



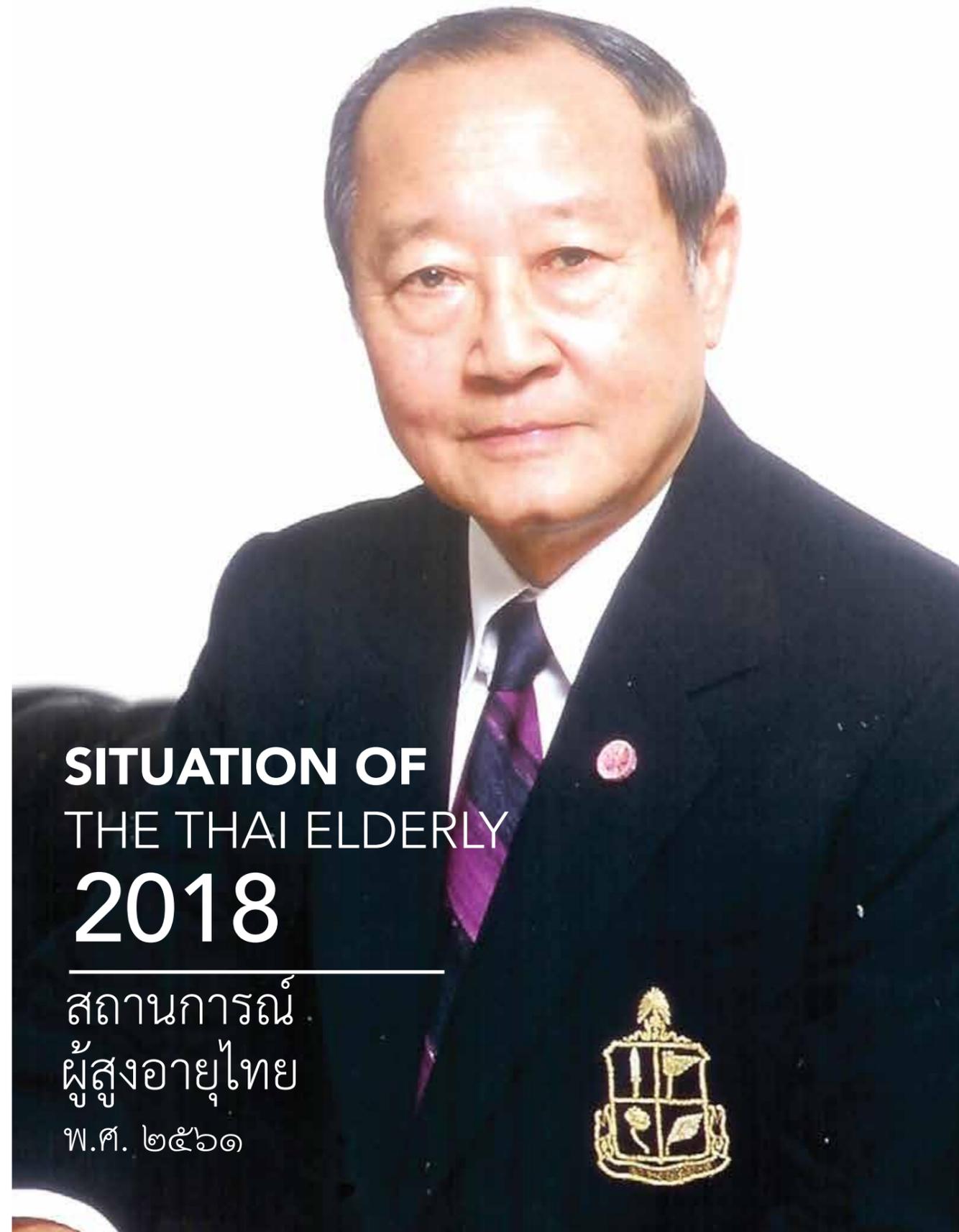
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SITUATION OF THE THAI ELDERLY 2018



SITUATION OF THE THAI ELDERLY 2018

สถานการณ์
ผู้สูงอายุไทย
พ.ศ. ๒๕๖๑

สถานการณ์ผู้สูงอายุไทย พ.ศ. ๒๕๖๑

Cover : Dr.Sumet Tantivejkul
The National Senior Citizen 2018

——— “ ———

....As long as I am still alive,
I will continue to work...
not to work for my own
benefit...instead, to work
for the benefit of others...
while I am alive,
I want to live an elegant
life...and then die in peace

——— ” ———

Special presentation on the occasion of
the award of Honorary Senior Fellow of 2018 to
Dr. Sumet Tantivejkul
on National Senior Citizen's Day for 2018, April 5, 2018



INTRODUCTION

This Report of the Situation of the Thai Elderly (2018) is a product of the National Committee for the Elderly (NCE) as mandated by the Elderly Person Act, B.E. 2546 (2003) (Article 9[10]) for presentation to the Cabinet on an annual basis. Ever since 2006, the NCOP has commissioned the Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development institute (TGRI) to prepare the annual report on the situation of the Thai elderly.

This latest report of the situation in Thailand presents information and statistics of the elderly as of 2018. The report also presents trends in the changing age structure of the Thai population to help forecast the future scenario.

Past annual reports of the Situation of the Thai Elderly have each had their own special theme. For example, the 2013 report focused on income security of the elderly. The 2014 report featured the situation of the elderly in the context of natural disasters. The 2015 report examined the housing situation for the Thai elderly. The theme for the 2016 report was health in older age, while the theme for 2017 was active aging. For this most recent annual report (2018) the theme is employment of the elderly.

The current and past reports of the Situation of the Thai Elderly have been supported by agencies in both the public and private sectors in sharing relevant information and data that is most up-to-date. On behalf of the TGRI, I would like to express our gratitude for that collaboration. I would also like to humbly thank the Older Persons Fund for its continuous financial support for the production of this series of annual reports.

(Banloo Siriphanich, M.D.)

President

Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development Institute

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AND
RECOMMENDATIONS



1

GLOBAL POPULATION OF OLDER PERSONS

The aging of the population is a global phenomenon and is a direct result of declining human birth rates and increasing life expectancy. In the past half century, the population of elderly started to increase rapidly. In 2018, of the global population of 7.6 billion persons, there were approximately 990 million persons age 60 years or older, or 13% of the total. Indeed, the world has met the criteria for being an “aged society” for many years (i.e., the proportion of the population age 60 years or older equals or exceeds 10%).

According to projection of the United Nations (UN) the population age 60 years or older (i.e., elderly) reached one billion persons at the beginning of 2019.

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE
AGE 60 YEARS OR OLDER IN
THE WORLD REACHED A TOTAL OF**

1,000

MILLION PERSONS

**AT THE BEGINNING
OF 2019**

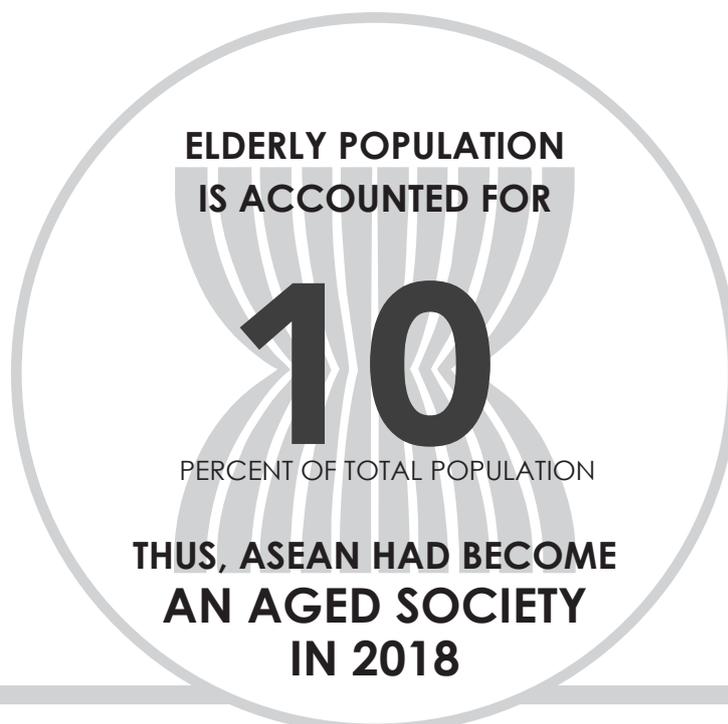
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ELDERLY POPULATION IN ASEAN

In 2018, the UN estimated that the total population in ASEAN member countries was 654 million persons. Of that total, the UN estimated that 67 million, or 10%, were elderly. That indicates that the ASEAN had become an aged society in that year.

Four country members of ASEAN which has already become aged societies include Singapore (20% elderly); Thailand (18%); Vietnam (12%); and Malaysia (10%).

It is also projected that Myanmar will have become an aged society in 2019, while Indonesia is expected to reach that milestone in the coming two years.



3

ELDERLY POPULATION IN THAILAND

In 2018, the total Thai population (excluding foreign migrants) was estimated to be 66 million persons. Of that total, 12 million (18%) were elderly.

However, the key challenge is that the Thai population is ageing very rapidly. It is projected that, within the coming four years, Thailand will have met the criteria for being a “complete aged society” whereby 20% of the population is elderly. Within the next 20 years, the proportion elderly of the total Thai population is projected to reach 30%.

By contrast, 20 years from now, the number of Thais aged under 15 years will decline from 12 million persons today, to only 9 million. The working-age population (15-59 years) will also decline, from 44 million to 37 million persons. At the same time, the number of elderly will double from 11 million to 20 million persons.



4

WORKING AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE THAI ELDERLY

One of the key Thai strategies to accommodate the rapidly increasing number of older persons is to encourage the elderly population to stay employed for as long as possible.

Older persons who remain in the labor force will be more able to support themselves and be valued as productive members of society. This will also lessen the burden on families and the state. What is more, retaining older persons in the labor force will help compensate for the reduction of the Thai working-age population.

In 2018, the Labor Force Survey by the Thai National Statistical Office (NSO) found that approximately 37% of the elderly population were still gainfully employed – that is about 4.4 million persons out of the total elderly population of 12 million person.

This comes at the time that the number of the working-age population is decreasing across the board among those aged 55 years and older. The proportion of Thais aged 55-59 years who were fully employed decreased from over 80% in the younger age group to 78%. Then, there is an abrupt drop in full employment during the age 60-64 to 59%.

This implies that many Thais are retiring at a time when they are still healthy and able to work full time, especially among those in the age 60-64 who were found about two in five (41%) were “unemployed” or “stopped working”

Thus, in order to inform policy and target setting, the indicator of the number of older persons who are gainfully employed of those in this age group (60-64 year) should be used to address this potential resource for the labor force and lessen the adverse impact of the rapid aging of the Thai population.

5

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT RETENTION OF OLDER PERSONS IN THE LABOR FORCE FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE

- 5.1** Strengthen existing skills or build new skills for older persons under the principle of lifelong learning;
- 5.2** Create incentives for older people to stay in or rejoin the labor force by using flexible work arrangements that match the demands and conditions for jobs appropriate to one's age;
- 5.3** Motivate employers to hire/retain older workers and expand benefits for those employers who hire older workers;
- 5.4** Extend the age of retirement (or receipt of senior citizen's welfare) to above 55 years of age for workers in the private sector who are under social security scheme;
- 5.5** Develop measures to recruit more workers in the non-formal sector to join the National Savings Fund to ensure income security in older age;
- 5.6** Improve the role of Local Administrative Organizations and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives of the private sector to create more employment opportunities for the elderly, especially in the non-formal labor sector;
- 5.7** Modify or improve the regulations, criteria and laws which impede hiring of older persons, and increase the mandatory age of retirement for government civil servants and employees of state enterprises; and
- 5.8** Create a new image and definition which values the elderly so that society views older persons as energetic and productive members of the labor force.



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“

DEFINITION OF ELDERLY

”

The United Nations does not define a specific age at which a person becomes elderly (i.e., an older person). But the UN uses age 60 years or over for statistical analysis and indicators related to the elderly. Most developed countries, many usually extends the cut-off age to 65 years.

Thailand defined the elderly (or senior citizen) in the 2003 Elderly Act (Article 3) as followed. “Elderly” is “a person age over 60 completed years and who has Thai nationality”.

In this 2018 report of the Situation of the Thai Elderly, “older person/elderly” is defined as an individual aged 60 years or older. “Aged population” is defined as the segment of the population aged 60 years or older. The “rate of elderly/older persons” refers to the proportion of the elderly/older populations to the total population.

“Population aging” refers to the demographic phenomenon which is occurring in most countries around the world in recent decades when people in the community, district, national and regional levels. The most direct indicator of population aging is the increasing proportion of the total population that is above a certain age, or the median age of a closed population (i.e., not accounting for in-out-migration). The direct cause of the aging of a population is decreased fertility and increased longevity of the population.

“Active aging” refers to a concept of the process which extends opportunity for individuals or a population of any age or sex to age in good health and actively participate in the economy and society. The concept includes having basic life security to support optimal quality of life of each individual or population group, from birth until death.

“Aged society” or “older person society” can be used inter-changeably, Dr. Banloo Siriphanich, President of the Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development institute (TGRI), has referenced the revered Buddhist monk Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P. A. Payutto) who wrote a book titled “Soong Ayu Pen Kor Na Pen Pu Soong Ayu” (knowing how to age makes it nice to be an elderly).

The book is written that the Thai word Ayu (age) comes from the Pali language and literally translates as “the power for life.” The Thai word “Wai” (age group) literally means “decline”. Thus, Dr. Banloo has suggested defining “aged society” as ‘a society that is raised by the power for nourishing life.’ He suggested avoiding the term “aging society” since that might have the negative connotation of a society that is in decline.

“ DEFINITION OF AGED SOCIETY AND AGING SOCIETY

— ” —

In this 2018 report of the Situation of Thai Elderly, the following demographic definitions are used:

“Aging society” Refers to a society where its population is getting older, as indicated by the progressive increase in the proportion of the population that is older.

“Aged society” Refers to a society with the proportion of population aged 60 years or older exceeds 10% of the total (or a population in which 7% are aged 65 years or older).

“Complete-aged society” A society with the proportion of population aged 60 years or older exceeds 20% of the total (or a population in which 14% are aged 65 years or older).

“Super-aged society” A society with the proportion of population aged 60 years or older exceeds 28% of the total (or a population in which 20% are aged 65 years or older).



SOURCE OF DATA CITED IN THE 2018 REPORT OF THE SITUATION OF THE THAI ELDERLY

World Population Prospects, the 2017 Revision which was published by the United Nations shows population projection by population's age and sex for all countries of the world based on their national censuses.

Population and Housing Census. That report is produced by the Thai National Statistical Office (NSO) and is based on a total enumeration of the resident population every ten years. The last Thai census was 2010.

Civil Registration System. This system is managed by the Bureau of Registration Administration of the Department of Provincial Administration of the Ministry of Interior (MOI). The system is a registry of births and deaths and net number of registered population at the end of each calendar year.

Population Projection for Thailand: 2010-2040. These estimates are produced by the National Economic and Social Development Council, and the data uses the 2010 census as a baseline. The projections present data on age and sex distribution of the population by year based on assumptions of fertility, survival and migration.

Survey of the Older Persons in Thailand: 2017. This survey is also implemented by the NSO starting in 1994. The 6th round of the survey was completed in 2017. The sample consisted of the population aged 50 years or older in 83,880 households. For the purpose of this 2018 Report on the Status of the Thai Elderly, only data for the population aged 60 years or older were used.

Labor Force Survey of the Population in 2018 Whole Kingdom: Quarter 3. This is a national survey conducted by the Thai NSO, and has been a continuous activity since 1963. In the initial rounds, the survey was conducted for only two quarters of the year. However, since 1998, the survey has been conducted in each of the four quarters of the year. The first quarter coincides with the non-agricultural planting season, while the third quarter is conducted during the agricultural planting season. The round conducted in the second quarter of the years focuses on recent school graduates who have entered the labor market, while the fourth quarter round coincides with the agricultural harvest season.

The Informal Employment Survey: 2018. This survey is also conducted by the NSO, and has been implemented on an annual basis since 2005. The survey is conducted in tandem with the third quarter round of the National Labor Force Survey (cited above). The survey estimates the number and characteristics of workers who have no labor protections or social security benefits, and are not protected by the provisions of Thai labor law.

1

GENERAL SITUATION

The aging of populations is a phenomenon that has been accelerating since the beginning of the current millennium. Indeed, the global population as a whole meets the criterion for an aged society. This aging of the population is mostly attributable to declining fertility and increased longevity of human societies.

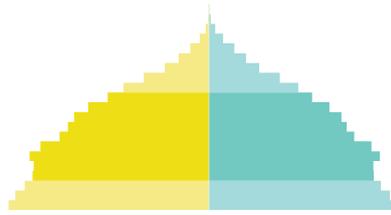
Our world will have a total elderly population (age 60 years or older) of one billion people in 2019

In 2018, the world had 142 million people age 80 years or older.

**And the number of
the population at this
oldest age range will**

DOUBLE

in the next 20 years



1.1

AGING

OF THE GLOBAL POPULATION

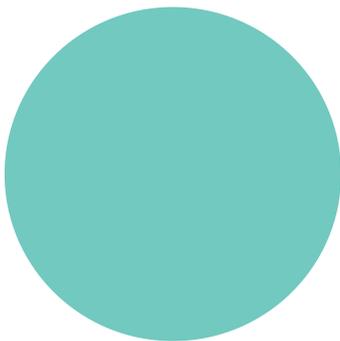
GLOBAL POPULATION IN 2018

In 2018, there were 990 million elderly around the world, and that group of the population is increasing at the rate of 3% per year. Thus, it is expected that the global population of elderly was 1.02 billion in 2019. It is estimated that the global population of older persons reached 1 billion in February of 2019.



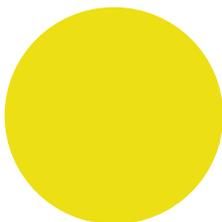
990 million persons age 60 years or older, or

13%
of the total.



The total population age 15-59 years was 4.674 billion persons or

61.2%



The population age 0-14 years was 1.969 billion persons or

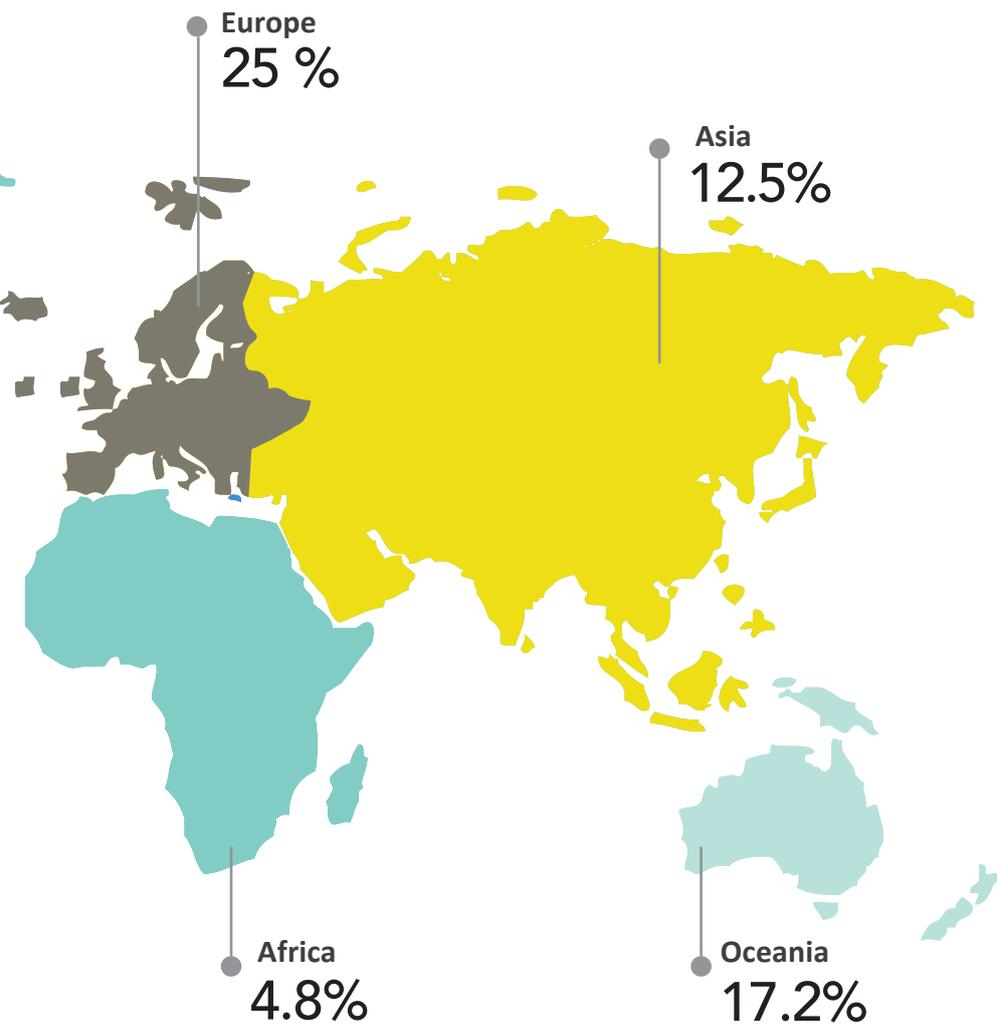
25.8%

Source: UN, 2017



GLOBAL POPULATION OF OLDER PERSONS IS ESTIMATED TO REACH

1 BILLION
IN FEBRUARY OF 2019



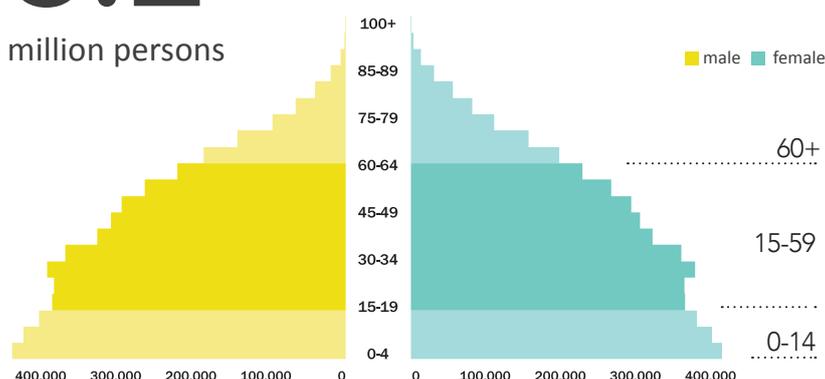
Source: UN, 2017

In 2018, there were 142 million persons age 80 years or older around the world, or 1.9% of the total global population. It is projected that this group of the population will add 188 million persons over the coming decade.

