keu-cuu-vi-bi-danh-dap-3291429.html>

²² See <http://vnexpress.net/tin-tuc/thoi-su/52-lao-dong-o-algeria-se-ve-nuoc-trong-10-ngay-toi-3304578.html>

Not everyone who marries a foreign national has a successful married life. At the National Workshop on International Marriage and Family in Can Tho province, 22 April 2011,²³ experts agreed that:

More Vietnamese women marrying foreign nationals through illegal marriage brokerage services resulted in many falling into difficult circumstances, being abused and trafficked for sexual purposes or beaten leading to disabilities for life or even death. Marriages for economic purposes (results of a recent sociology study showed that almost 31% of Vietnamese women interviewed wanted to marry a Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of Chinese man to find a job with increased income and 15.6% wanted to marry wealthy foreign nationals to help their families), not only contributes to increased risks of gender imbalances in marriageable-aged women, but also influences the country's relationship with destination countries and territories.

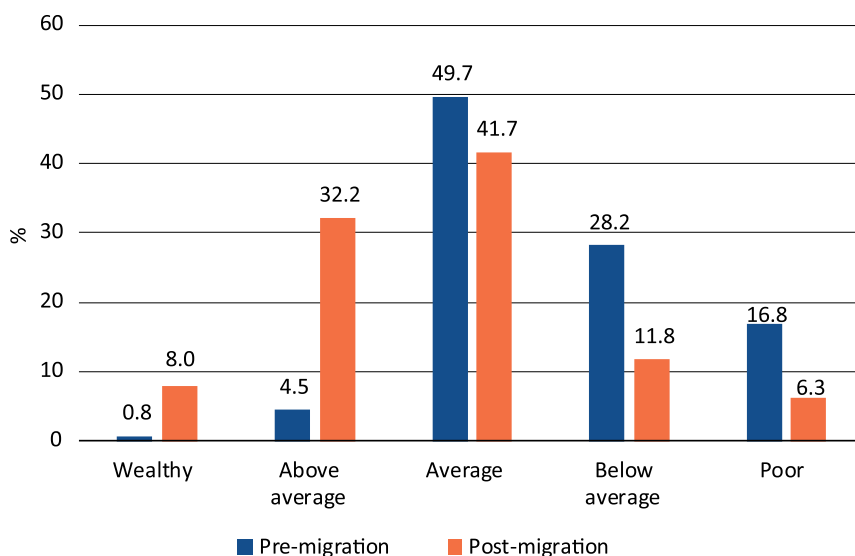
Overall, the impacts of international migration are diversified and multidimensional, positively and negatively affecting migrants. Migrants going through official channels with legal documentation, approved by authorities from Viet Nam and destination countries, often faced fewer risks than irregular migrants.

3.7. Impacts on families

According to a UNICEF-funded Sociology Institute study in five provinces during 2009–2010 titled “International Migration – Impacts on Families and Members Left Behind”, international migration was found to have positive impacts on the family economy. Figure 18 shows that at family level, remittances from migration helped improve household living standards with the percentage of wealthy families having increased tenfold compared to pre-departure, while the number of poor households reduced threefold (Nguyen, 2013).

²³ Article on website of the Institute for Family and Gender Studies on the National Workshop on International Marriage and Family in Can Tho, 22 April 2011, available from <http://ifgs.vass.gov.vn/Tin-hoat-dong/Hoi-nghi-toan-quoc-ve-hon-nhan-va-gia-dinh-co-yeu-to-nuoc-ngoai-100615.html>

Figure 18. Households' standards of living pre- and post-migration



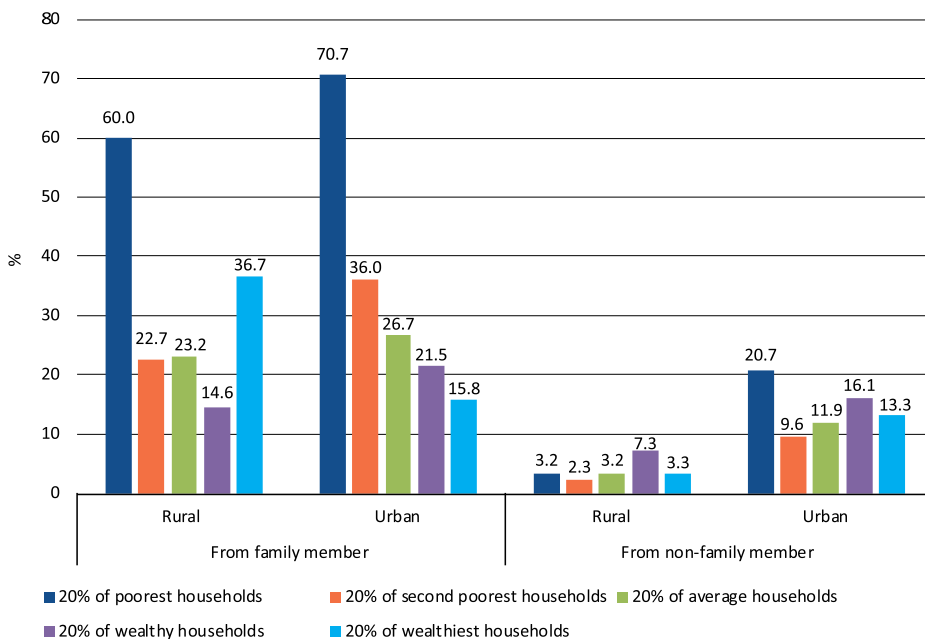
Source: Sociology Institute, 2010.

A study measuring international migration's socioeconomic impacts in six provinces of Viet Nam in 2010²⁴ showed international migrants' families received support through remittances (Dang et al., 2010). Notably, poor households in rural and urban areas in the research sample had a high ratio of receiving remittances from international migrants (Figure 19),²⁵ which also shows that a considerable ratio of households without migrants still received remittances from international migrants who were not family members, likely to be relatives. Therefore, international migration not only has direct impacts on the economic situation of migrants' families, but also on other households.

²⁴ The research sample included 1,508 households in six cities and provinces (Ha Noi, Hung Yen, Nghe An, Da Nang, Ho Chi Minh City and Can Tho). The research sample was divided into three types, households with migrants abroad at the time of survey, households with overseas migrants who returned and households without migrants abroad.

²⁵ The Survey of Living Standards of Households in 2006, Abella and Ducanes (2006) shows that on a national scale, only 7.6 per cent of households in the poorest quintile received remittances versus 48.5 per cent of the richest quintile. Note, this is an analysis of remittances from abroad, not necessarily from international labour migrants.

