



วิทยาลัยประชากรศาสตร์  
COLLEGE OF POPULATION STUDIES  
Chulalongkorn University

# 5100101 ประชากรกับการพัฒนา: Population and Development: การย้ายถิ่นหลังเกษียณอายุ

ตอนเรียน 71

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(หัวข้อที่ 8)



# Today's Class Outline



วิทยาลัยประชากรศาสตร์  
COLLEGE OF POPULATION STUDIES  
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1. Background and Migration Patterns
2. World Best Places to retire in 2023
3. Statistics and Research Findings in Thailand
4. In-class Discussion



# 1. Background and Migration Patterns



Why do older/retired people migrate?

ทำไมผู้สูงอายุหรือผู้เกษียณอายุถึงย้ายถิ่น?





# Background and Significance of the issue

- ‘Golden Age of Welfare’ in Europe since 1950s  
(Williams & Hall, 2000)
- Studies of **retirement migration** since 1970s  
(Wiseman & Roseman, 1979)
- International tourism boom as a ‘recruiting post’ for post-retirement migration overseas (Rodriguez, 2001)



## Background and Significance of the issue

- International retirement migration become prominent since late 1990s ([Innes, 2008](#))
- IRM has drawn interests in various fields of study, particularly in *migration studies*, *tourism studies*, and *social gerontology* ([Truly, 2002](#)).



# “International retirement migration” or “IRM”

- a *movement across borders* of *retired persons* to *temporarily or permanently* settle in any countries other than their country of origin.

- IRM can be viewed as a form of “lifestyle migration”
  - involving ‘self-fulfilment’ or a search for a better way of life at new destination
  - often involving ‘leisure, health, and lifestyle’

(Gustafson 2008, Benson and O’Reilly 2009, Benson 2011)

- Lifestyle

- Prestige
- Excitement and experience
- New kind of freedom and independence
- Tranquility, peace and slowness

(Benson and O’ Reilly 2016)





- Compelling reasons for later life migration:
  - Redundancy
  - Retirement
  - Bereavement

(Benson and O'Reilly 2009)

- **Migration** =

- ‘a way to overcoming the trauma of these events’ or
- ‘a fundamental change in lifestyle, signifying a break, a contrast, a turning point, and a new beginning.

(Benson and O'Reilly 2009)

- an ‘investment’ of individuals which involving the consideration toward both ‘money’ and ‘non-money’ aspects of costs and returns

(Sjaastad 1962)



- Family ties/marital instability & Migration:
  - family ties tend to deter migration
  - marital instability (e.g. separation and divorce) stimulated or increased migration.

(Mincer 1978)

# Migration selectivity

- “Migration is **selective**” (Lee 1966)
- Both migrants and destinations were actually “**nonrandom**” in the selection process and the pool of immigrants in any host country should be considered as “**doubly self-selected.**” (Borjas 1991)
- “The pool of immigrants in the host country is composed of persons who **found it profitable to leave** the country of origin **and** who **did not find it** profitable to go **anywhere else**” (Borjas 1991)

# Typologies of older lifestyle migrants

- **Warnes and Williams (2006)**
  - Older migrants who migrate (amenity-led migration)
  - ‘Aged in place’ former labor migrants and their companions (labor migration)
  - Return labor migrants (return migration to origin)
- **O'Reilly (2000)**
  - Full residents
  - Returning residents
  - Seasonal visitors
  - Peripatetic visitors

- **Transnational lifestyle of IRM migrants** (Gustafson 2001)
  - Multilocal adaptation
  - Translocal normality
  - Routinized sojourning
- **Lifestyle destinations** (Benson and O'Reilly 2009)
  - Residential tourism
  - Rural idyll
  - Bourgeois bohemian

# After Migration

- Similar to the migration of people of working age, **IRM has also been considered a continuing process**. Older migrants would develop ties at current destination while also continue to evaluate their post-migration experiences  
(Haas and Serow 1993, Åkerlund 2013)
- Every migration stream had its **counterstream**, which more or less compensated the emigration flow  
(Ravenstein 1885)

# Future Plans of Older Migrants

- Stay at current destination
- Waiting option
- Circulation Migration (Going Back and Forth)
- Return Migration
- Migration to other destination(s)



# Return Migration

## Main reasons of return migration

- Ageing body/ deterioration of own health
- Death of spouse/partner
- Financial decline



What are the countries of origin of older/retired migrants?