That means that the size of the oldest segment of the population is increasing at the rate of 3.2% per year. It is projected that one in five persons in the world will be elderly (age 60 years or older) by 2044. In just 26 years, the global population would be considered a complete aged society.

The number of the oldest members (80 years) of the population is increasing to

3.2
million persons



2018, THE
POPULATION
AGE 80 YEARS OR
OLDER REACHED
A TOTAL OF

142
MILLION PERSONS

In 2018, Africa was the only remaining continent whose population had not yet become an aged society. Only 5% of the African population was age 60 years or older. By contrast, in Europe, 25% of the population is elderly.



EUROPE
is the continent with the highest proportion of the population who is elderly

25 %



AFRICA
is the continent with the lowest proportion of the population who is elderly

4.8%

10 COUNTRIES WITH **THE LARGEST PROPORTION** OF THE POPULATION WHO IS ELDERLY:

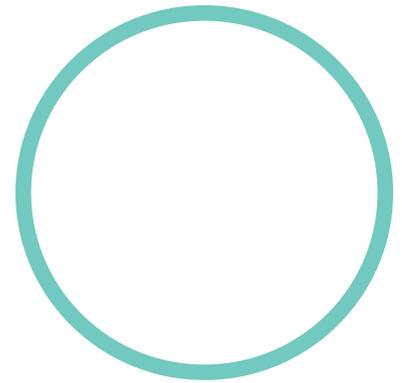
1	Japan	33.6%
2	Italy	29.8%
3	Germany	28.4%
4	Portugal	28.3%
5	Finland	28.1%
6	Bulgaria	27.9%
7	Croatia	27.2%
8	Greece	26.9%
9	Slovenia	26.8%
10	Latvia	26.6%

10 COUNTRIES WITH **THE LEAST PROPORTION** OF THE POPULATION WHO IS ELDERLY

1	United Arab Emirates	2.6%
2	Qatar	3.1%
3	Uganda	3.3%
4	Zambia	3.7%
5	Gambia	3.8%
6	Burkina Faso	3.9%
7	Mali	3.9%
8	Chad	4.0%
9	Angola	4.1%
10	Oman	4.1%

Source: UN, 2017

EXAMPLES OF THE IMPACT OF POPULATION AGING



**JAPAN HAS
THE HIGHEST
PROPORTION
ELDERLY OF
THE TOTAL
POPULATION OF
ANY COUNTRY**

33.6%

INDIGENOUS LABOR SHORTAGE IN JAPAN

Convenience stores in Japan must be open 24 hours a day. If an owner close a store at any time, they have to pay a fine. Thus, to avoid paying the fine, many franchise owners of convenience stores have to work themselves during the shifts lacking of staff. This is one of many adverse effects of an aging society (Jiji, 2019). In 2018, one in three Japanese was age 60 years or older (UN, 2017). This has led Japan to introduce a policy to recruit 500,000 foreign migrant workers during the period through the year 2025 (McCurry, 2018).

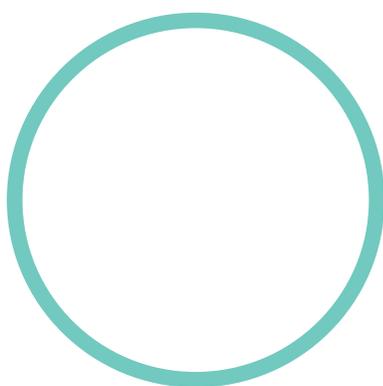
**SINGAPORE IS
ONE OF 4 ASEAN
MEMBER COUNTRIES
WHICH HAS
BECOME
“AGED
SOCIETY”**

**SINGAPORE HAS INCREASED
THE LEGAL AGE OF RETIREMENT
TO ENCOURAGE MORE SAVINGS**

In 2018, one in five citizens of Singapore was elderly (20.4%). That made Singapore the first country in ASEAN to become a complete aged society (UN, 2017). The increase in older persons combined with the reduction in births or childlessness means that income security for the elderly is becoming a serious national challenge for that country.

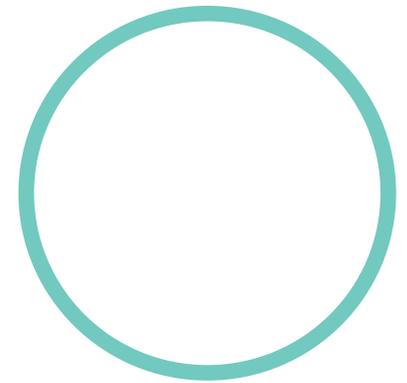
Singapore has a Central Provident Fund (CPF) to help citizens save money. The fund is created by deducting a percentage of a person’s salary during their working years to provide a means of financial support in retirement (Central Provident Fund Board, 2018). In addition, as the longevity of the population increases, proportionately more money is needed during the retirement years. Thus, the Singapore government raised the official age of retirement to boost savings during the working-age years, and is promoting workers to remain in the labor force longer to help ease problems related to labor shortages.

Singapore increased the official retirement age from 55 to 62 years in 2012 and, in 2017, the government mandated employers to provide job opportunities to the population up to age 67 (Government of Singapore, 2019). By increasing the age of retirement, workers had the option to continue working in their current job, retire, or re-train for a different type of employment. They could also opt to continue to work full-time or begin to work fewer hours.



ITALY HAS A CONTINUALLY INCREASING NUMBER OF THE POPULATION WITH DEMENTIA

Italy has 17.6 million persons age 60 years or older out of a total population of 60.3 million, or 29.8% elderly (UN, 2017). In 2014, it is estimated that there were one million older persons in Italy with dementia. Of that total, 600,000 were diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, and that total is projected to increase steadily over time as the population ages. Persons with dementia require full-time care, and not just from members of the immediate family. There needs to be support from the community and society, as well as specialist caregivers. Thus, the Italian Ministry of Health has introduced policies and measures to support health and social services, and building a network of care for persons with dementia. This includes increasing the quality of services and quality of life of sufferers from dementia and their family members. There are campaigns to reduce the negative image of dementia, and increase the number practitioners who can address the social needs of victims, as well as neurologists and nurses who specialize in managing cases of dementia (Open Access Government, 2017).

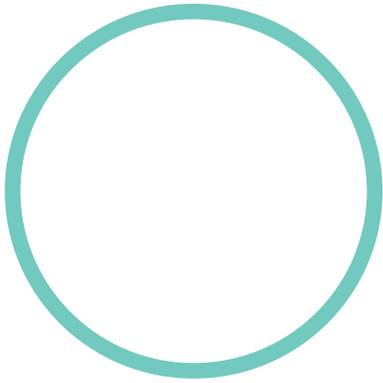


**IN 2014,
IT IS ESTIMATED
THAT THERE WERE**

1

MILLION

**OLDER PERSONS
WITH DEMENTIA
IN ITALY**



LABOR CRISIS IN GERMANY

The population of Germany peaked in 2002 with 82 million persons, and it is projected to decline to 74.5 million by 2050. Accordingly, the working-age population (age 20-65 years) is projected to decline from 50 million in 2010 to 36 million by the year 2060, at which time more than half the population will be over age 51 years

(Stratfor Enterprises, 2013). The economy of Germany has expanded over the years, and unemployment is only six percent. One strategy of the government to address potential labor shortages was to promote re-entry of women and older male persons back into the labor force. The proportion of women in the labor force reached 54%, a rate that is similar to that of France (51%) and the UK (56%). Moreover, employment of persons age 60-64 increased to 50%, though it is difficult to retain persons age 65 or older in the labor force. Accordingly, employers wanted the government to raise the retirement age from 65 to 67 years for flexible employment contracts. The German government complied, and instituted a new retirement age without impacting on persons who had already retired and receiving pension. Despite these efforts to repopulate and extend the labor force, the supply of labor cannot keep up with the demand for workers. That is, in part, because, foreign immigrant labor cannot adequately fill the need for skilled labor, and requires, on average, five years to adjust to the German labor system (Wagstyl, 2019).

**BY THE YEAR 2060,
HALF
THE GERMAN
POPULATION
WILL BE AGED OVER
51 YEARS**

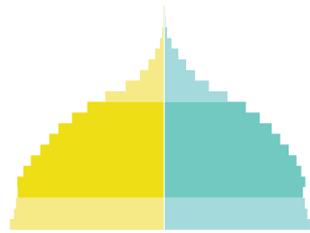
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSONS

1ST OF OCTOBER

On December 14, the UN General Assembly declared October 1st of every year to be the “International Day of Older Persons”. The purpose of this action is to remind the public of the value and productivity of the elderly in society, the importance of showing respect to older persons and the issue of violence against older persons.

**THE THEME OF 2018
INTERNATIONAL DAY
OF OLDER PERSONS**

Celebrating Older Human Rights Champions



1.2

AGING

OF THE MEMBER
COUNTRIES OF ASEAN

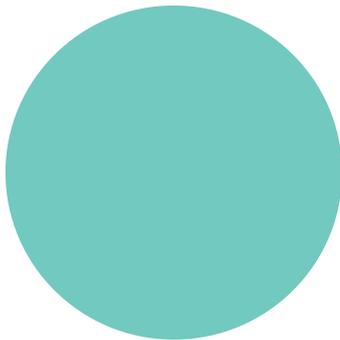
ASEAN POPULATION IN 2018

In 2018, the combined population of all ten ASEAN member countries became an aged society. ASEAN countries have an aggregate population of 654 million persons.



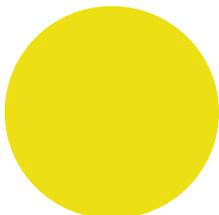
Of that total, 67 million were age 60 years or older, or

10.2%



Fully, 418 million were age 15-59 years or

63.9%



While there were 169 million persons age 0-14 years, or

25.9%

IN 2018, ASEAN HAS BECOME AN “AGED SOCIETY” WHERE THE PROPORTION OF POPULATION AGED 60 OR OVER REACHED

10 %

OF THE TOTAL POPULATION

Source: UN, 2017

Indonesia had the largest population among ASEAN members with 267 million, about one-fifth of the entire ASEAN total. Indonesia also has an elderly population of 24 million, or 9% of its total. When that total reaches 10%, then Indonesia will join the group of countries classified as aged societies.



Indonesia

has a population which is 9% elderly and, thus, does not yet meet the criteria for being classified as an “aged society.” Indonesia had

24 million elderly

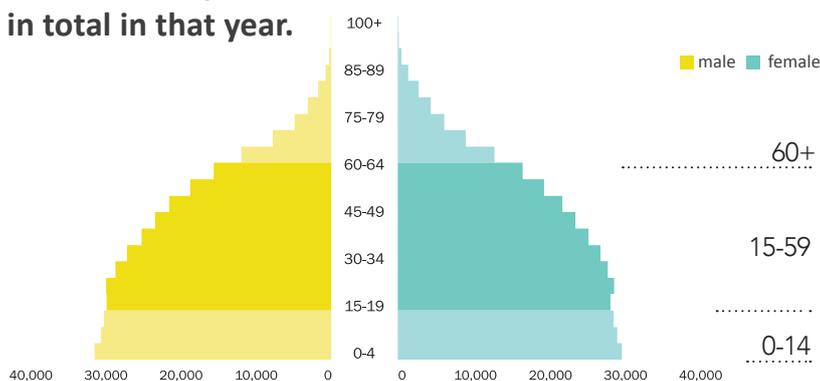
That should be soon since fertility is declining in Indonesia while life expectancy is increasing. Thus, it is projected that Indonesia will become the 6th aged-society country in ASEAN, after Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Myanmar.

For this reason, Thailand is increasingly concerned about the aging of societies in ASEAN. Accordingly, the Thai Prime Minister, Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha, at the ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Lao PDR, at the end of April 2017, proposed the establishment of an ASEAN Center on Active Aging and Innovation (ACAI). The purpose of the ACAI would be to develop and promote methods of care and accommodating the increasing number of elderly in ASEAN. Further, Thailand will place this issue on the priority agenda when it becomes the annual host of ASEAN in 2019.

In 2018, while ASEAN had

67

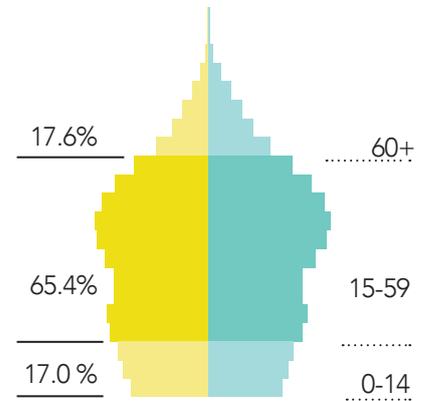
million elderly in total in that year.



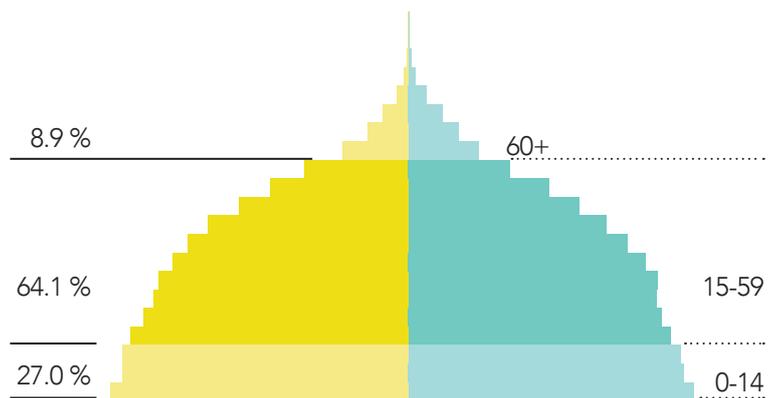
ASEAN MEMBER COUNTRY POPULATION IN 2018

■ male ■ female

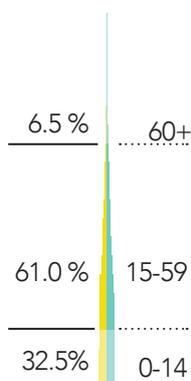
Thailand
with total
population of
69.2 million



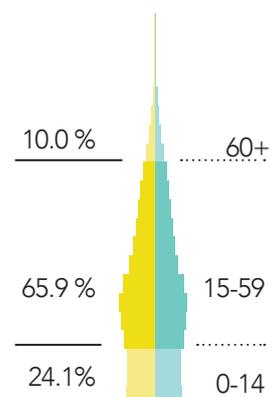
Indonesia
with total
population of
266.8 million



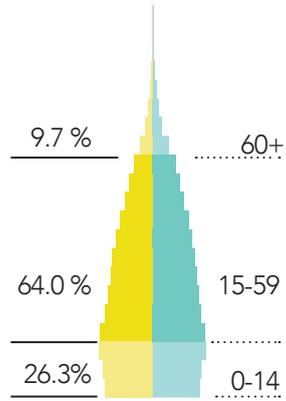
Lao PDR
with total
population of
7.0 million



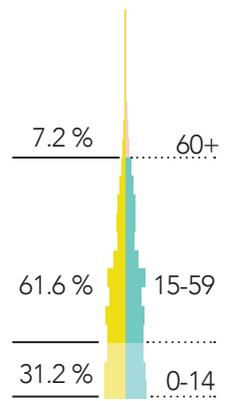
Malaysia
with total
population of
32.0 million



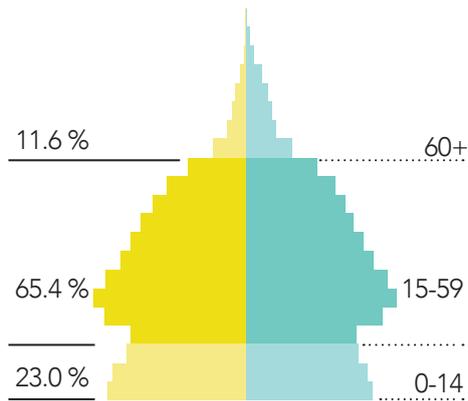
Myanmar
with total
population of
53.9 million



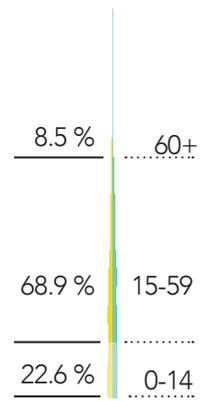
Cambodia
with total
population of
16.2 million



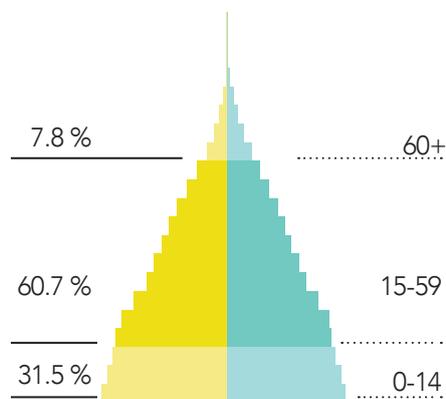
Vietnam
with total
population of
96.5 million



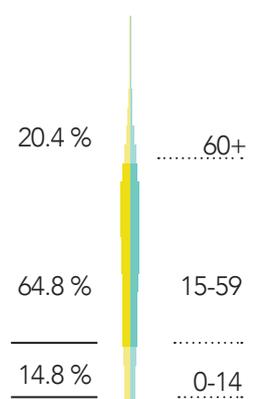
Brunei
with total
population of
0.4 million

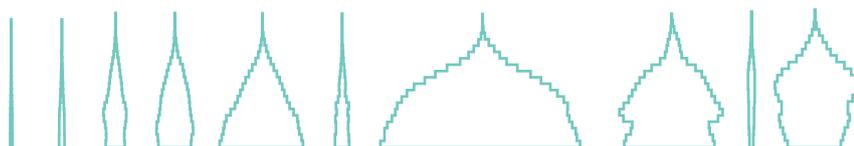


The Philippines
with total
population of
106.5 million



Singapore
with total
population of
5.8 million





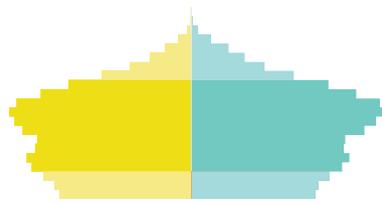
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF THE ELDERLY POPULATION IN ASEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES IN 2018

Country	1999*		2018	
	Population (million)	% population age 60 years or older	Population (million)	% population age 60 years or older
Singapore	3.8	10.5	5.8	20.4
Thailand**	62.0	9.6	69.2	17.6
Vietnam	79.4	8.6	96.5	11.6
Malaysia	22.9	6.1	32.0	10.0
Myanmar	47.1	7.1	53.9	9.7
Indonesia	208.6	7.2	266.8	8.9
Brunei	0.3	4.0	0.4	8.5
Philippines	76.3	5.0	106.5	7.8
Cambodia	11.9	4.9	16.2	7.2
Lao PDR	5.3	5.4	7.0	6.4
Total	517.6		654.3	

Source: UN, 2017

Remarks: * 1999 was the year when the number of ASEAN member countries became 10 nations

** The total population of Thailand is based on UN projections and includes Thai nationals as well as non-Thai residents, including those not in the Civil Registration system



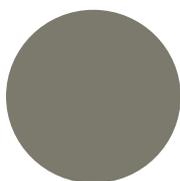
1.3

AGING

OF THAILAND'S POPULATION

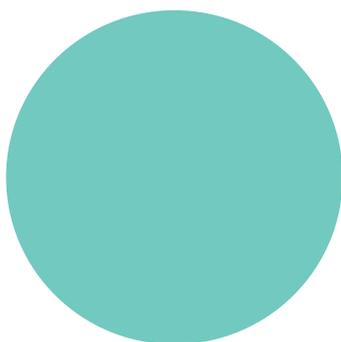
THE THAI POPULATION IN 2018

The population of Thailand is comprised of 66 million Thai nationals and 3 million non-Thais and persons not included in the Civil Registration system, for a total of 69 million in 2018. There were an estimated 11.7 million persons age 60 years or older, or 17.6% of the total.



