

Migrant Workers and the Challenge for Human Security in Southeast Asia since 1997

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Abstract : This paper aims to study the impact of international migration on human security in the Southeastern region of Asia, especially after Asian Financial Crisis 1997-98. International migration has impacts on many dimensions of security: the state security (sovereignty and autonomy); international relationships security (conflicts, terrorism, etc); and immigrants security. The paper aims to improve our comprehension of the impact of international migration on immigrant security in the region of Southeast Asia, particularly "vulnerable workers" whose number is growing very fast in the region. The literature review carried out on this matter led us to ask the following two question: 1) Did the creation of ASEAN Community matter on the evolution of immigrants in the region? And How governments try to resolve the gap between economic objectifs and security of immigrants in the region? To answer these two questions, the paper is subdivided in three parts: Firstly, we will show how the creation of the ASEAN Community, especially ASEAN Economic Community, had a significant impact on the pattern of evolution of immigration in this region. Secondly, we will paint a portrait illustrating the vulnerability of immigrants in Southeast Asia, particularly unskilled workers. Finally, using the theories of regional integration, we will assess how governments try to ensure the security and safety of the immigrants. Overall, our analysis illustrate the significant change of the official discourse of the leaders of the ASEAN member states, now more conciliator and especially more open to cooperation, as well as the proliferation of meetings and initiatives between these countries to control mobility flows in the region, and the ensure immigrants security.

Keywords : migrant workers, human security, human rights

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