What are IRM mainstream destinations and what are pull-factors of those destinations?

ผู้สูงอายุหรือผู้เกษียณอายุที่ย้ายถิ่นระหว่างประเทศ

ส่วนใหญ่มาจากประเทศใด?

ปลายทางหลัก คือประเทศใดบ้าง?

ปัจจัยดึงดูดของประเทศปลายทางคืออะไรบ้าง?

# Mainstream flow of IRM



- 201,843 registered British (55+) in Spain ([Giner-Monfort, Hall, Betty 2016](#))
- 738,103 Americans (All ages) in Mexico by 2010 Census ([Lardiés-Bosque, Guillén, and Montes-de-Oca 2016](#))

# Mainstream flow of IRM



- Flow of IRM: North-South movement/downward direction within Europe or North America (e.g. from **UK, Germany, and the Nordic countries** to **Spain, Malta, Portugal, Italy** OR from **USA** to **Mexico, Panama**) where they perceive better environmental, financial, and/or social conditions, such as warmer climate, lower cost of living, and slower pace of life



# ศึกษาคติปวีดีโอ



More Americans moving to Mexico after retirement –  
CGTN America (2016) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-UtfshHyN1w>

# ศึกษาคติปวีติโ



The British expats in Spain facing an uncertain future under no-deal Brexit – Channel 4 News (2019)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OhPWk-AKYo&t=100s>



## 2. World Best Places to retire in 2023

Source: International Living (2023)

# World Best Place to Retire in 2023

- |               |                           |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Portugal   | 6. Spain                  |
| 2. Mexico     | 7. Greece                 |
| 3. Panama     | 8. France                 |
| 4. Ecuador    | 9. Italy, <b>Thailand</b> |
| 5. Costa Rica | 10. Columbia              |

Source: International Living (2023)



# INTERNATIONAL LIVING'S 2023 GLOBAL RETIREMENT INDEX BY THE NUMBERS

Country	Housing	Visas/Benefits	Cost of Living	Affinity Rating	Development/Governance	Climate	Healthcare	Average
Portugal	74	90	85	89	94	88	92	87.43
Mexico	70	92	92	87	80	86	82	84.14
Panama	77	98	78	85	86	80	84	84
Ecuador	80	91	88	82	76	87	81	83.57
Costa Rica	60	94	68	84	78	80	91	79.28
Spain	56	76	79	84	92	72	88	78.14
Greece	70	76	84	80	78	68	82	76.86
France	64	70	56	84	88	82	84	75.43
Italy	62	64	88	75	76	70	80	73.57
Thailand	62	58	96	77	88	58	76	73.57
Colombia	59	66	97	68	54	87	83	73.43
Uruguay	72	68	70	70	78	58	80	70.86
Malta	56	56	75	82	84	63	75	70.14
Ireland	58	70	56	78	90	58	80	70
Roatán	56	80	73	70	58	58	49	63.42
Belize	56	66	77	61	56	58	45	59.86

Source: International Living (2023)

# 9. Thailand (Southeast Asia)



- Low cost of living, warm climate
- Best real estate deals, esp. buying condos
- Long term visas for people over 50
- A popular place for dental and health tourism

Source: International Living (2023)

# 1. Portugal (South Europe)



- Pleasant climate, Affordable Lifestyle
- Natural geographical beauty blends with its architecture
- Affordable and Quality professional healthcare
- **High Safety—7<sup>th</sup> safest country in the world (2023)**
- (Thailand #92, Malaysia #19, Vietnam #41, Indonesia #53, China #80)

Source: International Living (2023), Global Peace Index (2023)



# 3. Statistics and Research Findings in Thailand



The majority of foreign retirees living in  
Thailand: Where are they from? Male or female?

Place of usual residence?