Population age
60+ years = 11.7 million,
or

17.6%



Population age
15-59 = 43.3 million,
or

65.4%



Population age
0-14 = 11.2 million,
or

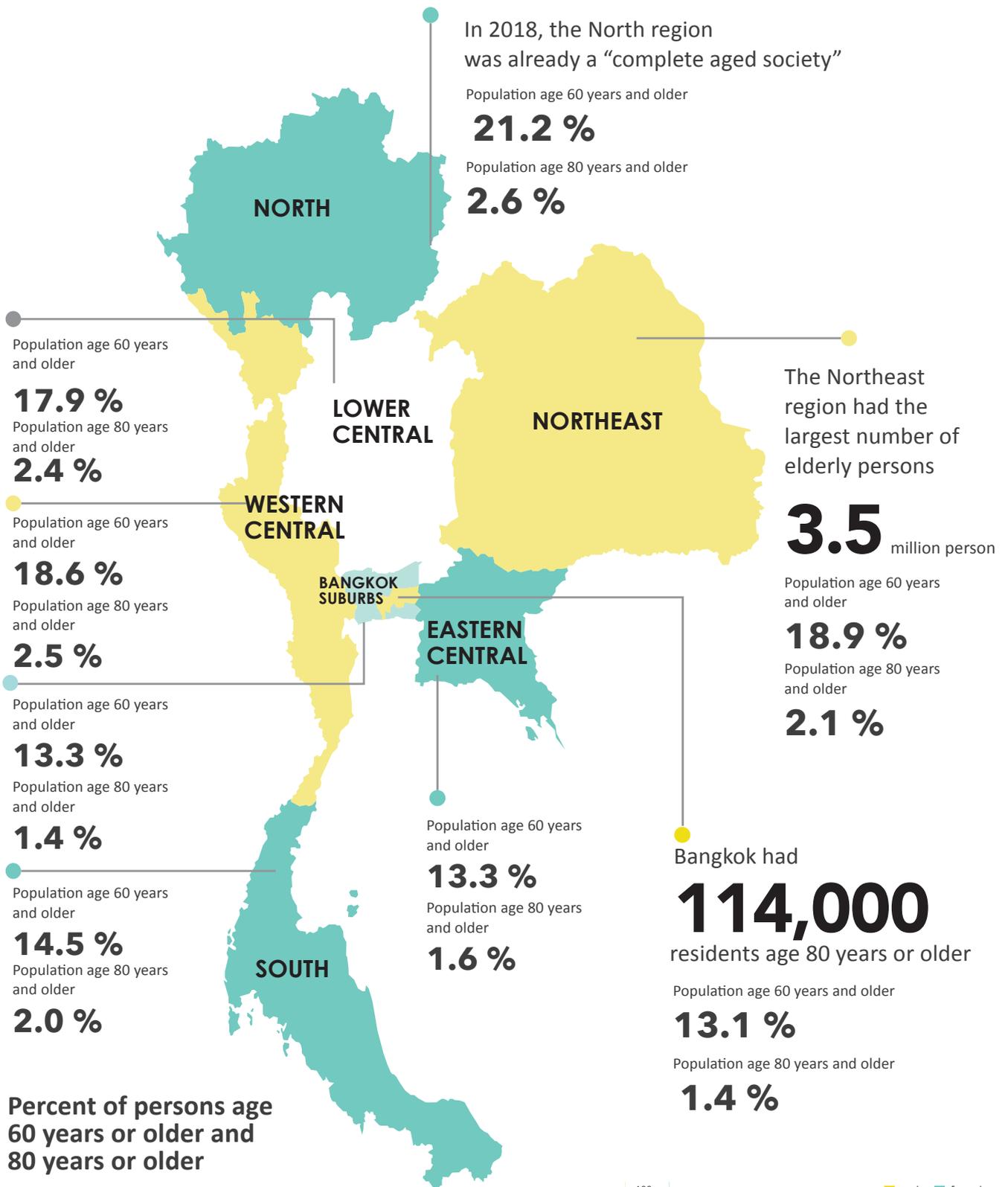
17.0%

POPULATION AGE 60 YEARS OR ABOVE AND 80 YEARS OR ABOVE

Region*	Total (million)	Age 60+ years (million)	Age 80+ years (thousand)
Bangkok	8.3	1.1	114
Bangkok suburbs	6.9	0.9	97
Lower Central	3.1	0.6	74
Eastern Central	5.6	0.7	88
Western Central	3.5	0.7	87
North	11.2	2.4	287
Northeast	18.5	3.5	389
South	9.1	1.3	182

Source: NSO., 2019

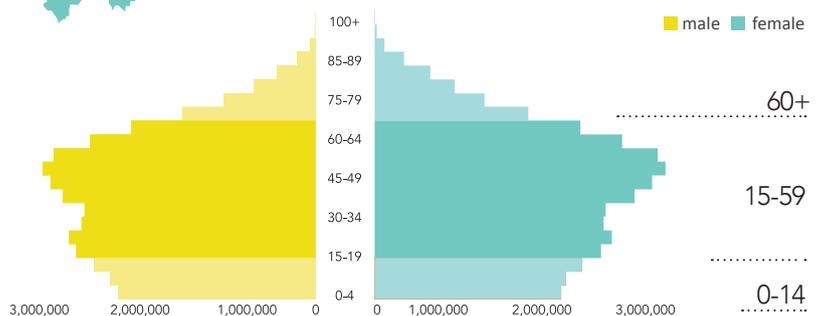
*The National Economic and Social Development Council divides the country into 8 regions as follows: Bangkok; Bangkok suburbs (Samut Prakan, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Nakorn Pathom, Samut Sakorn); Lower Central (Ayuthaya, Angthong, Lopburi, Singburi, Chainat, Saraburi); Eastern Central (Chonburi, Rayong, Chantaburi, Trat, Chachoengsao, Prachinburi, Nakorn Nayok, Srakeo); Western Central (Ratchaburi, Kanchanaburi, Supanburi, Samut Songkram, Petchburi, Prachuap Kirikan); : (Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lampang, Uttaradit, Phrae, Nan, Payao, Chiang Rai, Mae Hong Son, Nakorn Sawan, Uthai Thani, Kampaengpet, Tak, Sukothai, Pitsanuloke, Pichit, Petchabun); Northeast: (Nakorn Ratchasima, Buriram, Surin, Srisaket, Ubon Ratchathani, Yaothorn, Chaiyaphum, Amnatcharoen, Nong Bua Lamphu, Khon Kaen, Udorn Thani, Loei, Nong Khai, Beung Kan, Mahasarakham, Roi-et, Kalasin, Sakol Nakorn, Nakorn Panom, Mukdahan); South (Nakhon Si Thammarat, Krabi, Phang Nga, Phuket, Surat Thani, Ranong, Chumporn, Songkhla, Satun, Trang, Pattalung, Pattani, Yala, Naratiwat).



Percent of persons age 60 years or older and 80 years or older

Source: NESDB, 2019

In 2018, Thailand had a total of **11.7** million persons age 60 years or older



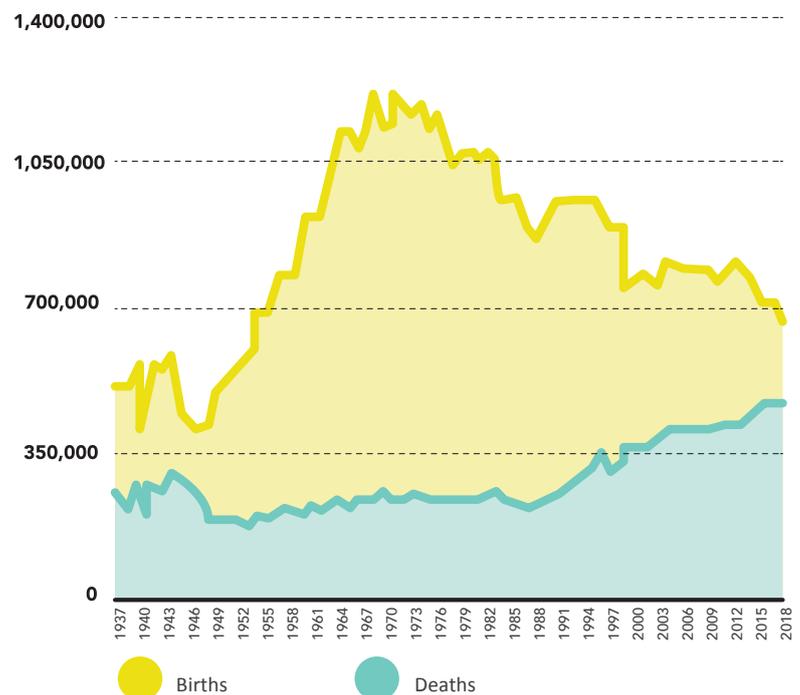
DECLINING FERTILITY AND INCREASED LONGEVITY IS ACCELERATING THE AGING OF THE POPULATION

The combination of the rapid decline in the Thai birth rate and increased longevity of older persons means that the proportion of the population that is elderly is increasing rapidly. In the past two to three decades, Thailand had a very slow population growth rate of under 1% per year. This is causing a dramatic change in the age structure of the population, from a society with a large number of births to a society with a rapidly increasing population of older persons.

In the past 20 years, the population began to age rapidly. In 2000, the Thai population was only 8% elderly (NSO, 2000). By 2018, that proportion had increased to 18%. It is projected that the proportion elderly will increase to 30% by 2038 (NESDB, 2019).

THE LIFE EXPECTANCY OF THE THAI POPULATION HAS INCREASED TO

77 YEARS



Number of births and deaths of the Thai population: 1937-2018

Source: Public Health Statistics: 1937-2018, Ministry of Public Health and the Civil Registration Office of the Ministry of Interior

WHY IS THE THAI POPULATION AGING SO RAPIDLY?

The reason why the proportion of the total Thai population that is elderly (age 60 years or older) is increasing can be attributed to the following two factors:

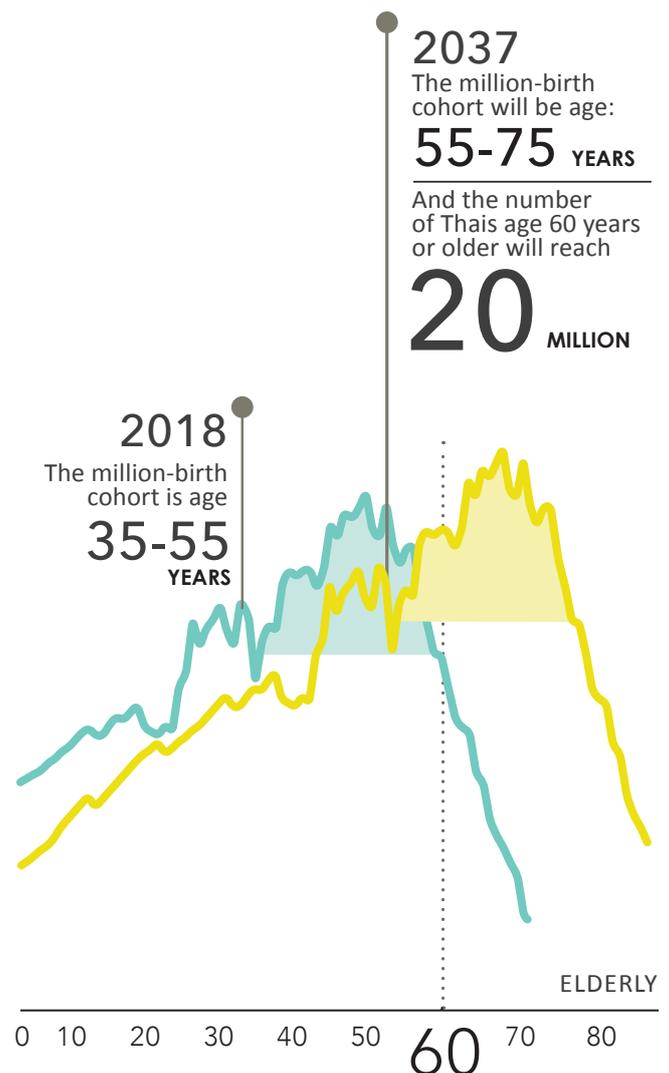
1

There has been a rapid decline in the number of live births. Part of the reason for this is the modernization of Thai lifestyles, and that the new generation of married women is having fewer births. But most important is that the number of Thai females in the child-bearing ages declined rapidly over the past 30-40 years. That means that the number of births today and in the future will be less than ever before in Thai history. And that will mean even fewer Thai women in the child-bearing age group.

2

Thais are living longer. About 40 to 50 years ago, the Thai life expectancy at birth was less than 60 years. However, at present, that figure has increased to age 77. It is projected that Thai life expectancy will continue to increase, and reach age 80, 20 years from now.

In the coming years, the “million birth cohort” (Thais born during 1963-1984, or age 35-55 years today) – which is equivalent to a ‘demographic Tsunami’ – will enter the elderly age group, and that will create even more momentum for the aging of the Thai population.



DECLINE IN THAI FERTILITY

TOTAL FERTILITY RATE (TFR):

The average total number of live births that a woman will have during her reproductive years

THE CHANGE IN THAI FERTILITY CAN BE DIVIDED INTO FOUR PERIODS:

1

Before 1970: This was before Thailand had a national family planning policy. Thai fertility was still high, with a TFR of about 6.

2

After 1970: Fertility began to decline, from over one million births per year to under one million births in 1984. (Division of Health Statistics, 1984)

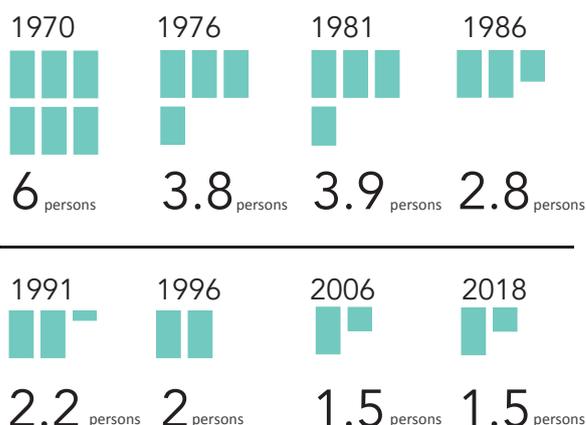
3

1990-1999: This period can be referred to as the reproductive revolution (UN Population Fund, 2011) since this was a time when the decline in fertility began to accelerate. The TFR declined from 3.9 in 1991 to 2.0 in 1996. That is significant since it meant that Thai fertility was below replacement level (Pramote and Patama, 2005).

4

The present (2018): The TFR has continued to decline and reached 1.5 in this year.

Thai TFR: 1970, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2006 and 2018



Source: Public Health Statistics: 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2006; Vital Statistics: Department of Provincial Administration, Ministry of Interior; Population (journal) of IPSR, 2016

THE THAI POPULATION LIFE IS GETTING LONGER

50 years ago, the Thai life expectancy at birth was

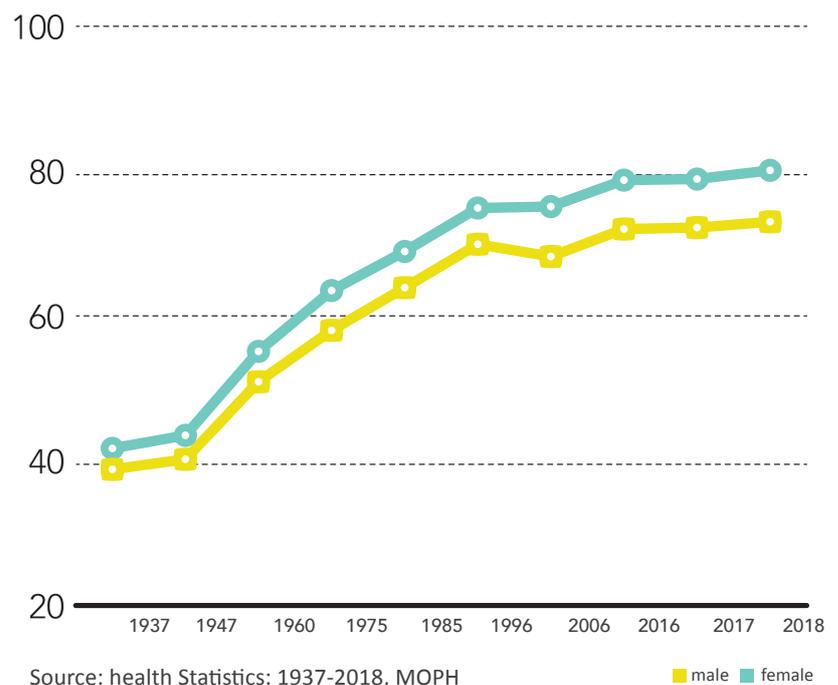
59 YEARS

Since then, life expectancy has continued to increase. By 2018, it was

77 YEARS

50 years ago, Thais had a life expectancy of 59 years. But in 2018, the Thai average life expectancy had increased to 77 years. In general, females have a higher life expectancy than males. The demographic data show that, in 2018, a Thai female had a life expectancy from birth of age 80 years, whereas the life expectancy of her male counterpart was only 73 years.

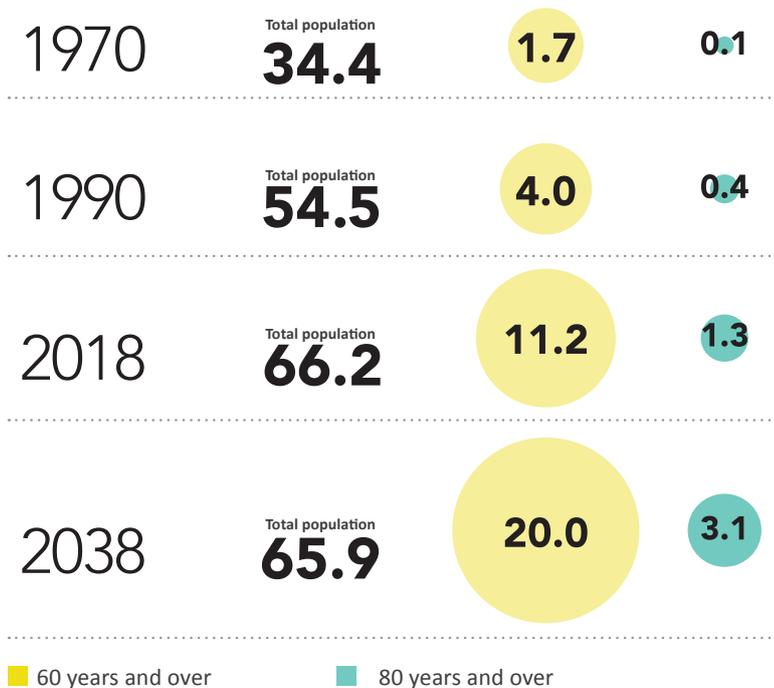
Trend in life expectancy at birth for Thais: 1937-2018.



TRENDS IN AGING OF THE THAI POPULATION

Thailand first became an aged society in 2005, and is on track to become a complete aged society in not so many years from now. In the past half-century, the number of Thai elderly increased nearly 7-fold. In 1970, Thailand had 1.7 million persons age 60 years or older. That number increased to 4.0 million by 1990 and 11.2 million by 2018. In 20 years from now (2038), the number of Thai elderly is projected to reach 20 million.

Population age 60 years or older and 80 years or older: 1970-2038 (million persons)



Source: NSO, 1970, 2990; NESDB, 2013

IN THE PAST HALF-CENTURY ALONE, THE NUMBER OF THAI ELDERLY HAS INCREASED ALMOST

7 TIMES

20 YEARS FROM NOW IN 2038, THE NUMBER OF THAI ELDERLY IS EXPECTED TO REACH

20 MILLION

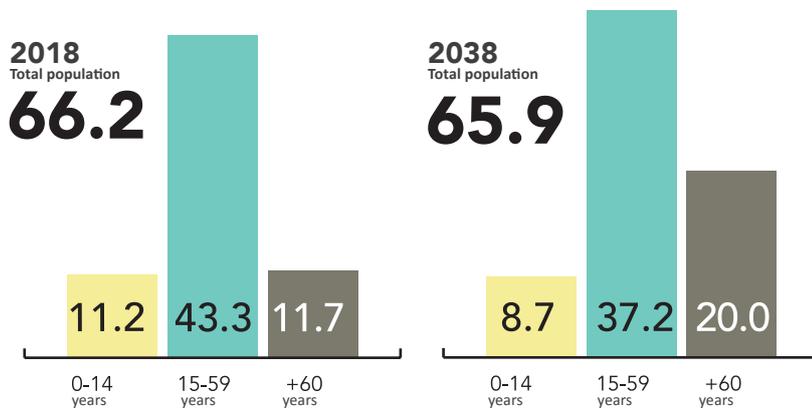
THE OLDEST AGE GROUP, OR THOSE AGE 80 YEARS OR OLDER, HAS INCREASED NEARLY 10-FOLD: FROM 140,000 IN 1970 TO 1.3 MILLION IN 2018.

IMPACT OF THE CHANGE IN AGE STRUCTURE OF THE THAI POPULATION

As of 2018, the age structure of the Thai population has changed dramatically from the past. This rapid demographic transition is having an impact on the society and economy. These impacts will only become more intensified in the years ahead.

The decline in the number of young Thais is forcing the closure or merger of primary schools.

Total population: 2018-2038 (million)



Source: NESDB, 2013

In 2018, Thailand had 11 million persons age under 15 years; 43 million age 15-59; and 12 million age 60 years or older (i.e., elderly). Two decades from now (2038) the number of Thai children will decrease to only 9 million, the working-age population will decline to 37 million, while the number of elderly will increase to 20 million, or nearly one in three Thais.

The decline in the working-age population means that there is a greater emphasis on skilled labor, use of automation and labor-saving technology, importing foreigners to fill gaps in the labor force, and extending the age of participation in the work force.

THE AGING OF THE THAI POPULATION IS ALSO AFFECTING THE WELFARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEMS, ESPECIALLY FOR OLDER PERSONS, INCLUDING HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE.

The content in Chapter 2 is adapted from the report:
**“Implementation of programs for the elderly in Thailand
under the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing,
2003-2016”**

Prepared by the Department of Older Persons of the Ministry
of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS), with
additional operational data for 2017-2018 from agencies
working with senior citizens



PROGRAMS

FOR THE THAI ELDERLY

1982-2018

PROGRAMS FOR THE THAI ELDERLY: 1982-2001

After the 1st World Assembly on Aging in Vienna Austria in 1982, Thailand developed its 1st National Plan for Older Persons (1982-2001). This was a 20-year plan which defined the direction of implementation of programs for comprehensive support for the elderly, especially in the areas of health, education, social security, and income security. The plan also gave importance to socio-culture participation of the elderly and appropriate social welfare services. Thailand has been actively implementing programs for the elderly since 1982. In 1999, Thailand announced a “Senior Citizens Declaration” which stated the government’s intention to recognize and focus on promoting, developing and giving opportunities for the elderly through cooperation from all sectors.

