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INTERNATIONAL RETIREMENT MIGRATION OF WESTERNERS TO THAILAND:  
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, WELLBEING, ASSIMILATION,  
AND IMPACTS ON DESTINATION

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Thesis Title INTERNATIONAL RETIREMENT MIGRATION OF WESTERNERS TO THAILAND: DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, WELLBEING, ASSIMILATION, AND IMPACTS ON DESTINATION

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กนกวรรณ ตั้งจิตนุสรณ์ : การย้ายถิ่นระหว่างประเทศของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกมาสู่ประเทศไทย: กระบวนการตัดสินใจ ความอยู่ดีมีสุข การผสมกลมกลืน และผลกระทบต่อพื้นที่ปลายทาง (INTERNATIONAL RETIREMENT MIGRATION OF WESTERNERS TO THAILAND: DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, WELLBEING, ASSIMILATION, AND IMPACTS ON DESTINATION) อ.ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์หลัก: ศ. ดร.พัชรวาลย์ วงศ์บุญสิน, 255 หน้า.

วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ศึกษากระบวนการตัดสินใจย้ายถิ่นระหว่างประเทศของผู้เกษียณอายุ (IRM) ความอยู่ดีมีสุขเชิงอัตวิสัย และการผสมกลมกลืนทางวัฒนธรรมของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกในประเทศไทย โดยใช้ข้อมูลปฐมภูมิแบบผสมผสานของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตก (พ.ศ. 2558-2559) ซึ่งประกอบด้วยแบบสอบถาม จำนวน 330 ชุด และการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึก จำนวน 21 คน นอกจากนี้ผู้วิจัยได้ศึกษาผลกระทบของ IRM และการวางแผนเพื่อรับมือกับปรากฏการณ์ดังกล่าวจากการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียฝ่ายไทย

ผลการวิจัยทั้งเชิงปริมาณและเชิงคุณภาพบ่งชี้ว่าค่าครองชีพ สภาพภูมิอากาศ และคนไทยคือปัจจัยดึงดูดหลักของไทย ผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกส่วนใหญ่ย้ายถิ่นเข้ามาหลังจากที่เกษียณอายุแล้ว และส่วนใหญ่เป็นผู้ชาย ชายเกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกที่เคยหย่าร้างหรือโสดจำนวนมากได้แต่งงานหรือคบหากับคนไทยภายหลังการย้ายถิ่นมาสู่ประเทศไทย แม้โดยทั่วไปแล้วผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกในไทยจะมีความพึงพอใจในความอยู่ดีมีสุข และ/หรือ มีความรู้สึกว่าได้รับการยอมรับจากสังคมไทยเป็นอย่างดี การที่พวกเขาจะอยู่อาศัยแบบถาวรในไทยยังคงเป็นไปได้ยาก ในอนาคตหากผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกไม่สามารถอาศัยอยู่ได้ด้วยตนเองเนื่องจากภาวะสุขภาพที่ย่ำแย่ สถานภาพทางการเงินที่ไม่ดี และ/หรือ การเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างกะทันหันของความสัมพันธ์ส่วนบุคคลหรือสถานภาพสมรส เช่น การหย่าร้าง หรือ ความเป็นหม้าย ผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกส่วนใหญ่เลือกที่จะย้ายถิ่นกลับไปอาศัยอยู่ในประเทศบ้านเกิด นอกจากนี้ พบว่านโยบายทางวีซ่าของไทยที่ไม่เอื้ออำนวย นโยบายการถือครองที่ดินที่จำกัด ความไม่แน่นอนทางการเมือง คุณภาพสิ่งแวดล้อมและโครงสร้างพื้นฐานที่ไม่ได้มาตรฐาน เป็นปัจจัยที่ไม่น่าพึงพอใจในประเทศไทยที่ส่งผลต่อการตัดสินใจย้ายถิ่นออกจากไทยในอนาคต ทั้งนี้ โดยภาพรวม ผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียฝ่ายไทยมองว่า IRM นั้นส่งผลกระทบต่อพื้นที่ปลายทาง ผลการวิจัยชี้ให้เห็นว่านโยบายของไทยที่เกี่ยวข้องกับ IRM ควรที่จะต้องอำนวยความสะดวกให้กับผู้ย้ายถิ่นให้มากกว่าในปัจจุบัน และไทยควรที่จะปรับปรุงคุณภาพสิ่งแวดล้อมและโครงสร้างพื้นฐาน

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ลายมือชื่อนิสิต .....

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KANOKWAN TANGCHITNUSORN: INTERNATIONAL RETIREMENT MIGRATION OF WESTERNERS TO THAILAND: DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, WELLBEING, ASSIMILATION, AND IMPACTS ON DESTINATION. ADVISOR: PROF. PATCHARAWALAI WONGBOONSIN, Ph.D., 255 pp.

This dissertation examined the international retirement migration (IRM) decision-making process, subjective wellbeing, and cultural assimilation of Western retirees in Thailand by relying upon 2015-2016 mixed-methods primary data of 330 self-administered questionnaires (SAQ) and 21 in-depth interviews (IDI). Besides, from the IDI of Thai stakeholders, the researcher examined the IRM impacts and planning for the phenomenon.

Both quantitative and qualitative results indicated that cost of living, climate, and people were the major pull factors of Thailand. The bulk of Western retirees migrated to Thailand after their retirement and the great majority of them were males. Most of the formerly divorced and single Western male retirees later married/partnered to local citizens after migration to Thailand. Though Western retirees were generally satisfied with their wellbeing in Thailand and/or felt well accepted by Thai society, permanent settlement in Thailand tended to be unlikely. In the future, if being incapable of living independently due to severe health conditions, negative financial circumstance, and/or an abrupt change of relationships/ marital status (e.g. divorce or widowhood), many would return to their home countries. Besides, Thailand's unwelcoming visa policy, restricted land ownership policy, political instability, and poor environmental quality and local infrastructure were being seen as undesirable factors that could lead to their departure. In general, Thai stakeholders perceived the IRM to have positive impacts on local community. These findings altogether suggested that the IRM policies in Thailand should be more facilitating and the local environment and infrastructure should be improved.

Field of Study: Demography

Student's Signature .....

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IDI	In-depth interview
IRM	International retirement migration
SAQ	Self-administered questionnaire





## Chapter 1

### Introduction

**Chapter 1** presents background and significance of the problem, research question, expected benefits, scope of study, key terms definitions, and the overview of the dissertation.

#### 1.1 Background and significance of the problem

While the international migration of people in the workforce (age 15-64 years) has long drawn a lot of interest from the governments, academicians and general public, the study of the migration of retired populations has just emerged in 1970s, initially with the emphasis on domestic mobility, i.e. from urban to suburban areas, from urban to amenity areas, and the return migration from specific areas back to hometown (Wiseman and Roseman 1979). The study of international movements of older persons or the so-called international retirement migration (IRM) has later become highly recognized since 1990s (Innes 2008).

An increase of life expectancy has made the remaining years after retirement become longer, particularly for people in advanced economies. Also, the “Golden Age of Welfare” in Europe since 1950s has allowed the retirees of the First World to visit recreational places abroad (Williams and Hall 2000). Apparently, international tourism could be seen as a “recruiting post” for IRM (Rodriguez 2001). Therefore, the study of

IRM requires an integration of several fields of knowledge, including migration studies, tourism studies, and social gerontology (Truly 2002).

Besides, in terms of academic discipline, IRM can also be perceived as a subset of lifestyle migration studies, which involves a temporary or permanent relocation of individuals (regardless of age) in searching for a 'better way of life' at new destinations (Benson and O'Reilly 2009).

With regard to the direction of migration flow, IRM is generally considered a North-South movement of the relatively affluent retirees from developed countries in the North migrating to a less developed countries and/or developing countries in the South; however, the mainstream routes for IRM have particularly occurred within Europe and North America (Tangchitnusorn and Wongboonsin 2014).

Despite West-East cultural difference, the number of Western retirees migrating to a developing country in Southeast Asia like Thailand has been noticeably increasing in recent decades. Previous studies revealed that Western retirees, particularly Western male retirees, were motivated to come spend their later life in Thailand due to several reasons, such as warm climate, low cost of living, good quality but affordable healthcare, the satisfaction of Thai culture, lifestyle, and people, as well as, the opportunity to establish late life intimate relationships with younger local women (Howard 2008, 2009, Koch-Schulte 2008, Esara 2009, Sunanta 2014, Sunanta 2009, Sunanta and Angeles 2012, Husa et al. 2014).

Recently, the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand has caught attentions from many scholars, local government, media, and general public. However, the available studies still remain relatively sparse.

A multidimensional study of the IRM is needed. Better understanding of the phenomenon will eventually help create mutual benefits between the retired migrants and the host country in long term.

In this dissertation, the author employed mixed methods, i.e. self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) survey and in-depth interviews (IDI), to examine the migration to Thailand decision-making process, wellbeing and assimilation in Thailand, and future migration plans in the next 5-10 years of Western retirees. Furthermore, the author examined the IRM impacts and planning for the phenomenon from the perspective of Thai stakeholders, including local citizens, the representatives from Thai public sector, and the representatives from Thai private sector.

## **1.2 Research question**

The research question is “what are the IRM decision-making process, well-being, assimilation, and impacts of the Western retirees in Thailand?”

### **1.2.1 Main research objective**

This dissertation aimed to examine the migration to Thailand decision-making process, the well-being and assimilation of Western retirees in Thailand, future migration plans of Western retirees, and the IRM impacts and planning for the phenomenon from the perspective of Thai stakeholders.

### 1.2.2 Specific research objectives

There were five specific research objectives: (1) to examine the migration to Thailand decision-making process of Western retirees; (2) to examine the subjective well-being of Western retirees after migration to Thailand; (3) to examine the cultural assimilation of Western retirees after migration to Thailand; (4) to explore future migration plans in the next 5-10 years of Western retirees; and (5) to examine the IRM impacts and planning from the perspective of Thai stakeholders.

### 1.3 Expected benefits

The expected benefits of this research include: (1) an extended and deepened knowledge of international retirement migration (IRM) in the realm of international migration literature; (2) a better understanding of the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand; and (3) the insights and recommendations for future IRM-related policies.

### 1.4 Scope of study

This paper mainly focuses on the study of the international retirement migration (IRM) of Western retirees in Thailand by examining pre-migration decision-making process, post-migration subjective wellbeing and cultural assimilation, post-migration decision-making process (i.e. future migration decisions), and the impacts of the IRM and planning for the phenomenon from the perspective of Thai stakeholders.

Western retirees in this study included the retirees (aged 50 or older) from developed Western countries (United Nations 2013b, International Monetary Fund 2013) who had been resided in Thailand for at least one year (See also topic **3.4.1**).

In addition, Thai stakeholders consisted of general Thai individuals, the representatives from Thai private sector, and the representatives from Thai public sector. The Thai stakeholders participated in this study included both male and female Thai individuals who aged 20 or older.

### 1.5 Key terms definitions

**“Migration”** means “a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence” (Lee 1966).

**“International retirement migration”** or **“IRM”** means a movement across borders of older/retired persons to temporarily or permanently settle in any countries other than their country of origin.

Though there are other available terms being used to describe the cross-border movements of older persons, e.g. elderly migration, later-life migration, lifestyle migration, seasonal migration, amenity migration, leisure-led migration, second-home tourism, and residential mobility, the term “international retirement migration” is more directly and widely used to describe the mobility of older/retired persons as it can imply both state-to-state movements and the characteristics of migrants (i.e. age and employment status). Hence, the term “international retirement migration” or “IRM” will be consistently used in this paper.

**“Place of usual residence”** means the area or country that a person normally lives in. However, according to the United Nations, “temporary travel abroad for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical

treatment or religious pilgrimage does not change a person's country of usual residence” (United Nations 2013a).

“**Westerner**” means a native or an inhabitant of the countries in North America (Canada and the United States), Europe, and Oceania (Australia and New Zealand). However, please note that the term “Westerner” in this paper only means the citizens of 24 developed countries in North America, Northern Europe, Western Europe, Southern Europe, and Oceania (See also topic **3.4.1**).

“**Western retiree**” means a Westerner (See “Westerner”) who already retired or was currently in his/her retirement transition. Though, the common retirement age of the citizens in developed countries is 65, the minimum age for an individual to apply for a retirement visa in Thailand is 50.

“**Subjective well-being**” means “good mental states, including all of the various evaluations, positive and negative, that people make of their lives and the affective reactions of people to their experiences” (OECD 2013b).

“**Life satisfaction**” means the cognitive judgments of an individual about his/her perceptions on “life as a whole rather than their current feelings” (OECD).

“**Cultural assimilation**” means “the extent to which immigrants, or groups of immigrants, adopt customs and practices indistinguishable in aggregate from those of native-born” (Vigdor 2013).

## 1.6 Overview of the dissertation

**Chapter 1** reveals the research design of this study by presenting background and significance of the problem, research question, main research objective, specific research objectives, expected benefits, scope of study, and key terms definitions,

**Chapter 2** presents the reviews of relevant theories and concepts regarding migration, subjective wellbeing, and cultural assimilation. Also, this chapter provides a brief summary of Thailand country profile, statistics of Western retirees in Thailand, and previous studies regarding the migration of Western retirees to Thailand, as well as, the migration of Western retirees to other retirement destinations. Lastly, this chapter presents the conceptual framework of this study, as well as, the hypotheses of this study.

**Chapter 3** presents the overview of research methodology, research ethics, research tools, subjects of the study, sampling methods, data collection, and data analysis.

**Chapter 4** presents personal characteristics of both IDI and SAQ participants, and their migration to Thailand decision-making process, in which, the author examines their motivations to move out from origins, research and evaluation, potential destinations, and migration decision to Thailand.

**Chapter 5** presents subjective wellbeing and cultural assimilation of both IDI and SAQ participants

**Chapter 6** presents future migration plans of both IDI and SAQ participants

**Chapter 7** presents the IRM impacts and planning from the perspective of Thai stakeholders.

**Chapter 8** presents the concluding remarks and recommendations of this study. Besides, based on the empirical findings of this study, the author presents an “International Retirement Migration Model of Western retirees to Thailand,” a revised model of the previous conceptual framework model in **Chapter 2**.





## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

**Chapter 2** presents (1) relevant theories and concepts of migration, subjective wellbeing, and cultural assimilation, (2) previous literature relevant to the migration of Western retirees to Thailand (i.e. a brief summary of Thailand country profile, statistics of Western retirees in Thailand, Thailand's retirement visa, and previous studies), (3) previous studies of the migration of Western retirees to other destinations, (4) conceptual framework of this study, and (5) hypotheses of this study.

#### 2.1 Theories and concepts

The author reviewed relevant migration theories and concepts that can help explain the migration decision-making process of older migrants. Besides, the concepts and measurements of wellbeing (i.e. subjective well-being) and assimilation (i.e. cultural assimilation) would also be examined in this session.

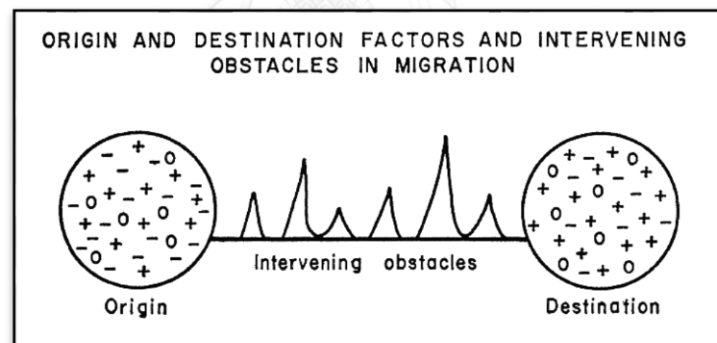
##### 2.1.1 Migration

The author reviewed several theories, models, and concepts regarding international migration, international retirement migration (IRM), and lifestyle migration, as presented as follows. However, the conceptual framework of this study (**Figure 2.6**) was primarily developed based on Lee's Theory of Migration (1966) and Åkerlund's Extended Property Acquisition Model (2013).

### 2.1.1.1 Everett S. Lee's Theory of Migration

Among all the migration theories, Lee's push-pull Theory of Migration seems to be the most appropriate standard neo-classical theory of migration that can explain not only the migration of the working age population but also the mobility of older or retired persons. In his paper, Lee identified four sets of factors involving the process of migration, including factors associated with the area of origin, factors associated with the area of destination, intervening obstacles, and personal factors; additionally, he also formed the hypotheses for the explanation of volume of migration, stream and counterstream, and the characteristics of migrants (Lee 1966).

Figure 2.1: Lee's push-pull Theory of Migration.



Source: Chart I in a Theory of Migration (Lee 1966).

In **Figure 2.1**, Lee explained that each migrant or prospective migrant might perceived the conditions at the area of origin and the area of destination as positive (+), negative (-), or neutral (0), in various degree depending on their personal factors or characteristics. However, since the information about the area of destination is not

equally distributed among all individuals, the positive (pull) and negative (push) factors at destination could also be mistakenly evaluated (Lee 1966).

Lee (1966) insisted that a migration would occur if the difference between the origin and destination is great enough for migrants to overcome the intervening obstacles, such as distance, and the natural inertia (i.e. a refusal to move or change).

In addition, Lee's hypotheses regarding the volume of migration, stream and counterstream, and characteristics of migrants were presented as follows.

First, the hypotheses regarding *volume of migration* included (1) "the volume of migration within a given territory varies with the degree of diversity of areas included in that territory," (2) "the volume of migration varies with the diversity of people," (3) "the volume of migration is related to the difficulty of surmounting the intervening obstacles," (4) "the volume of migration varies with fluctuations in the economy," (5) "unless severe checks are imposed, both volume and rate of migration tend to increase with time," and (6) "the volume and rate of migration vary with the state of progress in a country or area" (Lee 1966).

Second, the hypotheses regarding *stream and counterstream* included (1) "migration tends to take place largely within well-defined streams," (2) "for every major migration stream, a counterstream develops," (3) "the efficiency of the stream (ratio of stream to counterstream or the net redistribution of population selected by the opposite flows) is high if the major factors in the development of a migration stream were minus factors at origin," (4) "the efficiency of stream and counterstream

tends to be low if origin and destination are similar,” (5) “the efficiency of migration streams will be high if the intervening obstacles are great,” (6) “the efficiency of a migration stream varies with economic conditions, being high in prosperous times and low in times of depression” (Lee 1966).

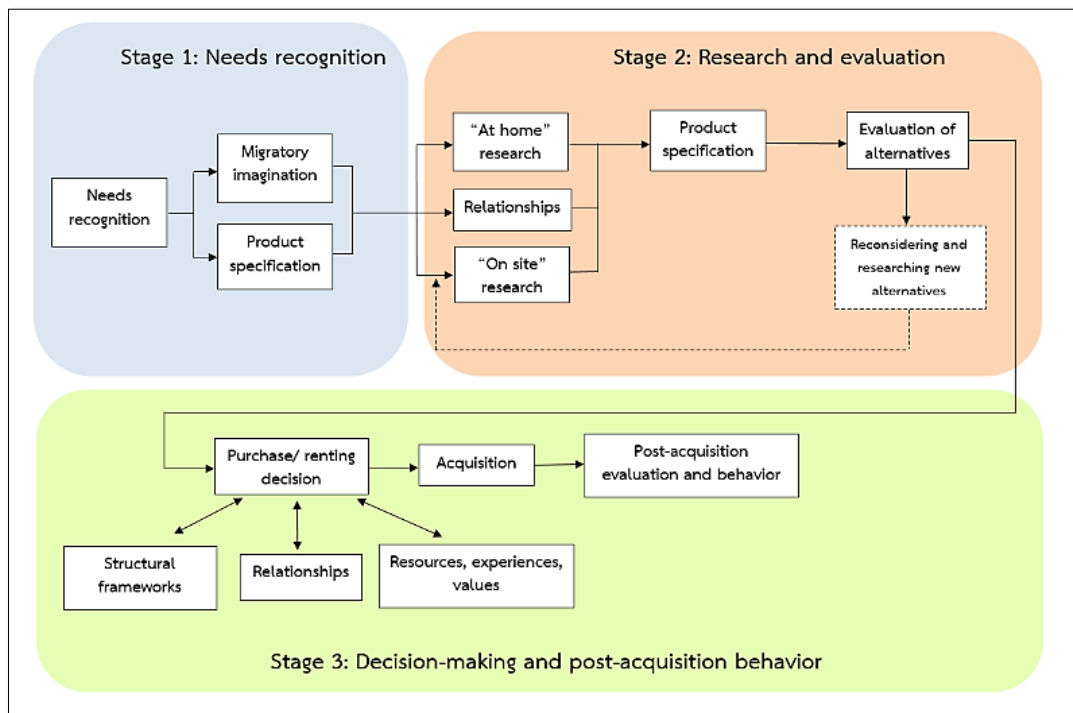
Third, the hypotheses regarding migrant’s characteristics included (1) “migration is selective,” in which, Lee explained that migrants versus non-migrants had different personal factors and characteristics and they would differently respond to the sets of push-pull factors at origin, push-pull factors at destination, and intervening obstacles, (2) “migrants responding primarily to plus factors at destination tend to be positively selected,” (3) “migrants responding primarily to minus factors at origin tend to be negatively selected; or, where the minus factors are overwhelming to entire population groups, they may not be selected at all,” (4) “taking all migrants together, selection tends to be bimodal,” (5) “the degree of positive selection increases with the difficulty of the intervening obstacles,” (6) “the heightened propensity to migrate at certain stages of the life cycle is important in the selection of migrants,” and (7) “the characteristics of migrants tend to be intermediate between the characteristics of the population at origin and the population at destination” (Lee 1966).

