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Thai Marriage Migrants in Germany and Their Employment Dilemma after the Residence Act of 2005

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Abstract

Thais started to migrate to Germany around the 1960s, and it is statistically evident that the feminisation of Thai migration through marriage to Germans has continued to the present day (Federal Statistics Office of Germany, 2016). Women account for almost 87 percent of all Thais in Germany. Marriages of Thai women to German or foreign husbands account for 94 percent of marriages in Germany involving Thai nationals, compared to only six percent of Thai men married to German or foreign wives. In 2005, the total number of Thais in Germany was 58,784; however, only 43 percent of Thais were registered as "labour" under the German employment system. This paper investigates the employment dilemma of Thai marriage migrants after implementation of the new Residence Act of 2005. First, it sheds light on the underlying problems that hinder Thai marriage migrants' potential as full-time labourers and provides better understanding of why highly-educated Thai marriage migrants cannot fully integrate into the German labour market. Second, it examines the Thai diaspora and explores the present-day trans-nationalism of Thai marriage migrants in Germany. Finally, it applies Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical concept of capital, habitus and social space to better understand Thai marriage migrants' career choices in the German milieu. Qualitative interviews with 38 informants and a quantitative questionnaire filled out by 125 additional respondents were conducted between 2016 and 2017, providing one of the most comprehensive researches on Thai marriage migrants in Germany to date.

Keywords

marriage migration, transnationalism, Thai diaspora, social space, employment, German labour market

Abstrakt

Seit ungefähr den 1960er Jahren migrieren Thailänder nach Deutschland, und es ist statistisch belegt, dass die Feminisierung der thailändischen Migration bis heute anhält (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2016). Frauen machen 87 Prozent aller in Deutschland lebenden Thailänder und Thailänderinnen aus. 94 Prozent aller Ehen mit thailändischer Beteiligung in Deutschland bestehen zwischen thailändischen Frauen und deutschen oder ausländischen Männern, während in nur 6 Prozent der Fälle thailändische Männer mit deutschen oder ausländischen Frauen verheiratet sind. Im Jahr 2005 waren 58.784 thailändische Staatsangehörige in Deutschland gemeldet, aber nur 43 Prozent davon waren nach dem deutschen Gesetz als „erwerbstätig“ registriert. Die vorliegende Arbeit untersucht das Beschäftigungsdilemma thailändischer Heiratsmigranten seit dem Inkrafttreten des neuen Aufenthaltsgesetzes im Jahr 2005. Zunächst beleuchtet sie die zugrundeliegenden Probleme, wegen derer die thailändische Heiratsmigranten ihr Potential als Vollzeit-Arbeitskräfte nicht ausschöpfen können, und erklärt, warum sich hochqualifizierte thailändische Heiratsmigranten nicht voll in den deutschen Arbeitsmarkt integrieren können. Dann untersucht sie die thailändische Diaspora und den Transnationalismus thailändischer Heiratsmigranten in Deutschland, und schließlich versucht sie, anhand Pierre Bourdieus Theorie von Kapital, Habitus und sozialem Raum die Berufsentscheidungen thailändischer Heiratsmigranten im deutschen Umfeld zu erklären. Qualitative Interviews, welche zwischen 2016 und 2017 durchgeführt worden sind, stellen mit 38 Informanten und einem quantitativen Fragebogen, der von 125 Befragten ausgefüllt wurde, bislang eine der umfangreichsten Forschungen über thailändische Ehemigranten in Deutschland dar.

Schlagwörter

Heiratsmigration, Transnationalismus, thailändische Diaspora, sozialer Raum, Erwerbstätigkeit, deutscher Arbeitsmarkt

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Federal Republic of Germany is home to the second-largest Thai population outside Thailand after the United States of America[1]. My assignment as a diplomat at the Royal Thai Embassy in Berlin, Germany from December 2012 to December 2016 gave me an opportunity to work closely with this group of Thais, most of whom are wives of German nationals. In the course of these four years, I came to know several Thai wives, either by work or by chance. My curiosity concerning their qualifications and employment opportunities in Germany has continued to grow, as I observed that many Thai migrants, regardless of their educational background and professional qualifications, have struggled to obtain decent work in Germany. Most of them are facing a dilemma between de-skilled employment or being unemployed.

It is often explained by migrants themselves and NGO workers that Thai women in Germany are poorly-educated with less than primary schooling. A majority of them has difficulties improving their German language ability, which negatively impacts their chances for gainful employment. Some women can barely speak German, even after living more than 30 years in Germany. This explanation sounds plausible, given my personal experience. In the 1980s, when I enrolled in a public primary school in Thailand, English was the only compulsory foreign language for children in grades 5 and 6. Thus, older generation Thais, which had only compulsory primary schooling, were not able to use their limited foreign language ability to pursue studying German. Moreover, a majority of women who migrated to Germany for economic reasons preferred spending their time working to taking German classes. This lack of interest and self-motivation to strengthen their German language ability or to pursue vocational training, as many explained, has resulted in their incapability to compete for desired positions offered by German companies. They are left with limited choices in ethnic-related business such as restaurants, massage parlours, as well as unskilled employment, such as cleaning.

Literature on the history of Thai migrants to Germany indicates that the migratory flow involved sex-workers and human-trafficking in the form of the 'mail-order-bride' business (see Chapter 2). Such associations have left a strong stigmatising effect upon these women in both receiving and sending countries (Mix & Piper, 2003, p. 53). I am particularly interested in how such stigmatisation has played a role in today's Thai diaspora and the impact it has on the employment opportunities of young generation Thais. To predict the future of the Thai diaspora

[1] Statistics from the website of Consular Affairs Department of Thailand, 2012

in Germany, I believe that the history of its migration has to be fully understood and present-day migrants' ways of living and thinking have to be investigated. Has the stigmatisation of Thai migrants being 'sex-workers' remained important in their consciousness today? Has it played a role in their migration and integration? How does it impact their everyday living and choice of careers? This thesis shall attempt to answer these questions.

However, the other explanation concerning Thai migrants' *habitus* has puzzled me. Thai migrants, as I was informed, jeopardized their own chances of gainful employment because of their 'laziness' to improve German language or vocational skills, their 'greed-driven incentive' in earning as much money as possible and their 'cunning mentality' of achieving what they need in the fastest and easiest way possible. One example supports this claim. Instead of putting effort into achieving sufficient command of the German language, as stipulated by the Residence Act, Thai wives would try to bear their German husbands a child as soon as possible, to avoid being deported in case of divorce, before their permanent residence permits were secured. They would be protected by the Act as a parent of a minor, unmarried German for the purpose of care and custody[2]. In a book entitled 'Wife or Worker? Asian Women and Migration', Prapairat R. Mix and Nicola Piper remark,

> *Finding work other than sex work is not easy for Thai women who usually do not speak German or English well enough. Thai women with resident visas are allowed to work legally in the entertainment sector as well as in any other job. In reality, their choices are limited if they lack good German or English. In this respect, they are inferior to their Filipino counterparts who usually speak very good English and have achieved higher education levels (and thus find learning a new language less troublesome). The women among our sample made little effort to learn German, and their definition of leading a successful life was typically measured by achievement of economic security. They did not consider integration into German society a priority. Instead, they tend to concentrate on the education of their children who are left behind in Thailand and/or are the offspring from marriages with Germans. (Mix & Piper, 2003, pp. 61-62).*

In recent years, I have encountered many young Thai women, mostly in their 30s, who received university degrees and gained skilled work experience before their migration. Not only they are proficient in the German language, but they also have high self-confidence and self-motivation to integrate into German society and the labour market. The increasing number of qualified Thai migrants has led to my hypothesis that Germany's Residence Act of 2005,

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[2] The temporary residence permit granted to a parent of a minor and unmarried German national for the purpose of care and custody is to be extended after the child has come of age as long as the child lives with him or her in a family household and the child is undergoing education or training which leads to a recognised school, vocational or higher education qualification (Section 28, subsequent immigration of dependants to join a German national, Subsection 3) (Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, 2017)

which imposes strict integration policies on migrants- particularly German language proficiency- has successfully improved the qualifications of most Thai newcomers, to whom I refer as 'New-generation'. To examine their everyday lives, it is no doubt that the role of technological advancement in the digital age has to be taken into account. Today's migrants are 'trans-migrants' who "develop and maintain multiple relations – familial, economic, social, organisational, religious and political that span borders" (Glick-Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1992). Thus, the interplay of trans-nationalism on their everyday lives, including employment circumstances, has to be explored.

On the employment front, I have observed and have been informed that new-generation Thai wives with seemingly improved qualifications find no fewer difficulties, compared to the former generation. Obtaining a position matching their educational level is almost impossible. German employment agencies advise them, similar to what they tell other migrants, to invest their time- up to three years- and money in vocational training, commonly known as Ausbildung. But this one-size-fits-all scheme is not suitable for everyone, particularly the highly-educated and older migrants. This research, therefore, aims to shed light on the underlying problems that hinder Thai migrants' potential as labourers and provides better understanding of why highly-educated Thai marriage migrants cannot fully integrate into the German labour market.

Today, Dr. Pattaya Ruenkaew is the most prominent Thai scholar conducting comprehensive research on Thai women migration to Germany. Dr. Ruenkaew graduated with a Ph.D. in Sociology from Bielefeld University, Germany. Her empirical studies focus on marriage migration of Thai women to Germany. She has authored several books and reports on this topic. I am fortunate to have known her personally and have received invaluable advice from her. Nonetheless, little has been said about the change in the characteristics of Thai migrants after the enforcement of the 2005 Residence Act. In her book entitled "The Rights of Thai Women to Migrate to Work Abroad", the study of which includes narrative biographical interviews with 33 Thai women in Germany, Dr. Ruenkaew comments:

> *The findings indicate that international female migration has hardly changed in most aspects during these 30 years. The main trait of migrant women is as follows: they come mostly from the Northern and North-eastern provinces of the country and can be divided into single mothers, commercial sex workers for foreign men and young unmarried women affected by relative economic deprivation searching for economic and social advancement (Ruenkaew P. , 2009, p. xvii).*

1.1 Research Questions

This thesis attempts to answer the following three main questions and sub-questions.

First, what are the impacts of Germany's Residence Act of 2005 on Thai marriage migration to Germany and Thai migrants in the last decade? How does Thai marriage migration differ from the old days, such as the purposes of migration, channels, relationship with German husband? Do 'mail-order brides' and human-trafficking agencies still exist? What are the qualifications of 'New-generation' Thai marriage migrants, who migrated to Germany after enforcement of the new Residence Act of 2005? How do they differ from the older generation in terms of integration?

Second, how do 'New-generation' marriage migrants interact with the Thai diaspora in Germany, and what are their everyday trans-national lives? How does stigmatisation of Thai female migrants being 'sex-workers' influence their everyday lives? How do advanced technologies play a role in modern-day migrants? How do homeland politics and Buddhism have an impact on 'New-generation' Thai migrants?

Third, how can Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* help explain the employment circumstances of Thai migrants in Germany? Why can educated Thai female migrants not fully integrate into and contribute to the German labour market? Are there underlying problems and issues that hinder the potential contribution of Thai workers to the German labour market? Have they experienced discrimination in the process of gaining employment? How does stigmatisation of Thai female migrants being 'sex-workers' influence their career choices?

1.2 Structure of the Thesis

Following this first introductory chapter, the thesis is divided into seven additional chapters.

Chapter two outlines the history of Thai migration to Germany from the 1960s to the present day, which has been shaped by the immigration and residence laws, as well as the history of the receiving country. It elaborates on the literature of feminisation of labour migration and marriage migration. It investigates Germany as a labour market for gendered migration by looking into the situation of female labour migrants in Germany and the comparative experiences of female migrants in the German labour market. Finally, it explores the importance of education and accreditation for female labour migrants in obtaining gainful employment in the receiving country.

Chapter three provides the theoretical framework of this thesis. The focusses are placed on trans-nationalism and Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus, capital and social space. Steven Vertovec's book, 'Transnationalism' (2009) and David Swartz's book 'Culture and

Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu' (1997) are central to the three analytical chapters, chapters five to seven, of this thesis.

Chapter four deals with methodologies applied in this thesis. The research is based on a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It outlines the population and samplings, limitations and data collection. Due to the sensitivity of the research topic on 'employment', many Thais feel reluctant to come forward as informants. Thus, establishing friendships based on trust and conducting interviews with great caution are keys to the success of the fieldwork.

Chapter five summarises empirical data gained from the interviews with 38 marriage migrants and online questionnaires filled out by 125 respondents. It seeks to identify inter-connections between the present-day migration of Thais and Germany's immigration and integration policies after 2005, when the Residence Act entered into force. It aims to examine qualifications of the "New-generation" Thai migrants, both male and female, particularly their educational attainment, work experience and familial obligations affecting their chances for gainful employment**.** It also sheds light on the booming Thai massage business in Germany.

Chapter six investigates the Thai diaspora, the unique characteristics of which have contributed to its 'weaknesses,' as compared to other ethnic minorities in Germany. It explores the present-day trans-nationalism of Thai migrants, which leads to the prediction of a 'lose-win-win' scenario for Thailand-Germany-migrants.

Chapter seven applies Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical concept of capital, habitus and social space to better understand Thai marriage migrants' career choices in the German milieu. It argues that a migrant's initial capital is being 'devalued' or 'transformed' or 'decreased' over the course of migration, narrowing inequality gaps and obscuring 'class distinction' within the diaspora. It takes Bourdieu's social space as an analytical tool to analyse how each migrant strategically positions his/herself according to their initial and newly-accumulated capitals, and how habitus plays a major role in their career decision-making process.

Chapter eight summarises the main arguments and concludes with recommendations to policy-makers in both sending and receiving countries to re-think and better understand modern-day Thai marriage migrants in the German milieu. Ultimately, they will replace the older generation and become the majority of Thai migrants in the next decades. Their increasing roles as economic and reproductive labourers in Germany are obvious. They are inevitably part of Germany's effort to cope with national challenges posed by demographic change, including the shortage of skilled labourers to sustain its economic growth. Thailand,

on the other hand, has to work harder and more strategically in strengthening the migrants' ties with the home country and in establishing and enforcing their interest and contribution to its development. More importantly, the time-bomb of the Thai massage business awaits solutions, and recommendations in this regard are provided in this chapter.

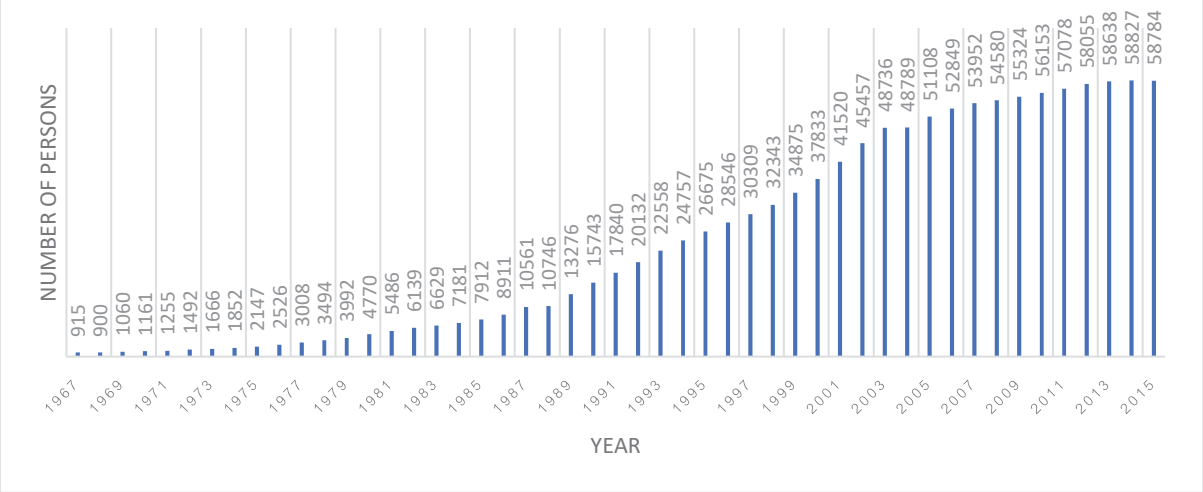
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 A Historical Overview of Thai Migration to Germany

2.1.1 Early Era of Migration

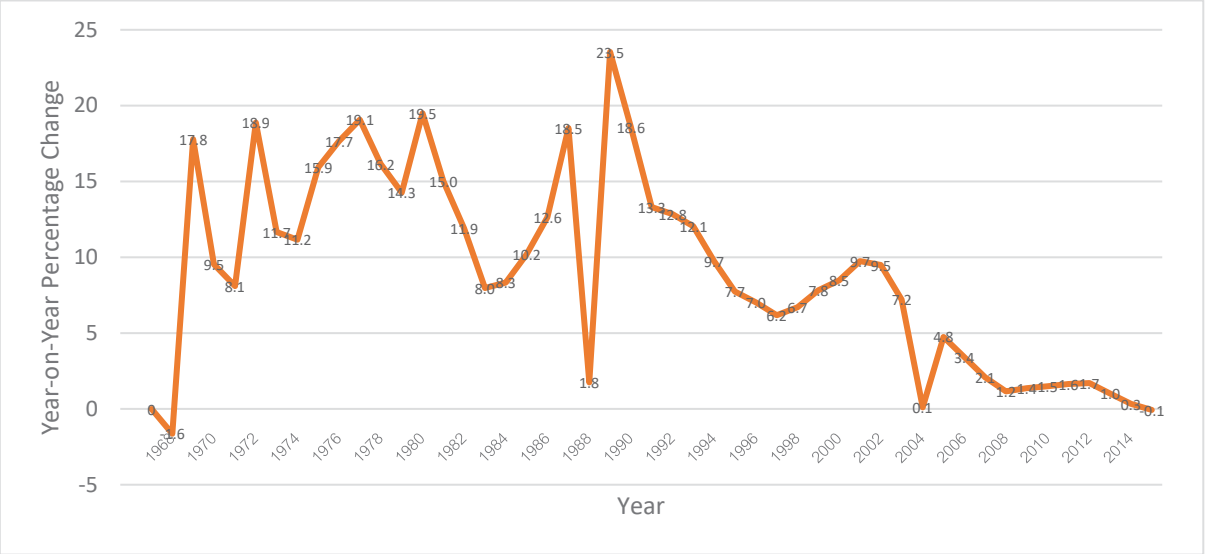
Thais started to migrate to Germany in the early 1960s, and by 1975 there were approximately 2,000 Thais living in Germany, with a nearly equal distribution of men and women: 1,004 men and 988 women (Ruenkaew P. , 2009, p. 60). In fact, statistics show that the Thai population in Germany has steadily increased from only 915 persons in 1965 to 58,784 persons in 2015 (Federal Statistics Office of Germany, 2016). As indicated in Figure 1, in 1987, the number of Thai migrants exceeded 10,000 persons, and within only one decade, it increased three-fold to more than 30,000 persons in 1997. Nonetheless, when considering the year-on-year percentage change of the Thai population, as Figure 2 shows, there have been fluctuations throughout the history of Thai migration to Germany. The number of Thais dramatically increased to double digits in 1972 and continued to grow at a high rate until the early 1990s. In the historically important year of 1989, when East Germany opened the Berlin Wall, one can see the highest change in the size of the Thai population: it increased up to 23.5 percent from the previous year.

Figure 1 Thai Population Totals in Germany (1967 – 2015)



SOURCE: FEDERAL STATISTICAL OFFICE OF GERMANY, 2017

Figure 2 Year-on-Year Percentage change of Thai Population in Germany (1968-2015)



SOURCE: FEDERAL STATISTICAL OFFICE OF GERMANY, 2017

Before 1990, relatively relaxed immigration regulations and a high demand for cheap foreign labour allowed poorly-educated and deprived Thais, both men and women, to travel to and work in West Germany as temporary foreign workers for up to 90 days (Mix & Piper, 2003, p. 58). Construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 significantly reduced the number of East German migrants, causing West Germany to recruit guest workers and foreign migrants to fill its labour force during the period of the economic miracle and developmental aid inflow. As a result, the number of Thai migrants in Germany grew rapidly, despite the fact that they were subject to illegal exploitation and underpaid work, known to Thais as 'black jobs'. Men were hired largely in labour-intensive work- such as driving, construction, cleaning- while a large number of women concentrated on entertainment, the sex trade, restaurants, cleaning and other services. Once their permitted stays in Germany approached their time limits, Thai migrants returned to Thailand or travelled to neighbouring countries to re-enter Germany. Many, however, overstayed and continued to work illegally.

Comprehensive research on the migration of Thai women to Germany conducted by Supang Chantavanich and her team from the Asian Research Centre for Migration of Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok reveals that the Vietnam War brought hundreds of thousands of American soldiers to Indochina, giving rise to the sex trade and sex tourism in Thailand. Many Thai women worked as 'mia chao' or temporary wives for American soldiers. After 1975, Thai women started working in the sex trade abroad and the largest number of Thai women in Europe worked in Germany, followed by Scandinavia (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 7). The image of dark-complexioned Thai women as partners of white foreigners created a

negative stereotype of North- and North-Eastern women in the eyes of other Thais and at the same time, generated a negative reputation for Thailand worldwide.

The increase in migration of Thai women to Germany had several causes. Some German men brought Thai women back to Germany for marriage; but many human trafficking networks placed them in the entertainment sector or in the sex trade (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 8). Before immigration regulation changes in 1989-1990, the artistic visa allowed a person to enter Germany as a cultural performer, including employment as a cabaret dancer. Many Thai women took advantage of artistic visas to enter Germany and work in the sex trade, typically with the assistance of agencies to process their visa applications (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 14).

The early era of Thai migration to Germany since the 1970s is summarised in the following four categories. First, the migration of female sex workers during the late 1970s to the early 1980s though contract agencies. German immigration regulations before 1989 allowed Thais to enter and to stay in Germany for up to 90 days without visas, thus providing the sex-worker loophole to repeatedly enter and re-enter the country, the process of which was referred to as 'shuttle prostitution' (Ruenkaew P. , 2014, p. 8). Second, the marriage migration of Thai women to German nationals through matchmaking brokers, called the 'mail-order-brides' business, which started around 1978. Third, the migration of non-sex workers who entered Germany as tourists and overstayed to take 'black jobs', starting around 1977. Fourth, the marriage migration of former Thai sex-workers and German tourists after the end of the Vietnam war in 1975-1977, when tourism in Thailand started to boom (Ruenkaew P. , 2009, pp. 133-134).

According to earlier researches, the migration of Thai women to Germany in the early era mainly resulted from socio-economic factors and involved the sex-trade (see Chantavanich, et al, 2001; Ruenkaew P., 2009; Mix & Piper, 2003). Despite a wide range of classes and backgrounds of Thai female migrants, the majority came from the lower- or lower-middle income classes with poor educational levels and no prospect of decent employment in Thailand. Financially, they were indebted and had responsibilities to support their parents and their own families (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 17). A majority of women came from rural areas, particularly in the Northern or North-Eastern regions, where poverty apparently was most severe (Ruenkaew P. , 2009, p. 79). Most women had experience migrating domestically from their deprived villages to bigger cities before their first transnational migration began. Their migration usually took place after they completed their compulsory education (elementary school level). Many headed to Bangkok to seek employment, while many others went directly

into prostitution in tourist cities, for instance, the Patpong entertainment district of Bangkok or the Pattaya beaches of Chonburi Province (Ruenkaew P. , 2009, pp. 83-84).

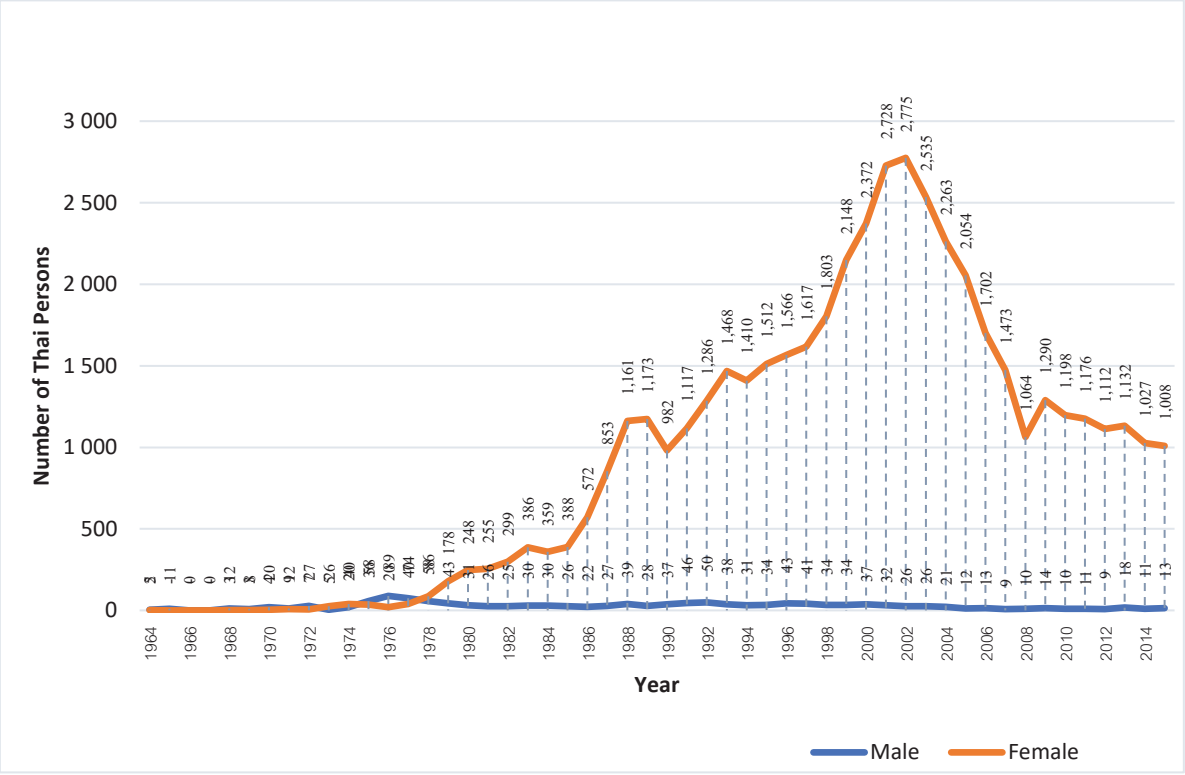
Family problems also motivated Thai women to migrate transnationally. Most women were either divorcées or single mothers or both. Such status had become taboos for women to remarry, particularly with those Thai men who upheld traditional values of abstinence and women's purity. These women felt they had lost their purity and lacked any further value, motivating them to enter the sex trade or to marry foreigners, and some women decided to migrate to escape their husbands, parents or step parents (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, pp. 17-18). For single mothers, the expectation of earning sufficient income to send remittances for their children in Thailand played an important role.

International trafficking networks, as well as friendly assistance from acquaintances in both Thailand and Germany, had significant influence on decision-making and travel arrangements of Thai migrants. They learned or were deceived into believing that they could live better lives in Germany. Thai women heard that they could earn more in Germany working as sex workers or even in menial jobs, such as waitresses, apple pickers, house cleaners, etc. (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 20). Some Thais travelled independently; but a majority paid a fortune for assistance from matchmaking brokers, employment agencies, relatives, friends or other persons. Such assistance included organising visas, marriages, employment and travel (Mix & Piper, 2003, p. 57). Matchmaking agencies further helped with advertising photos and background information of the women in local newspapers, brochures and other forms of publicity. The agencies portrayed the women in conformity with common German male stereotypes about Asian women: honest, obedient, servile and obsequious, making the women attractive marriage prospects for German men (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 22). Employment agencies, on the other hand, mostly recruited Thai women to work in the entertainment sectors in Germany. Most agents were Thais married to Germans, and some owned sex establishments (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 24). As obtaining visas for employment in Germany had been difficult for Thai citizens, these agents and women listed other occupations in their applications, particularly cooks and artists/performers (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 25). Some agents also paid German men to marry the women for easier entry into the country. Thus, a large number of lower-educated and poor Thai women and men arrived in Germany with huge debts. Most of them had little knowledge or preparation, including basic German language and culture, employment conditions and immigration regulations. Nonetheless, the flow of Thai migrants, both female and male, continued to increase, even after changes to German immigration regulations.

2.1.2 Feminisation of Thai Migration Through Marriage after 1990

Germany started to implement strict immigration measures to control the large influx of migrants after the Berlin wall fell in 1989 and reunification occurred in 1990. The imposition of new visa requirements caused Thai migrants to seek other channels to continue their stay in Germany, including marriage to German nationals. By that time, hundreds of Thais, both men and women, had already found German partners, secured legal employment or became entrepreneurs, entitling themselves to residence permits and lawful stay in Germany. Some Thai women married foreign men to prevent their temporary sex work from becoming long-term (Mix & Piper, 2003, p. 57). Statistics of Thai-German marriages during 1964 - 2015 show that between the 1960s and the late 1970s, the number of marriages of Thai migrants, both males and females, to Germans was relatively low: less than 100 persons a year. Thai male marriages outnumbered those of females in the 1970s, but have declined to less than 50 persons per year since 1979. On the other hand, since 1988, the number of Thai females married to Germans grew to more than 1,000 persons per year and reached its peak in 2002, when as many as 2,775 Thai females married Germans. As demonstrated in Figure 3, the number of marriages between Thai women and Germans has remained high, at more than 1,000 persons per year at present.

Figure 3 German-Thai Marriages (1964-2015)



SOURCE: FEDERAL STATISTICAL OFFICE OF GERMANY, 2017

Even though German immigration regulations tightened, the number of Thai migrants has continued to grow. Mix & Piper argue that, "the continued rise in the number of Thais legally married to German citizens is significantly related to the new requirement for Thai citizens to obtain visas" (Mix & Piper, 2003, p. 58). Most Thai women utilise marriage as a means to obtain a residence permit, which enables them to work legally and as a legal pathway for immigration to Germany, thus leading to marriage migration. The decisive mechanism shaping the immigration of Thai women into this specific form of marriage migration is the immigration law in Germany, which stipulates exactly the types of immigrants entitled to stay and work (Ruenkaew P. , 2009).

Marrying a German enables a Thai single mother to achieve her ultimate goals: pursuing higher living standards, accumulating wealth, providing a new life for her child(ren) from a previous marriage, and, if lucky enough, living happily ever after with her new family, either in Germany or Thailand. Thai male migrants, on the other hand, have not been very successful in marrying German women, partly because German women do not view Thai men as good partners. Their inability to secure employment or to start their own businesses forced many of them to return to Thailand. Thus after 1990, Thai female migration continued to increase due to marriage, together with the decrease of Thai male migration due to the barrier of immigration policies. Thus, the feminisation of migration from Thailand to Germany has become evident.

As demonstrated in Tables 1 and 2, married women account for the largest share of the total Thai population in Germany followed by single women, divorced women and single men. In 2015, there were 51,211 Thai women, 67.2 percent of whom were married, 13.1 percent were single, 12.3 percent were divorced and 3.7 percent were widowed. It is important to note that the share of divorced women has grown steadily from only 5.5 percent of the total female population in 1998 to 12.3 percent in 2015. Single men account for the largest share of the Thai male population in Germany. The number of married men has remained comparatively stable over time. Although same-sex marriage was not legal in Germany until 2017, registered partnerships for same-sex couples have been legal since 2001, as reflected in the statistics of both genders starting in 2011. The registration of same-sex partnerships between Thai males has become evidently high and has steadily increased since then.

Table 1 Marital Status of Thai Females in Germany (1998-2015)

Year	Thai Female Population in Germany								
	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Registered same-sex partnership	Same-sex partnership dissolved	Same-sex partner deceased	Unknown	Total
1998	5,891	18,164	284	1,513	-	-	-	1,436	27,288
1999	6,224	19,543	343	1,802	-	-	-	1,567	29,479
2000	6,731	21,105	406	2,060	-	-	-	1,729	32,031
2001	7,318	23,126	461	2,354	-	-	-	1,920	35,179
2002	7,930	25,325	522	2,660	-	-	-	2,091	38,528
2003	8,196	27,393	577	2,980	-	-	-	2,209	41,355
2004	7,491	28,402	654	3,158	-	-	-	2,075	41,780
2005	7,677	29,883	727	3,498	-	-	-	2,083	43,868
2006	7,644	31,008	843	3,836	-	-	-	2,128	45,459
2007	7,459	31,861	969	4,160	-	-	-	2,013	46,462
2008	7,320	32,171	1,109	4,487	-	-	-	1,965	47,052
2009	7,147	32,697	1,220	4,819	-	-	-	1,897	47,780
2010	6,982	33,161	1,389	5,173	-	-	-	1,921	48,626
2011	6,879	33,643	1,555	5,496	15	1	-	1,913	49,502
2012	6,846	34,033	1,688	5,801	16	1	1	1,975	50,361
2013	6,847	34,445	1,779	5,956	19	3	1	1,876	50,926
2014	6,813	34,479	1,882	6,155	20	3	1	1,812	51,165
2015	6,727	34,448	1,911	6,307	23	4	1	1,790	51,211

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Table 2 Marital Status of Thai Males in Germany (1998-2015)

Year	Thai Male Population in Germany								
	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Registered same-sex partnership	Same-sex partnership dissolved	Same-sex partner deceased	Unknown	Total
1998	3,695	944	10	130	-	-	-	276	5,055
1999	3,949	986	10	153	-	-	-	298	5,396
2000	4,251	1,027	12	187	-	-	-	325	5,802
2001	4,607	1,111	11	201	-	-	-	411	6,341
2002	5,042	1,211	10	223	-	-	-	443	6,929
2003	5,398	1,238	12	249	-	-	-	484	7,381
2004	5,082	1,193	12	271	-	-	-	451	7,009
2005	5,182	1,293	12	284	-	-	-	469	7,240
2006	5,235	1,342	15	297	-	-	-	501	7,390
2007	5,234	1,388	17	324	-	-	-	527	7,490
2008	5,185	1,417	17	361	-	-	-	548	7,528
2009	5,116	1,470	22	384	-	-	-	552	7,544
2010	5,001	1,513	25	407	-	-	-	581	7,527
2011	4,941	1,091	24	409	487	23	5	596	7,576
2012	4,931	1,147	24	425	514	31	5	617	7,694
2013	4,932	1,168	27	423	523	42	5	592	7,712
2014	4,819	1,233	31	428	530	61	4	556	7,662
2015	4,738	1,232	31	426	522	66	5	553	7,573

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The most common means to secure marriage was through matchmaking agencies and existing networks, for instance, friends or relatives in Germany. Many women had to pay a fortune or fall into heavy debt to the agencies to obtain three-month tourist visas, to be advertised in a local newspaper to attract prospective German spouses or to pay 'unattractive' Germans to marry them before their visas expired. Thai women who arrive in Germany on a tourist visa have to get married by the time their three-month visitor's visa expires, if they want to stay and/or work legally (Mix & Piper, 2003, p. 59). Some Thai women who came to Germany through matchmaking agents could easily end up with physically-handicapped and/or very elderly husbands (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 38). It is estimated that such 'marriages of convenience' can cost between 4,000 and 10,000 Euro (Mix & Piper, 2003, p. 61). Some married unemployed Germans who relied on the social welfare system. They had to perform all the housework and childcare. Yet Thai woman decided to 'cross the Rubicon' by marrying an unknown man and living in an unknown society, believing there was light at the end of the tunnel.