PROGRAMS FOR THE THAI ELDERLY: 2002-2018

The 2nd World Assembly on Aging was held in 2002 in Madrid, Spain, which resolved to endorse the Madrid International Plan of Action on Aging (MIPAA). Member countries adopted the MIPAA as a framework for developing strategies to support the elderly, under the following main themes:

1. Older persons and development
2. Advancing health and well-being into old age
3. Ensuring an enabling and supportive environment for older persons

2.1

OLDER PERSONS AND DEVELOPMENT

PLANS AND POLICIES FOR THE ELDERLY

- 1** The 2nd National Plan for Older Persons (2002-2021), the 1st Revision (2009) with guidelines for development and promoting quality of life for the elderly so that they are valued and have dignified lifestyles, self-reliance and life security.

- 2** 2002: The establishment of the Office of Support for Children, Youth, the Disadvantaged, Disabled and Elderly as part of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS), which was a newly-established ministry at the time.

- 3** The Act on the Elderly B.E. 2546 (2003) : This law ensures that Thai citizens age 60 complete years or older have protection of their rights, and socio-economic and health support. The law also affirms the right of older persons to social services and amenities. The 2003 Act also mandated the establishment of the National Older Persons Committee, with the Prime Minister as chair.

- 4** The Department of Health of the MOPH, re-located the programs for the elderly from the Family Planning Division (1973) to the Elderly Work Cluster (2002) and the Bureau of Elderly Health in 2014.

- 5** In 2015, the Department of Older Persons was established in the MSDHS, which was upgraded from the Bureau for Support and Protection of the Elderly

- 6** On December 4th, 2018, the Thai Cabinet resolved to place the issue of “Aged Society” on the national priority agenda.

THE ELDERLY AND EMPLOYMENT

1 SUPPORT AND EXPANSION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR THE ELDERLY

The Department of Employment and the Department of Skilled Labor of the Ministry of Labor (MOL) are the principal agencies responsible for providing opportunities for employment of the population, including the elderly. The MOL developed their 1st Phase Strategic Plan for the elderly (2016-20) in collaboration with all relevant sectors. The strategy extends to the community and household level in order to expand economic activity of older persons. In addition, the age of retirement is being raised, and employers are encouraged to retain older workers as long as they are willing and productive. The MOL also has a database to provide information on the elderly labor market.

2 RAISING THE RETIREMENT AGE OF GOVERNMENT WORKERS

In 1999, the Office of the Court of Justice issued a regulation on the employment of senior judges and, in 2000, the Office of the Attorney-General issued a regulation on the employment

PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT BY THE ELDERLY

2004

Healthy Thailand

Thailand announced the initiative for a “Healthy Thailand” including the establishment of Senior Citizens Clubs in each sub-district of the country.

By 2018

Thailand had

28,422

Senior Citizens Clubs.¹

¹ Source : The Senior Citizens Council of Thailand under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Srinagarindra, as of December 31, 2018

of senior attorneys-at-law in order to raise the retirement age from 60 to 65 years, with the option of continuing employment of judges and attorneys up to age 70 years.

In 2004, the Higher Education Commission of the Ministry of Education (MOE) issued a regulation on government faculty at the college and university level which allowed faculty, starting from the level of Asst. Professor, to extend the retirement age to 65 years.

Since 2009, the Thai Civil Service Commission approved the raising of the age limit of government civil servants from 60 to 65 years for experts and those with special skill sets.

On April 6, 2018, the Office of the Prime Minister issued an announcement on social reform to raise the retirement age from 60 to 63 years.

In the private sector, there is a trend toward raising the typical retirement age from 55 to 60 or even 65 years, in addition to developing incentives to retain productive older workers as long as possible.

3 ENCOURAGING THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO HIRE/RETAIN OLDER WORKERS

In 2017, the Civil-State Working Group for Society (E6) was established to explore ways to motivate the private sector to hire older workers. As an incentive, employers would be able to reduce their taxes by half for salaried and contract workers.

2.1.4

ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

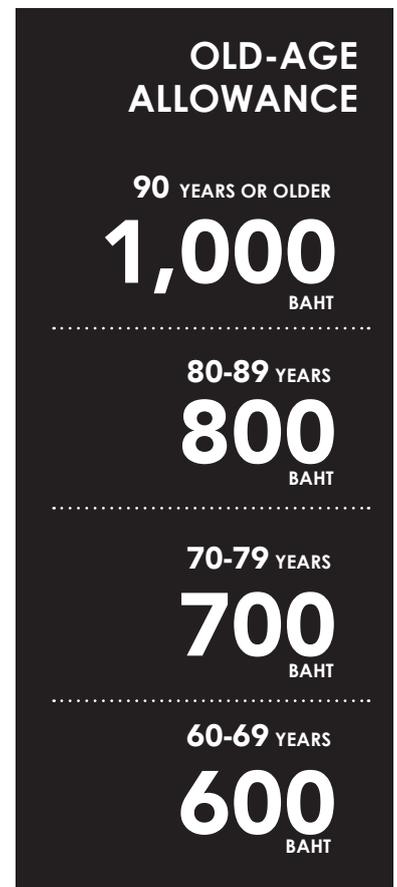
The Office for Non-formal and Alternative Education of the MOE collaborated with the Department for Community Development of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) to establish Community Education Centers which offer training and learning opportunities for senior citizens. These centers would also be a place to store and share traditional wisdom of local elderly sages. The centers are a place for the Senior Citizens Clubs to meet. These clubs are supported by the local administrative organizations.

MANY SENIOR CITIZENS CLUBS SUPPORT EDUCATION FOR OLDER PERSONS THROUGH “ELDERLY SCHOOLS”

INCOME SECURITY, SOCIAL PROTECTIONS, SOCIAL INSURANCE, AND REDUCTION OF POVERTY

OLD-AGE ALLOWANCE FOR ALL

Starting in 1993, the government started paying the needy elderly a cost-of-living subsidy of 200 baht per month. That amount was increased to 500 baht. In 2010, the subsidy was expanded to cover all older Thais who did not have a government pension. Since 2012, the government subsidy (so-called “old-age allowance”) increases with age, as follows: 60-69 years = 600 baht; 70-79 years = 700 baht; 80-89 years = 800 baht; and 90 years or older = 1,000 baht. In 2018, the government paid out 66.4 billion baht in the form of the elderly welfare subsidy.²



OLD AGE INSURANCE

Since 1999, the Social Security Office of the MOL introduced a pension scheme as part of the Social Security System. Those workers who self-insured would also have the guarantee of a government pension upon reaching age 55. In 2018, there was a total of nearly 16 million workers who were self-insured.³ The number of elderly in 2018 covered under Articles 33, 39, and 40 totaled 749,000 persons, as detailed below:

ARTICLE 33

Current full-time workers for an employer:

128,000

ARTICLE 39

Former full-time worker for an employer:

177,000

ARTICLE 40

Persons covered under the social security system:

444,000

²Source: Department of Provincial Administration, MOI, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Pattaya Municipality: Fiscal Year 2018

³Source: Social Security Office, MOL

MONTHLY SAVING OF CIVIL SERVANTS WHILE STILL WORKING

GOVERNMENT PENSION FUND

Government workers in the program save money each month while still employed. The government pays a matching amount into the fund. In 2018, the number of members in the fund totaled 1,076,000 persons⁴

⁴ Source: Government Pension Fund

PROVIDENT FUND

This fund was set up for contract workers to provide income security in retirement. The Board of the Security Exchange of Thailand (SET) has responsibility for managing the fund. In 2018, there were 380 separate funds under this scheme, with 3 million members.⁵

⁵ Source: Provident Fund

ENSURING INCOME SECURITY AFTER RETIREMENT

NATIONAL SAVINGS FUND

The National Savings Fund Act of 2011 is administered by the Finance Economics Office of the Ministry of Finance (MOF). The objective of the fund is to promote income security by savings during the working years for use in retirement. Payments are made to the fund each month by each worker, with a matching contribution by the government. When a member of the fund reaches age 60 years, the member will receive a monthly pension for the rest of their life.

The fund was open for enrollment in 2015 and, by 2018, it had 1.6 million members with assets of 3.8 billion baht.⁶

⁶ Source: National Government Savings Fund

**THIS FUND WAS
CREATED TO COVER
PERSONS NOT
COVERED BY THE
ABOVE SCHEMES
IN THEIR RETIREMENT
YEARS.**

THE 2017 THAI CONSTITUTION

stipulates the following under Article 48, para. 2: stipulates the following under Article 48, para. 2:

“ INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE 60 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER AND DO NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT INCOME, AND THE INDIGENT ARE ENTITLED TO RECEIVE APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE FROM THE STATE UNDER LAW. ”

TAX DEDUCTION BENEFIT FOR CHILDREN WHO CARE FOR DEPENDENT PARENTS CAN BE CLAIMED UP TO NO MORE THAN 30,000 BAHT/YEAR.

TAX BENEFITS FOR THE ELDERLY

The Revenue Department of the MOF provides tax benefits for the elderly as follows: (1) Tax deduction for children caring for dependent elderly parents up to 30,000 baht per year; (2) Deduction for purchase of health insurance for care of elderly parents up to 15,000 baht per year; (3) Tax exemption for income of persons age 65 years or older up to 190,000 baht per year.

THAI ELDERLY ACT OF 2003

ELDERLY FUND

This fund was established in 2004 as mandated in the 2003 Elderly Act. The purpose of the fund is to provide security and protection for older persons in retirement.

FUNERAL ASSISTANCE IN CASES OF DEATH OF AN ELDERLY PERSON

The MSDHS issued a 2004 ministerial regulation on criteria, methods, and conditions for protections and support for covering the cost of a funeral for an indigent elderly person in the amount of 2,000 baht.

FAMILIES OF INDIGENT ELDERLY UPON DEATH ARE ELIGIBLE FOR A PAYMENT OF 2,000 BAHT

ASSISTANCE FOR THE ELDERLY IN DIFFICULT SOCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

COUNSELING
FOR THE ELDERLY
VIA THE

**CALL
CENTER
1300**

JUSTICE
CLINIC

PROVIDES
COUNSELING ON
LEGAL RIGHTS FOR
OLDER PERSONS

The Thai government provides counseling services for the elderly who are in difficult circumstances through a free Hot Line (#1300). There is also legal assistance through justice clinics, and safe housing for emergency/crisis situations. The key agencies which help provide these services are the MSDHS, the MOPH, the MOI, and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ). The MSDHS has issued the following two ministerial regulations:

(1) Criteria, methods and conditions for protection and support for housing and essential supplies for the elderly (2005); and (2) Criteria, methods, and conditions for protection and support for elderly victims of abuse, legal exploitation, or abandonment, including counseling (2005).

The MOJ has established Justice Clinics in every province to provide legal counseling on rights of older persons.

2.2

ADVANCING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
INTO OLD AGE

TOTAL AND EQUAL ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES

The National Health Security Office (NHSO) provides free comprehensive health care coverage through public and private service outlets at all levels of the health system. Services include health promotion, disease prevention, medical care, and rehabilitation. This includes long-term care for older, dependent persons. To help support this, there are Health

THE MOPH SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING SERVICES AND BENEFITS FOR THE ELDERLY:

- 1** The Family Care Team Program for outreach care to elderly persons who are home-bound or bed-ridden.⁷

- 2** Creation of special 'fast lanes' for out-patient care for elderly clients.

- 3** Creation of eldercare clinics for special gerontological services

- 4** In 2005, launch of the Denture and Oral Health Promotion and Prevention Program

5 Provision of health exams including screening for dementia in clinical facilities at all levels in the system.

6 Establishing targets for all districts in the country for temple-based health promotion of the elderly. At present, there are 9,000 of these outposts.

7 Policy recommendations for a seamless system of social services for the elderly.

8 Provision of services in accordance with benefits rights to universal health care for the elderly, including health promotion, primary disease prevention, and clinical rehabilitation when indicated.

In Bangkok, there are special geriatric services delivered by a multi-disciplinary team with care for the elderly in two pilot-site hospitals, 12 municipal health centers and ten district offices. These outlets were created to provide elderly-friendly care for older persons with ADL scores of 11 or less.⁸

In addition, the BMA has a Home Ward Referral program. There is sharing of information of elderly patients through a network of 125 public and private health care outlets, which are linked with the 68 BMA health centers. By the end of 2018, the number of elderly patients who were referred through this system was over 50,000 persons (as of December 31, 2018).⁹

⁷ Source: Department of Health, MOPH

^{8,9} Source: Strategy and Evaluation Department, BMA

TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS IN GERIATRIC CARE

The MOPH, MSDHS, MOE, MOL, Thai Red Cross, the National Senior Citizens' Association, and the NHSO provide support for training, education, and skills building for caring for the elderly. The training is for physicians, nurses, and other clinical persons, as well as lay care providers for elderly persons. In 2016, the MOPH joined with the NHSO and local administrative organizations to create cadre of eldercare managers and caregivers. In 2018, there were a total of 13,000 eldercare managers, and 72,000 eldercare providers who had been trained and registered as such.

THE ELDERLY AND HIV

Elderly persons who have been adversely impacted by HIV/AIDS are eligible for financial assistance and counseling from the local administrative organization and the MSDHS. They can also receive assistance from eldercare volunteers who conduct home visits and provide motivational support.

13,000 PERSONS
ELDERCARE MANAGERS

72,000
PERSONS
CAREGIVERS FOR ELDERLY

2.2.4

THE ELDERLY AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

The Department of Mental Health of the MOPH has produced a handbook for mental health care of the elderly. The handbook provides guidelines for training volunteers and screening older persons for mental health problems through home visits.

MONTHLY WELFARE SUBSIDY FOR THE DISABLED

800 BAHT

2.2.5

THE ELDERLY AND DISABILITY

Elderly who have a disability have the right to assistance according to the 2007 Disabled persons Support and Quality of Life Act. When an older person registers their disability, they can receive an additional monthly welfare subsidy of 800 baht.

2.3

ENSURING ENABLING AND
SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

2003

ELDERCARE VOLUNTEERS

In 2003, Thailand began a pilot training program for community residents to create a grassroots cadre of eldercare volunteers. In 2007, the Cabinet approved the expansion of the pilot program nationwide to cover all villages and communities. Since 2013, these volunteers have been conducting regular visits to households with elderly persons, engage them in conversation, and help them with meals, bathing and house cleaning.

The Department of Older Persons has set the target of creating 80,000 volunteers in 2019. As of 2018, there were already 74,000 eldercare volunteers.¹⁰

2005

In 2005, the Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning of the MOI issued a ministerial regulation which specifies amenities to make buildings elderly-friendly. These include clear signs to advertise these amenities, elevators, special parking and restrooms, etc. An assessment of the National Plan on the Elderly, 2nd ed. (2002-21) and the 3rd Phase (2012-16) examined the status of amenities and whether they met the three criteria: ramps/banisters; escalators/elevators; and elderly friendly bathrooms.

The assessment concluded that the status of amenities did not meet the standard criteria at almost all buildings, with the exception of some of the district offices in Bangkok and eight airports.

2007

The network of Centers for Elderly Quality of Life and Occupational Development is an outgrowth of the Multipurpose Senior Citizens' Community Centers implemented by the MSDHS, starting in 2007. The new centers are now in every district of the country (as of 2014) and serve as activity centers for the elderly and people of other generations.

In 2018, there were 1,475 centers in 878 districts. These centers were used by 200,000 older persons in that year.

2012

The Department of Local Administration of the MOI instructed the local administrative organizations to adhere to the Cabinet Resolution of Nov. 20, 2012 to arrange for amenities and conveniences for the elderly in five areas: (1) ramps; (2) bathrooms; (3) signage; (4) parking; and (5) information.

By 2018, 3,700 local administrative organizations had ramps installed (47% coverage of the nation), remodeled 3,300 toilets (42% coverage), installed elderly-friendly signage at 3,100 sites (4% coverage), expanded parking at 2,400 sites (31% coverage), and created elderly-friendly information centers in 3,300 sites (42% coverage). Fully 2,100 local

administrative organizations had made improvements to the environment so that it is elderly-friendly across all eight indicators of amenities defined by WHO (27% coverage).¹¹

¹⁰ Source: Division of Older Persons Welfare Promotion and Rights Protection, Department of Older Persons

¹¹ Source: Department of Local Administration, MOI

SOCIAL WELFARE CENTERS FOR THE ELDERLY

These centers support and care for elderly who are lower-income, lack a caregiver, and are otherwise disadvantaged. The homeless can even take temporary shelter at these centers. In 2018, there were 12 such centers, and an additional 13 centers were transferred to the authority of the local administrative organization, covering all regions of the country.

IMAGE OF THE THAI ELDERLY

1982

In 1982, the Thai Cabinet designated April 13th of each year to be “national senior citizens’ day.” The MSDHS took responsibility for coordinating activities with other government agencies and the private sector. As part of the celebrations, a person is selected as the “Honorary Senior Fellow” and is presented with an award.

INTELLECTUAL RESOURCES OF THE ELDERLY

On the occasion of the anniversary of the birthday of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit in the year 2000, Her Majesty offered the following blessing:

“Thailand should promote and support the elderly who have valuable knowledge and skills but who have retired from working in government agencies, state enterprises, or private companies. This national human resource should be tapped into in order to benefit the development of the country.”

The inspiration from these remarks from Her Majesty led to the idea of creating a “brain bank” that builds upon traditional wisdom of older people. In 2018, there were over 5,000 persons who had joined the brain bank.¹² Since 2004, the brain bank concept has been implemented in communities across the nation. Each community creates a registry of older persons who have expertise or special knowledge which is of value to the development of the country. This has led to the enumeration of 23,000 local sages in communities around the country.

¹² Source: NESDC

RIGHT OF OLDER PERSONS TO USE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The Ministry of Transport (MOT) and state enterprises involved with mass transit have implemented measures to make public transportation more accessible to older persons. For example, there are senior citizen’s rates for transit or transportation fees in many sectors, such as air travel (reduction of 15%), and special fares for rail transit, public buses, the sky train and underground rail systems. For these sectors, there is a 50% reduction of the standard fare for the elderly. Ferry transport across the Chao Phraya River is free, along with other forms of short-trip water transit.

2.4

DATA ON THE ELDERLY

EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2ND NATIONAL PLAN ON THE ELDERLY (2002-21)

By the College of Population Studies,
Chulalongkorn University

REPORT OF THE SITUATION OF THE THAI ELDERLY

TGRI in collaboration with the College of Population Studies of Chulalongkorn University and Institute for Population and Social Research (IPSR) Mahidol University. With support by the Senior Citizens' Fund. The report of the Situation of the Thai Elderly has been produced every year since 2006 for presentation to the National Committee on Older Persons and the Thai Cabinet.

NATIONAL SURVEY OF THE ELDERLY

The NSO has conducted this survey six times in the following years: 1994, 2002, 2007, 2011, 2014, and 2017

DATABASE OF THAI OLDER PERSONS

In 2018, the Department of Older Persons created a database of information on older persons across three dimensions: Social welfare for the elderly; preparation for transitioning into the elderly years; and building capacity of older persons

3.

WORK AND EMPLOYMENT OF THE ELDERLY

Nowadays, Thais are living longer and staying in good health. If a person retires in the early-elderly years, then they will have a long period ahead of them out of the workforce, even though they are still strong, healthy, and mentally fit.

Why don't we, as a society, find ways to help these productive citizens remain in the work force for as long as they can be productive, and if they are willing. That would be extremely beneficial given the labor shortages that Thailand is experiencing and which will worsen in the decades ahead. Staying in gainful employment will also help elderly workers to save more for eventual retirement. That will also delay the time until they start tapping into the retirement benefits and pension that is owed to them. Finally, allowing elderly to remain in the workforce as productive members will increase their independence and dignity.

3.1

DEFINITION OF “WORKING ELDERLY”

**AN ELDERLY
PERSON WHO
IS “WORKING”
IS DEFINED AS
A PERSON AGE
60 YEARS OR
OLDER WHO**

1

receives at least one hour of paid work in the past week, salary, dividends, or other monetary compensation for services rendered. The compensation may be in cash or in-kind payment.