#### **2.1.1.2 Ulrika Åkerlund’s Extended Property Acquisition Model**

Åkerlund’s Extended Property Acquisition Model was developed from general consumer behavior models and the thematic analysis of the in-depth interviews with

retired Swedes in Malta. Åkerlund illustrated the process of overseas property acquisitions (purchase/ rent) in three stages, including needs recognition, research and evaluation, and decision-making and post-acquisition behaviors.

Figure 2.2: Åkerlund's Extended Property Acquisition Model.



Source: Åkerlund's Extended Property Acquisition Model (2013).

According to **Figure 2.2**, migrants or prospective migrants would initially think about the list of "product specifications" for the property abroad. Then, in the next stage, they would seek for more necessary information in order to revise the list of their "product specifications," and/or evaluate available choices of destinations by obtaining more information via several strategies, including "at home research" (e.g. Internet search, real estate exhibitions, etc.), "on-site research" (i.e. traveling to a destination to find out more about the property or the living conditions), and/or

“relationships” with professional mediators (e.g. property agents and lawyers) and/or social mediators (e.g. spouse, friends, and other expats met online or at the meetings) (Åkerlund 2013).

Before making final purchase/rent decisions, prospective migrants would consider “structural framework” (macro factor), “relationships” (meso factor), and “resources, experiences, and values” (micro factors). For “structural framework,” prospective migrants would have to consider property law and regulations at destination, local politics, and even local transport and communication infrastructure.

However, after property acquisition, migrants/buyers would continue to evaluate their post-acquisition of property at destinations and/or their migratory outcomes. In some case, former buyers or migrants could eventually become social mediators for the newcomers to the same destinations (Åkerlund 2013).

### **2.1.1.3 Other applicable theories and concepts**

The author reviewed theories and concepts related to international migration, migration selectivity, as well as, the international retirement migration (IRM) and lifestyle migration.

#### ***International migration***

Though both early migration theories (pre-1960 theories) and several standard modern theories seemed to primarily focus on labor migration and working

populations, the core ideas of those theories could also be applied in the study of international migration of older persons as well.

With regard to motivations of migration, Ravenstein's Laws of Migration emphasized that economic motive was likely to be the prevailing reason behind migration. Ravenstein viewed that "bad or oppressive laws, heavy taxation, an unattractive climate, uncongenial social surroundings, and even compulsion (slave trade, transportation)" at origin could have produced currents of migration; however, none of these currents could compare in volume with that which arose from the desire inherent in most migrants to "better themselves in material respects" (Ravenstein 1889). Besides, regarding locational choices, Ravenstein stated that "migrants proceeding long distances generally go by preference to one of the great centres of commerce or industry" (Ravenstein 1885).

Likewise, Sjaastad (1962) viewed migration as an "investment" of individuals who considering the costs and returns of their migration, in which, they would consider both "money" and "non-money" aspects of costs and returns.

Regarding the costs of migration, the examples of money costs included the expenditure for food, lodging, transportation, and the number of dependents (if migrating as a family), and the examples of non-money costs included (1) opportunity costs (e.g. the costs of traveling, searching, and/or learning a new job), and (2) psychic costs (e.g. the cost of leaving familiar surroundings, family, and friends) (Sjaastad 1962).

On the other hand, with regard to the returns of migration, the money returns were seen by income differentials between origin and destinations, and the examples of the non-money returns were such as better climate at destination and its natural amenities, and (Sjaastad 1962).

With regard to family and migration decisions, Mincer (1978) concluded from his work that family ties tended to deter migration, and, on the other hand, marital instability (e.g. separation and divorce) stimulated or increased migration.

Besides whether to migrate or not to migrate, Burda (1995) instead highlighted on the waiting option, which happened when prospective migrants delayed or postponed their migration due to the “imperfect availability of information about the host country” that created the uncertainty about the migration outcome at new destination.

Based on their reviews of several migration theories, Bodvarsson and Van den Berg (2013) concluded that “migration is an investment in one’s well-being” and the decision-making of such moves were theoretically and empirically influenced by family considerations, the option value of waiting, and the feelings of relative deprivation.

More recent literature confirmed that migration should not only be perceived as an investment of human capital, but also a consumption of individuals across spaces. Greenwood (1985) pointed out that the availability of amenities and public goods at specific destinations, life cycle of migrants (e.g. marriage, divorce, entry into the labor force, and retirement), as well as, other personal circumstances (e.g. age, sex,



health, employment status, skills, education, and earnings), should be considered as the determinants of migration.

### ***Migration selectivity***

With regard to migration selectivity, in accordance with the notion that “migration is selective” (Lee 1966), Borjas also discussed about self-selection in immigration and the selection outcomes at destination, i.e. positive selection or negative selection (Borjas 1987, 1989, Borjas 1991). Borjas (1991) insisted that both migrants and destinations were actually “nonrandom” in the selection process and the pool of immigrants in any host country should be considered as “doubly self-selected.” “The pool of immigrants in the host country is composed of persons who found it profitable to leave the country of origin *and* who did not find it profitable to go anywhere else” (Borjas 1991).

Based on the empirical findings from 1970 and 1980 U.S. censuses, Borjas (1987) concluded that nationalities of immigrants could determine their reception at destination. Over the postwar period, it was revealed that the immigrants from Western European countries performed quite well in the U.S. labor market and experienced a general increase in their earnings; on the other hand, the immigrants from less developed countries did not do well in the U.S. labor market and experienced a general decrease in earnings (Borjas 1987).

### *International retirement migration (IRM) and lifestyle migration*

Haas and Serow (1993) created “Amenity Retirement Migration Process” model to describe the flow of decision-making process of migration, in which, the model illustrated that (1) push factors of origin and pull factors of new destination as derived from information sources, would stimulate “remote thoughts” or the imagination of retiring at new destination, (2) after deciding to migrate to a new destination, migrants would decide about the locations, in which, such migration could take place either before or after their retirement, (3) after migration, migrants would develop ties to a new destination, and (4) migrants could possibly decide to leave if the current destination failed to meet their ideal and they would begin all the migration decision process over again to next destination.

So far, many scholars considered property rights and length of residence as main criteria to differentiate tourists from migrants; however, retirement migration, can be viewed as “a special case of the more general category of consumption-led migration,” and also “part of a generalized counter-urbanization tendency” (Williams and Hall 2000) or even “a fundamental change in lifestyle, signifying a break, a contrast, a turning point, and a new beginning” to overcome redundancy of life at origin, or the trauma of bereavement (Benson and O'Reilly 2009).

International retirement migration (IRM) or the mobility across borders of older persons was also regularly considered a form of lifestyle migration (Benson and O'Reilly 2009). In contrast to labor migration, international retirement migration (IRM) usually

yielded opposite economic flows, i.e. rather than sending working remittances back home like labor migrants, IRM migrants instead coming to spend their pensions or savings at destination as their motives for migration involve “leisure, health, and lifestyle,” making them “a highly privileged group of migrants” (Gustafson 2008).

Despite heterogeneity of IRM migrants in several receiving countries, their common migration motivations involved the comparison of environmental factors, financial advantages, as well as, the attraction to “way of life” at destination (Casado-Díaz et al. 2004). However, “second migration” or potential next migration of the retired migrants could also be anticipated due to crucial life events, such as loss of a spouse, or a decline in resources and the deterioration of one’s health conditions following the increasing age (B. Douglas 2004).

Based on the transnational lifestyles of 46 Swedish retirees in Spain, Gustafson (2001) identified three typologies of lifestyle migrants, i.e. “multilocal adaptation,” “translocal normality,” and “routinized sojourning.” The first two groups of migrants possessed strong attachment to both origin and destination, however, the first group revealed to adapt more of the way of life of the people at destination into theirs more than the second group; on the other hand, the last group rather just routinely moved to stay at multiple destinations with little or no place attachment (Gustafson 2001).

According to her fieldwork study of British migrants in Spain, O'Reilly (2000) categorized four groups of migrants based the length and continuation of stays, including “full residents,” “returning residents,” “seasonal visitors,” and “peripatetic

visitors.” The first two groups were called “residents” as they revealed to have intention to permanently or mainly stay at destination, unlike the latter two groups who seasonally or occasionally visited the destination. However, O'Reilly witnessed that either being “returning residents” or even “full residents,” it was unlikely for British migrants to become integrated to wider Spanish society (O'Reilly 2000).

Benson and O'Reilly (2009) introduced three types of lifestyle migration destinations (though not being mutually exclusive), including “residential tourism” (e.g. residential areas along the coastlines), “rural idyll” (i.e. rural areas that giving the “stepping back in time” feelings, and “bourgeois Bohemian” (i.e. areas that possessing certain spiritual and cultural identities).

### **2.1.2 Subjective well-being**

The OECD framework (2013) introduced 11 dimensions for measuring wellbeing, including: (1) income and wealth, (2) jobs and earnings, (3) housing, (4) health status, (5) work-life balance, (6) education and skills, (7) social connections, (8) civic engagement and governance, (9) environmental quality, (10) personal security, and (11) subjective well-being (OECD 2013a). However, since there was no available official statistics (OS) or non-official statistics (NOS) to be used as objective indicators for measuring well-being of Western retirees in Thailand, this study then only focused on the measurement of subjective wellbeing.

The OECD guideline suggested that the measurement design for measuring subjective well-being should cover these three elements, including “*Life evaluation*—a reflective assessment on a person’s life or some specific aspect of it,” “*Affect*—a person’s feelings or emotional states, typically measured with reference to a particular point in time,” and “*Eudaimonia*—a sense of meaning and purpose in life, or good psychological functioning” (OECD 2013b).

Nonetheless, the objective aspects of wellbeing could still be examined to certain extent by relying upon individual experience and evaluations of several domains of life. Regarding the reliability of subjective wellbeing as the measurement of the wellbeing of individuals, Oswald and Wu (2010) found a significant correlation ( $r = 0.6, P < 0.001$ ) between the subjective indicator of wellbeing (i.e. the reported life satisfaction of 1.3 million U.S. citizens randomly selected from 50 states in 2005-2008 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data) and the objective indicator of wellbeing (i.e. objective data of the amenities in each state of the United States, such as the weather (e.g. precipitation, sunshine hours, and temperature), geographical properties (e.g. coastal land, inland water, and public land), pollutions, student-teacher ratio, and cost of living) (Oswald and Wu 2010).

The International Wellbeing Group introduced Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI) to measure quality of life (QOL) in subjective dimension. The PWI was composed of seven domains of life, including standard of living, personal health, achieving in life, personal relationships, personal safety, community-connectedness, and future

security; additionally, the PWI also included two additional items (i.e. general life satisfaction and spirituality/religion) to subjectively test the wellbeing of people based on their answers in unipolar response scale—i.e. 0=No satisfaction at all and 10=completely satisfied (International Wellbeing Group 2013).

Lastly, HelpAge International introduced Global AgeWatch Index to measure the well-being of older persons by using both objective and subjective indicators in four domains, including (1) income security (i.e. pension income coverage, poverty rate in old age, relative welfare of older people, and GDP per capita), (2) health status (i.e. life expectancy at 60, healthy life expectancy at 60, and relative psychological wellbeing), (3) capability (i.e. labor market engagement of older people, education attainment of older people), and (4) enabling environment (i.e. social connections, physical safety, civic freedom, access to public transport) (HelpAge International 2014).

After reviewing the aforementioned concepts and measurements of subjective wellbeing, the author identified seven subjective wellbeing indexes for this study, including standard of living (SW1), health status (SW2), personal relationships (SW3), social connections (SW4), personal security (SW5), environmental quality (SW6), and local infrastructure (SW7). Furthermore, in order to provide an overall summary of life satisfaction, the author introduced the subjective wellbeing of life as a whole as an additional indicator of general life satisfaction of Western retirees in Thailand.

### 2.1.3 Cultural assimilation

Based on Vigdor's paper, the composite index for measuring assimilation consisted of three sets of economic, cultural, and civic factors, which could either be calculated as composite index or single index (Vigdor 2013). Nonetheless, in order to measure the assimilation of Western retirees in Thailand, both economic and civic factors were dropped from the analysis as people in their third age of life usually finished their formal education and already withdrew from the labor force; additionally, the number of those being granted permanent residency in Thailand was very small (Howard 2008, 2009).

In order to measure cultural assimilation, Vigdor (2013) suggested cover the aspects of language ability, intermarriage, marital status, and childbearing (number of children), in which, they could imply immigrants' intentions of long-term stays and future fiscal impacts on the host country, e.g. the use of public school service.

Gans (1992) identified four determinant factors of assimilation, including national origins, socioeconomic status, contexts of reception at destination, and family resources in both social and financial aspects.

Gordon (1964) identified seven stages of assimilation, including: (1) "*cultural and behavioral assimilation/acclulturation*," i.e., change of cultural patterns to those of host society; (2) "*structural assimilation*," i.e., large-scale entrance into cliques, clubs and institutions of host society, on primary group level; (3) "*marital assimilation/amalgamation*," i.e., large-scale intermarriage; (4) "*identificational*

*assimilation*,” i.e., development of sense of peoplehood based exclusively on host society; (5) “*attitude receptional assimilation*,” i.e., absence of prejudice; (6) “*behavior receptional assimilation*,” i.e., absence of discrimination; and (7) “*civic assimilation*,” i.e., absence of value and power conflict.

According to the results of running ordered probit model against the response on the feeling of national identity (i.e. as German, more as German, as German and as former nationality, more as former nationality, and as former nationality) of the immigrants in Germany based on the 1984 panel data, it was found that nationality, language proficiency, family context (i.e. marital status and number of children enrolled in school (particularly for male subsample), and other personal characteristics (i.e. years of residence in Germany, years of schooling, years of job-specific education, age at immigration (particularly for male subsample) could significantly affect the immigrants’ feeling of national identity (Dustmann 1996).

In conclusion, based on the reviews of the concepts and measurements of assimilation, the author would use the following indicators to examine the cultural assimilation of Western retirees in Thailand: (1) marriage assimilation (i.e. intermarriage and interracial children); (2) skills and knowledge of Thai language and Thai culture (i.e. ability to listen/speak Thai, ability to read/write Thai, knowledge about Thai culture, the desire to learn more about Thai language, and the desire to learn more about Thai culture); (3) social interaction in Thailand (i.e. language mainly used in Thailand, persons they mainly socialized with, participation/volunteers in social and cultural



activities in Thailand, and contribution/exchange of knowledge and skills in local community); and (4) the perceptions of cultural assimilation in Thailand (i.e. the feeling of the acceptance of general Westerners in Thailand, the feeling of the acceptance of oneself in Thailand, the perception of Thai-Western intermarriage, and the feeling of own national identity).

In addition, please note that the author used the feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thai society as a main proxy indicator of cultural assimilation of Westerners in Thailand.

## **2.2 Migration of Western retirees to Thailand**

The author presented a brief summary of Thailand country profile, as well as, the literature reviews regarding the IRM of Westerners to Thailand and the IRM of Westerners to other retirement destinations.

### **2.2.1 Thailand country profile**

Though Thailand was the only country in Southeast Asia that had never been colonized since its establishment in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century, the country had suffered from chronic political instability with a number of protests and military coups from time to time since the country changed its regime from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy in 1932 (Central Intelligence Agency 2015).

Based on 2015 estimation and world's ranking of GDP and GDP per capita, Thailand's GDP (est. \$1,107 billion) was ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> while its GDP per capita (est.

\$16,100) was ranked 100<sup>th</sup>, implying that the average Thai individuals were much poorer than the citizens of developed countries (Central Intelligence Agency 2015).

As of July 2015, there were approximately 67,976,405 populations in Thailand, in which, the majority had Thai nationality (95.9%), spoke Thai language (90.7%), and were Buddhists (93.6%) (Central Intelligence Agency 2015).

Though Thailand was still being classified as a developing country, its demographic profile, on the other hand, was quite similar to that of several developed economies where: (1) the fertility rate was already lower than the replacement level (lower than 2.1); (2) the proportion of population age 65+ exceeded 10 percent of the total populations; and (3) the life expectancy at birth (LEB) was high for both sexes (Population Reference Bureau 2015).

According to the 2015 estimation, the total fertility rate (TFR) of Thailand was at 1.6, the life expectancy at birth for both sexes was 75, i.e. 72 years for males and 78 years for females (Population Reference Bureau 2015). In addition, the percentage of population age 60+ and 65+ were 15.8 and 10.5, respectively (United Nations 2015).

Though, the process of demographic transition in Thailand was quite similar to that of the West (i.e. death rate firstly began to drop dramatically, while birth rate later continued to fall), it was evident that the demographic transition period in Thailand is much shorter than that of the West. Thailand's TFR had dropped from 6.4 to 1.82 in less than 50 years (1960-2005) and with the continuously increasing of life expectancy at birth (LEB), Thailand then rapidly became an aging society; additionally, the

proportion of old-age populations (60+) was expected to reach 20 percent of the total populations by 2025 (Wongboonsin, Guest, and Prachuabmoh 2005).

Besides, Thailand's ageing society had further challenged its universal provision of healthcare as the hospital bed density and the physicians density of Thailand were reported to be only 2.1 beds/1,000 population (2010) and 0.39 physicians/1,000 population (2010) (Central Intelligence Agency 2015).

With regard to the geography, Thailand currently had 77 provinces with the total area of 513,120 sq. km., and shared its borders with Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Malaysia, as well as, the Andaman Sea and the Gulf of Thailand (Central Intelligence Agency 2015). Regarding the climate, Thailand was considered as having tropical climate (temperature  $\approx$  19-38 °C), in which, the country annually had three seasons, including cool or dry season (November-February), hot season (March-June), and the rainy season (July-October) (Tourism Authority of Thailand).

### **2.2.2 Statistics of Western retirees in Thailand**

Though, the number of Western retirees in Thailand has been relatively small when comparing to that of mainstream retirement destinations (e.g. Spain and Mexico), Thailand was ranked first (28.7%) in terms of the percentage growth rate of U.S. pensioners during 1997-1999, followed by Panama, India and Yemen, respectively, (Warnes 2001).

According to **Table 2.1**, though there were more than 5.96 million tourists from advanced Western economies came to visit Thailand in 2014 (Ministry of Tourism and Sports of Thailand 2014), the 2010 Population and Housing Census and the 2014 statistics of visa applicants for the extension of temporary stays in Thailand revealed that there were probably more than 200,000 Westerners currently living in Thailand (NSO 2010, Immigration Bureau 2014b).