German husbands can be categorized into five groups (Ruenkaew P. , 2014, pp. 54-56). First, the divorcés, widowers or men who are separated from their German partners. They usually stay single for many years after failed relationships with Germans before remarrying foreigners. Second, single old men. Some German men never have had lovers nor have been in relationships with women due to their work obligations or social limitations. Many live in remote areas or have no self-confidence to start relationships with women. They choose to pay for the service of matchmaking brokers or other acquaintances to be introduced to Thai women. Third, physically unattractive men. They usually have difficulties establishing relationships with German women, thus leaving them no choice but foreigners. Fourth, men who have interest in other cultures and become attracted to Thai women. Fifth, men who come to know Thai women by chance and fall in love with them.

After marriage, some sex-workers leave the sex-trade but some continue to be sex-workers, because their husbands are unemployed (Mix & Piper, 2003, p. 61). Thai wives tend not to interact with mainstream German society and have no control over the family's finances (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 39). Many German husbands strongly object to their wives sending remittances to Thailand. They often say that their marriage to Thai women does not mean they have to support their extended families in Thailand. To prevent such risk, the German husband keeps all his income, takes care of the household's financial responsibilities, and pays his wife 'pocket money' which, as most Thai wives complain, is barely enough for daily subsistence, letting alone remittances. "Many German husbands treated their wives more like servants, providing them with pocket money only" (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 39)..

Most Thai women fear divorce and endure very troublesome relationships to obtain residency visas (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 38). All Thais who wish to live permanently or seek legal employment in Germany have the ultimate goal of obtaining permanent residence permits, which are known to them as 'forever' visas, because they have no time limit (Ruenkaew P. , 2014). Nonetheless, they have to meet several criteria, as the Act on the Residence, Economic Activity and Integration of Foreigners in the Federal Territory states that:

> *As a rule, the foreigner shall be granted a permanent settlement permit if he or she has been in possession of a temporary residence permit for three years, the family unit with the German continues to exist in the federal territory, there is no public interest in expelling the foreigner and the foreigner has a sufficient command of the German language. […] The temporary residence permit shall otherwise be extended as long as the family unit continues to exist (Section 28: subsequent immigration of dependents to join a German national, Subsection 2) (Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, 2017).*

Often, German husbands use the three-year cohabitation requirement to threaten their wives with deportation. As Mix and Piper claim, "The law enabled a man to threaten to send his wife back home to her country, if she does not do his bidding, as authorities would deport her if a divorce occurred before the end of a four-year period[3]" (Mix & Piper, 2003, p. 61). An insecure and stressed wife, as a result, attempts to bear an offspring as fast as she can to guarantee her residence in Germany, because the status as a parent of a minor, unmarried German for the purpose of care and custody can safeguard her stay in Germany, as stated in the Act:

> *The temporary residence permit granted to a parent of a minor and unmarried German national for the purpose of care and custody is to be extended after the child has come of age as long as the child lives with him or her in a family household and the child is undergoing education or training which leads to a recognised school, vocational or higher education qualification (Section 28: subsequent immigration of dependents to join a German national, Subsection 3) (Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, 2017).*

Remaining married to a German not only allows a Thai woman to stay and seek employment in Germany, but she is also entitled to one of the most generous welfare systems in the world. In case divorce occurs before a permanent residence permit is granted, a Thai woman has two options to extend her temporary permit before it expires. First, she must be lawfully employed and fully contribute to the social welfare system. Second, she has to marry another German. For most Thai migrant women, returning to Thailand is the last resort. They would rather struggle with their lives to stay and work illegally, until their objectives have been reached.

To many Thai single mothers, the most important benefit gained from marrying a German lies in the possibility that they can reunite with their offspring born to Thai husbands in a socially developed and economically advanced country like Germany. With an efficient and subsidised education system and advanced economy, Germany is by far a better place to raise their young children, compared to a deprived and disadvantaged environment in Thailand. Reuniting with their offspring means the mothers have better control over raising their children, and, at the same time, have fewer obligations to send remittances to Thailand. The Act stipulates that:

> *The minor, unmarried child of a foreigner shall be granted a temporary residence permit if the parents or the parent possessing the sole right of care and custody hold a temporary residence permit, an EU Blue Card, a permanent*

[3] The length of cohabitation requirement has changed to three years

settlement permit or an EU long-term residence permit (Section 32: subsequent immigration of children, Subsection 1), and,

If the minor, unmarried child is aged 16 or over and if it does not relocate the central focus of its life to Germany together with its parents or the parent possessing the sole right of care and custody, Subsection 1 shall only apply if the child speaks German and appears, on the basis of his or her education and way of life to date, that he or she will be able to integrate into the way of life prevailing in the Federal Republic of Germany (Section 32: subsequent immigration of children, Subsection 2) (Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, 2017).

Many Thai women convince their German husbands to adopt her Thai children, so they can permanently reside and are entitled to social benefits from the German welfare system. If the husbands refused to adopt the child, a Thai woman married to a German and holding a resident visa could still bring in the children by demonstrating her ability to cover all the child's expenses in Germany. Several Thai women brought their children to Germany this way, usually after their children had become teenagers (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 31).

Ruenkaew sees only little change during these past 30 years on the structural level, namely in terms of education, occupation prior to migration and area of origin. She argues that migrant women are mostly from the Northern and North-Eastern provinces of Thailand. The migrants can be divided into single mothers, commercial sex workers for foreign men and young unmarried women affected by relative economic deprivation (Ruenkaew P. , 2009). The uneven distribution of economic opportunities results from the failure of the National Economic and Social Development Plans, and economic deprivation motivates Thai women to migrate transnationally in search of better fortunes. Their obstacles in Germany remain the lack of information and language proficiency. Even though Ruenkaew notices the higher educational attainment and non-agricultural background of the new Thai migrants in Germany, she predicts that as long as gender inequality persists and strict immigration policies stipulate only limited venues for entry into the country, the flows of female transnational labour migration from Thailand to Germany are likely to continue in this form (Ruenkaew P. , 2009, pp. 148-149).

2.1.3 Present-day Thai wives and Their Potentials as Labourers

"Spousal reunification from abroad to join partners living in Germany has been a major path for migration for third-country nationals for many years. Since the introduction of the new Immigration Act (Zuwanderungsgesetz) in 2005, almost 350,000 women and men had entered Germany in the context of spousal reunification by the end of 2013" (Federal Office of Migration and Refugees, 2017). Statistics predicted that by the end of 2015, the total number

of Thais in Germany would be 58,784, with 7,573 men and 51,211 women (Federal Statistics Office of Germany, 2016). Thai women account for almost 87 percent of the total Thai population in Germany. Most Thai nationals live in the former West Germany, with less than 650 persons in each state of the former East Germany, except Berlin. The top five states where most Thais currently live are North Rhine-Westphalia, Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, Hesse, and Berlin, respectively. As outlined in Table 3, almost 99 percent of the Thai population in Germany is in the first generation born outside Germany, indicating the existing migration nature of Thai people to Germany. Most Thais in Germany are in the 'working age' group of 17-65 years of age, with the majority aged between 36 -55 years old.

Table 3 Migration Generation of Thai population by Age group and Gender in 2015

Migrant Generation	Gender	Age (years)									
		under 1-16	17-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-75	76-85	86 and above	Total
2nd generation (born in Germany)	Male	186	69	8	4	2	1	-	-	-	270
	Female	252	68	9	7	3	1	-	-	-	340
	Total	438	137	17	11	5	2	-	-	-	610
1st generation (born abroad)	Male	1,196	1,830	1,579	1,413	818	321	119	26	1	7,303
	Female	1,396	2,827	7,145	17,116	14,808	6,387	1,105	81	6	50,871
	Total	2,592	4,657	8,724	18,529	15,626	6,708	1,224	107	7	58,174

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Women with an initial legal status as a spouse, who afterwards took up employment, have turned into transnational migrant workers (Ruenkaew, 2009). Marriage migrants usually engage in care and reproductive labour in the transnational context, manifested primarily but not solely through remittances; thus, paid work is vital to them (Piper & Lee, Marriage migration, marriage precarity, and social reproduction in Asia: an overview, 2016). Nonetheless, while there are almost 60,000 Thai nationals living in Germany, only 43 percent are registered as 'labour' under the German employment system. According to Federal Employment Agency statistics (Federal Employment Agency of Germany, 2014), only 15,049 Thais were registered as "social security contributors," and 10,702 were registered as "mini-job" workers in 2014 (see Tables 4 and 5, respectively).

Table 4 Sozialversicherungspflichtig und Geringfügig Beschäftigte nach Staatsangehörigkeiten und Geschlecht Deutschland, West- und Ostdeutschland (Stichtag 30. Juni 2014)

Staatsangehörigkeitsschlüssel	Sozialversicherungspflichtig Beschäftigte								
	Deutschland			Westdeutschland (ohne Berlin)			Ostdeutschland (einschl. Berlin)		
	Insgesamt	dav.		Insgesamt	dav.		Insgesamt	dav.	
		Männer	Frauen		Männer	Frauen		Männer	Frauen
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Insgesamt	**30,174,505**	**16,240,821**	**13,933,684**	**24,487,974**	**13,378,163**	**11,109,811**	**5,681,674**	**2,859,504**	**2,822,170**
Deutsche	**27,594,881**	14,645,475	12,949,406	22,130,296	11,914,923	10,215,373	5,460,889	2,728,235	2,732,654
Ausländer	**2,563,286**	1,585,000	978,286	2,344,099	1,454,580	889,519	218,034	129,589	88,445
Staatenlos	**1,818**	1,307	511	1,594	1,151	443	222	154	68
Keine Zuordnung möglich	**14,520**	9,039	5,481	11,985	7,509	4,476	2,529	1,526	1,003
Europa dav.	**2,173,068**	**1,340,682**	**832,386**	**1,999,906**	**1,238,072**	**761,834**	**172,201**	**101,908**	**70,293**
Afrika dav.	**91,956**	**65,057**	**26,899**	**84,009**	**59,215**	**24,794**	**7,918**	**5,818**	**2,100**
Amerika dav.	**65,728**	**35,679**	**30,049**	**57,110**	**30,874**	**26,236**	**8,597**	**4,797**	**3,800**
Asien dav.	**228,232**	**140,823**	**87,409**	**199,598**	**124,163**	**75,435**	**28,495**	**16,566**	**11,929**
Australien dav.	**4,302**	**2,759**	**1,543**	**3,476**	**2,256**	**1,220**	**823**	**500**	**323**
Thailand	**15,049**	**2,454**	**12,595**	**13,440**	**2,162**	**11,278**	**1,605**	**291**	**1,314**

SOURCE: STATISTISCHES BUNDESAMT, STAATSANGEHÖRIGKEITS- UND GEBIETSSCHLÜSSEL (STAND: 1. JANUAR 2012)

Table 5 Sozialversicherungspflichtig und Geringfügig Beschäftigte nach Staatsangehörigkeiten und Geschlecht Deutschland, West- und Ostdeutschland (Stichtag 30. Juni 2014)

Staatsangehörigkeitsschlüssel	Geringfügig Beschäftigte								
	Deutschland			Westdeutschland (ohne Berlin)			Ostdeutschland (einschl. Berlin)		
	Insgesamt	dav.		Insgesamt	dav.		Insgesamt	dav.	
		Männer	Frauen		Männer	Frauen		Männer	Frauen
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Insgesamt	**7,811,376**	**3,042,704**	**4,768,672**	**6,858,654**	**2,633,955**	**4,224,699**	**944,169**	**405,856**	**538,313**
Deutsche	**6,923,060**	2,677,721	4,245,339	6,039,368	2,301,292	3,738,076	876,749	374,127	502,622
Ausländer	**869,587**	358,515	511,072	803,084	327,269	475,815	65,016	30,676	34,340
Staatenlos	**450**	309	141	370	244	126	80	65	15
Keine Zuordnung möglich	**18,279**	6,159	12,120	15,832	5,150	10,682	2,324	988	1,336
Europa dav.	**712,784**	**284,687**	**428,097**	**665,349**	**263,549**	**401,800**	**46,249**	**20,702**	**25,547**
Afrika dav.	**38,460**	**21,036**	**17,424**	**35,446**	**18,952**	**16,494**	**2,957**	**2,049**	**908**
Amerika dav.	**17,413**	**5,860**	**11,553**	**15,407**	**4,980**	**10,427**	**1,972**	**874**	**1,098**
Asien dav.	**100,194**	**46,586**	**53,608**	**86,266**	**39,497**	**46,769**	**13,720**	**6,997**	**6,723**
Australien dav.	**736**	**346**	**390**	**616**	**291**	**325**	**118**	**54**	**64**
Thailand	**10,702**	**557**	**10,145**	**9,852**	**491**	**9,361**	**824**	**66**	**758**

SOURCE: STATISTISCHES BUNDESAMT, STAATSANGEHÖRIGKEITS- UND GEBIETSSCHLÜSSEL (STAND: 1. JANUAR 2012)

Table 6 further illustrates that while Thais rank fifth among Asian social security contributors, after people from Vietnam, China, India and Kazakhstan, Thais rank second only after Vietnamese, when it comes to the “mini-job” category.

Table 6 Sozialversicherungspflichtig und Geringfügig Beschäftigte nach Staatsangehörigkeiten und Geschlecht Deutschland, West- und Ostdeutschland (Stichtag 30. Juni 2014)

Staatsangehörigkeitsschlüssel	Sozialversicherungspflichtig Beschäftigte			Geringfügig Beschäftigte		
	Insgesamt	dav.		Insgesamt	dav.	
		Männer	Frauen		Männer	Frauen
Jemen	**572**	522	50	**336**	308	28
Armenien	**2,797**	1,538	1,259	**1,370**	536	834
Afghanistan	**12,139**	9,209	2,930	**6,730**	4,501	2,229
Bahrain	**21**	13	8	**6**	3	3
Aserbaidschan	**2,426**	1,509	917	**1,212**	564	648
Bhutan	**79**	70	9	**22**	11	11
Myanmar	**520**	415	105	**167**	90	77
Brunei Darussalam	**26**	12	14	*	*	3
Georgien	**4,049**	1,460	2,589	**2,278**	623	1,655
Sri Lanka	**7,771**	5,918	1,853	**5,397**	2,522	2,875
Vietnam	**25,542**	14,077	11,465	**12,454**	4,114	8,340
Dem. Volksrepublik Korea	**1,422**	676	746	**390**	108	282
Indien	**21,296**	17,168	4,128	**5,111**	3,607	1,504
Indonesien	**3,415**	1,629	1,786	**1,449**	494	955
Irak	**14,741**	12,682	2,059	**8,242**	6,501	1,741
Islamische Republik Iran	**13,482**	8,649	4,833	**6,266**	3,687	2,579
Israel	**2,917**	2,102	815	**869**	587	282
Japan	**6,382**	2,478	3,904	**1,369**	329	1,040
Kasachstan	**15,862**	9,380	6,482	**6,653**	1,611	5,042
Jordanien	**1,985**	1,702	283	**569**	387	182
Kambodscha	**313**	159	154	**152**	38	114
Katar	*	7	*	**7**	*	*
Kuwait	**49**	37	12	**33**	19	14
Dem. Volksrepublik Laos	**335**	185	150	**115**	26	89
Kirgisistan	**2,098**	971	1,127	**847**	207	640
Libanon	**6,543**	5,233	1,310	**3,365**	2,527	838
Malediven	**29**	*	*	**8**	*	*
Oman	**18**	10	8	**8**	5	3
Mongolei	**1,038**	230	808	**532**	112	420
Nepal	**1,396**	950	446	**938**	629	309
Palästinensische Gebiete	**252**	222	30	**232**	202	30
Bangladesch	**2,001**	1,759	242	**1,579**	1,284	295
Pakistan	**8,158**	7,332	826	**4,181**	3,545	636
Philippinen	**9,439**	3,864	5,575	**3,182**	249	2,933
Taiwan	**44**	15	29	**28**	8	20

Republik Korea	**3,398**	1,756	1,642	**1,009**	307	702
Vereinigte Arabische Emirate	**114**	75	39	**39**	22	17
Tadschikistan	**315**	208	107	**131**	64	67
Turkmenistan	**443**	188	255	**168**	61	107
Saudi-Arabien	**163**	137	26	**47**	27	20
Singapur	**447**	145	302	**65**	14	51
Arabische Republik Syrien	**8,107**	6,632	1,475	**4,527**	3,349	1,178
Thailand	**15,049**	2,454	12,595	**10,702**	557	10,145
Usbekistan	**2,271**	1,167	1,104	**947**	368	579
China	**27,639**	15,295	12,344	**6,175**	2,270	3,905
Malaysia	**1,116**	555	561	**280**	100	180
Timor-Leste	*	*	*	*	*	*

SOURCE: STATISTISCHES BUNDESAMT, STAATSANGEHÖRIGKEITS- UND GEBIETSSCHLÜSSEL (STAND: 1. JANUAR 2012)

More importantly, Thai labourers are currently the largest "mini-job" Asian labour group in West Germany, excluding Berlin (see Table 7).

Table 7 Geringfügig Beschäfigte nach Staatsangehörigkeiten und Geschlecht Deutschland, West- und Ostdeutschland (Stichtag 30. Juni 2014)

Staatsangehörigkeitsschlüssel	Westdeutschland (ohne Berlin)			Ostdeutschland (einschl. Berlin)		
	Insgesamt	dav.		Insgesamt	dav.	
		Männer	Frauen		Männer	Frauen
Jemen	251	229	22	84	79	5
Armenien	1,169	450	719	197	86	111
Afghanistan	6,331	4,196	2,135	383	292	91
Bahrain	*	*	3	*	*	
Aserbaidschan	1,020	469	551	192	95	97
Bhutan	*	*	11	*	*	
Myanmar	152	*	*	15	*	*
Brunei Darussalam	*	*	3			
Georgien	1,995	534	1,461	281	89	192
Sri Lanka	5,189	2,431	2,758	204	90	114
Vietnam	8,360	2,670	5,690	4,061	1,435	2,626
Dem. Volksrepublik Korea	349	95	254	40	13	27
Indien	4,260	2,898	1,362	841	699	142
Indonesien	1,231	403	828	215	91	124
Irak	7,718	6,065	1,653	508	425	83
Islamische Republik Iran	5,767	3,390	2,377	485	288	197
Israel	669	455	214	198	131	67
Japan	1,124	263	861	244	66	178
Kasachstan	6,067	1,427	4,640	578	180	398
Jordanien	482	318	164	85	67	18
Kambodscha	143	35	108	9	3	6
Katar	7	*	*			

Kuwait	29	*	*	4	*	*
Dem. Volksrepublik Laos	103	22	81	12	4	8
Kirgisistan	744	165	579	101	41	60
Libanon	2,463	1,748	715	895	774	121
Malediven	*	6	*	*	*	
Oman	*	5	*	*		*
Mongolei	378	79	299	154	33	121
Nepal	723	481	242	214	148	66
Palästinensische Gebiete	174	153	21	58	49	9
Bangladesch	1,160	910	250	419	374	45
Pakistan	3,742	3,147	595	426	387	39
Philippinen	3,026	237	2,789	151	12	139
Taiwan	*	*	*	*	*	*
Republik Korea	828	240	588	176	65	111
Vereinigte Arabische Emirate	32	*	*	7	*	*
Tadschikistan	115	59	56	16	5	11
Turkmenistan	149	55	94	19	6	13
Saudi-Arabien	44	24	20	3	3	
Singapur	58	*	*	6	*	*
Arabische Republik Syrien	3,974	2,888	1,086	540	454	86
Thailand	**9,852**	**491**	**9,361**	**824**	**66**	**758**
Usbekistan	816	316	500	130	52	78
China	5,241	1,902	3,339	917	362	555
Malaysia	260	92	168	20	8	12
Timor-Leste	*	*	*	*	*	

SOURCE: STATISTISCHES BUNDESAMT, STAATSANGEHÖRIGKEITS- UND GEBIETSSCHLÜSSEL (STAND: 1. JANUAR 2012)

Other than the sex trade and entertainment sectors, Thai women work in various occupations in Germany, for instance, as apple pickers, waitresses, restaurant kitchen staff, maids and child care workers. And these jobs help women emotionally, as well as financially (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 36). In the 1990s, a higher number of educated Thai women migrated to Germany for marriage. To obtain decent employment, educated women attempted to have their Thai diplomas recognised, and some pursued further studies in Germany (Ruenkaew P. , 2014). Many were able to secure decent employment such as nurses, secretaries, care workers for the elderly. Ruenkaew suggests that in recent years, 'Thai traditional masseuse' has emerged as a new career opportunity for Thai women, both as entrepreneurs and as workers (Ruenkaew P. , 2014). As a result, a considerable number of Thai traditional massage parlours can be found in almost every German city.

Germany places high importance on promoting integration of foreigners. Thus, 'Integrationskurs' or Integration Courses, consisting of the German language, legal system, culture and history are mandatory for all foreigners living lawfully in Germany on a permanent basis (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2017). For all Thai wives, these courses mean the extension of their residence permits and, most importantly, the issue of settlement permits, which have no time limit.

> *Before the temporary residence permit is extended, it must be ascertained whether the foreigner has fulfilled his or her obligation to duly attend an integration course (Section 8: Extension of the Temporary Residence Permit, Subsection 3), and,*
>
> *A foreigner shall be granted the permanent settlement permit provided that (1) he or she has held a temporary residence permit for five years, (7) he or she has a sufficient command of the German language, (8) he or she possesses a basic knowledge of the legal and social system and the way of life in the federal territory…The requirements shall be deemed to be fulfilled if an integration course has been successfully completed. (Section 9: Permanent Settlement Permit, Subsection 1) (Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, 2017).*

Ruenkaew et al. (2014) claims that Thai women view the Integration Courses required by the German government as a burden, because their real objective in Germany is to earn as much in the shortest time possible. Most Thai women have debts to repay, and they do not intend to stay in Germany permanently; thus, learning the German language, legal system and culture have been considered a waste of their precious working time. Ruenkaew et al. (2014) also finds that Thai women experience violations of employee's rights and mistreatment, such as wage cheating or unjust dismissal. Most women do not know their rights and often do not have employment contracts. Some women accept unfair contracts to get jobs. Their low level of education, coupled with their intention to 'earn but not to learn' leads many Thai wives to encounter continuous difficulties living in Germany, particularly with their German spouses, official authorities and employers. Due to their low level of education, Thai women have difficulties learning German, so many drop out of the courses before completing their studies. Thai women's lack of German language skills creates many missed employment opportunities, and they are inferior to their Filipina counterparts in terms of (English) language (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 29). Many see education as a wasteful use of their work time. They do not appreciate the importance of language training and education offered by the German Government. The importance of education as applied to their children, either in Thailand or to offspring from marriages in Germany (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 29). They also do not try very hard to comprehend German spending habits, the ways in which Germans spend their free time and the nature of gender relations in Germany. Some women are simply 'gold diggers', searching for ways to have money without working. Some Thai women workers in Germany work without paying taxes or contributing to the pension fund, making them ineligible for unemployment insurance. Social welfare payments are for people who had no income or too little income to take care of themselves; e.g., some Thai women divorce their

German husbands after four years of marriage. Under some conditions, foreign women receiving social welfare payments could lose their right to stay in Germany. This leads some Thai women to refuse making such payments (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 31).

2.2 Feminisation and Marriage Migration

The literature acknowledges that feminisation of labour migration within and from Asia started in the late 1970s to the early 1980s. Migration was not necessarily women's first intention, but the labour market structural change, both at home and abroad, offered specific job opportunities abroad in highly-gendered job categories (Situation Report on International Migration in East and South-East Asia, 2008). The rapid and uneven industrialisation since the 1950s has generated a regional division of labour, which has, in turn, led to migration of unskilled migrant women workers from East and Southeast Asia (Yamanaka & Piper, 2005). Asian women from less-developed countries intra-regionally migrated to Japan and the newly industrialised countries, namely, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan to fill labour shortages in domestic and care work, as well as the sex trade.

In literature, marriage migrants have been studied largely as reproductive labourers, but trivially as economic agents, who contribute to both destination and origin countries. In addition, marriage migration has been excluded from the migration-development nexus debate, because it is typically not considered labour or work-related; therefore, it is not seen as a so-called productive type of migration (Piper & Lee, Marriage migration, marriage precarity, and social reproduction in Asia: an overview, 2016). Cross-border marriage immigrants are not well accepted and integrated in receiving countries, and are often perceived as serious social problems with negative stereotypes. Other than the stigma derived from the commercial operation of marriage brokerage services and from the human-trafficking of foreign brides as migrant domestic workers, state policies play an important role in regulating cross-border marriages and transnational families (Yang & Lu, 2010).

In the context of citizenship, marriage is one of the channels for a foreigner to obtain citizenship or long-term residence. States regulate not only by applying immigration policies to screen who is eligible to marry foreigners, but also by sets of population, social welfare and labour policies that determine differentiated citizenship towards foreign spouses of different nationalities and ethnic and religious backgrounds (Yang & Lu, 2010). The terms 'cross-border marriages' and 'transnational marriages' are often used interchangeably, refering to cross-ethnic/cultural or same-cultural marriages (Yang & Lu, 2010). Yet, while "the term cross-border marriage emphasises geographical, national, racial, class and gender and cultural

borders constructed in the hosting societies, the term transnational marriage emphasises a transnational network and space created by the actors themselves" (Yang & Lu, 2010).

The marriage migration of Thai women to Germany exhibits a similar fashion as that described in the study by Yen-Fen Tseng, which focuses on the marriage migration of Southeast Asian women to East Asian men. On the demand side, cross-border marriages are typically the product of lower-class men, who suffer from disadvantageous positions in their domestic marriage market, utilising globalising resources to improve their marriageability (Tseng, 2010, p. 31). As to the supply side, the increase in migrants via marriage channels is largely due to the economic hardships in several sending countries, especially in their rural areas. The available channel of marriage migration offers women opportunities to better their lives (Tseng, 2010, p. 34).

Moreover, states have their ways of checking the eligibility of potential citizens. These modes of receiving foreigners constitute a citizenship regime regulating incorporation or naturalisation processes. Citizenship regimes affect the marriage migrants' degree of integration into their new countries. To prevent marriage as a 'side door' for migrants coming to work, states often adopt many procedures to create hurdles for admitting spouses as migrants to detect motivations other than marriage. In some countries, it is a struggle for spouses to obtain citizenship, because many more hurdles are placed ahead of them, making it difficult to become full members (Tseng, 2010).

2.3 Germany as a Labour Market for Gendered Migration

2.3.1 Recognition of Well-educated Dependents of Migrants

Unlike nationals of the European Union, the European Economic Area (EEA)[4] and Switzerland, who are entitled to freedom of movement and unrestricted access to the German labour market, Thai migrants are categorized citizens of a "third country", whose permit for a residence title is needed to remain and work in Germany legally. "Modifications of Germany's immigration regulations since 2005, and the acknowledgement of the increasing demand for qualified individuals from abroad, mean that Germany is on the way to becoming an open, immigration-friendly country, which is an attractive employment destination for the highly-skilled in particular" (Federal Office of Migration and Refugees, 2017). In addition, to cope with demographic challenges, Germany has taken several measures, including recruiting foreign migrants, to ensure a sufficient supply of skilled labour in the medium- and long-term.

[4] These are the Member States of the EU plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway

A study by the Federal Ministry of Migration and Refugees indicates that "European countries – Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands – traditionally have a large share of foreign nationals with a low level of education, but this share is, however, noticeably decreasing over time, as a result of an increase, particularly in the group of the highly-skilled" (Humpert, 2015). Although immigration has been made considerably easier for skilled workers to work in Germany as it offers more generous regulations compared to other European countries, there remain some difficulties attracting skilled workers from third countries. In addition to the German language, the dual education system, the high number of regulated occupations and immigration policies can pose problems for skilled labour to take up employment in Germany (Mayer, Attracting highly qualified and qualified third-country nationals, 2013, p. 30).

Germany has started to recognise the increasing number of well-educated dependents of migrants and their potential as economic labourers. As Manfred Schmidt, President of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees of Germany (BAMF) notes:

> *Our data from the Marriage Migration Study show that it is important to consider the potential contributed by spouses from abroad. Almost all of them come to Germany when they are still young. Many of them have good school-leaving qualifications. More than half of them have completed vocational training or are higher education graduates. I consider a major task to lie in supporting the young women and men as early as possible after their arrival in contributing and developing their skills in Germany (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2014).*

According to the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, securing a skilled-labour supply is cited in the coalition agreement as a way to guarantee prosperity and growth, but it is also closely bound up with the goal of equal opportunities and the chance to improve people's employment prospects. Focus is placed on domestic potential, particularly youth and persons with immigrant backgrounds, but also on women and older people as target groups (Progress Report 2013 on the Federal Government's Skilled Labour Concept, 2013). In 2011, the Skilled Labour Concept already identified women and older people as domestic groups with a large potential for securing skilled labour. There are additional major potential groups, such as persons with immigrant backgrounds or low-skilled people (Progress Report 2013 on the Federal Government's Skilled Labour Concept, 2013). The German Government, therefore, supports mothers with immigrant backgrounds who strive to enter the labour market, contributing to securing a skilled-labour supply. In addition, it is expected that their labour-market integration will improve chances for their social integration and also provide better

prospects for their children (Progress Report 2013 on the Federal Government's Skilled Labour Concept, 2013).

2.3.2 Comparative Experiences of Female Migrants in German Labour Market

Literature reveals several investigations regarding gendered labour markets that confirm the characteristics of first-generation Thai female migrants regarding their participation in the German labour market. Specifically, with regard to the German labour market, Fleischmann and Höhne (2013) analyse interactions between gender, ethnic background and immigrant generation with regard to labour market participation, part-time work and occupation status in Germany. Given persistent gender parities in labour market behaviour in Germany, particularly in the West, they seek to answer to what extent immigrants from different countries, as well as East German men and women, assimilate to gendered patterns of labour market attainment in Germany, using West German men as the reference category (Fleischmann & Hoehne, 2013). The study reveals that gender gaps vary considerably between ethnic groups with regard to labour market participation, part-time work and occupational status (Fleischmann & Hoehne, 2013). Women from these groups also work more often part-time than native West German women; yet due to the substantial rate of part-time employment among native West German women (49.2%), ethnic gaps are more modest among women than among men (Fleischmann & Hoehne, 2013).

Fleischmann and Höhne (2013) also find that for groups originating in countries where gender gaps in labour market behaviour are narrower than in Germany, or where women outperform men, intergenerational assimilation may imply moving away from gender parity and towards greater female disadvantages, for instance, with regard to part-time vs. full-time work, as observed for ethnic Germans (Fleischmann & Hoehne, 2013). Women often withdraw from the labour market, if they do not succeed in translating their educational qualifications into high-status occupations, whereas men may more often resort to taking jobs for which they are overqualified, because of policies of the conservative German welfare state, and possibly in combination with preferences for traditional gendered-task distributions (Fleischmann & Hoehne, 2013).

Joyce M. Mushaben argues that discriminatory legal classifications, not ‘ethno-cultural differences’, constitute the main barrier to women’s socio-economic and political integration in Germany (Mushaben, 2009). Changes in German immigration, residency and citizenship regulations have imposed different impacts on different migrant groups and genders regarding their access to the legal labour market. As Mushaben (2009) outlines, Germany’s participation in two world wars, followed by 40 years of East-West division, have resulted in very complex

naturalisation requirements, based on blood descent (*jus sanginis*), bureaucratic discretion (*Ermessen*) since 1956, legal entitlement (*Anspruch*) after 1990 and birthplace (*jus soli*) as of 2000 (Mushaben, 2009). Additionally, German restrictions on spousal employment, 1973-79, mandated a three-year waiting period for Turkish partners, four years for all others. The 1990 Foreigners Act eliminated waiting periods for persons joining spouses with unlimited residency rights. The marriage dissolvement before specified number of years (not repealed until 1997) could result in women's loss of their residency and other benefits, and same-sex partners faced even more restrictions until 1998 (Mushaben, 2009). Mushaben concludes that the feminisation of migration entails significantly more than 'birds of a feather flocking together' (Mushaben, 2009). Each group is forced to develop its own opportunity structures; but divergent strategies all point in the same direction (Mushaben, 2009).