ผู้สูงอายุหรือผู้เกษียณอายุชาวต่างชาติในไทย

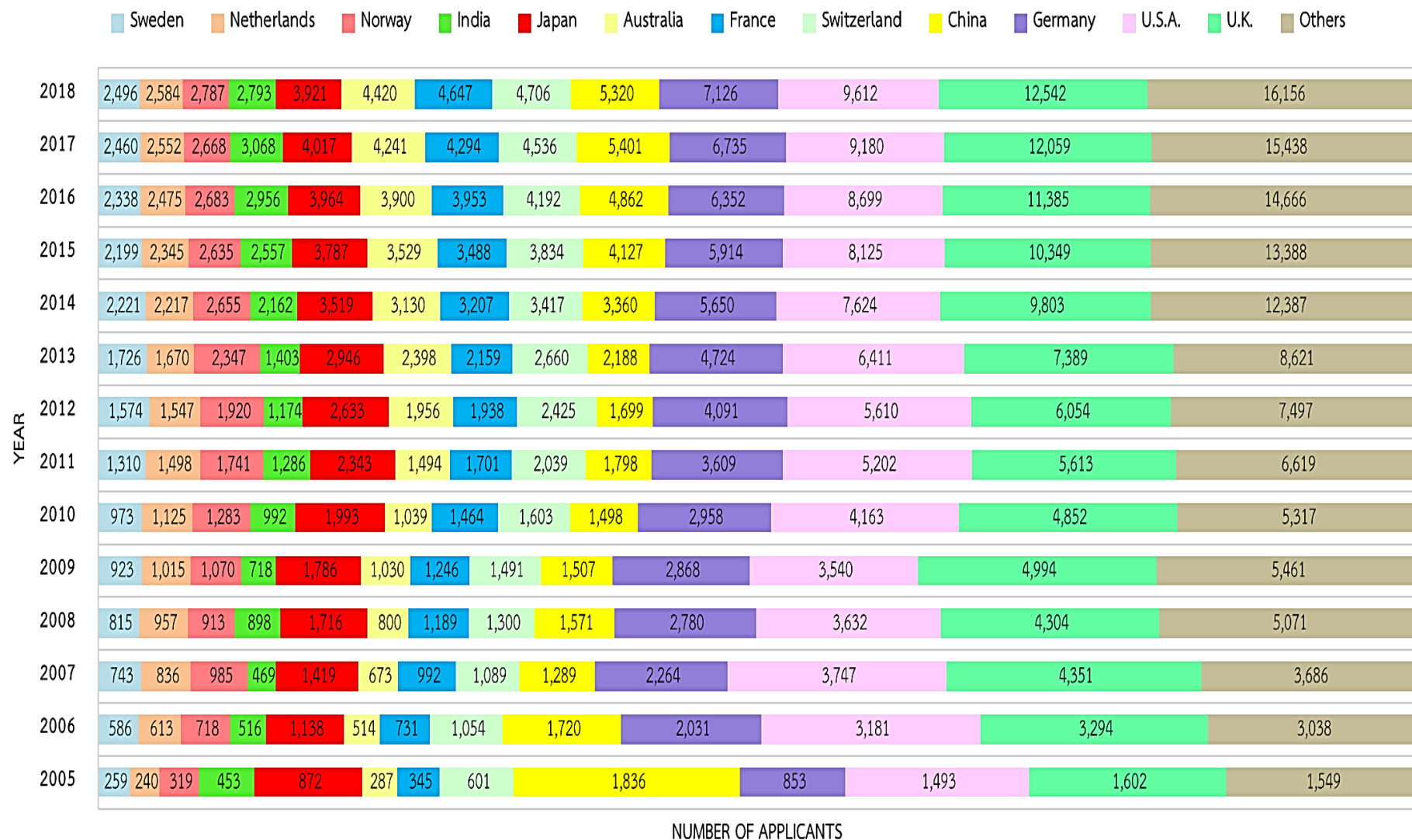
ส่วนใหญ่แล้วมาจากไหน?

เพศหญิงหรือชายมากกว่ากัน?

ส่วนใหญ่อาศัยอยู่ที่ใด?