Figure 19. Percentage of households receiving remittances from international migrants



Source: Dang N.A. et al., *Development on the Move: Measuring and Optimising Migration's Economic and Social Impacts in Viet Nam* (Global Development Network and Institute for Public Policy Research, 2010).

Remittances from international migrants are used for different purposes, but their impacts were often reported as enhancing the ability of families to meet children’s schooling needs, reducing school dropouts, improving family members’ access to medical services and health care, as well as enhancing their living standards (Chappell et al., 2010; Dang et al., 2010; Nguyen, 2013; and Zhang et al., 2012).

International migration for marriage can also have positive impacts on changing gender stereotypes. Research shows that international migration was an educational opportunity for women and the majority of returned migrants recognized the importance of gender equality (Dang et al., 2010). In areas where many Vietnamese women have successfully married foreign nationals and the benefits to family and community are evident, people tended to reorientate their views on preferring sons to daughters to better promote gender equality in their community (Hoang, 2011).

However, not all families benefit from international migration. Some households do not receive remittances, while fees and deposits required for international migration consume significant family economic resources. For irregular migrants who travel to a destination country under the guise of tourism to work illegally, the risk of a family sustaining economic losses is high. In addition, international migration separates married couples from each other and children for long periods, which can result in divorce and/or insufficient care for children.

For students who study overseas, their families must often cover significant tuition, travel and living costs in destination countries. To underscore the point, the amount paid by Vietnamese in 2013 for overseas study equalled more than 1 per cent of GDP (International Consultants for Education and Fairs, 2014).²⁶

3.8. Impacts on sending countries

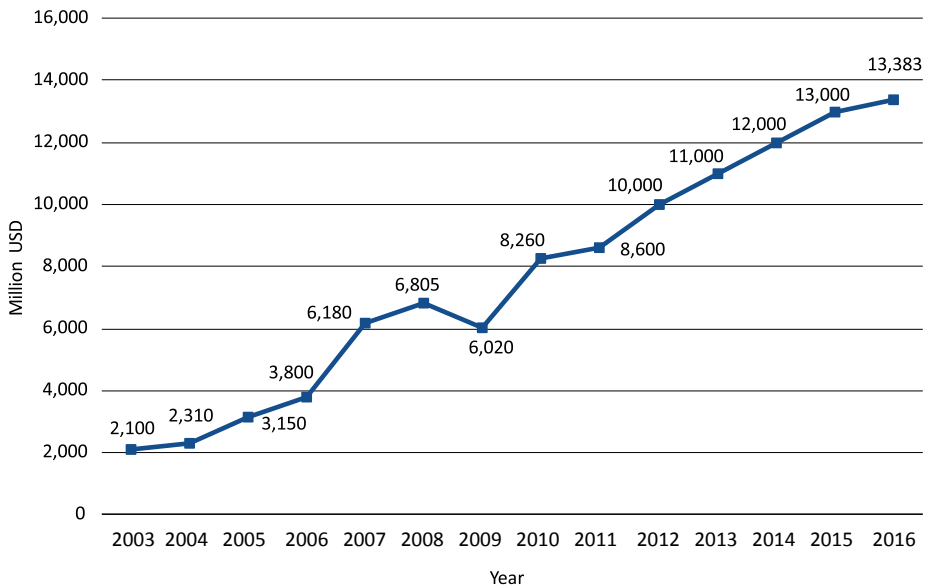
Research has shown that international migration greatly contributes to economies of sending countries. In 1990, international migrants' remittances globally totaled USD 50 billion, but by 2009, it hit USD 417 billion (Henning, 2011). According to UN reports, South and East Asia benefited most from migrants' remittances.

In Viet Nam, during the Doi Moi period, remittances from overseas Vietnamese were important sources of income for recipient families and the nation's development. Figure 20 highlights the upward trend of remittances to Viet Nam, aside from a blip in 2009 due to the world economic downturn. In 2014, remittances amounted to 6.4 per cent of GDP (USD 12 billion) and in 2015 hit a record USD 13.2 billion, accounting for 7 per cent of GDP for that year.²⁷ In comparison to ASEAN countries, Viet Nam's proportion of remittances to GDP in 2014 (a ratio of 10%) was only just behind the Philippines (ILO, 2015). For years, remittances to Viet Nam exceeded ODA (Dinh, 2014).

²⁶ See <http://markashwill.com/2014/07/17/125000-vietnamese-studied-overseas-in-2013/>

²⁷ According to the GSO, Viet Nam's GDP in 2015 was VND 4192.9 trillion, equivalent to USD 186.5 billion (see www.gso.gov.vn/default.aspx?tabid=621&ItemID=15507).

Figure 20. Remittances of Vietnamese overseas by time, 2003–2016

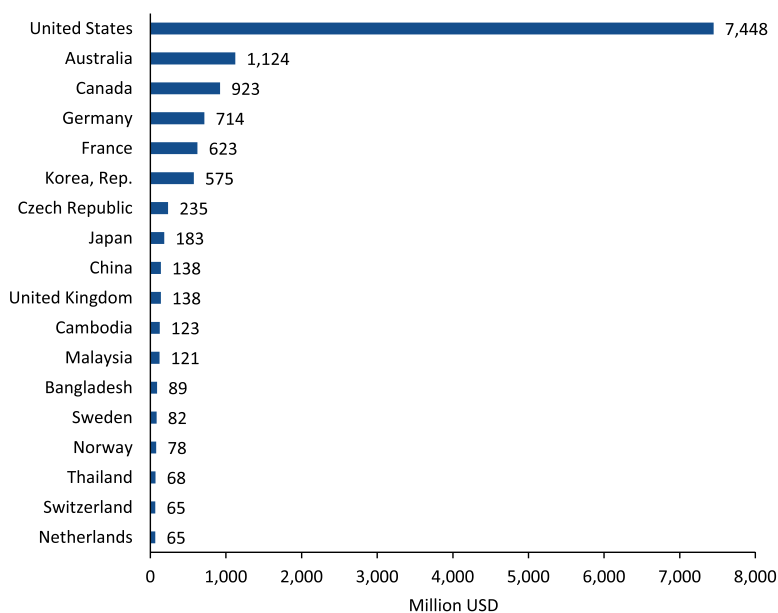


Source: www.worldbank.org/migration (data for 2016 was estimated by World Bank experts).

Figure 21 shows the flows of remittances to Viet Nam from abroad in 2015, with high numbers of Vietnamese in a specific country translating into greater remittances.