The occupational struggle faced by female ethnic minorities in Germany portrays experiences similar to those Thai women of the first generation encountered. Comparing five different groups of female dependent migrants, namely the wives of Italian guest workers, post-Soviet Assiedlerinen, women of Turkish descent, Bosnian refugees and temporary Polish labourers, Mushaben (2009) finds that Italian women, who came to Germany as foreign workers during the post-war economic boom in 1955, were recruited mainly 'for jobs too unattractive for men' such as domestic work, ice-cream parlours and textile production. For Italian women, Mushaben argues, migration brings greater educational opportunity, economic autonomy and household modernisation. It has also, to a certain extent, redefined masculine roles in a more equitable direction (Mushaben, 2009).

Unlike Italians, Russian repatriates, who returned after the Wall's collapse in 1989, were classified as German citizens; but women face greater discrimination, such as low wages, poor working conditions and sexual harassment (Mushaben, 2009). The German language is the most important asset for employment, as 65 percent of those whose language skills were very good were employed. After Unification, child-care facilities and all-day schools were shut down in the East, hitting East German women, 90 percent of whom worked full-time in 1989 (Mushaben, 2009). Similar to other ethnic minorities, after 1991, Aussiedlerinnen had to compete with jobless German 'native-speakers', as well as with recognised Yugoslav refugees, and professional females were de-skilled to paid-Putzfrauen or unpaid-housewife status in Germany (Mushaben, 2009). Besides the Aussiedlerinnen, another group of Russian young women arrived in Germany as 'imported brides', resulting in a dramatic increase of German-Russian marriages after the Soviet Union's collapse. To find eligible Germans to marry, Russian women subscribed to Russian-language newspapers in Berlin or placed their

names in card-catalogues back in the Ukraine (Mushaben, 2009), indicating a similar method that used by Thai women seeking marriage with Germans. Russian wives went through a similar fate faced by Thai wives in the early era of their migration: deportation after less than three years' marriage, slim employment opportunities due to low educational attainment. Many were faced with material dependence, isolation and frustration over intra-cultural differences, which could result in conflicts; some were even forced into prostitution (Mushaben, 2009). Turkish women, on the other hand, came to Germany to reunite with their husbands, particularly after the 1972 recruitment freeze, as well as refugees during the 1980 political unrest. Having experienced hardship in obtaining legal employment for many reasons, including stigmatisation and discrimination, Turkish women turned to establish themselves as entrepreneurs (Mushaben, 2009).

Mushaben (2009) concludes that the real problem (of women migrants' unemployment) stems from the host country's refusal to recognise their professional credentials and job experience, a process known as *disqualification*, which is an imposed status, hitting women hardest in fields historically dominated by men –e.g. medicine and engineering. She further argues that unemployment forces women into 'traditional' care-taking roles, exacerbating stress on families in the new environment (Mushaben, 2009).

2.3.3 Differences in Definitions of Skilled Labourers between Thailand and Germany

Differences in definitions can create misunderstanding of how an individual is classified as skilled or non-skilled labour. The Department of Labour Protection and Welfare, Ministry of Labour of Thailand provides the following definitions on its website:

> ***Skilled labour*** *possesses professional knowledge and expertise both theoretical and operational, enabling him/her to make decisions and solve problems by oneself;*
> ***Non-skilled labour*** *can carry out tasks without any knowledge or expertise. He or she can perform his/ her tasks only with small guidance;*
> ***Semi-skilled labour*** *is in between skilled and non-skilled labourers. He or she has learned or received training to perform part of the occupation and possesses semi-ability to make decisions and solve problems by oneself (The Department of Labour Protection and Welfare, Ministry of Labour of Thailand, 2017).*

In contrast, Germany has no generally accepted definition for the terms skilled, non-skilled or highly-skilled labourers. According to the website of Germany's Ministry of Interior, skilled labour immigrants possess qualifications ranging from completed occupational training or comparable qualifications to university-level degrees. Even though minimum salary for these skilled workers is not defined, it must be the same as for Germans with comparable skills

(Federal Ministry of Interior, 2017). 'Unskilled or low-skilled workers', on the other hand, are largely employed as seasonal workers in the agricultural sector, food-service industry, as au pairs or domestic workers (Federal Ministry of Interior, 2017).

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees defines 'highly qualified and qualified' third-country nationals as follows:

> *When defining highly-qualified and qualified third-country nationals, there are two types of classification in Germany: the definition according to the German Residence Law, which forms the basis for issuing residence titles and, if necessary, approvals in the event of a labour market test by the Federal Employment Agency (BA); and the definition according to occupational relevance (i.e. the knowledge and skills required for a profession and the work performed) and level of performance (i.e. complexity of work to be performed) that are applied when placing workers from third countries (Mayer, Attracting highly qualified and qualified third-country nationals, 2013, p. 11).*

A measure to recruit highly-qualified and qualified third country nationals is through the EU blue card initiative, yet Germany's requirement is relatively high. A citizen of a non-EU-country, who wishes to apply for the EU blue card in Germany, must possess a German or an accredited foreign or a university degree that is comparable to a German one and has a secure working contract with a gross annual compensation of at least €50,800 (4,134 Euros per month) or a contract in a so-called shortage occupation (scientists, mathematicians, engineers, doctors and IT-skilled workers) with the amount of €39,624 (3,302 Euros per month) (EU Blue Card Germany, 2017).

2.3.4 Recognition of Education and Skills of Female Migrants

Many countries try to attract highly-skilled labour to create 'triple wins', where the individual migrant, the country of origin and the country of destination all benefit from migration. Germany clearly acknowledges its need to import highly-skilled labourers to sustain its economic growth in the wake of demographic challenges. Nonetheless, skilled female migrants can hardly secure employment appropriate to their qualifications. They have faced many challenges, as many scholars have voiced their concerns.

Marit Aure (2012), for instance, points out that even highly-skilled migrants, both men and women, also experience exclusion processes when entering new markets. She studies twelve highly-skilled men and women who migrated for non-work reasons, or what she calls 'love migrants' in Tromsø, Norway. The study shows that both female and male dependent migrants experienced equally frustrated problems entering skilled labour markets. However, "migrants with higher education—even migrants with Norwegian education, long-term residency and language proficiency—experience greater risks of unemployment and over-

qualification than the ethnic majority" (Aure, 2013). Moreover, gendered expectations allow women to withdraw from the labour market to re-educate themselves or focus on their families; and opportunities for long parental paid leave in Norway may paradoxically add to migrant women's problems in entering the skilled labour market (Aure, 2013).

In addition, Robyn Iredale (2005) points to barriers skilled women encounter when they try to enter occupations for which they are trained. She argues that, compared to men, women face more obstacles, such as family obligations, gender bias and an inability to undergo assessment procedures and training (Iradale, 2005). Women tend to consider welfare of the family a top priority, thus, they often delay their language learning or qualification recognition processes. They also postpone applying for accreditation, if it is costly (Iradale, 2005).

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Literature and empirical data on Thai marriage migrants after the Residence Act of 2005 have led to three hypotheses. First, stigmatisation of Thai women being stereotyped as sex-workers remains inevitable in present-day Germany. Second, advanced technologies, which were not widely available before the 1990s, have played an important role in today's migration and everyday lives of Thai marriage migrants. Third, the *habitus* of Thai marriage migrants, even though it comparatively differs from that of the older generation, influences employment choices migrants make. Thus, for the purpose of analysis, this thesis applies the concepts of *transnationalism* and *habitus* as the core theoretical frameworks to examine Thai marriage migrants after 2005, their migration, their employment circumstances in Germany and their everyday lives in a stigmatised diaspora.

3.1. Transnationalism

Earlier researches on Thai migrants in Germany did not place much emphasis on roles of technologies in migration and migrants' everyday lives, because information and communication technologies were not widely available to Thai migrants until late the 2000s, when smart phones become accessible at affordable prices in the global market. Linkages between migrants and their country of origin were examined mainly on the basis of migration processes and remittances that migrants sent home. Other key aspects of transnational migration, such as diaspora, religion, homeland politics, have not been analysed in depth. Ruenkaew's edited book, 'Thailaendische Frauen und Gemeinde Heute in Deutschland', for instance, provides accounts of different professions and employment of Thai migrants in Germany, such as interpreter, nurse, house-maid, as well as the descriptive introduction of different diasporic associations and diasporic activities from the first-hand experience of each co-writer. However, analysis of transnational migration, transnational lives and the stigmatisation of its diaspora has remained unchallenged.

In the age of globalisation, where the Internet, smart phones and free chat applications are available at low cost, Thai marriage migration and migrants' everyday lives have changed considerably. Inevitably, information and communication technologies have become part of everyone's daily lives, providing accessibilities to information and connecting them to anyone in the world. The impact of technologies on migration is ambiguous. To seek a potential husband in Germany, for instance, a Thai woman no longer needs to pay for agents, reducing their chances of falling prey to human-trafficking organisations. With little literacy, she can

easily use Facebook and numerous dating websites available at her finger tips. On the other hand, such technologies have been used by traffickers for criminal purposes and online human trafficking has emerged.

The following sections examine in detail the concept of transnationalism, transnational migration and transmigrants introduced by (1) Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Blanc-Szanton; (2) Alejandro Portes; and (3) Steven Vertovec. This selection of authors is based on the concept's historical significance, critical views and key ideas in today's discourse. While Nina Glick Schiller and her collaborators have introduced the concept of 'transmigrants', Portes and his colleagues have critical views on the ideas and have advanced knowledge in this field with empirical studies. Vertovec compiles the key ideas of migrant transnationalism in today's discourse in his book, 'Transnationalism', which is fundamental to this research.

In his book, Vertovec underscores 'transformation' in his analysis on impacts of migrant transnationalism. Pattern and process of transformation can be witnessed amongst Thai migrants and within its diaspora. Migrants do not only link themselves between the country of origin and the country of destination, but they also contribute to shifts and changes in these countries, as Vertovec argues in the book's introduction:

> *There is a point to be emphasised in analysing the impacts of migrant transnationalism: while not bringing about substantial societal transformations by themselves, patterns of cross-border exchange and relationship among migrants may contribute significantly to broadening, deepening or intensifying the conjoined process of transformation that are already ongoing (and often subsumed by the overarching concept of globalisation). This is what I argue by way of the conventional categories of socio-cultural patterns, politics, economics and religions in respective chapters of this book. Each chapter is based on the recognition that specific practices and processes across borders have effects on: how people think about and position themselves in society both here-and-there; how they undertake aspects of their everyday activities, while taking account of their multiple connections across borders; and how they organise themselves collectively according to multiple criteria and participate within encompassing contexts and scales—within or spanning specific localities—politically and economically. When such processes accumulate to alter fundamentally some key societal structures, we can designate them as forms of significant transformation (Vertovec, 2009, p. 24).*

Thai migrants are married to the 'others', who do not share their language, religion and culture. However, most of them remain Buddhists in a Christian society. The Buddhist temples are increasing in number, similarly to the Thai restaurants and Thai massage businesses. Several cultural activities are organised and have become annual events, such as 'Amazing Thailand' in Bad Homburg. Given the fact that stigmatisation persists in both societies, it is

also important to investigate how the new-generation thinks about and positions itself in German society. Thus, this research follows four areas of transformation outlined by Vertovec (2009), namely socio-cultural, political, economic and religious.

3.1.1 Nina Glick-Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Blanc-Szanton

The concept of 'transnationalism' has been increasingly discussed in relation to today's migration and consequences of its movement, thanks to pioneers Nina Glick-Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton (1992). They observed that there is a new kind of migrating population, whose networks, activities and patterns of life encompass both their host and home societies. They introduced a concept, 'transnationalism,' and described the new type of migrants as 'transmigrants'. They defined transnationalism as "the processes by which immigrants build social fields that link their country of origin and their country of settlement. Transmigrants live their lives across borders and maintain multiple ties to home countries of origin. They develop and maintain multiple relations—familial, economic, social, organisational, religious and political that span borders. They take action, make decisions, and feel concerns, and develop identities within social networks that connect them to two or more societies simultaneously" (Glick-Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1992).

The development of their concept, of transnationalism follows six promises: "1) bounded social science concepts such as tribe, ethnic group, nation, society or culture can limit the ability of researchers to first perceive, and then analyse, the phenomenon of transnationalism; 2) the development of the transnational migrant experience is inextricably linked to the changing conditions of global capitalism and must be analysed within that world context; 3) transnationalism is grounded in the daily lives, activities, and social relationships of migrants; 4) transnational migrants, although predominantly workers, live a complex existence that forces them to confront, draw upon and rework different identity constructs: national, ethnic and racial; 5) the fluid and complex existence of transnational migrants compels us to reconceptualise the categories of nationalism, ethnicity and race, theoretical work that can contribute to reformulating our understanding of culture, class and society; and 6) transmigrants deal with and confront several hegemonic contexts, both global and national" (Glick-Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1992). The argument takes into account the perspective of a global capitalist system, migrants' responses to economic forces and their strategies of survival, cultural practices and identities within the world-wide historical context of differential power and inequality.

Transmigrants are more resilient to global political and economic situations, as they maintain several identities linking them simultaneously to multiple countries. At the same

time, they are class-differentiated, and their activities within each state and across national boundaries are influenced by, but also influence, all aspects of the hegemonic process in each nation-state (Glick-Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1992). Their later article adds that, "three conjoining potent forces in the current global economy lead present-day immigrants to settle in countries that are centres of global capitalism, but to live transnational lives: (1) a global restructuring of capital based on changing forms of capital accumulation has led to deteriorating social and economic conditions in both labour sending and labour receiving countries with no location a secure terrain of settlement; (2) racism in both the U.S. and Europe contributes to the economic and political insecurity of newcomers and their descendants; and (3) nation-building projects of the both home and the host society build political loyalties among immigrants to each nation-state in which they maintain social ties" (Glick-Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1995). In this paper, they also introduce the role of nation-state building as a political process and the role of today's advanced technologies of transportation and communication in making the interconnections possible. Factions and leaders within many countries which can claim dispersed populations have looked to their diasporas as a 'global resource and constituency' (Glick-Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1995).

Since its introduction, the concept of 'transnationalism' has been widely debated, followed or, in some cases dismissed, by many migration scholars, both theoretically and empirically. Nonetheless, the visibility of migrants' multiple ties and interactions across borders of nation-states, remains meaningful in understanding migrant transnational practices- socially, politically and economically- within homelands and places of settlements.

3.1.2 Alejandro Portes

A very important first step to assess the scope of transnational involvement among contemporary immigrants was the Comparative Immigrant Entrepreneurship Project (CIEP), conducted by Alejandro Portes and his colleagues, focusing on individual immigrants' border-crossing activities (Schunck, 2014). Portes outlines three main problems associated with the concept of transnationalism introduced by Glick-Schiller and her colleagues (Portes A. , 2001). Firstly, the methodology used by the earlier studies and mostly by social anthropologists focused on instances where the phenomenon of interest is present, but not on those where it is absent. According to Portes, not all immigrants are 'transmigrants' and transnational practices are still quite limited in absolute and relative numbers. Secondly, the presence of similar practices among immigrant groups in the past led to the problem of adumbration. Thirdly, the term 'transnational' has an appealing ring to it that leads to its usage in many diverse contexts. Thus, Portes seeks to delimit the meaning of transnationalism by introducing the terms

'*international*', '*multinational*' and '*transnational*'. The term '*international*' refers to activities and programmes conducted by states and other nationally-based institutions in other countries. The distinct characteristic of these activities is that they are carried out across borders in pursuit of the goals of large organisations that possess a clear national affiliation. The *multinational* type of activity is conducted by institutions whose purposes and interests transcend the borders of a single nation-state. Lastly, *transnational* activities would be those initiated and sustained by noninstitutionalised actors, be they organised groups or networks of individuals across national borders. Many of these activities are informal, that is they take place outside the pale of state regulation and control. "When supervised by state agencies, the key aspect of transnational activities is that they represent goal-oriented initiatives that require coordination across national borders by members of civil society" (Portes A. , 2001).

According to Portes, immigrant transnationalism, although numerically limited at present, is expected to grow in the future, because it is driven by the logic of global capitalism, which creates demand for immigrant labour in advanced countries and the supply of low-paid, third-world migrants (Portes A. , 2001). In addition, global capitalism has encouraged the invention and refinement of technological marvels in transportation and communication that greatly facilitate implementation of long-distance initiatives (Portes A. , 2001). These 'space and time-compressing' technologies enable immigrants to readily cross borders, easily follow events in the country of origin, and maintain close relations across borders (Schunck, 2014).

With respect to the relation of transnational involvement and immigrant integration into the receiving society, Portes further argues that immigration transnationalism can alter the process of integration to the host society of both first-generation immigrants and their offspring (Portes A. , 2001). Transnational activities may actually accompany and support successful adaptation to the host society, as transnationalism offers a viable alternative to bypass both labour market constraints and nativist prejudice (Portes A. , 2001). Economic resources created by transnational enterprise can empower immigrants to resist exploitation in the labour market and propel themselves and their families into the native middle-class (Portes A. , 2001). Their CIEP data indicates that more-educated immigrants are, the more likely they are to become transnational entrepreneurs and politically active (Portes A. , Conclusion: Theoretical convergencies and empirical evidence in the study of immigrant transnationalism, 2003). However, regular involvement in transnational activities appears to be a one-generation phenomenon; but this involvement can have resilient effects on the second generation, both through its influence on the socio-economic integration of parents and through the latter's persistent efforts to create 'bridges' between their children and culture and communities left

behind (Portes et al., 2001). Lastly, Portes points to the important role of various players of the sending countries, for instance, governments, churches or other religious bodies, and local development agencies, in intensifying their contacts with their respective diasporas (Portes A. , 2001). Migrants are viewed not only in economic terms as the source of remittances and local development support, but in political terms as lobbyists in defence of national interests.

Portes and his colleagues (2007) have tested the concept of transnationalism, using an empirical study of ninety Colombian, Dominican and Mexican migrants in the United States. They sought to capture the frequent and durable participation of immigrants in the economic, political and cultural life of their countries, which requires regular and frequent contact across national borders. They found that *international* activities undertaken by diplomats and government officials of sending countries in host countries have become increasingly oriented toward promoting and guiding *transnational* initiatives of their emigrant communities. Governments are aware of the national benefits from the rising volume of immigrant remittances, investments of expatriates in housing, land and businesses at home. Some sending governments have passed laws allowing migrants to retain their nationality, even if they become naturalised abroad. They are eligible to vote and even run for office while living in another country. In addition, "regardless of nationality, transnational immigrant organisations' members are older, better-established, and possess above-average levels of education, suggesting that participation in transnational activities and assimilation are not incompatible" (Portes, Escobar, & Radford, Immigrant Transnational Organizations and Development: A comparative Study, 2007).

3.1.3 Steven Vertovec

Steven Vertovec's "Transnationalism" (Vertovec, 2009) provides comprehensively key ideas of today's discourse and literature on transnationalism. He takes on the subject by examining it in six aspects: namely as social morphology; as type of consciousness; as mode of cultural reproduction; as avenue of capital; as site of political engagement and as (re) construction of 'place' or locality (Vertovec, 2009). Regarding social morphology, Vertovec focuses on the ethnic diasporas, their networks and the importance of new technologies in today's transnational networks. He also points to the fact that many illegal and violent social networks also operate transnationally, as well (Vertovec, 2009). On the type of consciousness, he argues that people are bound into social forms or networks with a common consciousness or bundle of experience, thus 'diaspora consciousness' can be observed. On the mode of cultural reproduction, transnationalism is often associated with cultural reproduction such as fashion, film, music, literature, as well as the production of hybrid cultural phenomena found

among transnational youth. Many ethnic or religious diasporas find satellite and cable networks efficient channels for communication and cultural education. Concerning the avenue of capital, transnational corporations (TNCs) as well as transnational capitalist classes are considered the major players in transnational practices, as their economic and political impacts are much greater than those of migrants. Similar to many scholars of transnationalism, Vertovec places importance on the engagement of homeland politics undertaken by governments, non-governmental agencies and transnational communities. Last but not least, the aspects of transnationalism in relation to space, particularly by creating transnational 'social fields' or 'social spaces' have been under investigation.

With regard to migrant transnationalism, Vertovec points to various contemporary developments found in more recent research. The powerful role of 'technology of contact', which contributes to speedy, intensive and inexpensive communication, helps facilitate increasingly institutionalised forms of political engagement with homelands, migrant home-town associations, government outreach programmes for emigrants. He points to the 'usual suspect' criticism that has challenged the transnational concept in migration studies; yet none of this critique delivers a knock-out blow (Vertovec, 2009). He suggests that one way to refine transnational theory is through categorising kinds of transnational migrants themselves, for instance, unskilled labour migrants, return migrants, forced migrants and so on. Moreover, it is necessary to differentiate transnationalism among people (a) who travel regularly between specific sites, (b) who mainly stay in once place of immigration, but engage with people and structures of origin, and (c) who have never moved, but whose locality is significantly affected by activities of others abroad. It is also important to identify types, specificities and differences surrounding migrant transnationalism (Vertovec, 2009).

Vertovec (2009) points to the concept of 'transformation' which refers to structural shifts and long-term changes in social, political and economic organisation wrought by the intensification of interconnections known as 'globalisation'. He acknowledges that migrant transnationalism does not necessarily lead to long-lasting, structural changes in global or local societies; but patterns of cross-border exchanges and relationships among migrants may contribute significantly to broadening, deepening or intensifying conjoined processes of transformation that are already ongoing (Vertovec, 2009).

3.1.3.1 Socio-Cultural Transformations

Vertovec (2009) argues that certain kinds of socio-cultural transformation and transnational lives are fostered by long-distance, cross border connections among migrants. Such transformations are largely facilitated by new technologies, particularly the advent of

cheap international telephone calls, which serve as a kind of 'social glue' connecting families and other small-scale social formations globally (Vertovec, 2009). Everyday transnational practices are shown to have affected institutions and many aspects of social life, such as families, gendered social structures and the habitus of persons by way of conditioning their dispositions, orientations and patterns of social action. The ways in which migrants conduct their transnational lives and maintain their long-distance attachments also have indications on how well transnationally connected migrants are integrating into their host society.

Families

The family dimension has been the integral part of most studies on migrant transnationalism. Vertovec (2009) places emphasis on the nature of parenting and the experience of children. Transnational mothers have to undertake the nurturing of their children-left-behind through available channels and technologies, which Vertovec points out, may lead to exasperation and emotional entanglements for both sides (Vertovec, 2009). However, Vertovec also believes that transnational families are buffered by their extensive social networks, which allow for the circulation of people, goods, jobs and information, as well as for the re-creation and modification of cultural values and practices. Socialisation within the family and social networks help prevent the divide, while at the same time, building the personal repertoires of *habitus* (Vertovec, 2009).

Gender

Within transnational families, female members who have migrated and become the breadwinners of the family have obviously altered their positions and relations in the household. As Vertovec (2009) points out, numerous studies demonstrate that irrespective of cultural background, women's status – in the household and community at home and in the receiving country – generally improves, because of employment opportunities and a certain degree of control over income and material resources. However, such empowerment does not always translate to a higher gender equality or patriarchal domination. Vertovec (2009) concludes that "gender relations and family forms are fundamental features of cultural institutions that are generated by sets of outlooks and values inculcated through social practices and experience" (Vertovec, 2009). To better understand how they might be transformed through transnationalism, Vertovec (2009) suggests that it's the concept of *habitus*.

Habitus

Vertovec (2009) places great emphasis on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* in his debate on transnationalism. He agrees with Bourdieu that most practices can only be accounted for by comparing them between "the social conditions in which the habitus that generated them

was constituted, to the conditions in which it is implemented" (Vertovec, 2009). Many scholars have attempted to incorporate this concept to explain the experiences of transnational lives. Conceptualising transnational experiences through the idea of habitus, Vertovec concludes, may give rise not only to dual orientations, but also to personal repertoires comprising varied values and potential action-sets drawn from diverse cultural configurations (Vertovec, 2009).

Cultural Competence/Cosmopolitanism

According to Vertovec (2009), 'new forms of *habitus*', including experiences, skills, information, abilities and orientations characteristic of individuals, allow labour migrants to cope with a range of cultural differences and transnational lives. To participate effectively in activities that cut across two or more national boundaries, an individual should possess a certain set of qualifications. Moreover, Vertovec (2009) emphasises that even though other cultural competence notions, for instance, multiple languages skills, are evident among transnational lives, their capacities are not without considerable constraints. He suggests that social actors' actions are embedded in a constellation of relations and structures, and that actions of transnational actors are multiply embedded.

Norms and Identities

Vertovec (2009) argues that transnational social patterns variously condition people's everyday expectations, moral obligations, institutional structures and relations to the state. Such norms of transitional life coincide with the conscious and non-conscious disposition of *habitus,* as one sees that migration leads to more migration (Vertovec, 2009). Families and friends of migrants are encouraged to emigrate using existing social networks and available information. However, he also points out that "the norms that manage and sustain migrant transnationalism do not determine individual behaviour, nor do they ensure social cohesion within the migrant group and its extended network in the place of origin. Such norms may, in fact, stimulate new social tensions, fragmentation and disarticulation within families and local communities: for instance, the case of dissenters" (Vertovec, 2009).

Vertovec (2009) looks into the issues of how members of second and subsequent generations are affected by transnationalism and if the transnational practices are carried on among second-generation youth. As literature displays considerable patterns of such transnationalism, Vertovec (2009) believes in the likelihood of the interplay of parents' transnational *habitus* and an array of local conditioning factors and second-generation youth's own hybrid or *multicultural habitus*. He also suggests that even though the second and subsequent generations may not be able to sustain strong forms of transnational practices, the

process of being socialised within the milieu of such transnational orientations and practices will often have substantial influence on long-term configurations of outlook, activity and identity (Vertovec, 2009).

Integration (Assimilation)

According to Vertovec (2009), the degrees to and ways in which today's migrants maintain identities, activities and connections linking them with communities outside their places of settlement are unprecedented. The level of transnational engagement will be largely conditioned by a range of factors, including migration channel and legal status, migration and settlement history, community structure and gendered patterns of contact, political circumstances in the homeland, economic means (Vertovec, 2009). More importantly, he agrees that the 'more transnational' a person is does not mean he or she is 'less integrated,' and the 'less integrated' one is does not necessarily prompt or strengthen 'more transnational' patterns of association (Vertovec, 2009).

Again, Vertovec places great importance on *habitus,* as he suggests that one should consider how patterns of migrant transnationalism entail the re-orientating of people's *habitus* towards 'bifocality' (Vertovec, 2009). He also suggests that a re-orientation of *habitus* takes place in the course of any person's relocation and integration into a new social system, and it contributes to a more widespread process of transformation, particularly the public recognition of multiple identities (Vertovec, 2009).

3.1.3.2 Political Transformations

Vertovec (2009) examines migrant transnationalism and resultant forms of political transformation, particularly affecting models of the nation-state and its encompassing conceptual complex or 'analytical triad' of 'identities-borders-orders'. Such transformations are witnessed most explicitly with the growth of dual citizenship and the enhancement of a variety of 'homeland' political activities among migrants and 'diaspora engagement policies' created by governments.

Identities-Border-Orders

Vertovec (2009) refers to the three conceptual domains 'Identities-Border-Orders' introduced by Mathias Albert, David Jacobson, and Yosef Lapid (Albert, Jacobson, & Lapid, 2001) when examining the relationship between migrants and nation-states. Nation-states can effectively create the sense of 'peoplehood' or membership by extending or withholding rights, voice and welfare access to immigrants (Vertovec, 2009). Yet, migrants also challenge nation-state ideals by moving back and forth between states, sometimes evading state controls over borders and taxes (Vertovec, 2009). Moreover, national-states also impose policies to strictly

maintain territorial jurisdiction and border control, which often have a substantial impact on migrant transnational practices. Lastly, nation-states can impose a broad range of policies surrounding migration, and migrants are concerned with reproducing certain legal, social and political systems (Vertovec, 2009).

Dual Citizenship/ Nationality

Vertovec (2009) points to the globally increasing number of countries, including Germany, that allow some forms of dual citizenship or nationality. He argues that migrant transnationalism plays a key role in this growth, and such a trend is having important outcomes in government policies (Vertovec, 2009). Debates on pros and cons of granting dual nationality are on-going, and many view such practice as promoting a kind of 'citizenship of convenience' (Vertovec, 2009). Nonetheless, rights and obligations derived from dual citizenship, including voting, holding public employment, access to education, national insurance and pensions and protection by labour laws, are being differently rationed by each nation-state. Thus, transnational migrants have to take such measures strategically (Vertovec, 2009).

Homeland Politics

Besides participation or involvement in political parties or civic associations in the country of origin, Vertovec (2009) suggests that homeland political allegiances can takes several other forms, including diasporic politics, provisions for absentee voting, buying into regimes, key roles in war and peace, mass protest and consciousness-raising, as well as overseas support for insurgency and terrorism (Vertovec, 2009). As the governments of sending countries try to reap the benefits of transnational migration, be they remittances, investment, political representatives or 'lobbyists', through their outreach policies, some migrant diasporas also find negotiation power with their governments. On the other hand, diasporic political movement may create fear and suspicion for host countries. The growing concern over home-grown terrorists or nationalism/political movements, for instance, encourages most nation-states to impose preventive measures. In the globalisation process, one can witness an increasing overlap of political identities and practices displayed between and within diasporic homelands and host societies (Vertovec, 2009).

3.1.3.3 Economic Transformations

Even though economic advancement has been a prime reason for migration, remittance is not the only form of transnationalism practiced by migrants. Vertovec (2009) examines existing forms of economic transformations stimulated by migrant transnationalism and its consequences.

Trade and Entrepreneurship

Economic activities of migrants- for instance, saving, investment, taxation- create 'multiplier effects' in both sending and receiving countries (Vertovec, 2009). Vertovec (2009) points to the growing number of transnational ethnic entrepreneurships which directly involve migrants, as well as spin-off industries catering for migrant transnational practices, such as telephone, air transportation and financial services (Vertovec, 2009). He also points out the recent development of migrant-related businesses that market to customers in diaspora- such as retail shops or supermarkets, travel agencies, shipping companies. He refers to an extensive survey conducted by Alejandro Portes, Luis Guarnizo and William Haller (2002) which finds that 'transnational entrepreneurs represent a large portion, often the majority, of self-employed persons in an immigrant community. They demonstrate that transnational entrepreneurs are generally better educated, higher salaried and have more solid legal standing, if not citizenship, then many of their immigrant counterparts' (Vertovec, 2009).

Remittances

The majority of studies on economic transnationalism focuses on remittances migrant workers send to their families in the countries of origin. The main objectives of remittances often involve improving livelihood, be it the consumption by left-behind families, investment in properties and small business, or development aid in the home country. The multiplier effects of remittances have been empirically evident in various studies, implying both positive and negative impacts to economies. While many scholars argue that remittances are used mainly for subsistence and towards non-productive activities, Vertovec (2009) insists that "migrants do indeed often channel remittances directly into investment, and that in this field we are not just talking about countries of the South" (Vertovec, 2009). The channels through which migrants transfer their money have changed through time and technological advancement. Both formal and informal financial bodies have to competitively adjust their mechanisms and bureaucratic processes, as migrants seek any way possible to minimise their international transaction costs. The introduction of internet-banking, for instance, helps reducing both transaction fees and excessive amounts of time one has to spend at bank counters, making money transfers easily accessible anywhere and any time.

Furthermore, Vertovec (2009) examines the roles of hometown associations (HTAs) in economic transformations and their contributions to homeland development. He suggests that these forms of institutionalisations have much valuable potential for effectively directing remittances to highly-needed and effective forms of local development. In addition, he points to research by Zabin and Rabadan (1998) which finds that "HTAs are clearly the most

numerous and ubiquitous form of voluntary organisation among first-generation immigrants" (Vertovec, 2009). HTA activities are often welcomed and supported by governments of sending countries, as well as other local agencies, be they NGOs or the private sector. However, "the relationships between HTAs and states of origin are not unproblematic, either" (Vertovec, 2009).

Micro-finance institutions (MFIs) provide small, low-interest loans and saving services to those who generally cannot access formal financial institutions to engage in productive activities, such as petty trading and small farms (Vertovec, 2009). As MFIs usually have financial limitations, in many cases HTAs play important roles in pooling funds from remittances to support the establishment or work of MFIs (Vertovec, 2009). Even though many MFIs have failed to achieve their objectives, "MFIs and innovation in technology surrounding them have much transformative potential steering remittances – perhaps particularly collective ones – toward optimal development outcomes" (Vertovec, 2009).

Circular Migration

Vertovec (2009) points to the growing efforts of policy-makers to systematically manage the movement of labour migrants to and from homelands and foreign places of work to achieve 'win-win-win' results. In recognition of the prevalence of transnational practices, policy-makers try to reverse the impact of the 'brain drain' by facilitating 'brain circulation' of professionals through temporary return visits or through 'virtual return over telecommunication systems' (Vertovec, 2009). The potential benefits of circular migration led many developing countries to open more avenues for repeat, temporary labour migration, for instance, multiple-entry visa regimes. Similarly, migrant receiving countries see circular migration as one way to ease sectoral labour shortages and to curb illegal migration, thus they tend to facilitate flexible cross-border movements for certain types of professionals.

The 'self-perpetuating' nature of migration leads an individual to repeatedly move. Vertovec (2009) further argues that the more migrants repeat their movements, the less they are concerned with whether they go legally or not. However, when they have accumulated human capital, i.e. skills and experience, which allows them to progress in terms of socio-economic mobility, they become more concerned with their legal status (Vertovec, 2009). He also agrees that circular migrants tend to remit more money, because they plan to return to their home countries and use the money themselves (Vertovec, 2009).

3.1.3.4 Religion Transformations

Diaspora

Vertovec (2009) firstly attempts to clarify the meaning of 'diaspora,' which has been used extensively across disciplines. The word 'diaspora' derives from the Greek *diaspeirō* (to distribute, *speirō* (to sow, to scatter) and *dia-* (from one end to the other), thus the term has become associated with the Jewish historical experience, and is associated with dispersed people sharing a common religious and cultural heritage (Vertovec, 2009). More importantly, he points to the argument by Martin Baumann (1995), that when we say something has taken place 'in the diaspora', one should distinguish what one tries to refer to: (a) the *process* of becoming scattered, (b) the *community* living in foreign parts, or (c) the *place* or geographic space in which the dispersed groups live (Vertovec, 2009).