**Table 2.1: Number of international tourists and foreign residents in Thailand.**

Countries	Source of information		
	Tourist arrivals 2014*	Thai Census 2010**	Immigration Bureau 2014***
Canada	213,161	5,851	8,992
United States	764,745	40,258	41,092
Australia	835,517	11,298	16,450
New Zealand	108,399	1,779	2,982
Denmark	160,828	3,764	4,100
Estonia	N/A	N/A	503
Finland	141,725	2,259	4,834
Iceland	N/A	N/A	162
Ireland	62,727	N/A	2,818
Norway	144,979	3,782	7,647
Sweden	324,780	6,438	12,208
United Kingdom	909,335	85,850	46,549
Austria	100,504	N/A	2,568
Belgium	99,152	N/A	4,176
France	632,242	22,489	22,192
Germany	717,631	24,381	19,413
Luxembourg	N/A	N/A	144
Netherlands	210,265	5,619	7,919
Switzerland	200,649	6,408	9,644
Greece	N/A	N/A	674
Italy	220,017	7,864	9,298
Portugal	N/A	N/A	395
Slovenia	N/A	N/A	181
Spain	116,555	N/A	2,788
<b>Total above</b>	<b>5,963,211</b>	<b>228,040</b>	<b>227,729</b>
Japan	1,265,307	80,957	52,378
Russia	1,603,813	8,413	26,737
Eastern Europe Except Russia	372,849	N/A	9,167
<b>All nations</b>	<b>24,779,768</b>	<b>2,702,164</b>	<b>1,169,932</b>
Note: N/A: Not available information			
* Total number of international tourists coming to Thailand in 2014			
** Total number of foreign residents who had lived in Thailand for at least 3 months before the census date (1 Sept. 2010)			
*** Total number of foreign residents who applied for visa extensions in 2014			

Source: Author's own compilation of data from: Immigration Bureau (2014), Ministry of Tourism and Sports (2014), and National Statistical Office (2010).

In addition, for foreign residents to be counted in Thailand's 2010 census, foreign residents must have lived in Thailand for at least three months before the

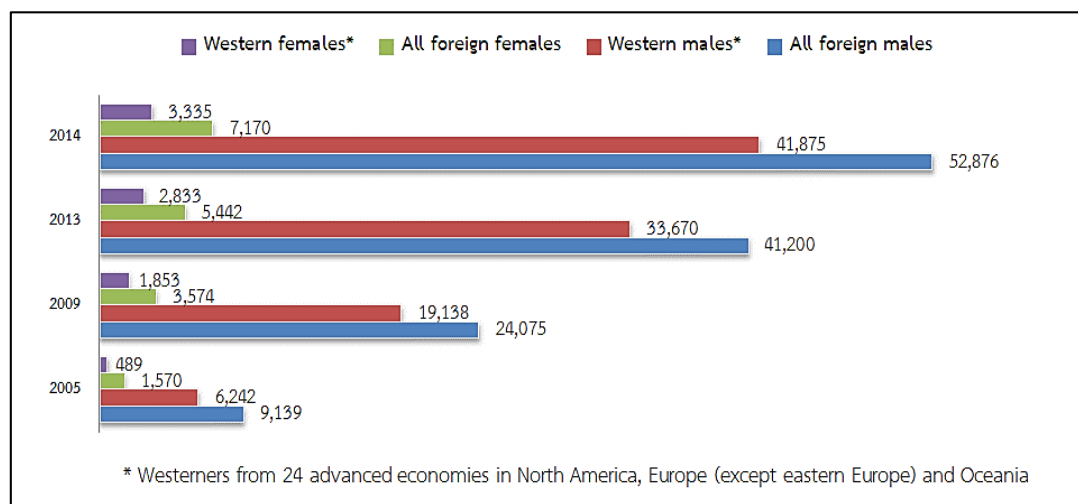
Census date (1 September 2010), in other words, they must enter the country before 1 June 2010 (NSO 2010).

Unfortunately, it is very difficult to have the exact number of retired Western residents in Thailand as both 2010 Census and 2014 immigration statistics did not provide age-specific information of Western residents.

Hence, the number of foreign retirees in Thailand then could be only estimated by using the number of retirement visa applicants, in which, there were 60,046 applicants in 2014. However, it is also possible that some of retired Western residents may stay on other types of visa, such as, Thai spouse visa, and business visa.

According to the data from the Immigration Bureau, the number of Westerners (from 24 advanced economies) applied for retirement visas in 2005, 2009, 2013 and 2014 are presented in **Figure 2.3** below.

**Figure 2.3: Number of Thailand's retirement visa applicants by gender, in year 2005, 2009, 2013 and 2014.**



Source: Author's own compilation of data from: Immigration Bureau.

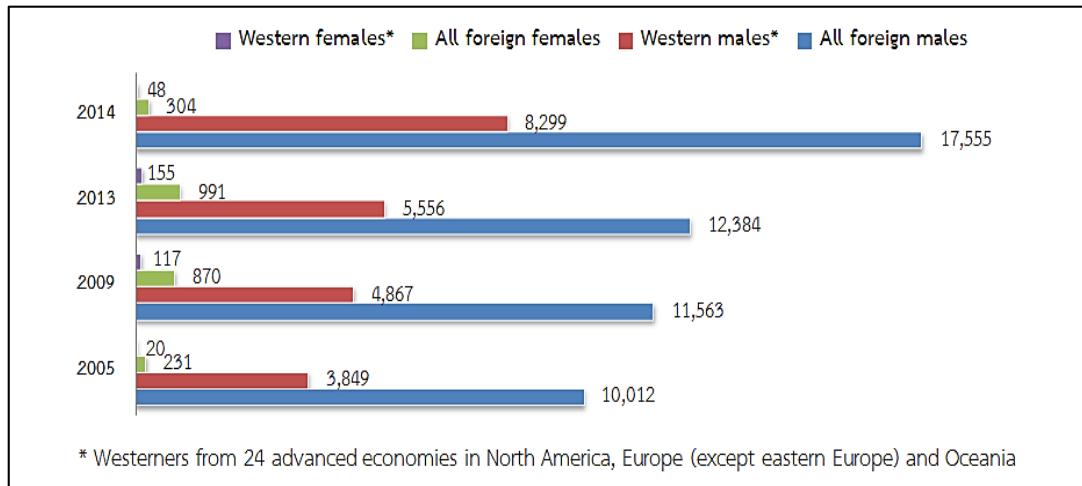
In **Figure 2.3**, the number of foreigners applying for Thailand's retirement visa had increased dramatically from 10,709 (2005) to 27,649 (2009), and from 27,649 (2009) to 46,642 (2013). Interestingly, for only a one-year period (2013–2014), the number of retirement visa applicants increased from 46,642 (2013) to 60,046 (2014) or by 29 percent of the previous year. Western retirees accounted for 63% (2005), 76% (2009), 78% (2013) and 75% (2014) of foreign retirees in Thailand.

There was a great dominance of male retirees over time (2005-2014) as more than 85% of retirement visa applicants were males. In addition, according to 2009-2014 data, it could be estimated that around 80% of male retirees were Western male retirees, while around 50% of female retirees were Western female retirees.

Likewise, **Figure 2.4** reveals that the number of foreign residents (regardless of age) who applied for Thai spouse visas had constantly increased from 10,243 (2005) to 12,433 (2009), and from 12,433 (2009) to 19,375 (2013). Also, it could be easily observed that almost all of Thai spouse visa applicants were male.

During 2013–2014, the number of foreigners applying for Thai spouse visas had increased from 13,375 (2013) to 17,859 (2014) or by 33.5% of the previous year. In addition, Westerners were accounted for 38% (2005), 40% (2009), 43% (2013) and 47% (2014) of the total number of Thai spouse visa applicants in those years.

Figure 2.4: Number of Thai spouse visa applicants by gender, in year 2005, 2009, 2013 and 2014.



Source: Author's own compilation of data from: Immigration Bureau.

Furthermore, according to the available data of the number of retirement visa applicants by immigrations in year 2005, 2006, 2013 and 2014, **Table 2.2** revealed that the majority of retirement visa applicants applied for the visa at the immigration offices in Pattaya, Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Hua Hin and Phuket, respectively (Immigration Bureau 2014b). Hence, it implied that the majority of foreign retirees (including Western retirees) might possibly live in those cities/provinces as foreign retirees were normally recommended by immigration officers to apply or extend their visa at the immigration offices nearest to their places of usual residence.

Besides those major receiving areas, there has also been a significant increase of foreign retirees in Rayong, Samut Prakan, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, Nakhon Ratchasima, Khon Kaen, Udon Thani, Chiang Rai, and Samui.

Table 2.2: Number of Thailand's retirement visa applicants by immigrations nationwide, in year 2005, 2006, 2013 and 2014.

Immigrations	2005	2006	2013	2014
Bangkok	5,613	6,343	7,961	8,948
Immigrations in Central region				
Pattaya	1,674	6,320	15,790	19,083
Rayong	86	194	650	780
Hua Hin	111	580	3,454	4,131
Samut Prakan	47	105	635	3,480
Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya	No information	No information	570	2,272
Others in Central region	188	456	1,934	2,808
Sub total	2,106	7,655	23,033	32,554
Immigrations in Northeastern (Isan) region				
Nakhon Ratchasima	No information	No information	767	928
Khon Kaen	No information	No information	878	1,170
Udon Thani	No information	No information	1,099	1,377
Others in Isan region	597	524	1,714	2,126
Sub total	597	524	4,458	5,601
Immigrations in Northern region				
Chiang Mai	754	1,935	4,339	5,198
Chiang Rai	19	211	800	895
Others in Northern region	7	75	955	1,054
Sub total	780	2,221	6,094	7,147
Immigrations in Southern region				
Phuket	1,244	1,750	3,243	3,743
Sa Mui	278	525	1,053	1,156
Others in Southern region	91	116	800	897
Sub total	1,613	2,391	5,096	5,796
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,709</b>	<b>19,134</b>	<b>46,642</b>	<b>60,046</b>

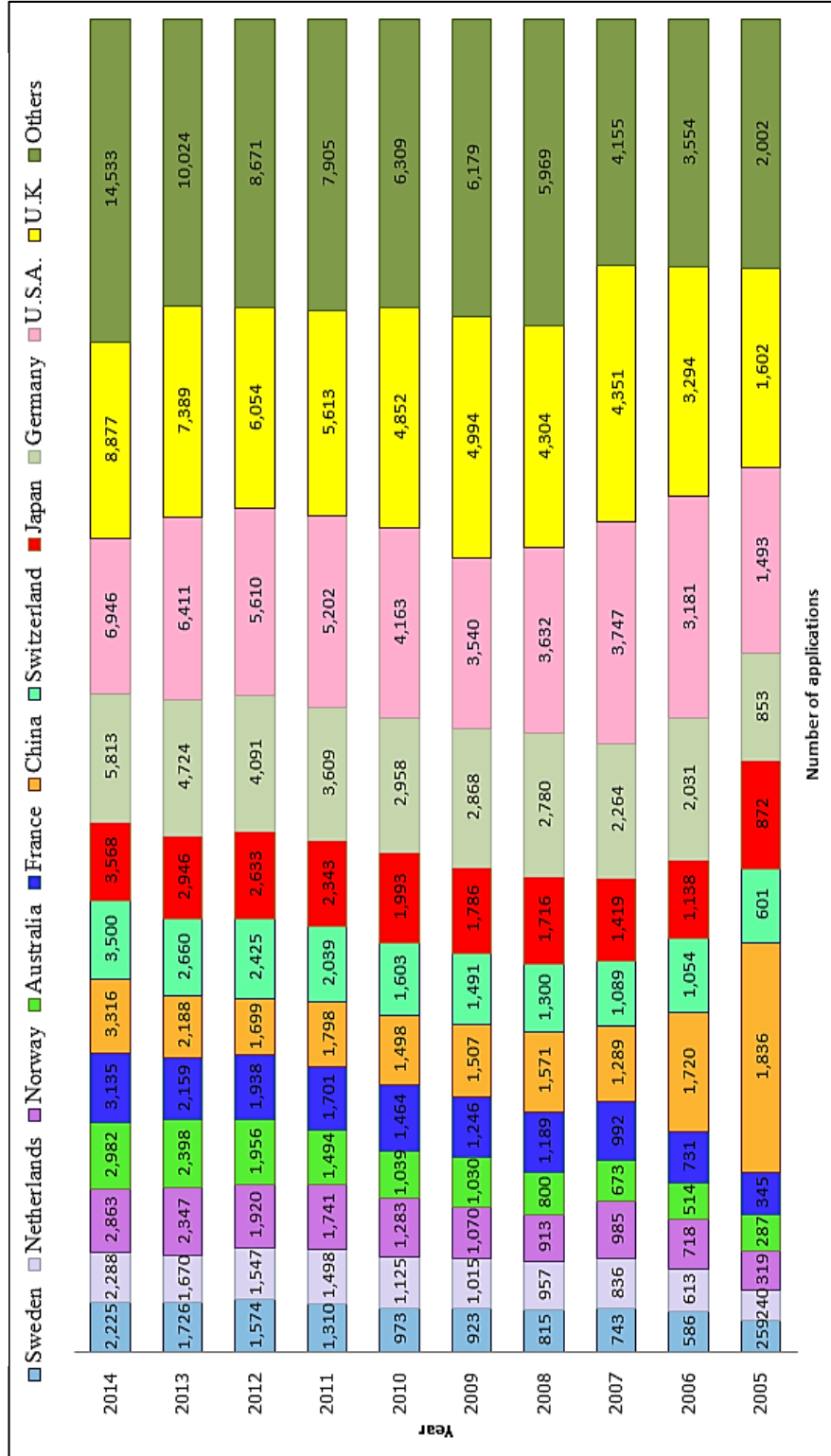
Source: Author's own compilation of data from: Immigration Bureau.

Figure 2.5 presented the number of Thailand's retirement visa applicants during 2005-2014 by their countries of origin. Among the top 11 countries of origin of Thailand's retirement visa applicants, there were consisting of nine developed Western countries and two Asian countries. The majority of Thailand's retirement visa applicants came from the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, China, France, Australia, Norway, Netherlands, and Sweden, respectively.

In addition, it can be observed that the number of retirement visa applicants from most countries has been constantly increased overtime (2005-2014).



Figure 2.5: Number of Thailand's retirement visa applicants by countries of origin, during 2005-2014.



Source: The author rearranged the data from the Immigration Bureau.

### 2.2.3 Thailand's retirement visa

According to Thailand's immigration regulations regarding the application criteria for the annually renewable retirement visa, any foreign retirees who had not been continuously allowed to live in the Kingdom before October, 21 1998 must basically follow these requirements: (1) they must have already been granted a non-immigrant visa (NON-IM); (2) they must be 50 years old or above; and (3) they must show proof of receiving at least 65,000 baht monthly income/pension, or a deposit of at least 800,000 baht in their Thai bank accounts for no less than 60 days before the filing date of their applications, or the combination of both income and saving deposits that totally worth at least 800,000 baht (Immigration Bureau 2014a). Similar to other types of long-stay visas, foreign retirees with retirement visa also needed to report their stays at nearest immigrations in every 90 days.

Nonetheless, besides retirement visa, a foreign retiree could also apply for other types of non-immigrant visa relevant to their purposes of stay, e.g. Business, Investment, Thai spouse, etc. However, comparing to retirement visa, both Business visa and Investment visa required more paperwork and financial provisions. Though Thai Spouse visa requires smaller financial requirements than retirement visa (i.e. a proof of 40,000 baht monthly income, or 400,000 baht deposits), the Thai Spouse visa applicants were required to provide a proof of the relationship (both *de jure* and *de facto*) (Immigration Bureau 2014a).

## 2.2.4 Previous studies

First, the author summarized a brief history of the migration of Westerners (regardless of age) to Thailand in former days. Then, the author would present the literature reviews of the international retirement migration (IRM) of Westerners to Thailand, which covering the aspects of the motivations for migration, characteristics of migrants, wellbeing, assimilation into host society, and the impacts on destination.

### 2.2.4.1 Migration of Westerners to Thailand in former days

Traced back in Ayutthaya era (A.D. 1569-1767), most *farangs*—a Thai term used for describing foreigners from Caucasian ancestry, specifically the Dutch, the French, the Portuguese and the Spaniards (at that time), had traveled to *Siam*—a former name of Thailand, mainly for trading, military, and religious purposes (Kitiarsa 2005). Then, in the early Rattanakosin era (A.D. 1767-1851), local people would see *farangs* as (1) “wicked and dangerous” for Thailand’s political and economic interests, and/or (2) the “models of and models for civilization and modernization.” (Kitiarsa 2005).

Later on, Thai-Western intimacy and the hegemonic masculinities of male Westerners in Thailand has become highly visible since 1960s. The United States deployed its military troops in the Northeastern (Isan) region as part of its Cold War strategy. Furthermore, at that time, the Vietnam-based U.S. soldiers were also allowed to have a “Rest & Recreation (R&R)” leave to Thailand, in which, most went to Bangkok and Pattaya for Thai prostitutes or “Mia Chao (rented wife)” (Maher and Lafferty 2014).

Therefore, any Thai women being in relationships with Westerners at that time, were inevitably seen as prostitutes and the children born of Thai mothers and Western fathers were also looked down by the Thai society (Esara 2009).

Nonetheless, the Thai-Western intimate relationships so far had revealed to be much diverse in reality as many Thais from various social class and educational backgrounds had married to Westerners (Howard 2008).

In addition, it is common to see that these days “luk-Kreung” or “racially-mixed children,” particularly those of Thai-Western couples, have shaped the new identity of Thainess by appearing in both national and world-class beauty contests, as well as, becoming popular actors/actresses in the local show biz industries (Kitiarsa 2005).

#### **2.2.4.2 Characteristics of migrants, motivations, wellbeing, and assimilation**

Two quantitative studies of Robert W. Howard in 2008 (i.e. sample size consisting of 152 Western retirees) and in 2009 (i.e. sample size consisting of 1,003 Westerners of all ages), revealed that a warm climate, low living costs, Thai lifestyle and culture, and the availability of attractive Thai partners were most cited as the pull factors of Thailand; on the contrary, the major push factors in their countries of origin were including the high cost of living and the unpleasant climate (Howard 2008, 2009).

Both studies of Howard also examined the leave reasons of Westerners/Western retirees who had already left Thailand (i.e. 9 Western retirees in 2008 study and 312 Westerners of all age in 2009 study), in which, the majority of respondents

cited financial reasons, job termination, visa reasons, hard Thai language, the missing of life in the West, and the disillusionment of Thailand from the experiences visa insecurity, sex industry, perceived weak intellectual culture, poor assimilation, discrimination, corruption, and racism in Thailand (Howard 2008, 2009).

In addition, Howard described that most of his respondents (in both 2008 and 2009 papers) were Western male who had initially migrated alone to Thailand without depending much on supporting networks, but then ended up marrying or living with the local Thai women, in which, he speculated the intention of such later-life moves to be of sexual interests (Howard 2008, 2009). “Living in a distant developing nation requires hardiness and good health, and selecting Thailand as the destination often implies an interest in an active sex life” (Howard 2008).

With regard to the well-being of Western retirees in Thailand, Howard (2008) revealed that the majority of respondents rated their well-being in Thailand as “good” (48.7%) and “excellent” (42.8%). In addition, regarding the assimilation of Western retirees in Thailand, Howard (2008) found that 54.6% of respondents felt that they were accepted by Thai society, 48% revealed to have “good” level of knowledge of Thai culture, even though 65.8% reportedly knew “some” or “little or none” about Thai language, and 51.3% reportedly mainly socialized with other Westerners.

With regard to the study of the IRM of Western retirees to an Isan interior city like Udon Thani, Koch-Schulte interviewed over 80 retired expats in Udon Thani in 2006, in which, almost all of his interviewees were male. Koch-Schulte (2008) revealed

that there were “many linkages and commonalities between the expatriate residents in Pattaya and Udon Thani,” as the majority of retired expats in Udon Thani were Western male retirees who firstly came to Pattaya and then moved to Udon Thani with their (usually much younger) Thai wives (Koch-Schulte 2008).