The top 12 countries with highest numbers of Vietnamese overseas and remittances (more than USD 100 million) were the United States, Australia, Canada, Germany, France, Republic of Korea, Czech Republic, Japan, China, United Kingdom, Cambodia and Malaysia. The United States was a particularly big source, with estimated 1.4 million overseas Vietnamese sending USD 7 billion in 2015 (World Bank, 2016).

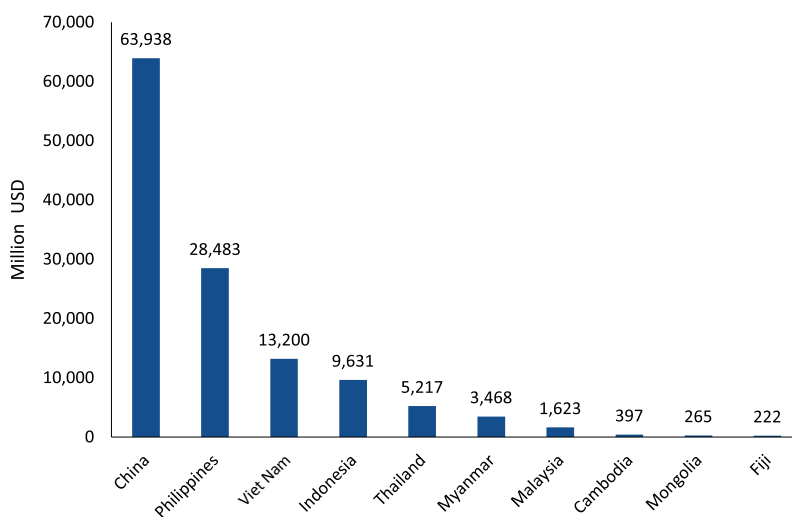
Figure 21. Vietnamese migrants' remittance flows to Viet Nam in 2015



Source: www.worldbank.org/migration

Figure 22 reveals that Viet Nam received a significant amount of remittances compared to most other South-East Asian countries in 2015.

Figure 22. Remittances of several countries, 2015



Source: www.worldbank.org/migration

Researcher Dinh Van Hai (2014) compared remittances with Viet Nam's ODA and FDI sources and concluded the former had seven positive financial impacts on the country. They are: (a) stable inflows of foreign currencies that create capital resources for economic development; (b) development is gained without/with minor investment; (c) development avoids negative results often associated with FDI (environmental pollution) or ODA (debts, paying interest); (d) hunger elimination, poverty reduction and enhanced production and competition capacities; (e) supports national balance of payments; (f) contributes to national savings; and (g) the financial market (Dinh, 2014). Recent research shows that remittances have positive effects on economic growth at national and provincial levels (Vu, 2015).

As stated earlier in this report, based on MoLISA's statistics on wage levels and incomes of migrant workers going through official channels, it was estimated that USD 3 billion in remittances was sent by migrant workers in 2014, an amount with potential to have a significant impact on the country's socioeconomic development.

Contractual labour migration offers other benefits through transferred knowledge, reduced unemployment, elimination of hunger and poverty reduction. At the same time, international migration has positive impacts on cultural, scientific and technological exchanges and education.²⁸ However, developing countries with large numbers of international migrants abroad faced difficulties in managing migrant workers, maintaining family ties and community solidarity, addressing disparity among population groups, preventing people trafficking and controlling social vices. In areas with a large number of Vietnamese women marrying foreign nationals (such as the Mekong Delta, Quang Ninh and Hai Phong), men encountered difficulties in getting married due to shortages of women (Hoang, 2011).

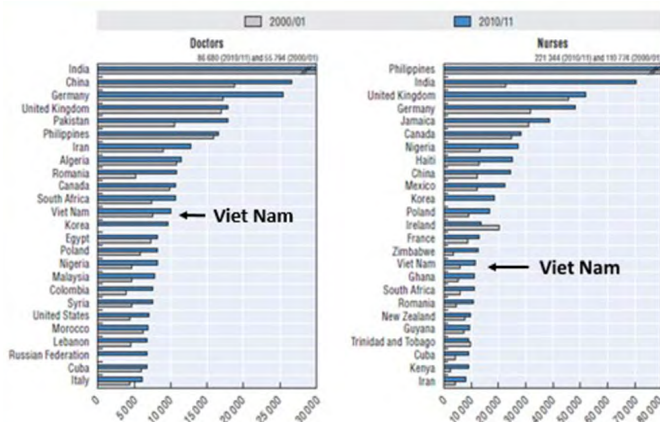
A further negative side to international migration is the "brain drain" of highly skilled professionals. Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States are some nations with effective policies to attract highly skilled migrants and limit unskilled ones (OECD, 2011). However, European countries have more flexible immigration policies and receive more unskilled migrant workers to do jobs unwanted by local people and contribute more than they take from the social security system (ibid.). It was estimated that during 2010–2011, 522,000

²⁸ Notice No.303/TB-VPCP, 24 August 2012 on conclusions of Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Thien Nhan at a labour cooperation meeting between Viet Nam and the Republic of Korea to mark the twentieth anniversary of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Vietnamese with bachelor’s degrees or higher working abroad were immigrants (World Bank, 2016).²⁹

Figure 23 shows the number of foreign nurses and doctors who worked in OECD countries in 2000–2001 and 2010–2011. Among developed countries, Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom lost nurses and doctors, while the United States benefited most. Many developing countries have nurses and doctors working in OECD countries. It is notable that more than 7,000 doctors and 5,000 nurses born in Viet Nam worked in OECD countries during 2000–2001, which both increased to 10,000 during 2010–2011. These figures largely encompass Vietnamese who migrated to OECD countries to work, despite the great need for doctors and nurses in Viet Nam. The shortage of nurses and doctors in South-East Asian countries was estimated at almost 1.2 million in 2000–2001 and 661,000 in 2010–2011 (OECD, 2015).

Figure 23. “Brain drain”: foreign nurses and doctors working in OECD countries, 2000–2001 and 2010–2011



Source: OECD, “Changing patterns in the international migration of doctors and nurses to OECD countries” in: *International Migration Outlook 2015* (OECD Publishing, Paris, 2015), pp. 105–182.

The deeper globalization of economies, development of information technology and modern transportation have altered the dynamics of the “brain drain” in many countries. Foreign investment from developed countries into developing ones has rapidly increased the need for skilled professionals from developed nations. At the same time, many skilled professionals and successful migrants from developing countries are now investing in home countries or setting up socioeconomic networks to create “transnational communities”.

²⁹ This World Bank Group’s report did not make clear if this is the stock of Vietnamese migrants in the year or the accumulative one.

Nowadays, governments of developing and developed countries understand the benefits of international migration and labour market linkages for unskilled and skilled labour (Mattoo and Carzaniga, 2003).

