



Governance and Participation

A Series of Policy Discussion Papers

INTERNAL MIGRATION IN THE RED RIVER AND MEKONG RIVER DELTAS: CURRENT ISSUES AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS



Ha Noi, September 2024

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ABBREVIATIONS

DOLISA	Department of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Products
GSO	General Statistics Office
MRD	Mekong River Delta
NEU	National Economics University
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
PAPI	Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index
RRD	Red River Delta
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VHLSS	Vietnam Household Living Standard Survey

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Migration is a multidimensional and widespread socio-economic phenomenon within the development process. It represents both a right and a solution for reducing poverty and creating opportunities for further development. Differences in development levels, geography, and culture result in distinct migration patterns in the Red River Delta (RRD) and the Mekong River Delta (MRD). Understanding the current situation of migration and the status of migrants—such as the reasons for migration, registration, employment, living conditions, and access to public services—will provide empirical evidence for designing policies that promote equality between migrants and local permanent residents, ensuring that "no one is left behind" in the development process.

This study was conducted by a research team from the National Economics University (NEU) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Viet Nam. We, the research team, would like to express our gratitude to UNDP Viet Nam for its continued assistance and support in our research activities. We extend our appreciation to the experts and specialists from UNDP Viet Nam, including Jonathan Pincus, Do Le Thu Ngoc, Do Thanh Huyen, Giulia Di Donato, and Tran Thi Van Anh, for their expertise, support, and communication throughout the research process. Special thanks are also due to the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for funding this research through UNDP's Viet Nam Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI) Programme.

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The opinions and views expressed in this study do not necessarily reflect those of our partners or funding agencies. We, the research team, are solely responsible for this report's contents, findings, and any shortcomings.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The rapid processes of industrialization and urbanization in Viet Nam have contributed to job creation and the expansion and improvement of urban services. However, these transformations are not spatially uniform, leading to the development of diversified industrialized, urban, and agricultural-rural areas. Generally, industrialized and urban areas present strong migration pull factors, whereas agricultural-rural areas tend to push migrants away.

In recent years, the Red River Delta Region (RRD) has become one of the industrial and urban centers attracting a large number of migrants, with a positive net migration rate. In contrast, the Mekong River Delta Region (MRD) has a negative net migration rate. The differences in migration "pull" and "push" factors between these regions have led to different migration flows, employment, living conditions, access to public services, and migration management challenges. This study on *"Internal Migration in the Red River and Mekong River Deltas: Current Issues and Policy Implications"* aims to provide insights into three dimensions related to internal migration in the RRD and MRD, namely: (i) the drivers of migration; (ii) the challenges and opportunities faced by migrants regarding their livelihoods, access to public services, and social protection; and (iii) the policies and solutions needed to ensure the rights of migrants to be recognized, protected and respected. In this regard, the study provides policy implications to improve internal migration governance and policy recommendations to ensure the rights of migrants are respected at their destinations. Considering the recent enforcement of the 2020 Residence Law and roll-out of the National Population Database, this study provides timely evidence to inform the design of policies and regulations that promote basic rights for internal migrants in both delta regions and across Viet Nam.

The literature review shows that previous studies have highlighted inequalities between migrants and permanent residents. Still, existing literature lacks in-depth analyses and insights to assess the inequalities in social life, access to public services, and social security between migrants and permanent residents, especially in the RRD and MRD regions. As a result, these gaps present challenges for policymakers and practitioners to provide advice to formulate appropriate and evidence-based policies to properly address issues and challenges faced by internal migrants. By using a stakeholder analysis approach, this study supplements existing knowledge with relevant findings on how internal migrants' rights are implemented and translated into concrete policies, procedures and services to suggest solutions to ensure that the rights of internal migrants in Viet Nam are protected.

The research team conducted interviews with 67 public officials and civil servants from the Departments/Divisions of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs, Commune/Ward People's Committee officials, and commune/ward police in nine provinces, including four provinces in the RRD (i.e., Ha Noi, Bac Ninh, Hai Duong, and Nam Dinh), four provinces in the MRD (i.e., Can Tho, Long An, An Giang, and Soc Trang), and one province in the Southeastern region (i.e., Binh Duong which receives many migrants from the MRD). Direct interviews with 96 interprovincial migrants and five families with members who had migrated out of the locality were also conducted, in addition to 16 focus group discussions with interprovincial migrants. The interviews and FGDs with migrants focused on the reasons and processes of migration, residency registration, employment, living conditions, access to public services, community integration, and migration strategies. Furthermore, the research team analyzed statistical data on various socioeconomic

variables and migration flows in the two deltas to gain a deeper understanding of the research area and the "push-pull" factors of migration.

Main findings

The key findings from the study are the followings:

- Migration in the RRD is significantly influenced by “pull” factors, whereas migration in the MRD is primarily driven by “push” factors related to economic and social aspects. Migrants have not clearly identified climate change as a direct cause of their migration.
- The rural-to-urban migration flow remains the predominant trend in both deltas; however, rural-to-rural migration in the RRD and urban-to-urban migration in the MRD represent the second largest flows. The trend of relocating industrial production closer to rural areas is expected to alter migration patterns shortly, particularly in the MRD.
- Migrants to the RRD are inter-regional, primarily originating from Northern mid-land and mountainous provinces to seek employment opportunities. In contrast, most migrants to the MRD are intra-regional, mainly from neighboring provinces, to look for higher-income job opportunities, with climate change acting as an indirect push factor.
- Many migrants are not well-informed about their rights and obligations regarding temporary residence registration and residence notification. However, they generally comply with these requirements when requested. More importantly, migrants do not fully understand the need of temporary residence registration for accessing social protection systems.
- Migration management is under meticulous control by local authorities in the MRD. However, local authorities in the RRD find migration management is overloaded.
- Coordination between registration and labor management authorities is inadequate, as registration authorities have not shared data on laborers and children migrants. This lack of data prevents labor management authorities from conducting effective forecasts of the needs for schools, healthcare, housing, and budgeting to meet increasing demands.
- Policies related to migrants are set out in various legal documents and regulations, with the level of implementation varying across localities.
- Provincial policies often distinguish between permanent and temporary residents, with many policies only applicable to permanent residents.
- Most migrants in the study sample do not receive relevant social welfare benefits such as health insurance or social insurance in their new locations.
- Many migrants experience material deprivation, poor mental well-being, limited social lives, low income, difficult living conditions, and a lack of family support.
- Most migrants in the study sample do not possess a clear migration strategy, as their plans depend on job-seeking opportunities and security.
- There are gender inequalities in the work and lives of migrants, notably in three aspects: (i) female migrants are less likely to undertake jobs requiring mobility and physical strength; (ii) female migrants are more willing than their male counterparts to accept poor working conditions to secure employment and income; and (iii) female migrants face greater psychological, social, and community integration challenges than male migrants.

- There are instances where management officials shift responsibilities onto migrants or interpret regulations in ways that ease administrative processing for officials.
- Many migrants encounter difficulties accessing public education services for their children. Access to public preschool and primary education is particularly challenging for children from migrant households in the RRD.
- Migrants rarely participate in community meetings and are involved in decision-making processes and community gatherings in their temporary residential areas. Most do not exercise their voting rights at their temporary locations. Additionally, many community integration activities for migrants are limited due to cultural and lifestyle differences.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

Based on the results of field research and the best practices observed in the sample provinces, the study highlights key policy implications and actions for policymakers and practitioners to consider. The suggested courses of policy action focus on ensuring three basic rights for internal migrants in destination localities: (i) recognition, (ii) protection, and (iii) community integration.

Recognition and enforcement of the rights of migrants. Recognition and enforcement of the rights of migrants are essential for protecting their interests and needs. First, the Communist Party and the State of Viet Nam should explicitly acknowledge that migration is an inevitable socio-economic phenomenon that cannot be reversed. Improving both the material and spiritual wellbeing of migrants, as well as supporting and protecting their social welfare, should be a consistent policy priority. Second, policies should be designed to ensure equal rights and obligations for both permanent residents and migrants. Third, relevant authorities should promote and protect the rights and benefits associated with temporary residence registration, emphasizing the roles of landlords, labor contractors, and village leaders at destinations. Fourth, authorities need to enhance their responsibility to explain and guide local officials, including civil servants, police, and public administrative service providers at the commune level.

Strengthening coordination between residence management agencies and migrants-related management agencies. Strengthening coordination between the agencies is crucial to ensure data is shared effectively. This will facilitate timely inputs for formulating policies and plans to support and protect migrants. Specifically, three courses of action should be undertaken: (i) ensure and evaluate the effectiveness of coordination between agencies involved to apply the national population data, identification, and electronic authentication to support the national digital transformation from 2022 to 2025, with a vision extending to 2030; (ii) promulgate and implement an inter-sectoral coordination plans that considers the needs and rights of migrants concerning housing, education, health, and social security; and (iii) integrate internal migration into strategies, local socio-economic development plans, and public budgeting processes to anticipate future internal migration flows and effectively manage expected migration flows.

Increasing opportunities for formal employment for migrants. To ensure social welfare services and protect the wellbeing of migrants, four solutions derived from the research findings are proposed. First, labor management authorities should oversee the hiring and employment of workers, particularly regarding contractual arrangements between employers and employees in their respective localities. Second, relevant authorities and labor supply companies should provide information about labor markets in destination areas. In the RRD, it is particularly important to provide timely information to migrants from Northern midland mountainous

provinces; in contrast, in the MRD, higher attention should be focused on migrants moving between rural areas within the region. Third, migrants should receive skill development training, vocational training, and professional knowledge in both origin and destination provinces. Fourth, local authorities should facilitate the transition of migrant workers from informal to formal employment sectors as a strategic long-term plan.

Increasing access to housing for migrants. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the Ministry of Construction should improve the land planning process to release permits for housing construction or ease existing sites renewal and maintenance to ensure decent housing for low-income individuals, regardless of whether they are permanent or temporary residents. Local authorities receiving migrant workers should diversify the forms and types of housing available for workers (e.g., sales, rental options, or housing subsidies). Additionally, relevant authorities need to standardize and oversee minimum conditions for rental housing to ensure health safety, privacy, and fire prevention for tenants.

Managing migration driven by push factors and encouraging circular migration in the MRD. Managing migration driven by push factors is a major concern in the MRD. Issues such as poverty reduction, lack of vocational training for workers, unemployment, and the need to improve social welfare are key challenges. Circular migration can help resolve employment issues without disrupting lives or placing undue pressure on education systems, housing availability, public administrative services, or social welfare at destinations. To facilitate circular migration in the MRD, relevant authorities in the region should: (i) facilitate the creation of decent jobs in the agricultural and rural sectors to retain workers within the region; (ii) effectively implement multidimensional poverty reduction policies alongside social welfare programs; and (iii) develop mobility networks to improve transportation and connectivity for daily commuting within the MRD.

Encouraging network-based migration. Network-based migration involves utilizing social capital to assist individuals in moving, transitioning, and adapting to new contexts at their destinations. This approach enhances job stability, living conditions, access to public services, mental wellbeing, and community integration for migrants. To promote network-based migration effectively, it is important to: (i) encourage young migrants to relocate with their nuclear family members; (ii) motivate migrant workers to migrate within community groups that share customs, cultural values, and lifestyles; and (iii) strengthen the responsibilities of labor supply companies, employers, and labor unions in facilitating connections among migrants within community groups at their destinations.

Supporting migrants, especially inter-regional migrants in the RRD, to integrate into communities at destinations. The study findings underscore the important roles played by local government authorities, migrants, labor supply companies/contractors, and local communities at destinations in facilitating community integration for migrants. In the RRD, provincial authorities from the host provinces should openly share information regarding labor demand while coordinating with their counterparts in migrants' home provinces in Northern midland mountainous regions. Migrants should be encouraged to proactively seek information to facilitate their integration into local communities at their destinations. Employment agencies ought to provide information about socio-economic conditions and cultural contexts at these destinations for hired workers. Local communities should slightly change their perceptions and treat migrants as members of their communities by involving them in local activities while respecting their customs and cultural values. Local authorities and civil society organizations are key stakeholders in facilitating and stimulating this social integration process.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Since the “Doi Moi” (Renovation) policy was initiated in 1986, Viet Nam has achieved remarkable results in economic growth and development, transforming the country from a poor to a lower-middle-income country in 2009. However, the next stages of economic development require deeper reforms in resource allocation within the country. Greater economic and social development not only requires the efficient exchange of goods and services but it is also reflected by the mobility of people. As part of the development path, a number of trends and dynamics, such as industrialization, urbanization, poverty, and demographic changes, pose great challenges, also related to the management of within-country migration. In the short term, within-country migration represents the more efficient allocation of labor conducive to growth, but, in the long run, unplanned migration might severely affect wellbeing and the quality of life of migrants, widening the gaps between migrants and permanent residents. This creates a critical policy challenge given the limited state capability at local level, outdated household registration system (hukou system), and low preparedness of local authorities in dealing with within-country migration.

Some regions in Viet Nam have experienced a very dynamic mobility of people, notably the MRD and the RRD regions. Although they are similar in population size, the former experienced net outflows of people, and the latter exhibited net inflows. They also differ in their socio-economic conditions, where the MRD is under-industrialized, with a dominant economic role played by the agri-aquaculture sector. On the other hand, the RRD is densely populated and highly industrialized, attracting high foreign direct investment (FDI) directed to big industrial sites and manufacturing facilities coexisting with many small-sized and family-owned businesses. These different socio-economic conditions result in diverse pull and push factors for migration dynamics in the two regions. In this context, a greater understanding of the living and working conditions of migrants will provide insights into local governments’ preparedness to effectively manage migration flows and ensure that migrant people are not left behind.

During the period from 2018 to 2022, the MRD region persistently experienced a net outflow of people, while the RRD region encountered a net inflow of people (General Statistics Office, 2023). Among provinces in these two regions, Soc Trang, Ca Mau, Tra Vinh, and An Giang exhibited the largest outflow of people, and Bac Ninh was the largest recipient of people nationwide in 2022. According to the survey on people mobility and family planning conducted by the General Statistics Office in 2021, urban-urban migration accounts for most within-country migration, 33.8%, followed by rural-rural, 32.5%, and rural-urban migration, 24.6%. The majority of migrants are young, with the most dynamic mobility cohort of 20 – 24 years old, then 25-29 and 15-19. The top drivers of migration are economic reasons, family union, education, and living environment, consistent with the Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI) survey in 2022.

The annual Viet Nam Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI)¹ findings from 2020 to 2022 showed persistent disparities between migrant and permanent residents’ assessment of public administration and performance at the local level. Since 2020, the PAPI survey has targeted migrant citizens (both short-term and long-term) and collected their

¹ See www.papi.org.vn/eng for more information about PAPI.

feedback on the drivers of migration and their perception and experiences on the quality of public administration and public service delivery in 12 provinces with net inflows of migrants. Among them, Ha Noi and Bac Ninh are in the RRD, and Long An and Can Tho are in the MRD. All the other provinces are outside the two river deltas. The PAPI surveys have data from the migrant host provinces, thus lacking further insights from the migrant home provinces that could underline the push factors in the migration decisions. Migration is a multi-faceted issue that calls for examining it from different angles and stakeholders, both from citizens and public officials. In addition, besides the above-mentioned driving forces of industrialization, urbanization, poverty, and demographic changes, the drivers of migration decisions might come from recent phenomena of lifestyle and climate change, particularly in the MRD. Therefore, conducting a study on migration dynamics and working conditions, life status, and access to public services of migrants in the RRD and MRD is timely and provides evidence for designing migration-adapting policies to ensure equality between permanent and temporary residents in the two deltas.

1.2. Literature review

Research on migration covers both international and internal migration, while internal migration receives more attention when it comes to assessing its impact on countries' socio-economic development. Internal migration is a solution to create jobs for surplus workers, narrow income disparities, and improve development between departure and destination places or regions. However, migration can also cause social problems such as population imbalance, weakening social structure, urban overcrowding, environmental degradation, and disruption of the labor market (Borjas, 2024; Harris & Todaro, 1970; Lewis, 1954).

The question "Why do people migrate?" has been answered by many theories. The traditional theory of migration, "Push-Pull theory," focuses on push factors, unfavorable conditions at the place of origin such as unemployment, poverty, or conflict, and pull factors at destinations like better job opportunities, higher living standards, family ties, or higher quality of the natural environment. Differences in labor demand, wages, and income at the departure and arrival places also explain migration decisions from the perspective of Neoclassical Economics Theory. People tend to move from a low-wage to a higher-wage destination and enjoy a higher income. Accordingly, migration is considered a rational action, and it takes place when the benefits of migration are greater than the costs of migration (Sjaastad, 1962).

Migrants calculate expected benefits and costs to make migration decisions (Harris & Todaro, 1970). The New Economics of Labor Migration theory expands further by linking individuals with household/family migration decisions to maximize benefits/welfare to households and to disperse risks. Migration is part of a household's strategy to adapt to economic uncertainties and achieve socioeconomic goals (Mincer, 1978; Stark & Bloom, 1985). However, this theory concerns household decisions based on net household benefits and ignores individual decisions. This leads to individuals migrating or staying involuntarily (Borjas, 2024). More recently, the Network Theory of Migration emphasizes the role of social networks (social aspects) in migration decisions, explaining individuals' migration decisions in association with the community, family ties, friends, or groups of migrants. More developed social networks reduce the costs and risks of migration and promote migration decisions (Massey et al., 1998; Massey & España, 1987).

A strand of empirical research on the relationship of migration with economic, social, and environmental issues is conducted, including in the Vietnamese context. Several studies provide

additional empirical evidence on migration, such as the 2019 Population and Housing Census report (GSO & UNFPA, 2020), the 2015 internal migration survey (GSO & UNFPA, 2016), and research on gender in migration and economic restructuring in Viet Nam (Australia Aid & CIEM, 2021). These studies provide important data about migration, including migration trends, migration rates, characteristics of migrants, main causes of migration, and negative effects of migration at the country level. They also generally mentioned the migration flows at national and country levels. However, those studies use the concept of migration and Population and Housing Census data, which omits many types of migrants, such as seasonal migrants, temporary migrants, and return flows that occur during the last 5 years or ignore the migration flow within the district. At the same time, the 2015 internal migration survey includes migrants aged 15 to 59. This causes migration data for management and the impacts of migration to not be accurately assessed.

Research on internal migration that addresses migration dynamics in Viet Nam considers migration a multidimensional phenomenon, but mainly focuses on economic reasons related to job opportunities and income at the destination (Dang et al., 2017; GSO & UNFPA, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2018). In addition, migration driven by educational opportunities was analyzed by (Pham & Hill, 2019) that observed an increasing trend of rural youth migrating to cities for higher education and skill development. Internal migration brings labor but at the same time causes many challenges for destinations, such as overpopulation, increased demand for housing, infrastructural strain, lack of access to social services, expansion of informal settlements, and increased environmental pollution (GSO & UNFPA, 2016, 2020; Vo & Nguyen, 2021). Migration also negatively affects the benefits and welfare of staying people, especially the old and children (HSF & ILSSA, 2022). Some studies referring to migration and migrant-managing policies confirm that the policies exist and are well-designed, but the effectiveness of policy implementation is still debatable (Dinh & Nguyen, 2020). Some policies to ensure migrants' access to education, healthcare, and housing in destinations need to be implemented to help migrants integrate into the community (Dinh & Nguyen, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2021).

In summary, internal migration in Viet Nam is a complex phenomenon driven by economic inequalities, educational aspirations, and demographic factors. While it has contributed to the country's economic growth and development, it also poses significant challenges, particularly in urban management, rural development, and migrants' integration. It raises a need for qualitative research to explore potential migrant-related issues for designing relevant policies for migration management and migration rights protection. Evidence-based government's policies aimed at managing migration are indeed crucial to ensure the respect of basic rights, wellbeing, and social integration of migrants.