2

is not working or works less than one hour per week

- but still receives wages, dividends, or other financial compensation from a job or business.
 - and does not receive wages, dividends, or other financial compensation from a business but intends to return to a job or business.
-

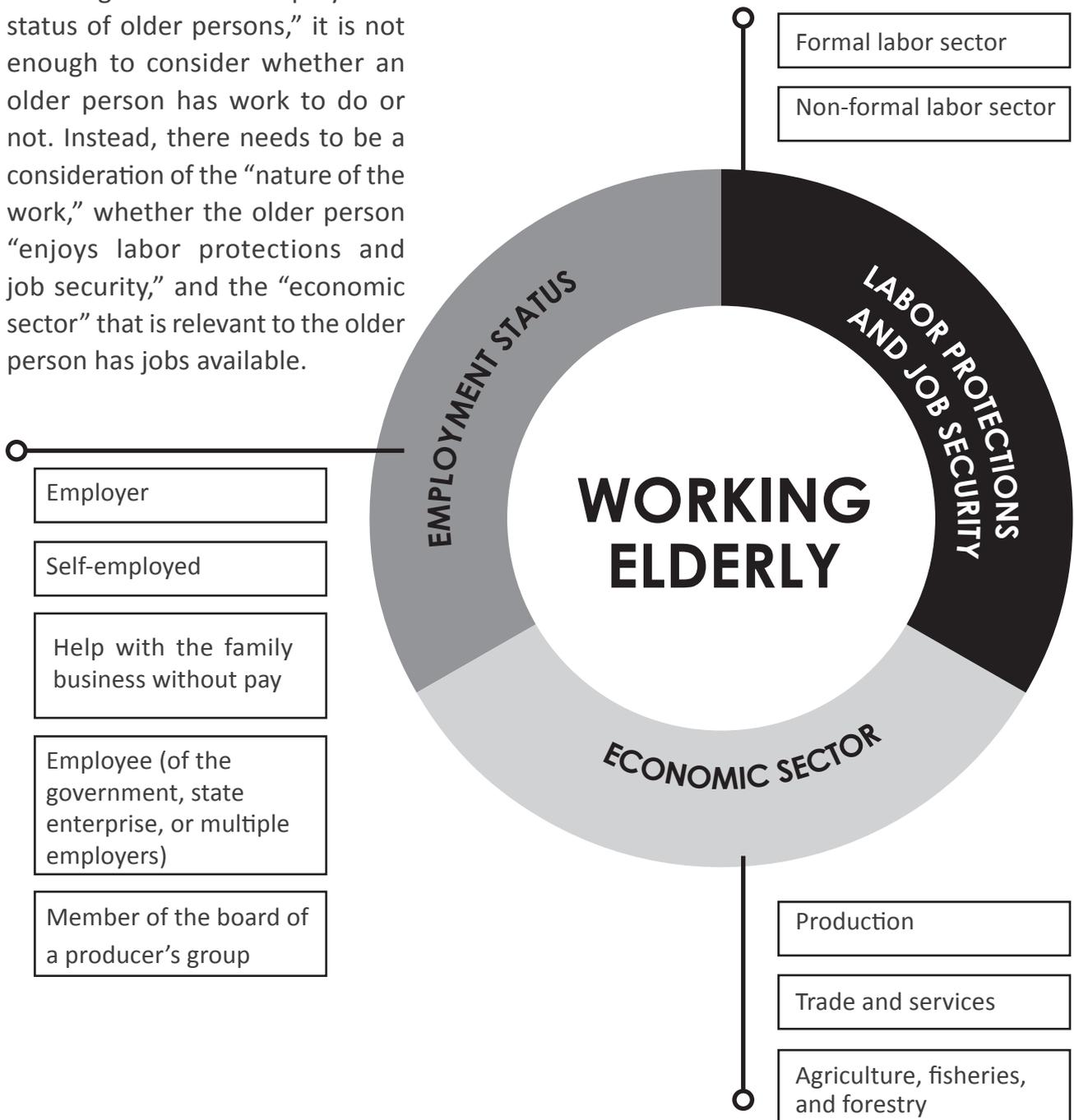
3

works at least one hour during the week in a business or other enterprise, including farming or agricultural activity, but does not receive a wage

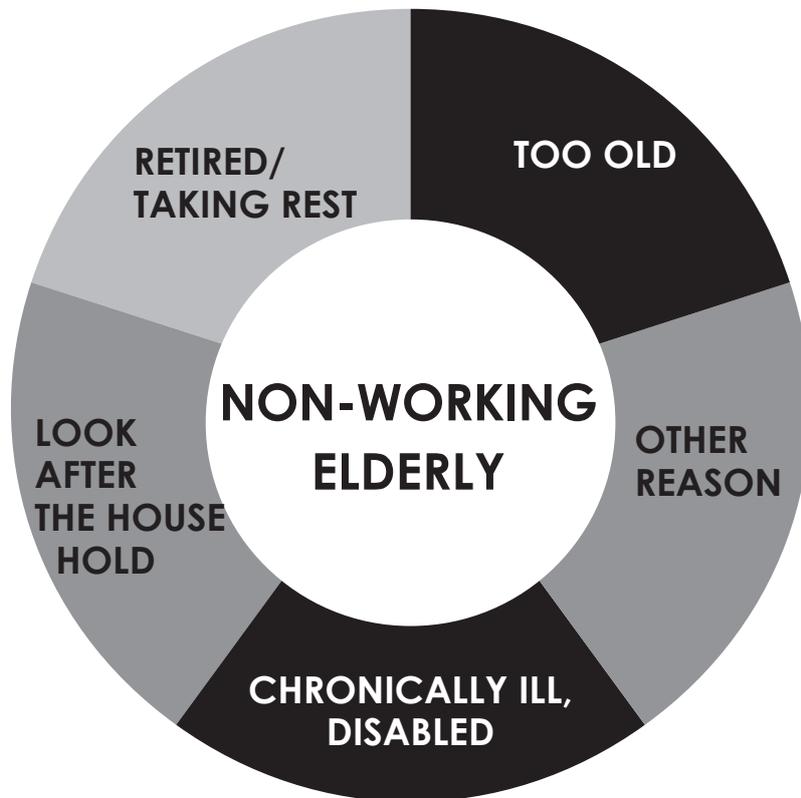
Source: Adapted from the definition of
“Working Older Persons in Thailand in 2018” (p. 21), NSO

EMPLOYMENT/WORKING STATUS OF OLDER PERSONS

With regard to the “employment status of older persons,” it is not enough to consider whether an older person has work to do or not. Instead, there needs to be a consideration of the “nature of the work,” whether the older person “enjoys labor protections and job security,” and the “economic sector” that is relevant to the older person has jobs available.



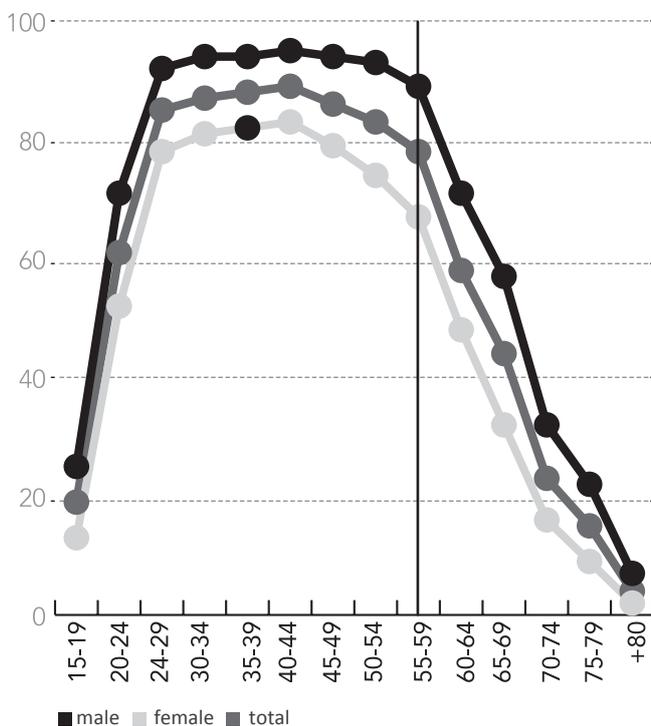
Given the present situation in Thailand as an aged society, there can only be benefits by retaining older persons in the work force -- as long as they are willing and able to contribute. The benefits will accrue not only to the individual and their family, but also to the macro-economy and society. The prime group for consideration are those Thais age 60-64 years (young elderly), most of whom are probably still strong and mentally fit. It is this group that should delay retirement and be retained in the workforce.



3.2

INDICATORS OF ELDERLY EMPLOYMENT

Labor force participation of Thais has declined rapidly and accelerates at age 55 years or older (under 80%) with women dropping out more than men.



% of "working/employed" among population aged 15 and over

Source: Analysis of the Labor Force Survey (Q3 2018)

IN 2018, OF THE TOTAL POPULATION OF 11.7 MILLION THAI ELDERLY,

1.3

IN 3

WERE STILL WORKING, OR 4.4 MILLION

STARTING AT AGE

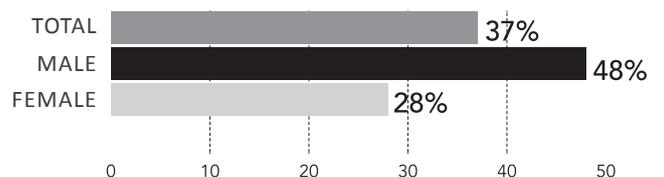
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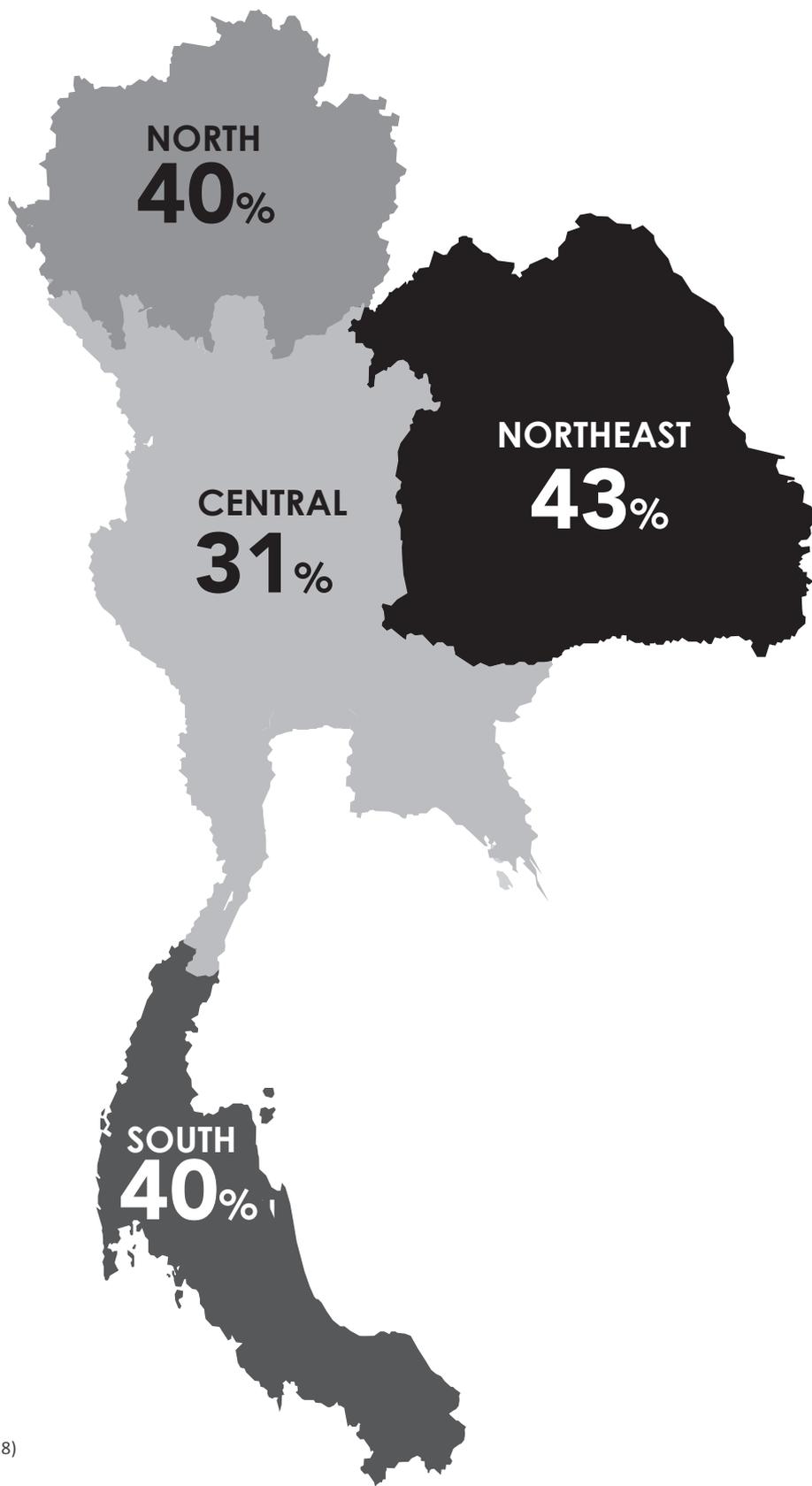
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION PLUMMETS

ABOUT

TWICE

AS MANY MEN AS WOMEN WERE STILL WORKING IN OLDER AGE

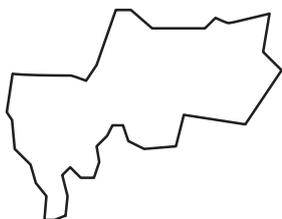




In Bangkok,

1 IN 4

elderly were still gainfully employed

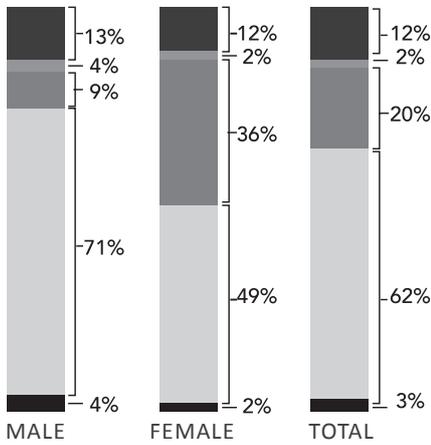


Bangkok

23%

of “working/employed” among population aged 60 and over

Source: Analysis of the Labor Force Survey (Q3 2018)



OF THE
4.36
 MILLION WORKING
 THAI ELDERLY:

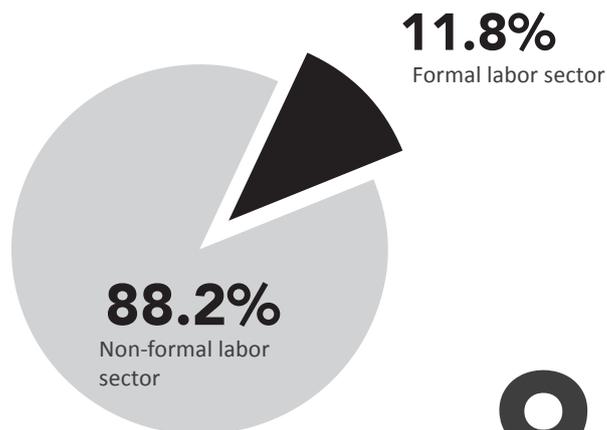
20 %
 WAS WORKING
 FOR THE FAMILY
 BUSINESS WITHOUT
 EARNING A WAGE

Work status of the elderly

- Work for a private enterprise
- Government or state enterprise
- Family business (no wage)
- Self-employed (no employees)
- Business owner (employer)

SOURCE: Analysis of Labor Force Survey data (Q3 2018)

Protections and Social Security from Labor Force Participation



NEARLY
2 IN 3
 WERE EMPLOYED OR
 WERE SELF-EMPLOYED
 WITHOUT EMPLOYEES

NEARLY
9 IN 10
 IN THE NON-FORMAL
 SECTOR WITHOUT
 LABOR PROTECTIONS

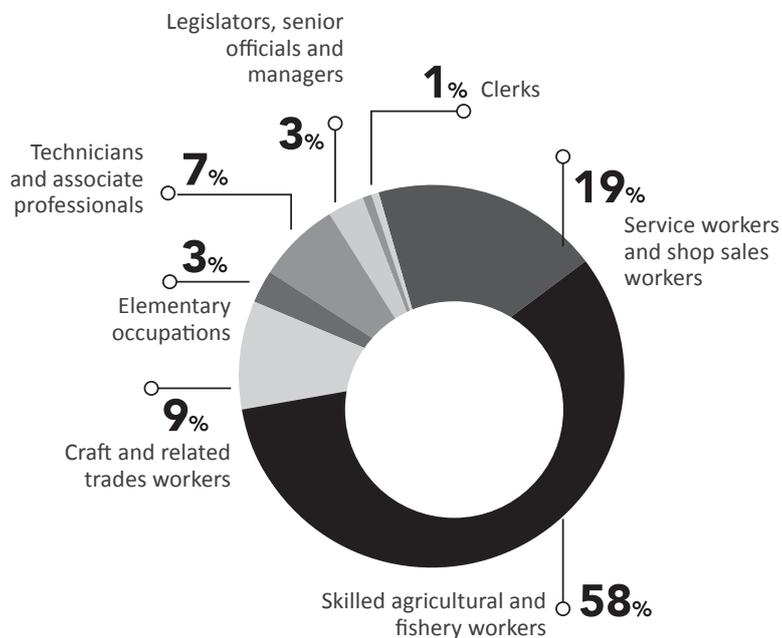
Source: Analysis of 2018 Labor Force Survey data

*Used NSO definitions of "formal" and "non-formal" labor sector

ECONOMIC SECTOR

3 IN **4**

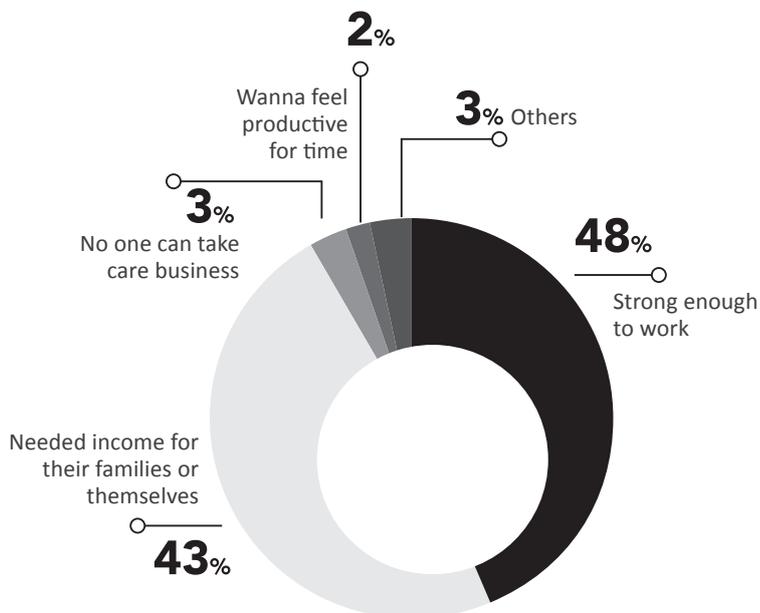
WORKED IN AGRICULTURAL, SERVICES AND COMMERCE SECTORS



% working elderly by type

REASONS FOR STILL WORKING

Nearly half of working elderly were doing so voluntarily or for the benefit of work (still healthy and strong, and wish to make productive use of their time). The other half felt that they had to keep working or would retire if they could afford to (out of need to support oneself and their family, or lack of a someone to take their place in the job).



% Characteristics of working elderly

Source: Analysis of the Survey of the Thai Elderly 2017

Employment of the elderly should be based on actual demand for the labor and skills of the person while they are still healthy and strong...

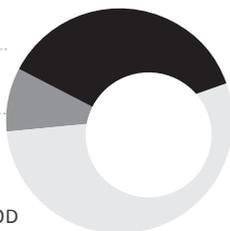
Older persons should not feel they have to keep working for survival or economic pressure

Health status of persons age 60-64 years

37%
MODERATE

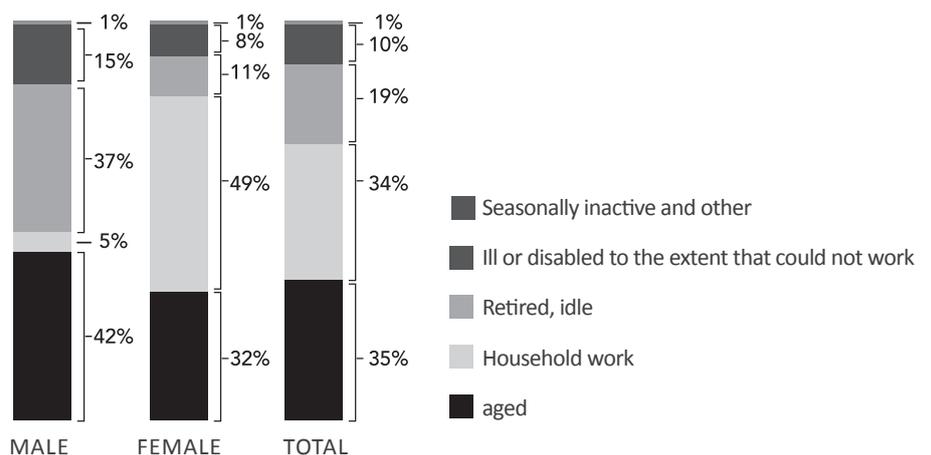
8%
POOR/VERY BAD

54%
GOOD/VERY GOOD



For elderly who are in decline or have health limitations, retirement may be impossible to avoid. However, keeping those who are still physically and mentally fit in the work force can actually delay decline due to older age.

REASON FOR INABILITY TO JOIN THE WORK FORCE : PERSONS AGE 60-64 YEARS



Source: Analysis of the data from The 2017 Survey of Thai Elderly

During age 60-64, most persons are probably still fit enough to continue working. However, many of these elderly (41%) were not working or had retired. According to the 2017 Survey of the Thai Elderly, one in ten felt they were in poor health. The 2018 Labor Force Survey found that, of 41% who were not working, nearly 90% cited a non-health-status reason (35% cited too old; 34% cited the need to tend/take care of the household; 19% cited they were retired or wanted to rest).

3.3

WAYS OF PROMOTING ELDERLY EMPLOYMENT¹



FORMAL SECTOR²

Most of the workers in the formal sector are also enrolled in the Social Security System. Starting at age 55 years, older persons can begin receiving a state pension. Currently, the government is considering raising the minimum age for pension eligibility above 55 years.

Raising the age of retirement (individual): This would extend the threshold for receiving a pension above age 55 years; after which it is considered on a year-to-year basis whether to delay retirement further. Any extension would depend on the criteria of the employer and the willingness of the employee.

Rehiring (individual): This would consist of a contract for employment for at least one year in an existing position and at the same

or similar level of compensation as before, with flexibility.

Retirement age of 60 years : This would apply to new and existing workers, and could be phased in gradually using a step-wise approach.



NON-FORMAL SECTOR

This sector mostly includes employers who run a personal business, a family business, farmers, people working in agriculture, or the services sector.