Different studies by Vietnamese researchers have indicated that international labour migration was growing and its drivers were more diversified, especially with the increased participation of women and children (Dang et al., 2010; Population Information Centre and General Population Office, 2011). The authors came to the conclusion that international migration had positive impacts on migrant families' income, expenditure and children's education, but could disrupt the family unit with heightened risks of divorce or separation (Dang et al., 2010).

Study is increasingly a driver of migration and might indirectly impact on the education market in Viet Nam. As already highlighted in this report, there is significant demand within Viet Nam's young and growing population for general and higher education in reputable overseas schools and universities. While not every family has the financial ability to send children abroad to study, Viet Nam is becoming an attractive education market for foreign recruiters and education investors. With such investment forecast to climb, Viet Nam can also participate in the education market to attract foreign students to study subjects/majors it enjoys a competitive edge in, especially when Viet Nam has educational institutions of an international standard.

3.9. Impacts on destination communities and integration of migrant workers at destination

In developed countries, an ageing population and low birth rate amplify labour shortages. If this demand for human resources in developed countries is coupled with a combination of excess labour, youth unemployment in developing countries, large discrepancies between wage, income levels and living standards, then there is great potential for international migration. In this context, migrant workers play an important role in the supply of labour for sectors local workers ignore.

Highly skilled migrant workers are welcomed in most destination countries as they can actively contribute to a nation's economy, society, technology and culture. School and college students, interns and trainees are also valued in

many countries due to their great contributions to host countries. Moreover, overseas students' contributions in the form of tuition fees and living costs leave a considerable economic footprint. For example, the 4,900 Vietnamese students in the Russian Federation in 2006 spent up to USD 30.5 million according to Russian Ministry of Education estimates, USD 11.7 million of which was for tuition fees and living costs (Chesnokov, 2011).

A 2016 US Department of Commerce report revealed that 974,926 foreign students went to the United States in the 2014–2015 school year and directly contributed USD 30.8 billion to the American economy. Thus, each foreign student studying in the United States on average contributed USD 31,600 per year. The money that individuals and families spent accounted for 63.6 per cent of the total cost of studying in the United States of all foreign students, while the rest was funded by different sources. According to this report, 18,722 Vietnamese students studied in the United States during this school year and if each contributed 63.6 per cent of expenses to the economy, it would amount to USD 376.2 million, which highlights the considerable outflow of money from Viet Nam for overseas study.

International migration also has negative impacts on receiving countries as migrants pose challenges in ensuring provision of basic social services (education, health care). In addition, irregular migration flows can be problematic (overstaying tourists and students, people trafficking and other transnational crimes).

However, UN experts conclude that international migration, particularly international labour migration, had positive impacts on sending and receiving countries (Henning, 2011). To have better gains from international migration, governments and international organizations must have policies and programmes to:

- Reduce transaction costs of remittance transfers;
- Promote migration with return and circular migration;
- Promote entrepreneurial spirit of migrants;
- Protect rights of all migrants; and
- Facilitate integration of migrants in destination countries.

4. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION GOVERNANCE AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

4.1. Institution and policies on international labour migration

The Government of Viet Nam has a long-established policy to encourage contractual overseas labour migration. In 1999, it passed Decree No.152/1999/ND-CP to regulate sending Vietnamese workers abroad for fixed-term employment. In 2003, Decree No.81/2003/ND-CP replaced Decree No.152/1999/ND-CP to regulate Vietnamese workers abroad through the Labour Law. In 2006, the National Assembly adopted the Law on Vietnamese Working Abroad under Labour Contracts, which in turn established a foundation for a comprehensive labour migration legal system. Decree No.126/2007/ND-CP was passed in 2007 to implement the Law on Vietnamese Working Abroad under Labour Contracts. This law underlines government support of Vietnamese workers, in particular to:

- (a) Create favourable conditions for Vietnamese citizens to work abroad.
- (b) Protect rights and legitimate interests of migrant workers, enterprises and agencies that send migrant workers abroad.
- (c) Assist with investment to open new labour markets offering high incomes and to train management staff, with vocational and language training for potential migrant workers.
- (d) Provide preferential credit schemes for social welfare beneficiaries who wish to work abroad.
- (e) Encourage deployment of workers abroad who are professionally and technically skilled to benefit from high pay and work in businesses run by Vietnamese enterprises that are contracted or invest abroad.

For poor households and social welfare beneficiaries, the Government passed Decision No.71/2009/QĐ-TTg on 29 April 2009 to facilitate labour migration in deprived districts for sustainable poverty reduction during 2009–2020. Pursuant to this decision, workers with permanent residence in one of 61 poor districts shall receive a range of support to work abroad. Following the decision, in 2010, MoLISA released Decision No.630/QĐ-LĐTBXH to regulate costs for vocational and language training, as well as orientation courses for workers from deprived districts to work abroad. For poor households outside

these districts, MoLISA issued Dispatch No.1083/QLDNN-KHTC in 2012 to support workers who are primary relatives of those deemed to have made significant national contributions, from poor households or ethnic minorities of working age and qualified to work abroad under contract. With such support, poor workers can now unlock the door to foreign labour markets.

During implementation of the Law on Vietnamese Working Abroad under Labour Contracts, numerous issues arose, such as overseas recruitment agencies or employers violating agreed provisions and increasing proportions of migrant workers changing or terminating their jobs. Many recruitment companies established branches without registration or did not directly recruit workers nor provided orientation trainings. Many also charged potential migrant workers high fees. Overall, management of migrant workers abroad was loose and ineffective. As for migrant workers, there was a sharp increase in breaking employment contracts in 2015 compared to 2013–2014 (MoLISA, 2015). There were also numerous difficulties in protecting the rights of recruitment agencies and migrant workers who complied with laws (Consular Department, MoFA, 2011).

In response, the Government and MoLISA issued a series of legal documents on sending migrant workers abroad to strengthen the labour export legal framework. Among the documents, the most notable include Circular No.21/2013/TT-BLDTBXH regulating maximum deposits paid by workers, Circular No.22/2013/TT-BLDTBXH regulating labour supply contract requirements, Decree No.95/2013/ND-CP stipulating administrative sanctions for violations of the Labour Law and Joint Circular No.32/2013/TTLT-BLDTBXH-BNG adopted by MoLISA and MoFA penalizing those who commit administrative violations against under contract Vietnamese workers abroad who: (a) stay abroad illegally after contract expiration; (b) flee assigned employment; and (c) do not show at the workplace as agreed in the labour contract upon destination country arrival and sanctions for violating agencies, organizations or individuals.