1.3. Objectives of the study

The objective of this study is to qualitatively investigate migrants' equal treatment, recognition, security, and integration. Particularly, this study seeks to gain insights into the dynamics underlying migration flows and the status of migrants in the RRD and MRD regions from a multi-stakeholder perspective. Based on empirical results, the report proposes policy implications to ensure the rights of recognition, protection and integration of the migrants.

Specifically, this study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Analyse the “pull” and “push” factors of migration and internal migration flows in the RRD and MRD;
- Assess the living conditions, access to jobs, and access to public services among internal migrants in the two deltas;
- Propose solutions and policy implications for internal migration management, ensuring the rights of migrants on recognition, integration , and protection in the host provinces in the two delta regions and the entire country.

1.4. Theoretical framework

1.4.1. Concepts

According to the 2019 Population and Housing Census, a person is considered a migrant if the current place of residence and the place where they lived 5 years ago are not the same. Thus, migration occurs at different levels, such as commune, district, provincial, regional, and international. The concept of migration may leave out some types of migrants, such as seasonal, temporary, and return flow, within 5 years of the survey, making migrant management and protection of the basic rights of migrants more challenging.

The identified migrants, according to the Viet Nam Household Living Standards Survey (VHLSS), only consider those who live outside the household for more than 6 months, while those who live away from the household for less than 6 months are still considered family members. This concept of migrants omits or does not collect complete data on those who migrate for less than 6 months.

According to GSO & UNFPA (2016), internal migrants are defined "as people who move from one district to another within 5 years of the survey time and satisfy one of the three following conditions: (i) have resided in the area for 1 month or more; (ii) reside in the new area for less than 1 month but intend to stay for 1 month or more; (iii) reside in the new area for less than 1 month but within the past 1 year have left the place of permanent residence to live in another district with a cumulative period of 1 month or more". It was noted that the surveyed sample in GSO & UNFPA (2016) included migrants whose ages ranged from 15 to 59 years.

This study uses the definition of *migrant* based on the Law on Residence and the definition of migrant in GSO & UNFPA (2016), focusing on interprovincial migrants. A migrant staying in a place different from their provincial permanent residence for more than 30 days has to register their temporary residence, and a migrant staying less than 30 days has to report their stay with the local government. Those are called registered migrants. Unregistered migrants could include those who migrate for more than 30 days and those who migrate for less than 30 days but have not completed their temporary residence registration or reported their stay.

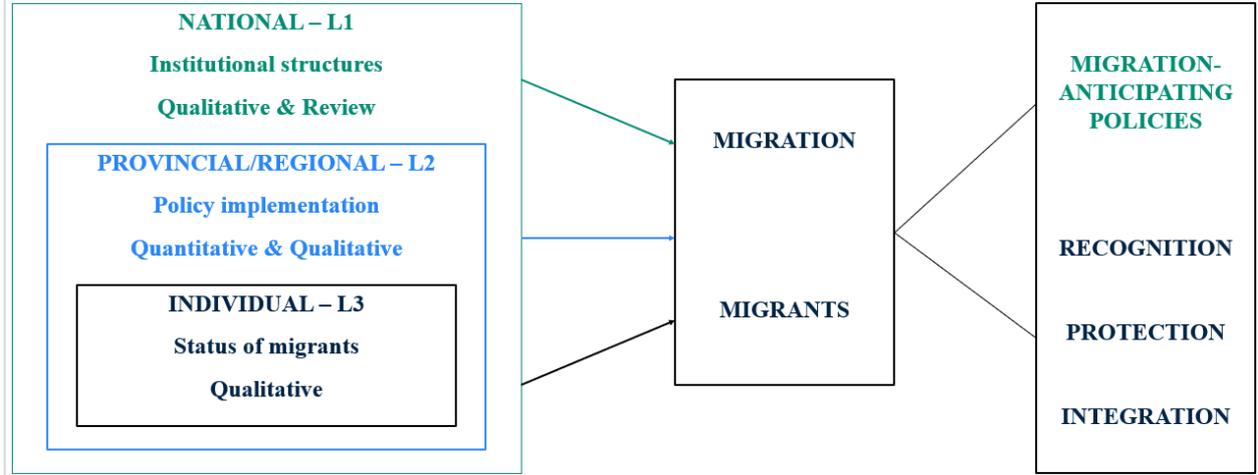
1.4.2. Analytical framework

The study uses a multiple-level analysis that addresses migration at both macro (national/provincial/regional) and micro (individual) levels. This framework provides complementary insights into migration processes and behavior. At the macro level, the study mentions institutions with a focus on policymaking. It addresses socio-economic differences between the two deltas and examines those differences in the departure places (push factors) and

destinations (pull factors) and the change in pull and push factors over time, such as economic, investment, employment, and social variables. Furthermore, the study also reviews migration-related policies and how they are implemented in reality. It also investigates the migration flows in these two deltas.

The micro level explores why people migrate, the migration decision-making process, and the current situation of migrants in the following aspects: employment, living, and access to public services. The study further examines whether migrants are treated equally with non-migrants regarding recognition-protection-integration by triangulating the perspectives of related stakeholders. Based on empirical results, the study recommends migration-managing policies to cope with migration and to ensure equality among migrants and non-migrants in two deltas.

Figure 1: Multiple-level analytical framework



1.5. Research methods

1.5.1. Desk study

The research uses the Desk study method to review related documents, theories, and databases on socio-economic conditions and migration fluctuations in Viet Nam, especially in the RRD and MRD. Desk study helps better understand the socio-economic context that can drive migration, emerging issues, and implemented migration-relating policies. The results of this method extend the understanding of the migration-related policies, migration theories, research context, socio-economic variables of the study areas, and migration in the two deltas.

1.5.2. Research sample

This project studies migration in the RRD and MRD, in which four provinces in each delta and one outside-region province as the destination of migration are selected. The sampling frame to select provinces includes as follows: (i) Net migration rate; (ii) Level of urbanization (urban population ratio); (iii) Level of industrialization (based on industrial GDP share and number of businesses per 1000 people); (iv) Development level of the province (GDP per capita); and (v) Impacts of climate change (see more in Annex 1). A total of nine provinces are selected in the research sample, including Ha Noi, Bac Ninh, Nam Dinh, and Hai Duong in the RRD, Long An, Can Tho, Soc Trang, and An Giang in the MRD, and Binh Duong outside the region as reference.

The research team closely interacted with officials from the provincial Department of Labor, War Invalids, and Social Affairs (DOLISA) to: select districts and district officials to suggest communes; select two districts in each province by net migration rates, industrialization, urbanization, and development levels that are representative of the province; select a commune in each district with significant in-flow and out-flow migration.

Based on the selected provinces, districts, and communes, the research team also worked closely with local governments to find residential areas where migrants reside and select migrants for interviews and FGD. Criteria for selecting migrants include migrants who: (i) are from other provinces, (ii) are working for companies/organizations, self-employed or working in the informal sector, and (iii) are renting accommodation in the sampled commune.

1.5.3. In-depth interviews

This study interviewed migration-related stakeholders at the provincial, district, and commune levels, including public officials and migrants.

Public official interviews include: 1 leaders of the provincial DOLISA; 2 officers of the district DOLISA; 2 vice chairpersons of the People Committee and 02 Policemen at a commune for each sampled province. The study conducted interviews with 67 public officials at different levels. Details are in Annex 2. The interviews with officials focused on: (i) awareness and role of migrants in the locality, (ii) management of migrants and migration laborers, (iii) migrant-supporting policies, (iv) community integration and access to public services of migrants, (v) migration-coping recommendations and ensuring equality of migrants. Policeman interviews focus more on registration, access to public administrative services, and management of migrants. The official interview questions are in Annex 9.

The study interviewed 96 interprovincial migrants and 5 migrant households. Interviews with migrants focused on (i) reasons for migration and migration process, (ii) registration of migrants, (iii) Employment status, (iv) Living conditions and community integration, (v) Access to public services, (vi) Participation in local governance; and (vii) migration strategies. The interview questions are in Annex 9.

1.5.4. Focus group discussion

FGDs are conducted with migrants at the commune level. Each sample commune has an FGD with 5 to 7 migrants chosen based on the above criteria. The content of FGD relates to migrants' migration decisions, registration, living and working conditions, access to public services, and migration strategies. FGDs also reveal possible solutions for migrants and better migration management. A total of 16 group discussions were conducted. The number of FGDs in each province and the characteristics of participants are in Annex 3, and the questions are in Annex 9.

The number and characteristics of interviewed migrants and FGD in each delta are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Description of migrants in the sample

	RRD		MRD		Binh Duong	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Male	45	53%	35	57%	9	41%
Female	40	47%	26	43%	13	59%
Kinh	26	31%	16	26%	5	23%
Other	33	39%	0	0%	0	0%
Do not know	26	31%	45	74%	17	77%
Urban-urban	4	5%	9	15%	1	5%
Urban-rural	5	6%	2	3%	0	0%
Rural – urban	53	62%	38	62%	5	23%
Rural – rural	19	22%	6	10%	5	23%
Do not know	4	5%	6	10%	11	50%
Intraregional	12	14%	49	80%	0	0%
Interregional	73	86%	12	20%	22	100%
Total	85	100%	61	100%	22	100%

1.5.5. Consultative and advisory meetings

A dozen consultative and advisory workshops and meetings were held. The meetings were conducted during the research design, the tools development, and data collection debriefings and discussions on preliminary results. A consultation workshop, which will include migration-studying researchers and migration-managing policymakers, will be held on July 23rd, 2024. All comments and suggestions from the above consultative and advisory workshops are inputs for drafting the report. The first draft is also sent to external reviewers for further comments that have already been integrated into the final report.

1.5.6. Data analysis

The research team collected more than 1,200 pages of documents, including data from interviews (approximately 158 interviewing hours), FGD (around 20 hours), relevant reports from communes/wards, the district and provincial DOLISA, and migration-related policies. Additionally, the team studied and developed 14 case studies on notable migrants in both deltas. The data was analyzed using content analysis methods with discussions and consultations from the research team and experts.

Descriptive statistics analysis was used to analyze the fluctuations of socio-economic variables that could serve as push and pull factors for migration, and the changes in migration flows in the two deltas. All the analyzed data were derived from the General Statistics Office and the Population and Housing Census in 2009 and 2019.

CHAPTER 2: SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS AND MIGRATION IN THE RED RIVER AND MEKONG RIVER DELTA

2.1. Social economic development

The RRD covers the downstream area of the Red River and Thai Binh River in Northern Viet Nam. The region includes 11 provinces and cities: Ha Noi, Hung Yen, Hai Duong, Hai Phong, Bac Ninh, Vinh Phuc, Ha Nam, Thai Binh, Nam Dinh, Ninh Binh and Quang Ninh. The MRD is the last part of the delta, including 13 provinces and cities: Long An, Tien Giang, Dong Thap, Vinh Long, Tra Vinh, Can Tho City, Hau Giang, Soc Trang, Ben Tre, An Giang, Kien Giang, Bac Lieu and Ca Mau. This section reviews and provides some information on the economic, investment, social, and environmental situation of the two deltas with comparisons among provinces by net migration rates and the impacts of climate change. All data analyzed in this section are collected and calculated from the General Statistics Office and the Population and Housing Census. This review gives some basic understanding of the push-pull factors of migration in the two deltas (see more in Annex 4).

2.1.1. Area, population, labor and migration

Population density is high and is continuously increasing in RRD, while MRD's population growth rate is close to zero. RRD has an area of 21.3 thousand km², with a population of 23.4 million in 2022, accounting for 6.4% of the country's area and 24.6% of its population, respectively. MRD has an area of 40.6 thousand km² with a population of 17.4 million people, accounting for 12.8% of the country's area, twice the area of RRD, but has 17.9% of Viet Nam's population. It is worth noting that (i) the population density of RRD increases continuously (about 1080 people/km² in 2022) while the density in MRD remains almost unchanged (about 425 people/km² in 2022); (ii) The population growth rate of RRD during 2010-2022 is 1.38%, while it is approximately 0.1% in MRD during the same period. It is considered an advantage of development for the RRD but a disadvantage for MRD.

The labor growth rate in both RRD and MRD regions has the tendency to decrease sharply recently. In 2022, RRD had about 11.6 million workers, and MRD had about 9.5 million workers working in economic sectors, accounting for 49.6% and 54.4% of the region's population, respectively. A noticeable piece of information is that from 2015 to now, the labor growth rate of both regions has decreased, and the sharpest decrease was in the period 2020-2022 (COVID-19 period) when both regions reduced labor by about 2.2% annually. This is the result of labor return-home migration flows in RRD and migration outflows in MRD.

The rate of trained workers in RRD is much higher than that of MRD. Statistics from 2015 to 2022 show that the rate of trained workers in RRD increases continuously and reaches 37.2% in 2022, nearly three times higher than in MRD (14.5% in 2022). This is an imbalance problem in labor quality in MRD; it can be a consequence of brain drain when MRD is the departure for migration. It poses challenges for socio-economic development in MRD. On the contrary, the high and continuously increasing rate of trained workers shows the attraction of high-quality labor of RRD and is also the potential for the socio-economic development of RRD.

RRD attracts migration with an increasing positive net migration rate, while MRD has a negative net migration rate, but the trend is decreasing. Statistics show that RRD has a net migration rate of 2.4‰ in 2022 (up from 0.5‰ in 2010), while MRD has a negative net migration rate,

decreasing from 8.4‰ in 2010 to 3.77‰ in 2022. RRD has five out of 11 provinces with a positive net migration rate, of which Bac Ninh emerged as the destination with a net migration rate of 36.4‰. MRD has two out of 13 provinces with positive net migration rates, of which Can Tho has emerged as the main destination in the region. Migration in RRD is intra-regional migration, while migration in MRD is inter-regional migration.

2.1.2. Investment, growth and migration

Foreign direct investment differs between RRD and MRD and between positive net migration and negative net migration provinces in the two deltas. Cumulative registered FDI capital to 2021 in RRD reaches 133 billion USD, accounting for 30% of the country's total registered FDI capital, while MRD reaches 34 billion USD, accounting for 8% of the country's registered FDI capital. Positive net migration provinces in RRD attract 75% of the total registered FDI capital of the region. However, FDI attraction in MRD provinces is similar to that of positive and negative net migration provinces. It implies that FDI attracts migration in provinces in the RRD but not in the MRD.

RRD is an industrial center, and MRD is not. RRD is the country's major industrial production center, with the number of enterprises accounting for 31.7% of the country's total enterprises, while MRD only accounts for 7.6%. Positive net migration provinces in RRD have a number of businesses accounting for 83% of the region. In comparison, positive net migration provinces in MRD only account for 33% of the number of businesses in the region. This evidence suggests that migration to seek intra-regional employment in the industrial sector is common in the RRD, but industry is not a factor attracting migration in the MRD.

The economic growth rate in the two deltas is significantly different. RRD's economic growth rate is higher than 9% per year before and after COVID-19, while MRD is only 5-6% per year. During the COVID-19 period, growth in MRD is relatively low, only reaching 0.45%/year in 2021. With such a growth rate, migration in MRD is a push factor.

Income per capita increases faster in RRD than in MRD. The growth rate of per capita income in RRD (nearly 6%/year) is significantly higher than that in MRD (nearly 4% per year). In addition, workers' income in businesses in RRD is always 1.3-1.5 times higher than in MRD. A detailed calculation of provinces with positive and negative net migration rates shows that the average labor income in enterprises of positive net migration provinces in RRD is 11.1 million VND per month and 8 million VND per month for the negative net migration provinces. MRD's average income is 8.0 million VND per month and 6.7 million VND per month for positive net migration and negative net migration provinces, respectively. Thus, income is an attractive or pull factor for migration, and the attractiveness of RRD is significantly higher than that of MRD.

2.1.3. Unemployment, poverty and migration

Unemployment is significantly different between RRD and MRD. From 2018 to 2022, the unemployment rate in RRD will always be lower than that of MRD. However, the unemployment rate in positive net migration provinces is higher than that in negative net migration provinces in RRD, but it is the opposite in MRD, meaning that negative net migration provinces have lower unemployment rates. This means that migrants can contribute to higher unemployment rates in positive net migration provinces in the RRD and migration as a solution to reduce unemployment for negative net migration provinces in the MRD.

Underemployment of working-age workers is reflecting the lack of internal job opportunities in the MRD economy at a high rate during 2015-2022. Statistics show that the underemployment rate in MRD is approximately 4 times higher than in RRD. The underemployment rate combined with the unemployment rate has been a strong push factor of migration in MRD over the last decade.

The multidimensional poverty rate of RRD (0.9% in 2022) is much lower than that of MRD (4.7% in 2022). All positive net migration provinces have lower multidimensional poverty rates than negative net migration provinces in MRD. This result is unclear for RRD; for example, Thai Binh (0.2%) and Ha Nam (0.4%) are negative net migration provinces but have lower multidimensional poverty rates than the destinations, such as Bac Ninh (0.9 %) and Ha Noi (0.8%). This result makes it possible that migrants are poor and arrive at their destination as poor, or there are other factors that promote migration other than poverty that lead to migration.

The proportion of the population using clean water in both deltas is very high, reaching more than 98.5%, and this rate does not differ between net positive migration and negative net migration provinces in the two deltas.

2.1.4. Climate change and migration

Based on the assessment of climate change risks published by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), this study divided provinces in the RRD and MRD by median value of the impact. Accordingly, RRD has (i) strongly climate change-affected provinces, including Quang Ninh, Hai Phong, Thai Binh, Nam Dinh, Ninh Binh, and (ii) less climate change-affected provinces, including Ha Noi, Vinh Phuc, Bac Ninh, Hai Duong, Hung Yen, Ha Nam. In MRD, (i) provinces strongly affected by climate change include An Giang, Kien Giang, Hau Giang, Soc Trang, Bac Lieu, Ca Mau, and (ii) provinces less affected by climate change include Long An, Tien Giang, Ben Tre, Tra Vinh, Vinh Long, Dong Thap, Can Tho (MONRE, 2022). Calculated empirical results show that:

Strongly climate change-affected provinces have negative net migration, while less climate change-affected provinces have positive net migration in both deltas. Strongly climate change-affected provinces in RRD have an average annual number of negative net migrants, or those provinces are migration destinations of 1.9 thousand people per province annually. In MRD, it is 9.8 thousand people per province annually. In contrast, the less climate change-affected provinces have positive net migration, or they are the destination of 11 thousand people/province on average in the RRD annually. However, less climate change-affected provinces are still the departure places of an average of 0.9 thousand people per province annually in the MRD region. Thus, there is a close correlation between climate change and migration. Strongly climate change-affected provinces are the departure for migration. Less climate change-affected provinces in RRD are destinations for both intra-regional and inter-regional migration.

Provinces strongly and less affected by climate change in the RRD have large differences in resource factors. These include population size, labor, enterprise development, and FDI attraction, which are the advantages of less climate change-affected provinces. In the MRD, these factors have no significant difference among strongly and less climate change-affected provinces. It may explain the MRD's negative net migration, which is the out-of-region migration flow. Other factors that might contribute to explain the direction of migration flow, addition to

climate change, are salinization and land subsidence due to dams, groundwater overexploitation and sand mining.

There is no difference in output factors/variables, such as economic growth, per capita income, labor income, unemployment, and poverty, among the strongly and less climate change-affected provinces in the RRD and MRD. However, the multidimensional poverty rate significantly differs between strongly and less climate change-affected provinces in the MRD. It is indifferent in the RRD.

In summary, migration in the RRD is strongly influenced by factors that "pull" migrants from intraregional and interregional locations. Migration in the MRD is strongly influenced by the "push" factors, while the reasons associated with the "pull" factors seem insignificant. As a result, migration in the MRD is largely interregional.