Creating jobs (production & services): This refers to government or local administrative organizations which promote jobs and employment for older persons, with flexible hours and methods of compensation, and where older persons can be paid by the hour.

Supporting the hiring or creating jobs for the elderly as part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by worksites and private companies.

¹ Extracted from "Report on the Project to Promote Income and Employment of the Elderly as part of the 'Government for Society' Policy, Supachai Srisukdee, Keokwan Tantipongkul, and Anim Arunreuangawat, 2018

² This does not include government civil servants, for which there is a plan to raise the mandatory age of retirement from 60 to 61 years, and to 63 years

3.4

GOVERNMENT MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF THE ELDERLY IN 2018:

1

The “1 District, 1 Sage” initiative recruits older persons with traditional wisdom in different fields of knowledge. They are encouraged to document and share their wisdom with others in the community. This initiative has been implemented in 11 pilot provinces including Nonthaburi Samut Prakan, Suphan Buri, Nakorn Ratchasima, Buriram, Ubon Ratchathani, Khon Kaen, Nakhon Si Thammarat, and Songkhla.

2

Another project is the program to expand occupational opportunities for older persons in 2018. The beneficiaries of this program include 105,436 older persons, including 12,383 in the formal labor sector (e.g., legal advice, examinations, other assistance) and 95,053 in the non-formal sector (using a needs assessment, helping find jobs, ensuring gainful employment, creating jobs in government agencies, and training in job skills).

3

This project supported 64,544 lower-income elderly who have registered with social services. It helps them develop job skills and find jobs with better income, create job security

4

There are 87 centers to help older persons find jobs, and register jobs for older persons through the Department of Employment of the MOL. 4,053 elderly registered and 2,202 found jobs through these centers

5

The government provides job-related knowledge for the elderly to help them find work and exercise their rights under labor protection law. This includes the program to educate older persons about labor protection law, and provi

The Revenue Department has a policy to support organizations to hire the elderly by providing tax deductions and exemptions. For example, the salary tax deduction for elderly employees is twice that for non-elderly. This is for employees making no more than 15,000 baht per month. In 2017, the number of companies taking advantage of this deduction totaled 454, with a total of 2,058 elderly employees (Revenue Department, 2019).

The Office of Social Development of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration conducted training of 7,800 older persons in 2018, of whom 3,400 were able to find jobs related to the training. The types of training include arts and crafts, cloth dyeing and weaving, pottery, artificial flower design, painting, kedupath, bag making, re-purposing recycled material, handbags, macramé, and traditional processing of natural materials, among other skills.

¹⁵ The Revenue Department. (2019). To submit the data for Situation of the Thai Elderly 2018

3.5

GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATE TO PROMOTE EMPLOYMENT OF THE ELDERLY

In the past 2 to 3 years, the government processed an MOU on employment of the elderly between the Department of Employment, the Department of Skilled Labor, the Department of Protection and Welfare for Labor, the Social Security Office, the Department of Older Persons, the Department of Community Development, the Department of Local Administration, the Civil Service Commission, the Municipal League of Thailand Associations, the Association of Local Administrative Organizations, and the Association of Tambon Administrative Organizations and private sector employers.

Up to 2018, 20 commercial entities have signed the MOU, including Thai Retailers Association, Central Group of Company, Berli Jucker Co., Ltd., Ek-Chai Distribution System Co., Ltd., C.P. ALL Public Co. Ltd., Index Living Mall Public Co. Ltd., Se-Eucation Public Co. Ltd., Bangchak Green Net Co. Ltd., Business Services Alliance Co.,Ltd., Restaurants Development Co.,Ltd., Thai Toshiba Electric Industries Co., Ltd., and MEZZO Co. Ltd.

**“CIVIL-STATE
WORKING
TOGETHER FOR
EMPLOYMENT OF
THE ELDERLY.”**

3.6

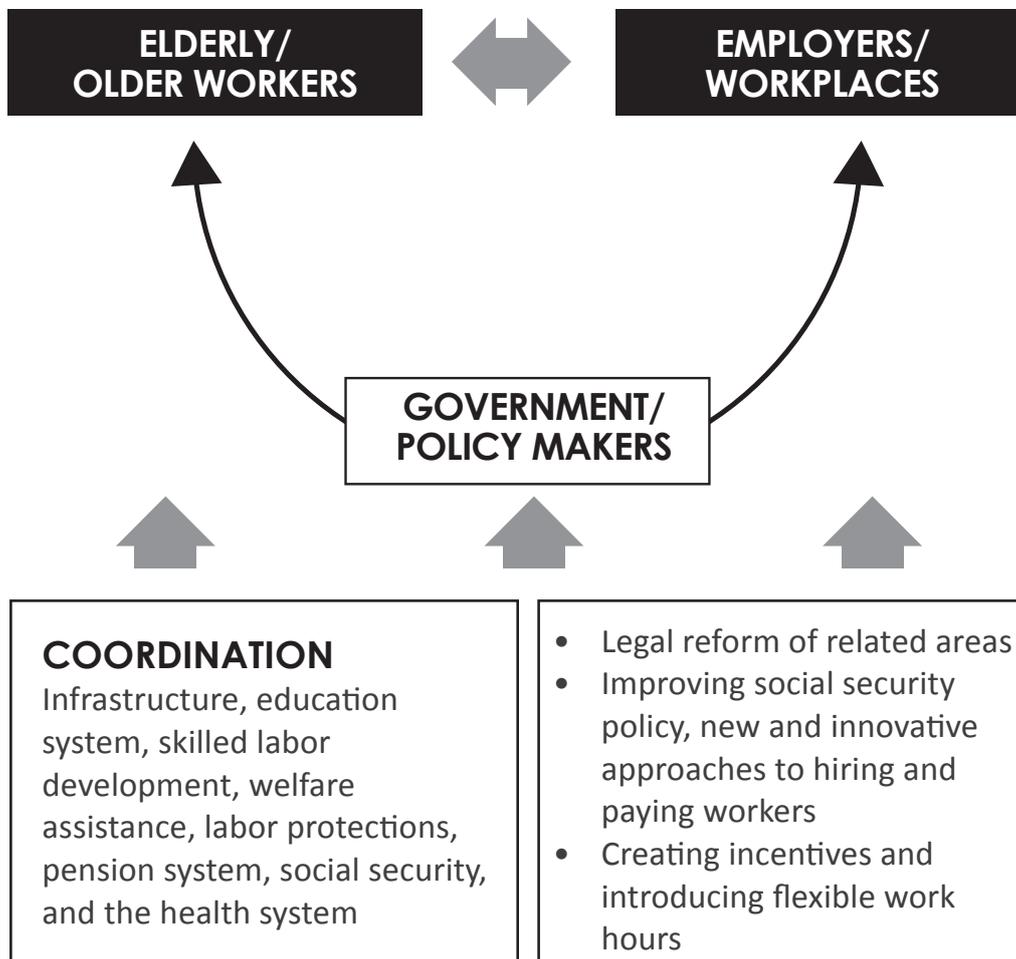
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

PROMOTING RETAINING OLDER WORKERS FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE³

Thailand is facing three critical challenges:

- (1) Increasing skilled labor (up-skill or re-skill) including older members of the workforce in accordance with the concept of Life-Long Learning Approach);
- (2) Creating motivation for hiring older workers through Flexible Working Conditions that are appropriate to the needs and ability of the employer and employee; and
- (3) Expanding the benefits and incentives to hire older skilled workers and retaining older skilled workers.

³ Extracted from the report of the Study of the Thai Central Bank on "Aged Society and the Challenge of the Thai Labor Market"



All of these recommendations require collaboration and coordination with the labor market and all sectors in society, including infrastructure, education system, skilled labor development, welfare assistance, labor protections, pension system, social security, and the health system.

In addition, there needs to be legal reform of related areas, improving social security policy, new and innovative approaches to hiring and paying workers, and creating incentives and introducing flexible work hours.

Working together to create an

AGELESS SOCIETY

**With older persons who are strong
and healthy and can work
as long as they are fit and willing
in a society free of ageism.**

4



HIGHLIGHTS
2018

4.1

NATIONAL SENIOR CITIZEN 2018

Ever since 2007, the National Committee for Older Persons has presented an award for the National Senior Citizen for the year.

Each year, the Committee, with the Prime Minister as Chairperson, appoints a sub-committee to select a person to be recognized and honored as a role model for the Thai elderly. The criterion for selection is a person who has selflessly been serving society and the public good for so long. The person is someone with high ethical standards and is a role model of morality.

**FOR 2018,
THE NATIONAL
SENIOR CITIZEN IS**

**DR. SUMET
TANTIVEJAKUL**



Kudos

Dr. Sumet Tantivejakul was born on August 26, 1939 in Petchaburi Province. Dr. Sumet is the child of Mr. Aree Tantivejakul, former Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Cooperatives, and Lady (Tan Phuying) Prasansuk Tantivejakul, former head chef for Thai cuisine in Chitrlada Royal Villa

Dr. Sumet is married to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lady (Khunying) Jintana Tantivejakul. They have two children.



Education

Dr. Sumet Tantivejakul began his formal education at the Bangkok La-or-uthit Kindergarten School, then continued at Assumption School in Bangrak, Bangkok, and graduated high school at Vajiravudh Academy. Dr. Sumet won a scholarship from the French Embassy in Thailand to continue his studies in Vietnam and Laos. He received his Associate Arts Degree in Philosophy. Next, Dr. Sumet travelled to France to study for his Bachelor's Degree in Political Science at Grenoble University and Master's and Doctoral Degree in Political Science from Montpellier University.

During his time as a civil servant at the National Economic and Social Development Board, he continued his studies at the Graduate School of Thai Army (Class # 23) and then attended the Defense College with the 28th Class.

Dr. Sumet has attended numerous training and study tour events overseas, and received a Diploma in Economic Planning from the International Management Institute in Paris, France, and a diploma in Economic Development from the World Bank in Washington DC, USA.

Dr. Sumet Tantivejakul has received an Honorary Doctorate award from 17 academic institutions in Thailand.

Employment History

1969: Appointed as a government civil servant at the Economic Preparedness Division of the NESDB

1974-1981: In addition to his full-time position with NESDB, Dr. Sumet held the position of Secretary for the Committee for Development of Security in the Army Region Four. Dr. Sumet also participated in security planning for all “red” areas, and that involved traveling to conflict zones in many insecure parts of the country. His input helped to develop the plans of the Thai army which General Prem Tinasulanond, Prime Minister, signed in the Directive 66/2523 for Development and Political Affairs which helped to defuse the threat of communist insurgents.

1981: Dr. Sumet was appointed Director of the Economic Preparedness Division of NESDB, and oversaw a number of Royal projects by virtue of his position as Secretary of the Special Committee for Royal Project Coordination.

These projects were inspired by His Majesty King Rama IX with the aim to reduce or eliminate poverty of the population in remote rural areas. These projects contributed significantly to establishing peace and security throughout the nation and society.

1989: HM King Rama IX established the Chai Pattana Foundation and appointed Dr. Sumet as member and secretary of the Foundation, a position he continues to hold to this very day.

The objective of the Foundation is to support a variety of development activities of which implementation was limited due to certain government conditions, or require alternative ways of implementations to benefit the Thai population truly and urgently without limitations such as time and



other conditions. However, these activities should never duplicate the work of existing government programs

1993: In this year, a special committee was separated out from the NESDB to coordinate Royal projects, and Dr. Sumet was appointed secretary of that committee.

1994-1996: Dr. Sumet served as Secretary-General of NESDB in tandem with his role as secretary of the Royal Project Coordination Committee.

His tenure as Secretary-General of NESDB coincided with the development of the 8th National Development Plan (1997-2001). This plan incorporated the principle of “sufficiency economy” as espoused by HM King Rama IX. The concept is defined as “a people-centered approach for national development” to help maintain good economy for the country as well as happiness among the people through balanced and sustainable development.

1999: Dr. Sumet resigned from his position as Secretary of the Royal Project Coordination Committee, and continued with the position of Secretary-General of the Chaipattana Foundation as his only full-time job to the present.

In addition, Dr. Sumet is a former Board member of many state enterprises, including the Textile Organization, the Thailand Tobacco Monopoly, the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand, the Zoological Park Organization, the Provincial Electricity Authority, Thai Airways International Public Company Limited, the Telephone Organization of Thailand. He is also a former board member of the Bank of Thailand and Krung Thai Bank Public Company Limited.

Awards of Honor

Dr. Sumet Tantivejakul is recognized and honored as an individual with moral correctness, ethics and honor. He has remarkably contributed to and sacrificed for the public good. He has received many awards and recognition as followed:

- Received the award as a “Role Person of the Year 1994 “from The Statesman Foundation of General Prem Tinsulanonda on August 9, 1995.
- Awarded Outstanding Civil Affairs Administrator 1995(Gold Garuda) from the Civil Affairs Association on 29 August 1996
- Received a Plaque of Honor for Excellence in Loyalty and Honesty from the Office of the Commission of Counter Corruption on March 3, 1997
- Received the award for National Outstanding Contribution in Economic Development in 1998 from the National Identity Committee on May 8, 2000
- Received a Plaque of Honor for “Mahidolwaranusorn” for 1995 from the Social Welfare Association under Royal Patronage on January 15, 1996
- Received the Royal Awards “The Pillar of Sema Dhamma Jakra” (The Wheel of the Doctrines Pillar) for outstanding contribution to Buddhism in Environmental Conservation for 1996, from the Department of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Education, on May 31, 1996
- Awarded the National Excellent Father Award for 2006 in conjunction with National Father’s Day on December 5, 2006
- Received the award for Excellence in Human Relations for 2010 from the Human Relations Association on November 17, 2010
- Received the Royal Medallion as an individual who has a comprehensive and authoritative knowledge or skill from the Air Force Academy on July 31, 2012
- Received the Niyom Thai award, from the Niyom Thai Association on February 23, 2013
- Received the honorary plaque for excellence in serving the children and youth of the country for 2015 from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security

4.2

NATIONAL ARTISTS IN 2018



The Department of Cultural Promotion of the Ministry of Culture recognizes outstanding Thai artists with significant works for the public to admire. The Department seeks to identify those artists with creativity, who promote development of the arts, and demonstrate inherit Thai valuable arts. These persons are caretakers and disseminators of the arts in their various fields, and embody the morals and values as a role person of Thai society in the field of arts.

Each year, the Department provides special recognition of “Nation Artist of the Year” and, in 2018, 12 artists were awarded this distinction. Notably, of these 12 persons, 11 are also elderly.

Performing Arts

6 artists



Mrs. Kan Chaowapong

Born on a Sunday in the 4th lunar month of the Year of the Dog (1933) in Nakorn Si Tammarat, Ms. Kan is better known as “Nora Kan Bantherngsin.” Her specialty is in the Nora southern Thai dance art form, using traditional instruments and dress. Ms. Kan is famous for her singing and dancing.

Mr. Viroj Wirawattananon

Born on April 27, 1945 in Ayutthaya, He has a record a numerous outstanding Thai musical folk theatre or Likay performances. He goes by the stage name of “Viroj Lan Hom Huan,” and is famous for his signing, dancing, improvisation, and literature.



Mrs. Sukon Pornpirun

Born November 1, 1935 in Ratchaburi, Ms. Sukon has written more than 3,000 songs, including soul stirring songs, religious songs, songs which honor the Monarchy, and songs dedicated to organizations and provinces. Her famous songs include “Kor Hai Meuan Derm,” “Khrai Kor Dai Tha Rak Chan Jing,” and “Namta Peuan Jai.”

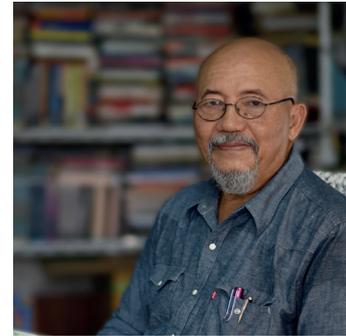


Literature

2 artists

Mr. Prapat Chonsaranon

Born May 18, 1960 in Ratchaburi, Mr. Prapat is an entertainment creator, a writer, and a song composer. He has integrated traditional Thai music forms to modern tastes and styles. He formed the group “Khun Phra Chuay Orchestra” to perform Thai contemporary songs. He has over 200 musical compositions.



Mr. Jamlong Fangcholajitr

Born on March 2, 1954 in Nakorn Si Tammarat, Mr. Jamlong writes short stories, novels, documentaries, and articles. His famous works include Kanam Noi Klang Thung Na, and Si Khong Ma. Mr. Jamlong has published over 300 short stories.

Mrs. Somsuk Kanjareuk



Born on Nov. 14, 1927 in Bangkok, Mrs. Somsuk is famous for over 300 plays that were aired on radio and TV programs, many of which were made into TV soap operas and movies, for example, Petch Ta Maew, Tukata Phi, and Bantheuk Rak Kong Pimchawee

Mrs. Ake Chaowarat

Born January 19, 1943 in Rayong, Ms. Ake , whose stage name is “Petchara Chaowarat” was a film star. She appeared in over 300 films during 1962-1978. She often starred with a famous lead actor - Mitr Chaibancha.



Mr. Sa-nay Singsuk



Born on June 18, 1957 in Petchaburi, Mr. Sane is known by his pen name “Daen-aran Saengthong.” He is a writer and a translator with a number of notable short stories and novels. He has published 19 volumes of short stories, and translated 33 books.



Visual Arts

4 artists

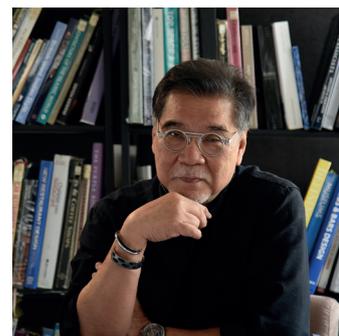


Mr. Shin Prasong
(sculpture)

He was born on January 6, 1942 in Nonthaburi, His distinguished work includes sculptures of important Royal family He has designed the sculpture of Somdech Phra Srinagarindra Boromarajajonani as well as 12 canine pets of the Royal household of King Rama IX.

Professor Parinya Tantisuk
(painting)

Born on March 31, 1955 in Bangkok, Prof. Parinya is an accomplished painter who uses a variety of media, such drawings, watercolor paintings, paintings on handmade paper, and mixed-media art.



Mr. Kongsak Yuktasewi
(interior architecture)

Born on March 15, 1943 in Bangkok, Mr. Kongsak has distinguished works of interior architecture and design. His work can be seen in well-known hotels and hospitals with an aim to elevate the status of Thai hospitals to international standard.



Mrs. Khampun Srisai
(exquisite art in weaving)

Born on January 5, 1933 in Ubon Ratchathani, Ms. Kampun is known for her intricate woven cloth designs which are other-worldly. She bases her methods on traditional Isaan weaving such as Mee, Khit, Yok, and Chok as a foundation.



These national artists receive a stipend of 25,000 baht per month along with health and medical care benefit according to the government regulation, and compensation of 50,000 is case of natural disaster. In the event of death, the family is provided with a sum of 20,000 baht to assist with funeral arrangements. Recipients also receive a grant of 150,000 baht to publish a commemorative volume on their life and work, posthumously.



4.3

On December 4, 2018, the Thai cabinet has passed a resolution to approve the addition of the topic of **“aged society”** to the national agenda, with the following key advocacy issues:

“AGED SOCIETY” IS ON THE **NATIONAL PRIORITY AGENDA**

1

Developing an elderly welfare and protection system

This gives priority to comprehensive care and quality of life for the elderly, both in rural and urban areas, to ensure equal access to a variety of social welfare services and protection of rights. This includes providing assistance for the vulnerable groups of elder persons who lack opportunity in accessing public welfare and services.

2

Promoting employment and income security of the elderly people

There is to be support and expanded opportunity for the elderly who are still in good health, knowledgeable and otherwise able to work (productive manpower) so that they can continue to contribute to the household, community and society. There should be tax incentives and other special privileges in the business sector to hire/retain older workers under appropriate conditions of hiring and flexible hours of work. There should be supports in production of materials and amenities especially designed for the elderly as well as supports for the elderly to engage in small-scale enterprise themselves.

3

Health system to accommodate an aged society

There should be priority for health promotion of the elderly to reduce non-communicable disease (NCD). There should be outreach screening services to facilitate access of the elderly in urban and rural areas to ensure timely treatment for new conditions or adjustment of treatment for NCD. This is especially important for elderly who are house-bound or bed-ridden. There needs to be a sustainable system of long-term care by a family medicine and family care team whose members come from a variety of areas (Multidisciplinary Team) as well as a care plan developed by a care manager and a caregiver to ensure holistic health and social care.

4

Adjustment of home and community environment to ensure safety for the elderly people

There should be support for education and application of universal design (UD) to create an aged-friendly community. This would include an appropriate and safe environment for the elderly to access to public services safely and conveniently. For example, there should be ramps in addition to steps to buildings, elderly-friendly public bathrooms, places for exercise, etc. In addition, the government needs to allocate budget for modification or repair of households with elderly. In the meantime collaboration between business sector and academia are required to help support re-designing of homes and communities to become elderly-friendly.

5

Time Bank for Elderly Care

There should be advocacy for the concept of a “time bank” which has been applied in other countries. This concept involves the use of community volunteers and time-share mechanisms (Give = Take) to ensure monitoring and visitation of dependent elderly (house-bound or bed-ridden). Volunteers accumulate hours of care they provide in order to redeem those care-hours when they or elderly members of their family are in need. However, in the Thai cultural context, it may not be necessary to use a system of time reward since most will see their services for older dependent persons as inherently valuable. Thus, instead of a “time bank,” it could be called a “goodwill bank,” and not just limited to eldercare or recompense.