The Government has also signed a number of international labour cooperation agreements with countries to legally protect Vietnamese migrant workers.³⁰ Overall, Viet Nam has a relatively comprehensive system of policies and laws to regulate contracted overseas labour migration.

³⁰ Some documents such as the agreement between the governments of Viet Nam and Thailand on sending and receiving labourers signed 23 July 2015 (Notice No.33/2015/TB-LPQT of MoFA on 28 July 2015) and a memorandum of understanding on labour cooperation also signed on the same day (Notice No.32/2015/TB-LPQT of MoFA on 28 July 2015); Agreement on Labour Cooperation between the governments of Viet Nam and Lao People's Democratic Republic signed on 1 July 2013, with Decision No.2404/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister signed on 31 December 2014 to implement the agreement.

Labour migration across land borders

The Government of Viet Nam has signed numerous agreements with countries sharing its land borders, including a common policy on land border crossings.

In 2009, Viet Nam and China inked three important agreements pertaining to citizens crossing shared land borders. They include the Protocol on Border Demarcation and Marker Erection (18 November 2009), Agreement on Land Border Management Regulations (18 November 2009) and Agreement on Border Gates and Land Border Gate Management Regulations (18 November 2009). Of these, the latter clearly specifies all international and mutual border gates, and crossings over international and mutual border gates requiring passports or travel documents. Regarding Vietnamese citizens who cross Viet Nam–China land borders with other travel documents, MoPS adopted Circular No.43/2011/TT-BCA on 29 June 2011 on travel documents for Vietnamese citizens to visit Chinese cities and provinces adjoining Viet Nam. It states “laissez-passers are issued for Vietnamese permanent residents who seek to visit Chinese cities and provinces adjoining Viet Nam’s border for tourism or other personal purposes” (article 2). The laissez-passer shall be valid for 12 months to travel within Chinese cities and provinces adjoining Viet Nam (article 3). As such, every permanent resident of provinces/cities across Viet Nam is entitled to a laissez-passer.

MoPS released Circular No.67/2013/TT-BCA on 11 December 2013 on the issuance of laissez-passers for Vietnamese citizens to cross the Viet Nam–China border. It states that only “Vietnamese permanent residents of communes and towns adjacent to Viet Nam-China border” and “officials of government agencies in districts, towns or provincial cities adjacent to the Viet Nam-China border assigned to carry out official duties in border areas with China” shall be permitted to obtain laissez-passers (article 3). It should be valid for 12 months and be non-renewable, but can be multi-used before expiry. Bearers can only visit communes/towns within the border area and further travel into China is not permitted. Heads of commune-level police agencies are authorized to issue laissez-passers for residents. It is important to note that Circular No.67/2013/TT-BCA does not include provisions to supersede Circular No.43/2011/TT-BCA, whereas in existing MoPS legal public administration documents promulgated alongside Decision No.4582/QD-BCA dated 7 August 2014, Circular No.43/2011/TT-BCA is still in effect.

This implies Vietnamese residents nationwide can apply for laissez-passers to travel to Chinese border provinces. The only difference is the application receiving and processing authorities for granting laissez-passers. According to Circular No.43/2011/TT-BCA, provincial police immigration offices from provinces adjoining China can receive applications and issue laissez-passers. According to Circular No.67/2013/TT-BCA, the police of communes where a person holds permanent residence can receive applications and process laissez-passers. In this way, Circular No.67/2013/TT-BCA provides favourable conditions for border commune residents to obtain laissez-passers. According to survey team discussions with local authorities, the reality in An Giang and Lang Son provinces – bordering Cambodia and China respectively – is a large number of migrants without permanent residence in border communes often illegally cross borders along footpaths, rather than follow official procedures with provincial police, local authorities reported.

Viet Nam has also signed numerous official documents regarding border demarcation and management with the People’s Democratic Republic. Important ones include the Agreement on National Border Regulations (1 March 1990) and the Protocol to Amend and Complement the Agreement on National Border Regulations (31 August 1997). On 29 June 2011, MoPS adopted Circular No.41/2011/TT-BCA on the issuance of laissez-passers for Vietnamese residents to visit the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and for Laotians to enter Viet Nam. This circular permits the issuance of laissez-passers for “Vietnamese citizens with permanent residence in provinces adjoining Lao People’s Democratic Republic who seek to visit Laotian provinces across the border for work or other personal purposes” (article 2) and officers and workers “of agencies, organizations or enterprises that have head offices located in provinces adjoining Lao People’s Democratic Republic (including agencies, organizations or enterprises that have head offices located in other provinces or central ministries, departments) for official duty or work purposes” (article 2).

With Cambodia, Viet Nam has inked several important border management documents, including the Treaty on National Border Regulations (20 July 1983), Treaty on Border Demarcation (27 December 1985) and Supplementary Treaty for the 1985 Treaty on Border Demarcation (10 October 2005). On 29 June 2011, MoPS adopted Circular No.42/2011/TT-BCA on issuance of Viet Nam–Cambodia laissez-passers for “Vietnamese officers and workers of central level agencies and agencies from other provinces having head offices located in provinces adjoining Cambodia, who seek to visit the province across the border for work” (article 2).

These policies have helped citizens of Viet Nam and neighbouring countries to trade and interact much easier. However, the long land border, intricate topography and long-established relations between border populations make irregular migration still popular.

4.2. Policies and regulations on international migration for study

Education and training are State-prioritized sectors for Vietnamese nationals who are supported to study abroad, especially in the context of globalization and international integration. In 1998, the National Assembly passed the new Education Law, particularly articles 94 to 97 of Item 3, which state “to encourage and facilitate Vietnamese nationals to migrate abroad for study, training and research, academic exchanges being self-funded or sponsored by international organisations, foreign companies or educational agencies” (article 95). The Education Law was amended in 2005 and 2009, but still encouraged Vietnamese nationals to study abroad. Furthermore, the State released numerous legal documents to promote education and studying abroad, including the 2006 Law on Vocational Training and 2012 Law on Higher Education.

In fact, policies on sending students to overseas were implemented as early as the 1950s during the French occupation of Viet Nam. By the end of the 1990s, through agreements on cultural, educational cooperation between Viet Nam and the Soviet Union, China and other socialist countries, tens of thousands of Vietnamese were sent abroad to learn, particularly engineers, post-graduation students and fellows. Especially from 2000, the project on “Provision of overseas trainings for technicians funded by the State budget” was approved under Decision No.322/QD/Ttg of the Prime Minister dated 19 April 2000. The project was then revised and extended to 2014 by Decision No.356/QD/Ttg of the Prime Minister dated 28 April 2005.