2.2. Provincial migration

2.2.1. Migration-relating regulations/policies

Migration significantly contributes to the socio-economic development and the implementation of Viet Nam's development goals. Properly managing migration not only allows to leverage the benefits of migration for development reducing development gaps, but also achieves the goal of "no one left behind" in the development process, protecting the rights of migrants and ensuring their wellbeing. Internal migration is managed through a unified policy system implemented from the central authorities to localities and stipulated in Vietnamese legal documents.

Migrants have full rights and equal obligations as non-migrants. The Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam stipulates that migrants have equal rights, such as employment, livelihood, residence, income, business, social security, learning, accessing public services, enjoying culture, etc. The exercise of migrants' rights in the Constitution is specifically regulated in relevant migration-related laws.

The right to freedom of residence is stipulated in the Constitution, Law on Residence, and Labor Code. However, citizens exercise these rights according to the provisions of legal guiding documents. For example, migrants follow the Law on Residence related to registration, residence management, rights, obligations, and responsibilities of citizens when exercising their rights to migrate. According to the Law on Residence, migrants who migrate for longer than 30 days must register for residence, and those who migrate for less than 30 days must declare their residence or stay. Based on residence registration, migration management ensures migrants' rights are properly implemented.

The law provides support for certain groups of migrants. For example, the Children's Law stipulates that migrant and refugee children with unregistered parents or caregivers are considered priority beneficiaries of social welfare. Children can receive health insurance, tuition, social benefits, and other support to ensure children's rights. Access to education, especially universal education, is children's right, but permanent residence children are prioritized over temporary residence children. The Law on Education also stipulates that universal education children learning at private schools receive tuition support from the province, including migrant children. However, implementation is heterogeneous across provinces. For example, in the 2023-2024 academic year, Nam Dinh pays 300 and 200 thousand dong per month for urban and rural universal education children learning at private schools, respectively.

The laws regulate social protection for migrants. For example, migrants with residence registration have full rights to health insurance if residing for 3 months or longer and signing labor contracts and social insurance if residing for one month or longer - according to Decree 62/2021/ND-CP guiding implementation of the Law on Residence. For migrants who are unregistered residents (including migrating for less than 30 days but not reporting their stay and for more than 30 days but not registering for temporary residence), they are not allowed to sign labor contracts of 3 months or more (not eligible to participate in insurance paid by employers), not allowed to participate in voluntary health insurance (on a household), and not allowed to access social insurance or unemployment insurance.

However, a review of migration-related policies reveals that some policies relating to migrants implemented at the local level show inconsistencies and do not consider migrants as part of the local workforce and population. First, some provincial policies do not treat migrants as beneficiaries. For instance, the province's labor training policy only provides this service to permanent residents, disregarding migrant workers living in the province. Some localities have not yet held meetings related to migrants. Secondly, some policies prioritize permanent residents. This discrimination manifested even during emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I have been the Vice Chairman of the Ward for nearly 10 years but have never had a meeting related to migrants. When I received the document, I had to review who the migrants were.”

– A ward official in Ha Noi

“At the grassroots level, we dare not do wrong. The resolution clearly states the scope of policy “workers permanently residing in the province”, so migrant workers are not the subject.”

– An officer of the DOLISA in An Giang

The document clearly states that students residing permanently in the area must be recruited, and temporary residents must find another place.

– A ward official in Can Tho

“The first round of COVID-19 vaccination in the locality, the list is made according to permanent residence. When the vaccine arrived in large numbers, everyone in the area was invited to get vaccinated.”

– A commune official in Long An

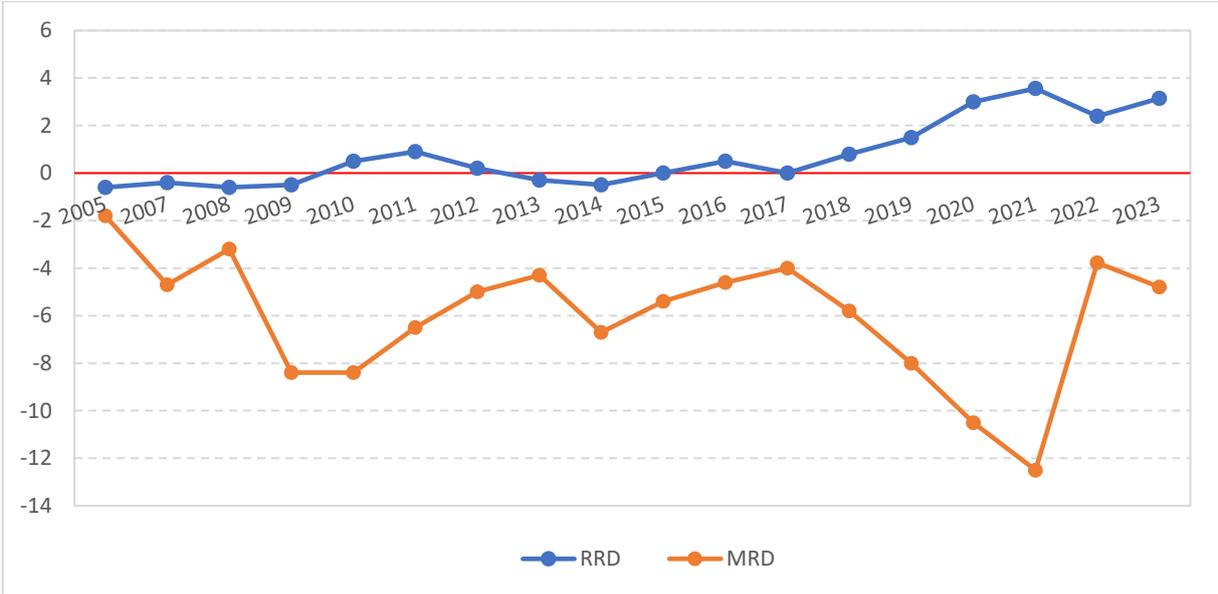
2.2.2. General migration trend

Viet Nam has been experiencing dramatic changes in migration over the past three decades. Migration has become a choice for people to improve their livelihoods, access better education, health, and public services, and reduce regional development gaps (GSO, 2020). RRD and MRD are two regions with strong and distinct migration fluctuations. Using data from the Population and Housing Census and GSO migration statistics, this section describes migration trends in the two regions.

The RRD is an immigration region, while the MRD remains a strong emigration region. Statistical data from the GSO shows that RRD is a positive net migration region, while MRD is a negative

net migration region. The trend still shows that RRD continues to attract migrants with an increasing positive net migration rate, and MRD shows a stronger negative net migration trend, especially after COVID-19 (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Net migration rates in RRD and MRD, 2005-2023



Source: Data adapted from GSO

People in the MRD mainly migrate to the Southeast region, while the RRD attracts migrants from the Northern Mountains. RRD attracted 420 thousand immigrants, accounting for 17.4% of the total number of migrants between regions across the country. Migrants to RRD are mainly from the Northern Mountainous region (209.3 thousand people, accounting for 61.2% of immigrants in RRD). Meanwhile, MRD is the region with the highest emigration rate in the country, with 724.8 thousand people. Most of the migrants from this region moved to the Southeast region, which is the most developed economic region in Viet Nam with a dense network of industrial parks in the key economic quadrilateral including Ho Chi Minh City, Binh Duong, Dong Nai and Ba Ria - Vung Tau (GSO, 2020).

Migration in the provinces in the two deltas has significantly changed. The 2019 Population and Housing Census data shows that Ha Noi, Bac Ninh (in RRD) and Can Tho, Long An (in MRD) are provinces with positive net migration rates, of which Bac Ninh and Long An had changed from negative net migration provinces in 2009 to positive net migration provinces in 2019. This change is due to the rapid development of new industrial parks in these two provinces, attracting a large workforce from other localities to live and work (GSO, 2020). Some other provinces, such as Hai Phong, Hung Yen, and Ninh Binh in the RRD, tend to become provinces that attract migration. On the contrary, the provinces with high negative net migration rates in the country are all in the MRD region, such as Soc Trang (-75.0‰), An Giang (-72.1‰), Ca Mau (-62.7‰), Hau Giang (-61.2‰), Dong Thap (-56.1‰) and Bac Lieu (-52.2‰).

The rates of trained migrants in the RRD (54.8%) are higher than that of MRD (24.1%). The skilled migrants in both deltas increased significantly between 2009 and 2019. The proportion of trained migrants in the RRD was consistently more than twice that in the MRD. As a result, RRD gradually becomes a growth pole when attracting trained human resources. At the same time, the brain drain occurs in MRD, and the unskilled workforce continues to be a barrier to MRD's development.

Migration in RRD is mainly due to families moving, while in MRD, migration is similar due to all three main reasons: finding jobs, family moving, and marriage. Migration due to marriage in MRD is 1.5 times higher than in RRD while looking for a job in RRD is 1.4 times higher than in MRD. It implies that migration in MRD is more strongly associated with network and cultural factors than in RRD, while migration in RRD is more closely associated with employment and income factors.

The Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition of the differences in immigration and emigration rates between the RRD and MRD reveals migration's push and pull factors. Accordingly, provincial income, per capita income, the number of enterprises, and industrial production value attract immigrants (increasing the immigration differences between RRD and MRD). Income and industrialization (employment) are strong factors that attract migrants, particularly the number of enterprises and, subsequently, the local per capita income. On the other hand, population factors and the rate of trained labor help reduce the differences in immigration between RRD and MRD (hindering immigration). It implies that retaining residents and increasing the rate of trained labor may be solutions to limiting emigration in MRD.

2.2.3. Migration flows

This section describes migration flows based on data from the 2009 and 2019 Population and Housing Censuses calculated by the Department of Labor and Employment Statistics of GSO. Migration is measured at the commune level, moving from one commune to another. The structure of migration flows is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Structure of migration flows in RRD and MRD, 2009-2019

Migration flow	RRD		MRD		Country	
	2009	2019	2009	2019	2009	2019
Rural-rural	32.6	25.8	44.8	44.0	33.8	26.4
Rural-urban	30.3	24.9	25.8	20.6	31.4	27.5
Urban-rural	8.4	8.2	11.6	15.5	8.4	9.6
Urban-urban	28.7	41.1	17.9	19.9	26.4	36.5
Intra-regional	53.9	65.3	73.0	79.4	53.9	69.2
Inter-regional	46.1	34.7	27.0	20.6	46.1	30.8

Source: Calculation from Population and Housing Censuses

The urban-urban migration flow dominates in the RRD, while the rural-to-rural migration flow dominates in the MRD. In recent years, urban-urban migration has become more popular in the RRD and accounts for 41.4% of the total migration in the RRD region. It is a sign of migration not for livelihood (job or income) but for other reasons because urban areas often provide similar livelihoods. In MRD, rural-rural migration is still popular, accounting for 44% of total migration in the region. It shows that the reason for migration here is not necessarily livelihood issues but could be other issues. The decrease in rural-urban migration in both RRD and MRD shows that the development gap between urban and rural areas in these two regions tends to narrow when industrialization and urbanization are becoming stronger in suburban and rural areas.

The urban-urban migration flow in the RRD is dominant, and the migrants are skilled, while the rural-rural migration flow is common in the MRD with unskilled migrants. Statistics show that the main migration flow in RRD is urban-urban migration, with 40% of migrants having university

and college degrees, while rural-rural migration is common in MRD, and nearly 90% of migrants have not been trained. This result implies that most workers in RRD move from one urban area to another, mostly from provincial to centrally managed cities (Ha Noi). It suggests that migrants seek better educational opportunities, better services, or family factors rather than for livelihood. This migration is voluntary. In contrast, the prominent migration flow in MRD is rural-rural, mainly unskilled workers. They move from one rural area to another not because of their livelihood, since the rural areas in MRD are similar, but because of weather problems, natural disasters, or the effects of climate change. This migration flow tends to be involuntary migration or forced migration.

Rural departure migration flows are associated with low living standards and “finding new jobs,” while urban departure migration flows are associated with higher living standards and “moving with family/moving house. For example, the rate of rich and very rich in rural-rural migration is 42%, and urban-urban is 89% in RRD, while in MRD, these rates are 11% and 45%, respectively. A noted point is that the rural-rural migration flow in MRD may be strongly influenced by changes in the natural environment and natural disasters caused by climate change. Still, the Population and Housing Census has not yet integrated it, and migrants do not recognize it as a direct migration cause.

Access to clean water and electricity is similar, but housing ownership differs between migration flows in both deltas. This result shows that basic services (such as clean water and electricity) are met, but when accessing housing, migration flows originating from urban areas have a higher rate of owning permanent housing. Its migration flow in RRD is higher than that in MRD.

Intra-regional migration flow is the main trend, which is much higher in the MRD. Intra-regional migration is high in MRD and does not fluctuate much (from 73.0% in 2009 to 79.4% in 2019). Meanwhile, RRD increased from 53.9% in 2009 to 65.3% in 2019, approximately the same as the general rate increase of the whole country (from 53.9% to 69.2%). Combined with natural disaster-related migration policies regulating those migrants being resettled in the same communes, districts, or provinces, migration in MRD is more prone to natural disasters than in RRD.

Intra-regional migration flows in RRD have higher living standards than intra-regional migration flows in MRD. For example, the rate of intra-regional migration flow of rich and very rich migrants in RRD is 75%, and approximately 16% is for MRD. There is evidence that intra-regional migrants in MRD are poor and negatively affected by extreme weather, environment, or climate change. They have to migrate from one commune to another by government policies responding to natural disasters.

The intra-regional migration flow in RRD has higher qualifications (44.5% college and university) and the homeownership rate (65%) than in MRD (11.6%) and (50%), respectively. It shows the situation of intra-regional migrants in both deltas, especially the MRD, which are highly affected by natural disasters and extreme weather and subject to involuntary/forced migration.

2.3 Benefits and challenges encountering migrants in the two deltas

Internal migration has various impacts on the economy, society, and environment at both origin and destination places. The movement of labor between regions promotes economic growth and structural transformation (Lewis, 1954; Todaro, 1980) but is uneven between localities when adding labor to the host destination, causing shortages at home (World Bank, 2009). Migration

changes labor supply and wages, promoting industrialization and urbanization (Harris & Todaro, 1970; Todaro, 1980). Migration changes society, causing changes in population characteristics and structure, the status of the elderly and children in rural areas (GSO, 2020; Lall et al., 2006; Todaro, 1980); cultural integration, changes in social networks (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001); Migrants have an increasing access to public services, but put pressure on health and education infrastructure in the destination, leading to health risks and human capital quality (CECODES et al., 2024; Coleman, 1988; Todaro, 1980). In addition, migration also has environmental impacts such as pollution, waste and urban congestion, urban expansion, rural abandonment, and challenges to environmental sustainability (Bai, 2003; Todaro, 1980; UNDP, 2014).

From the perspective of managers, migrants bring both contributions and challenges to socio-economic development and migrant management in the destination localities. Interviews with managers in the two delta regions show that:

Migrants supplement the shortage of labor for industrialization, which is a solution to solve the problem of surplus labor and unemployment. For highly industrialized provinces or the political-economic centers of the region such as Ha Noi, Bac Ninh, Can Tho, or Long An, there is a shortage of labor in both the formal and informal sectors and migrants make up for this shortage. For example, Bac Ninh needs to recruit 35,000 workers in 2023 and most of these workers are migrants.² On the contrary, for provinces with low levels of industrialization such as the MRD provinces, migration is a solution to surplus labor or unemployment. For example, according to the GSO, the labor force of the MRD in 2022 is 9.4 million people, of which 9.2 million are employed and only 1.2 million are working in enterprises. In An Giang in 2022, 60% of the labor force worked in the agricultural sector, experiencing underemployment, and low and unstable income. Migration is the solution to unemployment and underemployment among agricultural workers in the MRD.

“Every year, businesses in the province need to recruit about 35,000 new workers. Migrant workers meet the increasing labor demand and contribute to the socio-economic development of the province.”
- A leader of DOLISA Bac Ninh.

:The number of workers working in industrial parks and outside industrial parks is 370 thousand people. ... Migrants from other places account for about 30-40%. The province's new labor demand is about 40-50 thousand jobs because local people cannot meet the demand, so they have to recruit more workers from other provinces.”
- A leader of DOLISA Long An

“Binh Duong is the capital of industry... The number of migrant workers from other provinces accounts for more than 80% of the total labor force... Migrants come from all provinces and cities. Still, the majority are from the MRD... People from the Central and Northern regions are currently decreasing in number because in the Northern provinces, such as Bac Ninh, Bac Giang, and Thai Nguyen... Industrial parks have also developed... The labor force is needed there.”
- A leader of DOLISA Binh Duong

² Report No. 267/BC-SLDTBXH dated December 14, 2023 of the DOLISA Bac Ninh.

Skilled migrants significantly contribute to growth and employment in urban and highly industrialized areas. Interviews with government officials in Ha Noi, Bac Ninh, Can Tho, Long An, and Binh Duong were consistent with the role of skilled migrants, especially high-skilled migrants and foreign experts.³ They can work in government agencies, as management, or as experts and engineers in enterprises and are an important force in helping localities promote industrialization and transform the economic structure towards industrialization.

“Many high-quality workers, managers, and experts work in the province. Many go to work in the morning and return in the evening by company-sponsored vehicles. They do not have to register for temporary residence [according to the 2020 Law on Residence] locally and have made great contributions to the province's socio-economic development.”

– A leader of DOLISA, Bac Ninh

“Experts, managers, and engineers live in Ho Chi Minh City but work in Long An. They live here all day long, making important contributions to the province's development.”

– A leader of DOLISA Long An

“The current trend of businesses is towards skilled labor, those who already have skills and can be trained in a short-term, hands-on manner.”

– A leader of DOLISA Binh Duong

Migrants create jobs for the local population. In addition to the number of migrant workers having jobs in the enterprise sector, migrants also create jobs for local people and migrants themselves. Economic activities serving migrants, such as housing, catering, grocery sales, hair-cutting and shampooing services, etc., have also developed. For example, a ward in the research sample in Long An has more than 6,000 rental rooms for migrant workers, creating jobs and incomes for local people. Another ward in the research sample in Hai Duong, with more than 3,000 people, or a ward in Bac Ninh with 6,000 workers staying in rental housing, provides opportunities to provide rental housing and other services for migrants living in the area. Migrants bring income opportunities to local people.

“There are more than 5,000 rental rooms in the ward. If the average rent is 1 million VND per month, the local people have an income of about 60 billion VND per year.”

- A ward policeman in Bac Ninh

“In the commune, there is a large company with about 1,000 workers from other provinces coming to work. People have built many rental houses, and their income has also improved. In addition, some services such as food and drink are provided to serve the workers.”

- A commune leader in Long An

In addition, migrants bring many challenges to the development and management of destinations. Specifically:

³ According to report No. 267/BC-SLDTBXH dated December 14, 2023 of the Department of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs of Bac Ninh, Bac Ninh currently has more than 10,000 foreigners working in enterprises in the province, most of whom are managers, engineers, or researchers.

Housing pressure. Migrants come with housing needs, which is a challenge for localities due to difficulties in forecasting demand, determining land funds, allocating investment capital, and mobilizing the participation of the private sector. Social housing is limited and distorted;⁴ social housing prices are high or are only in planning, dormitories for workers are only available in large companies and do not meet demand, and private boarding houses do not meet decent living standards. As a result, migrant workers have to live in substandard, tiny rental rooms, severely lacking basic living facilities.

“No access to social housing. Most rent for 800,000 - 1.5 million/month, in alleys. Boarding houses are almost like slums. This problem has become clear during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

– A leader at the DOLISA, Binh Duong

“It is not easy for migrants to buy social housing. To buy a house of this kind, buyers need to pay an initial 300 million dong, which is quite a large amount for migrant workers. Buying social housing is still a dream for workers.”