In addition, besides moving to wife’s hometown, other pull factors of Udon Thani reportedly were reportedly including: (1) climate—i.e. hot and dry weather in Udon Thani was preferred to hot and humid weather of beach towns; (2) good living standard—i.e. very low cost of living, good-standard medical facility, availability of shopping and recreation amenities, in which, some retirees even brought their fragile parents to live together in Udon Thani; (3) closeness to border—i.e. some retirees crossed the border to Laos and then returned to Thailand within a day for tourist visa renewal; (4) easy transportation—e.g. many air flights per day; and (5) slower pace of life and high life safety—i.e. fewer tourists and lower threats from terrorism; and (6) the positive attitude towards local people and Isan culture (Koch-Schulte 2008). However, the “tightening” immigration laws and regulations was generally perceived by Western retirees as an obstacle for long-term settlement (Koch-Schulte 2008).

Besides knowing Udon Thani from their Thai wives and/or online dating partners, many foreign residents also came to visit the province due to the spread of the word of mouth (WOM) about the good livings in Udon Thani, and the invitations from Western friends who were currently living in Udon Thani (Koch-Schulte 2008).

In addition, Koch-Schulte (2008) tried to classify Western migrants who were living in each location, in which, he perceived that there was a concentration of highly educated foreigners in Chiang Mai and Bangkok; artists and musicians in Mae Hong Son and Bangkok; and gay communities in Chiang Mai and Pattaya.

Regarding the popularity of Thailand as a main destination country for lifestyle Swedish migrants, it was revealed that in year 2006, 2009, and 2010, Thailand had been ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> place in terms of the number of representations at *Köpa hus utomlands* overseas property exhibition; while, the country was ranked 4<sup>th</sup>- 5<sup>th</sup> place in terms of the number of available properties selling on two major Swedish real estate websites (Åkerlund 2012). Additionally, according to a master's thesis (2011), Swedish retirees in Sweden were interviewed regarding their motivations of long-stay tourism and IRM to Thailand, in which, it was found that most interviewees had positive attitudes about the living in Thailand as they were attracted to the lower cost of living, as well as, warm climate that allowed the opportunities for out-door activities (Kummaraka and Jutaporn 2011).

Besides the stories of Western husbands and Thai wives, Humphery-Smith's Master's thesis (1995), on the contrary, highlighted on the stories of Western wives and Thai husbands from 68 questionnaires and 14 in-depth interviews, in which, the majority of respondents and interviewees were female Westerners who married to Thai men. Based on the findings of her paper, the marriage between female Westerners

and Thai men generally occurred when the female Westerners were in their early twenties (Humphery-Smith 1995).

While, some respondents reported having a happy married life, others identified several hardships they faced after marriage, including the unfaithful habits of their Thai husbands, the lack of privacy (particularly when living with Thai extended family), low family income which later forced the Western wives to work outside, and the feeling of being unaccepted or even discriminated by Thai society (Humphery-Smith 1995).

#### **2.2.4.3 Impacts on destination**

##### ***Economic impacts***

With an ongoing aging phenomena and the IRM trend, the elderly market has been expanding globally, making such segment a lucrative source of income for the receiving countries (Dubout 2009).

Although the Thai law has restricted land ownership to foreigners, foreign buyers could possibly own a land in the country by purchasing it via a Thai majority company, or alternatively they might instead choose to buy condominium units which they could have freehold ownership or they might lease a house with land on long-term basis, e.g. for 30 years (Dubout 2009).

However, Dubout (2009) suggested that the receiving countries should grant freehold land ownership to foreign retirees in order to have sustainable economic



benefits from the IRM of relatively affluent retirees. Dubout stated “To those countries, I say that you cannot expect to benefit from the retirees’ financial bounty . . . without giving them a secure alternative to freehold ownership, . . . and that there should be no restriction to transmission made by succession” (Dubout 2009).

Regarding the economic impacts of the IRM of Westerners to Udon Thani, it is widely agreed that the IRM has helped improve the local economy, especially in the local property market as around 20-30% of the newly built homes in 2006 were purchased by foreigners (Koch-Schulte 2008). However, it was criticized that the economic benefits derived from the IRM might not be well distributed in the local economy as foreign customers usually went to shop at hypermarkets or shopping malls instead of smaller stores that owned by people in the community; additionally, there had been no direct tax on the income/pensions collected from long-term foreign residents (Koch-Schulte 2008). Furthermore, in terms of local landscape management, there was also a concern for the emergence of large-sized homes specifically built to serve the demand of long-stay or long-term foreign residents in Udon Thani as they used more resources and spaces than the average houses owned by local citizens (Koch-Schulte 2008).

In order to attract well-off tourists to travel or stay in Thailand as long as possible, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS) of Thailand, as well as, other organizations in both public and private sectors, has been actively promote Thailand’s tourism business.

Launched by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) in 2003, Thailand Privilege Card Company Limited (TPC) was established with the primary goal to attract “high-end visitors,” “businessmen,” “investors,” and “long stay groups” by selling a 2-million-baht Thailand Elite Individual Membership card to foreign buyers to obtain Privilege entry visa (5-year renewable multiple entry visa) with 20-year membership validity, as well as, receive privileged access to golf course, spa treatment, annual health check-up, 24-hrs call center, unlimited airport limousine service, etc. (Thailand Elite Card Company Limited 2016).

However, due to political instability and several changes of governments since 2003, together with, the unfitting of the program conditions to business environment, Thailand Elite program had been unfocusedly, inconsistently and discontinuously implemented, resulting in an unimpressive sale records and operating loss (Krasaesuk 2013).

On the other hand, while many developing countries had been welcoming affluent retirees to spend years of retirement in their countries, it reveals that in reality many of the retirees from advanced economies were actually of “modest wealth” and some of them could actually be perceived as “economic refugees” who could not afford retiring at home (Green 2014). According to the situation in Thailand, it was revealed that some Western retirees were “visa runners” who crossing the borders to neighboring countries and then coming back once their visas were about to get expired as they did not have enough financial resource to apply for a renewable 1-year

retirement visas or other types of long-stay visas (Green 2014). Furthermore, some of them might have to relocate to a cheaper destination, e.g. a retired couple staying in Thailand for several years had to move to Indonesia where the cost of living was much lower (Green 2014).

### ***Social impacts***

According to Thai-Western intimate relationships, it was revealed that Thai women generally perceived Western men to be more responsible than Thai men, especially in the aspect of financial support to family (Esara 2009, Sunanta 2009, Sunanta and Angeles 2012). Despite the popularity of intermarriage between older Westerners and the relatively deprived local women in the Northern or the Northeastern regions, Sunanta (2009) urged for Thai society to pay close attention to such trend as “the *Phua Farang* (foreign husband) phenomenon is perhaps not the most desirable vehicle for class mobility or equality for Thai women; I am aware that women are not always successful in gaining social and economic mobility through this strategy” (Sunanta 2009).

With regard to the intermarriage between Western retirees and local women in Udon Thani, Koch-Schulte (2008) found that the divorce rate was high due to several reasons, including large age gap, fast courtship period that insufficiently allowed both parties to learn about each other, lack of trust which even became worse due to language barrier (Koch-Schulte 2008). In addition, Koch-Schulte (2008) observed that most of the local women married to Westerners in Udon Thani were often

“uneducated” and many of them had their own children from previous relationships with Thai men; however, it was evident that most Thai-farang couples had no biological children together.

On the other hand, it was found that the marriage between retired Westerners and the local women in their mid-30s or older were more stable than the marriage between retired Westerners and the Thai women in their 20s (Koch-Schulte 2008). Furthermore, there was also a concern for the increasing number of pubs and bars in Udon Thani as there were only 2-3 bars in 2000 but the number increased to over 30-40 bars in 2006, in which, many local people expressed that they didn't want Udon Thani to become like Pattaya (Koch-Schulte 2008).

### **2.3 Migration of Western retirees to other destinations**

Though this study particularly focused on the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand, the author also provided the literature reviews of the IRM of Western retirees to other destinations, such as Spain, Mexico, Panama, and Malaysia. In this section, the author reviewed the (1) motivations for migration and characteristics of migrants, (2) cultural assimilation, mobility practices, and future migration plans, and (3) retiree-attraction policies of other retirement destinations, i.e. Malaysia and Australia.

#### **2.3.1 Characteristics of migrants and motivations**

The State Department of the United States revealed that the majority of 6.6 million U.S. emigrants were retirees, in which, around 550,000 of them were former

military personnel who decided to spend their later life in other countries, such as Panama, Mexico, and Costa Rica (Davidson 2011).

The comparative study of American retirees in Mexico and Panama found that (1) based on the analysis of Mexico's and Panama's 2000 censuses, there was a dominance of U.S. male retirees in Panama (67.6%), while the proportion of U.S. female retirees in Mexico was slightly larger (51.8%); furthermore, if comparing to the native seniors in both Panama and Mexico, the U.S. seniors had higher education, received higher incomes, and relatively depended on private medical facilities; (2) according to 17 interviews and 9 focus group interviews (68 respondents), U.S. retirees were unsatisfied with the U.S. politics and its foreign policies, administrative policies, and high tax on property; however, the pull factors of Panama were economic stability, the 20-year tax exemptions for newly constructed properties, the benefits and discounts package of the "pensionado visa"—i.e. pensioners visa, while the pull factors of Mexico included the ease to obtain visas for older migrants and no tariffs on imported goods as in accordance with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) since 1994 (Dixon, Murray, and Gelatt 2006).

In summary, Dixon, Murray, and Gelatt (2006) confirmed that their findings were similar to that of other previous IRM studies regarding the U.S. retirees in Mexico and Panama, in which, the common pull factors of those destinations included the proximity to home country, the availability of English-speakers, political and economic stability, good infrastructure, and desirable visa policy, tax policy, and property policy.

According to the 2007-2008 interviews of U.S. retirees in Mexico and Panama (N=46, 23 per each destination) regarding their healthcare experiences in those countries, it was revealed that migrants were satisfied with quality and price of physician services, home care, and dental care in those destinations; however, older migrants were still concerned for health insurance coverage and its availability, as well as, the quality of care, particularly the emergency services (Sloane et al. 2013).

The study of North European retirees in Spain (N=266) revealed that it was statistically significant that (1) Nordic migrants tended to be older than British and German migrants, (2) British and Nordic migrants possessed higher education than German migrants did, and (3) though all three groups of migrants generally had limited language ability, German migrants reportedly had lowest proficiency in Spanish (Casado-Díaz 2006).

The study of the British Household Panel Study (1991-2007) confirmed that there were statistically significant relationships between the later life migration of British citizens aged 50+ and two variables, including (1) individual desire to enhance individual lifestyle in their third age of life and (2) individual desire to find a place that is suitable for their deteriorating health (Evandrou 2010). Additionally, it was revealed by the study that crucial life events, such as partnership dissolution, e.g. from divorce or widowhood, could trigger late life migration and perhaps remarriages among older British citizens (Evandrou 2010).

On the other hand, the migration motivations of foreign retirees in Malaysia as based on the interviews of 26 Malaysia My Second Home program (MM2H) participants which comprising of 14 British and 12 Japanese revealed that the common push factors of their countries of origin were cold climate, high cost of living, health problems, as well as, the positive prior overseas experience which pushing them to retire abroad (Wong and Musa 2014a).

However, the common pull factors in Malaysia were reportedly including suitable climate, affordable cost of living, standard quality healthcare facility, availability of natural amenities, sports, recreational and entertainment opportunities, political stability and security, tranquility and simple life, hassle-free retirement scheme, ease of communication (i.e. good English language proficiency of the locals), friendly local people, and plenty of food and exotic fruits, etc. (Wong and Musa 2014a).

### **2.3.2 Assimilation, transnational practices and future migrations**

Despite mainly socializing within expatriate community, many North European retirees in Spain reportedly adopted some of Spanish ways of life (Gustafson 2008). Nonetheless, the study of British migrants in Spain revealed that regardless of the length of stay or the attachment to the host country, British migrants were unlikely to be integrated into wider Spanish society (O'Reilly 2000).

Regarding the mobility practices after the migration to a destination, it was revealed that instead of practicing excessive mobility like tourists did, retired migrants

preferred to limit their spatial mobility at destination; for instance, British migrants in France reportedly neither travel beyond their residential areas nor make several return trips to the UK (Benson 2011).

Based on 365 questionnaires of British retirees living in Costa Blanca, Spain, Casado-Díaz, Casado-Díaz, and Casado-Díaz (2013) summarized the mobility patterns or behavioral trends of how British retirees kept their family ties and relationships with people in the UK. Their strategies were including (1) making return visits to the UK, (2) having been visited in Spain by friends and relatives (VFR) from the UK, and (3) making use of the Internet and/or other means of communication to stay in touch with friends and family in the UK.

According to the findings, the majority of respondents returned to visit the UK 1-2 times by last year (54.5%) and spent around 1-3 weeks (36.7%) to see their relatives (78.4%) and friends (44.4%), in which, many of them stayed at friends'/relatives' accommodation (54%) or stayed at their own homes (20%) in the UK (Casado-Díaz, Casado-Díaz, and Casado-Díaz 2013).

In addition, most respondents reported that their friends/relatives used to visit them at destination (98.1%), and by last year they were mainly visited by their children/grandchildren (76.4%) who spent around 1-2 weeks with them (Casado-Díaz, Casado-Díaz, and Casado-Díaz 2013). Lastly, most retirees kept in touch with their friends/relatives every week via mobile phone (59.5%) and via the Internet (30.7%) (Casado-Díaz, Casado-Díaz, and Casado-Díaz 2013).



Green (2015) explored about life histories and motivations for migration among Western retirees in Penang, Malaysia and Ubud, Bali, he emphasized that the interpersonal relationships (i.e. couple relationships, transnational kinship ties, and property) have taken a significant role in shaping migrant's mobility practices.

First, regarding couple relationships, Green (2015) illustrated the case of Anna, a Dutch woman in her late 50s who flew to Ubud, Bali and rent a house from a female Dutch she knew in the Netherlands, Anna had to migrate to live in Ubud, Bali, Indonesia in 2008 in order to cut off the living expenses as she could no longer afford the living costs in the Netherlands after a bitter divorce from her husband in mid 2000s who was formerly in charge of providing at least two-thirds of her income.

Second, with regard to the influence of transnational kinship ties on mobility practices, Green (2015) brought the case of Peter and Allison, a married American couple in their 60s living in Ubud, Bali, Indonesia, in which, it was revealed that their future in Ubud and even their relationships were quite uncertain due to the fact that Allison didn't seem to feel settled in Ubud as she couldn't stand the hot climate and also she really missed her own grandchildren (biologically unrelated to Peter) in the U.S. whom she visited twice a year; while Peter, on the other hand, desired to spend most of the time in Ubud as he had less emotional connection to maintain transnational kinship ties with family in the United States.

And, third, regarding the influence of property ownership on migrant's mobility practices, Green (2015) brought the case of Ray, an early 60s Australian male retiree

living in Ubud with his Balinese wife and a 2-year-old biological daughter, in which, it was revealed that Ray still felt very emotionally attached to his two-story townhouse in Australia which he perceived to be a remark of his successful working life from his career in advertising, and he was thinking about returning to live there in the future for his daughter's education (Green 2015).

Furthermore, the studies about future migration plans of Western retirees and/or middle aged Western migrants were presented as follows.

Multinomial logistic regression of residential choices after retirement among working migrants aged 45 and above in France (N=4,336) in 2003 indicated that the majority of respondents preferred to stay in France after retirement; however, it was statistically significant that migrants would return if they have children living in the home countries (de Coulon and Wolff 2010). For some of those choosing mobile strategy of going back and forth between France (current destination) and their countries of origin, it was revealed that such decision was not significantly affected whether migrants having children at their home country (de Coulon and Wolff 2010).

In addition, Bolzman Fibbi, and Vial (2006) concluded from a survey of 274 Italians and 168 Spaniards aged 55-64 who living in Switzerland in 1994 that (1) the majority of Italian and Spanish respondents would continue staying in Switzerland after retirement, (2), the younger old migrants (aged 55-59), comparing to the older old migrants (aged 60-64), were more likely to partly live in Switzerland and partly live in home country (circulation migration) after their retirement, and (3) it was statistically

significant that the availability of at least one child at home country, as well as, the possession of good health would increase a chance of migrants returning to their home countries (Bolzman, Fibbi, and Vial 2006).

### 2.3.3 Retiree-attraction policies

The IRM of foreign retirees could particularly stimulate the local housing market of a host country and such investment was considered a ‘conscious element of a financial strategy for maximizing material wellbeing in late life’ of migrants (Casado-Díaz et al. 2004)

Douglas (2004) suggested that a host country could most benefit from younger retired migrants, not the frail older migrants who were likely to use up all their financial resources, particularly for medical treatments.

IRM destinations that could successfully recruiting younger retirees would gain several benefits, including (1) economic growth via job creations, and special taxes, such as sales taxes and property taxes; (2) improved local services in both public and private sectors; (3) less or no dependence from retired migrants on specific local services, such as social or public services, criminal justices services, and schooling; and (4) increased social capital at destination via social contributions and/or volunteering works of retired migrants who had valuable knowledge and skills (B. Douglas 2004).

With regard to the available retirement programs in other popular retirement destinations, the author reviewed the requirements and benefits of retirement visa programs in Malaysia and in Australia as follows.

In Malaysia, the 10-year period multiple-entry social visit pass visa under the Malaysia My Second Home (MM2H) program has been actively endorsed by the Malaysian government. Though, individuals could apply directly to the program by themselves, they could also apply via registered agents, in which, according to the MM2H official website, there were already 243 registered agents available as of April, 2016 (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia 2016).

Regarding the background of MM2H program, the program was initially known as “Silver Hair” program in 1996, and then in 2002 the program had been changed to “Malaysia My Second Home (MM2H)” (Wong and Musa 2014b, a). The MM2H program had been providing more privileges and flexibility to prospective applicants, including the provision of renewable 10-year social visit pass visa, more flexible property laws for foreign retirees, as well as, the abolishing of minimum age criteria for retirement visa in order to target the younger cohort of retired migrants (Wong and Musa 2014a).

Since, the minimum age requirement had been removed, the MM2H program has allowed participants to (1) bring their dependents, such as spouse and/or children (must be single and below 21 years of age) to live with them in Malaysia; (2) work part-time (20 hours/ week) in Malaysia, e.g. as a part-time lecturer or other non-teaching jobs; and (3) acquire properties in Malaysia (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia

2016). However, with regard to land ownership in Malaysia, “land is a state matter and it is important to check state laws before making any commitment . . . ,” so it implied that the purchasing of land in Malaysia could be prohibited in some states and otherwise (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia 2016).

However, despite its more flexible visa regulations, more beneficial property law and options, as well as, the tax exemptions either on the imported cars from abroad or a locally assembled cars in Malaysia (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia 2016), the MM2H program only received around 20,430 applicants from 2002 to 2011, while the number of retirement visa applicants in Thailand already surpassed 35,000 applicants by 2011 (Wong and Musa 2014a). In addition, according to MM2H program statistics during 2002-2015, the MM2H participants were the citizens of China (24%), Japan (13%), Bangladesh (11%), the UK (8%), Iran (5%), Singapore (4%), Taiwan (4%), Korea (4%), Pakistan (3%), India (3%), and others (22%), respectively (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia 2016).

Though the number of MM2H applicants had always been much lower than the number of retirement visa applicants in Thailand, its financial requirements allowed Malaysia to capture more economic benefits.

MM2H applicants aged below 50 years old had to provide financial proof of an offshore income of at least RM10,000 per month ( $\approx$  90,342 baht) and a credit balance of RM500,000 ( $\approx$  4.5 million baht) for three consecutive months in a bank statement (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia 2016). On the other hand, MM2H applicants

aged 50 and above had to provide the financial proof of an offshore income of at least RM10,000 per month ( $\approx$  90,342 baht) and a credit balance of RM350,000 ( $\approx$  3.16 million baht) for three consecutive months (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia 2016).