Even though 'diaspora' is associated with religion, more emphasis is being placed on the aspect of ethnicity. Vertovec (2009) brings into attention the relationship between religion and diaspora as well as the transformative potentials of religion in diaspora. He expresses his concern about the notion of 'diaspora religion' and the argument that diaspora implicates religion, because migrants practice religion. Vertovec (2009) argues that one should not assume that migration means diaspora, because "religion span(s) many ethnic groups and nationalities that have been spread by many other means than migration and displacement" (Vertovec, 2009). Moreover, one should not replace migration and its subsequent minority status with 'diaspora' (Vertovec, 2009). To Vertovec (2009), migration and minority status, diaspora and transnationalism are intuitively linked, but not conceptually synonymous. In short, Vertovec (2009) concludes,

> *I refer to diaspora here especially as an imagined connection between a post-migration (including refugee) population and a place of origin and with people of origin and with people of similar origins now living elsewhere in the world. By 'imagined', I do not mean such connections might not be actual. Rather, by this I emphasise the often strong sentiments, narratives, memories and mental pictures according to which members of diasporas organize themselves and undertake their cultural practices (Vertovec, 2009, pp. 136-137).*

Organisation and Mobilisation

The establishment of associations for the purpose of religious worship has been common among immigrant groups. Organisations and practices of religion are, nonetheless, subject to modification and adaptation due to many factors involved in the new settlement. Not only the processes surrounding associations reflect the size and development of the immigrant population itself, its establishment also concerns the status of immigrants as minorities and

legal protection against religious discrimination (Vertovec, 2009). Moreover, immigrants are self-conscious about their minority status in the religious pluralism environment, which usually affects their thinking about their religion.

Regarding gender and generation of participants, Vertovec (2009) interestingly points out that in many cases, women migrants- particularly those who are employed- take a lead in the organisation and management of collective religious activities (Vertovec, 2009). They also play important roles in reproducing religious practices domestically and educating subsequent generations to participate in and maintain the associations (Vertovec, 2009).

Religion and Transnationalism

To Vertovec (2009), migration and minority status, diaspora and transnationalism each relate to different, but overlapping, grounds, upon which religious transformations take place (Vertovec, 2009). Traditionally, religious transnationalism involves the movement of leaders or representatives, such as Buddhist monks, who propagate or promote their faith in foreign lands. Today, with advanced technologies and networks, religious practices and teachings can be carried out even without the presence of a member of a religious order. Moreover, religious organisations or other relevant bodies in the homeland can exercise considerable influence on the practices and religious associations abroad. As Vertovec (2009) points out, "A diasporic group may be concerned with affecting the religion and politics of the nation-state of origin, it may be seeking to create its own autonomous region or nation-state, or it may be dedicated to the cause of exporting a politico-religious ideology from one place of origin to another setting" (Vertovec, 2009).

Last but not least, Vertovec (2009) argues that change involves possible trajectories of collective identities and of local/regional or sectarian traditions in contexts of diaspora and transnationalism (Vertovec, 2009). He suggests five possible trajectories for specific religious traditions and groups, "(1) remaining intact; (2) homogenising parochial forms through lowest common denominators of belief and practice; (3) promoting a kind of ecumenism; (4) universalising a specific form by claiming it to be all-encompassing; and (5) cosmopolitanism, whereby the possibility of multiple, successive forms is celebrated" (Vertovec, 2009).

3.2 Pierre Bourdieu's Habitus and Social Space

Literature explains the role of *habitus* in Thai migrants' everyday lives and decision-making on their earnings. Many scholars argue that poverty, low education and familial problems have contributed to their decisions to marry Germans and migrate to Germany hoping for better lives and employment opportunities. Many Thais worked as sex-workers, and many

migrated as mail-order-brides. Moreover, they pay less attention to language studies and make little effort to integrate into mainstream society. Chantavanich describes some Thai women as possessing gold-digger characteristics:

> *Some Thai women married to German men fell into gender roles in which they expected their husbands to provide for their needs. In certain cases, the women need included having the husband support for their families and relatives in Thailand. Such women depended heavily on their husbands and did not make much (if any) effort to find their own sources of income (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 48).*

However, empirical data shows that many qualifications of Thai marriage migrants after enforcement of the Residence Act of 2005 have improved, including educational attainments, familial and economic situations. The *habitus* of Thai marriage migrants, too, has changed. They place great importance on language training and integration. A majority of them has achieved the B1 intermediate level of German-language proficiency and has strived toward securing employment in Germany. Thus, it is crucial to investigate how *habitus* plays a role in their decision-making, in the case of employment today.

Pierre Bourdieu's complex concept of *habitus* is one of the most influential theories in today's sociology and social science. Nonetheless, the original text in French and available English-language translations can be difficult to comprehend, particularly for those who are not familiar with the French cultural context. This research follows the interpretation of Bourdieu's theories drawn by David Swartz in his book, 'Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu' (Swartz, 1997) and the application of Bourdieu's theories in empirical studies in Boike Rehbein's book, 'Globalization, Culture and Society in Laos' (Rehbein, 2007) as an example of analysis.

To Bourdieu, all types of *action* are strategies to emphasise the *interest* orientation of people's behaviour, both of material and symbolic forms. Interest is defined by an actor's position within the social hierarchy (Swartz, 1997, p. 71). Swartz summarises Bourdieu's thinking about *action* in two general views. First, action is not a mechanical response to external determining structures, whether they be economic, political, social, or even cultural. Habits, traditions, customs, beliefs—the cultural and social legacy of the past—filter and shape individual and collective responses to the present and future. They *mediate* the effects of external structures to produce action. Second, he explicitly rejects a 'homo economicus' view of action (Swartz, 1997, p. 69). Furthermore, interest-oriented action does not assume conscious, rational calculations or 'goal orientation'. Interest is rather 'practical' and

'dispositional', and can be defined by an actor's position within the social hierarchy (Swartz, 1997, p. 71).

Bourdieu conceptualises *capital* in all forms of power. Swartz suggests that Bourdieu's concept of capital appears rooted in a kind of labour theory of value and that labour can be embodied in generally four generic types of capital: economic capital (money and property); cultural capital (cultural goods and services, including educational credentials); social capital (acquaintances and networks) and symbolic capital (legitimation) (Swartz, 1997, p. 74). Unlike Marx, Bourdieu's sociology focuses on how and under what conditions individuals and groups employ strategies of capital accumulation, investing and converting various kinds of capital to maintain or enhance their positions in the social order (Swartz, 1997, p. 75).

Bourdieu's *cultural capital* is not limited only to school attainment or credentials, but covers a wide range of resources. Three states of cultural capital: *embodied, objectified and institutionalised*, are explained as follows:

> *First, it refers to the ensemble of cultivated dispositions that are internalised by the individual through socialisation and that constitute schemes of appreciation and understanding. […] This holds for music, works of art, and scientific formulas, as well as works of popular culture. Thus, cultural capital exists in an embodied state. […] Second, cultural capital exists in the objectified form referring to objects, such as books, works of art and scientific instruments, that require specialised cultural abilities to use. Third, cultural capital exists in an institutionalised form, by which Bourdieu means the education credential system (Swartz, 1997, pp. 76-77).*

It is important to emphasise that *cultural capital* can become a power resource and is one of the main causes of social inequalities. "The unequal distribution of objectified and institutionalised cultural capital across social classes is for Bourdieu one of the key dimensions of social inequalities in modern societies" (Swartz, 1997, p. 77) .

According to Swartz (1997), the term 'dispositions' suggests two important components of the habitus concept: structure and propensity. "On the one hand, habitus sets structural limits for action. On the other hand, habitus generates perceptions, aspirations and practices that correspond to the structuring properties of earlier socialisation" (Swartz, 1997, p. 103). Here, the class-based character of socialisation is emphasised. "Habitus derives from the predominantly unconscious internalization—particularly during early childhood—of objective chances that are common to members of a social class or status group" (Swartz, 1997, p. 104). He further explains that habitus "generates self-fulfilling prophecies according to different class opportunities" and "the structural disadvantages can be internalised into relatively durable

dispositions that can be transmitted intergenerationally through socialization and produce forms of self-defeating behaviour" (Swartz, 1997, p. 104).

Another dimension of habitus focusses on adjustment of aspirations and expectations. To Bourdieu, an individual, in his/her specific location in a stratified social order, practically rather than consciously, adjust his/her forms of conduct, according to anticipated outcomes. On the one hand, habitus adjusts aspirations and expectations, according to the objective probabilities for success or failure common to members of the same class for a particular behaviour (Swartz, 1997, p. 105). On the other hand, habitus generates practices that differentiate actors from their competitors (Swartz, 1997, p. 114). Habitus is rather resistant to change, and some kinds of class habitus appear to be more durable than others (Swartz, 1997, p. 107). Bourdieu, however, does not apply habitus to all forms of behaviour. "Habitus is more useful for explaining behavioural patterns in situations where normative rules are not explicit" (Swartz, 1997, p. 113).

To understand more clearly about the concept of habitus, Bourdieu's *Fields of Struggle for Power* has to be examined. Swartz (1997) explains that "fields denote arenas of production, circulation, and appropriation of goods, services, knowledge, or status, and the competitive positions held by actors in their struggle to accumulate and monopolise these different kinds of capital" (Swartz, 1997, p. 117). To Bourdieu, a field is similar to a card game, the specific rules of which have to be followed by the actors. There are three different types of field strategies: conservation, succession and subversion. "Conservation strategies tend to be pursued by those who dominant positions and enjoy seniority in the field. Strategies of succession are attempts to gain access to dominant positions in a field and are generally pursued by the new entrants. Finally, strategies of subversion are pursued by those who expect to gain little from the dominant groups" (Swartz, 1997, p. 125).

The principal field in Bourdieu's work is the field of power (Swartz, 1997, p. 136). The struggle for power over symbolic and material resources is the fundamental dynamic of all social life. According to Swartz (1997), two major competing principles of social hierarchy shape the struggle for power in modern industrial societies: distribution of *economic capital* (wealth, income, and property), which Bourdieu calls the 'dominant principle of hierarchy,' and distribution of *cultural capital* (knowledge, culture and educational credentials), which Bourdieu calls the 'second principle of hierarchy' (Swartz, 1997, p. 137). More importantly, "As a general rule, Bourdieu finds that the greater the difference in asset structure of these two types of capital, the more likely it is that individuals and groups will be opposed in their power struggle for domination" (Swartz, 1997, p. 137). Finally, practices occur when habitus

encounters those competitive arenas called fields, and action reflects the structure of those encounters; thus, action is the outcome of a relationship between habitus, capital and field, as Bourdieu formulates: [(habitus)+(capital)] + field = practice (Swartz, 1997, p. 141).

Social Classes and the Struggle for Power

After migration, most Thai marriage migrants become jobless and financially dependent on their German husbands. Their chances of obtaining employment which is appropriate to their educational attainment is limited. The easiest and quickest way to empower themselves economically is to work as masseuse, which are in high demand in Germany. Nonetheless, this employment comes with the negative stereotype of being sex workers. Migrants, thus, have to decide whether they want to empower themselves financially by working as masseuse or to avoid that work, to maintain their social class standing.

To investigate Thai migrants' employment decision-making, Bourdieu's *social space* will be applied. "Bourdieu holds a highly-stratified view of the social world in which individuals and groups struggle to maintain and enhance their relative standing within a hierarchically-structured social space" (Swartz, 1997, p. 145). To Bourdieu, people of similar classes have similar dispositions and practices, because they have similar positions in *social space*, providing them with similar conditions of existence and conditioning (Swartz, 1997, p. 153). Thus, social classes imply any groups of individuals sharing similar conditions of existence and dispositions. Stratifying factors involved in social classes are mainly capitals (economic, cultural, social and symbolic); gender; race; places of residence and age. Bourdieu constructs three fundamental dimensions of *social space*, which are total volume of capital, composition of capital and social trajectory (upward mobility, downward mobility, or stagnation), which provide the general framework for Bourdieu's analysis of class structures in contemporary societies (Swartz, 1997, p. 162). "He argues that individuals who share similar positions in all three dimensions also share similar conditions of existence or class condition" (Swartz, 1997, p. 162).

Swartz (1997) further explains that Bourdieu sees that the class structure of society becomes internalised in distinct class habitus, and each habitus embodies both material conditions of existence of the class and symbolic differentiation (e.g. high/low, rich/poor) that categorise and rank their relationships to other classes (Swartz, 1997, p. 163). Class conflict and competition occur when individuals or groups of individuals struggle to improve or maintain their positions within the stratified social order. They struggle over valued forms of capital and over definitions of what is legitimate capital (Swartz, 1997, p. 180). More

importantly, “Class struggle in advanced countries tends to follow the logic of market competition rather than one of collective mobilization” (Swartz, 1997, p. 188).

4 METHODOLOGIES

This research is based on a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. To investigate transnational experiences and employment situations of Thai marriage migrants in Germany after the Residence Act of 2005, various types of interviews were conducted in Germany between August 2016 and July 2017 with Thai migrants who married since 2005 and with relevant agents, including Thai government officials, NGOs workers, researchers, members of religious associations, German husbands and other Thai migrants to strengthen the overall research findings and analysis. The online survey was conducted in July 2017 with the aim of deepening the analytical results regarding migrants' employment decision-making. Lastly, observation methods based on the researcher's four-year experience working closely with Thai migrants in Germany in all aspects, be they political, economic, cultural, religious, welfare and labour protection, has contributed to the overall improvement of this research.

4.1 Population and Samplings

According to the Federal Statistical Office of Germany (2017), there are approximately 7,600 Thai marriage migrants who have resided in Germany since 2005. Thai migrants are living in all states of Germany, many of them in suburbs or remote areas. Thus, locating and approaching them for independent research purposes are unlikely to be successful. More importantly, due to the sensitivity of the research topic on 'employment', many Thais felt reluctant to come forward as informants. Some migrants did not want to expose their wrong-doings, and some felt ashamed of their employment. Some housewives believed that they could not contribute as research respondents, because they are unemployed.

Various channels had to be explored to search for target respondents, i.e. Thai marriage migrants who registered their marriage from 2005 onwards. Firstly, the assistance of the existing network of migrants, officials, NGO members played an important role in the initial phase of this research. Through their introduction and encouragement, many informants felt more comfortable taking part in interviews. Some informants may have felt obligated to accept the interview for these migrants, officials and NGOs members. Secondly, social media and instant messaging services proved to be the most powerful tools in transmitting interview requests to the broadest target groups in the shortest time possible. Many migrants came forward and volunteered to take part in the interviews after seeing the message on employment-related Facebook pages administered by Thai migrants. A large number of young-generation Thai migrants in Germany are members of two Facebook pages called, 'Sharing the Experience

of Learning Berufsausbildung in Deutschland,' with more than 6,000 members and a page called 'Arbeitsplatz für Thai in Deutschland' with more than 3,500 members. Most informants with relatively high educational attainment promptly expressed their willingness to be part of the research, as they hope that the research may lead to improving employment opportunities for new generation Thai migrants in Germany. The other important channel was through the group-chats of LINE, the top messaging and live-chat application most Thai migrants use. After reviewing the request, each migrant could simply copy the message from one LINE group and paste it to as many groups as possible in a penniless and effortless fashion. Lastly, the snowball chain referral was crucial in reaching the hidden population. Initial informants made suggestions or, in many cases, personally contacted and persuaded other informants to participate in the research interviews. Without this combination of sampling methods and channels, interviews with a dispersed population on a sensitive topic would not have been possible.

4.2 Limitations

It is important to note that three limitations were encountered during the fieldwork, but deliberate attempts have been made to lessen these weaknesses. First, informants involved in wrong-doings or illegal conduct, particularly unregistered employment (black jobs) and tax evasion, did not come out into the open. Even if they did, their honesty would have been in doubt. Therefore, it was important to conduct interviews in a casual yet cautious manner, allowing the informants to feel at ease with the interviewer and confident of their privacy and information confidentiality. The informants were assured that video or voice recordings were not made during interviews and that only written notes were used. They were reassured that their personal information would be strictly anonymous and confidential. To protect their identities, many informants expressed their intention to give interviews only via messaging applications, such as LINE and Facebook messenger. In most cases, they preferred voice calls to face-to-face interviews, adding more difficulties in observing their reactions or sincerity in answers. Establishing trust and friendship during and after the interview was key to obtaining genuine information and referral to other informants.

Secondly, snowball sampling has the disadvantage of selection bias, causing most of the informants to be in the same or a similar class of population. To reduce such disadvantages, attempts were made to diversify the initial sets of informants and enlarge the sample size as much as possible. The online questionnaire was added with the aim of compensating for the weakness of snowball sampling.

Finally, unlike earlier research on Thai migrants in Germany, this research does not involve Thai sex-workers as informants. Attempts were made to reach such persons, but to no avail. This group of migrants does not openly give interviews, as Prapairat R. Mix, who has assisted sex-workers for over 20 years at Amnesty for Women (AfW), Hamburg, Germany, notes: "*Most sex-workers are isolated and have no contact with people outside their work.*" (Mix P. R., 2016, p. 17). Nonetheless, other sources of information indicate that Thai women working as sex-workers or prostitutes in Germany have declined in number. In June 2017, BBC Thailand reported an interview with a transgender Thai sex-worker named Sandy, concerning the new Prostitution Law, which was about to go into effect on 1 July 2017 (BBC Thailand, 2017). The information from Sandy, who has been a sex-worker in Germany for over 20 years and is now working in Frankfurt, is reported as follows:

> *Sandy believes that in Frankfurt, there are Thai transgenders like herself working (in the sex industry) around 20 persons. However, there are not as many real women from Thailand as compared to 20 years ago. Even though there have been regular reports about human trafficking and forced prostitution of Eastern European sex-workers, Sandy believes that almost no Thai has become a victim. And she views that the Thai transgenders can take care of themselves.*

In the same report, BBC Thailand also provides information from an official of the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Frankfurt, saying:

> *The viewpoint of Sandy is not different from that of Mr. Parama Chamrasromran, Consul of the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Frankfurt, who says that, even though we cannot tell the number of Thais who came to work as sex-workers here (in Germany), but it is predicted that the number has decreased as compared to 20-30 years ago. This has resulted from the number of sex-workers from other countries in Europe after the establishment of the European Union. Mr. Parama indicates that there are very few Thais who have been victimised by the sex industry.*

The prostitution of Thai women in Germany, however, has been transformed into what Thai people call 'nuad-ab-fang' (translated to 'disguised massage'), the topic of which is discussed in detail in this research.

4.3 Data Collection

4.3.1 Qualitative Methods

Qualitative methods are central to this research. To explore migrants' transnational experiences and employment situations, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 38 Thai marriage migrants living across Germany. In addition to assurances of anonymity and confidentiality, respondents were informed about the research objectives and potential benefits

to academia and future policy-making processes. They could decline to answer any questions considered to be sensitive. They were allowed to pose any question before, during or after the interview for further clarification. Interviews were conducted in the Thai language and took place without the presence of other Thais, to keep information as confidential as possible.

Annex 3 outlines a set of questions used as a guideline for interviews with marriage migrants to explore his/her pre-migration situation, decision to marry a German, marriage migration and transnational experiences, opinions on diaspora, employment decisions and habitus. They were encouraged to elaborate on any information deemed important to them, which may or may not have been originally considered pertinent. During the interview, some questions were omitted and/or added, as seen to be appropriate and relevant. Each interview took approximately one hour or longer, depending on if further discussions were needed. In a few cases, a second interview was arranged to discuss a specific topic in more detail. The type and number of respondents for the qualitative method is listed in Table 8.

Table 8 List of Informants for Qualitative Method

No.	Type of Informants	Number of Persons
1.	Thai marriage migrants (female)	35
2.	Thai marriage migrants (homosexual male)	3
3.	Consul, Royal Thai Embassy in Berlin	2
4.	Labour Attaché, Royal Thai Embassy in Berlin	1
5.	German husbands of Thai migrants	2
6.	Researcher (Dr. Pataya Ruenkaew)	1
7.	Ban Ying e.V. representative	1
8.	Amnesty for Women e.V. representative	1
9.	Thai Spa Vereinigung Deutschland e.V. representative	1
10.	Thailändische Kunst- und Kulturverein Hegau-Bodensee e.V. representative	1
11.	Wat Dhammaniwasa Buddhistische Gemeinschaft Städteregion Aachen e.V. representative	1
12.	Wat Pah Bodhi-Dhamm Berlin representatives (group discussion)	3
13.	Other migrants e.g. former instructor of Goethe Institute Thailand, Thai student, spa owners	4

The purposive interviews with non-migrant agents, namely respondents' numbers 3 – 13, were conducted individually or in group discussions. Questions were related to their comparative experiences working with Thai migrants who married Germans before and after the entering into force of the Residence Act of 2005. Other key questions included transnationalism and how migrants involve themselves in the Thai diaspora, particularly homeland politics, ethnic-related associations and Buddhist temples. Questions concerning opportunities for and barriers to employment for Thai migrants in Germany were also dominant in the interviews. Roles of diplomatic representations, NGOs and associations in the betterment of the migrants' well-being are discussed in detail. Each interview took at least 45

minutes, depending on the deeper interest in the topic of both interviewer and interviewees. However, it is also important to note that many informants did not have concrete information about migrants' years of marriage or their residencies in Germany. Thus, their answers were based mainly on observation and intuition.

Besides the purposive interviews mentioned above, the researcher also participated in a seminar and a workshop related to Thai migrants in Germany and Europe to gain more insights about their past and current situations. The second 'Destination EU' workshop was organized by Amnesty for Women e.V. between 26 - 28 August 2016 in Berlin and was attended by 29 Thai activists from nine European countries, namely Belgium, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The activists reported the situation of Thai migrants in each country, updated new national regulations impacting migrants' lives and employment opportunities and discussed common threats. According to the findings, many Thai migrants residing outside Germany have taken advantage of the free movement within the European Union (EU) to come to work temporarily in Germany, where wages are higher than most other EU countries. Such increasing tendency has caused great concerns for activists assisting Thai migrants in Europe. In addition, a seminar on the network of Thai non-profit organisations (NPOs) in Germany was organised by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand from 9 - 11 June 2017 in Berlin. The Thai Government aims to empower the existing Thai NPOs in assisting Thai nationals abroad. Representatives of roughly 100 Thai NPOs, including Buddhist temples, in Germany attended the seminar and exchanged views on the current welfare of Thai migrants and ways to improve their well-being in Germany. This initiative can be considered as Thailand's policy in allying migrants with their homeland.

4.3.2 Quantitative Methods

To further strengthen the analysis of new-generation Thai migrants' employment using Pierre Bourdieu's social space theory, an online questionnaire (see *Annex 4*) was conducted through the Netigate Survey and Insight Platform (www.netigate.net) between 1 – 15 July 2017. A total of 125 respondents completed the online questionnaire. The main channels to reach the target group of respondents were similar to the qualitative methods, with an extensive use of LINE networks and numerous communications of Thai migrants on Facebook.

The questionnaire consisted of five sections: namely personal information, integration indicators, employment search, employment obstacles and opinion about masseuse work. It aimed to investigate their initial level of education, professional qualifications, work experience and German language level pertaining to gainful employment in Germany. It

explored the obstacles potentially discouraging or preventing migrants from obtaining desired employment, such as familial burdens, language proficiency, the usefulness of Thai degrees and diplomas. The respondents were asked to indicate what factors are beneficial for securing employment and why employment in Germany is deemed important to them. To understand the migrants' financial concerns, the respondents were asked to indicate whether they are obligated to send remittances to Thailand. This question is particularly important, because it indicates the need for economic capital necessary for Bourdieu's social space analysis. The section on employment obstacles required the respondents to evaluate their satisfaction with their current employment and whether they have plans to change their employment in the future. Lastly, they were asked to give an opinion about masseuse work, whether they are interested in or have experience in this employment. The questionnaire included their opinion about good points and bad points of masseuse work. They were encouraged to further elaborate on their answers, if needed.

The online questionnaire generated by the Netigate Survey enabled interested respondents to complete all 24 questions easily and quickly on their mobile phones or personal computers. It also enabled the researcher to get feedback in real-time. Summaries of the initial outcomes, such as response times (median) and data on individual responses, were reported constantly. Thus, adjustments to the survey or expansion of respondent searches could be made spontaneously, as appropriate. According to the report, each respondent spent an average of 10 minutes to complete the survey. Many took time to elaborate their answers in writing, providing more comprehensive information for deeper analysis. More importantly, expanding the number of respondents using quantitative methods helped to reduce the weakness of snowball-sampling and to strengthen qualitative methods.

5 MARRIAGE MIGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT DILEMMA AFTER 2005

> *Access to the German labour market is determined by the provisions of the German Residence Act (AufenthG). For a residence for the purpose of gainful employment, the approval by the Federal Employment Agency (BA) is always required. This approval can be obtained in an internal procedure from the German agency abroad in the country of origin (visa centre) or the responsible local immigration authority in Germany. The permit for taking up employment is awarded along with the residence title.*
>
> (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2017)

According to the Federal Foreign Office, "Germany's new Immigration Act entered into force on 1 January 2005 and contains provisions for the entry of foreigners into Germany, their residence in the country, various residence purposes, termination of residence and asylum procedures. It is hereinafter referred to as the Residence Act (Aufenthaltsgesetz). "Amendments to the Act, which took effect on 28 August 2007, include provisions to implement eleven EU directives on residence and asylum rules, to prevent sham or forced marriages, to enhance internal security, to implement decisions of the German Conference of Interior Ministers on nationality law, to facilitate the immigration of company founders and, above all, provisions to foster integration of legal immigrants" (Federal Foreign Office, 2017). The Act also stipulates, "Immigrants have a duty to learn the German language and to take integration courses in German to know, respect and comply with the Constitution and laws. Migrants who have successfully completed an integration course are able to shorten the time they have to wait for a settlement permit or, if desired, for citizenship" (Federal Foreign Office, 2017).

As a rule, a Thai who applies for a visa for the purpose of 'spousal immigration' (Vizum zum Ehegattennachzug) must provide proof of basic knowledge of the German language, usually A1-certificate of the Goethe-Institut, not older than two years (Deutsche Botschaft Thailand, 2017). Upon arrival in Germany, they are required to take a general integration course consisting of 660 hours. To be entitled a permanent residence permit and citizenship, the intermediate German language skills (B1 level) is the minimum requirement.

The 2005 Residence Act and long-standing integration policies have fostered the emergence of what I refer to as a 'new-generation' of Thai migrants in Germany. Compared to Thai female migrants described by scholars such as Ruenkaew (Ruenkaew P. , 2009), Chantavanich (Chantavanich, et al., 2001) and Mix & Piper (Mix & Piper, 2003), this research, which focuses on marriage migrants after the Residence Act of 2005 finds an increasing

number of so-called 'new-generation' persons, who are characterised as more educated, more financially independent and better integrated into German society.

Even though the research results have confirmed the success of the Residence Act of 2005 in improving Thai marriage migrants' qualifications, it cannot officially confirm that a larger number of Thai migrants, who entered Germany after the Residence Act of 2005, possess such characteristics nor that the old patterns of Thai migration to Germany have disappeared. According to a report of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in 2013, data based on the Microcensus shows that educational levels of new immigrants from third countries have increased noticeably, and that the vast majority of highly-qualified new immigrants from third countries come from America and Asia. However, the Microcensus data does not indicate the purpose of migration- whether the individuals came to Germany for work or other reasons, such as family reunification, education or humanitarian reasons (Mayer, Attracting highly qualified and qualified third-country nationals, 2013). Thus, it cannot be concluded for certain that marriage migrants' educational qualifications have improved.

Informants and respondents included in this research were 163 persons, which account for less than three percent of the total population. Attempts have been made to obtain official statistics of Thai migrants' educational attainments from the Federal Statistical Office of Germany, the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Bangkok and the Royal Thai Embassy in Berlin. The Federal Statistical Office of Germany offered statistics from the Microcensus of 2015 (see *Annex 5*), but the number of Thai migrants included in the census is too small, thus statistically insignificant. Both the German and Thai Embassies also do not keep records of such statistics. By far, this research provides the largest and most comprehensive data on Thai migrants' qualifications to date.

5.1 Qualifications Improvement of New-generation Thai Migrants

The tightening of immigration regulations and the subsequent qualification screening process for residence entitlement, particularly the demanding requirement for language proficiency, have presumably improved qualifications of new-generation Thai migrants in Germany. According to the interviews (see Table 9), the pre-migration qualifications of 38 first-generation Thai marriage migrants, composing 35 Thai women and three homosexual men, indicate that a majority of them attained at least Bachelor degrees. Only 11 out of 38 informants received less than a Bachelor degree.

Table 9 Personal Information and Pre-migration Qualifications of 38 Informants (Sex, Age, Marital Status and Parenthood, Educational Attainment and Work Experience)

No.	Sex	Age	Previous Marital status/ Parenthood	Education attainment	Previous work in Thailand
1	F	37	Single/ No	B.A. (Hotel)	Hotel
2	M	37	Single/ No	B.A. (Tourism)	Hotel
3	F	57	Divorced/ 2 daughters	B.A. (Law)	Lawyer, Owner of a construction company
4	F	37	Single/ No	B.A. (Business Admin)	Hotel
5	F	34	Single/ No	M.A. (Sociology)	Employee of telecom, information, media company
6	F	39	Divorced/ 1 daughter	M.A. (Communication)	Employee of airline company
7	F	44	Single/ No	M.A. (Linguistics -Intl. programme), AUSBILDUNG	Employee of newspaper, publishing company
8	F	38	Single/ No	M.A. (Marketing)	Employee of Dell computer company
9	F	43	Divorced/ 1 daughter	M.A. (Healthcare Administration), Ph.D. drop-out	Government official, Ministry of Public Health
10	F	32	Single/ No	B.A. (Hotel)	Employee of private company
11	F	43	Divorced/ 1 son	Middle school (G9)	Hotel
12	F	37	Single/ No	M.A. (Business Admin)	Accounting Official, Sub district Administrative Organization
13	F	38	Single/ No	B.A. (Communication)	Secretary, Intl. Consulting firm
14	F	38	Single/ No	B.A. (Marketing)	Employee, Sound appliances company
15	F	57	Divorced/ 1 son	3 B.A. (Education, Accounting, Public Administration)	Official (accountant), Ministry of Public Health
16	F	32	Single/ No	B.A. (Humanity, Majoring in English), AUSBILDUNG	Hotel
17	F	33	Single/ No	High School (G12) B.A. drop-out	Au-Pair in France, Germany
18	F	33	Single/ No	B.A. (Education)	Teacher (briefly), Masseuse in Thailand, Russia
19	F	44	Single/ No	Middle school (G9)	Beauty salon
20	F	45	Single/ No	2 M.A. (Education, Psychology), Ph.D. drop-out	University Instructor in Psychology
21	F	43	Divorced/ 2 children	High school (G12)	Caregiver for elderly
22	F	39	Divorced/ 2 children	B.A.(Marketing)	Business owner
23	F	39	Divorced/1 child	B.A.(Communication)	News reporter, Business owner
24	F	30	Single/ No	B.A. (Marketing)	Employee, Dried seafood company
25	F	35	Single/ No	M.A.(Science)	Researcher
26	F	44	Divorced/1 child	High Vocational Diploma	Masseuse, Banyan Tree Resort and Spa
27	F	38	Single/ No	B.A. (Economics)	Employee, Nestle Thailand
28	M	39	Single/ No	M.A. (Computer Science) Germany	Employee, Accenture Consulting
29	F	40	Single/ No	High School (G12)	Beauty Salon
30	F	44	Single/ No	M.A. (Communicative English)	BMW Thailand
31	F	38	Single/No	B.A. (Mass communication), AUSBILDUNG	Hotel
32	F	49	Divorced/ 1 child	B.A. (Marketing)	Massage (Owner, Instructor)
33	F	33	Single/ No	B.A. (Humanity-German Language)	Travel Agency
34	F	54	Divorced/ 2 children	Grade 4	Massage
35	F	49	Divorced/ 1 child	Grade 4	Massage

36	F	23	Divorced/ 1 child	High school (G12)	Nurse Assistant, Hospital
37	M	42	Single/ No	High Vocational Diploma	Hotel travel agency (employee), co-own a small business
38	F	38	Divorced/ 2 children	High school (G12)	Massage

Additionally, statistics obtained from the quantitative questionnaires, including 125 respondents, also support the qualitative data. As indicated in Table 10, 43 percent of respondents graduated with Bachelor's degrees, but only one person has less than elementary schooling and seven persons completed elementary schooling. The second-largest group is high school graduates with 17.60 percent of all respondents.

Table 10 Educational Attainment of 125 Questionnaire Respondents

Educational Attainment	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than elementary	1	0.80%
Elementary (G6)	7	5.60%
Middle school (G9)	17	13.60%
High school (G12)	22	17.60%
Vocational Certificate	5	4.00%
High Vocational Diploma	13	10.40%
Bachelor's Degree	53	**42.40%**
Master's Degree	5	4.00%
Ph.D.	2	1.60%
Responses	125	

The majority of 'new-generation' migrants are of working age, between 26 and 50 years old. Outcomes of the quantitative questionnaires indicate that the largest age group is between 31 and 40, accounting for 48 percent of total respondents (see *Annex 11*). Almost 81 percent of questionnaire respondents worked before their marriage with Germans (see *Annex 11*). Many of them worked in a hotel business, where opportunities to meet foreigners were high. Pre-migration careers of Thai migrants vary, ranging from owning businesses, working in Government offices, teaching at universities, holding high positions in world-class German companies. It is also interesting to note that four out of eleven migrants with less than a Bachelor's degree worked as masseuses before their migration. The rest worked in beauty salons, hotels, healthcare and as au pairs. Similarly, pre-migration careers of questionnaire respondents, who have a high school educational attainment or less, were mainly in unskilled or low-skilled employment, such as factory workers, golf caddies, saleswomen, hotel employees, beauty salon owners or employees and au pairs. Most women got married in their late 20s or early 30s, considered a 'mature age' for marriage in both Eastern and until recently, at least, Western societies. The marital status and parenthood of new-generation migrants varies, with 24 out of 38 informants from the interviews being single with no children.