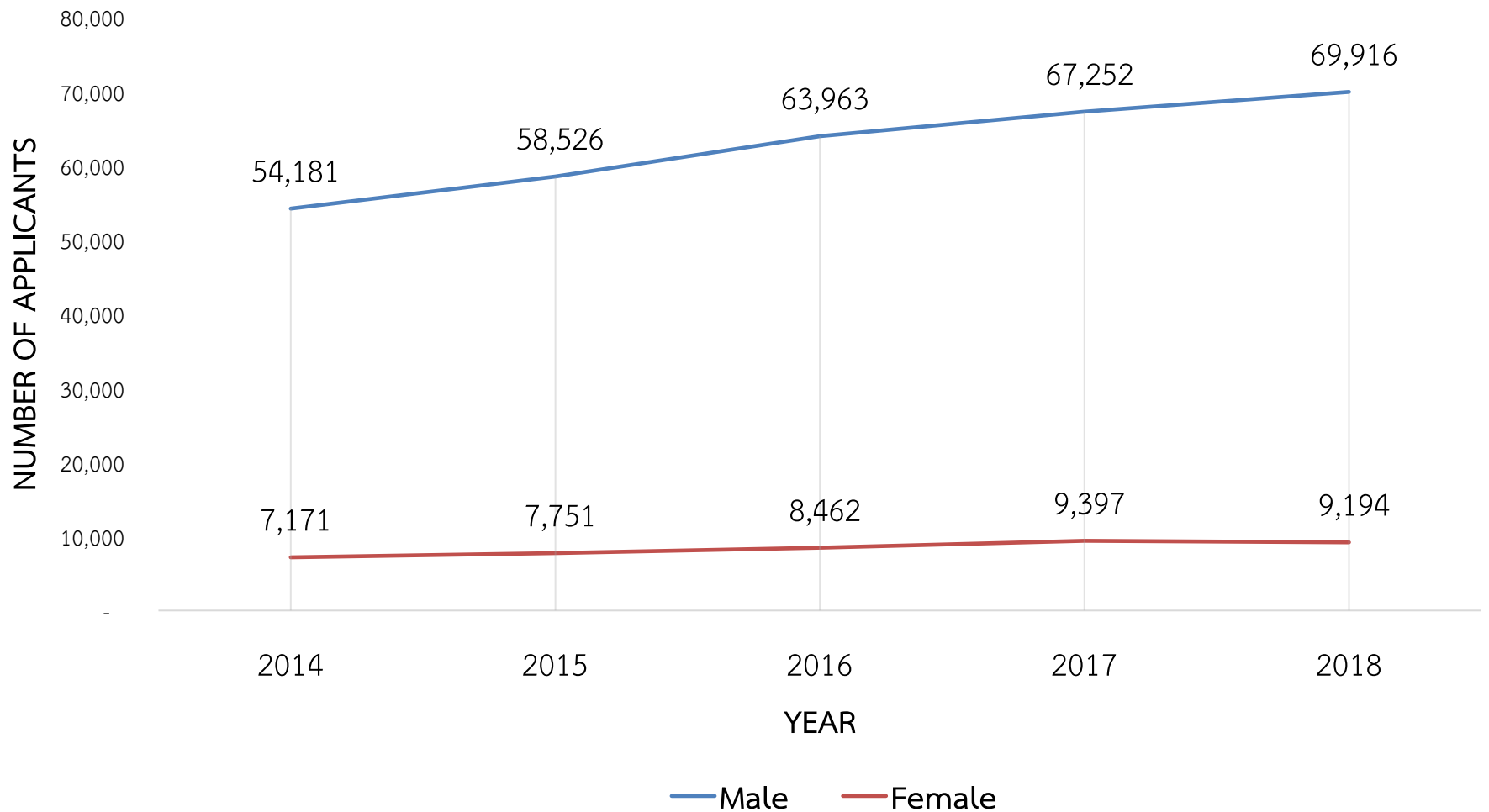


## THAILAND'S RETIREMENT VISA (NON-IMMIGRATION O-A) APPLICANTS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN YEAR 2005-2018