– An official of DOLISA in An Giang

“There are more than 6,000 rental rooms in the commune, many of which are built on rice fields, illegally built, have thatched roofs, and do not have fire management schemes. If they are not allowed to operate now, where will the migrants live?”

– A commune official in Long An

“The ward has nearly 10,000 people from other places, of which about 4,000 students rent rooms. Solving housing issues is very stressful.”

– A ward official in Ha Noi

Pressure on educational infrastructure: Highly-industrialized provinces attract many migrant workers and their children, especially in preschool and primary schools. Children's education is a right and is protected by the state. To meet the increased demand coming from migrating families, localities should increase the number of schools, classes, and students per class. For example, Bac Ninh increased on average 400 preschool classes, 20 schools, 240 primary classes, and 150 secondary school classes annually, and Binh Duong increased 30,000 students from preschool to high school yearly. However, building schools takes time due to limited public investment, so school overload always occurs. As a result, children of migrant workers are in a disadvantageous position.

“There are two groups in the classroom: children of permanent residents and those of migrants. Children see inequality every day.”

– A leader of DOLISA, Binh Duong

“The ward has a kindergarten and 6 childcare centers, a primary school with 11 first-grade classes, and a secondary school. The newly-built schools are overloaded. A new

⁴ According to the Project on Investment in Construction of at least 1 million social housing units in the period 2021-2023, the whole country will have only 156.7 thousand houses under construction and 7.8 million m² of social housing completed, reaching 65% of the plan by 2020. From 2021 to 2030, it is expected that there will be 1.062 million social housing units and workers' housing units, of which 428 thousand units will be built in 2021-2025 and 634.2 thousand units will be built in 2026-2030.

primary school with an area of 14,000 m² will be built in May 2024.”

– A ward leader in Hai Duong

“The commune has a public kindergarten, 15 private kindergartens, and two primary schools, but they do not meet the demand. The commune is building 12 more classrooms for the primary school. In 2024, one more kindergarten and one primary school will be built with district-level budget.”

– A commune leader in Long An

“Pressure on students' education. The schools here are overloaded, especially for preschool and primary school age. We prioritize local people first, then temporary residents. The number of temporary school-age residents is very large, so they have to study in private schools. There are private schools for preschool children but no private schools for school-aged children.”

–A commune official in Long An

Pressure on the health system. Migrants put upward pressure on the healthcare system at the host destination. General hospitals, district- and commune/ward- health centers lack the capacity to serve. Many provinces can invest in building hospitals, but the problem is that it is difficult to attract doctors and nurses. This makes the overload situation even worse. Moreover, migrants working in the informal sector often do not have health insurance, even voluntary health insurance. This puts the burden of health care on migrants and local authorities, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“General hospitals and district healthcare centers have few staff and are also in charge of preventive health care, being under pressure of autonomy, and are of low quality, so they cannot meet the demand.”

– A leader of DOLISA Binh Duong

“The grassroots health sector is overloaded. During the pandemic, this weakness has been even more prevalent. Ward and health officials work day and night shifts without breaks, but no one knows how many people need medical support.”

– A ward official in Hai Duong

Social evils and crime. Migrants to urban areas are affected by urban evils. Migrants to newly industrialized areas still maintain the lifestyle and customs of the place of departure, which are no longer suitable for the place of destination. Research results show social evils related to migrant workers, but the rate is small. This result is due to (i) Regular police surveillance at the commune level, (ii) Good management of migrants thanks to personal identification, (iii) The nature of migrants is honest, only wanting to find work, (iv) employers have their own surveillance network, (v) rental houses are equipped with security cameras.

“Professional police are here, so the security and order situation is much better. Thanks to professional police, social evils have decreased a lot, and security is ensured.”

– A town official in Hai Duong

“Workers in Can Giuoc are kind. Companies have a network with each other. If you are fired, no company will hire you.”
– An official of DOLISA in Long An

“The landlord installed security cameras, theft decreased, and management was better. The whole commune now has more than 300 security cameras. The current problem is the rampant loudspeaker problem. All of them are related to migrants.”
– A commune policeman in Long An

“The ward police established an interdisciplinary inspection committee to check the place of residence regularly. The local police here know your name and year of birth... they still know. If you come for a few days, you may not see them, but after a few weeks, they will see you.”
– An official of DOLISA in Can Tho

“They bring customs, drinking, or fighting down here. When the door opens, the good wind blows more, but the bad wind also blows more... Most people drive motorbikes without a driver's license... and then cause traffic accidents. According to statistics in Bac Ninh, most motorbike accidents involve people coming down from the mountainous provinces.”
– A ward policeman in Bac Ninh

Migrants overload essential infrastructure. The difficulty for localities is that they cannot predict the number of migrants while migrants are increasing. It leads to the overloading of essential infrastructure such as housing, schools, health care, etc., and the government needs to respond more.

“The biggest challenge now is that we need to understand the growth of the migration population. Too many people come, affecting the ability to meet the requirements for jobs, housing, schools, and healthcare due to overcrowding, especially in industrial wards.”
– An official of DOLISA in Can Tho

“At the beginning of the year, elementary schools must report to the Department of Education the expected number of students to allocate teachers. Permanent residents are easy. The difficulty is not knowing the temporary residents and not estimating how many children will enroll. This makes schools passive.”
– A commune officer in Long An

CHAPTER 3: SITUATIONS OF MIGRANTS IN THE RED RIVER AND MEKONG RIVER DELTA

3.1. The reasons for migration and registration for temporary residence

3.1.1. The reasons for migration

The study conducted interviews with 106 out-of-province migrants and 16 focus group discussions with migrants in the Red River and Mekong Delta regions, asking them about the reasons and process of migration. Migrants move for many reasons related to each specific case and characteristics of the two delta regions.

Migration is a people's right protected by law. Current policies and regulations (Constitution and Residence Law 2020, Decree 62/2021/ND-CP, Circular 66/2023/TT-BCA, Circular 17/2024/TT-BCA) all stipulate Movement is the right of the people. Local authorities affirm that this is the people's right and guide people to exercise that right. Although people do not yet care that migration is their right, they all realize that moving is their decision and do not encounter any obstacles when making the move.

"The place we go to work is our choice. It's where it's easy to find a job."
– A migrant in Soc Trang

"Where people move is their rights. The government carries out management, guidance, and support so they [migrants] can contribute to local development."
– A leader of DOLISA Hai Duong

"We welcome migrant workers here. Binh Duong has about 1.3 million immigrants. Coming here is their decision, welcoming them is our job."
– A leader of DOLISA Binh Duong

Migrants' purpose is to find job opportunities. Job opportunities and income increase and stability are an important driver in the decision to migrate. Securing a stable and higher paid job allows migrants to take care of themselves and their families. The interview results are similar to the results of previous studies in Viet Nam. For example, GSO (2020) and GSO and UNFPA (2020) found that migrants looking for better job opportunities are the biggest reason for migrants in Viet Nam, accounting for 37% of the total number of migrants. This is also the main reason for migrants in the Mekong Delta (32%) and the second highest reason in the RRD (29%). CECODES, RTA & UNDP (2024) found that looking for a job is the second-largest reason for the decision to migrate, accounting for 22% of the 2023 survey sample. People who decide to migrate are those characterized by unemployment, underemployment, unstable employment, or low-income and precarious employment in the countryside. With such works, it is difficult for them to meet their demand given the market economy is increasing in rural areas. The following are some opinions of people participating in interviews about their reasons for migrating:

"Selling all the rice and corn for the year probably earns 20 million, but it's not just myself who does it, it's the whole family [of 9 people] who does it... Only when I come down here to work, I have money."
– A migrant in Nam Dinh

"I go to work in a company to earn money to support my children."

– A migrant in Nam Dinh

"Working for someone else, .. going to Saigon to work in the private sector... for about a year, in 2019 they lacked market demand, so they laid us off until early 2021 when we returned to Saigon...but because of the pandemic, we stuck there, could not go home, no jobs. After quarantine (Directive 16 – end of 2021), I returned to my hometown but there was no job, I did whatever people asked.

I came here to work in early 2023."

– A migrant in Soc Trang

"I came down here to work because up there [Son La] we only grow corn, cassava, agricultural products... but it's too cheap, only cassava is grown, and there is no cultivated land..., cassava is not priced well, has been depreciating in recent years.

The harvest depends on the weather."

– A migrants in Bac Ninh

"My parents agreed to let me follow my sister to go to the South to make a living."

– A migrant in Can Tho

People migrate because of family reunification. Migration to reunify the family has many forms found in this study such as migration due to marriage, migration of family members according to the household's decision to migrate (for example, parents go to work), children must follow; husband/wife must follow while working), migration to help migrants (parents migrate to help children, migrate for medical treatment) and migration due to divorce. CECODES, RTA & UNDP (2024) found that this is the largest reason for migration decisions, accounting for 41% of the 2023 survey sample. This is the second highest reason for migration with 36% of migrants in Viet Nam, and that is the highest reason for migration in the RRD, accounting for 41% of the survey sample (GSO, 2020; GSO & UNFPA, 2020). The following are the opinions of some migrants who participated in the interviews:

"When my couple and children lived in my father-in-law's house, I only lived there temporarily, and my household registration was in Tien Giang. When my wife left [divorced], my daughter and I moved here."

– A migrant in An Giang

"If you have a husband who works here, you should go with him... If you have a husband or wife, you must go with him wherever you go... otherwise, you will ruin that person ... We go for both of us [for economic while keeping her husband]."

– A migrant in Hai Duong

"Due to the nature of my job, I work in the countryside and have a stable job... My wife works [as a translator] in Ha Noi. Previously, my wife and I worked in two different places, my wife and the eldest child lived in Ha Noi, and the two younger children lived at home with their father. After that, they found it inconvenient for them to live in different places."

– A migrant in Nam Dinh

"I'm also leaving because of a sad family matter [my wife just passed away]."

– A migrant in Binh Duong

Migrants want to experience city life and services (life, urban services, vocational opportunities, higher education). Migrants want to experience life in another place (usually an urban area) with a desire to experience life in a place that is different from their place of permanent residence. Experiential migrants are often young and independent of their families.

“Moving down here was for a change, my partner and I wanted to change and start their careers.”

– A migrant in Long An

“Just work for a short time, experience the change, and then find another job. Still young, planning to travel a lot and know many places.”

– A migrant in Hai Duong

“The living environment, medical services, and education here [Can Tho city] are much better than in my home town [Soc Trang]. I have seen people die [in the countryside] just because of lack of medical facilities and not receiving timely emergency treatment.”

– A migrant in Can Tho

“At home [District 3, Ho Chi Minh City], my parents keep talking about getting married and having children. I came down here, I didn't listen to any complaints, I experienced a new life, the cost of living was cheap, and I made many new friends.”

– A migrant in An Giang

Migrants do not consider climate change as a direct cause of their decision to migrate. Climate change does not directly force people to migrate but makes it more difficult for them to stay in their places of residence. Many migrants believe that their decision to migrate is due to low crops productivity or low farming outputs due to drought, saltwater intrusion, etc. Therefore, their livelihood is not guaranteed. They do not recognize the underlying cause of low productivity and low output. This is something to keep in mind when designing or implementing policies related to migration. Regarding environmental issues, we did not find direct evidence of people migrating for natural environmental reasons in the study sample. Normally, people who migrate because of the natural environment fall into two groups: those who are forced to migrate or those who have the conditions to migrate.

“Farming in the countryside is unstable. My family had a fish farm. There was a flood. All the fish went with the flow and we lost about 6-7 million. There was a storm at the beginning of the rice season, and we lost the field... But that's not why I left.”

– A migrant in Bac Ninh

“Once in a while, there would be a big flood, a long drought, or a sharp drop in crop price. These affect [our] income. The place where my house is located is in a mountainous area, not affected by floods. It is mainly affected by wind and storms that cause crop failure. This is not the [main] reason for coming here. The reason for [me] coming here is money.”

– A migrant in Bac Ninh

“At that time, I worked in the river, cultivated land, and so on, and then it [the land] all eroded towards the river. My family helped me buy some land here. My oldest son left to work as a construction worker, he came back and was able to make the house's

foundation. Then he left for another 5-7 months, kept going back for that but still has not finished the house.”

– A family member of migrant in Soc Trang

“Growing cassava depends on the weather. Having a drought means the crop will fail. Our land on the hill cannot be irrigated. In the past, we had rain. Now drought is more frequent. When planting season arrives, there is drought. It just doesn’t work.”

– A migrant in Bac Ninh

3.1.2. Registration for temporary residence among migrants

According to the provisions of the 2020 Residence Law and the guiding documents guiding the implementation of the 2020 Residence Law, migrants need to register at their place of residence. Migrants, based on the nature of residence, carry out necessary registration activities such as permanent residence registration, temporary residence registration, and temporary stay notifications. The residence law stipulates that people who migrate to another place for 30 days or more must register temporary residence, and those who move to another place for 30 days or less must register their temporary stay. Temporary residence registration or stay notification is digitized through the National Database on population, residence, and personal identification numbers. Interview results show.

Most migrants register for temporary residence. In the interview sample, most of the migrants staying in rented accommodation made photocopies of their citizen identification cards and gave them to the landlord, and they assumed that the landlord would help carry out all the remaining registration procedures. Anyone who has a citizen ID card means the system has recorded them. The landlord provides proof that the accommodation is legal to register temporary residence for the tenant. When interviewing commune/ward police, many opinions also confirmed that migrants had been notified and registered.

“I submit my citizen ID card, I only send pictures to the landlord, the landlord takes care of the rest. It was the same when I was in Binh Duong.”

– A migrant in Long An

“Everyone has to sleep somewhere. The landlord needs to know the resident’s information. Only criminals and undocumented people do not report.”

– A ward police in Soc Trang

“In the past, there were still cases of non-registration, but now there are very few. the declaration procedure is very convenient, the landlord is subject to administrative sanctions if they do not make the declaration or notification.”

– A town policeman in Hai Duong

Migrants do not clearly understand temporary residence registration. Migrants in general do not fully understand and differentiate between temporary residence registration and temporary stay notification. The simplest way for them to understand registration is to provide citizen identification to the landlord or fill out a form given to them by the landlord. Meanwhile, notification of stay can be kept in a book, while temporary residence registration must be declared in the database system according to the personal identification code. Thus, there are two problems here: (i) inconsistency in the understanding of temporary residence registration between migrants and the local governments and (ii) migrants do not distinguish between

temporary residence registration and notification of stay. This is an issue that needs further clarification for migrants.

“As soon as I arrived, the landlord asked for a photocopy of my ID card. The uncle [the landlord] told me to register with the community and the police.”

– A migrant in Can Tho

“The construction contractor took a photo of my ID card, I did not realize whether this was an act of notification. We are strangers here and don't know where to report.”

– A migrant in Hai Duong

“Registering for temporary residence is not difficult at all. Bring your ID card and submit it to the landlord, who will report it to the police.”

– A migrant in An Giang

“When they arrived, they presented their ID cards to the landlord to report to the police. The ward police give the landlords an account and they enter the information themselves. If after 30 days they continue to stay and meet the conditions, the ward police will guide them through temporary residence procedures. Otherwise, they will also guide them to continue declaring.”

– A ward policeman in Long An

Registering for temporary residence is relatively convenient. Migrants can apply for temporary residence registration or stay notification relatively smoothly. They can declare online via VNeID, the public service portal, register at the commune/ward police station, or ask the innkeeper to declare. Temporary residence declaration is done directly via VNeID or goes to the commune/ward and the police register on the public service portal.

“When I went to the town police station to do it, there were no officers to guide me. It takes time to figure it out myself.”

– A migrant in Ha Noi

“Registration is done by the landlord. The landlord told me to make a photocopy of my ID, then he went to register me.”

– A migrant in Can Tho

“We have people on duty, receiving and processing for citizens. What takes time is verifying whether the rental property complies with the law. We know the landlord in the area so we can handle it quickly.”

– A commune policeman in Long An

“According to the new law, registration is now simple and does not require management like in the past. When they arrive, they show their identification and the police register them.”

– A ward official in Can Tho

“The accommodation notification software is installed for rental households to make accommodation notifications. Temporary residence registration is done through public services, submitting documents via software. You can apply at any location, it's very convenient.”

– A commune policeman in Bac Ninh

“Now migrants do not have to run to the police to request temporary residence or temporary absence. In the past, there was a temporary residence book for temporary absences. Currently on the software, it takes 1 minute and 30 seconds to complete.”

– An official of DOLISA in Soc Trang

Migrant management is showing signs of overload in some localities. Interview results show that the residence management agency in the Mekong Delta generally keeps close eyes on residential areas, regional police, residential groups, and motel owners to manage migrants. Meanwhile, there is evidence that residence management is overloaded in some localities in the RRD when residence management agencies report being overloaded due to a lack of personnel, a large number of migrants, and the need to demand administrative and professional work in the police sector.

“Residential police monitor their area every day so they clearly know the number of permanent, temporary, and staying residents. The implementation method is through the eyes and ears of the people, the hamlet chief, and the police procedure.”

– A ward policeman in Can Tho

“It is not possible to capture all groups migrating for less than 30 days. They change accommodation, change jobs, they work seasonally, and go back and forth. We manage it tightly, but people hate it!”

– A ward policeman in Hai Duong

“Migrants only declare for the first time, then they change jobs or places of residence and we don't know.”

– A ward official in Ha Noi

“Here, a regional police officer is in charge of two villages, and about 800 households, and also works on a part-time basis. I am a commander but still have to be in direct duty of a village. There are times when I have to be in charge of many things, related to line-industry operations.”

– A commune policeman in Bac Ninh

The coordination between registration authorities and migrant labor management authorities is limited. The local registration management is relatively good compared to the management of migrant workers. Some interviews show that the DOLISA can grasp the number of workers and migrant workers reported by businesses but does not clearly understand the number of workers and migrant workers in the informal sector. This is partly due to the issue of data sharing between registration management and labor management. The labor management has not been able to share data from the registration authority. Every time the social-labor sector needs this data, it asks for the migration management authorities or conducts its own survey. This reflects a waste of resources and a lack of effective use of the population database as well as taking advantage of results from population management.

“The police manage the population, they have the data but they do not share it. [We] build a population database but there is no regulation for sharing to the labor management. The province is coordinating with the provincial police to solve the problem. Hopefully, the labor management authorities can access that data.”

– A leader of DOLISA Long An

“Currently, the police and labor management authorities are coordinating to enter employee information and labor declaration. Later, when completed, it can be shared, but there must be regulations so that the labor management can request data from the police. However, the two parties have not solved this problem.”

– A ward policeman in Binh Duong

“National population data is kept by the police. The workers who came to work and registered there. I did not get any report. My department is already busy conducting a survey on the local labor force, but I have to meet you guys today. You should cite in the report that the police need to share that data with us.”

– An official of DOLISA in Hai Duong

“Sharing population data must be decided by the central government. If the central government shares it with any ministry, that ministry keeps it to themselves... There must be a roadmap for this.”