6

Preparing the next generation to be well rounded in all aspects

The younger generation needs to acquire knowledge and understanding about health, and social and economic security so that they will start planning for the time when they are elderly or retired in order to have a good quality of life with security in old age regarding income, housing, care, and social welfare. In the meantime, the concept of society for all ages and reduction of ageism should be highlighted.

7

Raise the level of collaboration of all sectors to empower the aged society.

There needs to be integrated collaboration of the government, private sector, business, and Civil Society, at the policy and implementation levels in order to successfully advocate for empowerment of the elderly, in tandem with policy development and activities through outreach/active as well as passive projects. This requires the involvement of stakeholders and involving parties in the planning and operational levels in the community with the shared goal of a quality aged society.

8

Improvement in laws and regulations to benefit activities for the elderly

There should be research studies, analysis and review of law related to the elderly, especially the 2003 Elderly Persons Act, to ensure that the provisions are consistent and appropriate with the situation and facts at the present time. This includes a review of regulations or procedures of various related agencies to facilitate the convenience. Meanwhile, there should be supports on programs related to care and quality of life for elder persons as a whole.

9

Data base system reform for a more efficient operation

There should be improvement to the elderly data base systems with data on the elderly, and links among these systems across agencies in order to create an up-to-date and comprehensive picture of the situation of the elderly across all dimensions. These data will help inform plans and policy to address current problems and reduce inequality among the elderly population.

10

Promote the development of innovations to accommodate the aged society

This includes supports in research and studies to develop innovative products, technology and approaches to enhance the quality of life of the elderly by improving convenience and access. This includes tapping into and applying traditional wisdom and local inexpensive reSources that is accessible by elderly population.

The government, private sector, research institutions, and other members of the network should join force to help develop these innovative products and services for elderly population.

4.4

4.4.1

OLD-AGE ALLOWANCE PAYMENT FOR THE ELDERLY EXCEEDED

66,000

BILLION BAHT IN 2018

The old-age allowance for the elderly is the legal right of every Thai aged 60 years or older. Data for 2009-2018 show that there has been a steady increase in the number of elderly receiving the allowance as well as the amount of allowance paid.

Elderly receiving old-age allowance 2009-2018

	Number (persons)	budget (baht)
2009	5,448,843	21,963,075,000
2010	5,652,893	32,779,232,400
2011	6,521,749	37,893,398,000
2012	6,784,734	52,535,425,200
2013	7,308,315	58,347,043,200
2014	7,664,599	60,999,878,400
2015	7,749,138	61,879,284,200
2016	8,012,853	63,219,443,300
2017	8,158,313	64,783,645,200
2018	8,380,749	66,407,367,600

Source: Elderly persons during 2009-18 and old-age allowance payments by local administrative organizations, the BMA, and Pattaya Municipality

DONATION OF OLD-AGE ALLOWANCE TO THE ELDERLY FUND PROJECT

On December 1, 2017, the Thai Cabinet passed resolution to approve the project for donations of old-age subsistence allowance to the Elderly Fund to be used as compensation/ subsidy to help the elderly with low incomes in the state welfare registration program

Donors to the fund receive a “Phra Klang Medal” which is a medal of honor from the Elderly Fund.

As of December 31, 2018, there had been 811 donors to the fund (292 for the BMA, 518 for local administrative organizations, and 1 for Pattaya) in the amount of 2,842,900 baht (Elderly Fund, Department of Elderly Affairs).

**DONORS TO THE ELDERLY
FUND RECEIVE A
“PHRA KLANG MEDAL”
WHICH IS A MEDAL OF
HONOR FROM THE ELDERLY FUND**

4.5

BUSINESS AND THE ELDERLY

At present, more and more businesses are recognizing the need and value to tap into the elderly members of the population. The following are examples of how this is occurring in Thai society.

Tourism

The elderly represent a niche population for tourism. More tourism companies are arranging packages to accommodate that segment of the market. Elder persons travel leisurely and require amenities for convenience in traveling due to certain physical limitations.

Dietary supplements

Dietary supplements, including vitamins, are being marketed directly to the elderly population, and especially those with dietary restrictions or who have difficulty getting adequate daily nutrients. The belief is that these supplements will fortify aging bodies and ensure a complete daily allowance of nutrients. Older persons are prone to calcium deficiency, especially women. Thus, there emerge many products targeting both physically fit elders and those who have nutrient deficiencies.

Geriatric care facilities/ Nursing home for the elderly

Special clinical services for the elderly include care and rehabilitation facilities, and daily activity for the elderly. In most cases, there are full-time professional nurses who are in attendance. In some cases, the elderly do not necessarily need to stay at the clinic as home care services, which staff travel to the homes of elderly to provide care, can be arranged.

Elderly housing

At present there are public and private sector initiatives to provide housing for senior citizens, including stand-alone domiciles and condominium projects. Many of these developments apply Universal Design principles with elderly-friendly furniture, i.e., without sharp edges, for safety of the residents as a selling point. There are even intentional communities which cater to elderly residents, and have on-site clinical care facilities, physical therapy centers, day care and a facility for in-patient care etc.

Some examples public projects of these intentional communities for the elderly include the Sawangkaniwet development of the Thai Red Cross, the elderly condominium project of the Mass Rapid Transit Authority in collaboration with the National Housing Authority (NHA), and the Commercial Housing Development for the Elderly project of the NHA in Mueang District, Saraburi Province.

In addition, there are a number of foreign elderly traveling to Thailand to rent a house or condominium for annual or long-term stay.

All these developments are a boost to the real estate sector; the elderly, both domestic and international, are increasingly targeted as a valuable consumer of housing and rentals.

Financial sector

Financial services companies are offering special products for the elderly or their caregivers. For example, the Government Savings Bank offers products especially for the elderly including reverse mortgage loan, housing loan for caregivers of old-age parents, saving account especially for the elderly, civil state loan for the elderly etc.

Consumer products

Apart from adult diapers which have been around for quite some time, there emerge other elderly-specific products such as shampoos, tooth brushes, toothpaste, lotions, skin creams, and bath creams.

4.6

ELDERLY SPORTS COMPETITIONS IN 2018

SPORTS ARE A MAGIC MEDICINE

**THAILAND ARRANGES
A WIDE ARRAY OF
ATHLETIC EVENTS FOR
PERSONS OF ALL AGES
AND BOTH GENDERS,
INCLUDING SENIOR
CITIZENS.**

In 2018 there were the following elderly sports competitions:

(1) Thailand's track and field championships for the elderly. In 2018, this was organized by the Thai Veteran Athletics Association and was the 23rd event of its kind in Lampang Province during March 8-11, 2018.

(2) Thailand National Sports Competition for the Elderly. This is organized by the Department of Physical Education Department and, in 2018, the 12th annual event was held during May 30 to June 2 in Rayong Province, under the logo "Mamamud Games."

(3) The National Senior Sports Competition is organized by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports. The 1st event was held in 2018 during April 21-27 in Nan Province, under the theme "Black Ivory Games."

Grandmother Neo Jantamanee

Aged 90 years

Neo is an athlete from Songkhla Province and has won the gold numerous medals in the 23rd Thailand's track and field championships for the elderly. She threw the javelin 10.11 meters, put the shot 4.39 meters, and threw the discus 10.39 meters.



Source: https://www.khaosod.co.th/sports/news_818631

Grandfather Sawang Hanpram

Aged 98 years



This man is an athlete from Rayong Province and won the gold medal in the 1st National Senior Sports Competition in 2018 where he ran the 100 meter dash in 24.59 seconds.

At 23rd Thailand's track and field championships for the elderly, he won the 200 meter dash in 54.21 seconds. In addition, he put the shot 4.97 meters, threw the discus 11.38 meters, and threw the javelin 13.20 meters.

4.7

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF GILANADHAMMA GROUP

Gilanadhamma Group was founded in 2008, with its origins in the concepts of the Volunteer Buddhist Students Group in Life and Death Branch at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyala University. The aim is to transcend standard learning to help patients and their relatives and friends to relieve stress of confronting suffering and pain based on Buddhist principles. This is a component of holistic care in combination with standard medical practice.

The Gilanadhamma Group members visit patients, their relatives, and close friends at the bedside of the patient to boost morale for them. The volunteers provide motivational counseling to help patients achieve peace of mind and acceptance, through proper understanding of Buddhist teaching. The group also arranges training activities for students in nursing and medical colleges, traditional Thai healers, guidance counselors, and psychology students in the University.

To commemorate its tenth year of existence, the group convened the event on the Gilanadhamma Method on April 1-3, 2018 at the Buddhadasa Indapanno Archives (Suan Mokkh Bangkok).



Tea circle during the meeting of the Kalyamitr Network to discuss “Way of Gilanadhamma: Practicing Sangha to Eliminate Suffering” on April 2, 2018 at the commemorative event of the 10th anniversary of the Gilanadhamma Group at Buddhadasa Indapanno Archives

Source: <https://peacefuldeath.co/สุวิถิตินธรรม/>



Art of Living & Dying

The Contemplative Education Center and the Network of Bhuttika Jittakam invited students and staff from Mahidol University and other interested persons to participate in the 63rd Forum on Contemplative Learning on the Workshop in the Art of Living and Dying. This was held on February 21, 2018.

Source: <https://peacefuldeath.co/gallery/>

4.8

LIVING WILL

ตัวอย่างพินัยกรรมชีวิต หรือ หนังสือแสดงเจตนาฯ

61/76 เสนานิเวศน์ 2 จระเข้บัว
ลาดพร้าว กรุงเทพฯ 10230

1 พฤศจิกายน 2551

เรื่อง แสดงเจตนากรณีปฏิเสธการรักษาพยาบาลในวาระสุดท้ายของชีวิต
เรียน แพทย์และบุคลากรสาธารณสุขที่เกี่ยวข้องที่เคารพ

1. ในขณะที่เขียนหนังสือแสดงเจตนากรณีนี้ ผมมีสติสัมปชัญญะเป็นปกติทุกประการ โดยมีญาติของผมเป็นพยาน

2. ผมขอใช้สิทธิตามมาตรา 12 ของ พ.ร.บ.สุขภาพแห่งชาติ พ.ศ. 2550 โดยขอยืนยันสิทธิของผม ดังนี้

2.1 ในกรณีที่ผมป่วยด้วยสาเหตุใดก็ตาม จนตกอยู่ในสภาวะที่ไม่อาจรักษาให้หาย กลับมามีชีวิตได้อีกและผมไม่มีสติสัมปชัญญะที่จะพิจารณาเกี่ยวกับแผนการรักษาของผมได้แล้ว หากหัวใจผมหยุดเต้น ผมขอไม่รับการกระตุ้นหัวใจด้วยวิธีการต่างๆ หากการหายใจผมล้มเหลวลง ผมขอไม่รับการเจาะคอหรือใช้เครื่องช่วยหายใจ ผมขอรับการรักษาเพียงเพื่อบรรเทาอาการเจ็บป่วยทุกข์ทรมาน ไม่ขอรับการรักษาหรือรับหัตถการใดที่จะยืดการตายของผมออกไปโดยไม่จำเป็น เพื่อให้ผมเสียชีวิตไปโดยธรรมชาติ

2.2 หากมีกรณีความไม่ชัดเจนในหนังสือแสดงเจตนาข้างต้นเกิดขึ้นในช่วงที่ผมไม่มีสติสัมปชัญญะแล้ว ขอให้ภรรยาของผม (นางวงเดือน จินดาวัฒนะ) และบุตรที่บรรลุนิติภาวะแล้ว เป็นผู้ร่วมพิจารณากับแพทย์เจ้าของไข้ และให้ดำเนินการไปตามนั้นได้

3. ผมขอขอบคุณแพทย์และบุคลากรสาธารณสุขที่เกี่ยวข้องที่ให้การดูแลผมด้วยความเมตตากรุณาและให้ความเคารพสิทธิของผมเป็นอย่างดี ขอให้ทุกท่านมีความสุขและมีสุขภาพดี

ลงชื่อ 
(นายแพทย์อำพล จินดาวัฒนะ)
ผู้แสดงเจตนากรณี

ลงชื่อ 
(นางวงเดือน จินดาวัฒนะ)
ภรรยา - พยาน

ลงชื่อ 
(ทพญ.ประทุม จินดาวัฒนะ)
พี่สาว - พยาน

จากงานวิจัย "สิทธิการปฏิเสธการรักษาตาม พ.ร.บ. สุขภาพแห่งชาติ พ.ศ. ๒๕๕๐ มาตรา ๑๒ : ศึกษาเปรียบเทียบแนวคิดของต่างประเทศ" ศูนย์กฎหมายสุขภาพและจริยศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์

LIVING WILL

A “living will” is a statement which an individual avers in writing the wish not to receive extraordinary care or life-extending procedures when they are at the end-stage of life. Adapted from Article 12 of the 2007 National Health Act

Source: This Task Force for this report received permission to reproduce this example of a living will.

Source: <https://pantip.com/topic/31078648>

4.9

INNOVATIONS FOR THE THAI ELDERLY

Researchers from the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA) have produced numerous innovations and practical tools to make daily life easier for the elderly.

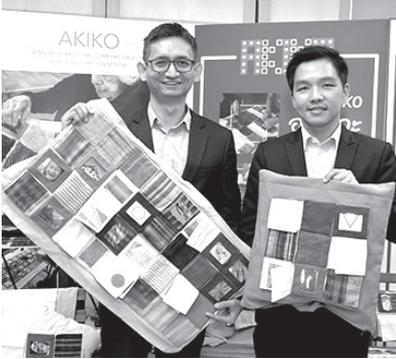
SMART SENSOR TO SUPPORT THE ELDERLY AND PATIENTS CARE



Source: https://www.matichon.co.th/lifestyle/news_1228330

This device combines sensor technology with IOT to assist with monitoring the status of older persons. It is a small piece of equipment which can be attached to different parts of the body of older persons and patients in the hospital. For example, it can be attached behind the ear, on the leg, etc. The sensor sends a signal to the monitor screen to indicate when the user is getting out of the bed or leaving the room. That can alert the attending nurse or caregiver of the need to check in on the person to make sure they do not have an accident. The sensor can also warn about the danger of bed sores if the user

lies too long in a single position. This device won the award for Distinguished Female Researcher in the area of Physiotherapeutic Science in L'Oréal Research Fund Thailand Project "For Women in Science" for 2018.



Source: <https://www.nstda.or.th/th/all-newsletter/184/11958>

AKIKO BRAIN STIMULATION QUILT

This quilt blanket is soft and attractive to the eye. It is woven in a special design with the purpose to help older persons and people with dementia to stimulate their senses to help with memory. Users attach photographs, mementos, or scents to squares on the quilt in ways that make sense, and which can be moved around. Memory games can be played by oneself or with others using the squares on the quilt.



Source: <https://www.nstda.or.th/th/all-newsletter/184/11958>

JOEY REMINDER BED

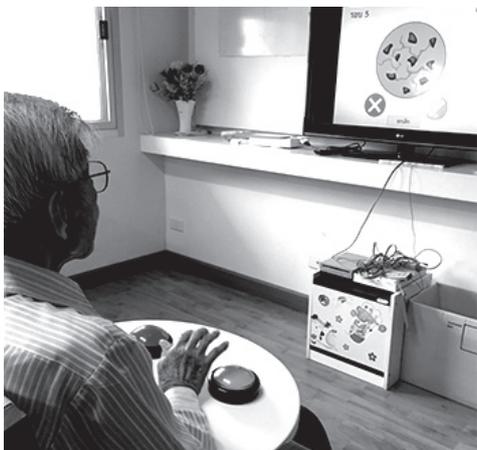
This bed helps remind the user to get up from time to time. A special function of the bed is that the back can rotated to an angle of 90 degrees in order to resemble a chair. That makes it easier for the user to transition to a standing position, safely. Sitting down is also safer this way and more gradual, thus preventing risk of a fall.



Source: <https://www.smethailandclub.com/entrepreneur-3510-id.html>

MONICA BRAIN STIMULATION GAME

This game can be connected to a TV screen, and can be controlled by a wireless remote control device which is easy for an older person to see and handle. The game helps stimulate the memory and concentration of the elderly and persons suffering from dementia. This game helps learning, planning, and decision-making.



Source: <https://www.nstda.or.th/th/all-newsletter/184/11958>



Source: <https://mgronline.com/smes/detail/9600000124729>



Source: <https://www.newsplus.co.th/153009>

SMART HOVERBOARD WHEELCHAIR

This wheelchair is the brainchild of master's degree student Ms. Maythinee Songthay. It combines the assets of a standard wheelchair with the rapidly advancing hoverboard technology. The hoverboard helps facilitate the movement of the wheelchair using battery power. It only takes one hour to fully charge the battery which can power the wheelchair up to a distance of 20 km. In this way, the device is a low-cost means of transportation for the elderly which is affordable and accessible. The cost for one vehicle is only 10,000 baht

BEN: TECHNOLOGY TO HELP GETTING OUT OF BED

This device helps the elderly and infirm patients to rise from their bed to a sitting position and then stand without assistance. This helps expand the range of activities which the user can access.

4.10

COVERAGE OF “AGED SOCIETY” IN THE MEDIA

As Thai society ages, the media is certain to have a stronger focus on the lives of older persons while issues targeted to the elderly are often presented.

Television media is one of the media outlets that highlight the aged society phenomenon. This can already be seen in the television programs that currently air. More programs are featuring knowledge, entertainment and lesson learned from experiences of the elderly who are considered life experts. More of information like these are broadcasted to the public audience in order to encourage them to follow the foot step of these life

Luy Mai Roo Rooy, Soong Wai Dee Dee, Luy Mai Roo Rooy.

This program is not only a program that target the elderly audience, but it is also beneficial to persons who are approaching retirement.

The program airs every Thursday and Friday from 6.05-16.30 on Thai PBS.

GenO(LD) Soong Wai Duay Kan

The program airs every Wednesday from 20.20 – 21.10 on Thai PBS.

Soong Wai Hua Jai Nantanakan

The program airs every Tuesday since September 19, 2017 from 8.30-8.35 on TV Channel 5.

SUPER 60+ Achariya Pangao

SUPER 60+ Achariya Pangao is a program that invites persons aged 60 years or older to present their special skills or talents.

The program airs every Sunday at 17.00 on TV Channel 23 (WorkPoint).

The Voice Senior

The Voice Senior program is a singing contest show in which older persons demonstrate their singing talent.

The program airs every Monday at 20.15 on PPTV HD36.

The Aged Society TV program

The program airs every Sunday at 15.00 on Channel 10.

4.11

THE ELDERLY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

THE ELDERLY AND INTERNET USE

At present, technology and communications is playing a greater role in enhancing the life of the elderly. Technology advancement, computer and internet network has been developed to accommodate the demand of usage in all areas which allow convenience in everyday life. The smart phone is a common technology device widely used among the elderly. A survey of Communication Technology Use in the Household in 2018 held by the National Statistical Office found that 10% of the elderly population used the Internet. The young old especially used the Internet more than their peers.

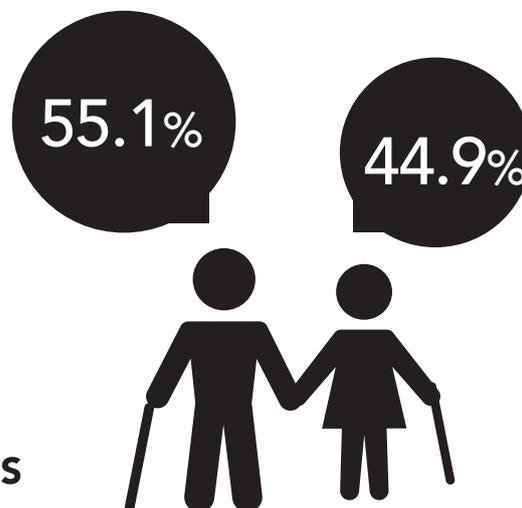
Proportion of elderly who use the Internet by age group:

14.8%
60-69 YEARS

5.1%
70-79 YEARS

1.8%
80 YEARS
AND OLDER

MORE MALE
ELDERLY USE
THE INTERNET
THAN FEMALES



Source: Survey of Communication Technology Use in the Household in 2018 (Quarter 1), NS

Use of the Internet by the Elderly

33%

of the elderly use the Internet **FROM 8.00 -11.59**

28%

of elderly use the Internet **ALL DAY LONG.**

24%

of elderly use the Internet **FROM 12.00-15.59**

38%

of elderly use the Internet for more than **1 - 2 HOURS EACH DAY**



TWO THIRD OF THE ELDERLY (AROUND 59%) USE THE INTERNET ON A SMART PHONE

The top five uses of the Internet by elderly are as follows:

93.1%

for social networking e.g., Facebook, Twitter, GooglePlus, LINE, Instagram

50.3%

use it to upload photos, videos, music, software etc. to share on a website

45.9%

use it to upload photos, videos, music, software etc. to share on a website

45.4%

search for non-health products or services

45.2%

use the Internet to download newspapers or e-books

Source: Survey of Communication Technology Use in the Household in 2018 (Q1), NSO



5

RESEARCH ON THE ELDERLY

Each year, there are new research studies on the elderly in Thailand, and the Task Force for the production of the 2018 Report of the Situation of the Thai Elderly has selected the following noteworthy studies that relate to the theme of this year's report. The report of Thai elderly in 2018, in the chapter 5, would be the research on work and employment of the elderly.

MECHANISMS FOR PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT OF OLDER PERSONS WHO ARE INFORMAL LABORERS

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The study was conducted in 2015.

FUNDED BY

Thai Health Promotion Foundation
Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development institute (TGRI)

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To distill lessons learned and best practices from local administrative organizations, NGOs, the community and/or other sectors in promoting the employment of the elderly through activities, and occupation groups in the non-formal labor sector.
- (2) To identify factors which are effective in promoting activities or occupation groups of the elderly to earn supplemental income and participate in the labor force for economic gain.
- (3) To synthesize the lessons learned into mechanisms, measures and options for policy related to employment of the elderly through support of local administrative organizations, NGOs, the community and other sectors, as proposed to the National Committee for Older Persons.