In 2010, the Prime Minister passed Decision No.911/QD-Ttg approving the “Provision of training for lecturers at doctorate level for colleges and universities in 2010-2020” project. To promote the sending of officials abroad for training, Decision No.599/QD-TTg approved the “Provision of overseas training for government officials funded by the State budget in 2013-2020”, which emphasized promotion of postgraduate and university-level education for talented youth and enhanced migration to Canada, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, United Kingdom and United States and others with leading education systems to serve Viet Nam’s development. In addition, Decision No.2448/QD-TTg dated 16

December 2013 approved a proposal on international integration of education and vocational training until 2020, which emphasized “proactive and active international integration to selectively acquire global educational and vocational training experiences based on the principles of protecting independence, self-control, equality and cooperation of mutual benefits”. Besides these projects, MoET implemented nearly 20 scholarship programmes under agreements with countries, with 1,000 scholarships annually, to encourage Vietnamese citizens to study abroad.

MoET passed Decision No.2653/QD-BGDDT on 25 July 2014 to implement Resolution No.29-NQ/TW on the comprehensive renovation of education and training as part of the country’s industrialization and modernization agenda to become an internationally integrated socialist-oriented market economy. Vietnamese migrating abroad for study is managed in accordance with Decision No.05/2013/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 15 January 2013. Article 6 stipulates MoET develop and manage an e-database for mandatory registration of overseas students.

Overall, the Government of Viet Nam has encouraged its nationals to migrate abroad to study and contribute to the nation’s development.

4.3. Regulations and policies on marriages with foreign nationals

The Government of Viet Nam recently enhanced regulations and policies on marriages with foreign nationals (Consular Department, MoFA, 2011). In 2014, the National Assembly ratified the new Marriage and Family Law (Law No.52/2014/QH13 dated 19 June 2014), with article 2 stipulating that “marriage relations between Vietnamese nationals of different ethnic groups, religions, religious beliefs and between Vietnamese and foreign nationals are respected and protected by laws”. Following in this legislation’s footsteps was Decree No.126/2014/ND-CP, dated 31 December 2014, with specific provisions on how to implement the Marriage and Family Law with regards to marriages involving foreign nationals. Circular No.02a/2015/TT-BTP, issued by MoJ on 23 February 2015, guided several provisions of Decree No.126/2014/ND-CP and the Marriage and Family Law relating to marriage and family relations with foreign nationals. In short, new laws and legal documents on international marriages have improved significantly to better protect marriage rights, particularly of Vietnamese to foreign nationals.

4.4. Regulations and policies on international child adoption

Child adoption is an increasingly international social phenomenon regulated by laws. In Viet Nam, it is a profound humanitarian issue that attracts serious government attention, especially in the context the country still bears heavy consequences of past wars, socioeconomic difficulties and people's low incomes. Along with creating alternative family shelters for children adopted (most are children in special circumstances), adoption also contributes to meeting the legitimate needs of adoptive parents, especially couples with no or limited birth capacity. Child adoption by foreign nationals in Viet Nam has long been regulated by laws ensuring children must be cared, nurtured and educated in healthy family environments.

Presently, Viet Nam's legal framework on child adoption is aligned with international norms protecting children's rights through multilateral cooperation mechanisms. This is an important element in Viet Nam meeting its obligations as a signatory to the La Hay Convention on Child Protection and Cooperation in Child Adoption (Hague Conference on Private International Law, 1993). The clause, in the Law on Adoption (2010), to "allow adoption by foreign nationals only in case alternate families in the country cannot be found" is an important principle clearly recognized in the La Hay Convention (1993) on adoption. International adoption is beneficial as it provides long-term family shelters for children for whom suitable country-of-origin families cannot be found. According to the La Hay Convention, every country should prioritize the raising of children by their original families at every opportunity, as also expressed in Viet Nam's Law on Adoption.

MoJ is the government agency responsible for international child adoption. It established the Department of Child Adoption, whose mandate is to assist the minister in management of child adoption.³¹ For government administration purposes, all information related to children who seek adoptive parents, including date of birth, gender, ethnicity and health status, must be recorded and archived at the Department of Child Adoption. This information was vital for development of the *Viet Nam Migration Profile 2016* chapter on

³¹ The Department of International Child Adoption, established under Decision No.337/QD-BTP dated 5 August 2003 by the Minister of Justice to manage international adoptions, was renamed the Department of Child Adoption under Decision No.2278/2008/QD-BTP dated 4 December 2008 by the Minister of Justice and given an additional mandate to manage domestic adoptions. Decision No.3139/QD-BTP dated 20 November 2014 replaced Decision No.2278/2008/QD-BTP with the added mission "to assist the minister to perform the tasks of the central agency for international adoption in Viet Nam".

international child adoption.³² To effectively handle child adoption cases in strict compliance with the law and strengthen local-level cooperation, many provinces have developed inter-agency cooperation mechanisms for child adoption.

4.5. Regulations on migration relating to human trafficking

Human trafficking rapidly emerged during the 1990s, and in response, the Government of Viet Nam took numerous measures to fight this crime, especially the establishment of the Steering Committee of the National Plan of Action on combating trafficking in women and children (Office 130/CP) by Decision No.187/2004/QD-TTg. On 18 January 2013, the Government promulgated Decision No.187/QD-TTg to merge Office 130/CP together with the Steering Committee of the National Target Programme on Crime Prevention and Combating to form the Steering Committee 138/CP.

In 2011, the National Assembly passed the Law on Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking (Law No.66/2011/QH12), an important milestone to build a legal framework to fight human trafficking in Viet Nam. The Government then focused on developing an anti-human trafficking policy and legal system, through a comprehensive review of pertinent legal documents before making recommendations to the National Assembly to amend relevant laws. Other important documents include Decree No.09/2013/ND-CP on implementation of the Law on Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking, Joint Circular No.01/2013/TTLT-TANDTC-VKSNHTC-BCA-BQP-BTP of the People's Supreme Court, People's Supreme Procuracy, MoPS, MoND, MoJ on establishing criminal responsibility of people who traffic adults and children, as well as fraudulently exchange or sell children, Joint Circular No.01/2014/TTLT-BCA-BQP-BLDTBHX-BNG on procedural orders and coordination in verification, identification, reception and return of victims among MoPS, MoND, MoLISA and MoFA, Decision No.1427/QD-Ttg of the Prime Minister adopting the Plan of Action to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking during 2011–2015, Decision No.623/QD-TTg dated 14 April 2016 of the Prime Minister approving the National Strategy for Prevention and Combating Crimes during 2016–2025 and orientation towards 2030 and Decision No.793/QD-TTg dated 10 May 2016 of the Prime Minister on selection of July 30 as the annual National Day against Trafficking in Persons.