– A ward policeman in Bac Ninh

3.2. Employment conditions of the migrants

Interviews with migrants and analytical data in PAPI 2023 (CECODES et al., 2024) show that an important reason explaining people's migration decisions is jobs and employment. Migrants want to find a job or a better job, as a basis for their better life. Finding a job is a crucial factor in people's migration behavior. According to GSO and UNFPA (2020), migrant workers with technical expertise in the RRD (55%) are much higher than in the Mekong Delta (24%). This is related to the work that migrants undertake. Calculations from the 2022 VHLSS show that 29.2% of workers in households with migrants in the Mekong Delta have labor contracts, compared to that of 58.3% in the RRD. This means that nearly 70% of migrants in the Mekong Delta and 42% of migrants in the RRD often work in the informal sector, where employment protection regulations are very limited. Based on interviews with migrants in this study, some key findings are drawn as follows:

The jobs of migrants are very diverse. Migrants work in both the formal and informal sectors, like self-employment and being an employees, in jobs that require expertise and simple jobs. If we consider jobs by economic sector, it is common for migrant workers to work as workers in manufacturing enterprises; working in the trade, service, and repair industry; accommodation and food services; construction or as civil servants, public employees, etc. In the research sample, migrants with professional qualifications/occupations are more common in the RRD. Professional/vocational migrants often: (i) work in the formal sector (officials, technical workers, team/group management positions) with relatively good labor contracts and benefits, less overtime. These migrant workers often have stable jobs, guaranteed working conditions, labor protection, and health insurance. (ii) ownership in the informal sector in large urban areas and highly industrialized areas including owners of food stores, hair services, spas, grocery stores, car repair, electronics, telephones, etc. The employment of the group of high-skilled workers is relatively stable, having high responsibility, and often in the service and commerce sector. Many migrants in this group are considered as safe migrants.

“I work at TL 1 primary school, Thot Not district. The teaching job is in the Primary Education Pedagogy field and is stable. The payments are in line with the state regulations and are also subject to local authorities.”

– A migrant in Can Tho

“I studied mechanical engineering and car repair. We have the skills to be independent, so I rented a house to use as a repair workshop. There's a lot of work here, so I hired four more people to help. The average income is 12 million VND per month.”

– A migrant in Ha Noi

“I sell computers, stationery, and groceries, but my main business is computers. Business is stable because here only I work. I run my own business, I do it how I want when I want, and I don't have to depend on anyone else.”

– A migrant in Soc Trang

Migrants without expertise or occupation are low-skilled workers, working mainly in the formal sector, including manufacturing workers – the companies only provide short-term training, or are freelance occupations. The formal working group, mainly workers in factories, has labor contracts, social insurance, health insurance, and standard safety protection. However, this group of migrant workers often has to work many overtime hours to ensure a stable income, many having no extra benefits, unstable jobs, and experiencing high job turnovers. For employees and freelance workers such as masons, painters, lottery sellers, street vendors, noodle sellers, shrimp peelers, gardeners, and tree care workers, this group of migrants often works without a labor contract, no health insurance and social insurance, low or no extra-benefits, unstable seasonal work, high risk of changing jobs and moving workplaces. Migrants in this group often change jobs, places of work, and places of residence.

“I work as a driver and porter. Do not have a labor contract. No insurance. I sometimes work even on holidays.”

– A migrant in An Giang

“There is no support at all! The company provides Tet holiday support. There is Tet, but there is no “festival”.”

– A migrant in An Giang

“Work according to oral contract. There are no allowances, blankets, mats, fans, etc. you have to buy them all yourself. People don't support me at all!”

– A migrant in Hai Duong

“I saw a job ad on Facebook. I came to apply for a job. [We] made an oral contract for a job making 3,000 loaves of bread a day. There is no other support.”

– A migrant in Can Tho

Migrants have to work many hours overtime to secure a higher income. Results from interviews and focus groups show that migrant workers working in the formal and informal sectors are different greatly in income. In the official sector, most income is about 7-8 million VND per month and is 9-11 million VND per month with overtime hours, with some companies reaching up to 14 million per month. Pay in the informal sector is lower, about 5-7 million VND per month. This makes migrant workers always want to work overtime, lengthening the total hours. This situation

arises for several reasons. First, policy to keep labor costs cheap with low regional wages. Enterprises design low working hours and salary programs but still ensure regional minimum wage regulations. However, due to the low minimum wage, workers have to work overtime. Second, enterprises establish working hours to exploit labor and circumvent regulations to save costs. Enterprises require workers to work from 6:00 to 18:00. Despite paying overtime for working hours beyond 8 hours per day, businesses exploit the health of migrant workers by going to work early, without breaks and snacks between regular work and overtime according to regulations. Third, businesses have interconnected networks. It is not easy for a good business to increase wages for its workers because other business owners in the same area oppose it.

“Two children live with my husband. I send money home to support all three and my husband's parents. Having an average income, but feeding such a large number of people is a bit difficult.”

– A migrant in Nam Dinh

“Every day, my husband and I go to work from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. My husband found it too hard, so he quit and looked for another job.”

– A migrant in Long An

“I work from 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM, even if there is no customer but the contracted time is like that.”

– A migrant in Ha Noi

“I work 12-hour shifts. The company is so ridiculous. Other companies have work shifts from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM. But for my company, I start working from 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM, with 3 hours overtime, 1 hour at the beginning, 2 hours at the end.”

– A migrant in Hai Duong

“Their businesses circumvent the laws by forcing workers to work from 6:00 AM to late night. Although they pay for overtime hours, but they cannot force workers to start their workday at 6:00 AM. Cannot do additional work before main work.”

– An official of DOLISA in Binh Duong

“Work from 7:00 PM to 7:00 AM, 15 days of night work shifts, then 15 days of day work shifts. Work until 10:30 PM, take an hour off, and bring your own food out to eat. After a break, work all the time, no breaks.”

– A migrant in Hai Duong

“Monthly salary with overtime payment is 8-9 million/month, not Sunday work but overtime, on average 2-3 hours a day [over time]. If you don't work overtime, the salary is low, only 6 million/month.

If you work overtime, you'll get an extra meal and lunch.”

– A migrant in Nam Dinh

Unemployed migrants. In the survey sample, several migrants are currently unemployed. This result is similar to the finding of GSO (2020) when the unemployment rate for migrants is 2.28% in the RRD and 2.67% in the Mekong Delta. Reasons for unemployment are diverse: (i) migrants have just arrived at their accommodation, have not yet found a job, or are waiting for a job; (ii) migrants temporarily quit their jobs because the company has less work and has to lay off workers; (iii) migrants are bored with jobs that require too much overtime and inadequate

income; (iv) migrants change jobs and wait for new jobs; and, (v) migrants do not participate in housework. Daily living depends on family members or savings. These migrants appear worried about their job prospects, life, children's education, family happiness, and future.

"I returned from working in Dubai and now I am looking for a job. Came here with my partner who is studying hairdressing here. The two of us rely on my savings for our living. It will be better when you go to work."

– A migrant in Long An

"I came down to work for a few days and was out of work. Sitting for a long time, I'm so bored that I don't want to play cards anymore. If you work one day and take two days off, you won't have any money left to return home."

– A migrant in Hai Duong

"My family kept asking me to return home, but because the child was in the middle of studying, he could not return. If I stay here and do nothing, I feel like it's a waste. When I work, I don't feel secure about my children's education."

– A migrant in Can Tho

"Recently, I went to work, but the company let me off during the pandemic. After that, when I applied for a job again, they said they only accepted people from 18 to 40 years old. I was older than that age cohort so they didn't recruit me. More than two years at home without doing anything. Cook at home for two children."

– A migrant in Binh Duong

The employment of migrants in the RRD is subject to the role played by brokers and labor supply companies. The study found that some migrant workers in Ha Noi, Bac Ninh, Nam Dinh, and Hai Duong go to work under the arrangement of labor supply companies. These companies recruit workers in the Northern Mountainous provinces and bring them down to work. They provide seasonal workers for each business, receive wages, and pay them back to the workers, or they help businesses recruit and receive service fees. These businesses support migrants in finding work but charge fees from migrant workers and appear to keep migrants' documents (citizen identification cards). The seasonal labor supply makes migrants' job flexibility very high. This also causes difficulties for the migrants themselves and the management of migrants.

"I went down following the company's job recruitment introduction. When I got off, they kept my citizen ID card, telling me I would work for 2 months and then return it. If you quit your job within those two months, you must pay them 1.5 million VND. When I got down here, I realized that I was not entitled to work for the company."

– A migrant in Ha Noi

"I'm working for the construction owner. My group has seven people, all working for him. Wherever he tells me to go, I'll go."

– A migrant in Hai Duong

"Working for the company [labor-supplying company], I work with no contract, no social insurance, and get nothing. Now in industrial parks, there are also many companies that hire labor and many companies that lease labor like that. The difference in salaries paid to workers by these two companies is very high."

– A migrant in Hai Duong

Migrants in the RRD show signs of finding jobs closer to their hometowns. Migrants in the RRD previously migrated to work in localities far from home such as Binh Duong, Dong Nai, and other remote provinces. After the COVID-19 shock, they returned home and now they find jobs closer to their hometowns instead of migrating for work far away. According to officials in the research sample, there is a certain percentage of migrant workers. People in this group are often older migrants, migrants with health problems, migrants with children or elderly parents, and migrants in localities near industrial centers or in localities experiencing recent industrialization. These migrants may be tired or hoping to find work more suited to local “new contextual realities.”

“My parent did not change their household registration but returned to our hometown to live on temporary residence. They both have illnesses [platelet disease] and their health is quite fragile. When we came here, we had to hire a house maid, and rely on our relatives, but the weather is good here, and we are surrounded by relatives, live well emotionally and we care for each other.”

– A migrant in Nam Dinh

“Previously went to the south to work, stayed there for more than 1 year, and worked in Binh Duong. I left my job in Binh Duong and returned to Lang Son. After that, I came back here (Bac Ninh) to look for a job. Because my parents were old, they wanted me to come here to be closer to home. Been working here for more than 1 year.”

– A migrant in Bac Ninh

*“Before, I lived in Binh Duong so far away that I only came back once a year. I left for a job here, near home, near wife and children, near family...
On a day off, it takes a few hours to get home.”*

– A migrant in Hai Duong

3.3. Living conditions

When considering the living conditions of migrants, the study refers to material life (income/spending, housing, utilities, power outages, etc.), mental life, security and safety, and social life. The analysis results from the PAPI survey data in 2023 and VHLSS data in 2022 show that:

Migrants to the RRD have a higher average income than migrants to the MRD, while registered migrants have higher incomes than unregistered migrants in both deltas. The calculation results from the 2022 PAPI survey show that migrants in the RRD have an average monthly income (15.1 million VND/month) higher than migrants in the MRD (11.0 million VND/month), this result is true for both registered and unregistered migrants. For example, unregistered migrants in the RRD and the MRD have incomes of 13.8 million and 8.3 million, respectively⁴. GSO (2020) calculates the Wealth index, which reflects the standard of living for migrants in the two deltas, showing that the proportion of migrants belonging to the rich group and above in the RRD is the highest in the country, reaching 67.4%, much higher than that of rich migrants in the MRD, at 21.8% (see also Annex 7).

Calculations from the 2022 VHLSS also indicate that the income of households with migrants is lower than that of households without migrants. Similar results are observed in the RRD and the MRD, implying that low income is a reason for migration. However, this income gap is larger in the MRD than in the RRD, and the income in the MRD is significantly lower than in the RRD (see Annex 6 for more details). The survey results also show that the proportion of households with

migrants living in semi-permanent housing in the MRD (70.4%) is higher than that of non-migrant households (68.1%). These figures in the RRD are 12.9% and 14.4%, respectively.

FGDs and in-depth interviews reveal the following findings:

The majority of migrants live in unqualified hostels. This result is different from previous studies when referring to migrant housing by level of solidity and the occupancy rate in permanent and semi-permanent housing areas is up to 98% (GSO, 2020; GSO & UNFPA, 2020). However, permanent or semi-permanent housing is not qualified. Many migrant workers live in cramped, dirty, moldy hostels that others do not want to enter; Many hostels lack basic appliances such as televisions, refrigerators, water heaters, etc., and are especially unqualified for fire and explosion prevention. Power cuts are more common in hostel areas in the MRD than in the RRD (CECODES et al., 2024). The shortage of clean water for daily life occurs frequently, especially for migrants in the MRD.

The main point is understanding why migrants choose or accept to live in similar housing. Firstly, hostels have cheap rents. The hostel's rooms are built in rows, and each room has an area of 9 to 16m² with a rental price of 800 thousand to 1.4 million VND per month, excluding electricity and water, especially there are hostels for rent for 500 thousand VND per month. The more cost-effective type of hostel is in collectives, with dozens of people in the same room, migrants pay for accommodation for each night. The price ranges from 10 to 30 thousand VND per day and night. Second, the hostel is used only for sleeping. Most migrant workers work all day, often overtime. Many migrant workers used to finish their work, have dinner at their workplace, and then go home. They stay at their hostels only for bathing, washing and sleeping. Third, the hostels are perceived as temporary accommodations. Migrants are constantly looking for higher paid jobs and more convenient opportunities, while for seasonal workers their stability depends on the occupation. Because of this scarce stability and flexibility to constantly relocate, migrant workers do not consider high quality and decent accommodations to be among their priorities.

“There was a time my grandson came to play and he told me he would not go in there because her house was filthy.”

– A migrant in Bac Ninh

“If you buy clean water, 200 thousand VND/m³. It is cheaper to buy water from the boat. The hostel usually drills wells, filters them, and sells them to the renters.”

– A commune official in Long An

“The rent is more expensive than in other places, but there are many jobs. I just work here, if they (the landlord) don't rent it anymore, we can just look for another place, but I don't dare to think about buying land to build a house.”

– A migrant in Ha Noi

Figure 3: Typical housing of migrants in the study



*An example of a hostel of 20 migrants
in Hai Duong*

A migrant's housing in Can Tho

The psychological aspect of many migrants is poor. The psychological aspect of each individual is closely linked to the material life and it reflects the quality of the individual's life. For migrants, their psychological condition is related to emotional life, social interaction, and leisure activities. The results of the study show that:

First, the emotional lives of many migrants are affected by family separations. The majority of migrants do not bring all their family members with them, mostly working alone or including couples. They leave their children in the countryside because bringing members is very expensive due to the cost of accommodation, education, and spending at the destination is expensive; due to changes in work, change of destination. Even if they decide to bring their children with them, there is no one to look after these kids. Migrants have few opportunities to return to their hometowns to join their families because it is expensive to move/travel. A visit back to their hometown requires many to buy gifts, not to mention they have to stop working/pause their jobs, which affects their income. This causes mishaps between family members, for example, husband and wife lack sharing, children lack the care of their parents, and parents in poor health lack the care of their children. Children who lack the care and love of their parents can affect their psychological development and emotional life. This can also be a psychological burden for children as adults. As a result, the emotional lives of many migrants are impoverished.

"I didn't dare to go home even though I'd been away all year. Travel expenses, gifts, and having to quit jobs. Taking a break means a loss of income. I go only when have something I must be back home."

– A migrant in Bac Ninh

"Missing my husband/child is sad, sometimes I feel depressed but I don't have anyone to confide."

– A migrant in Soc Trang

"My kid staying with the grandma makes me worry, too. The grandparents can spoil him. There is a saying: "a bad kid is the fault of the grandma"."

– A migrant in Can Tho

“Leaving the kids for the grandparents, they can only look after him physically, but they cannot really guide his study, parents are not at home to supervise him.”

– A migrant couple in Nam Dinh

“I have two kids, staying with my grandparents. The elder is 7 years old, and the second is 5 years old, still going to school... I cannot bring them here because it is too far, they need to stay for school... I miss them. I go back to visit them every time I have a break.”

– A migrant in Ha Noi

Second, many migrants have little social interaction. Social communication is a condition for having a rich social life. Most migrants spend most of their time commuting, working from morning to evening and possibly on weekends. Coming home from work tired, most just want to sleep. Even meeting relatives from the same hometown and neighbors in the industrial park is difficult. Each person works different hours, they spend their break sleeping. Moreover, migrants have different customs from those in their destinations, so communication is also difficult. In general, migrants in the MRD have more diverse social interactions than migrants in the RRD because migrants to the MRD are mainly intra-regional migrants.

“The local culture here is strange to me, I don't understand anything. The village association is also not mine.”

– A migrant in Bac Ninh

“Looking at my clothes, my voice, my hair bun, people can tell I am an ethnic minority. People make fun of me!”

– A migrant in Hai Duong

“We sell and communicate with all kinds of people. If I don't understand them, I can't sell to them.”

– A migrant in Can Tho

“I rent here, but my house is at Lap Vo Wharf [Dong Thap]. If not for the two ferries, there is no need to rent. Everyone here is gentle, they know me.”

– A migrant in An Giang

Third, migrants are less involved in recreational activities. Recreation contributes to the reproduction of labor, but many migrants have very little participation in recreational activities. This has a negative effect on the lives of migrants. Many migrants hardly engage in recreational activities because: First, they don't have the time. Most of the migrant's day is spent working and working overtime. At the end of the workday, they are tired and sleep is usually the activity of choice after working time. Secondly, many recreational activities require financial expenses. Local cultural and sports activities may be unfamiliar to migrants. And other activities require expenses while they are short in income.

“My working day starts at 4 a.m. and ends at 9 p.m. I'm tired, so I go to sleep.”

– A migrant in Ha Noi

“Workers go to work, do not have time to participate in recreational activities.”

– A migrant in Nam Dinh

"I alone take care of my mother, my second brother had an accident and couldn't do anything, so there are his wife and children. I only dare to spend on what is necessary, there is no money for entertainment."

– A migrant in Long An

Security, safety, and community integration of migrants. Interviews with migrants show that the security situation in the area where migrants live is generally safe, but community integration is still limited. Field observations reveal the following three points:

First, immigrants face a trade-off between safety and freedom. Immigrant hostels are usually very tightly managed by the owner, closing and locking their doors frequently. Those staying at the hostel working night shifts need to register with the hostel. In addition, the hostels are equipped with security cameras, so freedom and privacy can be affected. This safety can limit migrants' community integration.

"The hostel has two gates but only opens on the owner's side. She [the owner] manages the entrance."

– A migrant in Can Tho

"This hostel is only open until 9:00 pm. Anyone who works the night shift must notify the owner to borrow the key."

– A migrant in An Giang

"Everyone who enters and exits here must go through the gate of the owner's house. I don't want to go anywhere anymore when I come home from work."

– A migrant in Nam Dinh

Second, there is still petty theft, affecting the lives of migrants. Although this phenomenon is rare, it still occurs and directly affects migrants.

"Here is the border (between administrative areas), so theft and other social problems remain, but the rate is low."

– A commune policeman in Long An

"Petty theft in crowded areas with workers in hostels still occurs, and there are reports every year."

– A town policeman in Hai Duong

"The other day, someone in this hostel had his motorbike stolen. The value is not much, but there is the loss of the means to commute."

– A migrant in Can Tho

Third, migrants are affected by social problems in large cities. Social problems among migrants have been documented both in the RRD and the MRD, especially in major cities and heavily industrialized areas in the RRD. People who migrate from rural areas to urban areas or from the Northern Mountainous Region to the RRD are at higher risk of becoming entangled in social issues. Some migrants are afraid to go out, affecting community integration.

"Migrants are affected by the downside of urban life."

– An officer of the DOLISA in Ha Noi

“We came down here to work, not to fight. There was one who drank and then fought, and we had to call the police.”
– A migrant in Nam Dinh

“There are many fun things in town, but they cost a lot of money. Some spent all their money and had to borrow money to go back to their hometown.”
– A migrant in Hai Duong

Most migrants do not have a clear migration strategy. In the short term, the migration plans of the migrants depend heavily on their employment/income status. Long-term migration plans depend on job stability, integration into life, and housing. Tired migrants consider returning home as a last resort.