Then, upon the approval, the MM2H applicants aged below 50 were required to open a fixed deposit account of RM300,000 ( $\approx$  2.7 million baht) which could be withdrawn only after a period of one year but up to RM150,000 ( $\approx$  1.36 million baht) for approved expenses, such as house purchase, child education in Malaysia, and medical costs; however, those who purchased local property of at least RM1,000,000 ( $\approx$  9 million baht) in a fully paid amount and already granted ownership documents could ask to lower the initial fixed deposit amount from RM300,000 to RM150,000, in which, the latter amount must be remained throughout their participation under the MM2H program (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia 2016).

On the other hand, the MM2H applicants aged 50 and above could either choose to (1) show proof of the received pension worth at least RM10,000 per month ( $\approx$  90,342 baht); or (2) open a fixed deposit account of RM150,000 ( $\approx$  1.36 million baht) which could be withdrawn only after a period of one year but the minimum balance of RM100,000 ( $\approx$  896,694 baht) must be remained throughout their participation in the program; nonetheless, those who purchased local property of at least RM1,000,000 ( $\approx$  9 million baht) in a fully paid amount and already granted ownership documents could ask to lower the initial fixed deposit amount from RM150,000 to RM100,000 (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia 2016).

Therefore, if considering the approved number of 29,390 MM2H participants (2002-2015) and the aforementioned fixed deposit requirements for participants aged below 50 ( $\approx$  1.36 million baht) and that of participants aged 50 and above ( $\approx$  896,694 baht), it could be calculated that the MM2H program could have already injected around 26 – 40 billion baht into Malaysian economy.

Besides financial requirements, the MM2H applicants must also present (1) a medical report as it could be obtained from private hospital or registered clinic in Malaysia, (2) medical insurance (exemptions might be given to those facing difficulty to obtain medical insurance due to age or medical condition), and (3) “Personal Bond” (for those who apply via agents) or “Security Bond” (for those who apply directly by themselves), in which, the rate of Security Bond for Western citizens could range from RM1,500 to RM2,000 ( $\approx$  13,543 to 18,057 baht) depending on their nationalities (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia 2016).

On the other hand, in Australia, there were two types of temporary visa for foreign retirees, including “Investor Retirement Visa (subclass 405)” and “Retirement Visa (subclass 410)” (Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection 2016). Since July 2005, the newcomers could only apply for an “Investor Retirement Visa (subclass 405)” which relatively having more requirements while offering fewer rights comparing to the “Retirement Visa (subclass 410),” however, both types of visa could not lead to permanent residency in Australia (Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection 2016).

Under the “Investor Retirement Visa (subclass 405)” which granted a 4-year temporary stay in Australia, applicants must comply to the following requirements: (1) being 55 years old or above; (2) making a minimum designated investment in Australia, i.e. via the purchase of the non-transferable and non-redeemable 4-year-maturity government securities of AUD500,000 (≈ 13 million baht) if living in low growth area or AUD750,000 (≈ 19.4 million baht) if not living in low growth area; (3) showing proof of having minimum transferable assets of AUD500,000 (≈ 13 million baht) if living in low growth area or AUD750,000 (≈ 19.4 million baht) if not living in low growth area; (4) showing proof of having a minimum annual net income of AUD50,000 (≈ 1.3 million baht per year or around 107,827 baht per month) if living in low growth area or AUD65,000 (≈ 1.7 million baht per year or around 140,176 baht per month) if not living in low growth area; (5) applicants and their partners (if applicable) must have no dependent children and/or other dependent family members; (6) applicants and their partners (if applicable) must hold adequate health insurance to cover medical needs while staying in Australia; (7) applicants and their partners (if applicable) must not work full-time in Australia and the part-time working must not exceed the allowable 40 hours per fortnight (or 4 hours per working day); and (8) applicants and their partners (if applicable) must be of good health and character (Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection 2016).

On the other hand, there were much fewer requirements under the “Retirement Visa (subclass 410),” which granted a 10-year temporary stay for the



former retirement visa holders and their partners (if applicable) who had been granted the visa before July, 2005. The requirements for the “Retirement Visa (subclass 410)” were including (1) being 55 years old or above, (2) applicants and their partners (if applicable) must have no dependent children and/or other dependent family members; and (3) applicants and their partners (if applicable) must be of good character (Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection 2016). In summary, under the “Retirement Visa (subclass 410),” the visa holders would not have to purchase government securities or present the evidence of their minimum transferable assets or annual net income or even their health status; additionally, they could work freely in Australia as there was no restriction on working hours (Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection 2016).

In summary, if compared to Thailand’s retirement visa policy, the visa policies in Malaysia and Australia granted longer duration of stays and more incentives for foreign retirees. However, both retirement visa policies in Malaysia and Australia allowed the host countries to receive more benefits, i.e. larger financial requirements and the opportunity to recruit the retired immigrants into local labor force via the part-time work permits.

## 2.4 Conceptual framework of this study

Prior to the stage of data collection and data analysis, the researcher created the conceptual framework of this study (**Figure 2.6**) primarily based on the integration of the three stages of Extended Property Acquisition Model (Åkerlund 2013)—i.e. needs recognition, research and evaluation, and decision-making and post-acquisition behavior, and the four sets of factors associated with an act of migration from Theory of Migration (Lee 1966)—i.e. personal factors, push factors at origin, pull factors at destination, and intervening obstacles.

Lee's four sets of factors for migration were put into need recognition stage to explain how prospective migrants formed their migratory imagination and specifications of potential destination(s). Since "migration is selective" (Lee 1966), the "personal factors" of individuals are the key factors that decide whether he/she will become a migrant. Each individual of different personal factors or characteristics will differently respond to the sets of external factors, such as push-pull factors at origin, the push-pull factors at destination, and the intervening obstacles of migration.

In research and evaluation stage, migrants will seek to obtain more information about destination(s) by (1) conducting "at-home research"—i.e. staying at home country but obtaining relevant information via the Internet, property exhibitions, etc., (2) performing "on-site research"—i.e. traveling to have real experiences of the living at destination, and (3) obtaining information through the "relationships" with

professional mediators (e.g. property agents and lawyers), and social mediators, (e.g. friends, family members, and other expats met online or at expat club meetings. As a consequence, migrants will make an “evaluation of alternatives” by comparing the push-pull factors and intervening obstacles for migration of all potential destination(s).

In decision-making and post-migration behavior stage, the “purchase/renting decision of property at destination” will depend on (1) individual “resources, experiences, values” (micro factors) which already lied in the concepts of “personal factors,” and their perceptions on the “push-pull factors at origin,” “push-pull factors at destination,” and “intervening obstacles,” (2) the “relationships” with both professional and social mediators (meso factors), and (3) the “structural frameworks” at destination (macro factors), such as visa regulation, property law, taxation law, and local infrastructure.

Then, after migration to a destination, their post-migration evaluation and behaviors (future migration decisions) will be influenced by their ties to current destination (Haas and Serow 1993), in which, the author would explore their “well-being at destination” and “assimilation at destination.”

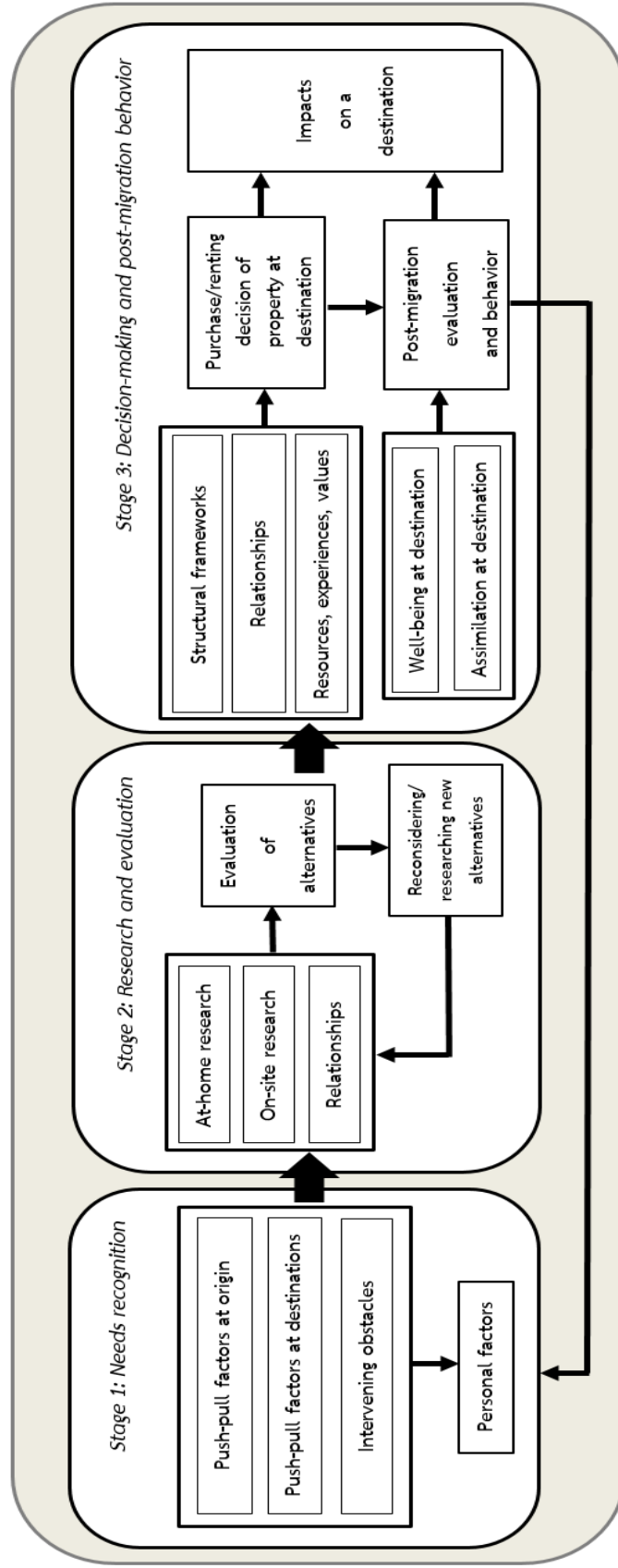
Wellbeing (i.e. subjective wellbeing) and assimilation (i.e. cultural assimilation) of migrants can reflect their living conditions and ties in the current destination (Thailand) through year(s) of real living experience. In other words, migrants’ perception of wellbeing and assimilation can be viewed as the reevaluation of the push-pull factors of a current destination.

Since migration to a destination by purchasing/renting property at destination, there will be “impacts on a destination.” This study will examine the economic, social, and environmental impacts caused by the migration of Western retirees to a destination (Thailand).

In addition, after analyzing all the research findings and revisiting relevant theories and concepts, the author develops an International Retirement Migration Model of Western retirees to Thailand (**Figure 8.1**), which is presented in **Chapter 8**.



Figure 2.6: Conceptual framework of this study.

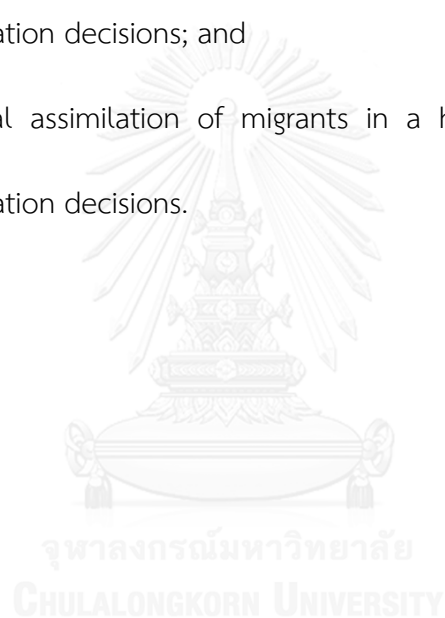


Source: Adjusted from Lee (1966), Åkerlund (2013), and Haas and Serow (1993).

## 2.5 Hypotheses of this study

Based on the reviews of related theories and concepts, as well as, the findings of previous studies, the hypotheses of this study are presented as follows:

- (1) personal factors or characteristics of migrants could influence migrant's future migration decisions;
- (2) subjective wellbeing of migrants in a host country could influence migrant's future migration decisions; and
- (3) cultural assimilation of migrants in a host society could influence migrant's future migration decisions.



## Chapter 3

### Research Methodology

**Chapter 3** presents the overview of research methodology, research ethics, research tools (i.e. self-administered questionnaire or SAQ and in-depth interviews or IDI), subjects of the study (i.e. Western retirees and Thai stakeholders), sampling methods, data collection (i.e. online SAQ, offline SAQ, and IDI), and data analysis of both SAQ and IDI results.

#### 3.1 Overview of research methodology

The author employed a mixed method—i.e. a less structured research method that combining both quantitative and qualitative research approaches (Pearce 2012) in order to enrich the interpretation of the findings and encounter the weaknesses of each method.

Both 330 self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) survey (i.e. 246 online questionnaire and 84 paper questionnaire) and 21 in-depth interviews of Western retirees were concurrently conducted—i.e. parallel data gathering (Östlund et al. 2011), during October 2015 – May 2016. Then, the results from quantitative and qualitative methods were combined at the end—i.e. component design (Östlund et al. 2011).

As for the study of the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the migration of Western retirees to Thailand and the planning of Thai public and private sectors for the phenomenon, the author conducted in-depth interviews (IDI) with 27 Thai stakeholders, i.e. 10 local citizens, 8 representatives from 6 private organizations, and 9 representatives from 6 public organizations.

### **3.2 Research ethics**

The Office of Ethics Review Committee for Research Involving Human Research Subjects (Health Science Group) of Chulalongkorn University had reviewed this research study and approved it on 28 September 2015 (Protocol No. 149.1/58), in which, the data collection was allowed to be performed since 28 September 2015 until 27 September 2016.

In accordance with the requirements from the Ethics Review Committee, the author provided the “participant information sheet” document, which is a two-page summary document of the research study, to all research participants. However, instead of only relying upon the participant information sheet, the author also provided a brief summary of this research project (i.e. research objectives, inclusion criteria of research participants, and author’s contact information) on the first page of both paper and online questionnaire.

Besides, for all interview participants, the author collected the “informed consent form” with their signatures to prove the voluntariness of their participation in the study. Furthermore, please note that the anonymity and confidentiality of all



research participants (i.e. both Western retirees and Thai stakeholders) were preserved throughout the research project.

### **3.3 Research tools**

Both questionnaires and interview questions were discussed as follows.

#### **3.3.1 SAQ of Western retirees**

The development, structure, and format of self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) for Western retirees (See **Appendix 1: Questionnaire survey**) were presented as follows.

##### **3.3.1.1 Development of SAQ**

The questionnaire questions were developed from the conceptual framework of this study, previous IRM studies, a review of concepts and measurements of subjective well-being and cultural assimilation.

In order to improve content validity and construct validity of the questionnaire, the author consulted with the six experts, including both Thai and non-Thai scholars, as well as, senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Public Health.

Furthermore, in order to test the reliability of the questionnaire, the author conducted a pilot study among Western retirees (N=30) at the Immigration Bureau in Bangkok (Chaengwattana Office) during 18 July – 14 August 2015. Based on the data from the pilot study, the author calculated the value of Cronbach's alpha to measure

“internal consistency” (UCLA: Statistical Consulting Group) of the opinion questions in the questionnaire. As a result, the analysis indicated that the questionnaire was reliable (alpha coefficient=0.893).

### 3.3.1.2 Structure of SAQ

The questionnaire consisted of three main parts, including PART 1 (personal information), PART 2 (migration to Thailand decision-making process and future migration plans), and PART3 (level of wellbeing and assimilation in Thailand)

PART 1 (Personal information) included the questions about:

- a) *demographic and socioeconomic characteristics*, i.e. age, biological sex, gender identity, nationality, race, home country, retirement status, age at retirement, education, former occupation, current monthly income, main source(s) of income, current marital status, last marital status before migrating to Thailand, number of children (all), and number of biological child with Thai spouse;
- b) *visa and residence in Thailand*, i.e. visa status, year(s) totally lived in Thailand, year(s) living in Thailand before retirement, place of usual residence (location), household size, types of residence, and ownership types of residence;
- c) *mobility practices*, i.e. mobility after migration to Thailand, time spent in Thailand last year, the number of visits and time spent in home country last year, and previous migration(s) to other countries prior to the migration to Thailand; and
- d) *expenditure and dependence on public school services and healthcare services in Thailand*, i.e. current monthly expenditure, major expenditures, number of

biological children attending Thai public schools, the use of healthcare services in Thailand, and personal health conditions.

PART 2 (Migration to Thailand decision making process and future migration plans) included the questions about the push-pull factors at home country, push-pull factors at destination, intervening obstacles of the migration to Thailand, ideal place for retirement, research and evaluation methods for the migration to Thailand (i.e. at-home research, on-site research, and relationships with social and/or professional mediators), and post-migration behaviors (i.e. future migration decisions, possible leave reasons, and potential next destination).

PART 3 (Level of wellbeing and assimilation in Thailand) included the questions about the subjective wellbeing of life as a whole, and the subjective wellbeing/ life satisfactions of seven subjective wellbeing indexes (i.e. standard of living, health status, personal relationships, social connections, personal security, environmental quality, and local infrastructure), as well as, the questions about cultural assimilation of Western retirees in Thailand (i.e. the acceptance of general Westerners in Thai society, the acceptance of themselves in Thai society, perceptions of Thai-Western intermarriage nowadays, persons whom they mainly socialized with, their participation in Thai cultural or social activities, their contribution of knowledge and skills to local community, language being spoken while staying in Thailand, Thai language proficiency and the eagerness to learn more about Thai language, knowledge of Thai culture and the eagerness to learn more about Thai culture, and the feeling of national identity).

### 3.3.1.3 Format of SAQ

The questionnaire was composed of 8 pages (including the cover page), in which, there were 32 questions about personal factors (PART 1), 12 questions about the migration to Thailand decision-making process and future migration plans (PART 2), and 15 questions about wellbeing and assimilation in Thailand (PART 3).

In most multiple choice questions, the author added “others (please specify.....)” option in order to provide a space for respondents to bring up other answers or new issues.

The 5-point Likert’s scale was applied in rating questions regarding (1) desirability level (i.e. very undesirable, undesirable, neutral, desirable, very desirable), (2) agreement level (i.e. strongly disagree, disagree, no opinion/uncertain, agree, strongly agree), (3) acceptance level (i.e. very poor, poor, neutral, good, excellent), (4) level of participation or contribution (i.e. hardly ever, occasionally, sometimes, frequently, almost always), (5) level of Thai language proficiency (i.e. very poor, poor, average, good, excellent), (6) level of knowledge of Thai culture (i.e. little to none, little, some, a lot, expert level), and (7) level of the feeling of own national identity (i.e. as non-Thai, more as non-Thai, as Thai and as non-Thai, more as Thai, as Thai).

In addition, as in accordance with the Personal Wellbeing Index (International Wellbeing Group 2013), the author applied 11-point unipolar scale (0=Not satisfied at all, 10=completely satisfied) to measure the level of subjective well-being in Thailand.

### 3.3.2 IDI questions for Western retirees

In-depth interview questions for Western retirees in Thailand (See Appendix 2: Interview questions for Western retirees) were structured in accordance with the questionnaire questions for Western retirees, which consisting of three parts: personal information; migration to Thailand decision-making process and future migration plans; and wellbeing and assimilation in Thailand.

### 3.3.3 IDI questions for Thai stakeholders

In-depth Interview questions (IDI) for Thai stakeholders (See Appendix 3: Interview questions for Thai stakeholders) included the following, (1) questions for local citizens regarding their perceptions on economic, social, and environmental impacts of the IRM of Westerners to Thailand;

(2) questions for the representatives from Thai private sector regarding the impacts of the IRM on their business and their strategic planning for the phenomenon; and

(3) questions for the representatives from Thai public sector regarding the impacts of the IRM in Thailand and their planning for retirement visa regulations (Immigration Bureau), long-stay and second-home tourism strategies (Ministry of Tourism and Sports and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), impacts on national healthcare systems and strategies (Ministry of Public Health), tax policy for retired expats (Ministry

of Finance), and land ownership policy for foreign buyers (Department of Land, Ministry of Interior).

### **3.4 Subjects of the study**

The inclusion and exclusion criteria of research participants (i.e. Western retirees and Thai stakeholders) were discussed as follows.