³² Under provisions of the Hague Convention on child adoption and legal provisions of Viet Nam, information of adoptive parents and adopted children must be kept confidential and only be provided in accordance with the law and not be detrimental to adoptive parents and adopted children.

Moreover, Viet Nam has actively cooperated with countries sharing its borders to combat human trafficking, resulting in a number of agreements. They include: (a) Agreement between Viet Nam and China on cooperation in prevention and combating human trafficking and protection of victims signed on 15 September 2010; (b) Agreement between Viet Nam and Lao People's Democratic Republic on cooperation in prevention and combat of trafficking and protection of victims signed on 3 November 2010 and effective on 19 March 2011; (c) Bilateral Agreement between Viet Nam and Cambodia on Elimination of Trafficking in Women and Children and Support to Victims signed on 10 October 2005, amended and supplemented on 28 September 2012; (d) Agreement between Viet Nam and Thailand on Elimination of Trafficking in persons, especially in Women and Children signed on 24 March 2008 (effective 22 January 2009); and (e) Agreement between Viet Nam and Malaysia on 1 October 2015 to combat transnational crimes.

Multilateral counter-trafficking cooperation is also a government priority as reflected in a number of agreements, including Decision No.605/QD-TTg by the Prime Minister to implement the Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes and Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Announcement No.14/2015/TB-LPQT of MoFA on an agreement between the governments of Viet Nam and Australia on implementation of the Asian-Australian Cooperation Programme on Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons, Decision No.2574/QD-CTN, dated 20 November 2015 of the President on signing the ASEAN Convention on Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons, a memorandum of understanding on cooperation between Cambodia, China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) signed in Ha Noi on 21 May 2015.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Concluding remarks

Like with other developing nations embracing globalization and modernization, millions of Vietnamese exit and enter their country each year. Taking unofficial border crossings into account, up to 10 per cent of Viet Nam's population (9 million people) could exit and enter the country each year. Those who depart often belong to the most active working age group of 20–40 years, with a slightly higher percentage of males.

Vietnamese nationals travel abroad through a variety of means and for a number of different purposes, with economic migration the chief driver. Government policies have consistently encouraged labour exports, reflected in the rising number of annual departures. In 2014, this number exceeded 100,000 people for the first time and hit 119,530 in 2015 and 126,296 in 2016. As Viet Nam becomes increasingly globalized, the rise in Vietnamese migrant workers abroad will become an irreversible trend. Migration is characterized by the proportionally low number of female migrant workers, with most migrant workers from northern provinces down to north-central Nghe An and fewer from southern provinces. Japan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Republic of Korea and Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China received the majority of Vietnamese migrant workers during the past five years. Wage levels of migrant workers are generally higher than ones in Viet Nam.

Apart from official labour exports via mutual agreements, many workers choose neighbouring countries, such as Cambodia, China and Lao People's Democratic Republic as destinations. This type of labour migration involves people from various walks of life, with different purposes and means of transport, with the majority illegally travelling across borders via informal routes. Irregular migrants are not protected by law and as a consequence are likely to be exploited, fall victim to people traffickers or transgress home and destination country laws. In reality, numerous irregular migrants fall victim to such risks. The high demand for border province low-skilled workers together with relatively higher wages attract numerous Vietnamese workers. Underemployment and lower incomes in migrants' localities are determinants of cross-border work. However, there are no effective mutual policies between Viet Nam and neighbouring countries to facilitate labour migration. For these reasons, many choose to follow unlawful migration channels despite the potential risks. These irregular migrants usually travel to work for short periods and return home. This migration pattern has

resulted in establishment of social networks in Viet Nam and abroad to support such irregular migration, which will become more complex in the future.

Another important motivation for migration is education. This has become achievable for growing numbers of Vietnamese due to the Government's open policy towards overseas study, rapid economic growth, accessible international travel networks, Vietnamese people's more internationalist outlook and thriving social networks of Vietnamese overseas. Currently, more than 100,000 Vietnamese study abroad, and this number will continue to rise. Many graduates return to Viet Nam to contribute to the country's development. Those who remain abroad retain close relationships with families and communities in Viet Nam and support socioeconomic development through remittances and other important contributions.

Migration for marriage with foreign nationals is also common. Within the past five years, fewer women have married foreign nationals than men. Australia, Republic of Korea, Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China and the United States have the highest numbers of citizens marrying Vietnamese, with ones with Taiwanese commonly in Mekong Delta provinces and with nationals of the Republic of Korea in northern provinces.

The number of adoption cases involving foreign nationals has risen in recent years. In 2016, international adoption took place in 48 cities/provinces nationwide with 551 children adopted. Most adoptive parents were citizens of places with child adoption cooperation agreements with Viet Nam, including Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Republic of Korea, Sweden and Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China. Overall, more girls were adopted by foreign nationals than boys, with the majority aged up to 5 years.

Regarding trafficking-related migration, the current situation remains highly complicated with increasing cases detected. Trafficking for sexual exploitation and marriage are among the most common forms, but trafficking in men, infants, even unborn babies and for organs is now frequent. The number of reported victims increased between 2010–2014, with 1,000 victims in 2015. The actual number of trafficking cases and victims is thought to be significantly higher than detected. Although trafficking crimes occurred nationwide, the majority were detected in border provinces adjacent to Cambodia, China and Lao People's Democratic Republic. Nearly half of trafficked victims were from ethnic minorities, most were unmarried, from poor households, with low levels of education and often unemployed or farmers.

The impacts of international migration are diversified and multidimensional, positively and negatively affecting migrants, their families and communities. Migrants going through official channels with legal documents to destination countries often face fewer risks than irregular migrants. Key positive impacts of international migration include employment, higher incomes, better education, enhanced skills, new languages and cultural exchanges. Families and relatives of migrants receive important sources of economic contributions through remittances used to improve people's living standards, business start-ups, enhance education and health care or enable other family members to seek opportunities overseas. Such migration also reduces pressure on the local job market, and returning migrants improve the competitive capacity of the local labour force through transfers of knowledge and skills, while cultural exchanges between countries enable Viet Nam to further integrate into the global economy and benefit from globalization.

However, there are downsides to international migration. Not all families benefit as some households do not receive remittances, while fees and deposits required for international migration consume significant family economic resources. For irregular migrants who travel to a destination country under the guise of tourism and work illegally, the risk of a family sustaining economic losses is high. In addition, international migration separates married couples from each other and children for long periods, which can result in divorce and/or insufficient care for children. As a result of skilled migrants attracted abroad, this "brain drain" could impact on the economy and the nation's development.