“I haven’t considered it yet, I will work until I feel I can’t do it anymore. However, moving like this is not the way.”
– A migrant in Soc Trang

“For now, I still stay here to work because there are many companies here, moving elsewhere doesn’t have as many companies as here.”
– A migrant in Bac Ninh

“Currently, I don’t know where to move because my parents have all passed away. My siblings are far away and everyone has their own families.”
– A migrant in An Giang

“I need to take care of my child’s education. The housing prices here are too expensive, so I will return to my hometown, I don’t think I will stay here.”
– A migrant in Can Tho

“...I wish there were apartments or low-cost houses for long-term residents like my family to pay in installments to have our own home.”
– A migrant in Can Tho

There is a gender difference in the work and living status among migrants. The research does not identify issues of gender inequality among migrants but does reveal gender differences in work and living status. Female migrants rarely take jobs that require mobility (driving, delivery services, traditional motorbike taxis, and ride-hailing services) or physically demanding work (construction workers, security guards, porters, etc.). Female migrants are also more likely to accept jobs or working conditions than men in order to secure employment and income because they are concerned about family burdens and the lack of personal protection. At the same time, female migrants face more psychological, social, and community integration challenges than male migrants, such as loneliness, marital life outside of the family, etc.

“My two children are with my husband. I send money back to support all three of them and my parents-in-law.”
– A migrant from Nam Dinh

“I came down here to work, and my husband followed me. He couldn’t bear it after just a few days and went back home.”
– A migrant from Ha Noi

“I work to support my children and my mother. What I fear the most is being out of work, followed by the fear of falling ill, all alone, and no one to protect me.”

– A migrant from Long An

“Everyone here knows me, but I don’t socialize. My husband goes to work, and sitting around would be blamed.”

– A migrant from Can Tho

3.4. Access to public services by migrants

Access to public services, including public administrative services, basic social services, and participation in local governance, is both a right and a reflection of the quality of life of migrants. The results of interviews with migrants show that access to public services varies by service group.

3.4.1. Public administrative services

Access to public administrative services by migrants is the use of services related to law enforcement, not for profit, by competent or authorized state agencies.⁵ This is a service associated with the state management function to meet the requirements of the people. According to CECODES et al. (2024), people in the MRD (38.1%) use online public services higher than in the RRD (29.7%). The results of interviews with residence officers, migrant labor officers, and migrants show that the public administrative procedures related to migrants commonly used include: Registration and confirmation of residence, Personal background confirmation, Motorcycle registration, etc. Birth certificate for the child, and Business Registration.

Most migrants can access a residence registration service. Residence registration is the most common administrative procedure for migrants. Depending on the nature and duration of their stay, migrants can register for temporary residence or declare their stay. The results of the study in section 3.1 show that most migrants carry out residence registration and the residence registration procedure is relatively convenient. There were 8.3% (17 out of 204) migrants who did not know whether they had registered or not in the interview and group discussion form, of which 6 migrants confirmed that they had not registered, and 11 people did not remember whether they registered or not. Confirmation of the migrant's residency status is favorable. However, most confirmations of residency status are done by the host doing a favor for the migrants when they need it.

Migrants have difficulty obtaining personal background checks. Most migrants do not apply for personal background verification in their temporary residence for the purpose of applying for work. According to the provisions of Decree No. 23/2015/ND-CP of the Government, migrants can apply for background confirmation at their permanent or temporary residence. However, most migrants interviewed for this confirmation confirmed that they applied for it from their permanent residence or contractor. In Binh Duong, the Commune/Ward Justice can certify and this certificate can be used in the province.

“I had the résumé validated in my hometown and brought it there. I'm not from here, people [who work in the public services] don’t know who I am to validate my résumé.”

– A migrant in Can Tho

“It depends on the type of paper. Notarization can be done here, but other papers are returned to the commune. For example, confirming my residence means that I must return to the commune [commune-level service].”

– A migrant in Nam Dinh

“I came here to work, Mr. Giang [the contractor] took care of all the papers. I gave him only my ID.”

– A migrant in Long An

“Confirmation of identity status was declared by migrants and at their own risk. The Justice Department confirms that this paper is valid throughout the province.”

– A ward official in Binh Duong

Migrants hardly register motorbikes at their shelters. Among those interviewed and participated in the group discussion, there were some migrants who bought motorbikes, including new and used bikes at their place of residence, but almost no one went through the procedures for registering motorcycles at their temporary residence. For new vehicles, migrants want their assets to be registered at their permanent place of residence because that is the place where they live in the long term. The current residence is only temporary. This registration is carried out by the seller of the motorcycle [company] and the buyer only makes a request for the place of registration. Therefore, where to register a motorbike is not troublesome or difficult for migrants. Migrants who buy used motorbikes do not file to change the owner’s name in the old registration.

“There is no need to register my motorbike because it belongs to others. I don’t change the registration to my name. When I returned to visit my wife, I could just borrow the innkeeper’s motorbike.”

– A migrant in Can Tho

“[When I was] buying a motorbike, the seller asked where I wanted to register. I paid and they [the sellers] did all for me.”

– A migrant in An Giang

“I bought my motorbike from a colleague, I didn’t change the name, I just went. I only go from the hostel to the company anyway.”

– A migrant in Hai Duong

Many migrants register the birth of their children at their permanent residences. According to the current regulations in the Law on Residence 2020, birth registration for a child can be carried out at the People’s Committee of the commune/ward where he permanently or temporarily resides. Where to register the birth of the child is the choice of parents and migrants often choose to register the birth of their child at their place of permanent residence because (i) They think that they have to register the birth of their child at their place of permanent residence. (ii) Easier registration at the place of permanent residence; (iii) The migrant is suggested to be the birth of the child in the place of permanent residence.

“The third baby was born here but [we] did not register his birth here, but registered in Nam Tien commune, which is the place where his mother’s permanent residence is registered.”

– A migrant in Ha Noi

“My child was born, then [we] returned to Long Phu to register his birth. The officials here tell us to go back to the permanent residence of the registered parents. My wife is from Long Phu so we should go there.”

– A migrant in Soc Trang

“I think if you don't have a household registration here, you can't register the birth of your child here. I went to the place of household registration for my child's birth.”

– A migrant in Ha Noi

It is relatively convenient for migrants to apply for a business license at their place of temporary residence. Migrants can register their businesses [as households] at their temporary residences, which is relatively convenient.

Apply for business household registration is easy. It is not difficult for me to register and pay taxes. – A migrant in Soc Trang

I registered my auto repair business in the town, asked them for guidance, and followed along. No obstacles. – A migrant in Ha Noi

This result shows that a portion of migrants ignore that they are entitled to benefit from public administrative services, while some officials push the work toward migrants. Migrants typically belong to a group of lower social status, so they are afraid to work with the government. This makes migrants' access to public administrative services poor. The state of migrants' access to public administration has almost no difference between the RRD and the MRD.

3.4.2. Basic social services

Having access to and benefit from adequate and quality social services is a human rights. In this study, we considered basic social services that migrants are interested in, including education and vocational training, healthcare, culture and recreational activities, and sports.

Education and vocational training

Access to education and training services both exercises rights and ensures social services for migrants. Migrant workers are typically young adults with a median age of 28 years and the 20-39 age group accounts for 62% (GSO & UNFPA, 2020). Young migrants are often associated with giving birth and having small children, usually within preschool, primary, and secondary school age. Results from GSO and UNFPA (2020) show that the percentage of children aged 11-18 who are in school in the migrant group in 2019 is lower than that of the non-migrant group, reflecting differences in migrant children's access to education.

Migrants' access to public education differs from locality to locality and level of education. In the heavily industrialized and urbanized localities in the study, such as Bac Ninh, Ha Noi, or even in the control study province of Binh Duong, schooling for migrant children is still a challenge. For example, in Bac Ninh, each year, there is an average increase of 400 preschool groups/classes, 20 schools, 240 primary classes, and 150 secondary classes. In Binh Duong each year, there is an increase of about 30 thousand students at all levels. The heavily industrialized and urbanized provinces in the two deltas have shown signs of overcrowding in educational institutions. Meanwhile, the construction of schools has been slow to implement.

“Ha Noi spends resources to build more schools and increase the size of students in classes. There are classes of 40 to 60 students but still cannot meet the demand. Ha Noi has money, but the forecast for counseling is not good, so it can only take care of the permanent residence.”

– Head of Ha Noi DOLISA

“Investment in school construction is still slow. [We] are still waiting for the arrangement of communes/wards to be completed.”

– A leader of DOLISA Hai Duong

“Most pressure is from the education of the children. We have not planned enough schools for the children.”

– A Leader of DOLISA Long An

It is difficult for migrants to send their children to public preschool facilities. There are three reasons. First, migrants often register the birth of their children in places where their parents have permanent residence registration, so migrant children are placed after permanent residents when registering for school. Second, due to the limitation of the number of educational institutions, the number of schools/classes has not met the increasing demand of migrants. Third, because the study, drop-off, and pick-up hours of public educational institutions are not suitable for the working time of migrant workers. As a result, migrant children have to study in private preschool facilities, which are more expensive, and the conditions for facilities and teachers are not met. The problem of lack of public preschool education institutions may be exacerbated from the 2024-2025 school year when 5-year-olds are exempt from tuition fees. This causes inequality in migrants' access to education when studying in private educational institutions.

“[Our] area has 1 [public] kindergarten and 15 private kindergartens but still have not yet met the demand.”

– A commune official in Long An

“The ward has 1 [public] kindergarten and 6 private childcare facilities. In the near future, school fees will be waived for 5-year-old children in public schools, and the leadership in the ward is making efforts to meet the demand.”

– A ward official in Hai Duong

“The child [3 years old] has to study at a private school, which is very expensive, 1.8 million/month. [I] want to send him to a public school, but school ends at 4 o'clock, there is no one to pick him up.”

– A migrant in Binh Duong

“There are many workers here, the school is crowded, so it is difficult for them to apply, when there is an opening, [we] can apply.”

– A migrant in Nam Dinh

Migrants' children have access to primary education. This is a universal education, so localities have created favorable conditions for children to go to school. Migrants all reflect that procedures such as issuing birth certificates or temporary residence procedures for children of eligible age to attend school are facilitated by the local government. The local governments actively expand the size of classes, increase the number of students in classes, and build new schools, but the construction

progress of new schools is slow. The government also coordinated to transfer students from overcrowded places to neighboring schools that still have the capacity to serve.

“My child applied to study at a normal public school. When entering grade 1, the commune registered temporary residence for him and did not force him to pay a fine.”

– A migrant in Can Tho

“The ward has 11 classes for grade 1. There is planning for a new primary school on an area of 14000m², but [it] has not yet been implemented.”

– A ward official in Hai Duong

“There are a few cases, we recommend them to the neighboring commune to study.”

– A ward official in Nam Dinh

For secondary schools and above, migrant children have difficulties to access. Most migrants do not bring their eldest children who are studying at the secondary level because access is relatively difficult, and expensive and children can live far from their parents. If they bring their children with them, migrants must find a way to bring their children into the homes of relatives or migrants through personal relationships so that their children can go to school.

“I have two children, a 6th grader and a 9th grader, who are staying with their grandmother in the countryside. Every month, we save the salary of a person to send them back to take care of their education.”

– A migrant in Long An

“My son was registered into my aunt's house in Thot Not to go to high school there.”

– A migrant in Can Tho

“My child is in grade 6 at Vinh Quynh [commune]. I am acquainted with the teacher and she showed me how to apply.”

– A migrant in Ha Noi

From a management perspective, education for migrants is a big challenge, especially in urban areas and industrial centers. Section 2.3 addresses the pressure of migration to education in the destination. Many solutions have been implemented by local authorities in the short and medium terms such as: requiring 20% of urban and industrial park land to be used for school construction, building new schools, opening more classrooms, increasing classroom sizes, and transferring students from overcrowded places to places with service capacity. However, the key issue is the forecast of labor demand, the level of urbanization, and migrants as the basis for planning and budget allocation. Applying predictive governance in local governance can be the solution.

Vocational training for migrants is relatively limited. Migrant workers who participate in training are mainly sent by the related enterprises to serve their work. Vocational training programs for workers under state programs have proven to be ineffective, lack funding, miss the right subjects, and have not been associated with the demands of the labor market. Vocational training under [public] programs has not yet supported migrants in finding jobs suitable for their professions.

“Vocational training has been stuck in recent years because there is no funding, so it cannot be implemented. There are correct policies, but when implemented, they are ineffective.”

– An official of DOLISA in Can Tho

“We must determine the subject of training; general training is just for naught. For example, if you have land, you will be trained in agriculture; I don't have any land, so there is no use to train me for that. Poor households receive agriculture training, but poor households have no land! How should people with disabilities manage after being trained in agriculture?”

– A leader of DOLISA Can Tho

Healthcare

According to data from the General Statistics Office, there is no significant difference between the RRD (89.9%) and the MRD (88.3%), which is close to the overall health insurance coverage rate of the whole country (90.2%) in 2021. Migrants (72%) have a lower health insurance coverage rate than non-migrants (76%) (from the 2023 PAPI survey). Migrants' access to health services varies by migrant group. For migrant workers who have the expertise to work in the formal area and have a labor contract, they have full health insurance. Skilled migrants/owners of service establishments have health insurance voluntarily purchased by their families. Migrants, who are children or students, have children/student health insurance. Migrants who are self-employed workers, usually do not buy health insurance (except for a few who buy it with their families in their hometown). The common reasons why self-employed migrant workers do not buy health insurance are: (i) they are still healthy and do not feel the need to buy insurance; (ii) they need to save money to cover their family; (iii) they do not buy because of the low benefit rate (they buy with their families in the hometown, go to medical facilities at work, it is considered off-line and the benefit rate is low); and, (iv) it is not clear what health insurance is and what it does.

“For the last two years, I have not bought health insurance anymore because of my precarious income, saving money for my children's education.”

– A migrant in Can Tho

“My working hours [salary] are few, how can it be enough to buy insurance for those three [husband and two kids].”

– A migrant in Long An

“Health insurance can only be used in my hometown, but it cannot be used here.”

– A migrant in Soc Trang

“What is health insurance? I don't know.”

– A migrant in Ha Noi

“No, I have never had health insurance. I don't buy it because I am illiterate, and I don't know that area.”

– A migrant in Long An

“I did not buy health insurance because the insurance was bought in my hometown, the commune filed it for me. Arriving here, that insurance cannot be used, it is not in the line [outside of designated place]. If you are sick, you have to go back to your hometown or province.”

– A migrant in Long An

Migrant children have more difficulties accessing vaccination services than permanent residents do. There is a difference of opinion between the government and migrants when the government argues that access to health services does not discriminate between locals and

migrants. The majority of migrants with young children say there is discrimination in vaccination. The local clinic organizes vaccinations and notifies the family according to the list of permanent resident children. During the COVID-19 period, permanent residents are prioritized to be vaccinated before migrants.

“For the vaccination of children, the commune clinic makes a list. Children of all ages in the area were selected.”

– A commune official in An Giang

“When the situation was heated [during the COVID-19 period], the list was endless. Therefore, there are cases where people from other places come to live in the area to be overlooked.”

– A commune official in Long An

“I vaccinate my baby with 1-2 shots here. I took the initiative to take the baby to the commune clinic for the shots because I didn't have the same papers as the people here. For the other shots, I brought the children back to my hometown.”

– A migrant in Ha Noi

Migrant workers hardly participate in medical examinations or use medical services at local health facilities. The schedule of migrant workers is not consistent with the office hours at the local health facilities. The majority of migrants are in the younger age group, with little or mild symptoms, and can self-medicate.

“There are also people who buy health insurance, and there are also people who do not buy it, some people say that they wait too long in the hospital, they go to the outpatient examination, so they do not buy it.”

– A ward official in Can Tho

“I have never been to a doctor or used a health insurance card because we are probably in the category of people who are less likely to get sick. I went to the local clinic once, but usually, when I got a petty sickness, I went out to buy medicine [from the pharmacies].”

– A migrant in Hai Duong

“I also rarely get sick, I have never had to go to the hospital since I went to work, I only have a headache. For minor illnesses, I buy painkillers.”

– A migrant in Bac Ninh

Culture and Sports

According to Berry (1997), migrants are both faced with cultural erosion and a lack of initiative to learn about the culture of their destination. This leads to two situations in which migrants are isolated or culturally marginalized. The results of the study show that migrants hardly participate in cultural and sports activities. Similar to recreational activities, migrants do not have time to participate in cultural and sports activities. Moreover, cultural differences prevent migrants from actively exploring and integrating. Another problem is that cultural integration takes time while migrants are highly mobile. Immigrants in the MRD are all intra-regional and share similar cultural

values, but immigrants in the RRD are outsiders with differences in customs/practices and culture. As a result, migrants are isolated or living on the cultural margins of their destination.

“It takes time to integrate, ethnic minority people are more different, not as agile as people here, they need time. Work and life here are different from over there.”

– A commune official in Hai Duong

“It is also difficult to integrate, it takes a while to get used to the roads. We visit around, there are people carrying motorbikes, sometimes they go out and relax.”

– A migrant in Hai Duong

“There have been occasional festivals in the village communal house, but I have not had the opportunity to participate, due to the busy nature of my job, I just want to sleep when I am back to my room, I mostly work the night shift.

– A migrant in Hai Duong

“We work all day and don't have time to participate in sports. Boxed lunch at noon, boxed lunch in the evening, I'm tired when I come home. Just want to sleep.”

– A migrant in Hai Duong

“I don't know anyone, I am from far away, so I only know how to go to work, eat and sleep. I am afraid of strangers, of getting lost when going out.”

– A migrant in Hai Duong

“I don't have any contact with anyone here, seeing people in the hostel, I smile, but I don't know what their names are, I don't socialize.”

– A migrant in Binh Duong

3.4.3. Participation in local governance

People's participation in local governance illustrates the level of "ownership" of the people, showing the aspect of taking the people as the center and for the people from policy to practice. In this sense, the more deeply migrants are involved in the local governance process, the more they integrate into life at the destination. The participation of migrants in local governance in this study was at two levels: participation in neighborhood meetings and participation in voting for neighborhood officials, or people's councils at all levels. Some of the key findings on migrant participation in local governance drawn from the interviews are presented below:

Migrants hardly participate in neighborhood group meetings. Many migrants are residents of the area but are not notified and invited to meetings of neighborhood groups/clusters, or are not aware of the meetings due to inappropriate notification methods. Many people have lived in the locality for a relatively long time, and their neighbors know them but have never participated in any neighborhood group meetings. This result comes from both sides. Migrants do not know they have rights and do not require participation; migrants do not consider their local affairs to be relevant to them; migrants do not have time to participate. The neighborhood group has not provided opportunities for the participation of migrants (did not actively invite migrants to attend) or did not make sure that the invitation to meetings reached the migrants (for example, announcements broadcasted through the ward loudspeakers at times when migrants go to

work); participating in neighborhood group meetings may have to contribute to residential activities; or they just invite the hostel owners to represent.

"I have lived here for 11 years and have not seen anyone invite me to a meeting!"

– A migrant in Long An

"I have never been to a neighborhood meeting. They didn't have an invitation, maybe it was for the owner, the resident, but I was only staying temporarily. And there is that case too?[imply they can attend too?]"

– A migrant in Soc Trang

"I go to work, meetings are for others. I am not participating, I go to work every time, I am too tired from the job, I just want to go to sleep."

– A migrant in Binh Duong

"I just arrived here so I don't participate. I guess these meetings are only for people [originally] from the locality. I am from outside, would not get invited."

– A migrant in Ha Noi

"They did not actively invite but only called on the loudspeaker. So I also had a meeting "through the speaker!"

– A migrant in Bac Ninh

"I don't participate in neighborhood group meetings, we go to work all the time, we don't have time, we just go home. A few days ago, I came back at 9 pm. There are many days when I don't have time to cook anything, I just go out to eat and then go to sleep."