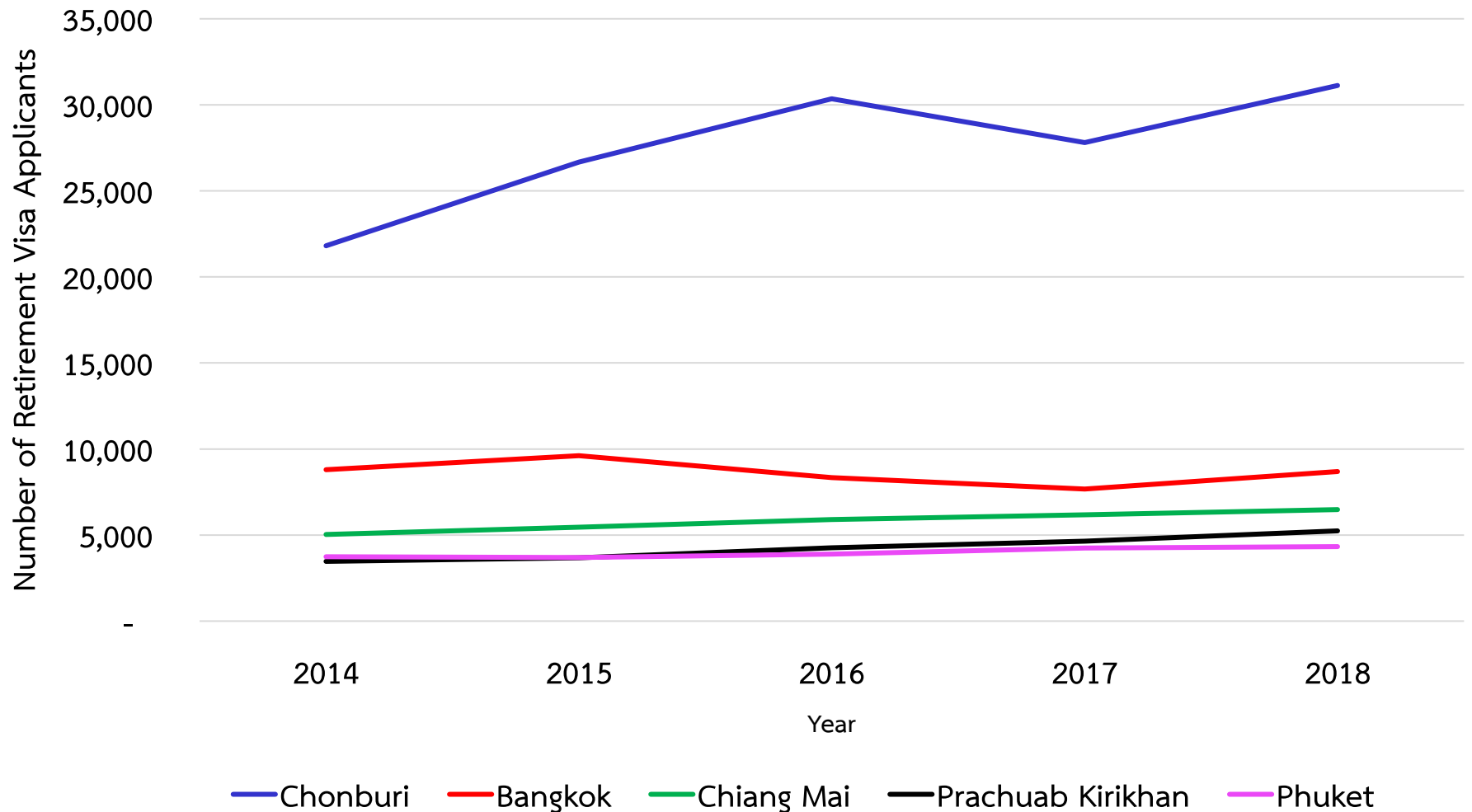
Source: Data Combined from the statistics of the Immigration Bureau of Thailand (2019)

## Thailand's Retirement Visa Applicants by Sex in Year 2014-2018



Source: Data Combined from the statistics of the Immigration Bureau of Thailand (2019)

## Thailand's Retirement Visa Applicants by Provinces in Year 2014-2018



Source: Data Combined from the statistics of the Immigration Bureau of Thailand (2019)



# Main Findings from the Interviews of 80 Western retirees in Udon Thani (2008)

- Many are retired western men (*previously divorced in the west, firstly spent time in the sex tourism haven of Pattaya before moving to the interior Northeastern city where their wives are from*) with local Thai women (much younger)
- Why chose Udon Thani:
  - Wife
  - Hot and dry weather is preferable to hot and humid (beach locations)
  - Fewer tourists
  - Close to Laos for visa renewal
  - Safety issues—limited threat from terrorism
  - Udonmap.com website
  - Elevated status for foreigners in Isaan

Source: Koch-Schulte ( 2008)

# Main Findings from the Survey of 330 Western retirees in Thailand (2017)

The majority of the 330 samples were . . .