METHODOLOGY

Data were collected from agencies and organizations, such as local administrative organizations, NGOs, the community and other sectors, and from groups of the elderly concerning work in the non-formal labor sector. Elderly occupation groups were selected from the North, Central, Northeast, South regions of the country and Bangkok.

In addition, indicators of success were used to define the lessons learned. Two discussion guides were used with key informants from the two groups of respondents. The responses were organized into guidelines which can be applied. Cases studies were produced based on examples from each geographical region. Finally, the findings were synthesized into mechanisms and measures to promote employment of the elderly in the non-formal labor sector.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The elderly who worked in the rural non-formal sector from a young age, and now can no longer perform the labor, rarely choose a new occupation. Instead, they opt to lead a simplified life of basic subsistence and help out the household in any way they can. However, elderly folk in urban areas may need to continue to perform odd jobs after retirement in order to make ends meet. Elderly in the non-formal sector who are independent spend their time in applying their traditional wisdom to produce crafts which reflect the indigenous culture and which can be sold as souvenirs.

However, these elderly face many obstacles to making these activities economically viable. These challenges include lack of income security, lack of raw materials and resources for production, and lack of market mechanisms to sell their products. The capital costs of production for some of these products can be prohibitively high. In addition, there may not be enough demand for these products.

In addition, the agencies or entities which have a mandate to support elderly workers in the non-formal sector (e.g., the Older Persons Fund) do not have enough reach to extend loans to elderly artisans in remote rural areas. The relevant staff of the MOL may lack adequate understanding or knowledge to help bridge the gap between state resources and the elderly in need. Plus, there is often no local mechanism to hire these elderly persons.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) Promote hiring of the elderly who are knowledgeable and skilled in crafts and arts, so that they have a community-based occupation which shares knowledge with others.
- (2) Promote agencies in the government and private sector to hire older persons in non-formal labor sector in activities which are appropriate for the ability and skills of those persons.
- (3) Promote gainful employment of the elderly who receive cash income and who otherwise are valued.
- (4) Advocate for improved order and management of occupation groups and apply conditions for membership for the elderly.
- (5) There should be new perspectives in promoting elderly in the workforce to expand and utilize their traditional strengths.
- (6) Support employment of the elderly to have gainful employment, for example, by providing tax exemptions to employers who hire elderly workers.
- (7) Formulate policy and measures to change societal attitudes to see how employment of the elderly increases quality of life.
- (8) Promote employment of the elderly in the non-formal sector in urban areas so that they have a clear mandate.
- (9) Publicize the products produced by elderly artisans, and encourage the public and private sector to help market these products.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY ON ELDERLY STAFFS IN THE THAI HOTELS CHAIN

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The study was conducted in 2018

FUNDED BY

School of Management Science, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University

OBJECTIVES

(1) to determine the policy of the hotel chain business towards the employment of the elderly; (2) To study policy related to hiring elderly workers in the hotel sector; and (3) to examine factors promoting the employment of the elderly in hotel chain business

METHODOLOGY

This study was a qualitative research study which used in-depth interviews with a sample of hotel owners/managers from hotel chains including Dusit Thani, Centara, and Center Point. Hotels with management in Bangkok were selected for data collection. Personnel from Human Resources or persons responsible for hiring elderly were interviewed.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

(1) Currently, hotels have to hire/retain older persons or persons who have retired from other jobs as a result of labor shortage due to the aging of the population. The pressure to hire/retain older workers is due to the need for experience and the kinds of assets which a hotel service needs.

(2) The hotels do not have any formal policy to hire older persons, but they are beginning to implement programs for delayed retirement or increasing the age of retirement, in addition to recalling former employers who had retired. The method of hiring elderly workers is usually through general contracts of duration from one to three years. Some hotels have full-time elderly workers for those on delayed retirement plans. The most common jobs which elderly perform in the hotel sector are senior management, back-up support, and front office jobs. Most elderly enjoy full benefits of the job including standard welfare and medical care.

(3) Factors affecting hiring of the elderly can be summarized as follows: the organizational vision and attitude of senior management; and external factors such as state policy, and regulations to have, for example, a minimum percent of elderly personnel on staff, tax exemptions for hiring elderly, and abilities and experience of older persons so that they can continue to perform the work effectively.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) The government should support capacity building of the older work force, and ensure they have benefits and coverage to maintain their health over the long-term. There should be policy to increase women's participation in the labor force across all sectors. There should be improvement in the quality of education and skills development for the labor force.
- (2) To address the emerging challenge of an increase of elderly in the population, the government and private sector must introduce operational guidelines that are consistent and mutually reinforcing, which improve the situation and implement programs that are evidence-based with a central database on the need for elderly workers, and help match employers with willing elderly. There should be training programs to build relevant skills of the elderly to meet labor force demand. That said, some elderly persons possess special knowledge or expertise that is underutilized or which could be transferred to others as their contribution to the labor force.

PROMOTION OF INCOME SECURITY AND EMPLOYMENT OF THE ELDERLY AS PART OF THE POLICY OF “CIVIL-STATE FOR SOCIETY” (E6)

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The study was conducted in 2018

FUNDED BY

Division of Older Persons Promotion, Department of Older Persons, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To study models of promoting income security and employment of the elderly in accordance with state policy on “government for society” (E6);
- (2) To study models of occupations and types of work, work schedules and income that are appropriate for the elderly;
- (3) To compile data on the need for hiring older persons in the formal and non-formal labor sector;
- (4) To study models for advocating for income security and employment of the elderly in all sectors of society as per state policy (E6);
- (5) To produce policy recommendations for the National Committee for Older Persons.

This research used mixed methods of data collection. This included quantitative secondary data on labor statistics of older persons in both the formal and non-formal sector, in addition to a review of existing guidelines and models for promoting income security and employment of the elderly, and review of policy and measures in hiring the elderly, both domestic and international.

Qualitative data were collected by in-depth interviews and group discussion to brainstorm ideas and opinions from employers who are interested in raising the age of employment of older persons. The research team went to the field to collect data from representatives of senior citizens, and staff from agencies in the public and private sector in four provinces: Chiang Mai, Ayutthaya, Khon Kaen, and Phuket. Fifty persons in each province participated in the data collection. The team also visited the Pheung Noi Bakery in Chiang Mai and the Center for Quality of Life Development of Older Persons in Phuket.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

It is clear that the demographic transition that is rapidly evolving in Thailand will force employers to recruit or retain older workers more than ever before. Other countries have confronted this challenge of an aging society by formulating policy and measures to promote elderly in the labor force, though these policies and measures differ with the context of a given country. However, a common feature is extending the retirement age, and measures to promote continuous income for older persons if they remain in the work force. This requires adjustment of labor management and the pension and benefits systems. Often, in these countries, the government has led the way through expanded hiring of older workers. That encourages the private sector to follow suit. Later, this is codified into regulations for both the public and private sector, e.g., that they must consider older workers when jobs are available.

Clearly the major force behind these policies is the labor shortage in key sectors being felt by many countries around the world. What is more, older persons possess knowledge and skills that can continue to contribute to the national economy. In the absence of ageism, there should be no barrier to recruiting and retaining older persons who meet the qualifications for a given job. In other words, age alone should not be a factor in whether to employ a person. That said, a factor which might work against raising the age of retirement is the increasing use of technology, automation, and robotics to replace workers who perform repetitive tasks. Some governments also have policies to promote hiring of cross-border migrants from lower-income countries as a way to fill labor shortages (rather than hiring/retaining older citizens in the job). In other countries, the policies may not use the word “civil-state” as in Thailand. However, the approach is similar in that all the related sectors work together, especially local government, to address this issue and play an active role in implementing solutions.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The government, private sector, and Civil Society need to work together to implement measures to promote employment of the elderly, as in the following examples:

- (1) Request cooperation from employers to create new positions which older persons could fill;
- (2) The companies who are part of the civil-state Samakhi program in all 77 provinces should work together to create a fund expressly for hiring the elderly by automatically diverting a percentage of their profits to such a fund, and have a central agency administer the fund;
- (3) There should be modified conditions for receiving the senior citizens welfare subsidy in terms of age criteria which is consistent with the ability of older persons to continue to work. This includes tax incentives for employers to hire/retain older workers;
- (4) The state should sponsor research into the creation of models of occupations and employment that are appropriate for the elderly, including a structure of compensation and welfare benefits;
- (5) The government should support the private sector to hire more elderly workers using tax incentives and grants to improve the environment in the workplace so that it is safe and welcoming for older persons, as well as other groups of workers;
- (6) There needs to be an improvement in knowledge and attitudes about elderly in the labor force so that they are accepted. This includes campaigns to combat ageism in society which discourages or limits work opportunity for older persons. There should be a module in the school curriculum, starting at the primary grade levels, to teach children to have a proper attitude about elderly in the work force.

5.4

LESSONS LEARNED FROM WORKPLACES THAT HIRED OLDER WORKERS

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The study was conducted in 2016

FUNDED BY

Foundation of Thai
Gerontology Research and
Development Institute (TGRI)

OBJECTIVES

This research was conducted to collect data from worksites which have hired older persons, and distill lessons learned on how they overcame barriers to retaining and hiring older workers. This successful experience can help inform policy and advocacy efforts to replicate models of seamlessly incorporating the elderly into the work force, and how to address remaining problems and challenges in hiring older persons.

METHODOLOGY

This study collected data from four worksites in order to identify common factors which helped these employers be successful in including older persons as part of their work force. The researchers also reviewed the related literature on expanding opportunities for elderly in the work force, both in Thailand and other countries. This information provides a framework for identifying factors to help in decision-making about hiring/retaining older workers. The researchers also conducted in-depth interviews with workers under and over the typical retirement age (55 years). These four worksites have a system and process for retaining/hiring older persons and include: Cho Heng Rice Vermicelli Factory; Toshiba (Thailand) Co., Pranda Jewelry Co., and HomePro Co. The researchers convened focus group discussions with representatives from these companies and other entities outside the sample. This was to ensure that the distillation of lessons by the researchers was accurate and in line with the company policy and could be replicable in other work sites.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Factors which promote or obstruct the hiring of older persons differed among the four worksites depending on the different types of enterprise, knowledge management in the business, and ability to recruit older persons to fill vacancies. There may also be limitations of the financial ability of a worksite to retain/hire older workers. (However, the four worksites in this study did not have financial obstacles when compared to other similar worksites.) Key factors of the older person also affect their chances for employment, including physical ability and health status. There are also financial factors of the older person and the attitude of their family and other persons regarding employment of the elderly.

The enabling factors for hiring elderly in these worksites are many and varied. These include the importance that the business owner gives to retaining/hiring older workers, demand for workers in different sections of the worksite, flexibility of the job requirements, the ability of an older person to fill gaps in the workforce, having a written policy to raise the age of retirement, having a good relationship between management and the workforce, and having open communication and transparent sharing of information between management and the workforce.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Thai government should encourage employers to have a policy to retain and hire older workers who are willing and able to do the job – for as long as they can. Initially, the government can allow companies to implement these policies on a voluntary basis, with the government providing financial incentives or tax breaks for hiring elderly. This may require some restructuring of

the worksite and making the work environment elderly-friendly. Later, the government could introduce stronger measures to pressure companies to enact policies to retain/hire older persons. The government could impose targets which specify the minimum proportion of the workforce that is elderly. The government may decide not to interfere with how a worksite achieves these quotas or evaluates compliance with the policy and fairness. That could be worked out through an agreement between labor and management. It is crucial that government implement campaigns to change societal attitudes about elderly in the workforce and how the elderly need to be valued as productive members of the economy and society. That will help support company hiring policies and make the policies and programs successful in boosting employment of the elderly

A STUDY OF CURRENT SITUATIONS ON CONTINUOUS EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYER ATTITUDES IN PRIVATE SECTOR

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The study was conducted in 2018

FUNDED BY

Program for Challenging Research
in Thailand: Active and Productive
Ageing Research Cluster, National
Research Council of Thai

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To study the situation of employment of the elderly in the private sector;
- (2) To study the private companies' adjustment made to prepare for continuous employment;
- (3) find a proper way to support the government's policy that is related to the current situation by gathering the information from the public and limited companies

METHODOLOGY

Data were collected from juristic entities (public company) and companies registered with the Department of Business and Commercial Development of the Ministry of Commerce which are still in operation and provided complete response to a self-administered questionnaire sent and returned by mail.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Raising the age of retirement is not yet widely applied by companies in the private sector. Only 23% of companies in this survey have an official age of retirement, and only 4.5% have plans to raise the age of retirement. The most common method of employing older persons is to extend their employment contract near the end of their term of employment for a specified period of full-time work. Another approach is to recall workers who have retired or left the company and re-assign them to full-time positions. Hiring elderly workers who have never worked in the company before is rare. Typical positions which older workers are assigned to include management advisor or expert resource person in some technical area. A key asset of the older worker is their knowledge and experience with the work of the company, and strong sense of responsibility. Weaknesses include limitations due to health problems, difficulty adapting to the tasks, lack of facility with the latest computer software and other modern technology, and generally age-related reduced efficiency and effectiveness. That said, all the respondents in this survey recognize the value of retaining/hiring older persons who can do the job since that helps reduce problems of labor shortage and helps the entire economy of the country.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) Elderly employment policy should not be limited only recruiting elderly employees, but encouraging employers to employ elderly continuously;
- (2) Private sector expects the government to be involved in supporting the companies' elderly employment. Moreover, the government should be the role model by hiring elderly to work in the government system.
- (3) Support employers in private sector to be prepared for their employees regarding health benefits, training courses, lifelong learning, and IT skill development, which may be beneficial for the companies since those employees are able to work continuously even when they are older;
- (4) The government should keep the private sector informed about the aging of the Thai population and how that is impacting on the economy and society. The government should also publicize existing measures to promote employment of the elderly so that the private sector is aware.
- (5) The government should consider the long-term implications of retaining and hiring older workers, especially in the area of health benefits.

EXTENDING THE AGE OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR: FORMAL SECTOR WORKERS IN WHOLESALE AND RETAIL INDUSTRY, AND THE HOTEL AND RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

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The study was conducted in 2015

FUNDED BY

Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research
and Development institute (TGRI)
Thai Health Promotion Foundation

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To study the factors which contribute to premature staff attrition in the retail, wholesale, hotel and restaurant industries, with a focus on workers age 45 to 60 years, and the movement of labor between the formal and non-formal sectors;
- (2) To study the factors related to employers and employees, and state policy which impacts on premature staff attrition for consideration in formulating measures to expand the age of employment;
- (3) To propose measures to advocate for expanding the age of employment in the retail, wholesale, hotel and restaurant industries.

METHODOLOGY

This research used mixed methods of data collection. For the quantitative research, the researchers conducted a survey of employers and employees using a structured questionnaire. For the qualitative research, there were in-depth interviews with policy makers and other senior level persons with knowledge of the labor sector and employment of older persons. Data were also collected by group discussion with 611 workers age 45-60 years who were employed in 128 worksites in nine provinces: Bangkok Metropolitan Region, Nakorn Pathom, Kanchanaburi, Petchaburi, Phitsanulok, Chiang Mai, Ubon Ratchathani, Nakhon Si Thammarat, and Songkhla

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Most of the worksites did not have explicit programs to hire the elderly, and hiring of the elderly is not very prevalent. This is despite the fact that many of the worksites have labor shortages, and hiring or retaining older workers would help fill that gap. Instead, these worksites used other strategies to address labor shortages.

In addition, most of the worksites did not have explicit plans for worker retirement, or an age at which a worker was no longer employable. That said, most respondents had positive attitudes toward elderly in the work force. However, as workers approach retirement they preferred to stay in the workforce in a non-formal capacity rather than a formal capacity.

An important factor for an older person in deciding whether to stay on the job is their health status. A secondary factor is family considerations. From the employer's standpoint, the factor affecting the decision to retain or hire older workers is

the ability of the worksite environment to be elderly-friendly. Wherever that is the case, it reflects an implicit policy of the employer to retain/hire older workers.

A key goal of expanding employment opportunities for older workers is to have a uniform policy and procedure in hiring across all sectors. That means a consensus among the government, private sector, employees, and their representatives. Each entity must advocate for elderly employment under a single vision of the labor market. While each sector has different needs and constraints, they can all agree with the fundamental principle of expanding work opportunities for the elderly given the extreme aging of the Thai population. However, these measures are better implemented on a voluntary basis; there should not be coercive measures by the government to expand hiring and retention of older workers.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) There should be measures to ensure employment opportunity for the elderly up to a reasonable level. Worksites should use technology to help ease the burden for older workers and lengthen the period that they are able to do the work.
- (2) The government should commission studies or devise models of expanding employment of the elderly in a variety of types and methods. These should be consistent with the nature of the business and the capacity of older workers.
- (3) There should be improved attitudes in society and understanding toward the inclusion of older persons in the workforce. Society needs to recognize the imperative of keeping older people in productive jobs for as long as possible.
- (4) The measures to promote hiring/retaining older workers should be based on the principle of fairness and a dignified work life. Employment of the elderly should be pursued because of their genuine contribution to the economy and society – not just as a substitute for welfare. The elderly must be valued in society in their own right.
- (5) Best practice models need to be identified and replicated. Those models can be a platform for expanding elderly employment on a wide scale. This can only happen if society sees the benefit of older workers and eliminates the practice of ageism in employment.
- (6) There should be a system for matching worksites with labor shortages to older workers who have the qualifications for the job. This will require collaboration and data exchange among agencies.

6.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

RELATED TO THE ELDERLY ACROSS
VARIOUS DIMENSIONS

Past reports of the Situation of the Thai Elderly have included recommendations for policy and measures to help the country cope with the rapid transition into a complete aged society. Those past recommended policies and measures need to be continued. The following are reminders about past recommendations and new ones that need to be addressed.

1.

SUPPORT DOMICILES OF THE ELDERLY THAT ENABLES QUALITY OF LIFE

1. As much as possible, promote the ability of the elderly to live in their original domicile with family members (i.e., not relocating them to elderly housing). It would be traumatic for many elderly to be uprooted from the home community and environment in order to be cared for in groups of other elderly. Instead, the current domicile should be modified so that it is elderly-friendly, both inside and around the house.
2. There should be support for family members with elderly relatives on proper eldercare. They should have access to information and knowledge about eldercare.
3. There should be more support for local government and the community network to play a bigger role in monitoring the status of the dependent elderly in the community and arrange care as needed. This can include the system of eldercare volunteers, and Senior Citizens' clubs for daytime activity and monitoring.
4. There should be support for local government and the community to improve the environment so that it is elderly-friendly, and provide public services – especially transport – so that elderly folk can conveniently travel to other places outside the home.
5. There should be an elevation of standards of housing – by the public or private sector – if elderly persons are required to move to an assisted-living facility.

2.

SUPPORT THE ELDERLY TO HAVE SECURE LIVES WITH DIGNITY AND HONOR

1. There should be a form of “social immunization” to protect Senior Citizens from external threats to their well-being. This involves providing them with up-to-date information, tools, mechanisms, and technology to help them lead safe and dignified lives.
2. There is a need to combat ageism in society and the negative image of aging or being elderly.
3. There should be support for Senior Citizens clubs where older persons can play an active role in events and realize strength in numbers.
4. All agencies, families, and schools should work together to campaign for recognizing the value of Thai elderly and spreading the norm that promotes compassionate consideration for older persons, and showing gratitude to them as representatives of the forebears of the nation.

3.

PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE INCOME SECURITY FOR THE ELDERLY

1. Promote employment of the elderly.
2. Promote a savings mindset among the working-age population and the concept of sufficiency economy so that they can have financially secure retirement.
3. Support the National Savings Fund so that it is strong and sustainable through good management.
4. Develop the pension system so that it fully covers all Thai elderly, and improve the elderly welfare subsidy to reflect increasing cost of living and inflation.

4.

PRODUCE PLANS FOR ASSISTING THE ELDERLY DURING NATURAL DISASTERS

1. Local government at all levels should work together to have specific plans for assisting the elderly in times of natural disaster. This should include prevention of harm and coping mechanisms.
2. Produce a “Disaster Handbook” which has a special section on helping the elderly.
3. The relevant agencies must have a database of who the elderly are in the community and where they live. This should include their health status and means of contacting them in case of emergency. The data need to be kept up-to-date.
4. The relevant agencies must rehearse assisting the elderly on a regular basis and as appropriate.
5. The elderly need to be informed how they can prepare themselves to cope with a disaster and how to best care for themselves, including rehabilitation.

5.

PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF THE ELDERLY

1. There should be a seamless system of health services to maximize access to care when needed, including a shuttle service to transport elderly to care outlets.
2. There should be more efficient methods of caring for the elderly outside the hospital setting. This is especially important for those with long-term care needs in the home or community.
3. There should be greater attention to rationale drug use by the elderly to reduce unnecessary or harmful medication, and reduce drug side effects.
4. There should be more efficiency in health promotion and disease prevention programs, especially for diabetes, hypertension, accidental falls, and mental health problems.
5. There should be support for exercise and social activities. This will require improvements in public transportation and shuttle services to enable elderly to access green areas, and enjoy safety of life and property, and primary services.
6. There should be an improved information system to monitor changes that are accurate and timely.
7. There should be a system of health services which serves the elderly in their home community, such as creation of Wellness Centers for Senior Citizens, and mechanisms for medium-term care in the community.
8. Medical students from all specialties and other clinical/health students should receive education in geriatric medicine and eldercare.
9. The general population should pay greater attention to maintaining healthy lifestyles during their working-age years to reduce the probability of chronic health problems in older age.
10. There should be indicators to monitor progress in implementation of policies and plans to ensure that they really enhance the life of the elderly, and that programs are addressing the indicator targets.

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