– A migrant in Nam Dinh

Migrants hardly participate in elections in their place of residence. The calculation results from the PAPI Survey 2022 are similar to the statistics on voting results, which show that the voter turnout rate is very high. This result is associated with voting at the place of permanent residence. According to the 2015 Law on Election of National Assembly and People's Council deputies, migrants can register on the voter list at their temporary residence. However, the results from the interviews show that migrants almost do not participate in the elections where the migrants arrive. The reasons given by the migrant include: (i) the voter list is made in the locality where the permanent residence is located; (ii) migrants who do not know their right to vote in their place of temporary residence; (iii) the migrant has "phobia syndrome", fear of being disturbed when registering to vote at the place of residence.

"People have made a list of voters in my hometown. My husband in the countryside voted for the whole family."

– A migrant in Ha Noi

"The voter list is only for people who have lived in the area for 3 months or more, and migrants must register at the polling place."

– A ward official in Soc Trang

"I have been here for more than 9 years, everyone in this area knows me, but no one has invited my family to vote. Every time, my mother called me home."

– A migrant in Can Tho

CHAPTER 4: KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Key findings

Migration patterns in the Rural River Delta (RRD) are predominantly influenced by pull factors, whereas migration in the Mountain River Delta (MRD) is largely driven by push factors. Notably, migrants do not perceive climate change as a significant cause of their migration. In the RRD, migration is primarily motivated by the allure of industrialisation and urban services. Conversely, migration to the MRD is chiefly attributable to a lack of employment opportunities, unskilled labour positions, precarious agricultural jobs that are heavily reliant on environmental conditions, and the impacts of climate change. Nevertheless, migrants have yet to recognise climate change as a fundamental cause of precarious agricultural conditions, low productivity, and insufficient income. Consequently, it is essential to identify and articulate the root causes of migration decisions in order to devise appropriate solutions, particularly in the MRD.

The predominant trend in both deltas remains rural-to-urban migration; however, rural-to-rural migration in the RRD and urban-to-urban migration in the MRD constitute the second largest flows. This phenomenon can be attributed to the penetration of industrialisation into rural areas within the RRD, while many migrants to the MRD continue to seek employment opportunities in inner urban locales. The ongoing trend of rural industrialisation is likely to alter migration flows in the forthcoming years, especially within the MRD.

A significant proportion of immigrants to the RRD are interregional, whereas those migrating to the MRD are predominantly intra-regional. Immigrants in the RRD primarily originate from northern mountainous provinces and are keen to secure employment opportunities in newly industrialised rural areas. In contrast, immigrants to the MRD mainly come from regional provinces and seek to escape challenging living conditions at their places of origin, which are exacerbated by factors such as precarious employment and low income linked to climate change.

Many migrants exhibit a limited understanding of temporary residence registration and notification requirements; nonetheless, they manage to complete these procedures. A considerable number of migrants are unable to differentiate between residence notification and registration and do not fully comprehend the significance of temporary residence registration for accessing social protection systems. It is important to note that temporary residence registration is closely associated with migrants' rights and benefits.

Migration management is subject to stringent oversight by local authorities in the MRD; however, there are indications of strain within the RRD. The residence management agencies in MRD provinces deal with fewer immigrants than those in RRD provinces. They, therefore, have more favourable conditions for managing and supporting migrants. In contrast, migration management within the RRD appears overcrowded and exhibits signs of inadequate oversight. Contributing factors include: (i) a large and diverse immigrant population; (ii) police officers engaged in residence management who are burdened with multiple responsibilities; and (iii) a slow pace of digital transformation in migration management, compounded by limited infrastructure for such initiatives.

The coordination between residence and labour management authorities is insufficient. While migrants at their destination are registered for temporary residence, labour management agencies lack access to this information. Labour management agencies rely on data reported by

businesses and organisations, which may result in overlooking migrant workers employed in the informal sector. The absence of access to data from residence management agencies may hinder efforts to gather information on immigrant workers and their children, thereby complicating forecasts related to school demand, healthcare needs, housing requirements, etc. It is imperative that residence data be shared with relevant management agencies to enhance the utility of databases and improve overall management efficacy.

Policies pertaining to migrants are articulated in various legal documents, yet the level of implementation varies significantly across different localities. The review of these policies indicates notable discrepancies at the provincial level, including: (i) applicability solely to individuals with permanent residence registration; (ii) applicability to both individuals with permanent residence registration and those who have registered for temporary residence for a specified duration; and (iii) the consolidation of multiple policies into a single resolution that applies exclusively to permanent residents, inadvertently excluding migrants from certain policy provisions.

The majority of migrants within the study sample reported inadequate access to social welfare benefits at their destinations. Skilled migrants generally enjoy better employment opportunities and welfare provisions compared to their unskilled counterparts. Individuals possessing expertise and skills typically find employment in either formal or informal sectors, where they benefit from relatively stable jobs and basic entitlements. In contrast, the majority of unskilled migrants often engage in low-skilled jobs within companies or undertake freelance work, frequently working overtime with minimal benefits; for instance, they often lack health insurance or voluntary social insurance and do not receive social protection benefits at their destinations.

Many migrants experience material deprivation, poor mental well-being, and limited social engagement. The findings reveal similar conditions for migrants in both the RRD and MRD. Numerous migrants report lower incomes and living standards, with their housing conditions being inferior to those of permanent residents in their respective destinations. A significant challenge for local governments is addressing housing needs for immigrants. The emotional well-being of migrant families may also be adversely affected, leading to situations where children lack parental care and elderly individuals are unsupported by their children, particularly in cases of estrangement or separation. These issues contribute to various social problems that require urgent attention.

Most migrants in the study sample lacked a clear migration strategy. Their migration plans were predominantly contingent upon employment opportunities; migration was perceived as a process of seeking job prospects, particularly in the short term. In the long term, most migrants were uncertain about their future migration plans. While a few expressed a desire to remain connected to stable employment, others did not view continuous mobility as a viable means of survival, with returning to their hometown often regarded as a last resort.

The research highlights gender disparities in the work and living conditions of migrants. Although issues of gender inequality were not explicitly identified among this population, distinct gender differences emerged regarding work and living status. The differences include: (i) female migrants rarely engage in jobs that necessitate mobility or are physically demanding; (ii) female migrants are more inclined than their male counterparts to accept less favourable jobs or

working conditions in order to secure employment and income; and (iii) female migrants encounter greater psychological, social, and community integration challenges compared to male migrants.

There are instances where management officials transfer responsibilities onto migrants or interpret regulations in ways that facilitate administrative processing for officials. Some public administrative services are effectively shifted onto immigrants due to: (i) a lack of comprehensive understanding of regulations among both migrants and officials; and (ii) favourable interpretations of regulations that benefit the public officials themselves. Such circumstances impose additional burdens and costs on immigrants.

Many migrants encounter difficulties accessing public education services for their children, particularly concerning universal education provisions in destination provinces. Accessing kindergarten and elementary public education at destinations is notably challenging for immigrants in the RRD. Numerous localities exhibit signs of overcrowding in public educational institutions, as they struggle to accurately forecast fluctuating student numbers throughout the academic year. The situation regarding access to public education for students lacking permanent residence is relatively common, especially within the RRD. This issue arises from regulations concerning "permanent residence," which hinder accurate forecasting of migrant student populations. Therefore, management policies must address the concerns of migrants without discrimination against either migrants or permanent residents.

Migrants rarely engage in community meetings or provide feedback regarding their temporary residential areas; most have not exercised their voting rights at these locations. Migrants' participation in local governance activities is severely limited as most migrants do not attend meetings or participate in elections at destination localities. Some migrants are required to return to their registered places of permanent residence to vote, complicating their ability to exercise this right. Additionally, community integration remains minimal as many migrants lack time or awareness regarding available activities at destinations. Most migrants therefore face and exclusion from policy protections and/or marginalisation from local culture activities.

4.2. Recommendations

Migration is a significant socio-economic phenomenon within the development process. It constitutes both a fundamental right of migrants and a viable solution for alleviating poverty, reducing income inequality, and providing employment opportunities. In Viet Nam, particularly in the RRD and MRD, disparities in developmental characteristics among localities, provinces, and regions, alongside individual aspirations, render migration an inevitable occurrence. Migrants must be empowered to exercise their rights to freedom of movement and residence, ensuring equal treatment and status for both permanent and temporary residents. Specifically, it is imperative that migrants are recognised within policy development and implementation, protected in their workplaces and daily lives, granted access to public services and social security, and integrated into the local communities of their destinations.

Recognition and enforcement of migrant rights. The recognition and enforcement of migrant rights necessitate the development and promulgation of policies aimed at protecting these rights, along with associated guidelines for their implementation. However, the degree of implementation varies across different localities and is contingent upon the specific conditions

of each area. To enhance awareness and enforcement of migrant rights, several key activities should be undertaken:

- The Party and Government must clearly articulate the perspective that migration is an inevitable and irreversible socio-economic phenomenon. Migrants represent a valuable resource and are an integral part of the community alongside permanent residents, contributing to the socio-economic development of their destinations. Consequently, improving both the material and spiritual well-being of migrants while supporting their social security must be a consistent policy objective.
- It is essential to ensure non-discrimination between permanent residents and migrants in the exercise of their rights. While provisions related to basic human rights have been incorporated into policy formulation and promulgation, it is crucial that these are implemented equitably for both migrants and permanent residents. Localities with limited resources must not neglect to support and protect migrants—particularly regarding access to education, healthcare, and social benefits.
- There should be a concerted effort to disseminate information regarding the rights of migrants, particularly when they register for residence. This information should be presented concisely, potentially using diagrams, and distributed to hostel owners, labour contractors, and residential managers. Emphasis should be placed on the role of these stakeholders in promoting awareness of migrants' rights and benefits associated with temporary residence registration.
- It is vital to enhance the accountability of officials responsible for explaining regulations and guiding processes at the commune level. This includes commune officials, police officers, and public service portal departments. Furthermore, effectively utilising the national population database while accelerating the digital transformation of public services will gradually facilitate migrants' access to essential services and enable them to exercise their basic rights.

Strengthening coordination among management agencies. Strengthening coordination between residence management agencies and those responsible for migrant-related matters is crucial for providing better support and protection for migrants. Residence authorities should have prompt access to migration data via the national population database. Such shared data will equip labour management agencies and other specialised agencies with essential information for effective planning. This approach is fundamental for ensuring that migrants are fully identified, supported, and protected. Key actions for enhancing coordination between residence management agencies and those related to migrant affairs include:

- The residency management authority alongside functional management agencies should implement and evaluate the effectiveness of coordination efforts in executing Project 06 while promoting data sharing among local agencies.
- An inter-sectoral coordination plan should be developed that considers the needs and interests of migrants in areas such as housing, education, healthcare, and social security. Local planning and decision-making processes must take into account migrant populations as a basis for forecasting demand for housing, educational facilities, healthcare services, infrastructure, and cultural institutions. Notably, provinces within the RRD as well as large urban areas or rapidly industrialising regions in the MRD—such as Can Tho and Long An—should prioritise the establishment of preschool and primary educational facilities.

- Internal migration should be integrated into local socio-economic development strategies, planning frameworks, and public budgeting processes to ensure that internal migration flows are adequately considered. This will facilitate effective anticipatory migration management in localities receiving migrants.

Increasing opportunities for formal employment for migrants. Enhancing opportunities for formal employment for migrants is essential, as those working in the informal sector often lack labour contracts and are not afforded basic social security protections, such as health insurance, social insurance, unemployment insurance, and social assistance. Consequently, initiatives aimed at increasing job opportunities in the formal sector represent effective strategies for improving support and safeguarding social security for migrants.

- The labour management agency should oversee the recruitment and utilisation of labour in the region, particularly ensuring compliance with the provisions of the 2019 Labour Code regarding the signing of labour contracts in rapidly industrialising and urbanising areas.
- Providing comprehensive information about the labour market, social services, and other resources is crucial for facilitating relocation and mitigating migration risks. In addition to information disseminated by employers, agencies, organisations, and unions, informal networks, civil society organisations, associations, and socio-political entities can serve as valuable channels for information sharing. New communication platforms, including social media and dedicated job information sections in newspapers, radio, and television, may effectively broaden outreach. In the RRD, information dissemination should target the Northern mountainous provinces, while in the MRD, efforts should focus on rural populations within the region.
- Fostering professional training for migrants at both their places of departure and destination is vital. Training initiatives can be funded by either employers or local authorities. It is important to ensure that (i) localities do not discriminate between training participants but include both permanent residents and local migrants; (ii) challenges in coordinating training activities are addressed, including the selection of relevant occupations and training/retraining participants to meet local labour demands; and (iii) particular emphasis is placed on training and retraining migrants in the MRD, where intra-regional migration is prevalent but remains underrepresented.
- Supporting the transition of migrant workers from the informal to formal sectors is a critical strategy aimed at promoting job creation in the formal economy while formalising informal employment. This approach represents a significant long-term strategic objective.

Increasing access to housing for migrants. Access to housing remains a pressing concern for localities but has yet to meet existing demands. The housing market struggles to provide adequate accommodation for migrants due to limited supply and high prices. Therefore, it is imperative that both relevant central government agency (such as the Ministry of Construction) and local authorities continue to explore solutions to address migrant housing needs.

- The Government has initiated plans to allocate land for constructing housing intended for low-income individuals, irrespective of their status as permanent residents or migrants. When planning industrial parks, it is essential to concurrently plan housing facilities for workers. Provinces within the MRD should prioritise this aspect to accommodate incoming migration flows associated with industrialisation. For instance, Binh Duong has permitted

projects to transition towards building housing for low-income individuals, mandating that production projects allocate 20% of their land for worker housing and cultural institutions.

- Diversifying housing supply options for workers is vital. Government plans should encompass both sale and rental housing; enterprises should support rental costs as part of their financial planning; options should include employee housing, youth accommodation, trade union facilities, and private/community hostels. Housing solutions for low-income workers ought to be developed on the periphery of urban areas with basic amenities that reduce costs while alleviating pressure on urban infrastructure—particularly relevant in the RRD.

Addressing migration driven by push factors and encouraging circular migration in the MRD.

Migration driven by push factors presents significant challenges in the MRD, where poverty alleviation, worker training, employment opportunities, and social security are paramount concerns. Encouraging circular migration can facilitate job creation without disrupting education or placing undue pressure on schools or public services at destination sites.

- Creating employment opportunities within agriculture and rural areas in the MRD is essential for retaining local workers. This can be achieved through initiatives aimed at developing industrial zones and clusters that attract investment; promoting non-agricultural economic activities linked to agriculture (such as ecotourism, community tourism, and experiential tourism); and implementing strategies that adapt economic activities and livelihoods to climate change impacts in the MRD.
- Addressing ‘multidimensional poverty’ and ‘security poverty’ in the MRD is critical. While poverty reduction remains a continuous focus for localities, there is an increasing emphasis on tackling these specific forms of poverty.
- Improving transportation connectivity is vital to facilitate daytime travel for migrants. Localities in the MRD are often divided by rivers and canals, which can restrict worker mobility during daylight hours. Some areas bordering Ho Chi Minh City have successfully leveraged pendulum migration to attract high-quality workers. Allowing same-day travel benefits both migrants and their host communities by alleviating pressure on schools, housing availability, access to public services, and social protection systems.

Encourage network-based migration. Network-based migration refers to a form of migration that is influenced by "social capital," enabling individuals to move, adapt, and thrive in new contexts. Migrants can leverage relationships—particularly familial ties, community connections, and intermediary relationships (such as brokerage firms and labour contractors in the RRD)—to enhance job security, improve their quality of life at their destination, and gain access to public services. Furthermore, network-based migration plays a crucial role in protecting and integrating migrants into their local communities. To promote this type of migration, the following key actions should be implemented:

- Promoting the migration of young individuals alongside nuclear family members is essential. Family migration, as a form of network-based migration, ensures that families remain united and that parental supervision is maintained for children. This approach also mitigates social costs while safeguarding families and communities for future generations.
- Facilitating the relocation of individuals who share similar customs, cultural values, and lifestyles is vital. Community migration is particularly prevalent in the RRD, where ethnic groups often migrate collectively to work in the same industrial areas and reside in the same hostels. This practice helps preserve cultural customs and values, preventing migrants from

becoming marginalised in their new environments. To foster this type of migration, the roles of community leaders and intermediaries—such as labour recruitment and supply companies—are critical.

- Labour supply companies, employers, and trade unions should create conditions that facilitate migrant workers' connections with community associations and groups at their destinations. For instance, labour supply companies in Bac Ninh, landlord networks in Binh Duong that assist migrants in finding housing, and construction contractor networks in Long An and Hai Duong exemplify effective practices.

Supporting integration of migrants at destinations. Supporting migrants, particularly inter-regional migrants in the RRD, is essential for their successful integration into local communities. Many immigrants in the RRD originate from out-of-region provinces, predominantly from the Northern Mountainous Provinces. These individuals often belong to ethnic minority groups with lower educational attainment levels and distinct customs and cultural values. To aid their integration, several key aspects warrant particular attention:

- Local authorities should publish and disseminate information regarding labour demand while coordinating with potential labour-supplying regions in the Northern Midlands and Mountains. Migrants should be recognised as integral members of the community, with their participation in local activities actively encouraged. Special emphasis should be placed on respecting their customs and cultural values. In this context, the roles of neighbourhood and village leaders are paramount in supporting migrants' integration efforts.
- Migrants should be motivated to engage actively within their new communities. This includes familiarising themselves with their destination and migration plans while maintaining healthy practices and habits.
- Labour brokers and suppliers must provide comprehensive information regarding the economic, social, and cultural conditions of the provinces where migrants will be employed. Companies should conduct thorough recruitment screening processes as well as training sessions to guide workers on exercising their rights as migrants. Contractors and labour brokers/suppliers serve as focal points for assisting migrants in accessing social security benefits and integrating into their communities effectively.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Criteria for selecting provinces

	Bac Ninh	Ha Noi	Nam Dinh	Hai Duong	Long An	Can Tho	Soc Trang	An Giang	Binh Duong
Net migration	Positive	Positive	Negative	Negative	Positive	Positive	Negative	Negative	Positive
Urbanization	X	X				X			X
Industrialization	High		Low	Average	High		Low	Average	X
Development level		High	Low	Average		High	Low	Average	X
Climate changes			X				X		

Annex 2: Subjects and number of interviews

	Provincial officials	District officials	Commune officials	Commune Police	different	Sum
Ha Noi	1	2	2	2	1	8
Bac Ninh	1	2	2	2		7
Hai Duong	1	2	2	2		7
Nam Dinh	1	2	2	2	2	9
Can Tho	1	2	2	2		7
Long An	1	2	2	2		7
An Giang	1	2	1	2		6
Soc Trang	1	2	3	3		9
Binh Duong	1	2	2	2		7
Sum	9	18	18	19	3	67

Annex 3: Number of migrants interviewed and participated in FGD by locality

	Interviewed Migrants	FGDs
Ha Noi	7	1
Bac Ninh	12	2
Hai Duong	15	3
Nam Dinh	14	1
Can Tho	7	2
Long An	11	3
An Giang	9	2
Soc Trang	6	1
Binh Duong	15	1
Total	96	16

Annex 4: Some socio-economic variables of the RRD and the MRD in 2022

	RRD	MRD	RRD/MRD
Population (million people)	23.4	17.4	1.3
Average population growth rate 2010-2022 (%)	1.38	0.09	15.3
Labor force (million people)	11.6	9.5	1.2
GRDP (trillion VND)	2,888.1	1,143.4	2.5
Industrial value (trillion VND)	1,256.5	294.8	4.3
Number of businesses	284,303	65,290	4.4
GRDP per capita (million VND/year)	123.1	65.6	1.9
Total FDI (billion USD)	132.8	34.8	3.8
Multidimensional poverty rate (%)	0.9	4.7	0.2
Unemployment Rate (%)	1.9	2.8	0.7
Area (km ²)	21.3	40.6	0.5