5.2 Marriage Migration

German immigration law and active anti-human trafficking enforcement have lessened the chance for Thai women to become 'mail-order brides' or fall prey to fraud marriages with the poor, the disabled or the unemployed. The 'sufficient subsistence' of German husbands is, first and foremost, the pre-condition for the migration of their Thai wives, both before departing Thailand and after living in Germany. Advanced technologies and access to information have increased their chances of long-distance dating without middle agents, reducing their risk of human-trafficking association. Nowadays, one can easily access warnings and announcements issued online by official authorities, NGOs or Thai women regarding the pros and cons of marrying Germans.

Channel

As illustrated in Table 11 below, a majority of Thai migrants met their future spouses either by work, by study or by chance. Many of them worked in hotel and hospitality businesses, giving them greater possibilities to meet and be pursued by German guests. Some worked for international corporations, where German clients are involved. Some met as friends or colleagues at university. The "by-chance" couple usually met when traveling.

Match-making websites have become one of the less-risky channels for Thai women to find potential foreign husbands. 'ThaiLoveLink', the largest Thai dating website with over one million registered members (Thai Love Link, 2017), has become a vital instrument for the least costly and most convenient long-distance meeting and dating. The other common channel is match-making assistance through friends and relatives in Germany. As the community of Thai wives is expanding every year, it is inevitable that these women can act as match-makers on behalf of either Thai women or German men.

Table 11 Marriage Migration (Channel, Dating, Purpose and Spouse Age Difference)

No.	Channel of meeting spouse	Dating (years)	Cross-border visits	Purpose of Migration	Spouse Age difference (years)
1	Introduced by German ex-boyfriend	1	Yes	Being pregnant, Economic (parent)	Plus 14
2	Work-related (hotel guest)	1	Yes	Economic (debts)	Plus 10
3	Introduced by relative in Germany	1	Yes	Economic (debts, children)	Plus 9
4	Work-related (hotel guest)	2	Yes	Love	Minus 4
5	Work-related	1 to 2	Yes	Love	Plus 4
6	Introduced by friend	4	Yes	Love	Minus 1
7	By chance (tourist)	2	Yes	Adventure	Plus 11
8	Work-related	2	Yes	Love	Minus 4
9	Matchmaking website (ThaiLoveLink)	4	Yes	Love	Plus 14

10	By chance	1	Yes	Adventure	Plus 12
11	Work-related (hotel guest)	2	Yes	Economic (child)	Plus 6
12	Introduced by friend in Germany	3	Yes	Love	n.a.
13	Work-related	1	Yes	Adventure	Plus 1
14	Work-related	2	Yes	Love	Plus 7
15	Introduced by friend in Germany	1	Yes	Economic (child), Love	Plus 3
16	Work-related (hotel guest)	3	Yes	Love	Plus 13
17	Matchmaking website	3	Yes	Economic (parent)	Plus 8
18	Matchmaking website (ThaiLoveLink)	7 months	Yes	Economic (parent)	Plus 29
19	By chance	6	Yes	Adventure	Plus 14
20	Work-related	3	Yes	Love	Plus 20
21	Matchmaking website (ThaiLoveLink)	Approx. 6 months	Yes	Economic (parents, children), Adventure	Plus 30
22	Introduced by mother in Germany	n.a.	Yes	Economic (debts, children)	n.a.
23	By chance	4	Yes	Love	n.a.
24	Matchmaking website (ThaiLoveLink)	2 to 3	Yes	Love	Plus 2
25	Study/Work related	1	Yes	Love	Plus 3
26	Work related	1	Yes	Love, Economic	Plus 3
27	Introduced by friend	1	Yes	Love	Plus 18
28	Study related	3	Yes	Love	Minus 9
29	By chance (tourist)	3-4 months	Yes	Love	Same age
30	By chance / introduced by friend	3	Yes	Love	Plus 3
31	Work-related (hotel guest)	2 to 3	Yes	Love	Plus 12
32	Introduced by friend	2	Yes	Economic	Plus 13
33	Work-related (tourist)	6-7 months	Yes	Love	Plus 10
34	By chance (tourist)	1	Yes	Economic	Plus 10
35	Internet (assisted by friend)	3	No	Economic	Plus 8
36	Internet	2.5	Yes	Economic	Plus 30
37	Work-related (hotel guest)	3	Yes	Economic	Plus 15
38	Work-related	1	Yes	Economic, Love	Minus 2

Dating

To minimise the risk of cross-border marriage, 'new-generation' Thai women often spend a good amount of time, at least one year, to get to know their future husbands, both online and in person. Most of them exchange cross-border visits. Some Germans even paid visits to their potential in-laws for marriage approval. The age difference between Thai wives and German husbands varies, with the increasing emergence of older Thai women marrying younger men.

There are three main reasons Thai women seek marriage with German men. Firstly, love and companionship account for the main reason disclosed in this research, as most informants are singles or single mothers who do not have economic difficulties. Most Thai women find German men to be trustworthy, mature and honest, in contrast to Thai men. Secondly, economic reasons and remittances. Remittances are sent mainly to children from

previous marriages, parents and for debt payments. Finally, adventure and new lifestyle. Some women, particularly those who are young or cannot afford to travel abroad, find marriage with foreigners to be the starting point for their adventurous lives.

To a Thai woman, the more her German boyfriend knows about her life in Thailand, particularly her financial situation, the more likely her marriage will be successful. Besides language barriers and cultural differences, remittance is one of the biggest threats to Thai-German marriages. German men are very sceptical about Thai women's alleged 'gold-digger' incentives and are very cautious about making payments to them. For those women burdened with economic difficulties, it is crucial that they discuss such issues with their potential spouses before marriage. Mutual understanding on financial arrangements after marriage is one of the most important factors for the success of Thai-German marriages. Some husbands acknowledge the problem and make it clear at the beginning that they are not willing to provide assistance in this regard. Some generously assist in such payments. One informant talked about his pre-marriage agreement with his partner as follows:

> *Love is not just about feeling but also security. Leaving Thailand to Germany means I'm becoming a one-year-old child who needs to be taken care of. I made it clear to him from the very beginning on three things. First, food. I need to eat well. Second, I have debts, such as insurance and educational loans, and he has to clear a debt for me. Third, I do not send remittances. I will not work until I finish my (language) study and have a driver's license (*Informant no. 2).

Subordinate Familial Position

Marriage migration means joblessness and financial dependence. Most women confess that they have gone through a phase of frustration and mental problems because, no matter how hard they try, finding decent jobs that match their educational and skill qualifications seems out of reach. For single women from well-to-do backgrounds, remittances are not considered the main issue; but they want to earn for themselves to gain pride, negotiation power and financial independence. They do not like the idea of being housewives, staying at home and having no money for their own personal use. Most husbands control the family budget and do not give allowances or 'pocket money' to their housewives. Even though they are responsible for all household expenses (electricity, food, etc.), statutory health insurances for their wives and child care; but they do not provide or provide very little allowances for their wives' personal expenses. Most women find income, even from mini-jobs, to be a means of happiness. The common answer to the question why income is important: '*To have some extra money for myself*'. Moreover, they want to prove themselves worthwhile, particularly in the eyes of their husbands and families. They do not want to be seen as gold-diggers.

As indicated in Table 12, the overwhelming number of questionnaire respondents thinks the main reason for seeking employment in Germany is to earn income for themselves and family in Germany- accounting for 90.7 percent. The second main reason is to get rid of boredom (64.6 percent). Sending remittances comes in third, with 63.72 percent. A large number of respondents (62 percent) wants to meet and know new people, such as colleagues and clients. On the other hand, only nine percent of respondents think employment will enable them to bring their children from Thailand to Germany, and 27 percent believe employment will help increase their familial negotiating power.

Table 12 Main Reasons for Employment in Germany

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
To earn income for myself and my family in Germany	102	**90.27%**
To send remittances to Thailand	72	63.72%
To meet and know new people such as colleagues and clients	70	61.95%
To get rid of boredom	73	64.60%
To increase negotiation power within the family	30	26.55%
To earn the permanent residence permit or nationalization	38	33.63%
To be able to bring my children from Thailand to Germany	10	8.85%
Others	12	10.62%
Responses	113	

In addition, it is the sense of security, legally and emotionally, both singles and single mothers are yearning for. As the Residence Acts stipulates, "The foreigner shall be granted a permanent settlement permit if he or she has been in possession of a temporary residence permit for three years and the family unit with the German continues to exist" (Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, 2017), or else she could face deportation. However, if she is permitted to be employed, or is in possession of the other permits required for permanent pursuit of her economic activity, she is on the safe side. If a woman can secure formal employment, meet tax obligations and contribute to paying for compulsory social insurance within three years of cohabitation with her husband, she need not fear the consequences of a divorce. Legal employment shall grant her rights to a permanent settlement permit, entitlement to all social benefits and protection under German law, similarly to a German citizen. As indicated in Table 12 above, 34 percent of questionnaire respondents believe that employment will help them earn permanent residence permits or nationalisation.

5.3 Language Proficiency and Residency

Upon arrival in Germany, Thai migrants are faced with integration policies, as stipulated by the Residence Act. For those determined to reside permanently in Germany, they are required to undertake lengthy and difficult studies of the German language. German language proficiency at the B1 level is a minimum requirement to secure the permanent residence entitlement (*Niederlassungserlaubnis*) and nationalisation. Thus, the 'new-generation' Thai migrants, no matter what level of educational background they have, attach great importance to such learning requirements. All informants interviewed spent their first year(s) in Germany taking classes to achieve the B1 level as soon as possible. Many avoided working, so they could fully concentrate on their studies. Some, however, worked part-time or at mini-jobs to send remittances. German husbands also support such efforts. The majority of informants attained the B1 level of German language proficiency (see *Annex 7*), and almost 49 percent of questionnaire respondents also achieved this level (see *Annex 11*). Nonetheless, most women stop taking language proficiency exams after the B1 level. Some of them, mainly those who work as housewives or are self-employed, continued to pursue their language training by themselves or at a language institute.

Concerning their residence entitlements, new-generation Thai migrants do not encounter difficulties obtaining permanent settlement permits or nationalisation, if they have achieved the B1 language proficiency, cohabited with their husbands who have had regular income for three years, and/or have been employed, thus meeting tax obligations and contributing to the social security system. The majority of Thai migrants either possesses permanent settlement permits or are nationalised Germans (see *Annexes 9 and 11*). Almost 49 percent of questionnaire respondents are holders of permanent residence permits, while almost 15 percent are nationalised Germans. Failure to obtain permanent residence permits occurs mainly due to (1) insufficient language skills, and (2) husband's inability to provide sufficient subsistence, due to abrupt unemployment or death.

5.4 Employment Dilemma

Since 1 April 2012, professional qualifications gained outside Germany can be compared with requirements set for the same profession in Germany (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2017). Nonetheless, recognition of qualifications obtained in Thailand or having these qualifications assessed do not seem to be helpful for Thai migrants when it comes to improving their occupational integration prospects. Some informants, who have had their degrees assessed and have received certificates confirming full equivalence of

professional recognition, express their frustration over what they regard as being useless. Most of them achieved at least the B1 level of German language proficiency. Some even further pursued vocational training/apprenticeships (*Ausbildung* in German), hoping to obtain a higher-paid and more socially-recognised position. Nonetheless, the following table demonstrates the hard reality that most of them do not achieve their professional expectations.

Table 13 details the current employment status of 38 Thai migrants interviewed for this research. Most 'new-generation' Thai marriage migrants are faced with the dilemma of choosing between de-skilled types of work or being unemployed. Many of them are housewives and many are self-employed. Those who are highly-educated also face social and psychological pressure, as they are expected to work as intellectuals and not in manual labour, as one informant, a B.A. graduate and former news reporter admits:

> *After a long deep depression of being jobless, I decided to work as a gardener, caregiver, or (perform) other manual work around my village. Even though the payment was small, I felt happier earning some money* (Informant No. 23).

Another informant, an M.A. graduate and former employee of Dell computer company agrees that high education can be a source of pressure and disadvantage:

> *I graduated with (an) M.A. degree, so I'm a bit disappointed that I cannot compete for jobs. I also cannot go back to school. There are so many disadvantages. The more educated you are, the less likely you will compete with the Germans for a job. The German speaks many foreign languages. I live in Bad Krozingen, and the Germans here also speak French (*Informant No. 8).

Table 13 Employment Status, Language Proficiency, Parenthood and Vocational Training

No.	German	Parenthood (age)	Educational Attainment	Current Employment Status	Ausbildung
1	B1	2 sons (6, 3)	B.A. (Hotel)	Massage (employee), mini-job	None
2	B1	None	B.A. (Tourism)	Massage (owner)	None
3	B1	None	B.A. (Law)	Massage (owner)	None
4	B1	None	B.A. (Business Admin)	Family-run gas station (full-time), Massage (self-employed)	None
5	B1	None	M.A. (Sociology)	Penny supermarket, mini-job	None
6	B1	One daughter (Grade 8)	M.A. (Communications)	Interpreter, Self-employed	None
7	B1	1 Daughter (5)	M.A. (Linguistics - Intl. programme), AUSBILDUNG	Assistant, Tax Office	Tax Office Assistant
8	B1	2 Daughters (2, 5)	M.A. (Marketing)	Housewife	None
9	B1	1 Daughter (16)	M.A. (Healthcare Administration), Ph.D. Drop-out	Online teacher (German and English language), Self-employed	None
10	B1	None	B.A. (Hotel)	Employee in husband's own business, part-time/ as of	None

				August 2017 works full-time for a German company	
11	A1	1 Son (5)	Middle School (G9)	Massage, self-employed	None
12	B1	None	M.A. (Business Admin.)	Employee of a small online shop, part-time	None
13	C1	1 Daughter (6)	B.A. (Communication)	Teacher (Thai language), self-employed	None
14	B1	1 Daughter (8)	B.A. (Marketing)	Export German snacks to Thailand, self-employed	None
15	A2	None	3 B.A. (Education, Accounting, Public Administration)	Local staff, Thai Embassy, Full-time	None
16	B1	None	B.A. (Humanity, Majoring in English), AUSBILDUNG	Dentist Assistant, Full-time	Dentist Assistant
17	B1	None	High school (G12) B.A. Drop-out	Massage, Self-employed	None
18	B1	None	B.A. (Education)	Employee in husband's own business (part-time), Massage (mini-job)	None
19	A1	None	Middle School (G9)	Hotel maid (cleaning), mini-job	None
20	A1	None	2 M.A. (Education, Psychology), Ph.D. Drop-out	Housewife, language student	None
21	A1	None	High School (G12)	Massage (employee)	None
22	B1	2 sons (15,12)	B.A.(Marketing)	Massage (employee) Tropical Islands, Full-time	None
23	B2	None	B.A.(Communications)	Massage (employee)	None
24	B1	None	B.A. (Marketing)	Employee, Arvato Direct Service Potsdam (start 29 May 2017), Full-time	None
25	B2	Pregnant and one son (4)	M.A. (Science)	Housewife	None
26	B1	None	High Vocational Certificate	Massage, Self-employed	None
27	B1	2 Children (daughter 7, son 5)	B.A. (Economics)	Housewife	None
28	C1	None	M.A. (Computer Science) Germany	Local staff, Thai Embassy, Berlin, Full-time	None
29	B1	1 Son (6)	High School (G12)	Massage, Self-employed	None
30	B2	None	M.A. (Communicative English)	Thai Consulate (Commercial Section), Frankfurt, Full-time	None
31	B1	1 Son (8)	B.A. (Mass Communication), AUSBILDUNG	Ausbildung Practitioner	Physiotherapy (on-going)
32	B1	None	B.A. (Marketing)	Massage (owner, instructor), Self-employed	None
33	C1	1 Daughter (9)	B.A. (Humanities-German Language)	Local staff, Thai Embassy, Berlin, Full-time	None
34	A1	None	Grade 4	Massage (employee), mini-job	None
35	B1	1 Daughter (15)	Grade 4	Massage, Self-employed	None
36	A1	None	High school (G12)	Cleaning, mini-job	None
37	B1	None	High Vocational Certificate	Waiter, mini-job	None
38	B1	1 Daughter (15)	High school (G12)	Cleaning, mini-job	None

5.5 Causes of Employment Dilemma

First and foremost, lack of native fluency in the German language. Even though most of them obtained the B1 level of proficiency, their command of German does not allow them to utilise their knowledge effectively. Naturally, they are less competitive, compared to native-speakers with the same degrees. Writing skill is by far the most difficult in which to excel. All Thai migrants find language proficiency to be the greatest challenge in their search for jobs. Both interview and questionnaire data indicate the same results. As Table 14 shows, questionnaires of 110 respondents indicate that 89 percent of them consider proficiency in the German language to be the most useful factor for obtaining employment for Thai migrants in Germany, followed by educational qualifications from Germany, such as university degrees, vocational training diplomas, which account for 42.7 percent.

Table 14 Useful Factors for Obtaining Employment in Germany

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
German language	98	**89.09%**
Educational qualification from Thailand	18	16.36%
Educational qualification from Germany (such as university degrees, vocational training diploma)	47	42.73%
Vocational/professional training from Thailand (such as Thai cooking, Thai massage)	38	34.55%
Network of acquaintances (Who you know)	38	34.55%
Work experience in Thailand	36	32.73%
Work experience in Germany	37	33.64%
Others	14	12.73%
Responses	110	

Similarly, when respondents were asked about their main obstacles to finding or obtaining employment in Germany, almost 77 percent answered that their German language ability is not good enough (see Table 15).

Table 15 Main Obstacles to Finding or Obtaining Employment in Germany

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
I have children of young age (kindergarten or primary school level) to take care of.	41	33.88%
My educational qualification from Thailand is not useful.	39	32.23%
My German language ability is not good enough.	93	**76.86%**
I have a health problem.	13	10.74%
My husband does not allow me to work.	12	9.92%
I do not have information or anyone assisting me to find employment.	17	14.05%
I live in a remote area, and it takes a long time commuting to work.	23	19.01%
I wish to take Ausbildung, but I am unable to do so, because of high cost, educational attainment etc.	26	21.49%

I had been discriminated against on the basis of being a foreigner or a woman during application or interview sessions.	3	2.48%
Others	10	8.26%
Responses	121	

Second, degrees Thai women possess are not considered as being in short supply in Germany. Most of them graduate with degrees in social sciences (politics, accounting, anthropology, business, economics, education, journalism, tourism, human resource development, etc.), skills of which are not widely recruited among migrants or non-native speakers. Thai migrants also find their education obtained from Thailand the 'least useful' factor in obtaining employment in Germany (see Tables 14 and 15).

Third, German companies pay more attention to 'on-the-job skills' than to degrees. The long-traditional dual-education system, combining practice and theory, is highly regarded as the backbone of Germany's economic growth. Thus, most companies are not simply looking at the degrees of applicants, but also test their practical skills and hands-on experience for specific positions. Thai higher educational institutions have different approaches to education and merely equip their graduates with sufficient on-the-job training and practical skills. One informant criticises the standard of Thai education, which equips students with fewer practical skills:

> *I graduated from public universities, and both of my degrees (B.A. and M.A.) were assessed and received identical equivalence in Germany. The problem is how to improve Thai education to meet foreign standards. The Thai curriculum is not intensive enough for practical usage. For instance, kids are not encouraged to speak when they learn (foreign) languages. Here, one must improve oneself a great deal in order to work with Germans. Germany's education system is based on both learning and working (Informant No. 6).*

Fourth, Thai women face familial burdens and gender inequality similarly to German women. In March 2016, Deutsche Welle reported that:

> *Women in Germany have never been better qualified, according to the Federal Statistical Office on Monday: a quarter of working-age women held a college degree or higher level of qualification in 2011. When women between 30 to 34 years of age only were taken into consideration, that figure stood at 35 percent, compared with 31 percent of men. Yet the increase in the level of higher-educated females does not translate into more, better-paid jobs for women. Fresh data from the EU statistics agency, Eurostat, published last week, cast gender equality in the workplace in a negative light, with the average private sector wage gap between men and women in Germany reported at 21.6 percent. Reasons behind the pay gap and promotion hurdles are both complicated and manifold, and include the fact that women are more likely to work in lower-paid job sectors, such as healthcare or retail, work part time - and that there are often*

fewer promotion opportunities for those not in full-time employment" (Deutsche Welle, 2016).

Research outcomes from qualitative and quantitative data also lead to the same conclusion. Most informants with young children would place child raising responsibilities over employment opportunities. Most of them would prefer to work self-employed, part-time or at mini-jobs to have flexible time for their children. As Table 15 indicates, caring for young children is the second greatest obstacle for Thai marriage migrants, after proficiency in the German language. A majority of mothers says they will seriously think about going back to work when their kids are older.

Fifth, the role of husbands in supporting their wives to gain employment is very important. As dependent wives, Thai migrants pay great attention to their German husbands' advice and highly appreciate their husbands' financial responsibilities in the household. One informant, a former university instructor, says: "M*y husband and I agree that I do not work after moving to Germany. Here, we have a maid to take care of the household chores*" (Informant No. 20). Several German husbands do not support their wives to work as masseuse: *"I only look for office work because I'm educated. My husband said I should rather stay home than working as masseuse"* (Informant No. 14).

Sixth, the Ausbildung can be considered harmful to highly-educated migrants. On the one hand, the system, which aims at improving skills of young and less-educated labourers, can disregard most Thai wives with greater age and higher education as their target group. One informant says: *"My application for Ausbildung as an elderly caregiver was rejected because my university degree is considered 'overqualified' for such job training"* (Informant No. 23). On the other hand, the Ausbildung is seen as a time-consuming investment, the yield of which does not satisfy their expectations of higher-position employment. The popular Ausbildung fields among Thai wives are elderly caregivers (Altenpflegehelferin), child caregivers/educators (Kinderpflegerin, Erzieherin), assistants to doctors/ dentists/ nurses (Gesundheits und Krankenpflegerin, Zahnmedizinische Fachangestellte). The course usually takes up to three years, and most of them do not lead to intellectual positions. According to the questionnaire outcomes, almost 22 percent of respondents wished to take Ausbildung, but were unable to do so, because of high costs or level of previous educational attainment (see Table 16).

Finally, the German taxation system discourages lower-earning spouses to work full-time. Within a family, taxation and social security contributions are calculated carefully.

Taxation at the source for employment income will be carried out based on taxation classes and personal status. For a married couple with one spouse having no income or lower income, taxation Classes III and Class V are commonly chosen. The Thai wife who earns less is inevitably forced into Class V taxation and is subject to a higher tax deduction, compared to Class III occupied by her husband. At the end of the day, a Thai woman would see no reason why she should work full-time, unless her residency is at risk. In most families, husbands take responsibility for filing taxes, and their wives have no knowledge of the tax return at the end of the year. Several informants complained about this system that discourages their ambitions to find full-time positions. For instance, "*I want to avoid a full-time job, because I have children. And taxation. The more you work, the less you have left* (Informant No. 25)."

5.6 Employment Discrimination

When asked about discrimination in recruitment, most women do not have strong feelings about it. They accept the fact that they lack the skills and the command of German necessary for the positions. Recognition of their credentials has been helpful for their immigration applications, but evidently not for gainful employment in Germany. As indicated in Table 15, less than three percent of questionnaire respondents say they had been discriminated against on the basis of being a foreigner or a woman during application or interview sessions. For those who have experience working in German companies, they overwhelmingly praise the work conditions, work habits and professionality of bosses and co-workers. Most of them prefer working for German companies to Thai-owned businesses.

5.7 The Booming of Thai Massage and Prostitution in Disguise

Having had slim chances to compete in the formal labour market, Thai women turn to ethnic-related entrepreneurships, similarly to other ethnic minorities in Germany. In recent years, Thai masseuse has been the 'number one' profession for Thai female migrants. It is easier, in terms of less strict regulations and lower investment, to open Thai massage/spa parlours, as compared to Thai restaurants. For owners, the income of at least 45 Euro per hour is cost-effective, and the German practice of clients coming in 'by appointment' rather than 'by walk-in' makes the business easy to manage for profitable income and employees' working hours. For employees, the wage of 10 - 25 Euro per hour is by far more attractive than cleaning, waitressing, cooking and other manual work. More importantly, advanced German-language fluency is not required, as they have little to communicate, verbally or in writing, with their clients. Working conditions are comparatively better than in other manual jobs. Table 16

details the positive opinions of questionnaire respondents about masseuse work. The largest percentage of respondents feels that a high level of German-language proficiency is not required, and the work offers good incomes. It is, therefore, possible for newcomers who have less Germanspeaking backgrounds to work in this business. Moreover, a large number of respondents thinks that the working hours are more flexible than in other types of employment and that the jobs require shorter training periods. One can start working and earning money after a few weeks of training, and many owners offer on-the-job training for their new masseuses.

Table 16 Good Points about Masseuse Work

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Good income	62	**55.86%**
Working hours are more flexible than other jobs	46	41.44%
Short training time	37	33.33%
No need to have a high level of German proficiency	61	**54.95%**
Be able to know more Thai people (such as boss, colleagues)	21	18.92%
Workload is not as heavy as other jobs (such as cleaning)	18	16.22%
Tt is the only job I can do now (I have tried to find other jobs, but to no avail)	20	18.02%
Others	19	17.12%
Responses	111	

The booming Thai massage business emerges together with what Thai people call 'disguised massage', a term for erotic massage or prostitution in disguise. Mix provides an account of this type of massage as the new scene for sex-workers:

> *Some Thai women today are of the view that, if one does not engage in sexual intercourse with a client in the traditional sense of the term, one is not a sex worker. There has been an increasing new trend in Hamburg of the Thai massage service in massage studios. This "massage" is given mostly by Thai women. It has also come to light that these businesses do not provide only a massage but other services of sexual stimulation as well, such as blow jobs and hand jobs. The women who work within such establishments do not consider themselves as prostitutes, but rather masseuses. It seems that this is currently the new, preferred type of sex work by Thai women, as in their eyes it seems more acceptable (Mix P. R., 2016, pp. 40-42).*

In Germany, negative stereotypes about Thai massage establishments being seen as brothels impact everyone in the business. Those migrants who want to open genuine massage businesses often have a hard time finding a place to rent or run their business without client's prejudices: "*I contacted almost 10 properties, but to no avail. The owners have prejudice against this business, and they think we do not have money to pay rent"* (Informant No. 2); or *"I have problems renting a place, because the property owner sees that I am Thai and fears*

that my business will be a massage parlour for prostitution. Thai people have made bad impressions because of money. Yet I didn't think it would be this bad" (Information No. 26). Almost all owners have experienced receiving phone calls asking if erotic services are offered. Thus, for owners and employees of genuine massage businesses, erotic massage and 'disguised massage' have literally dragged the reputation of Thai massage down. But they also believe it cannot be changed, as long as there are demands and supplies for such services.

Given the negativities about the Thai masseuse, success stories of 'wife-turns-entrepreneur' encourage many Thai newcomers to enter this market, which has resulted in the following problems. First, newcomers see it as the 'only' well-paid employment in Germany for those who have lower educational levels and lack German-language proficiency. Their ultimate goal is to become entrepreneurs in this business. Here, the vicious circle begins. As the work does not require a high level of language proficiency, they start to lose their ambitions for self-improvement to obtain better employment. According to the research questionnaires, as many as 62 percent of the respondents have achieved the B1 or higher level of German-language proficiency, but only 17 percent of respondents have ever had their Thai educational/professional qualifications from Thailand assessed for equivalence in Germany. Moreover, out of 119 respondents, only two persons have pursued education leading to university degrees, and 14 persons have pursued Ausbildung vocational training in Germany, accounting for less than 14 percent of the total respondents (see *Annex 11*).

Second, the increased supply of masseuse workers leads to exploitation of labourers and the sex-trade. The rapid increase in the number of Thai massage businesses leads to intense competition. Thus, a large number of places have introduced sex-services, or erotic massages, in their business, which thus negatively impacts on the businesses' overall professional reputation. Many owners alleged that they received so many phone calls asking for such services that they had to explicitly announce 'no erotic massage' in their business cards or adverts. It also opens a door to human-trafficking and exploitation.

Third, higher incomes in Germany attract illegal Thai female migrants from other countries in Europe, particularly the Eastern part. One NGO named, 'Thai Town Budapest' based in Budapest, Hungary, reports that unlike the strict immigration regulations in Germany, Thai women can easily obtain a work permit and visa to work as masseuses in Hungary. Nonetheless, the income in Hungary is relatively low, even compared to that in Thailand. On average, one receives around 15,000 Baht, or approximately 400 Euro, per month. They, therefore, use their Schengen visas, which permit them to travel freely in EU countries, to enter Germany to work illegally as masseuse or sex-workers.

6 DIASPORA AND TRANSNATIONALISM

This chapter is divided into two intertwined sections. The first section investigates the Thai diaspora, the unique characteristics of which have contributed to its 'weaknesses,' as compared to other ethnic minorities in Germany. The second section explores the present-day transnationalism of Thai migrants, which leads to the prediction of a 'lose-win-win' scenario for Thailand-Germany-migrants. Thailand is not only on the verge of experiencing brain drains; the net gain from migration in Germany is deemed negative in all aspects: political, economic, religious. Thai migrants, no matter how well-integrated they are, have positively contributed to German society as economic labourers and reproductive labourers. In contrast, they have paid little attention to the development of their homeland. Thailand's homeland politics, for instance, has had little success in this diaspora.

6.1 Diaspora

The Thai diaspora differs from other ethnic diaspora in Germany in many ways. First, most migrants migrated individually. Almost 99 percent of Thai migrants in Germany are first-generation migrants, who were born outside Germany (See Table 3 in Chapter 2). In Germany, Thai migrants either have no relatives or only a short link of kinship, for instance, mother and daughter, or sister and sister. Thus, most of them do not have strong familial bonds. Unlike Turkish migrants, who are most likely to marry among themselves, Thai migrants are married to 'others', who do not share their language, religion and culture. Their locations are dispersed throughout Germany, depending on work places or households of their husbands. Moreover, Thai migrants also do not share life-threatening feelings experienced similar to those of refugees, asylum seekers or displaced persons, who are forced to leave their countries of origin due to war, persecution or natural disaster. Thus, the feeling of 'togetherness' in the diaspora cannot be manifested in this regard.

Thai migrants develop their first bonding through similar 'initial' identities and habitus, such as, region of origin, local language and food preference. For instance, those who grew up in the North-eastern region, are more likely to come from poor families, speak *Isan* dialects and enjoy pla-ra (smelly fermented fish) and sticky rice. Those who grew up in Bangkok would presumably come from middle-class families, speak without regional accents and more commonly eat steamed rice. Their 'later' bonding is developed through the shared experience of South-North migration and 'being a wife to a German'. They encounter similar difficulties

in learning new languages, finding employment and adapting to the new social structure. They share their problems and give each other thoughts and advice.

In this research, most informants pay special attention to similarities in 'attitude' and 'lifestyle,' when they bond with each other. Even though words such as 'class' or 'social status' or 'educational attainment' were not implicitly spelled out during the interviews, the selection of words- such as 'attitude' and 'lifestyle'- also implies differences with which one group distinguishes itself from the others. When being asked about the Thai diaspora in Germany, many would answer that they have no or very few Thai friends. Examples are:

> *No offense, I think it's a matter of 'lifestyle and attitude'. We came from a different background. I don't have any close friends here. In the past, I had some friends, but our attitudes and lifestyles were different (Informant No. 6);*

or

> *I don't have any Thai friends in Germany. There are some people who wanted to be friends with me. They came to my house. But their manners were just 'not right'. We couldn't communicate. My husband said Thai people like to gather in groups, but we like living quietly (Informant No.9);*

or

> *When I first came here, I wanted to have friends. I didn't care much about educational levels. I believe everyone should help each other. But as time passes by, I've realised that some of them are not 'good to know'. We don't have to be close to everyone (Informant No. 10).*

Secondly, as outlined in Chapter 5, most persons in the diaspora are in subordinate positions. At home, they are subordinate to and dependent on their husbands, who provide subsistence and control over their residency. Almost all German husbands earn higher incomes and are responsible for all household expenses and childcare, while incomes earned by Thai wives are solely for their own personal use and remittances. Outside home, they are migrants, living in an alienated and highly-regulated social structure. Their incapability to communicate and commute freely generate, more or less, their inferiority complex. Most women, regardless of their educational level, have difficulties entering the high-wage labour market in Germany. Those with jobs are subject to Class V taxation, discouraging them from working full-time. Sizable numbers of women are breadwinners, who support their parents and children left behind; thus a large part of their income is spent on remittances. At present, the Thai massage and spa business is the only entrepreneurship feasible for them, due to lower investment costs and fewer legal restrictions, compared to opening a restaurant. Given financial constraints and lack of knowledge about doing business in a foreign land, the chances that Thai wives will become large investors or entrepreneurs on their own without support from their spouses are

limited. Obviously, most of them are not capable of financially assisting other migrants in the diaspora, and most of their financial decisions are subject to their husbands' approval.

Thirdly, the feminisation of migration has led to nearly a one-sex population, with an increasing number of homosexual men (See Table 2). Naturally, jealousy and competition among the same sex population are more severe than among those of diverse groups. Economically, there are many forms of symbolic success, ranging from the wealth of husbands to brand-name handbags, remittances, houses and properties in Thailand; and the list goes on. Political influence is provided by leadership in non-profit associations. Nonetheless, all association leaders, sooner or later, would be challenged by other members, leading to a split and founding of new associations, most of which become financial competitors for limited funding.