#### **3.4.1 Subject of the study: Western retirees**

Western retirees participated in this study (either in the questionnaire survey or interview session) were subjected to comply with these inclusion criteria:

- (a) being male or female aged 50 years old and above (please note that 50 is the required minimum age to apply for a retirement visa in Thailand);
- (b) retired already or currently being in retirement transition. The retired persons in this study were those who:
  - (1) verbally or literally stated that he/she already retired, semi-retired, or were currently in retirement transition; or
  - (2) verbally or literally stated that he/she did not retire yet but later revealed that he/she was staying on Thailand's retirement visa, and/or already received retirement pension;
- (c) having been totally staying in Thailand for at least one year (either continuously or discontinuously). In addition, the one year criteria was

derived from the UN definition of “international long-term immigrant” (United Nations 2013a);

- (d) coming from 24 developed Western countries, listed by the International Monetary Fund (2013) and the United Nations (2013b). They are the countries in North America (i.e. Canada, USA), Oceania (i.e. Australia and New Zealand), Northern Europe (i.e. Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom), Southern Europe (i.e. Greece, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain), and Western Europe (i.e. Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and Switzerland). However, please note that the small developed countries in Southern Europe, i.e. San Marino and Malta, were not included in the study as there were only two retirees from San Marino and four retirees from Malta applying for Thailand’s retirement visa in 2014, while there were at least five retirees from each aforementioned 24 developed Western countries applying for the visa in 2014 (Immigration Bureau 2014b).

The exclusion criteria of the questionnaire respondents included (a) the violations of any of the inclusion criteria mentioned above, (b) the involuntariness to participate in this study, and (c) the failure to provide the answers to the questions in the questionnaire.

On the other hand, the exclusion criteria of interview participants included (a) the violations of any of the inclusion criteria mentioned above, (b) the involuntariness to participate in this study, and (c) the failure to provide a signed consent document after the interviews.

### **3.4.2 Subject of the study: Thai stakeholders**

The inclusion criteria and exclusion criteria of Thai stakeholders, including local citizens, representatives from Thai public sector, and representatives from Thai private sector, were discussed as followed.

The inclusion criteria for the local citizens included (a) being male or female aged 20 and above, and (b) currently sharing the same local community with Western retirees, keeping in touch with Western retirees, and/or being a family member of Western retirees.

The inclusion criteria for the representatives from Thai private sector included (a) being male or female aged 20 and above, and (b) currently working in IRM related business and/or tourism-related business, such as accommodation and property business, private hospital business, and visa and legal consulting business.

The inclusion criteria for the representatives from Thai public sector included (a) being male or female aged 20 and above, and (b) working in the Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Finance, and the Department of Land (Ministry of Interior).



On the other hand, the exclusion criteria of the Thai stakeholders included (a) the violations of any inclusion criteria mentioned above; (b) the involuntariness to participate in this study; and (c) the failure to provide a signed consent document after the interviews.

### 3.5 Sampling methods

The sampling methods for (1) the SAQ survey of Western retirees, (2) the IDI of Western retirees, and (3) the IDI of Thai stakeholders, were discussed as follows.

#### 3.5.1 Sampling method: SAQ survey of Western retirees

The author estimated the populations of Western retirees from 24 developed countries based on the immigration statistics of Thailand's retirement visa applications in 2014, in which, there were 45,210 Western retirees (i.e. 41,875 males and 3,335 females) currently living in Thailand (Immigration Bureau 2014b).

However, in reality, the number of Western retirees could be larger than 45,210 persons as some of them might stay on other types of visa (e.g. Thai spouse visa, Business visa, and 90-day tourist visa), or even received permanent residence permit.

Based on Yamane's sample size formula (Israel 1992), the sample size of this study should be 397 (95% confidence level). The calculation is presented as follows.

From the equation:

$$n = \frac{N}{(1 + N(e)^2)}$$

**Note:** n=sample size, N=size of population, and e=the level of precision

So, if  $N=45,210$  and  $e=0.05$  (95% confidence level), then

$$n = \frac{45,210}{(1 + 45,210(0.05)^2)} = 396.492$$

Since it is impossible to have a randomly selected samples due to the limitations of time, cost, and the lack of effective channels to reach all Western retirees in Thailand nationwide, the author then firstly attempted to employ quota sampling method—i.e. “a non-probability sampling technique wherein the assembled sample has the same proportions of individuals as the entire population with respect to known characteristics, traits or focused phenomenon” (Explorable.com Sep 1, 2009), by using the countries of origin of retired Western applicants as population subgroups.

According to the 2014 data, Western retirees who applied for Thailand’s retirement visa in Thailand came from the UK (19.6%), the U.S. (15.4%), Germany (12.9%), Switzerland (7.7%), France (6.9%), Australia (6.6%), Norway (6.3%), Netherlands (5.1%), Sweden (4.9%), and others (14.6%).

Therefore, if the author would like to achieve 397 samples that were proportionally corresponded to the approximated number of Western retirees by countries of origin in 2014, this study should have the respondents who came from the UK ( $n=78$ ), the U.S. ( $n=61$ ), Germany ( $n=51$ ), Switzerland ( $n=31$ ), France ( $n=27$ ), Australia ( $n=26$ ), Norway ( $n=25$ ), Netherlands ( $n=20$ ), Sweden ( $n=20$ ), and others ( $n=58$ ).

However, during October 2015 – May 2016, there were only 330 questionnaires being collected, in which, the respondents were from the UK ( $n=87$ ), the US ( $n=107$ ),

Germany (n=29), Switzerland (n=8), France (n=8), Australia (n=29), Norway (n=6), Netherlands (n=9), Sweden (n=14), and others (n=33). In other words, only the respondents from Australia, the UK, and the U.S. exceeded their quotas, while the rest were below their quotas.

### **3.5.2 Sampling method: IDI of Western retirees**

The author employed snowball sampling method—“a nonprobability sampling method, often employed in field research, whereby each person interviewed may be asked to suggest additional people for interviewing” (Babbie 2010), in which, the author interviewed 21 Western retirees in Nan (2), Pattaya (4), and Chiang Mai (15) during October 2015 – February 2016. The author managed to interview those Western retirees through the help of her known persons (i.e. both Thais and Westerners).

There were two retired couples (i.e. one British couple and one American couple) participating in this interview session. In addition, there were 11 IDI participants who also took part in the SAQ survey.

### **3.5.3 Sampling method: IDI of Thai stakeholders**

The author adopted both snowball sampling method and purposive (judgmental) sampling method—“a type of nonprobability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher’s judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative” (Babbie 2010), for recruiting Thai stakeholders into the study.

### 3.6 Data collection

Data collection process of self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) of Western retirees, in-depth interviews (IDI) of Western retirees, and in-depth interviews (IDI) of Thai stakeholders were discussed below.

#### 3.6.1 Data collection: SAQ survey of Western retirees

The author distributed both online SAQ and offline SAQ, together with “participant information sheets” (i.e. a two-page summary of research study) to Western retirees in Thailand from October 2015 until May 2016. The voluntariness, confidentiality, and dignity of all questionnaire respondents were preserved throughout the study.

##### 3.6.1.1 Online SAQ

The author distributed online SAQ by posting the URL or web address of the questionnaire on 13 online expat forums (**Table 3.1**). Based on the number of views and the number of replies by others, it could be stated that this study had received good attentions from the online expat community.

Besides, the author asked three expats clubs, i.e. Chiang Mai Expats Club (CEC), Pattaya City Expats Club (PCEC), and Udon Thani Expats Club, to help advertise the questionnaire via their online newsletters.

As a result, there were 246 online responses being collected during October 2015 – May 2016.

Table 3.1: Online questionnaire distribution: expat forum websites.

#	Expat forum websites	Main audience	Posted since	# of topic views	# of total replies	# of replies by others
1	Udonmap.com	Expats in Udon Thani	November 4, 2015	2,359	21	11
2	Huahinforum.com	Expats in Hua Hin	November 4, 2015	2,446	24	13
3	Chickynet.com	Female expats in Thailand	November 16, 2015	25	5	3
4	Pattayataalk.com	Expats in Pattaya	December 4, 2015	1,053	19	13
5	Udon-expat-living.net	Expats in Udon Thani	February 9, 2016	67	4	2
6	KhonKaenforum.net	Expats in Khon Kaen	February 9, 2016	1,037	11	8
7	Udontalk.com	Expats in Udon Thani	February 10, 2016	757	25	19
8	Chiangraities.com	Expats in Chiang Rai	March 6, 2016	529	14	11
9	Korat-info.com	German expats in Nakhon Ratchasima	March 6, 2016	704	10	6
10	Thai360.com	Expats in Thailand	March 7, 2016	686	23	21
11	Korat-fart.com	Expats in Nakhon Ratchasima	March 7, 2016	98	2	1
12	Teakdoor.com	Expats in Thailand	March 8, 2016	2,543	111	99
13	Nittaya.de	German Expats in Thailand	April 27, 2016	822	13	11
<b>Total</b>				13,126	282	218

Note: Information as of 4 May, 2016

Source: The author.

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### 3.6.1.2 Offline SAQ

Hundreds of offline or paper SAQ were distributed to the Immigration Bureau offices in major tourism cities/provinces, including Pattaya, Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Hua Hin, Phuket, Udon Thani, and Samui. Since the author was told by the immigration officers in Bangkok that the immigration would prefer not to let outsiders distribute any materials at their work place, the offline SAQ then were instead distributed to

Western retirees by the immigration police and student interns there. The author had been keeping close contact with all key distributors at each immigration office.

The main reason for choosing the immigration offices to be the centers for offline questionnaire distribution was particularly because all retired foreign residents would generally have to visit the immigration office nearest to their place of usual residence several times a year; for example, for submitting annual visa extension, and for notifying their stays in every 90 days.

Nonetheless, besides the distribution of the offline SAQ to immigration offices, the author distributed five paper SAQ to Western retirees via her known persons.

As a result, the author managed to collect 84 hard copy responses in total.

### **3.6.2 Data collection: IDI of Western retirees**

This study relied upon face-to-face in-depth interviews with Western retirees at places where they tended to gather and/or visit at most, including a golf course clubhouse, restaurants, hotels (i.e. coffee shop and in front of international seminar venues), as well as, at their residence, in case of the access was allowed.

From October – December 2015, the author interviewed 21 Western retirees from Nan, Pattaya, and Chiang Mai. Prior to the interviews, the author introduced herself, briefly explained about the research study, as well as, gave “personal information sheet” (a two-page summary of the research study), along with the “informed consent form” to the interviewees.

To encourage participants to feel as comfortable as possible while speaking of any particular issues, the conversations were purposefully not recorded. Instead, the author took notes answers and had them verified by each participant. The interviews lasted about 30-120 minutes, in which, all of interview participants submitted their signed consent forms to the author.

### **3.6.3 Data collection: IDI of Thai stakeholders**

From October 2015 – February 2016, the author interviewed 27 Thai stakeholders from Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Nan, Pattaya, and Udon Thani, including 10 local citizens, eight representatives from six private organizations, and nine representatives from six public organizations.

The interviews of Thai stakeholders lasted about 10-90 minutes. Most of the interviews were done face-to-face at their places/organizations, while some interviews were conducted via telephone. All of them were informed of the study in both written and verbal forms. Consent forms were attained from all interviewees.

## **3.7 Data analysis**

The data analysis relied upon the conceptual framework shown in **Figure 2.6**. The methods of quantitative and qualitative data analyses were discussed as follows.

### **3.7.1 Quantitative data analysis**

Operational variables and definitions, and the statistics used for the quantitative data analysis were discussed below.

### 3.7.1.1 Operational variables and definitions

Table 3.2 illustrated the conceptual variables, nominal variables, and the operational variables and definitions used in this study.

**Table 3.2: Conceptual variables, nominal variables, and operational variables and definitions**

Conceptual variable	Nominal variables	Operational variables and definitions
Personal factor	Age	Age of respondents.
	Sex	There were two operational variables regarding sex of respondents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Biological sex means the sex at birth of respondents.</li> <li>- Gender identity means the personal inner senses and experiences about own gender.</li> </ul>
	Nationality	Nationality of respondent, either obtaining by birth or naturalization.
	Race	Race means a group of populations related by common descent or heredity.
	Home country	Home country means the country of origin of the respondent where he/she was born and/or raised.
	Marital status	There were two operational variables regarding marital status, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current marital status</li> <li>- Last marital status before migrating to Thailand</li> </ul>
	Number of children	There were three operational variables regarding the number of children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How many children do you have (including biological children, adopted children, and/or step-children)?</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How many biological children do you have with a Thai spouse?</li> </ul>
	<b>Income</b>	<p>There were two operational variables regarding the income of respondent, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Your current monthly income</li> <li>- Main source(s) of income while in Thailand (more than 1 answer allowed)</li> </ul>
	<b>Education</b>	Highest educational attainment means the highest educational level received by the respondent.
	<b>Retirement status</b>	Retirement status of a respondent.
	<b>Former occupation</b>	What is your main occupation before retirement?
	<b>Years lived in Thailand</b>	<p>There were two operational variables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How long have you already lived in Thailand? (total years lived in Thailand)</li> <li>- Did you ever live in Thailand for at least one year before your retirement?</li> </ul>
	<b>Visa status</b>	Visa status of a respondent.
	<b>Place of usual residence</b>	<p>There were three questions related to the place of usual residence of a respondent, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Place of usual residence in Thailand</li> <li>- Type of the place of usual residence in Thailand</li> <li>- Type of the ownership of place of usual residence in Thailand</li> </ul>
	<b>Household size</b>	Household size of a respondent while living in Thailand
	<b>Mobility practices</b>	<p>There were five operational variables regarding the mobility practices of respondents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Besides Thailand, did you have the experience of living in any country other than your country of origin for at least a one-year period?</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- While living in Thailand, did you ever change your place of usual residence? (More than 1 answer allowed).</li> <li>- How long did you stay in Thailand last year?</li> <li>- How many times did you visit your home country last year?</li> <li>- How long did you stay in your home country last year?</li> </ul>
	<b>Expenditure</b>	<p>There were two operational variables related to the expenditure of respondents in Thailand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Total monthly expenditure while living in Thailand.</li> <li>- Major expenditures while in Thailand (More than 1 answer allowed)?</li> </ul>
	<b>Dependence on Thai public school services</b>	<p>There was one operational variable regarding the dependence on Thai public services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How many of your biological children attend public schools/ universities in Thailand?</li> </ul>
	<b>Dependence on health care services in Thailand</b>	<p>There were two operational variables about the dependence on healthcare services in Thailand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Which sector of healthcare services do you mainly use while in Thailand?</li> <li>- Do you have any chronic diseases or risky health conditions?</li> </ul>
<b>Push-pull factors at origin</b>	<b>Push-pull factors at origin</b>	<p>How do you perceive these factors in your home country? (Please rate each of the following items on a 1-5 rating scale, while 1=Very undesirable, 2=Undesirable, 3=Neutral, 4=Desirable, and 5=Very desirable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost of living</li> <li>- Climate</li> <li>- Healthcare facilities</li> <li>- Sports, recreation, and entertainment opportunities</li> <li>- Natural and cultural amenities</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food</li> <li>- Lifestyle</li> <li>- Language</li> <li>- Culture</li> <li>- People</li> <li>- Infrastructure</li> <li>- Life security and crime rates</li> <li>- Political stability</li> <li>- Economic stability</li> <li>- Other (Please specify.....)</li> </ul>
Push-pull factors at destination	Ideal place for retirement	Which country is your ideal place for retirement? (More than 1 answer allowed)
	Push-pull factors in Thailand	<p>How do you perceive these factors in Thailand? (Please rate each of the following items on a 1-5 rating scale, while 1=Very undesirable, 2=Undesirable, 3=Neutral, 4=Desirable, and 5=Very desirable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost of living</li> <li>- Climate</li> <li>- Healthcare facilities</li> <li>- Sports, recreation, and entertainment opportunities</li> <li>- Natural and cultural amenities</li> <li>- Local/Thai food</li> <li>- Local/Thai lifestyle</li> <li>- Local/Thai language</li> <li>- Local/Thai culture</li> <li>- Local/Thai people</li> <li>- Local/Thailand's infrastructure</li> <li>- Life security and crime rates</li> <li>- Thailand's visa policy</li> <li>- Thailand's property policies for foreign buyers</li> <li>- Thailand's tax scheme for permanent foreign residents</li> <li>- Political stability</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economic stability</li> <li>- Other (Please specify.....)</li> </ul>
<b>Intervening obstacles</b>	<b>Intervening obstacles for the migration to Thailand</b>	<p>To what extent do you agree that these intervening factors impede or delay your migration to Thailand? (Please rate each of the following items on a 1-5 rating scale, while 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=No opinion/Uncertain, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Distance</li> <li>- Unfamiliarity/ignorance of Thai laws and regulations</li> <li>- Language and cultural difference</li> <li>- Political instability in Thailand</li> <li>- Others (please specify.....)</li> </ul>
<b>At-home research</b>	<b>At-home research</b>	When you were in your home country, how could you obtain information about retirement migration in Thailand? (More than 1 answer allowed)
<b>On-site research</b>	<b>On-site research</b>	<p>There were two operational variables related to the on-site research, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Did you ever visit Thailand before migrating to the country?</li> <li>- What was/were the purpose(s) of your previous visits to Thailand before your migration to the country? (More than 1 answer allowed)</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b>	<b>Relationships with professional and social mediators</b>	<p>There were two operational variables regarding the relationships with professional mediators and/or social mediators in obtaining necessary information for migration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When you were in your home country, how could you obtain information about retirement migration in Thailand? (More than 1 answer allowed)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who influenced and/or facilitated your final decision to purchase a freehold/leasehold dwelling in Thailand? (More than 1 answer allowed)</li> </ul>
<b>Structural frameworks</b>	<b>Structural frameworks in Thailand</b>	Which structural frameworks did you consider when you made your final decision to purchase a freehold/leasehold dwelling in Thailand? (More than 1 answer allowed)
<b>Wellbeing at destination</b>	<b>Subjective wellbeing in Thailand of life as a whole, and of particular domains of life, including</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standard of living</li> <li>- Health status</li> <li>- Personal relationships</li> <li>- Social connections</li> <li>- Personal security</li> <li>- Environmental quality</li> <li>- Local infrastructure</li> </ul>	<p>There were eight operational variables about the subjective wellbeing in Thailand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How satisfied are you with your life as a whole in Thailand?</li> <li>- How satisfied are you with your standard of living in Thailand?</li> <li>- How satisfied are you with your health status while living in Thailand?</li> <li>- How satisfied are you with your personal relationships while living in Thailand?</li> <li>- How satisfied are you with your social connections in Thailand?</li> <li>- How satisfied are you with your personal security in Thailand?</li> <li>- How satisfied are you with the environmental quality in Thailand?</li> <li>- How satisfied are you with the local infrastructure in Thailand?</li> </ul>
<b>Assimilation at destination</b>	<b>Feeling of acceptance in Thailand</b>	<p>There were two operational variables regarding the feeling of acceptance in Thailand, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What do you feel is the general level of acceptance of <i>farangs</i> or Westerners in Thailand?</li> <li>- What do you feel is the level of acceptance of YOU personally by Thai society?</li> </ul>
	<b>Intermarriage</b>	There were three operational variables regarding the intermarriage, including two questions about

		<p>marital status (<i>also mentioned in Personal factors</i>) and one question about the perception of Thai-Western intermarriages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current marital status</li> <li>- Last marital status before migrating to Thailand</li> <li>- Do you think the intermarriages between Thais and Westerners are common these days?</li> </ul>
	<b>Socialization</b>	Who are the persons you mainly socialized with while staying in Thailand? (More than 1 answer allowed)
	<b>Interactions with local people</b>	<p>There were two operational variables regarding the interactions between the Westerners and Thai society, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How often do you participate/ volunteer in Thai social and cultural activities arranged by the local Thai community and/or Thai public or private sectors?</li> <li>- How often do you contribute and/or exchange your knowledge and skills with the local Thai community and/or Thai public or private sectors?</li> </ul>
	<b>Thai language</b>	<p>There were four operational variables regarding the use of Thai language and Thai language proficiency, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Which language do you mainly use while staying in Thailand?</li> <li>- How do you rate your ability to listen/speak Thai language?</li> <li>- How do you rate your ability to read/write Thai language?</li> <li>- Do you want to learn more about Thai language?</li> </ul>

	<b>Thai culture</b>	There were two operational variables regarding the knowledge of Thai culture, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How much knowledge of Thai culture do you have?</li> <li>- Do you want to learn more about Thai culture?</li> </ul>
	<b>Feeling of national identity</b>	How do you identify yourself in terms of nationality?
<b>Post-migration evaluation and behaviors</b>	<b>Future migration patterns</b>	There were three operational variables regarding future migration patterns, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would you consider leaving Thailand in 5-10 years in the future?</li> <li>- Your possible reasons for leaving Thailand in the future (More than 1 answer allowed).</li> <li>- Which country do you think could be your next migratory destination after leaving Thailand? (More than 1 answer allowed).</li> </ul>

Source: The author.