Source: General Statistics Office

Annex 5: Net migration rates in the RRD and MRD, 2010-2022

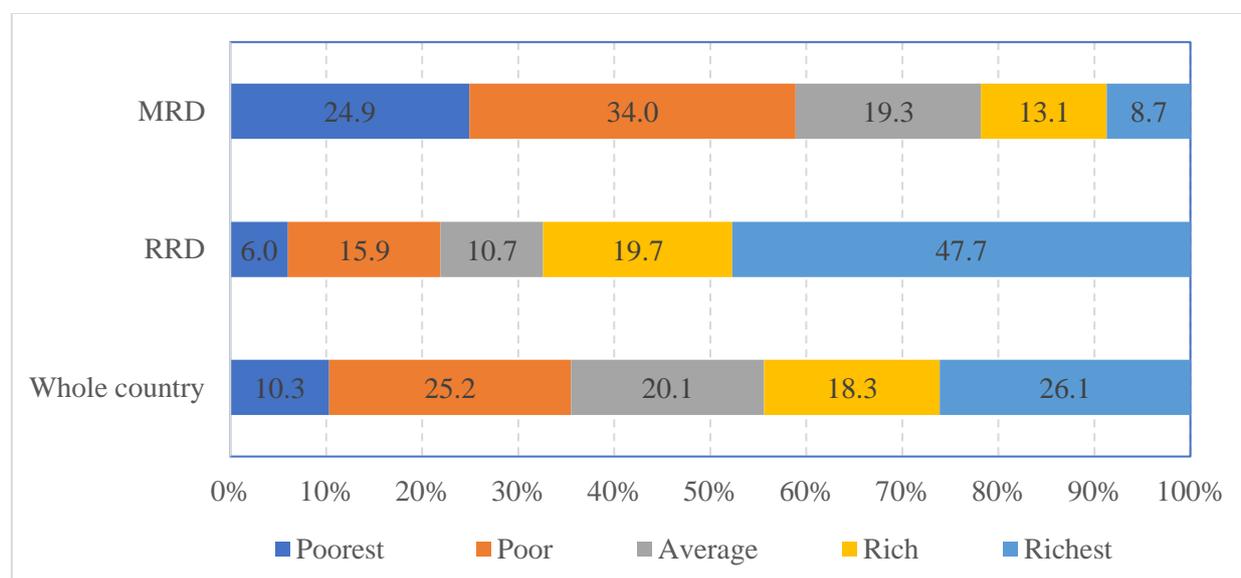
	2010	2015	2020	2022
RRD	0.5	0	3.1	2.4
Ha Noi	5.9	0.6	3.73	1.95
Vinh Phuc	-2.4	-1.4	-0.64	-0.43
Bac Ninh	2.2	12.8	35.83	36.37
Quang Ninh	-1.7	-2	-2.81	-4.09
Hai Duong	-2.2	-1	-0.5	-2.94
Hai Phong	3.2	1.4	1.06	1.45
Hung Yen	-0.2	-1.1	4.07	2.26
Thai Binh	-8.4	-4.2	-4.39	-2.33
Ha Nam	-4.6	-3.2	1.59	-1.44
Nam Dinh	-4.3	-3	-4.1	-2.53
Ninh Binh	-3.3	1.1	-0.48	2.13
MRD	-8.4	-5.4	-10.5	-3.77
Long An	-3.5	-2	1.12	1.71
Tien Giang	-0.2	-1	-3.42	-0.07
Ben Tre	-12.9	-3.7	-10.27	-0.97
Tra Vinh	-4.1	-2.7	-21.49	-9.15
Vinh Long	-13.4	-5.2	-7.33	-1.46
Dong Thap	-6.6	-7.3	-7.67	-7.21
An Giang	-8.3	-9.6	-16.16	-8.25
Kien Giang	-8.7	-7.9	-11.14	-2.12
Can Tho	-1.7	-4.6	-2.2	11.16
Hau Giang	-6.9	-4.2	-23.76	-1.99
Soc Trang	-9.9	-5.2	-19.3	-14.54
Bac Lieu	-10.6	-6.3	-13.34	-6.14
Ca Mau	-27.2	-7.2	-15.15	-12.32

Source: General Statistics Office

Annex 6: Characteristics of households with migrants without migrants

	2018				2022			
	RRD		MRD		RRD		MRD	
	With migrants	No migrants						
Total expenditure on education (1000 VND)	5,589	7,125	2,563	4,596	7,061	7,059	3,551	4,738.9
Rate of health insurance (%)	85.7	87.6	81.3	85.0	95.2	93.5	85.6	88.6
Employment rate (%)	69.6	63.6	61.3	63.2	65.6	59.2	60.2	60.2
Income from wages and salaries in the past 12 months (1,000 VND)	61,194	73,936	49,937	55,281	92,634	94,057	57,206	66,040
Have an employment contract (%)	47.9	58.9	27.8	37.0	58.3	67.6	29.2	40.0
Semi-solid/temporary (%)	26.0	25.0	93.9	88.7	23.0	14.5	79.9	76.4

Annex 7: Wealth Index of Migrants in the RRD and MRD, 2019



Source: Calculation from the 2019 Population and Housing Census

Annex 8: Some migration related-policies

Policy	Source	Migrant-related content	Article/Section
Constitution	Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, 2013	Human rights and civil rights	Article 14
		Legal residence;	Article 22
		Freedom of movement and residence	Article 23
		Freedom to do business in the industry	Article 33
		Ensuring social security	Article 34
		The right to work, choose occupations and workplaces; Ensure working conditions and salaries; Prohibition of discrimination and forced labor	Article 35
		Protection, health care	Article 38
		Study Rights and Obligations	Article 39
		The right to enjoy and access to culture	Article 41
		The State and society protect and take care of health, health insurance, etc.	Article 58
		The State creates conditions for equal enjoyment of social welfare, social security, etc.: Housing development, creating conditions for people to have a place to live	Article 60
Law	Labor Code 2019	Employees have the right to work and enjoy policies	Articles 5, 10
		Employees and employers must comply with the provisions of the law	Article 5.6
		The employer is not allowed to keep the original papers of the employee	Article 17
		Separate regulations on domestic helpers like other employees	Section V
		For employees who are not subject to social insurance, health insurance and unemployment insurance, the employer is responsible for paying an additional amount of money to the employee at the same time as the salary payment period equivalent to the payment of social insurance, health insurance and unemployment insurance	Article 168
Law	Law 68/2020/QH14-Residence Law	People have the right to freely choose his place of residence and ensure his freedom of residence	Articles 4 and 5
		It is forbidden to obstruct citizens from exercising their right to freedom of residence; Corruption...	Article 7
		Conditions for permanent residence registration, adjustment of permanent residence information.	Articles 20 - 26
		Temporary Residence Registration, Notice of Stay, Declaration of Temporary Absence	Articles 27 - 31
Decree	Decree 62/2021/ND-CP guiding the Law on Residence	Detailing a number of articles on the Residence Law... Building, managing, and using the residence database.	A Decree being amended

Policy	Source	Migrant-related content	Article/ Section
Circular	Circular 66/2023/TT-BCA	Guidance on conditions, procedures and registration methods;... Residence Registration Process	Articles 1 - 4
Health Insurance Law	Law No. 28/VBHN_VPQH consolidating the Law on Health Insurance	Health insurance is compulsory insurance paid by employees and employers... (contractual employees..); Participating groups by household The rate of health insurance entitlement for medical examination and treatment is not on the right line	Article 2
Guiding Documents	Guiding document No. 2089/VBHN-BHXH, dated 26/6/2020: Consolidated document	Voluntary social insurance: ... employees for less than 1 month; part-time activists in villages/hamlets/hamlets..., domestic helpers	Section 2
		Unemployment Insurance: .. employees who have labor contracts or working contracts, or seasonal labor contracts from full 3 months to less than 12 months	Section 3
		Health insurance: paid by the employee and the employer..; According to households (other than the group paid by employees and employers) are those whose names are in the household registration book (except for temporary absence), and the number named in the temporary residence book	Section 4
Law on Social Insurance	Law No. 58/2014/QH13 of the National Assembly	Participants in compulsory social insurance are: employees with contracts (from 1 month or more)..., employers...; Voluntary participants are people who are 15 years old or older (not subject to compulsory social insurance)	Article 2
Children's Law	Law 102/2016/QH13	Disadvantaged children: Migrant children, displaced children, refugees whose parents have not yet been identified or have no caregivers	Article 10
Decision	No. 590/QD-TTg dated 18/5/2022 approving the Residential Layout Program	Supporting the population of the regions: free migration.... on residential land, houses, production land, production development, vocational education, employment... (Note: including households and individuals who have migrated freely in the whole country not according to the planning, plan, and life is still difficult) in the period of 2021 - 2025, 10,526 free migrant households will be stably arranged. Striving to 2025, there will be basically no free migration	Article 1
Circular	Circular No. 24/2023/TT-BNNPTNT guiding the implementation of Decision No. 590/QD-TTg	Formulation of projects, plans, and contents of population arrangement and stabilization	Articles 4-8
		Direct support; Supporting investment in infrastructure construction, production development, vocational education development, employment, etc.; Funding and funding sources	Articles 7-9
		Stable population arrangement in the district; outside districts in the province	Articles 10 and 11

Policy	Source	Migrant-related content	Article/Section
Decision	No. 1719/QD-TTg dated 14/10/2021 approving the National Front Program	Population arrangement and stabilization for 17,400 free migrant household Scope: Communes and villages in ethnic minority and mountainous areas	Section I, II
Resolution	Resolution No. 21-NQ/TW dated 25/10/2017	Ensuring migrants have full and equitable access to basic social services	Article 2
		Prioritize investment in state resources, mobilize social resources to develop establishments providing basic social services, ensuring specific population groups, etc. migrants... are truly equal in terms of opportunities to participate and enjoy development achievements	Article 4
Law	Law No. 43/2019/QH14 of the National Assembly: Law on Education	Primary students in public educational institutions are not required to pay tuition fees; in areas where there are not enough public schools, primary school pupils in private educational institutions shall be supported by the State with tuition fees, the level of support shall be decided by the provincial-level People's Councils	Article 99
Decree	Decree No. 97/2023/ND-CP dated 31/12/2023 of the Government	Amending and supplementing a number of articles on the mechanism for collection and management of tuition fees for educational institutions in the national education system and policies on tuition fee exemption and reduction, support for learning expenses; service prices in the field of education and training. Primary students in public schools do not have to pay tuition fees	Articles 1, 2, 3
Decree	Decree No. 81/2021/ND-CP dated 27/8/2021 of the Government	5-year-old preschool children who do not fall into the above categories are exempt from tuition fees from the school year 2024-2025 (from September 1, 2024)	Article 14
Official Dispatch	Official Dispatch 2179/BGDDT-KHTC 2024	From the school year 2024 - 2025, 5-year-old preschool children in Clause 6, Article 15 of Decree No. 81/2021/ND-CP are exempt from tuition fees (from September 1, 2024)	Article 15
Circular	Circular No. 25/2018/TT-BCT dated 12/9/2018 and Circular 09/2023/TT-BCT dated 21/4/2023 of the Ministry of Industry and Trade	In the case of renting a house to students and employees (the tenant is not a household): - If the lessee has a lease contract of 12 months or more and registers temporary residence or permanent residence, the landlord shall directly sign the electricity purchase and sale contract or sign the electricity purchase and sale contract on behalf of the tenant; - In case the lease term of the house is less than 12 months and the landlord fails to fully declare the number of electricity users, the retail price of domestic electricity of level 3 shall be applied to the entire electricity output measured at the meter.	Article 3
			Article 15a
			Article 2
Resolution	Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP dated 27/12/2008 of the Government	Labor export policy: support for vocational training, foreign language training, cultural fostering, orientation training	Article 8
		Concentrated vocational training to send rural workers to work at enterprises and labor export	Article 2

Annex 9: Interview Questions

Annex 9.1: Interview questions for local authorities (Province and District Levels)

(Department/Bureau of Labour, War Invalids, and Social Affairs)

1. Please briefly present the functions of the Department/Bureau of Residence registration and management in your area. The migration inflow (outflow) of the area/the number of migrations arriving (leaving) your area? Where do they come from? Who are they? What are their occupations? The number of registered and not-yet registered migrants (if any).
2. Describe the tasks involved in migrants' management. The collaboration process between the police (public security) and migrants' management? The policies regarding the migrants in the area?
3. What are the contributions of the coming (leaving) migrants to local development? Any positive/negative impact (economic, job, healthcare, education, social security, public security, culture, environment...)? Please give some specific examples.
4. According to the law, which policies do migrants arriving in the local area benefit from? What is the difference between the residents and migrants? Between registered migrants and non-registered migrants?
5. Social security policies, in general (education, healthcare, welfare, integration for migrants), pose which problems/concerns regarding their implementation for the migrants? Please give some specific examples.
6. Do you encounter any difficulties when managing migrants? Can you propose some suggestions to support the integration of migrants into the local communities and to develop the local economy?

Annex 9.2: Interview Questions for Migration-Managing Authorities

(Commune officials and Police/Immigration Authorities)

1. Could you please provide an overview of the socio-economic development in your locality (ward/commune)? What is the migration flow to the area (how many migrants have arrived? Where are they coming from? Who are they, and what types of work do they typically engage in? What are the reasons for their migration to the area—income, employment, family, climate, environment, etc.)? Please also explore the number of registered and unregistered migrants (if any, why?).
2. Could you describe the current migration situation in your locality and how the management of migrants is being conducted? What are the procedures/processes for registering migrants when they arrive? How are they managed? What services do migrants commonly use from the commune (People's Committee and Police)? Are there any challenges? Why? Please provide specific examples.
3. What contributions do migrants make to the locality? Please provide specific examples. Are there any negative impacts on the locality (economy, employment, social welfare, safety, culture, environment, etc.)? Please provide specific examples.
4. What policies are in place for migrants in the locality? Are there any differences between migrants and local residents? Are there differences between registered and unregistered migrants? Please provide specific examples.
5. Are there any challenges or obstacles in implementing social welfare policies in general (education, healthcare, welfare, safety) for migrants? What about the resources, implementation processes, etc.? Please provide specific examples.

6. Are there any difficulties in managing migrants in your locality? Do you have any recommendations to support the integration of migrants into the community and their contribution to local socio-economic development?

Annex 9.3: Interview questions for registered migrants

(Quantity: 02 -03 registered migrants in each area?)

1. Could you please introduce yourself briefly: where are you from (urban/rural area)? What was your occupation while living in your hometown, and what was your job like? How did your standard of living at that time compare to the average in your local community or among your neighbors?
2. When did you move here? (Please provide details about your migration process.) What was the main reason for leaving your hometown and moving here? What factors influenced your decision to migrate—economic reasons, employment, cultural/religious factors, family, etc.?
3. When you first moved here to live and work, did you complete the necessary temporary residence/absence registration procedures? Did you face any difficulties? Please provide specific examples. If you did not register, what was the reason? Did you experience any disadvantages due to not registering? Please provide specific examples.
4. When you first moved here to live and work, what were your initial feelings? How is your current life here (please explore housing conditions, electricity, water, sanitation, security/safety)? How does your current life compare to the local average? How does it compare to your life in your hometown or previous place of residence? (Is it better? Worse? Please provide specific examples.)
5. How is your current job (explore income, job stability, and any insurance or benefits associated with the job)? How does it compare to your job in your hometown or previous place of residence? (Is it better? Worse? Please provide specific examples.)
6. Are you aware of the rights that migrants are entitled to? Have you been able to exercise these rights? Have you encountered any difficulties in exercising these rights? Please provide specific examples.
7. Have you experienced any difficulties integrating into the local community here? Have you encountered any challenges in interacting with or dealing with local government agencies (from neighborhood groups to the ward level)? For example, any issues related to administrative procedures, migration status verification, your children's education, healthcare, security/safety, etc.?
8. What are the biggest challenges you have faced in your life, work, and integration into the local community? Please provide specific examples.
9. What are your plans for migration strategies for your life and work over the next three months and one year?
10. Do you have any suggestions for local government agencies to address difficulties and support people who have moved here to live and work?

Annex 9.4: Interview questions for non-registered migrants

(Quantity: 01-02 non-registered migrants in each area)

1. Could you please introduce yourself briefly: where are you from (urban or rural area)? What was your occupation while living in your hometown, and how was your job? How did your standard of living at that time compare to the average in your local community?
2. When did you move here? (Please provide details about your migration process.) What was the main reason for leaving your hometown and relocating here? How was the migration decision made? Was it due to economic reasons, employment, culture/religion, family, etc.?

3. Did you complete the necessary temporary residence/absence registration procedures when you first moved here to live and work? If not, why? Were there any difficulties in completing this process? Please provide specific examples. Did you face any disadvantages due to not registering your temporary or permanent residence?
4. How is your current life here (in terms of housing conditions, electricity, water, sanitation, security/safety)? How does your current life compare to the local average? How does it compare to your life in your hometown or previous place of residence? (Is it better? Worse? Please provide specific examples.) How does it compare to the lives of others who have moved here and registered for temporary or permanent residence?
5. How is your current job (in terms of income, job stability, insurance, and benefits)? How does it compare to your job in your hometown or previous place of residence? How does it compare to the jobs of others who have moved here and registered for temporary or permanent residence? (Is it better? Worse? Please provide specific examples.)
6. Are you aware of the rights that migrants are entitled to? Have you been able to exercise these rights? Have you encountered any difficulties in exercising these rights? Please provide specific examples.
7. Have you experienced any difficulties integrating into the local community here? Have you encountered any challenges in interacting with or dealing with local government agencies (from neighborhood groups to the ward level)? For example, any issues related to administrative procedures, migration status verification, your children's education, healthcare, security/safety, etc.?
8. What are the biggest challenges you have faced in your life, work, and integration into the local community? Please provide specific examples.
9. What are your plans or migration strategies for your life and work over the next three months and one year?
10. Do you have any suggestions for local government agencies to address difficulties and support people who have moved here to live and work?

Annex 9.5: Focus group's questions for migrants

(Quantity: 06-10 migrants per group; at least one group per area)

1. Please introduce yourself: Where are you from (urban/rural area)? What was your occupation back home, and how was your job? How did your life in your hometown compare to the average living standard of the local population?
2. When did you move here? (Please provide detailed information about your migration process.) What was the main reason for leaving your hometown and moving here? How was the decision to migrate made? Were there economic, employment, cultural/religious, or family reasons involved?
3. Did you register for temporary residence or absence when you first arrived here for living and working? Were there any difficulties in completing these procedures? Please provide specific examples.
4. How is your current life here (in terms of housing conditions, electricity, water supply, sanitation, security/safety)? How does your life compare to the average living standard of this area? How does it compare to your previous life in your hometown/previous place of residence? (Better? Worse? Please provide specific examples.)

5. How is your current job (in terms of income, job stability, insurance, and benefits)? How does it compare to the job you had in your hometown/previous place of residence? How does it compare to the jobs of the local population here? (Better? Worse? Please provide specific examples.)
6. Are you aware of the rights that migrants are entitled to? Have you benefited from these rights? Please provide specific examples.
7. Have you faced any difficulties integrating into the local community here? Have you encountered any challenges when dealing with local government authorities (from neighborhood committees towards)? For example, administrative procedures, confirming migration status, children's education, healthcare, security/safety issues, etc.?
8. What are the biggest challenges you have faced in your life, work, and integration into the local community? Please provide specific examples.
9. What are your plans or migration strategies for continuing your life and work in the next 3 months and 1 year?
10. Do you have any suggestions for the government authorities to address difficulties and support people from other regions who move to live and work in this area?