Competition within the diaspora has become fiercer with the mushrooming of Thai massage and spa businesses. Thai women are competing against each other, not only in business, but also in snatching masseuse. On the positive side, the high demand for masseuse has granted Thai women greater negotiating power in terms of employment contracts, hourly wages, holidays, etc. On the negative side, Thai masseuses can easily 'hop around', quitting the old and applying for the new. Finding and replacing masseuses has always been the largest problem for all owners, as one complains: *"Within four years, I had changed eight employees!! I think Thais lack responsibility and do not pay (enough) attention to their work"* (Informant No. 2).

Masseuse staffers, after being trained, often quit to start their own businesses and become competitors. Often, they not only bring their co-workers along by offering better wages or employment contracts, but also 'steal' customers from their previous employers. Clients can easily follow a masseuse, because they like her skill and personality. Consequently, owners are left with few options to keep their businesses running: train non-Thais, or import Thais from elsewhere, be they from Thailand or other neighbouring countries. An owner of high-class Thai massage and spa establishments at Frankfurt and Munich airports says: *"Seeking personnel has always been a problem. Now, I have to train Germans and foreigners to solve this problem".* Many women find self-employment to be the best option for their business, because they do not have to deal with staff problems, and the success of their businesses is solely based on their skills. Overall, competition within the diaspora has been a reason contributing to the weakness in solidarity of the Thai community, as compared to many other ethnic minorities in Germany.

6.1.1 Diasporic Stigmas and Stereotypes

The stigma of Thai women being 'sex-workers' is popular in both their country of origin and their country of destination. As literature describes, this stigma originated from sex-tourism in Thailand and the sex-trade abroad back in 1970s, and has lasted until today. In Thailand, the image of a Thai women married to a foreigner is no longer popularly respected. Thai and German societies have the stereotype of Thai women in Germany as innocent young women being deceived to become sex-workers. They are being sold or forced (by agents) to marry German losers, whom nobody wants. Thus, the image of Thai women in Germany is: 'prostitutes' or 'mail-order brides' or 'bought wives' (Ruenkaew P. , 2014, p. 44).

In Germany, dramatic news and reports about foreign males falling prey to Thai women and becoming penniless have been widely despised. The stereotype about Thai women being sold as wives or working as sex-workers still remains. One German husband, who is married to a Thai single mother of two, recalls:

> *In 2008, I was single again after seven years. I had a wish to celebrate my birthday under a palm tree, so I did some research about Thailand. In German TV, we only see old (foreign) men going Pattaya. […]Later on, when I told a co-worker that I decided to marry a Thai lady, she asked me 'on which page of the catalogue did you find her?'. I answered her nicely that I found my wife on page 46 and it cost me a fortune (German husband of Informant No. 38).*

Another German husband, a wealthy business man, agrees that he feels some concern about the stigma and stereotype of Thai women in German society. He decided to hold a marriage ceremony to properly introduce his Thai wife to his family, colleagues and acquaintances. He also bought a house by Lake Constance, one of the most expensive property areas in Germany, so that his wife and two children can live in an upper-class neighbourhood.

> *I decided to hold a marriage ceremony here (in Germany) to eliminate any doubts about my wife…Yes, I do have concern that my children will be asked about their mother in a negative way. But when people see our house, they would understand that we are different. However, if this problem arises, we are also thinking of Schule Schloss Salem (a boarding school which is famous among upper-class Germans) as our last resort (German husband of Informant No. 27).*

In Germany, Thai women are well aware of racial and sexual stigmas they must endure. In fear, many informants decided to visit Germany before marriage to investigate the well-being of their future husbands, and at the same time, to observe the attitudes of family and friends towards them as Thai women. One informant confirms that she and her sister travelled to Germany to observe her fiancé's family: *"I don't have any (economic) reason to move here*

(to Germany). So, if any prejudice or negative attitude by my husband's family or acquaintances was foreseen, I'd told myself that I would call off the marriage proposal" (Informant No. 27).

According to the interviews, many 'new-generation' marriage migrants believe that they do not conform to the stereotype of Thai sex-workers, because of their appearance (non-sexily dressed), public manners, and locations where they are seen with their boyfriends. The older age of the German spouse is one common stereotype most are concerned with: *"I'm the first one in my community who married a foreigner. But my husband is not too old. When we walk together it is not that obvious. I don't care how people see me, and I don't think they think of me in that way. I don't have a dark complexion, and my husband is not old* (Informant No. 31).

The diasporic consciousness of and stereotypes of Thai women in Germany shape the ways new-generation Thai wives think and behave in the new diaspora. To distance themselves from the diaspora, some women intentionally avoid close association with those who seemingly came from stigmatised classes, particularly the masseuse. As Table 17 demonstrates, respondents overwhelmingly believe that masseuse work is stigmatised and is seen as the sex trade. As high as 72 percent thinks that masseuse work establishes the possibility of being seen as sex-workers.

Table 17 Bad Points about Masseuse Work

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Low income or unstable income	29	29.00%
Poor business management	18	18.00%
Possibility of being seen as sex-workers	72	**72.00%**
Poor work environment, such as boss, colleagues	13	13.00%
Possibility of being sexually harassed by clients	37	37.00%
Others	18	18.00%
Responses	100	

Most informants, who do not work in the massage business, have a negative impression about masseuse girls as being materialistic and dishonest. To them, Thai masseuses are fond of brand-name handbags, such as Louis Vuitton, Gucci and Chanel as proof of their prosperity and success. Many masseuse, particularly owners, have secret affairs with their male clients. Gold-diggers and sex-workers are also thought to be working as masseuse, because of the well-known 'erotic massage' or 'disguised massage'.

Literature and interviews with Thai officials and NGO workers indicate similar negative opinions towards Thai wives in Germany. Thai women are being stereotyped as 'gold diggers', a woman who forms relationships with men purely for economic reasons. Their

common traits are being lazy, having no interest in self-improvement and integration, always taking the 'easy-way-out' to earn as much as possible in the shortest time. According to the officials and NGO workers, Thai women tend to skip German-language classes to work for remittances, so they are at fault for jeopardising their lives and their chances for good careers. Instead of investing her time in studying the German language and in skills improvement, a Thai wife would try to give birth to a German child as fast as she could. After decades of residence in Germany, many women are incapable of making themselves understood, even by their husbands. Working as a sex-worker is also seen as another example of an 'easy-way-out' for quick income.

6.1.2 Integration

According to the research findings (See Chapter 5), new-generation Thai wives try not to repeat the negative behaviour perceived to be carried by the older generation, e.g. greed-driven and reckless of integration. They have made attempts to learn the German language and achieve B1 level of proficiency as fast as possible, so their permanent residence permits or naturalisation are guaranteed. They make an effort to obtain driver's licenses, which enable them to commute independently without their husbands' assistance. One informant outlined her step-by-step plan after marriage: *"I will start thinking about children only when I achieve the B1 proficiency and obtain a driver's license"* (Informant No. 27). Such clever planning demonstrates that her top priority lies in 'independence' and 'security'. Unless her independence is secured, she is not willing take the risk of becoming a mother to a foreign child in a foreign land.

Concerning employment in Germany, Thai officials and NGO workers suggest that Thai migrants tend to evade taxes by filing as 'mini-job workers' who earn less than 450 Euro per month; yet in fact they work full-time and receive undeclared payments in cash. This 'win-win' practice benefits both employers, who can contribute less to the social security system, and the Thai wives and their German husbands, who can pay minimal taxes. Many Thai wives declare themselves unemployed, so the whole family can reap the benefit of the social system; yet in fact, they work informally, such as house-cleaners or gardeners and earn their income in cash. These cash incomes are transformed into remittances and their personal and household spending. It remains true, according to the research results, that tax evasion- particularly in the massage business and manual work, such as house cleaning- still exists. Nonetheless, very many informants wish they could fully integrate into the German labour market, pay taxes and contribute to the social security system. Informants understand the pros and cons of each type of employment: mini-job, part-time, full-time, in terms of taxation and insurance benefits. The

most preferred type is 'part-time' because, unlike mini-jobs, they can enjoy partial benefits, and they do not have to work as hard as full-time workers. They realise that only with that faithful contribution, they can live easy lives after retirement in either Germany or Thailand. They dream of living in Germany for the rest of their lives and travelling to Thailand occasionally after retirement. Those women who have invested in houses and properties in Thailand also express doubts about returning permanently to their country of origin. The main reasons are health insurance and better living conditions in Germany. For senior citizens, German medical insurance is by far more reliable than that in Thailand. Most informants have enrolled in the Retirement Insurance *(Rentenversicherung* in German*)*, either on their own, or as dependents of their spouses. Their expected income after retirement, even though believed to be minimal, is significant to their well-being after retirement. Some of them plan to live six months in Thailand during the winter and another six months in Germany during the summer (See *Annex 10*).

Concerning associating with German people and society, most informants working outside the massage business, can easily and well integrate into German society. As they do not associate much with the Thai people or community, their lives are centred around their husbands, husbands' families, German or foreign colleagues and friends. They praise the German society as being frank and straight-forward, in contrast to what they regard as the superficial Thai diaspora, where most people sweet-talk to one another, but slander them behind each other's backs. Many informants, when asked to compare work experiences between Germans and Thais, answer that, 'A fight with German co-workers ends at the meeting and friendship continues. When you work with Thais, either you are not allowed to express contradicting opinions, or you turn them into enemies'.

6.2 Transnationalism

The majority of the Thai population in present-day Germany is transmigrant. They maintain close links with families and friends in Thailand and actively use technologies for connection and communication. Cheap Internet service and chat applications on mobile phones have replaced cheap international telephone calls. The chat application from Japan called 'Line' is by far the most popular messenger application in Thailand, compared to WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger. Having been launched in early 2012, Thailand had more than 10 million users by year end and has become the world's second largest market after Japan, reaching 41 million users in 2017. On average, Thais spend 234 minutes per day on their smart phones, of which 70 minutes are spend on Line daily (Bangkok Post Pressreader, 2017). The Line

application enable users to make free calls, talk face-to-face through cameras, send spontaneous messages to groups and, unlike other messenger applications, enjoy numerous playful stickers. Migrant daughters are able to see the livelihood of their parents, and single mothers are able to parent their children face-to-face.

For a majority of informants in this research, Line has become the integral part of their transnational lives (see *Annex 10*). They are actively using Line daily in connecting themselves, both with families and friends in Thailand, but also with their peer migrants in Germany. The use of Facebook, on the other hand, serves three main purposes: (1) personal use and networking; (2) cheapest business adverts; and (3) group discussions of shared interests. For instance, a Facebook page named 'Sa-pai, German' (translated to 'German daughters-in-law'), uses the diasporic identity to attract almost 6,000 members. This aspect of social media usage will be explained in more detail in Sub-section 6.2.4 (Diasporic Associations). It is important to note that the cheap telephone call, unlike Vertovec (2009), is becoming less influential and is used only when the recipient in Thailand is technology-lagging, i.e. the elderly.

Technology, while connecting Thais across borders, plays a contrasting role in pulling Thais in the diaspora further apart. Messaging applications and social media have become the 'alternative meeting point' where no one actually is present. Facebook groups, for instance, allow strangers and non-friends to exchange views on posted topics. One can carelessly or inconsiderately express a hurtful opinion and get into an embarrassing argument in front of thousands of witnessing readers, without any fear, because their identities and real selves are not exposed. One finds these channels of communication as ways for revenge, to slander or to embarrass others in public, particularly in the diaspora, as words are in the Thai language. Some gain popularity and leadership by becoming Facebook group administrators with several thousand followers.

6.2.1 Dual Citizenship/Nationalisation

While many Thais have become nationalised German citizens and holders of German passports, some prefer permanent residence permits to nationalised citizenship, partly to avoid being forced to give up their Thai nationality. According to the website of the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees, to become a nationalised citizen, one of the conditions is to lose or give up his/her former nationality. But exceptions apply, depending on the country of origin, mostly those unable to give up their nationality easily, such as refugees (Federal Office of Migration and Refugees, 2017). Thai women, at least in recent years, have been capable of nationalisation without showing proof of renouncing existing Thai nationality.

Dual citizenship is not recognised under Thai national law. A Thai woman who married a foreign national and acquired her husband's citizenship, has technically lost her Thai citizenship (Special Branch Bureau, Royal Thai Police, 2017). Her Thai citizenship can be regained, if the marriage ends in death or divorce. This contradicting practice of Thailand on dual citizenship can presumably push Thai migrants further away from homeland engagement. In Germany, migrants are much better off in terms of higher wages and social welfare benefits, compared to Thailand. Today, many of them are reluctant to return to Thailand permanently after retirement, because of medical reasons. One informant, who has a heart illness and has to rely on German health insurance, says: "*The health insurance in Germany is the most important thing for me. It provides the best medical care and the best doctors available. I cannot return to Thailand because of my sickness"* (Informant No. 19). Not only Germany can provide higher standards of medical facilities and care, they are affordable for all citizens with health insurance coverage. In Thailand, all citizens are under the universal 30-Baht (less than 1 Euro) healthcare scheme, but accessibility to a number of expensive medications and treatments is not included.

As indicated in *Annex 10*, it is even more evident among new-generation Thai marriage migrants that they do not have intentions to leave Germany at any point in time. In short, they want to work and live their lives like Germans. To them, Thailand has become a place for *Urlaub* (holiday or vacation in English) similarly for Germans. Most of them return to Thailand once a year to visit their families and friends and spend time at popular beaches or tourist attractions for leisure and relaxation. Some of them go to Buddhist temples to make merit, but do not support any religious associations.

This research predicts that Thai migrants will further loosen their ties with their homeland, if their Thai nationalities are renounced. Not only will they have to apply for visas to enter Thailand for periods longer than 90 days, they will have less motivation to economically invest or voluntarily assist in the development of their homeland, as their legal residence entitlements and their senses of belonging and ownership are, more or less, lost.

6.2.2 Buddhism

Most Thai migrants remain Buddhists in Germany (See *Annex 9*). Currently, there are 28 Thai temples, monasteries and Dhamma studies/practice centres listed on the Thai Embassy's website (Royal Thai Embassy in Berlin, 2017). According to the representative of Wat Dhammaniwasa Buddhistische Gemeinschaft Städteregion Aachen e.V., there are two establishment initiatives leading to the development of Buddhist associations in Germany. First, the expansion of different schools of thoughts abroad. Traditionally, the majority of Thais

have been Teravada Buddhists in the Maha Nikaya order. Most large and influential temples of different schools and sects have established themselves in Germany, receiving initial funding and representatives from their head or affiliated temples in Thailand. The second establishment is initiated and funded by local Thai migrant communities who (1) have difficulties commuting to existing temples; or (2) have different interests in Buddhist schools. Many temples and Buddhist centres of Dhammayuttika Nikaya, the smaller and more conservative Theravada Buddhist order, have been established in this fashion.

Earlier research on Thai migrants and their participation in Buddhist temples in Germany states that:

> *Thai women imported parts of Thai society into Germany, creating opportunities to visit Thai temples in Germany, read Thai publications and watch videos showing Buddhist religious practices for the temple and home. In addition, some Thai women measured their success in Germany based on the accumulation of wealth and material possessions. Success depended on how much money they saved, how much money they sent to Thailand and how much jewelry and other accessories they acquired (especially gold necklaces). They did not view success in terms of how well they fitted into German society, their acculturation to German cuisine, the quality of their living arrangements, or the extent to which Germans accepted them socially* (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, p. 30).

However, the interviews with 38 migrants in this research indicate that many new-generation Thai migrants do not pay attention to religious gatherings in Germany. Their main reasons are (1) long distances between home and temples, (2) time is better invested in work and family affairs, (3) being sceptical of the commercial aspects of temples and wrong-doing of monks, (4) unwillingness to associate with Thai people, and (5) Buddhism can be practiced at home. Many informants say Thais gather at temples for free Thai food and small talk. They do not really pay much attention to Dhamma practice. Examples are:

> *I once went to a Thai Temple in Köln. The first sentence an unknown Thai asked me was 'How much money does your husband give you?'. I also do not have faith in monks' behaviour, so I prefer to go to church (Informant No. 5);*

or

> *Buddhist temples in Germany differ from those in Thailand. People go to temples to talk and eat. Their main objective is not to listen to Dhamma teaching. (Informant No 15).*

Likewise, the representative and co-founder of Wat Dhammaniwasa Buddhistische Gemeinschaft Städteregion Aachen e.V., sheds similar light on the negative role of new-generation Thai migrants towards the sustainability of Buddhism in Germany:

> *The new-generation neither has a voluntary spirit nor willingness to work for personal sacrifices. They avoid association with older generation Thais, because they have negative opinions about them. They only go to temples for personal purposes, such as birthdays and merit-making.*

In light of this negative propensity of local communities in supporting religious activities and representation, homeland religious associations are expected to play more active roles in maintaining Buddhism in Germany in the years to come.

6.2.3 Homeland Politics

The Thai Government has actively strived to engage Thai migrants overseas through its outreach policies and unconventional schemes. Official representations, i.e. Embassies and Consulates, are tasked with 'strong Thai community' schemes, with the aim of strengthening overseas communities to become vital parts of Thailand's economic development and foreign affairs. Activities vary, ranging from religious, cultural, economic, political, to educational and many more. In addition, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security has launched a pilot project to financially support Thai non-profit organisations and informal associations in Germany, with the aim of mobilising volunteers to assist other Thais living in Germany (National News Bureau of Thailand, 2017).

Similar to their lack of engagement in religion, new-generation Thais also do not participate in activities implemented by Governmental representations, unless they are deemed beneficial to them. Activities such as mobile consular days or massage training offered free of charge are at the top of their interest. As indicated in *Annex 9*, most interviewed migrants do not participate in activities implemented by Governmental representations, i.e. Thai Embassy in Berlin and Thai Consulate-General in Frankfurt. They do not follow Facebook pages of the Embassy or the Consulate on a regular basis. They do not participate in the national day celebrations, when most Thais gather to celebrate the birthday of His Majesty the King, mainly because it is difficult for them to commute to and from outside the Berlin and Frankfurt areas. A large number of them do not closely follow politics and the economic situation in Thailand. Most of them deny being associated with or provide any contribution to any political party in Thailand.

Again, the diaspora has been gradually weakened due to the lack of participation and interest of Thai migrants in strengthening solidarity. The government and its representations will have to find an alternative way to engage these new-generation Thais, who are more educated, but are less interested in matters of homeland politics and development.

6.2.4 Diasporic Associations

There is a recorded number of more than 100 Thai non-profit organisations, including religious associations, in Germany, varying from cultural (traditional music and instruments, dances, Thai language for second-generation youth, boxing and sports, arts), political (anti-human trafficking), economic and skill improvement (massage and spa, professional interpreters). The establishment of non-profit organisations also empowers one to a leadership position within the diaspora. As outlined above, competition among agents in the Thai diaspora is fierce. Disagreement amongst members is common, which results in divisions and formation of new associations. For instance, the founder of the Thai Culture and Art in Hagau Bodensee (Thailändischer Kunst-und Kulturverein, Hegau Bodensee e.V. in German) mentions: *"At the beginning, there were roughly 200 members in this association, but now there are less than 40-50 persons left".* Competition and disagreement between and amongst organisations can be intensified when politics and financial support are factored in. The Thai Government's annual budget under the 'strong Thai community' scheme is rather limited, and equal funding to satisfy all associations in Germany is impossible.

Unlike the older types of diasporic associations, new-generation Thai migrants are using social media to form their own online associations. Benefits of online associations are (1) lower costs and fewer legal restrictions; (2) ability to have unlimited numbers of interested members; (3) spontaneous interaction among members 24/7; and (4) the personal lives and privacy of administrators, as well as members, are kept apart. At present, there are five to six Facebook pages that have more than one thousand followers. The Facebook page called 'Sharing the Experience of Learning Berufsausbildung in Deutschland', for instance, has more than 6,000 members. Members in this page exchange their experiences of taking Ausbildung and giving moral support and advice to those with difficulties. Another Facebook page called 'Arbeitsplatz für Thai in Deutschland' has more than 3,500 members, who share their experiences in seeking employment in Germany. The page also provides opportunities for employers, mostly massage businesses, to place job adverts for potential employees. There is a sizable number of German-language Facebook groups among Thai migrants. To name a few, a page called 'Keine Angst vor der Prüfung A1-B2' has more than 2,000 members and 'Wir Lernen Jeden Tag ein Neues Deutsches Wort' has more than 5,000 members. Both pages provide followers with language exam samples and tips. Similar to its business community, Facebook groups related to massage and spas are mushrooming. One Facebook page, which can be translated to 'New Lady Boss (Thai massage in Germany and Europe)' has become a huge hit and has almost 3,800 members today. Another similar page called 'German Language

for Therapists' has around 1,300 members. More importantly, many new-generation Thais avoid participating in traditional diasporic associations, because Thai cultural values of respecting the elderly can limit their freedom of expression. For instance, the administrator of a Facebook page called 'Arbeitsplatz für Thai in Deutschland' shares how she started her Facebook page and the reason why she is not interested in joining a Thai diasporic association:

> *I started this page because my husband works for the Employment Agency and his family members also work for relevant public agencies such as the finance office. I think I can help Thai people by giving them accurate advice I receive from my husband and his family. […] The older-generation Thais often accuse us (the new generation) of not having a voluntariy spirit, because we do not join their associations. In fact, we do but in our own ways!! Volunteering in Thai associations means I have to follow the Thai values of always listening and obeying the seniors. They do not allow us to express our opinions equally.*

A majority of Thai migrants' Facebook pages are closed-group and are administered by 'new-generation' Thai wives. The administraters have absolute control over membership, i.e. who should be accepted, rejected or expelled. Some conduct surveys on their members' identities and interests. They initiate conversations, mediate conflicts and assist members in need. Many older generation migrants see the rising popularities of Facebook group administrators with great concern.

> *The new-generation Facebook administrators and followers can be egoistic, emotional and immature. For instance, those who have passed B1 language proficiency are often seen providing the newcomers with wrong grammatical explanations. In the age of Internet surfing, the administrators can simply and quickly search online for answers, copy-paste information or provide advice without thorough research, knowledge and understanding. Unfortunately, members are likely to take their advice as fact and quickly share it to other circles of friends. (Representative of Thailändischer Kunst-und Kulturverein, Hegau Bodensee e.V. in German)*

Thus, many older-generation NGOs leaders and members are having difficulties engaging the younger generation in their work and associations. A representative of Amnesty for Women e.V. Hamburg opines:

> *Thai women in the old days couldn't even write. They only finished Grades 4-6. In the last 4-5 years, there are more B.A. graduates, but education does them no good. They have to lower their pride and be deskilled in order to find work. Eighty percent of those who are educated end up working as interpreters. The new generation, even though possessing higher qualifications, pays less attention to social responsibilities. They are more economical and keep loose relationships among themselves. Temple activities, for instance, are not likely to be participated in.*

In the wake of social media and privacy consciousness, leaders of diasporic associations, too, have difficulties attracting the interest of Thai migrants and recruiting new faces. Not only are the social media easy and powerful tools for communication, migrants are inclined to avoid bureaucracies and work ethics of Thai associations. They also place high importance on protecting their own privacy and that of their families in Germany.

7 BOURDIEU AND CAREER CHOICES

This chapter takes Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical concept of capital, habitus and social space to better understand Thai marriage migrants' career choices in the German milieu. The chapter is divided into three sequential sections. The first section argues that a Thai marriage migrant's initial capital is being 'devalued' or 'transformed' or 'decreased' over the course of migration, narrowing inequality gaps and obscuring 'class distinctions' inside the diaspora. Each agent is, as a consequence, obliged to accumulate 'one or another' type of capital, instead of maximising overall capital as suggested by Bourdieu. To demonstrate the relationship between capital, habitus and career choices of Thai wives, the second section takes Bourdieu's social space as an analytical tool. Each migrant strategically positions him/herself according to their initial and newly-accumulated capital, and habitus plays a big role in their career decision-making processes. The final section concludes with the migrant's vicious circle, which is determined by the accumulation of economic capital.

7.1 Devaluation, Transformation and Decrease of Capital

Over the course of marriage migration, Thai migrants have experienced the devaluation of cultural capital, the transformation of social capital and the decrease of economic capital.

7.1.1 Cultural Capital

'Embodied' cultural capital, such as the Thai language and dialect, has become useless in the new milieu in which all migrants have to, or are being forced by German immigration and integration policies to, accumulate new a language and integrate into a new culture. They have to adapt themselves to the new climate and new social structure, which are different and highly regulated. 'Objectified' cultural capital, such as cars, expensive clothes, jewelery, brand-name handbags or fancy mobile phones, are either no longer available or are becoming less affordable, because marriage migrants are in subordinate positions, being dependent housewives who live on their husbands' financial support.

More importantly, 'institutionalised' cultural capital, i.e. credentials, diplomas and certificates, is deemed useless, even when their academic qualifications are recognised and their full equivalency to German qualifications are certified. With the exception of those who work at the Thai Embassy and the Consulate, almost all migrants who have university degrees hardly find their academic qualifications assets for employment, as one informant rightly says, "E*veryone here has to start anew from point zero*" (Informant No. 16). Interestingly, there is a contrasting result from the questionnaire. Almost 54 percent of respondents believe that their

degree/diploma/certificates from Thailand are useful in obtaining employment in Germany (See *Annex 11*). Nonetheless, only 17.6 percent of respondents have ever had their Thai education/professional qualifications from Thailand assessed for equivalency in Germany; 10.4 percent of whom were awarded identical equivalency (See *Annex 11*).

Thai migrants often consult the Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit) in their neighbourhood for advisory services regarding job opportunities. The most common advice is to further their education with on-the-job training (Ausbildung), each course of which requires approximately three years of time and financial investment. As emphasised on the website of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees: "The continuing vocational education is very important in Germany, and it is necessary in many professions to take further courses and to acquire new qualifications after undergoing training. Thus, migrants are encouraged to go through vocational integration and continuing training under the promotional program entitled Integration through Skill-building (*Integration durch Qualifizierung*- IQ)" (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2017). At the same time, German employers also expect specific skills from their employees. More advanced German-language proficiency beyond the B1 level is required for most skill-building programs in Germany.

As a consequence of the time-consuming and financial requirements of taking an Ausbildung, only three out of 38 informants have gone through this 'hard way' of obtaining gainful employment. Similarly, questionnaire respondents also express little interest: only 14 out of 119 respondents have pursued Ausbildung vocational training in Germany (See *Annex 11*). One informant, who is now doing a tax assistant Ausbildung, has been in Germany since 2006. She has put herself through various types of careers, including masseuse, Volkshochschule instructor and Embassy staff. She decided to start an Ausbildung in 2017 at the age of 44, wishing to obtain gainful employment after her completion. Ironically, such a 'hard way' skill-building process does not always translate into a satisfying result. One informant is now in her second year of Physiotherapy Ausbildung. She doubts whether her Ausbildung will be successful, desperately saying: "*The course is incredibly difficult with all the technical terminologies. I don't even know if I will successfully complete this Ausbildung. In fact, I'm so afraid of recommending it to anyone that I avoid posting it on my Facebook page*" (Informant No. 31).

For Thai marriage migrants in Germany, their initial cultural capitals have been devalued, and alternative cultural capitals are being forcibly accumulated. The required cultural capital, such as new professional skills and Ausbildung certificates, is almost impossible to acquire.

7.1.2 Social Capital

Migration causes one to leave his/her initial social network to establish another, leading to the transformation of social capitals. Social capital is accumulated through establishing various trusting and supporting relationships, many of which take several years or even generations to accomplish. However, for migrants, the pre-migration network has become less important in the new milieu. As a dependent spouse, her social network has been transformed into her husband's networks and social class into which she is integrating. During her first three years of cohabitation, the German husband is technically her sole legal guardian. If a marriage of an unemployed Thai wife ends during the first three years of cohabitation, she could face deportation. If her German husband becomes unemployed during the first three years, his wife's residence permit is in jeopardy. During the first years of migrants' settlement in Germany, their lives revolve around language training, residence entitlement and fulfilling integration requirements imposed by the German Goverment, which result in the accumulation of new social capital. For those migrants who are obliged to send remittances, they have to accept unskilled employment, such as cleaning, waitressing and massaging. They also have opportunities to network themselves with Germans outside their existing circles, as well as with the Thai diaspora.

The migrant's new social class is her husband's social class. If her husband is in a higher social class status, she is there as well. Educated Thai women are likely to be married to a man with overall higher capital and vice versa. One German husband says: "*Education as well as other background are very important when I consider dating someone. It would have been very difficult to have to explain everything to my wife if we have nothing in common*" (Spouse of Informant No. 27). When being asked about their relationship with German in-laws and their husbands' acquaintances, most informants respond positively. They are warmly welcomed into the family and the circle of their husband's friends. This is partly due to the fact that most Germans live in nuclear families, and privacy is highly respected, thus conflicts with in-laws or siblings are minimal. Some informants believe that their in-laws are particularly nice to them, because their sons are married and they see the prospect of having grandchildren.

For dependent spouses and mothers, accumulating social capital is limited, due to their inabilities to obtain gainful employment. Many of them are stay-at-home housewives, self-employed masseuse, or work for their husbands' businesses. One informant, whose husband is a jewelry trader at flea markets, spends most of her time traveling from place to place. Another informant works at a gas station owned by her in-laws. To enhance the social network

outside their immediate families, both of them also work as part-time masseuses. Nonetheless, masseuse work is not always a choice, and many informants live their lives in a small circle of people and networks.

As outlined in Chapter 6, many new-generation Thais try to keep their distance from the Thai diaspora to protect their privacy. To accumulate social capital, 'social media' have become vital platforms where everyone can meet without being present. Relationships, however, are at a 'superficial' level and based on suspicion. Facebook page members can become "friends" without having met in person. Newcomers often ask questions, and experienced migrants provide their insights. Several thousand members follow information and participate in discussions posted on Facebook by administrators and members. They share their personal experiences, photos and views. In many cases, conflicts of interest have resulted in hateful attacks on the unknown. One Facebook administrator of a popular page called 'Arbeitsplatz für Thai in Deutschland', for instance, posts a warning to her followers: "Please do not cross my line of privacy" (Informant No. 17).

7.1.3 Economic Capital

Marriage migration means joblessness and financial dependence. Almost all German husbands are breadwinners and have control over the family budget. They are responsible for household expenses (electricity, food, etc.), statutory health insurances for their wives and child care; but most of them do not provide large allowances for their wives' personal expenses. Some of them give 'pocket money' or only pay when their wives make a request. Thus, most women find little income, even from mini-jobs, to be their means of happiness and financial independence. The common answer to the importance of income: 'To have some extra money for myself'. Such testimony is supported by the quantitative outcomes summarised in Table 12. Almost 91 percent of 113 questionnaire respondents voted 'Earning income for themselves and family in Germany' to be the main reason behind their search for employment in Germany.

Many housewives feel guilty and carefully consider expenditures when it comes to spending their husbands' money for their personal use or for their own families in Thailand. One informant, who married a wealthy businessman, says: "*My husband gives me a credit card, and I am free to use it. He never checks how much I spend, because he knows that I am very careful with money. When I want to buy something for my own family in Thailand, I always inform him in advance, as a courtesy*" (Informant No. 27). When Thai marriage migrants have successfully secured employment and their own incomes, they ususally pride themselves on sharing the household's expenses. Some pay for food, some pay for family trips abroad. They do not want to be perceived as 'gold-diggers'. Some informants are reluctant to spend money

to accumulate cultural capital, such as private language tutors or Ausbildung. They think everything in Germany is expensive, and money should be better spent on family affairs.

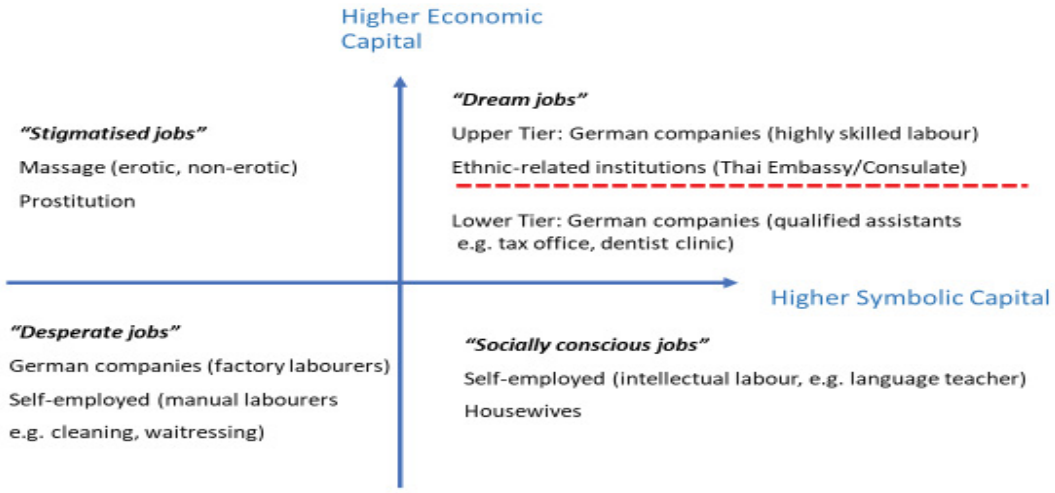
Over the course of migration, Thai marriage migrants have experienced their devaluation of cultural capital, transformation of social capital and decrease of economic capital on the one hand. On the other hand, their capabilities to accumulate new capital are limited, due to their dependence on their German spouses socially, legally and financially. For marriage migrants, the capability to use one form of capital to acquire another is also limited. One cannot easily utilise newly-acquired social capital, i.e. networks of her husband's associates, to obtain economic capital. Similarly, one with economic capital dependence cannot easily acquire objectified or institutionalised cultural capital. Institutionalised cultural capital, which is linked to future economic capital, such as skill-building Ausbildung, is difficult to accumulate. Thus, an increase of both or multiple forms of capital becomes almost impossible for Thai marriage migrants, forcing them to choose to accumulate 'one or another' capital, rather than maximising their overall capitals, as suggested by Bourdieu.