### 3.7.1.2 Use of statistics

Quantitative data in this study was analyzed by SPSS™ 21.0, using (1) descriptive statistics (i.e. frequencies, percentage, median, and quartiles), (2) Pearson's Chi-Square test/ Chi-Square test for independence/ Chi-Square test of association, (3) Wilcoxon Signed Rank test (nonparametric statistics equivalent to the dependent t-test/ paired Student's t-test), (4) Kruskal-Wallis test (nonparametric statistics equivalent to the one-way ANOVA), and (5) multinomial logistic regression.

As both Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Shapiro-Wilk test revealed that none of the numerical variables in this study (e.g. age, years lived in Thailand, 0-10 subjective wellbeing score, and other rating questions) were normally distributed ( $p < 0.05$ );

therefore, it would be proper to use nonparametric statistics for the quantitative data of this study. Therefore, the author used (1) median, quartiles, and/or interquartile range (IQR) instead of using mean and standard deviation (SD); (2) Wilcoxon Signed Rank test instead of using the dependent t-test/paired-samples t-test; and (3) Kruskal-Wallis test instead of using the one-way ANOVA.

Frequencies and percentage were used to describe both numerical and categorical data of this study.

Median and quartiles were used to describe age, total year(s) lived in Thailand, year(s) lived in Thailand before retirement, age at retirement, subjective wellbeing scores, the level of desirability of the push-pull factors at home country and in Thailand, agreement level, acceptance level, participation/contribution level, language proficiency level, expertise level, and the feeling of national identity.

Pearson's Chi-Square test was relied upon for testing the associations between two categorical variables, including

(1) current marital status and other variables, including sex, last marital status before migration to Thailand, availability of biological child with Thai spouse, availability of years lived in Thailand before retirement, place of usual residence, and type of place of usual residence;

(2) nationality and place of usual residence;

(3) the feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand and other variables, including age, sex, nationality, and current marital status;



(4) the feeling of national identity and other variables, including age, sex, nationality, and current marital status; and

(5) future migration decisions and other variables, including (I.) personal factor variables (i.e. age, sex, nationality, education, income, marital status, visa status, place of usual residence, the availability of biological child/children with Thai spouse, total year(s) living in Thailand, and the availability of chronic disease or risky health conditions), (II.) subjective wellbeing variables (i.e. the subjective wellbeing of life as a whole, and SW1-SW7 of subjective wellbeing indexes), and (III.) cultural assimilation indicators (i.e. marital status, interracial children, biological the perception of intermarriage between Thais and Westerners, ability to listen/speak Thai, knowledge of Thai culture, participation/volunteers in Thai social or cultural activities, contribution/exchange of knowledge or skills with Thais, the feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand, and the feeling of national identity.

The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was used for comparing “two sets of scores that come from the same participants” and determining whether there has been “any change in scores from one time point to another, or when individuals are subjected to more than one condition” (Laerd Statistics). In this study, the author used Wilcoxon Signed Rank test to compare the desirability level of SAQ respondents toward the factors at home country and in Thailand. The author reported the number of (1) the respondents who perceived the factors at home as more desirable than such factors in Thailand ( $H>T$ ), (2) the respondents who perceived the factors in Thailand as more

desirable than such factors at home ( $H < T$ ), and (3) the respondents who perceived the factors at home and such factors in Thailand as having the same desirability level ( $H = T$ ). The Wilcoxon signed-ranks test was reported using Z statistic, in which, there would be a statistically significant difference of the desirability scores if the “Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) or the p-value of the Z statistic  $< 0.05$ .”

Kruskal-Wallis test was used for determining “if there are statistically significant differences between two or more groups of an independent variable on a continuous or ordinal dependent variable” (Laerd Statistics). In this study, the author used Kruskal-Wallis test to compare (1) the scores of the subjective wellbeing of life as a whole in Thailand of participants from different age group, sex, nationality, marital status, and place of usual residence, and (2) the scores of the subjective wellbeing of life as a whole, standard of living, health status, personal relationships, social connections, personal security, environmental quality, and local infrastructure in Thailand of respondents from different place of usual residence.

Multinomial logistic regression was used to predict a nominal dependent variable of future migration decision in 5-10 years, i.e. “leave” (leave Thailand), “not leave” (not leave Thailand/continue staying in Thailand), and “maybe” (may leave or may not leave). The ‘Not leave’ option was taken as the reference category.

The variables entered as independent variables in the multinomial logistic model were including age, sex, nationality, current marital status, place of usual

residence in Thailand, the subjective wellbeing of life as a whole, and the feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand.

Sex, nationality, current marital status, and place of usual residence were entered as categorical variables in the model. On the other hand, age, the subjective wellbeing of life as a whole (11 scale score), and the feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand (5 scale score) were entered as continuous variables in the model.

The regression results were interpreted by relative risk ratio (RRR). Furthermore, Pseudo  $R^2$  was also reported to reflect the Goodness of Fit of the model.

This study ensured that the analysis also reflected additional comments/explanations provided in the questionnaire by several SAQ respondents.

### **3.7.2 Qualitative data analysis**

This study relied upon these four criteria of trustworthiness of qualitative study suggested by Guba (1981): credibility, transferability/generalizability, dependability, and confirmability. To do so, the analysis followed these steps: (1) confirming the interview notes with all interview participants at the end of each interview in order to ensure that the received information were accurate and truly derived from the interviews, (2) summarizing each interview according to the structure of interview questions, (3) coding/labeling each interview answer back to the source of information, (4) extracting themes from the codes, and (5) comparing the qualitative results with the quantitative results presented in this study, as well as, previous studies.

In order to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of all interview participants, their characteristics were partially revealed and/or presented in a whole picture in the analysis to make it unable to identify their true identities.

These labels of each interview answer were also relied upon: (1) W01 – W21 referred to the 1<sup>st</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> retired Western interviewees, (2) LOC01 – LOC10 referred to the 1<sup>st</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> local Thai interviewees, (3) PRI01 – PRI08 referred to the 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> representatives from the Thai private sector, and (4) PUB01 – PUB09 referred to the 1<sup>st</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> representatives from the Thai public sector.

For the Thai stakeholders, their interviews were analyzed first and later translated into English.



## Chapter 4

### Personal characteristics and pre-migration decision-making process

**Chapter 4** presents personal characteristics or personal factors of research participants (i.e. IDI and SAQ participants), and their pre-migration decision-making process to Thailand. Both qualitative and quantitative results revealed their motivations to move out from origins, research and evaluation, potential destinations, and migration decision-making to Thailand.

#### 4.1 Personal characteristics of research participants

The characteristics of both in-depth interview (IDI) participants and self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) respondents were discussed as follows.

Under the topic **4.1.1**, the author presented descriptive statistics of the characteristics of IDI participants, as well as, identified six groups of Western retirees in Thailand based on their marital histories and migration patterns.

On the other hand, under the topic **4.1.2**, the author provided more information regarding personal factors/characteristics of SAQ respondents by presenting:

(1) descriptive statistics of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics (**Table 4.2**, **Table 4.3**, and **Table 4.7**), visa and residence in Thailand (**Table 4.4**), mobility practices (**Table 4.5**), and expenditure and dependence on services in Thailand (**Table 4.6**); and

(2) relationships of particular characteristics, i.e. current marital status and sex (**Table 4.8**), current marital status and last marital status before migration to Thailand (**Table 4.9**), current marital status and the availability of biological child with Thai spouse (**Table 4.10**), current marital status and the availability of year(s) of living in Thailand before retirement (**Table 4.11**), current marital status and place of usual residence (**Table 4.12**), current marital status and type of usual residence (**Table 4.12**), and nationality and place of usual residence (**Table 4.13**).

The study of a relationship between nationality and place of usual residence (**Table 4.13**) provided the information of locational preference among Western retirees of different ethnics in Thailand, in which, this helped explain their migration to Thailand decision-making process (i.e. specific objective **(1)** under the topic **1.1.2**).

As the majority of SAQ respondents married/partnered to Thais, the study of the relationships between current marital status and other factors could provide more insights about (a) migrant's characteristics and backgrounds (**Table 4.8**, **Table 4.9**, and **Table 4.10**), (b) chronological orders of their migration to Thailand (**Table 4.11**), and (c) residential preference in Thailand (**Table 4.12**).

The findings in (a), (b), and (c) could provide insightful information for explaining their migration decision-making process to Thailand (specific objective **(1)** under the topic **1.1.2**). In addition, the findings in (a) could further help explain their future migration plans (specific objective **(4)** under the topic **1.1.2**).

#### 4.1.1 Characteristics of IDI participants

**Table 4.1** revealed the information of age, sex, nationality, education, monthly income, current marital status, visa status, and place of usual residence of in-depth interview (IDI) participants (N=21) in a whole picture.

**Table 4.1: Characteristics of IDI participants (N=21).**

Variables	Categories and numbers					
Age	50-59	60-69	70-79	80 and above		
	2	8	9	2		
Sex	Male	Female				
	17	4				
Nationality	British	American	Australian	Dutch	Swedish	Canadian
	7	8	2	2	1	1
Education	Below Bachelor's		Bachelor's or higher			
	10		11			
Monthly income (baht)	Below 50K	50K-100K	>100k-200k	>200k	Not answer	
	1	7	7	5	1	
Current marital status	With Thai <sup>1</sup>	With non-Thai <sup>2</sup>	Single <sup>3</sup>	Divorced	Separated	Widowed
	7	7	0	3	2	2
Visa status	Retirement	Tourist				
	20	1				
Place of usual residence	Chiang Mai	Pattaya	Nan			
	15	4	2			

<sup>1</sup>Married to Thai spouse or have a live-in Thai partner.

<sup>2</sup>Married to non-Thai spouse or have a live-in non-Thai partner.

<sup>3</sup>Single (never married).

**Source: The author.**

The median age of IDI participants was 70, in which, the youngest persons were 59 and the oldest person was 92. The majority of IDI participants were males (n=17); held American nationality (n=8); had bachelor's degree or higher education (n=11); monthly received more than 100,000 baht (n=12) mainly from pensions and/or savings/investments abroad; stayed on retirement visa (n=20); married or had live-in partner (n=14); and currently lived in Chiang Mai (n=15).

With regard to the current marital status, there were including those who married/partnered to Thai (n=7), married/partnered to non-Thai (n=7), divorced (n=3), separated (n=2), and widowed (n=2). Two male participants, who were currently married to Thai wives, reportedly had married other Thai women before. In addition, one male participant, who was currently married to a non-Thai woman, stated that he used to marry a Thai women when he was in his 20s.

Based on the analysis of the marital statuses both before and after migration to Thailand of IDI participants (n=21), the author could categorize retired Western expats in Thailand into six groups, including (1) migrants who remained unmarried/unpartnered both before and after migration to Thailand (W05, W10, W11, W13, and W14); (2) migrants who firstly came to Thailand as unmarried/unpartnered persons, but later married/partnered to local citizens and ended up living in Thailand (W01, W02, W04, W17, and W18); (3) migrants who firstly came to Thailand as unmarried/unpartnered persons, but later married/partnered to non-Thais (W06 and W21); (4) migrants who returned to Thailand with their Thai spouse/partner whom they met abroad (W03 and W09); (5) migrants who migrated to Thailand with their non-Thai spouse/partner (W07, W08, W12, W19, and W20); and (6) migrants who migrated to Thailand with their non-Thai spouse/partner, but later remained living alone in the country (W15 and W16).



Homosexuality was also reported by IDI participants. W03 and W09 reportedly met their same-sex partners (males) at their home countries. They had long been in relationships before they decided to live in Thailand together.

#### 4.1.2 Characteristics of SAQ respondents

Table 4.2 revealed that the majority (54.2%) aged between 60 and 69, in which, the median age of SAQ respondents was 65, the youngest persons were 50, and the oldest person was 85.

Table 4.2: Age, sex, gender identity, nationality, race, and home country of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Variables	Categories and percentages					
Age	50-59	60-69	70-79	80 and above		
	23.6	54.2	20.3	1.8		
Sex (biological sex)	Male	Female				
	89.7	10.3				
Gender identity	Male	Female	Other	Missing		
	87.0	10.0	2.7	0.3		
Nationality	British	American	Australian	German	Swedish	Other
	26.4	32.4	8.8	8.8	4.2	19.4
Race	White/ Caucasian		Same as nationality		Other	Missing
	64.2		10.6		4.5	20.6
Home country	UK	U.S.	Australia	Germany	Thailand	Other
	24.8	31.5	7.9	7.9	7.3	20.6

Source: The author.

With regard to sex or biological sex, 89.7% of respondents were male and 10.3% of respondents were female. In general, gender identity of respondents were reportedly the same as their biological sex. Though, there were nine respondents

selecting “other” gender identity option but none of them elaborated more about their “other” gender identity.

About race/ethnicity of respondents, 64.2% identified their race as “White” or “Caucasian,” 10.6% identified their nationality as their race (e.g. British respondents identified their race as British), and 4.5% of respondents identified their race as Asian American, Black or African American, European, Chinese, Western, Arier/Aryan, Jewish, and Christian.

Regarding the nationalities of SAQ respondents, there were American (32.4%), British (26.4%), Australian (8.8%), German (8.8%), and Swedish (4.2%), while the rest (19.4%) included Dutch, Swiss, French, Norwegian, Canadian, Danish, New Zealander, Belgian, Irish, Finnish, Italian, Austrian, and Greek. Though the home countries of SAQ respondents were usually corresponded to their nationalities, 7.3% of them identified Thailand as their home country. Other countries being identified as home countries of SAQ respondents (20.6%) included Canada, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, South Africa, New Zealand, Finland, Italy, Belgium, and Austria.

**Table 4.3** revealed that 93.9% of SAQ respondents reportedly retired already. It is interesting to note that the respondents who stated that they did not retire yet (4.2%), “semi-retired” (0.9%), or currently had part-time jobs (0.9%) were all staying on Thailand’s retirement visa. In addition, it was revealed that the majority of respondents retired at age 50-59 (43.9%), in which, the median age at retirement was 58 (min.value= 35, max.value= 78).

With regard to highest education attainments, SAQ respondents obtained lower than high school education (2.7%), high school (31.5%), bachelor's degree (34.8%), postgraduate degree (26.7%), and others (4.2%). Among those selecting "other" option (4.2%), their answers included "military academy," and "vocational training" with no further explanations/elaborations about those answers. Hence, the "other" category then should be remained mutually exclusive from other alternatives, as both military academy and vocational training could possibly take place at the secondary, post-secondary, or higher education level.

**Table 4.3: Retirement status, age at retirement, education, former occupation, monthly income, and main source of income of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Variables	Categories and percentages					
Retirement status	Retired already		Not retired yet <sup>1</sup>		Other <sup>2</sup>	
	93.9		4.2		1.8	
Age at retirement	Below 50	50-59	60-69	70-79		
	10.9	43.9	43.6	1.5		
Education	<High school	High school	Bachelor's	Postgraduate	Other	
	2.7	31.5	34.8	26.7	4.2	
Former occupation	Owner/ self-employed		Company officer	Military officer	Teacher	Other
	25.5		21.5	5.8	9.4	37.9
Monthly income (baht)	Below 50K	50K-100K	>100K-200K	>200K		
	9.4	43.0	35.8	11.8		
Main source of income*	Pension	Savings/investments abroad		Local savings/investments	Other	
	76.4	50.3		13.0	11.8	

<sup>1</sup>Though reportedly not retired yet, all of them stayed on Thailand's retirement visa.

<sup>2</sup>Semi-retired (0.9%), retired but still working part-time jobs (0.9%).

\*More than one answer is possible.

**Source: The author.**

Former occupations of SAQ respondents included business owner or self-employed (25.5%), company officer (21.5%), military officer (5.8%), teacher/lecturer (9.4%), and others (37.9%). Other former occupations (37.9%) included engineering

professional, software developer, government official, UN official, police officer, editor/journalist, medical doctor, nurse, information technology (IT) specialist, biologist, sea captain, marine surveyor, fireman, postman/postal clerk, finance professional, banker, hotel manager, travel agent, real estate agent, judge, attorney, legal support specialist, business system analyst, consultant, researcher, librarian, artist, electrician, machinist, mechanic, carpenter, construction technician/worker, airport ground staff, taxi driver, railroad employee, and housewife.

Regarding the income of respondents, the majority (43%) received around 50,000 to 100,000 baht per month, while 9.4% received less than 50,000 baht a month, 35.8% received more than 100,000 baht to 200,000 baht monthly, and 11.8% received more than 200,000 baht a month. In other words, 90.6% received 50,000 baht or more income per month. In addition, their main source(s) of income included pension (76.4%), savings or investments abroad (50.3%), local savings or investments (13%), and other sources (11.8%), i.e. business abroad and local business.

**Table 4.4** illustrated visa status, years of living in Thailand, and other factors to the place of usual residence in Thailand of SAQ respondents.

The majority of respondents (79.7%) reportedly stayed on retirement visa, while others had Thai spouse visa (12.4%), 90-day tourist visa (4.5%), business visa (1.5%), and others (1.8%). Other visa status (1.8%) included a permanent resident (n=1), and “Non-Immigration visa type O” (n=5) which could cover retirement, child support, and family visit; hence, this option should remain mutually exclusive from others.

With regard to the number of years SAQ respondents totally living in Thailand, 42.4% totally lived in Thailand for at least 1 year to 5 years, 31.8% lived here more than 5 years to 10 years, and 25.8% already lived in Thailand more than 10 years. The median of the number of years that respondents totally living in Thailand was 7 (min=1, max=47).

On the other hand, regarding the number of year(s) spent in Thailand before retirement, 67% reportedly never lived in Thailand for a year or more before their retirement; however, before their retirement, 21.8% used to live in Thailand for 1 to 5 years, 6.4% used to live in Thailand more than 5 years to 10 years, and 4.8% used to live in Thailand more than 10 years. Therefore, the median of the number of years that respondents spent in Thailand before their retirement was 0 (min=0, max=30).

**Table 4.4: Visa status, number of years living in Thailand, and other factors related to place of usual residence in Thailand of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Variables	Categories and percentages					
Visa status	Retirement	Thai spouse	Tourist	Business	Other	
	79.7	12.4	4.5	1.5	1.8	
Total years lived in TH	1-5 yrs	More than 5 to 10 yrs		More than 10 yrs		
	42.4	31.8		25.8		
Years in TH before retirement	None	1-5 yrs	>5 - 10 yrs	>10 yrs		
	67.0	21.8	6.4	4.8		
Place of usual residence	Bangkok	Pattaya	Chiang Mai	Udon Thani	Hua Hin	Other
	10.6	15.8	25.2	14.5	9.4	24.5
Household size	1	2	3	>3		
	16.4	45.5	20.6	17.6		
Types of usual residence	Single-detached house		Condominium	Apartment	Townhouse	Other
	60.0		19.4	10.0	6.1	4.5
Ownership of usual residence	Freehold (life-time)		Leasehold (temporary)		Not sure	NA
	47.6		35.8		11.5	5.2

Source: The author.