Overall, international migration has mainly positive impacts. It is important that appropriate measures and institutions be in place to protect the legitimate rights and interests of international migrants, to minimize risks and create conditions for international migration to make better contributions at individual, family and country levels.

5.2. Recommendations

Having acknowledged that international migration has numerous positive socioeconomic impacts on migrants, their families and the nation, Viet Nam's policymakers are encouraged to place greater emphasis on responding to their citizens' legitimate migration needs and minimize related risks. Key policy recommendations centre on continual improvements to State management institutions, creation of favourable conditions to better respond to people's legitimate migration needs and enhanced protection of their legal rights and benefits. This is important in the context that Viet Nam is integrating more

deeply into the world, while implementing a new generation of FTAs to increase the need for an even more international outlook.

The State is encouraged to appoint a migration management agency as a focal point to develop a database on international migration, to periodically establish migration profiles for management and development purposes. Frequent updates, monitoring and management of international migration processes are vital for social management and development. Currently, international migration data is fragmented and inaccurate due to its collection by ministries, sectors and localities through agency-specific methods to serve specific needs. Furthermore, the complexity and multidimensionality of international migration demands cooperation between domestic and international migration-related agencies and organizations, especially ministries of foreign affairs in destination countries. Therefore, the Government is encouraged to officially appoint MoFA as the focal point agency to develop a database on Viet Nam-related international migration, periodically establish migration profiles for development and management purposes with financial sources earmarked for this activity.

Ministries and branches, within their areas of responsibility and functions, should review current international migration policies and institutions to optimize migration procedures in Viet Nam. Optimization would include reduced migration costs and enhanced services to migrants and potential ones. At the same time, the control of border entries and exits should be better managed through development of an electronic database to collect statistics according to set criteria, such as age, gender, place(s) of departure/destination and purpose(s) of migration, if possible. This could be achieved after a review of migration-related policies and the following actions:

- Reform current electronic information systems for digitization of information for easy reference and extraction of data by age, gender, ethnicity, departure and arrival.
- Reinforce cooperation with countries with diplomatic relations with Viet Nam, especially popular destinations for Vietnamese migrants. Cooperation should include increased information exchanges on migration for labour, education, marriage, tourism, child adoption or health care purposes, as well as trafficking in persons.
- Strengthen international migration cooperation with IOM and other international organizations, with a special focus on migration management, risks and crisis management.
- Encourage inter-agency cooperation to establish a shared database for migration management and data sharing.

MoFA is recommended to instruct Viet Nam's diplomatic representatives abroad to effectively protect the rights and legitimate interests of Vietnamese citizens overseas and support ministries in accessing information on established partners/businesses in host countries to guide international cooperation activities. Such support would alert MoLISA to unscrupulous employers of Vietnamese migrants and allow MoET and the Ministry of Health to be better informed about education/training institutions and health-care service providers, respectively.

MoLISA:

- Continue to review its labour export management policies and mechanisms and pay more attention to monitoring and evaluation of labour export agencies. This will ensure safe and cost-effective labour exports and further protect the rights and lawful benefits of migrant workers, recruitment agencies and foreign employers.
- Consider establishment of a mechanism to ensure recruitment agencies and foreign employers adhere to laws and benefit from their rights. A legal mechanism is required to bind responsibilities to all stakeholders in cases of violations to the rights and legal benefits of migrant workers and a communication mechanism to effectively detect and report violations of migrant workers' rights, benefits and dignity.
- Enhance its electronic information system to allow for development of a digitized database for easy reference and extraction of data by age, gender, ethnicity, departure and arrival.

MoET:

- Develop and propose an international education integration strategy to the Government to increase participation in the international education market through creation of favourable conditions to grow the market domestically and encourage Vietnamese to study abroad.
- Continue to coordinate more closely with MoFA, especially Vietnamese embassies in countries with advanced education systems, to further develop international education networks to provide counselling and raise awareness of education opportunities available to Vietnamese students for better selection of majors and skills.
- MoET's database of Vietnamese students abroad under State scholarships or bilateral agreements, a rich source of information for migration management, should be fully digitized to enhance access and allow for comprehensive analysis of material.
- In the context of globalization, foreign language skills are a key determinant for success, as well as global integration. MoET should review and improve

policies related to teaching and learning of foreign languages, as well as set mandatory requirements on Vietnamese graduate students' language skills to continue their development and help the nation compete internationally.

MoPS and **MoND** have important roles to ensure land, sea and air border security. MoPS should review and improve migration management policies to ensure security, better assist Vietnamese citizens migrating abroad for education, work, tourism or other legitimate purposes to contribute to lower migration costs and deter irregular migration.

MoPS:

- Continue to improve exit–entry procedures to facilitate departures of Vietnamese citizens abroad for work, study, tourism and other legitimate purposes.
- Coordinate with MoND to strengthen cooperation with neighbouring country security forces to fight human trafficking, fraud, forced labour, sexual exploitation, transnational trading of drugs and prohibited goods.
- Enhance its electronic information system to allow for development of a digitized database for easy reference and extraction of data by age, gender, ethnicity, departure and arrival.

MoND:

- Strengthen measures to prevent different forms of irregular migration at land and sea border gates.
- Enhance its electronic information system to allow for development of a digitized database for easy reference and extraction of data by age, gender, ethnicity, departure and arrival of migrants.

MoJ:

- Coordinate with relevant ministries, branches and local authorities to ensure cases of international marriage and child adoption are legally managed to minimize fraud and/or risks of human trafficking.
- Enhance its electronic information system to allow for development of a digitized database for easy reference and extraction of data by age, gender, ethnicity, departure and arrival.
- Develop a mechanism to ensure information is frequently updated to differentiate cases of marriages involving foreign nationals who remain or migrate from Viet Nam.

Ministry of Information and Communication:

- Should enhance information and communications channels for dissemination of information on policies, regulations and practices related to Vietnamese migration abroad.

Other ministries, agencies and social organizations have a duty to realize achievement of these objectives, especially through enhanced inter-agency cooperation in policy research and implementation to better manage international migration and Vietnamese citizens' awareness of its benefits and risks.

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5	Nguyen Thanh Cam	Member of the Presidium, Head of Policy and Law, Viet Nam Women's Union
6	Nguyen Tuan Anh	Deputy Director of Population and Labour Department, General Statistics Office, Ministry of Planning and Investment
7	Pham Van Thuy	Deputy Chief of General Advisory, Department of Border Gate, Command of National Border Guards, Ministry of National Defence
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11	Nguyen Hong Quan	Deputy Head, General Department of Police, MoPS
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