7.2 Social Space, Habitus and Career Choices

The devaluation, transformation and decrease of capital have narrowed inequality gaps and obscured 'class distinctions' in the diaspora. The following Bourdieu's social space illustrations analyse how each agent, through habitus and existing capital, strategically positions him/herself in the German labour market and how he/she advances his/her symbolic and economic capital in the struggle for class distinction.

Figure 4 illustrates the social relationships and social struggles over economic capital and symbolic capital of Thai marriage migrants. The vertical axis is marked by 'higher economic capital', as one moves upward, and the horizontal axis is marked by 'higher symbolic capital', as one moves to the right. The space is now divided into four categories of career choices. An agent's decision to place herself in one of the categories depends on how she evaluates her capital as valuable and how she misrecognises the arbitrariness of capital.

Figure 4 Social Space of Thai Migrants' Career Choices



Four categories of career choices are closely examined. The **'dream jobs'** are located in the upper right corner of the graph, where one is able to accumulate higher levels of both economic and symbolic capital. Table 18 illustrates the qualifications of migrants who achieved 'dream jobs'. To land in this category, one has to be equipped with a highlevel of cultural capital and/or social capital. The upper tier is the most prestigious, well-paid, highly-skilled employment, for instance, white-collar positions in well-known German companies or ethnic-related prestigious institutions, such as the Thai Embassy and the Thai Consulate. Informants, who obtain upper-tier 'dream jobs', all possess high educational backgrounds, the minimum of which is a Bachelor's degree. Degrees obtained in Germany have proven to be beneficial in obtaining gainful employment in this category, as employers are more confident of employees' knowledge, German-language proficiency and integration capabilities. All informants in this category possess the minimum of B1 German-language proficiency, except one informant who has the A2 level. In her case, a strong social capital, i.e. her brother's leadership position, helped her to obtain employment.

The lower-tier 'dream jobs' also demand a high level of cultural and social capital, which is obtained through Germany's Ausbildung programme. Even though this programme is promoted as beingf the most effective channel for migrants to obtain gainful employment, it usually does not lead to executive or managerial positions.

Table 18 'Dream Jobs' Informants

No.	German	Remittance	Parenthood (Age)	Previous work in Thailand	Educational Attainment	Current Employment/ Status
7	B1	No	1 Daughter (5)	Employee of Newspaper, Publishing Company	M.A. (Linguistics - Intl. Programme), AUSBILDUNG	Assistant, Tax Office
15	A2	Yes	None	Official (Accountant), Ministry of Public Health	3 B.A. (Education, Accounting, Public Administration)	Local staff, Thai Embassy, Full-time
16	B1	No	None	Hotel	B.A. (Humanity, Majoring in English), AUSBILDUNG	Dentist Assistant, Full-time
24	B1	No	None	Employee, Dried Seafood Company	B.A. (Marketing)	Employee, Arvato Direct Service Potsdam (Start 29 May 2017), Full-time
28	C1	No	None	Employee, Accenture Consulting	M.A. (Computer Science) Germany	Local Staff, Thai Embassy, Berlin, Full-time
30	B2	Yes (Occasional)	None	BMW Thailand	M.A. (Communicative English)	Thai Consulate (Commercial Section), Frankfurt, Full-time
31	B1	Yes	1 Son (8)	Hotel	B.A. (Mass Communication), AUSBILDUNG	Ausbildung Practitioner
33	C1	No	1 Daughter (9)	Travel Agency	B.A. (Humanities-German Language)	Local staff, Thai Embassy, Berlin, Full-time

The '**socially conscious jobs'** are indicated in the lower right corner of the graph, where one is able to accumulate a higher level of symbolic capital, but less economic capital. All informants in this category are B.A. graduates or higher. In fact, the two highest-educated informants (Ph.D. drop-outs) are in this category. All of them possess at least the B1 level of German-language proficiency. On average, their work experience in Thailand is more intellectual and socially respectful than those of migrants in other categories. Moreover, none of them had ever worked in the massage business before migrating to Germany.

More importantly, none of them send remittances, indicating their high level of initial or existing economic capital. One informant in this category says: "*My daughter (from a previous marriage) is more well-off in Thailand than she is here in Germany. In Thailand, she needs not do any household chores, but here in Germany, she has to clean her own room and even bathroom*" (Informant No.9). Most of them describe the financial situation of their

immediate families in Thailand as 'having enough', so that remittances are not required. Table 19 shows the qualifications of migrants in the 'socially conscious jobs' category.

Table 19 'Socially Conscious Jobs' Informants

No.	German	Remittance	Parenthood (Age)	Previous work in Thailand	Educational Attainment	Current Employment/ Status
5	B1	No	None	Employee of Telecom, Information, Media Company	M.A.(Sociology)	Penny Supermarket, Mini-job
6	B1	No	One Daughter (Grade 8)	Employee of Airline Company	M.A. (Communication)	Interpreter, Self-employed
8	B1	No	2 Daughters (2, 5)	Employee of Computer Company	M.A. (Marketing)	Housewife
9	B1	No	1 Daughter (16)	Government Official, Ministry of Public Health	M.A. (Healthcare Administration), Ph.D. Drop-out	Online Teacher (German and English languages), Self-employed
10	B1	Yes	None	Employee of Private Company	B.A. (Hotel)	Employee in Husband's Own Business, Part-time/ As of August 2017 Works Full-Time for a German Company
12	B1	No	None	Accounting Official, Sub district Administrative Organization	M.A. (Business Admin)	Employee of a Small Online Shop, Part-time
13	C1	No	1 Daughter (6)	Secretary, Intl. Consulting Firm	B.A. (Communication)	Teacher (Thai language), Self-employed
14	B1	No	1 Daughter (8)	Employee, Sound Appliances Company	B.A. (Marketing)	Exports German Snacks to Thailand, Self-employed
20	A1	No	None	University Instructor in Psychology	2 M.A. (Education, Psychology), Ph.D. Drop-out	Housewife, Language Student
25	B2	No	Pregnant and One Son (4)	Researcher	M.A.(Science)	Housewife
27	B1	No	2 Children (Daughter 7, Son 5)	Employee, Nestle Thailand	B.A. (Economics)	Housewife

On the employment front, all 'socially conscious' informants either are full-time housewives or work part-time or on a mini-job basis. A large number of informants in this category has young child(ren) either from previous marriages or with German husbands; thus the importance of motherhood is placed above that of employment. Once their children are of school-age, they find themselves less competitive in the labour market, as one informant

claims: "*I took three years off to take care of my children; now there is a big gap in my resume"* (Informant No. 6). In some cases, Thai wives have to relocate frequently, due to their husbands' work, making it more difficult to secure gainful employment. One informant had worked for the Dell computer company, before migrating to Germany and was able to work at home for the same company for two years. She accompanied her husband to Switzerland and has been a full-time housewife ever since. Many informants have to work part-time or at mini-jobs, not only because they have to care for their young children, but because of their inabilities to obtain a full-time job. Many singles in this category have applied for various types of employment, ranging from unskilled to skilled/intellectual positions, but they have not been successful. One informant, who is an M.A. graduate and works part-time at a Penny supermarket says: *"I feel ashamed. My parents have financed me through university, but I'm still not able to find a job that matches my qualifications"* (Informant No.5).

To maintain their class status, Thai migrants in this category do not consider masseuse as an alternative choice for employment or entrepreneurship, even if it offers flexible working hours and good income. Most of them prefer working as unskilled labourers for German companies to working as masseuses. They praise German professionalism, in contrast to Thai work ethics. More importantly, they are concerned with their social status, as one informant claims: *"I only look for office work, because I'm educated. I've never thought of working in massage, Thai restaurants or cleaning"* (Informant No. 14). Highly-educated informants in this category work as intellectuals, mainly as language teachers, translators or interpreters, which allows them to gain social respect from both Thais and Germans.

As indicated in Table 17 (Chapter 6), the greatest concern of all questionnaire respondents regarding masseuse work is the possibility of being seen as sex-workers (72 percent of total respondents) and the possibility of being sexually harassed by clients (37 percent of total respondents). Thai masseuses have a high tendency to be harassed by their male clients, because of the well-known stereotype. Even though genuine parlours have made it clear that erotic services are not offered, many clients enjoy the challenge. *"Some clients ask me to massage only their butt. In this case, I will inform the manager to ask them to leave"* (Informant No.18). Self-employed masseuses, who provide services alone at their apartments/parlours or at clients' places, all have this concern in mind. Thus, to accept new clients, referrals from existing clients are needed.

Thai migrants and their German spouses are well aware of these high risks in massage work, so many migrants do not consider it an option. When respondents are asked if they are

interested in working as a masseuse, as many as 35 percent of respondents say 'No' to this type of employment (See Table 20).

Table 20 Interest in Working as a Masseuse

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes, and I am now working as a masseuse.	21	17.50%
Yes, but I have not had a chance to do so.	34	28.33%
I used to work as a masseuse, but have already quit.	13	10.83%
No	42	35.00%
Others	10	8.33%
Responses	120	

Many informants in the 'socially-conscious' group have negative stereotypes about masseuses being greed-driven, materialistic, addictive to gambling, disgraceful for committing adultery. The business itself is subject to exploitation of labour and misconduct, such as tax evasion and prostitution. In their opinion, the massage business is in a grey area and is full of risk and suspicion. As a result, they prefer staying unemployed or working on a part-time/mini job basis in socially respectable types of employment to working as masseuses.

'Stigmatised jobs' are placed on the upper left corner of the graph, where one is able to accumulate higher levels of economic capital, but less symbolic capital. In this research, only massage work is explored. All migrants in this category have one common characteristic: sending remittances, which indicates the importance of economic capital in their lives. Only one informant in this category no longer sends remittances, because all debts in Thailand had been paid by his German partner before marriage. As indicated in Table 21, the educational attainment of informants in this category varies from fourth grade to Bachelor's degrees. Their work experience before migration is mainly in the hotel and massage businesses, except one informant who had worked as a lawyer and an owner of a construction company before migrating to Germany. Her business went bankrupt during the 1997 Asian financial crisis, leaving her almost 40 million baht (approximately one million Euro) in debt. Informants in this category all work as masseuse or owners of massage businesses. Some work on a part-time/ mini-job basis, together with other types of employment.

Table 21 'Stigmatised Jobs' Informants

No.	Parenthood in Germany (Age)	Educational Attainment	Work Experience	Language Proficiency	Send Remittance?	Current Employment/ Status
1	1 Son (6)	B.A. (Hotel)	Hotel	B1	Yes	Massage (Employee), Mini-job
2	None	B.A. (Tourism)	Hotel	B1	No	Massage (Owner)
3	None	B.A. (Law)	Lawyer, Owner of Construction Company	B1	Yes	Massage (owner)
4	None	B.A. (Business Administration)	Hotel	B1	Yes (Occasional)	Family-run Gas Station (Full-time), Massage (Self-employed)
11	1 Son (5)	Grade 9	Hotel	A1	Yes	Massage, Self-employed
17	None	High School (G12), B.A. Drop-out	Au-Pair in France, Germany	B1	Yes	Massage, Self-employed
18	None	B.A. (Education)	Teacher (Briefly), Masseuse in Thailand, Russia	B1	Yes	Employee in Husband's Own Business (Part-time), Massage (Mini-job)
21	None	High school (G12)	Caregiver for Elderly	A1	Yes	Massage (Employee)
22	2 Sons (16,13)	B.A.(Marketing)	Business Owner	B1	Yes	Massage (Rmployee) Tropical Islands, Full-time
23	None	B.A.(Communications)	News Reporter, Business Owner	B2	n.a.	Massage (Employee)
26	None	High (School?)Vocational Certificate/ College Diploma	Masseuse, Banyan Tree Resort and Spa	B1	Yes (Occasional)	Massage, Self-employed
29	1 Son (6)	High School (G12)	Beauty Salon	B1	Yes (Grandmother)	Massage, Self-employed
32	None	B.A. (Marketing)	Massage (Owner, Instructor)	B1	Yes (But stopped)	Massage (Owner, Instructor), Self-employed
34	None	Grade 4	Massage	A1	Yes (Parent, Child)	Massage (Employee), Mini-job
35	1 Daughter (15)	Grade 4	Massage	B1	Yes (Parent)	Massage, Self-employed

All informants in this category are well aware of the stigma associated with massage work, but they had to overcome such negative thoughts, because the work offers an *"easy*

entrance and high income" (Informant No. 1). For less-educated migrants, massage is one of the few employment opportunities they have in Germany. The reasons are, for instance, *"I'm poorly educated"* (Informant No. 29) and *"I'm stupid; my brain has a low processing speed. I only have fourth-grade schooling."* (Informant No. 34). Because of the high demand for masseuses, on-the-job massage training is offered by many places. Thus, masseuses can start working without prior knowledge and skills.

All informants in this category agree that the habitus of being greed-driven, materialistic, addictive to gambling, disgraceful for committing adultery are common among masseuses. The exploitation of labour, tax evasion and erotic massage have been monitored closely and, in many cases, put on trial by German authorities. Fierce competition at the workplace and among similar businesses has worsened the situation. One informant, who has more than 10 years experience working as a masseuse, confirms that:

> *"My co-workers are back-stabbers and gossipers. I got into trouble many times, because of their jealousy. They are jealous, because I have a lot of bookings from high-tip-giver clients. The clients love me, because I know how to heal their pains and how to talk to them. More than half of masseuses use brand-name handbags to show-off their success. They enjoy having people click 'Like' and praising them on Facebook" (Informant No. 18).*

Given such negativities, however, most masseuse are unlikely to quit their jobs and abandon their dreams of becoming business owners. They see the massage business as the fastest and easiest way to accumulate economic capital, thus allowing them to advance to a higher-class status. They witness the success of many owners, who make substantial profits and live prosperous lives. The price for a one-hour massage starts at 30-45 euro, while the average wage of a masseuse can be as low as the minimum wage. However, there are many risks associated with this business, and mismanagement has forced many parlours to close. Those migrants who are aware of their limitations, such as knowledge, skills, or financial means, therefore, prefer remaining employees to investing money in this business.

Finally, the **'desperate jobs'** are located in the lower left corner of the graph, where one is able to accumulate the lowest level of both economic and symbolic capital. Migrants in this category do not have a high level of initial and existing cultural and social capital. No informants in this category have university degrees. They end up in this category, due to two main reasons. First, they are unable to work as masseuse, because of family or health reasons. Informant No. 19, for example, is diagnosed with heart illness. Her German husband died, so she is living on the limited amount of his pension fund. She works as a cleaner on a mini-job basis at a family-run hotel, to where she can walk from home. To work as a masseuse, one

needs physical strength. On some busy days, a masseuse may have to work more than eight hours without a break: "*It's like you work at the conveyer belt on an assembly line. The clients come one after another nonstop for eight hours straight. You need strong wrists for such a tough job"* (Informant No. 7). Secondly, some migrants, particularly those newly-arrived in Germany, cannot find better employment because of their German-language skills. Informant No. 36, for instance, arrived in Germany in 2015 and is now taking language classes. She, too, has no other choice of employment but cleaning.

Table 22'Desperate Jobs' Informants

No.	German	Remittances?	Parenthood (Age)	Previous Work in Thailand	Educational Attainment	Current Employment/ Status
19	A1	Yes	None	Beauty Salon	Middle School (G9)	Hotel Maid (Cleaning), Mini-job
36	A1	Yes	None	Nurse Assistant, Hospital	High School (G12)	Cleaning, Mini-job
37	B1	Yes	None	Travel Agency (employee), Co-own Small Business	High Vocational Certificate	Waiter, Mini-job
38	B1	Yes	1 Daughter (15)	Massage	High School (G12)	Cleaning, Mini-job

7.3 Vicious Circle and Habitus

Many success stories of 'wife-turns-entrepreneur' encourage many Thai newcomers to enter the massage business and employment. To them, enhancing their economic capital means improving their familial positions and their social status distinction in both the Thai and German communities. They want to prove their worthiness in the eyes of their husbands, friends and families in both the Thai and German societies. As a result, many newcomers, as well as those migrants in 'socially-conscious' and 'desperate' categories, see massage as the 'only' opportunity to advance their economic capital. Some witness the unsuccessful stories of highly-educated Thai wives in trying to obtain qualified jobs and jump to the conclusion that they are not likely to be successful in accumulating symbolic capital. Accumulating economic capital, therefore, is the only channel by which they can advance their social status in the German milieu.

As indicated in Table 23, as many as 97 percent of questionnaire respondents are willing to be de-skilled, in exchange for employment. The questionnaire asked: 'If you cannot find appropriate employment that matches your educational background, would you be willing to

accept a position with a lower educational requirement?'. As many as 101 respondents out of 104 respondents agreed to this condition.

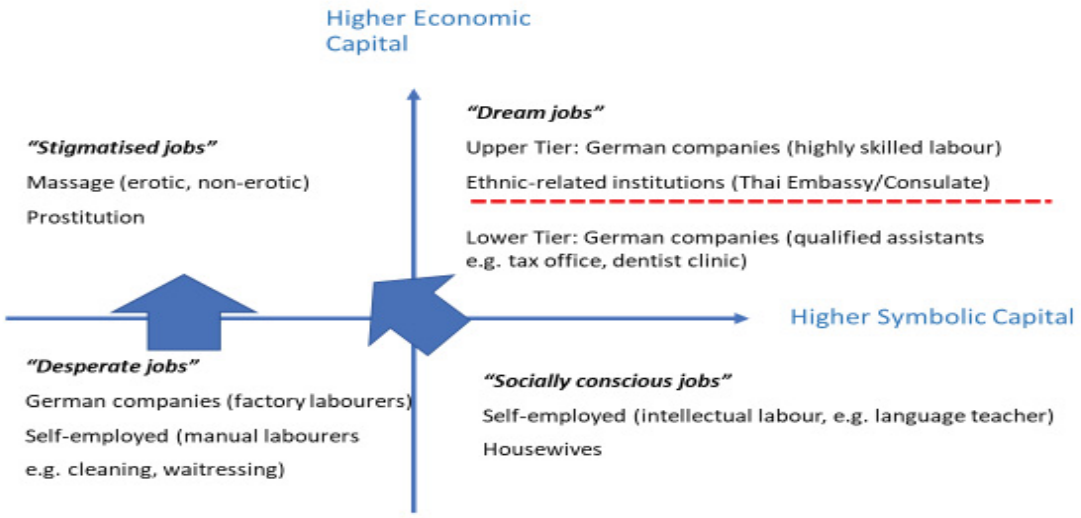
Table 23 Willingness to be De-skilled for Employment

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	101	97.12%
No	3	2.88%
Responses	104	

Their attitude can lead to a conclusion that new-generation Thai marriage migrants attach great importance to employment and economic capital and that migrants in other categories, particularly the 'socially-conscious' category, have a tendency to move upward to the 'stigmatised' category to improve their economic capital in Germany.

Figure 5 demonstrates the upward-moving tendency of migrants in the 'socially-conscious' and 'desperate' categories toward the direction of 'stigmatised' types of employment.

Figure 5 Direction of Thai Migrants' Career Changes



Here, the vicious circle begins. As outlined in Chapter 6, massage work does not require high-level language proficiency and skills; migrants start to abandon their ambition to accumulate cultural capital for self-improvement or better positions in socially-respected categories. Their focus on accumulating the greatest amount of economic capital is likely to lure them into the erotic massage field or prostitution in disguise, which are common in this

business. They are likely to possess the *habitus* commonly known to masseuse, such as being greed-driven, careless of integration, materialistic, gambling addicts. It can be said that employment types and *habitus* of older-generation Thai migrants have returned to the new-generation in the form of masseuse.

8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Conclusion

Over five decades of their migration to Germany, Thais are still faced with a dilemma between de-skilled employment or being unemployed. Even though the Residence Act of 2005 has positively shaped Thai marriage migration, lessened human-trafficking and the sex-trade and improved their initial qualifications, it is almost impossible for Thai migrants to obtain employment which is appropriate to their education and qualifications. According to the empirical study, three research questions can be answered as follows:

First, immigration and integration policies imposed by the Residence Act of 2005 have successfully improved the initial qualifications of Thai migrants, such as their educational and economic backgrounds. Integration policies, which are linked to the residence permits, have forced new-generation Thai migrants to learn the German language before arriving in Germany and to pay more attention to German-language training to secure their residence permits. Most of them spend their first years learning the German language to achieve the minimum level of B1 proficiency as soon as possible. This research investigates present-day Thai marriage migration, including migrants' channels and reasons for migration and finds that numerous positive changes have been made since the Residence Act of 2005. The number of mail-order-brides and arranged sham marriages, for instance, has been considerably reduced. The advancement of technology has also played a role in this regard. Match-making websites, such as 'ThaiLoveLink', Emails, chat applications and phone calls have become alternative channels for Thai women to find and get to know their foreign husbands before migration. Both Thais and Germans spend time dating and making cross-border visits to avoid identity fraud, human-trafficking and potential exploitation.

Empirical study indicates that several factors have contributed to the employment dilemma of Thai marriage migrants, including language proficiency, familial burdens, useless credentials from Thailand, gender inequality in the German labour market, skill-based recruitment of German companies, supportive roles of husbands, Ausbildung skill-improvement schemes and the taxation system. Therefore, most Thai marriage migrants, particularly the highly educated, are having difficulties obtaining employment that matches their educational levels. In Germany, Thai massage has become a 'number one' ethnic profession for Thai marriage migrants. However, the emergence of erotic massage or 'prostitution in disguise', has reinforced the negative stereotypes and stigma of being sex-workers. Thai massage parlours are being seen as brothels, impacting everyone in this

business. Those migrants who wish to open genuine massage parlours, for instance, have a hard time finding a place to rent or run their businesses without landlord's prejudice. Many masseuses, therefore, decide to work as self-employed to avoid misunderstandings and to maintain the standard of their businesses.

Second, through the transnationalism lens, many aspects of Thai migrants' everyday lives are investigated, including dual citizenship, Buddhism, homeland politics and diasporic associations. The research finds that a majority of new-generation Thai marriage migrants is able to quickly integrate into German society, due to their improved language skills and supportive husbands. Advanced technologies and social media, such as Line and Facebook, have played important roles in their transnational lives. However, the more they are easily integrated, the more likely they will distance themselves from the 'stigmatised' Thai diaspora. The diasporic association, for instance, has transformed into Facebook pages, where several thousands of members are actively involved. Even though almost all new-generation Thai migrants keep their connections with families and friends in Thailand, little efforts have been made to support the betterment of the Thai diaspora in Germany and the development of their homeland. The popularity of the Thai massage and spa business has resulted in great competition and conflicts in the diaspora. The research findings, therefore, lead to a prediction that new-generation Thai migrants will continue to loosen ties with their homeland, as they are quickly and happily integrating into German society.

Third, to answer why educated Thai female migrants cannot fully integrate into and contribute to the German labour market and what the underlying problems are that hinder the potential contribution of Thai workers to the German labour market, Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical concepts of capital, habitus and social space are being applied. This research suggests that a Thai marriage migrant's initial capital is being 'devalued' or 'transformed' or 'decreased' over the course of marriage migration, narrowing inequality gaps and obscuring 'class distinctions' inside the diaspora. Each agent is, as a consequence, obliged to accumulate 'one or another' type of capital, instead of maximising overall capitals. Career choices are made, depending on habitus and capital each agent regards as valuable. Four categories of career choices are elaborated: dream jobs, socially-conscious jobs, stigmatised jobs and desperate jobs. Highly-educated migrants who cannot achieve their 'dream jobs' have two choices: either maintaining their class status by working in 'socially-conscious jobs' or improving their economic capital by working in 'stigmatised jobs'.

8.2 Recommendations

Before enforcement of the Residence Act of 2005, Chantavanich et al. viewed Germany's integration policies towards Thai marriage migrants as unsuccessful, citing *habitus* as one of the causes contributing to their inability to integrate:

> *The large numbers of migrants in Germany prompted the German government to devise policies to help integrate these migrants into German society. […] These policies did not succeed with married Thai women. First, many Germans believed Thai women came to Germany primarily for prostitution, a difficult stereotype to erase. Second, some Thai women married to Germans fell into gender roles in which they expected their husbands to provide for their needs. […] Third, some women had a tendency to be spendthrifts, in that they failed to understand the prices and typical spending standards in Germany. […] The German government's policies were even less successful with Thai women in the entertainment sector and sex trade […] these women often had very limited interactions with, and thus few chances to adjust to, mainstream German society. They were illegal workers with no social value in German society (Chantavanich, et al., 2001, pp. 49-50).*

As a result of these research findings, different perspectives of Thai marriage migrants should be taken into consideration. New policies should be formulated to better serve the qualified young marriage migrants who have potential to benefit both sending and receiving countries. In Germany, the role of Thai women as reproductive labourers is obvious. Their potential as economic labourers, however, is underestimated. Statistics show that the number of Thai marriage migrants has continued to grow even during the period of immigration policy changes. A majority of them has strived to become part of Germany's labour market. How can Germany assist the growing numbers of qualified Thai marriage migrants to integrate into the labour market more easily? It is strongly recommended that the concept of intersectionality of Thai marriage migrants, including gender, race, citizenship, stigmatisation, has to be taken into account when formulating policies to assist this group of migrants. Is it possible to provide more incentives and assistance to Thai marriage migrants in some occupations where Germany faces a labour shortage? As compared to the older generation, an increasing number of new-generation Thais are pursuing Ausbildung as elderly caregivers (Altenpflegehelferin), child caregivers/educators (Kinderpflegerin, Erzieherin), assistants to doctors/dentists/nurses (Gesundheits und Krankenpflegerin, Zahnmedizinische Fachangestellte), hoping to achieve respectful employment in Germany. Nonetheless, a much larger portion of newcomers has given up such opportunities and chosen to work as masseuses.

Policy-makers of Thailand, on the other hand, have to clearly understand the historical accounts of Thai migration and Germany's immigration policies, which have greatly shaped

the composition and qualifications of migrants, as well as its diaspora. Thai migrants and its diaspora differ considerably from other ethnic minorities in Germany. One mistake regularly made, for instance, is to compare the economic success of Thai migrants to that of Vietnamese or Turkish migrants, whose migration history and diaspora are significantly different from those of Thais. Besides, the improved qualifications, new *habitus* and transnationalism of new-generation Thais should be understood to forge bonds with their homeland. It is inevitable that this group of Thais will soon replace the old-generation and become the majority of the Thai population in Germany in the next decades. How can Thailand help empower them at home and abroad? How can Thailand involve them in the development of their homeland? To answer such questions, recommendations are offered as follows:

First, a number of existing and new Thai marriage migrants of all educational levels will continue to depend on the Thai massage business to economically empower themselves in Germany. Thus, it is important for both Germany and Thailand to join hands to 'standardise' this profession, similarly to other vocational training (Ausbildung) in Germany. Vocational training in Thai massage should be made a minimum requirement for massage business owners and masseuses, both self-employed and employees, to guarantee high quality and standards everywhere. Currently, masseuses possess various certifications, ranging from the Ministry of Labour of Thailand and well-known temples and institutes in Thailand, to private tutors. But none of them is authorised and certified by German authorities. The curriculum should include not only massage skills, but also German language used specifically for this profession, such as business management, legal matters regarding taxes and employment contracts.

The regulation requiring Thai business owners and employees to have Ausbildung training certificates will not only reduce illegal conduct and exploitation, but also empower employees to have greater bargaining power. Offering incentives to experienced masseuses should be promoted. Training time should be shortened for skilled masseuses. The German Ausbildung certification will provide Thai masseuses full trust from clients and enable them to work and earn more professionally in Germany and elsewhere. Illegal exploitation of Thai masseuses from other European Union member countries in Germany will be reduced, because they are not legally allowed to work without permits or certificates. Thus, both Germany and Thailand should strive to support this initiative, which will result in a 'win-win-win' scenario for both countries and migrants.

Second, erotic massage and genuine Thai massage must be clearly separate and distinctive. Many Thai masseuses have voiced this concern to protect the high reputation of traditional Thai massage. Germany's new Prostitution Law, which entered into force on 1 July

2017 and calls for more control, more regulations and more penalties, might be the turning point for the erotic massage business. According to the new laws, sex workers are required to register with local authorities, and businesses that offer sex services will be required to apply for a permit that will only be granted if health, hygiene and room requirements are met (Deutsche Welle, 2017). Erotic massage parlours and masseuses are subject to this regulation. It is predicted that the fear of registration will force many erotic masseuses to quit and many erotic massage parlours to close down or convert to be genuine ones.

Finally, it is important to equip Thai migrants with information and skills specifically needed by the German labour market. While Germany is doing its part in offering vocational training in different fields of study to their nationals and migrants alike, not many Thai migrants are ready or willing to take these difficult paths. As Table 15 indicates, 14 percent of questionnaire respondents claim that lack of information is one of their burdens in finding or obtaining employment in Germany. Moreover, almost 22 percent of respondents wish to take Ausbildung, but they are unable to do so, because of high costs and their educational attainment. The Thai Government can play a role in this regard. Currently, Thai migrants are exchanging opinions and sharing their experiences about taking Ausbildung on a popular Facebook page called, 'Sharing the Experience of Learning Berufsausbildung in Deutschland', which has more than 6,000 members. Support from the homeland government and representations in providing information- such as about occupations where labour shortages exist, application processes and in offering language and skills training prior to their arrival in Germany- would enhance migrants' chances to succeed. In Thailand, the training course for elderly caregivers, for instance, could be offered in the German language with support from both Governments. Such training would not only help Germany in coping with demographic challenges, but Thai marriage migrants will arrive in Germany with higher prospects for skilled employment. The existing network of migrants should be supported, so that accurate information can be channelled to a large number of audiences.

To this end, I hope this thesis sheds some light on modern-day Thai marriage migration and Thai migrants in Germany. I hope better understanding will lead to better policies of both sending and receiving countries in empowering these men and women to achieve better employment opportunities and career development, as well as to improve their well-being in Germany. The recommendations on the Thai massage business in Germany need serious consideration and immediate action. I hope that data and analysis provided in this thesis will lay a solid foundation for diasporic-based policies towards Thai migrants in each country. Today, Germany is home to the second largest Thai migrant population. I believe that great

attention needs to be paid to this population and specific, instead of generalised, policies should be formulated.