- Nationality: Americans, British, German, Australians, etc.
- Average age = 65
- Male (89.7%)
- Living in Chiang Mai, BKK, Pattaya, Hua Hin, Udon Thani etc.
- Lived in Thailand for about 7 years
- Holding Bachelor's degree or higher education (61.5%)
- Earned more than 50k baht/month (90.6%)

Source: Tangchitnusorn (2017)

# Main Findings from the Survey of 330 Western retirees in Thailand (2017)

- Only 24.5% married/partnered to Thais before migration
- 63% currently married/partnered to Thais
- Only 19.7% had at least 1 child with Thai spouse/partner
- Ability to speak/listen to Thai language: Poor
- Knowledge about Thai culture: Some/ A lot
- Acceptance of oneself by Thai society: Good
- Feeling of national identity: Non-Thai

Source: Tangchitnusorn (2017)

# Main Findings from the Survey of 330 Western retirees in Thailand (2017)

- Most desirable factors in Thailand:
  - Cost of living, Climate, People, Healthcare, Life security
- Least desirable factors in Thailand:
  - Environmental quality, Infrastructure

Source: Tangchitnusorn (2017)

# Main Findings from the Survey of 330 Western retirees in Thailand (2017)

- Future plan in 5-10 years:
  - 40.6% Not sure
  - 30.9% Stay in Thailand
  - 28.5% Leave Thailand
- Possible leave reasons:
  - Visa reasons, financial reasons, health, crucial life events (e.g. widowhood, divorce, etc.)
- Possible next destination:
  - Country of origin (return migration)

Source: Tangchitnusorn (2017)



# Thailand's Retirement visa policy

## Non-Immigrant O-A visa

Type	Length	Before filing an application	After getting a visa
O-A	1 Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 50 years and older</li><li>- 800k baht deposit (2 months) <b>or</b> a monthly income of 65k baht</li></ul>	90-day report

Source: Data combined from Siam-legal.com

## Non-Immigrant O-X visa

Type	Length	Before filing an application	After getting a visa
O-X	5 Y (10 Y)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 50 years and older</li> <li>- Japan and developed Western countries</li> <li>- 3 m baht deposit (12 months)</li> <li>- Fixed deposit of 1.5 m baht</li> <li>- Health insurance</li> </ul>	90-day report

Source: Data combined from Siam-legal.com



## Long-term Resident (LTR) visa

Type	Length	Before filing an application	After getting a visa
“Wealthy pensioners”	5 Y (10 Y)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 50 years and older</li> <li>- Passive income 80k USD /year <b>or</b> 40k USD plus 250k USD investment</li> <li>- Health insurance 50k USD <b>or</b> deposit of 100k USD (12 months)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fast track</li> <li>- Airport service</li> <li>- 1-year report</li> </ul>

Source: Data combined from [ltr.boi.go.th](https://ltr.boi.go.th)



# 4. In-class Discussion



## คำถาม:

- 2.1 นิสิตมีความคิดเห็นอย่างไรต่อการที่ไทยเป็นหนึ่งใน  
ประเทศปลายทางยอดนิยมของผู้เกษียณอายุต่างชาติ
- 2.2 นิสิตคิดว่า **ภาครัฐ** และ **ภาคเอกชน** ของไทยควรมี  
แนวทางหรือนโยบายส่งเสริมในเรื่องนี้อย่างไร

# Reference:



- **Dissertation:**

1. Tangchitnusorn, K. (2017). International retirement migration of Westerners to Thailand: decision-making process, wellbeing, assimilation, and impacts on destination. (Doctoral degree), Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok. Retrieved from <http://cuir.car.chula.ac.th/handle/123456789/58187>

- **Websites:**

1. The Best Places to retire in 2020 by International Living  
<https://internationalliving.com/the-best-places-to-retire/>
2. Global Peace Index 2023 <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/GPI-2023-Web.pdf>
3. Thailand's Immigration Bureau <https://www.immigration.go.th/>
4. Malaysia My Second Home Program [www.mm2h.com/](http://www.mm2h.com/)
5. More Americans moving to Mexico after retirement – CGTN America (2016),  
URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-UtfshHyN1w>
6. The British expats in Spain facing an uncertain future under no-deal Brexit – Channel 4 News (2019),  
URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OhPWk-AKY0&t=100s>
7. LTR Visa Thailand <https://ltr.boi.go.th/>



# Thank you