ANNEX

Annex 1 Statistics of Thai population in Germany 1967-2015

Year	Population	Y-Y Change (%)
1967	915	n.a.
1968	900	-1.6
1969	1060	17.8
1970	1161	9.5
1971	1255	8.1
1972	1492	18.9
1973	1666	11.7
1974	1852	11.2
1975	2147	15.9
1976	2526	17.7
1977	3008	19.1
1978	3494	16.2
1979	3992	14.3
1980	4770	19.5
1981	5486	15.0
1982	6139	11.9
1983	6629	8.0
1984	7181	8.3
1985	7912	10.2
1986	8911	12.6
1987	10561	18.5
1988	10746	1.8
1989	13276	23.5
1990	15743	18.6
1991	17840	13.3
1992	20132	12.8
1993	22558	12.1
1994	24757	9.7
1995	26675	7.7

1996	28546	7.0
1997	30309	6.2
1998	32343	6.7
1999	34875	7.8
2000	37833	8.5
2001	41520	9.7
2002	45457	9.5
2003	48736	7.2
2004	48789	0.1
2005	51108	4.8
2006	52849	3.4
2007	53952	2.1
2008	54580	1.2
2009	55324	1.4
2010	56153	1.5
2011	57078	1.6
2012	58055	1.7
2013	58638	1.0
2014	58827	0.3
2015	58784	-0.1

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Annex 2 Statistics of Thai-German Marriages (1964-2015)

Year	Male	Female
1964	5	2
1965	11	n.a.
1966	n.a.	n.a.
1967	n.a.	n.a.
1968	12	3
1969	8	3
1970	20	4
1971	12	9
1972	27	7

1973	5	26
1974	20	40
1975	58	36
1976	89	20
1977	74	40
1978	58	86
1979	43	178
1980	31	248
1981	26	255
1982	25	299
1983	30	386
1984	30	359
1985	26	388
1986	22	572
1987	27	853
1988	39	1,161
1989	28	1,173
1990	37	982
1991	46	1,117
1992	50	1,286
1993	38	1,468
1994	31	1,410
1995	34	1,512
1996	43	1,566
1997	41	1,617
1998	34	1,803
1999	34	2,148
2000	37	2,372
2001	32	2,728
2002	26	2,775
2003	26	2,535
2004	21	2,263

2005	12	2,054
2006	13	1,702
2007	9	1,473
2008	10	1,064
2009	14	1,290
2010	10	1,198
2011	11	1,176
2012	9	1,112
2013	18	1,132
2014	11	1,027
2015	13	1,008

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Annex 3 Qualitative Questionnaires

1. Marriage Migration and Integration

Central Question	*Focusing Questions*	*Desired Information*
Describe yourself.	How old are you? Which province of Thailand do you come from? What is your highest educational attainment? What is your field of study? Do you have any siblings? What is your previous marital status? Do you have children from previous marriages? If so, how old are they? Have you received support from your ex-husband?	Demographics, marital status and parenthood
Describe your employment in Thailand (if any) and financial situation before migration.	What type of work? Were you satisfied with your job and why? Did you work in the field of your study? Did you have any financial difficulties (debt, parent or child support etc.)?	Career choices, work experience and achievements, financial situation
Describe your relationship with your German spouse before marriage.	How did you meet your German husband (online, match-making agencies, friends/relatives etc.)? Which year? How would you describe your husband (marital status, age, with or without children previous marriage, jobs/ financial status, personalities etc.)? How long did you know your partner before marriage? Did you come to Germany before marriage? Did your boyfriend visit you in Thailand before marriage? Do you have any concerns about marriage migration?	Reason for marriage migration, Concerns, Dating, Cross-border experiences

Describe your difficulties and preparation before migration.	Did you confront any difficulties before marriage (language barrier, your family's discontent, financial, etc.)? Which level of German-language proficiency did you achieve? Did you learn new skills for employment? How was your experience with the immigration process?	Migration barriers, Preparation for integration in new settlement
Describe your life and income in Germany.	How would you evaluate your life in Germany? Do you have a child? How old? What are your responsibilities at home? How income is allocated? What do you think about his family, his friends, his work?	Life as a marriage migrant and financial situation in Germany
Describe your feelings towards your German immediate family and your husband's acquaintances.	How's your experience with your German in-laws, as well as relatives, friends and colleagues of your husband? Have you experienced any discrimination from them? How frequently do you interact with them? Do you get any support from your husband and his family?	German immediate family and acquaintances
Describe your language learning, residence settlement, vocational training.	Have you attended language class? What level? Have you attended vocational training? What is your current residence settlement permit? Do you hold dual citizenship/ Are you a nationalised German?	Integration efforts
Describe your experience living in Germany and how you feel about the German people.	Before living in Germany, how did you imagine your life would be? How different is it in reality? What do you like and dislike about Germany? Is it better living in Germany than in Thailand? Do you feel discrimination as a minority? How do you confront it?	German society and discrimination

2. Transnationalism and Diaspora

Central Question	*Focusing Questions*	*Desired Information*
Describe your transnational lives.	How frequently do you visit Thailand? For what reason? What is your means of communication with your family and friends in Thailand (phone calls, WhatsApp, LINE, Facebook)? How often do you communicate with them? Have you supported your local community in Thailand? Are you a member of a hometown civic association? What language do you speak with your child?	Transnational lives, Role of technologies, Socio-Cultural transformations

Describe your perception of Thai communities in Germany.	What do you think about Thai communities in Germany? How often do you associate with them? Do you have any Thai friends in Germany? When you have a problem, who do you turn to (family/friends, NGOs, Embassy/Consulate etc.)?	Diaspora
Describe your perception of Thai women in Germany.	What do you think about Thai women in Germany? Do they exhibit undesirable practices and dispositions (such as gold-diggers, gambling, harsh manners)? Have you heard about the stigma of Thai women as sex-workers? What do you think about this stigma? Have you had any experience being stigmatised? How do you see the Thai women community in the future?	Stigma and Thai women
Describe your involvement in diasporic activities.	How often do you attend Thai Embassy/Consulate activities? How do you get information? What type of activities to you like/dislike? Do you have any suggestions? Are you a member of any Thai associations in Germany?	Political transformation/ identity Homeland politics and associations
Describe your involvement in religious activities.	What are your and your husband's religions? How often do you attend religious gatherings? Do you practice religiously at home? How does it help you in your everyday life? How do you find your religious communities in Germany?	Religious transformation

3. Employment and Habitus

Central Question	*Focusing Questions*	*Desired Information*
Describe your experience looking for a job in Germany.	What type of job are you looking for? What jobs have you had? What are the main obstacles? Have you ever tried to apply for a job in your field of study? Do you think there is discrimination? Why did you decide to take your present job?	Job searching experience
Describe your present job.	How did you find it? How long have you been working? What are your main responsibilities? How often do you work? Part-timer or Full-timer? How many hours per day? Who is your employer? How much do you earn? On what basis (hourly, monthly)? Do you have an employment contract? How do you file your income tax return? Do you pay for social security/insurance?	Employment condition

	Are you looking for a new job? If not, why?	
Employment habitus	What do you think about your peers? Do you enjoy working with them? Are there common dispositions/ manners among the workers? Are there any conflicts or problems in your workplace?	Employment habitus
Do you send remittances?	Have you sent remittances to Thailand? To whom? How often? Which channel? How are the remittances used?	Remittances
What is your plan after retirement?	How do you see yourself? Do you plan to go back and live in Thailand in the future?	Hopes

Annex 4 Quantitative Questionnaire

Section 1: Personal Information (6 questions)

1. Year of Marriage Registration

   □ 2005 □ 2006 □ 2007 □ 2008 □ 2009 □ 2010 □ 2011 □ 2012 □ 2013 □ 2014

   □ 2015 □ 2016 □ 2017

2. Age

   □ less than 20 □ 20-25 □ 26-30 □ 31-40 □ 41-50 □ 51-60 □ more than 60

3. Gender

   □ Male □ Female □ Transgender or third gender

4. Educational Attainment

   □ Less than elementary □ Elementary (G6) □ Middle School (G9) □ High School (G12)

   □ vVocational Certificate □ High Vocational Diploma □ Bachelor's Degree □ Master's Degree □ Ph.D.

5. Did you work before marrying and migrating to Germany?

   □ Yes (Please specify your last position) □ No

6. Do you have any children to take care of in Germany?

   □ Yes (Please specify number and age of your children) □ No

Section 2: Integration Indicators (5 questions)

1. Your German-language proficiency (Only with formal certification)

   □ A1 □ A2 □ B1 □ B2 □ C1 □ C2

2. Have you ever had your Thai educational/professional qualifications assessed for equivalence in Germany?

□ No □ Yes, and it is identical. □ Yes, but it is lower.

3. Do you think your degree/diploma/certificate from Thailand is useful in obtaining employment in Germany?

   □ Yes □ No (Please specify the reasons)

4. Have you pursued education in Germany?

   □ No

   □ Yes, Bachelor's degree

   □ Yes, Master's degree

   □ Yes, Ph.D.

   □ Yes, vocational training or Ausbildung (Please specify field of study)

5. What is your current residence entitlement or nationalisation?

   □ Temporary residence permit (befristete Aufenthaltserlaubnis)

   □ Permanent residence permit (Niederlassung/unbefristete Aufenthaltserlaubnis)

   □ Nationalised German

   □ Other (Please specify)

Section 3: Employment Search (5 questions)

1. What is your current employment? (You may select more than one answer.)

   □ Full-time housewife

   □ Employee of German company or agency

   □ House cleaning

   □ Masseuse (Employee)

   □ Employee in Thai restaurant (such as chef, waiter/waitress)

   □ Owner of massage business (with employees)

   □ Owner of massage business (self-employed, one-person business)

   □ Instructor, teacher

   □ Employee of Thai company or agency

   □ Others (Please specify)

2. What do you think are useful factors for obtaining employment in Germany? (You may select more than one answer.)

   □ German language

□ Educational qualifications from Thailand

□ Educational qualifications from Germany (such as university degrees, vocational training diplomas)

□ Vocational/professional training from Thailand (such as Thai cooking, Thai massage)

□ Network of acquaintances (who you know)

□ Work experience in Thailand

□ Work experience in Germany

□ Others (please specify)

3. What is your type of employment?

   □ Full-time □ Part-time □ Mini-job □ Self-employed

4. Are you obligated to send remittances to families in Thailand?

   □ Yes □ No

5. If you cannot find employment that matches your educational qualifications, would you be willing to work in a lower-than-your-educational-level type of employment?

   □ Yes □ No

Section 4: Employment Obstacles (4 questions)

1. What are the main obstacles in finding or obtaining employment in Germany? (You may select more than one answer.)

   □ I have young children (kindergarten or primary school level) to take care of.

   □ My educational qualifications from Thailand are not useful.

   □ My German-language proficiency is not good enough.

   □ I have a health problem.

   □ My husband does not allow me to work.

   □ I do not have information or anyone assisting me to find employment.

   □ I live in a remote area, and it takes a long time commuting to work.

   □ I wish to take Ausbildung, but I am unable to do so, because of high costs, educational attainment, etc.

   □ I was discriminated against on the basis of being a foreigner or a women while applying or during interview sessions.

   □ Others (Please specify)

2. Why is employment in Germany important to you? (You may select more than one answer.)

□ To earn income for myself and my family in Germany

□ To send remittances to Thailand

□ To meet and know new people, such as colleagues and clients

□ To alleviate boredom

□ To increase negotiating power within the family

□ To earn the permanent residence permit or nationalisation

□ To be able to bring my children from Thailand to Germany

□ Others (Please specify)

3. Do you feel satisfied with your current employment and why?

□ Yes, because of good income

□ Yes, because of good boss and colleagues

□ Yes, because I have time for my family.

□ Yes, because I have more chances to work with Germans.

□ No, because of low or unstable income

□ No, because of bad boss and colleagues

□ No, because my work is unstable.

□ No, because of hard work

□ Others (Please specify)

4. Are you planning to change your employment in the near future?

□ No □ Yes (Please specify your reason.)

Section 5: Opinion about Masseuse Work (4 questions)

1. Are you interested in working as a masseuse?

□ Yes, and I am now working as a masseuse.

□ Yes, but I have not had a chance to do so.

□ I used to work as a masseuse, but have already quit.

□ No

□ Others (Please specify)

5. What do you think are the 'good points' about masseuse? (You may select more than one answer.)

□ Good income

□ Working hours are more flexible than in other jobs.

□ Short training time

□ No need to have a high level of German proficiency

□ Be able to know more Thai people (such as boss, colleagues)

□ Workload is not as heavy as other jobs (such as cleaning).

□ It is the only job I can do now (I have tried to find other jobs, but to no avail.)

□ Others (Please specify)

6. What do you think are the 'bad points' about masseuse? (You may select more than one answer.)

□ Low income or unstable income

□ Poor business management

□ Possibility of being seen as sex-workers

□ Poor work environment, such as boss, colleagues

□ Possibility of being sexually harassed by clients

□ Others (Please specify)

2. If you have further opinions about masseuse, please write them below.

Annex 5 Statistics of Thai Migrants' Educational Attainment

Population 2015 with Thai migrant background by year of entry and ISCED level

in 1000's

Year of Entry	Total	ISCED Level			
		ISCED II or Less	ISCED III or Higher	Children under Age 15	Unknown
Total	61	38	13	7	/
1950-2004	40	27	9	/	/
2005-2015	20	11	/	/	/

Source: Micro census 2015, Federal Statistical Office of Germany, 2017

Note: The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is a statistical framework for organising information on education maintained by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Annex 6 Results of Qualitative Interviews (Date of Interview, Sex, Age, Year of Marriage, Previous Marital Status/parenthood, Previous Work in Thailand)

No.	Date of Interview	Sex	Age	YoM	Previous Marital Status/ Parenthood	Previous Work in Thailand
1	7 May 2017	F	37	2010	Single/ None	Hotel
2	7 May 2017	M	37	2011	Single/ None	Hotel
3	7 May 2017	F	57	2005	Divorced/ 2 Daughters	Lawyer, Owner of Construction Company
4	7 May 2017	F	37	2009	Single/ None	Hotel
5	9 May 2017	F	34	2010	Single/ None	Employee of Telecom, Information, Media Company
6	10 May 2017	F	39	2012	Divorced/ 1 Daughter	Employee of Airline Company
7	12 May 2017	F	44	2007	Single/ None	Employee of Newspaper, Publishing Company
8	13 May 2017	F	38	2013	Single/ None	Employee of Computer Company
9	15 May 2017	F	43	2014	Divorced/ 1 Daughter	Government Official, Ministry of Public Health
10	15 May 2017	F	32	2013	Single/ None	Employee of Private Company
11	16 May 2017	F	43	2011	Divorced/ 1 Son	Hotel
12	17 May 2017	F	37	2014	Single/ None	Accounting Official, Sub-district Administrative Organisation
13	17 May 2017	F	38	2007	Single/ None	Secretary, Intl. Consulting Firm
14	18 May 2017	F	38	2006	Single/ None	Employee, Sound Appliances Company
15	18 May 2017	F	57	2007	Divorced/ 1 Son	Official (Accountant), Ministry of Public Health
16	19 May 2017	F	32	2009	Single/ None	Hotel
17	19 May 2017	F	33	2012	Single/ None	Au-Pair in France, Germany
18	19 May 2017	F	33	2011	Single/ None	Teacher (briefly), Masseuse in Thailand, Russia
19	20 May 2017	F	44	2010	Single/ None	Beauty Salon
20	20 May 2017	F	45	2016	Single/ None	University Instructor in Psychology
21	9 August 2016	F	43	2014	Divorced/ 2 Children	Caregiver for Elderly
22	9 August 2016	F	39	2010	Divorced/ 2 Children	Business Owner
23	9 August 2016	F	39	2008	Divorced/1 Child	News Reporter, Business Owner
24	24 May 2017	F	30	2015	Single/ No	Employee, Dried Seafood Company
25	24 May 2017	F	35	2010	Single/ None	Researcher
26	24 May 2017	F	44	2012	Divorced/1 Child	Masseuse, Banyan Tree Resort and Spa
27	28 May 2017	F	38	2007	Single/ None	Employee, Nestle Thailand
28	30 May 2017	M	39	2012	Single/ None	Employee, Accenture Consulting
29	31 May 2017	F	40	2006	Single/ None	Beauty Salon
30	31 May 2017	F	44	2014	Single/ None	BMW Thailand
31	1 June 2017	F	38	2007	Single/None	Hotel
32	2 June 2017	F	49	2012	Divorced/ 1 Child	Massage (Owner, Instructor)
33	3 June 2017	F	33	2008	Single/ None	Travel Agency
34	5 June 2017	F	54	2009	Divorced/ 2 Children	Massage
35	5 June 2017	F	49	2010	Divorced/ 1 Child	Massage
36	25 June 2017	F	23	2015	Divorced/ 1 Child	Nurse Assistant, Hospital
37	7 July 2017	M	42	2006	Single/ None	Travel Agency (Employee), Co-own Small Business
38	15 July 2017	F	38	2011	Divorced/ 2 Children	Massage

Annex 7 Results of Qualitative Interviews (German-language Proficiency, Being Remittance Sender, Current employment, Parenthood in Germany, Educational Attainment)

No.	German	Remittances	Current Employment/ Status	Parenthood (Age)	Educational Attainment
1	B1	Yes	Massage (Employee), Mini-job	2 Sons (6, 3)	B.A. (Hotel)
2	B1	No	Massage (Owner)	None	B.A. (Tourism)
3	B1	Yes	Massage (Owner)	None	B.A. (Law)
4	B1	Yes (Occasionally)	Family-run Gas Station (Full-time), Massage (Self-employed)	None	B.A. (Business Administration)
5	B1	No	Penny Supermarket, Mini-job	None	M.A. (Sociology)
6	B1	No	Interpreter, sSlf-employed	One Daughter (Grade 8)	M.A. (Communications)
7	B1	No	Assistant, Tax office	1 Daughter (5)	M.A. (Linguistics -Intl. Programme), AUSBILDUNG
8	B1	No	Housewife	2 Daughters (2, 5)	M.A. (Marketing)
9	B1	No	Online Teacher (German and English language), Self-employed	1 Daughter (16)	M.A. (Healthcare Administration), Ph.D. Drop-out
10	B1	Yes	Employee in Husband's Own Business, Part-time/ as of August 2017 Works Full-time for a German Company	None	B.A. (Hotel)
11	A1	Yes	Massage, sSlf-employed	1 Son (5)	Middle School (G9)
12	B1	No	Employee of a Small Online Shop, Part-time	None	M.A. (Business Administration)
13	C1	No	Teacher (Thai Language), Self-employed	1 Daughter (6)	B.A. (Communications)
14	B1	No	Exports German Snacks to Thailand, Self-employed	1 Daughter (8)	B.A. (Marketing)
15	A2	Yes	Local Staff, Thai Embassy, Full-time	None	3 B.A. (Education, Accounting, Public Administration)
16	B1	No	Dentist's Assistant, Full-time	None	B.A. (Humanity, Majoring in English), AUSBILDUNG
17	B1	Yes	Massage, Self-employed	None	B.A. Drop-out
18	B1	Yes	Employee in Husband's Own Business (Part-time), Massage (Mini-job)	None	B.A. (Education)
19	A1	Yes	Hotel Maid (Cleaning), Mini-job	None	Middle School (G9)
20	A1	No	Housewife, Language Student	None	2 M.A. (Education, Psychology), Ph.D. Drop-out
21	A1	Yes	Massage (Employee)	None	High School (G12)
22	B1	Yes	Massage (Employee) Tropical Islands, Full-time	2 sons (15, 12)	B.A. (Marketing)
23	B2	n.a.	Massage (employee)	None	B.A. (Communications)
24	B1	No	Employee, Arvato Direct Service Potsdam (Start 29 May 2017), Full-time	None	B.A. (Marketing)

25	B2	No	Housewife	Pregnant and One Son (4)	M.A. (Science)
26	B1	Yes (Occasionally)	Massage, Self-employed	None	High Vocational Certificate
27	B1	No	Housewife	2 Children (Daughter 7, Son 5)	B.A. (Economics)
28	C1	No	Local Staff, Thai Embassy, Berlin, Full-time	None	M.A. (Computer Science) Germany
29	B1	Yes	Massage, Self-employed	1 Son (6)	High School (G12)
30	B2	Yes (Occasionally)	Thai Consulate (Commercial Section), Frankfurt, Full-time	None	M.A. (Communicative English)
31	B1	Yes	Ausbildung Practitioner	1 Son (8)	B.A. (Mass Communications), AUSBILDUNG
32	B1	Yes (But stopped)	Massage (Owner, Instructor), Self-employed	None	B.A. (Marketing)
33	C1	No	Local Staff, Thai Embassy, Berlin, Full-time	1 Daughter (9)	B.A. (Humanities-German Language)
34	A1	Yes	Massage (Employee), Mini-job	None	Grade 4
35	B1	Yes	Massage, Self-employed	1 Daughter (15)	Grade 4
36	A1	Yes	Cleaning, Mini-job	None	High School (G12)
37	B1	Yes	Waiter, Mini-job	None	High Vocational Certificate
38	B1	Yes	Cleaning, Mini-job	1 Daughter (15)	High School (G12)

Annex 8 Results of Qualitative Interviews (German-language Proficiency, Being Remittance Sender, Current Employment, Parenthood in Germany, Educational Attainment)

No.	Channel for Meeting Spouse	Dating (Years)	Cross-border Visits	Purpose of Migration	Spouse Age Difference (Years)
1	Introduced by German Ex-boyfriend	1	Yes	Being Pregnant, Economic (Parent)	Plus 14
2	Work-related (Hotel Guest)	1	Yes	Economic (Debts)	Plus 10
3	Introduced by Relative in Germany	1	Yes	Economic (Debts, Children)	Plus 9
4	Work-related (Hotel Guest)	2	Yes	Love	Minus 4
5	Work-related	1 to 2	Yes	Love	Plus 4
6	Introduced by Friend	4	Yes	Love	Minus 1
7	By Chance (Tourist)	2	Yes	Adventure	Plus 11
8	Work-related	2	Yes	Love	Minus 4
9	Matchmaking Website (ThaiLoveLink)	4	Yes	Love	Plus 14
10	By Chance	1	Yes	Adventure	Plus 12
11	Work-related (Hotel Guest)	2	Yes	Economic (Child)	Plus 6
12	Introduced by Friend in Germany	3	Yes	Love	n.a.
13	Work-related	1	Yes	Adventure	Plus 1
14	Work-related	2	Yes	Love	Plus 7
15	Introduced by Friend in Germany	1	Yes	Economic (Child), Love	Plus 3
16	Work-related (Hotel Guest)	3	Yes	Love	Plus 13
17	Matchmaking Website	3	Yes	Economic (Parent)	Plus 8
18	Matchmaking Website (ThaiLoveLink)	7 Months	Yes	Economic (Parent)	Plus 29
19	By Chance	6	Yes	Adventure	Plus 14
20	Work-related	3	Yes	Love	Plus 20

21	Matchmaking Website (ThaiLoveLink)	Approx. 6 Months	Yes	Economic (Parents, Children), Adventure	Plus 30
22	Introduced by Mother in Germany	n.a.	Yes	Economic (Debts, Children)	n.a.
23	By Chance	4	Yes	Love	n.a.
24	Matchmaking Website (ThaiLoveLink)	2 to 3	Yes	Love	Plus 2
25	Study/Work-related	1	Yes	Love	Plus 3
26	Work-related	1	Yes	Love, Economic	Plus 3
27	Introduced by Friend	1	Yes	Love	Plus 18
28	Study-related	3	Yes	Love	Minus 9
29	By Chance (Tourist)	3-4 Months	Yes	Love	Same Age
30	By Chance / Introduced by Friend	3	Yes	Love	Plus 3
31	Work-related (Hotel Guest)	2 to 3	Yes	Love	Plus 12
32	Introduced by Friend	2	Yes	Economic	Plus 13
33	Work-related (Tourist)	6-7 Months	Yes	Love	Plus 10
34	By Chance (Tourist)	1	Yes	Economic	Plus 10
35	Internet (Assisted by Friend)	3	No	Economic	Plus 8
36	Internet	2.5	Yes	Economic	Plus 30
37	Work-related (Hotel Guest)	3	Yes	Economic	Plus 15
38	Work-related	1	Yes	Economic, Love	Minus 2

Annex 9 Results of Qualitative Interviews (Residence Entitlement, Ausbildung Experience, Stigma Perception, Religion, Religious Attendance, Embassy/Consulate Activities Attendance)

No.	Residence Entitlement	Ausbildung	Stigma Perception	Religion	Religious Attendance	Embassy/Consulate Activities Attendance
1	Permanent	None	Yes	Buddhist	Rarely (Long Distance from Home)	Only Massage Training
2	Nationalised	None	Yes	Muslim	No	Only Massage Training
3	Temporary (Unemployed Husband)	None	Yes	Buddhist	Rarely (Only large Ceremonies)	Only Massage Training
4	Nationalised	None	Yes	Buddhist	Rarely (Once a Year)	No
5	Nationalised	None	Yes	Buddhist	No	No
6	Nationalised	None	Yes	Buddhist	Yes (Supporter)	n.a.
7	Nationalised	Assistant for Tax Office	Yes	Buddhist	Rarely	Occasional
8	n.a.	None	Yes	Buddhist	Rarely (Long Distance from Home)	No
9	Temporary (< 3 Years of Cohabitation)	None	Yes	Buddhist	No	No
10	Permanent	None	Yes	Buddhist	No	No
11	Temporary (No B1)	None	n.a.	Buddhist	No	No
12	Temporary (<3 Years of Cohabitation)	None	Yes	Buddhist	No	No
13	n.a.	None	Yes	Buddhist	No	Occasional
14	Nationalised	None	Yes	Buddhist	No	No
15	Permanent	None	Yes	Buddhist	Yes (Once a Week)	Yes
16	Permanent	Dentist's Assistant	Yes	Buddhist	Rarely	No
17	Nationalised	None	Yes	Buddhist	No	No
18	Permanent	None	Yes	Buddhist	No	No
19	Temporary (< 3 Years of Cohabitation and Husband Passed Away)	None	Yes	Buddhist	Yes	No
20	Temporary (<3 Years of Cohabitation)	None	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
21	Temporary (Divorced German Husband)	None	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
22	Permanent (Divorced German Husband)	None	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
23	Permanent	None	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
24	Temporary (< 3 Years of Cohabitation)	None	n.a.	Buddhist	Yes	Yes
25	Nationalised	None	n.a.	Buddhist	No	No
26	Temporary (< 3 Years of Cohabitation)	None	Yes	Buddhist	Yes	Yes
27	Permanent	None	Yes	Buddhist	No	No
28	Nationalised	None	Yes	Buddhist	Rarely (3-4 Times a Year)	Yes
29	Nationalised	None	Yes	Buddhist	Occasional	n.a.

30	Temporary (< 3 Years of Cohabitation)	None	Yes	Buddhist	Occasional	Yes
31	Permanent	Yes (Physiotherapy) On-going	Yes	Buddhist	Occasional	n.a.
32	Nationalised	None	Yes	Buddhist	No	No
33	Permanent	None	Yes	Buddhist	No	No
34	Temporary (Language)	None	Yes	Buddhist	Yes	n.a.
35	Permanent	None	n.a.	Buddhist	Yes	No
36	Temporary (< 3 Years of Cohabitation)	None	Yes	Buddhist	Rarely (Unable to Commute Alone)	Occasional
37	Nationalised	None	Yes	Buddhist	Yes	Occasional
38	Permanent	None	Yes	Buddhist	Yes	No

Annex 10 Results of Qualitative Interviews (Frequency of Thailand Visits, Means of Communication to Thailand, Hopes and Plans after Retirement)

No.	Frequency of Thailand Visits	Means of Communication	Hopes	Plans after Retirement
1	1/Year	Phone	Owner of Massage Business	Return to Thailand
2	1/Year	Line (Weekly)	n.a.	n.a.
3	1/Year	Line, FB	Ausbildung (Therapist), Massage Training for Nursing Homes	Live in Germany
4	1/Year	n.a.	Owner of Massage Business	Return to Thailand
5	1/Year	Line	Position that Matchs Qualifications	n.a.
6	2/Year	Line	n.a.	Live in Germany
7	1/Year	Line	Full-time Employment	Return to Thailand
8	1/Year	Line/Skype	Undecided	Live in Both Countries
9	n.a.	Line/Phone	n.a.	Live in Both Countries
10	1/Year	Line/FB	Work in German Companies	n.a.
11	Not Regularly	Phone	Owner of Massage Business	Return to Thailand
12	1-2/Year	FB	Better Position	Live in Austria
13	1/Year	Line/FB	n.a.	Return to Thailand
14	1/Year	Line	n.a.	Live in Germany
15	1/Year	Line	n.a.	Return to Thailand
16	1/Year	Phone	Additional Ausbildung	Undecided
17	1/Year	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
18	1/Year	Line	n.a.	Live in Both Countries
19	Not Regularly	FB	n.a.	n.a.
20	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
21	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
22	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
23	n.a.	n.a.	Work at Nursing Home	n.a.
24	n.a.	Line	n.a.	n.a.
25	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
26	2/Year	Phone/Line	Owner of Massage Business	n.a.
27	1/Year	Line	Go into Business	n.a.
28	Rarely	Line	Build a House for Parents	n.a.
29	1/Year	Line	Owner of Massage Business	Live in Germany
30	1/Year	Phone/Line	Have a Child	n.a.
31	1/Year	Line	Work as Therapist	n.a.
32	n.a.	n.a.	Have a Business in Thailand	Undecided
33	n.a.	Line	n.a.	n.a.

34	1/Year	Phone/Line	Build a House for Child	Return to Thailand
35	Every Two Years	Phone/Line	Have a Business in Thailand	n.a.
36	n.a.	Line	Bring Child to Germany	n.a.
37	1/Year	Line/FB	Build a House/ Have a Business in Thailand	Live in Both Countries
38	n.a.	Line/FB	n.a.	n.a.

Annex 11 Results of Quantitative Questionnaires

1. Personal Information

Year of Marriage Registration	Number of Respondents	Percentage
2005	6	6.82%
2006	4	4.55%
2007	9	10.23%
2008	4	4.55%
2009	5	5.68%
2010	4	4.55%
2011	7	7.95%
2012	12	13.64%
2013	7	7.95%
2014	7	7.95%
2015	10	11.36%
2016	8	9.09%
2017	5	5.68%
Responses	88	

Age (year)	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 20	0	0.00%
20-25	8	6.40%
26-30	18	14.40%
31-40	60	**48.00%**
41-50	35	28.00%
51-60	4	3.20%
More than 60	0	0.00%
Responses	125	

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	0	0.00%
Female	114	99.13%
Third Gender or Transgender	1	0.87%
Responses	115	

Educational Attainment	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than Elementary	1	0.80%
Elementary (G6)	7	5.60%
Middle School (G9)	17	13.60%
High school (G12)	22	17.60%
Vocational Certificate	5	4.00%
High Vocational Diploma	13	10.40%

Bachelor's Degree	53	**42.40%**
Master's Degree	5	4.00%
Ph.D.	2	1.60%
Responses	125	

Did You Work Before Marrying and Migrating to Germany?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
No	23	19.17%
Yes	97	80.83%
Responses	120	

Have You Children to Care for in Germany?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
No	58	49.15%
Yes	60	50.85%
Responses	118	

2. <u>Integration Indicators</u>

German-language Proficiency	Number of Respondents	Percentage
A1	25	20.66%
A2	21	17.36%
B1	59	**48.76%**
B2	11	9.09%
C1	5	4.13%
C2	0	0.00%
Responses	121	

Have You Ever Had Your Educational/professional Q ualifications from Thailand Assessed for Equivalence in Germany?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
No	103	82.40%
Yes, and It Is Identical	13	10.40%
Yes, But It is Lowered	9	7.20%
Responses	125	

Do You Think Your Degree/diploma/certificate from Thailand is Useful for Obtaining Employment in Germany?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	67	53.60%
No	58	46.40%
Responses	125	

Have You Pursued Education in Germany?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
No	103	**86.55%**
Bachelor's Degree	0	0.00%
Master's Degree	1	0.84%
Ph.D.	1	0.84%
Ausbildung Vocational Training	14	11.76%
Responses	119	

What is Your Current Residence Entitlement or Nationalisation?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Temporary (Befristete Aufenthaltserlaubnis)	39	32.50%
Permanent (Niederlassung/unbefristete Aufenthaltserlaubnis)	58	48.33%
Nationalised German	17	14.17%
Others	6	5.00%
Responses	120	

3. <u>Employment Search</u>

Current Employment	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Housewife (Full-time)	43	**34.68%**
Employee of German Companies/Agencies	33	26.61%
House Cleaning	14	11.29%
Masseuse (Employee)	5	4.03%
Employee in Thai Restaurant (such as Chef, Waiter/waitress)	4	3.23%
Owner of Massage Business (with Employees)	4	3.23%
Owner of Massage Business (Self-employed, One-person Business)	6	4.84%
Teacher, Instructor	2	1.61%
Employee of Thai Companies or Agencies	2	1.61%
Others	38	30.65%
Responses	124	

What Do You Think Are Useful Factors for Obtaining Employment in Germany?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
German Language	98	**89.09%**
Educational Qualifications from Thailand	18	16.36%
Educational Qualifications from Germany (such as University Degrees, Vocational Training Diploma)	47	42.73%
Vocational/professional Training from Thailand (such as Thai Cooking, Thai Massage)	38	34.55%
Network of Acquaintances (Who you Know)	38	34.55%
Work Experience in Thailand	36	32.73%
Work Experience in Germany	37	33.64%
Others	14	12.73%
Responses	110	

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Type of Employment		
Full-time (Vollzeit)	34	**35.05%**
Part-time (Teilzeit)	23	23.71%
Mini job	30	30.93%
Self-employed (Selbständig)	21	21.65%
Responses	97	

Are You Obligated to Send Remittances to Families in Thailand?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	67	64.42%
No	37	35.58%
Responses	104	

If You Cannot Find Employment Matching Your Educational Qualifications, Would You be Willing to Work in a Lower-than-your-educational-level Type of Employment?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	101	97.12%
No	3	2.88%
Responses	104	

What Are the Main Obstacles to Finding or Obtaining Employment in Germany?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
I have young hildren. (Kindergarten or Primary School level) to care for.	41	33.88%
My educational qualifications from Thailand are not useful.	39	32.23%
My Germanlanguage ability is not good enough.	93	**76.86%**
I have a health problem.	13	10.74%
My husband does not allow me to work.	12	9.92%
I do not have information or anyone assisting me to find employment.	17	14.05%
I live in a remote area, and it takes a long time commuting to work.	23	19.01%
I wish to take Ausbildung, but I am unable to do so because of high costs, educational attainment, etc.	26	21.49%
I was discriminated against on the basis of being a foreigner or a woman during applications or interview sessions.	3	2.48%
Others	10	8.26%
Responses	121	

Why is Employment in Germany I important to You?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
To earn income for myself and my family in Germany	102	**90.27%**
To send remittances to Thailand	72	63.72%
To meet and know new people, such as colleagues and clients	70	61.95%
To alleviate boredom	73	64.60%
To increase negotiating power within the family	30	26.55%
To earn the permanent residence permit or nationalisation	38	33.63%
To be able to bring my children from Thailand to Germany	10	8.85%
Others	12	10.62%
Responses	113	

Do You Feel Satisfied with Your Current Employment and Why?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes, because of good income	31	32.63%
Yes, because of good boss and colleagues	43	**45.26%**
Yes, because I have time for my family.	30	31.58%
Yes, because I have more chances to work with German people.	36	37.89%
No, because of low or unstable income	5	5.26%
No, because of bad boss and colleagues	0	0.00%
No, because my work is unstable.	6	6.32%
No, because of hard work	2	2.11%
Others	24	25.26%
Responses	95	

Are You Planning to Change Your Employment in the Near Future?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
No	41	44.57%
Yes	51	55.43%
Responses	92	

5. Opinion about Masseuse Work

Are You Interested in Working as a Masseuse?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes, and I am now working as a masseuse.	21	17.50%
Yes, but I have not had a chance to do so.	34	28.33%
I used to work as a masseuse, but have already quit.	13	10.83%
No	42	**35.00%**
Others	10	8.33%
Responses	120	

What Do You Think Are the 'Good Points' about Masseuse?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Good income	62	**55.86%**
The working hours are more flexible than other jobs.	46	41.44%
Short training time	37	33.33%
No need to have high level of German proficiency	61	54.95%
Be able to know more Thai people (such as boss, colleagues)	21	18.92%
The workload is not as heavy as others (such as cleaning).	18	16.22%
It is the only job I can do now (I have tried to find other jobs, but to no avail).	20	18.02%
Others	19	17.12%
Responses	111	

What Do ou Think are the 'Bad Points' about Masseuse?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Low income or unstable income	29	29.00%
Bad business management	18	18.00%
Possibility of being seen as sex-worker	72	**72.00%**
Bad work environment, such as boss, colleagues	13	13.00%
Possibility of being sexually harassed by clients	37	37.00%
Others	18	18.00%
Responses	100	

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