With regard to the place of usual residence in Thailand, SAQ respondents currently resided in Chiang Mai (25.2%), Pattaya (15.8%), Udon Thani (14.5%), Bangkok (10.6%), Hua Hin (9.4%), and others (24.5%). Other places of usual residence (24.5%) included the provinces in *North Thailand* (i.e. Chiang Rai, Nan, and Phayao); *Northeast Thailand* (i.e. Khon Kaen, Nong Bua Lamphu, Nong Khai, Buriram, Roi Et, Loei, Ubon Ratchathani, Kalasin, Nakhon Phanom, Surin, and Mukdahan); *Central Thailand* (i.e. Nakhon Ratchasima, Chonburi (excluding Pattaya), Prachuab Khiri Khan (excluding Hua Hin), Phetchabun, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, and Samut Prakan); and *Southern Thailand* (i.e. Phuket, Ko Samui, and Nakhon Si Thammarat).

The majority of respondents (45.5%) had two-person household size, while 16.4% lived alone, and 38.2% had at least 3 persons in the household.

Regarding the types of their place of usual residence, 60% of respondents were living in single-detached houses. Other respondents were living in condominium (19.4%), apartment (10%), townhouse (6.1%), and the rest (4.5%) reportedly lived in penthouse, hotel, guest house, bungalow, semi-detached house, and pool villa. Therefore, it could be stated that the majority of respondents were currently living in houses with lands or more private areas, i.e. single-detached houses, semi-detached house, townhouse, bungalow, and pool villa.

With regard to the ownership type of their place of usual residence in Thailand, 47.6% reportedly stayed in freehold (life-time rights) properties, 35.8% stayed in leasehold properties, while 11.5% were unsure about the ownership type of their

residence, and 5.2% provided the answers that are not applicable, e.g. identifying the owner of the property or expressing dissatisfactions towards Thailand's property ownership policy.

**Table 4.5** revealed current mobility practices of SAQ respondents, i.e. the relocations after migration to Thailand, time spent in Thailand last year, times and duration of visiting home country last year, and the availability of previous migration experiences to other destination(s) before migration to Thailand.

**Table 4.5: Factors related to the mobility practices of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Variables	Categories and percentages				
Relocations of residence*	Not moved	Moved within Thailand		Moved internationally	
	33.0	54.5		13.3	
Time spent in Thailand last year	11-12 months	6-10 months	<6 months	No time	
	69.4	23.0	6.7	0.9	
Times visit home country last year	0	1	2	3	>3
	44.5	36.4	14.5	3.3	1.2
Time spent in home country last year	No time	<1 month	1-2 months	3 months or more	
	44.5	25.2	15.5	14.8	
Previous migration to other countries	Yes	No			
	48.8	51.2			

\*More than one answer is possible.

**Source:** The author.

With regard to the relocations of place of usual residence after migration to Thailand (more than one answer was possible), around one-third of SAQ respondents reportedly never changed their place of usual residence, while about half of them had moved to other residence within Thailand (i.e. moving within the same province and/or moving to other province), and 13.3% moved to live outside Thailand (i.e. returning to home country and/or moving to other countries, but then came back to Thailand).

During last year (2014), the majority (69.4%) of SAQ respondents reportedly stayed in Thailand for 11-12 months, 23% stayed for 6-10 months, while 6.7% spent less than 6 months, and 0.9% spent no time in Thailand.

About half of them reportedly visited their home country at least once last year (year 2014), in which, 25.2% spent less than a month at home country, 15.5% spent around 1-2 months, and 14.8 spent 3 months or more at home country. On the other hand, 44.5% of respondents reportedly never visited or spent time at their home country last year (year 2014).

Regarding previous migration experiences to other destination(s) before migration to Thailand, 51.2% reportedly never lived for one year or more in other countries. On the other hand, before their migration to Thailand, 48.8% used to live for at least one year in other countries, such as Germany (n=20), the United States (n=16), United Kingdom (n=16), Saudi Arabia (n=14), Australia (n=12), Japan (n=12), Singapore (n=8), Vietnam (n=7), Philippines (n=7), South Africa (n=7), and Indonesia (n=7).

**Table 4.6** revealed the information regarding the expenditure, dependence of biological children on public school services, personal use of healthcare services, and personal health conditions in Thailand of SAQ respondents. The study found that the majority (56.1%) spent around 50,000 to 100,000 baht per month in Thailand, while 25.8% spent lower than 50,000 baht per month, 13.9% more than 100,000 to 200,000 baht a month, and 4.2% more than 200,000 baht each month.



Table 4.6: Expenditure, and dependence on public school service (via biological children) and health care services in Thailand of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Variables	Categories and percentages				
	Monthly expenditure (in baht)	Below 50K	50K-100K	>100k-200k	>200k
	25.8	56.1	13.9	4.2	
Major expenditures*	Accommodation	Housing costs	Health	Recreation	Other
	36.4	60.0	27.0	39.7	23.0
Biological children in public school	No/ None	1	2	3	
	88.8	7.0	3.6	0.6	
Use of healthcare services	Private service	Public service	Other		
	80.6	15.5	3.9		
Have chronic disease/risky health	Yes	No			
	29.4	70.6			

\*More than one answer is possible.

Source: The author.

In terms of their major expenditure in Thailand (more than one answer was possible), 60% mentioned housing costs (e.g. cost of utilities and household maintenance), 39.7% mentioned recreational and culture (e.g. package tours, spa treatments, and golfing), 36.4% mentioned accommodation rent fees/ accommodation installment payments, 27% mentioned health related costs (e.g. medical treatments, medical products/equipment, etc.), and 23% mentioned other expenditures, such as food (n=36), children's education (n=14), car purchase/ car insurance (n=17), transportation (n=4), and financial support to Thai wives and/or their Thai family members (n=4).

With regard to the dependence on Thai public school, only 11.2% stated that their biological children (either with Thai or non-Thai spouse) attended local public school or universities.

Regarding the dependence on local healthcare services, 80.6% of respondents reportedly used private healthcare, while 15.5% used public healthcare. The others (3.9%) were including those who used both public and private healthcare services and those who did not depend on any healthcare services (i.e. hospitals) in Thailand. For those who did not use any hospitals in Thailand, some of them revealed that they were currently still in good health, while others were reportedly unable to find valued health insurance in Thailand.

In addition, only 29.4% of respondents reportedly had chronic disease and/or risky health conditions, in which, most of them were chronic/ non-communicable diseases, such as hypertension (n=40), diabetes mellitus (n=19), cardiovascular/heart disease (n=17), high cholesterol (n=7), asthma (n=6), emphysema/chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (n=5), and bone disease (n=5).

**Table 4.7** revealed that 63% of SAQ respondents were currently married to Thai spouse or had Thai partners. However, before their migration to Thailand, only 24.5% of them had been married/partnered to Thais. Obviously, while the number of intermarriages/cohabitations between Thais and Western retirees rose dramatically after their migration to Thailand, the number of formerly divorced retirees (34.8%) and formerly single retirees (17.3%) shrunk accordingly.

Table 4.7: Current marital status, last marital status before migration, number of children (all), and number of biological child with Thai spouse of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Variables	Categories and percentages					
Current marital status	With Thai <sup>1</sup>	With non-Thai <sup>2</sup>	Single <sup>3</sup>	Divorced	Separated	Widowed
	63.0	11.5	7.3	11.8	3.6	2.7
Last marital status before migration	With Thai <sup>1</sup>	With non-Thai <sup>2</sup>	Single <sup>3</sup>	Divorced	Separated	Widowed
	24.5	15.8	17.3	34.8	3.6	3.9
Number of children (all)	No child	None	One	Two	Three	>Three
	20.9	5.5	16.7	32.4	11.8	12.7
Biological child with Thai	Never had Thai spouse		None	One	Two	Three
	24.2		56.1	13.0	5.8	0.9

<sup>1</sup>Married to Thai spouse or have a live-in Thai partner.

<sup>2</sup>Married to non-Thai spouse or have a live-in non-Thai partner.

<sup>3</sup>Single (never married).

Source: The author.

In terms of the number of children (including biological children, adopted children, and/or step-children), the majority (73.9%) reportedly had at least one child. However, only 19.7% had biological child/children with Thai spouse/partner.

**Table 4.8** revealed the relationship between sex and current marital status of SAQ respondents, in which, there was a statistically significant association between sex and current marital status ( $\chi^2=81.610, p=0.000$ ).

If looking at the statistics of male respondents (n=296), it was revealed that 69.6% of them married/partnered to Thais, 7.8% of them married/partnered to non-Thais, while 22.6% of them were unmarried/unpartnered persons.

On the other hand, If looking at the statistics of female respondents (n=34), it was revealed that only 5.9% of them married/partnered to Thais, 44.1% of them married/partnered to non-Thais, while half of them were unmarried/unpartnered.

Table 4.8: A relationship between sex and current marital status of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Variables	Current marital status					
	Thai <sup>1</sup>	non-Thai <sup>2</sup>	Single <sup>3</sup>	Divorced	Separated	Widowed
Sex						
Male (n=296)	206 (69.6%)	23 (7.8%)	22 (7.4%)	30 (10.1%)	11 (3.7%)	4 (1.4%)
Female (n=34)	2 (5.9%)	15 (44.1%)	2 (5.9%)	9 (26.5%)	1 (2.9%)	5 (14.7%)
Pearson Chi-Square	81.610***					

<sup>1</sup>Married to Thai spouse or have a live-in Thai partner.

<sup>2</sup>Married to non-Thai spouse or have a live-in non-Thai partner.

<sup>3</sup>Single (never married).

\*\*\*p<0.001

Source: The author.

Table 4.9 showed the relationship between last marital status before migration to Thailand (row variable) and current marital status (column variable). It was revealed that 56.1% of formerly single retirees (n=32), 66.1% of divorced retirees (n=76), and 53.8% of widowed retirees (n=7) later married/partnered to Thais after their migration. In addition, there was a statistically significant association between last marital status before migration to Thailand and current marital status ( $\chi^2=607.230$ ,  $p=0.000$ ).

Table 4.9: A relationship between last marital status before migration to Thailand and current marital status of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Marital status before migration	Current marital status					
	With Thai <sup>1</sup>	With non-Thai <sup>2</sup>	Single <sup>3</sup>	Divorced	Separated	Widowed
With Thai <sup>1</sup> (n=81)	77 (95.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.5%)	1 (1.2%)
With non-Thai <sup>2</sup> (n=52)	12 (23.1%)	37 (71.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (3.8%)
Single <sup>3</sup> (n=57)	32 (56.1%)	1 (1.8%)	22 (38.6%)	1 (1.8%)	1 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Divorced (n=115)	76 (66.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.9%)	37 (32.2%)	1 (0.9%)	0 (0.0%)
Separated (n=12)	4 (33.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (66.7%)	0 (0.0%)
Widowed (n=13)	7 (53.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (46.2%)
Pearson Chi-Square	607.230***					

<sup>1</sup>Married to Thai spouse or have a live-in Thai partner.

<sup>2</sup>Married to non-Thai spouse or have a live-in non-Thai partner.

<sup>3</sup>Single (never married).

\*\*\*p<0.001

Source: The author.

**Table 4.10** revealed the relationship between current marital status (row variable) and the availability of biological child/children with Thai spouse (column variable). It was revealed that among those who currently married/partnered to Thais (n=208), only 27.9% of them (n=58) had biological child/children with Thais. However, there were respondents who were divorced (n=2), separated (n=3), and widowed (n=2) retirees reportedly had at least one biological child with Thai spouse.

In addition, there was a statistically significant association between current marital status and the availability of biological child/children with Thai ( $\chi^2=29.506$ ,  $p=0.000$ ).

**Table 4.10: A relationship between current marital status and the availability of biological child with Thai spouse among SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Current marital status	Have biological child/children with Thai spouse	
	Yes	No/ None
With Thai <sup>1</sup> (n=208)	58 (27.9%)	150 (72.1%)
With non-Thai <sup>2</sup> (n=38)	0 (0.0%)	38 (100%)
Single <sup>3</sup> (n=24)	0 (0.0%)	24 (100%)
Divorced (n=39)	2 (5.1%)	37 (94.9%)
Separated (n=12)	3 (25.0%)	9 (75.0%)
Widowed (n=9)	2 (22.2%)	7 (77.8%)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.506***	

<sup>1</sup>Married to Thai spouse or have a live-in Thai partner.

<sup>2</sup>Married to non-Thai spouse or have a live-in non-Thai partner.

<sup>3</sup>Single (never married).

\*\*\* $p<0.001$

Source: The author.

**Table 4.11** revealed a relationship between current marital status (row variable) and the availability of year(s) lived in Thailand before retirement (column variable) by reporting number and percentage in current marital status (row variable).

Except for single retirees, the majority of the retirees married/partnered to Thais (66.3%), retirees married/partnered to non-Thais (68.4%), divorced retirees (87.2%), separated retirees (66.7%), and widowed retirees (66.7%), reportedly had never spent a year or more in Thailand before their retirement. Only the majority of single retirees (62.5%) used to spend a year or more in Thailand before retirement. In addition, there was a statistically significant association between current marital status and the migration to Thailand before retirement ( $\chi^2=16.697$ ,  $p=0.005$ ).

**Table 4.11: A relationship between current marital status and the availability of year(s) lived in Thailand before retirement of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Current marital status	Availability of year(s) lived in Thailand before retirement	
	Yes	No
With Thai <sup>1</sup> (n=208)	70 (33.7%)	138 (66.3%)
With non-Thai <sup>2</sup> (n=38)	12 (31.6%)	26 (68.4%)
Single <sup>3</sup> (n=24)	15 (62.5%)	9 (37.5%)
Divorced (n=39)	5 (12.8%)	34 (87.2%)
Separated (n=12)	4 (33.3%)	8 (66.7%)
Widowed (n=9)	3 (33.3%)	6 (66.7%)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.697**	

<sup>1</sup>Married to Thai spouse or have a live-in Thai partner.

<sup>2</sup>Married to non-Thai spouse or have a live-in non-Thai partner.

<sup>3</sup>Single (never married).

\*\* $p<0.01$

Source: The author.

**Table 4.12** revealed the relationships between current marital status (column variable) and two variables, including place of residence (row variable), and type of residence (row variable).

**Table 4.12: Relationships of current marital status and place of usual residence, and type of usual residence of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Variables	Current marital status					
	With Thai <sup>1</sup> (n=208)	With non-Thai <sup>2</sup> (n=38)	Single <sup>3</sup> (n=24)	Divorced (n=39)	Separated (n=12)	Widowed (n=9)
<b>Place of residence</b>						
Bangkok	21 (10.1%)	3 (7.9%)	7 (29.2%)	1 (2.6%)	2(16.7%)	1(11.1%)
Pattaya	32 (15.4%)	6 (15.8%)	4 (16.7%)	7 (17.9%)	2(16.7%)	1(11.1%)
Chiang Mai	30 (14.4%)	20(52.6%)	9 (37.5%)	17(43.6%)	3(25.0%)	4(44.4%)
Udon Thani	44 (21.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (10.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Hua Hin	17 (8.2%)	5 (13.2%)	3(12.5%)	3 (7.7%)	3(25.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Other	64(30.8%)	4 (10.5%)	1 (4.2%)	7 (17.9%)	2(16.7%)	3(33.3%)
Pearson Chi-Square	75.873***					
<b>Type of residence</b>						
Single detached house	154(74%)	14 (36.8%)	9 (37.5%)	9 (23.1%)	5(41.7%)	7(77.8%)
Condominium	19 (9.1%)	14 (36.8%)	11 (45.8%)	17 (43.6%)	2 (16.7%)	1 (11.1%)
Apartment	8 (3.8%)	6 (15.8%)	4 (16.7%)	10 (25.6%)	4 (33.3%)	1 (11.1%)
Townhouse	16 (7.7%)	3 (7.9%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Other	11 (5.3%)	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (5.1%)	1 (8.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Pearson Chi-Square	93.711***					

<sup>1</sup>Married to Thai spouse or have a live-in Thai partner.

<sup>2</sup>Married to non-Thai spouse or have a live-in non-Thai partner.

<sup>3</sup>Single (never married).

\*\*\*p<0.001

**Source:** The author.

According to **Table 4.12**, respondents married/partnered to Thai were living in Udon Thani (21.2%), Pattaya (15.4%), Chiang Mai (14.4%), Bangkok (10.1%), Hua Hin (8.2%), and other cities/provinces (30.8%). The majority of respondents married/partnered to non-Thai (52.6%), separated respondents (25%), and widowed respondents (44.4%) were living in Chiang Mai. Single respondents were mainly living

in Chiang Mai (37.5%) and Bangkok (29.2%). Divorced respondents were mainly residing in Chiang Mai (43.6%) and Pattaya (17.9%). None of single respondents, separated respondents, widowed respondents, and respondents with non-Thai spouses/partners were living in Udon Thani. In addition, there was a statistically significant association between current marital status and place of usual residence ( $\chi^2=75.873, p=0.000$ ).

With regard to currently marital status and type of residence in Thailand, the respondents married/partnered to Thais were living in single detached house (74%), condominium (9.1%), townhouse (7.7%), apartment (3.8%), and others (5.3%).

The majority of respondents married/partnered to non-Thais (52.6%), single respondents (62.5%) and divorced respondents (69.2%) were living in condominium or apartment. On the other hand, 41.7% of separated respondents and 77.8% of widowed respondents were living in single-detached house.

In addition, there was a statistically significant association between current marital status and type of residence ( $\chi^2=93.711, p=0.000$ ).

**Table 4.13** revealed the relationship between nationality and place of usual residence in Thailand of SAQ respondents.

According to **Table 4.13**, it was revealed that Chiang Mai was the most popular place of usual residence for British, American, and Australian respondents.

With regard to German respondents, 34.5% of them were living in Northeast/Isan provinces, while 44.7% of them were living in beach towns (i.e. Pattaya,



Hua Hin, Southern provinces, and a Central province). Only 21.3% of Swedish respondents were living in beach towns, i.e. Pattaya and Hua Hin.

There were 43.8% of the respondents of other nationalities (excluding British, American, Australian, German, and Swedish) living in beach towns (i.e. Pattaya, Hua Hin, Southern provinces, and a Central province)

In addition, there was a statistically significant association between nationality and place of usual residence in Thailand ( $\chi^2=62.280, p=0.045$ ).

**Table 4.13: A relationship between nationality and place of usual residence of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Variables	Nationality					
	British (n=87)	American (n=107)	Australian (n=29)	German (n=29)	Swedish (n=14)	Other (n=64)
Place of usual residence						
Bangkok	7 (8.0%)	15 (14.0%)	2 (6.9%)	2 (6.9%)	2 (14.3%)	7 (10.9%)
Pattaya	12 (13.8%)	13 (12.1%)	6 (20.7%)	5 (17.2%)	1 (7.1%)	15 (23.4%)
Chiang Mai	21 (24.1%)	39 (36.4%)	9 (31.0%)	3 (10.3%)	2 (14.3%)	9 (14.1%)
Udon Thani	14 (16.1%)	17 (15.9%)	2 (6.9%)	4 (13.8%)	4 (28.6%)	7 (10.9%)
Hua Hin	12 (13.8%)	3 (2.8%)	3 (10.3%)	5 (17.2%)	2 (14.3%)	6 (9.4%)
North <sup>1</sup>	5 (5.7%)	6 (5.6%)	4 (13.8%)	1 (3.4%)	2 (14.3%)	4 (6.3%)
Northeast <sup>2</sup>	11 (12.6%)	9 (8.4%)	2 (6.9%)	6 (20.7%)	1 (7.1%)	7 (10.9%)
Central (interior cities) <sup>3</sup>	3 (3.4%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (3.1%)
Central (beach towns) <sup>4</sup>	0 (0.0%)	4 (3.7%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.4%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.6%)
South <sup>5</sup>	2 (2.3%)	1 (0.9%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (6.9%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (9.4%)
Pearson Chi-Square	62.280*					

\*p<0.05.

<sup>1</sup> Northern cities/provinces except Chiang Mai.

<sup>2</sup> Northeastern cities/provinces except Udon Thani.

<sup>3</sup> Interior cities in Central region.

<sup>4</sup> Beach towns in Central region besides Pattaya and Hua Hin.

<sup>5</sup> Southern cities/provinces.

Source: The author.

## 4.2 Pre-migration decision-making process

The author examined the motivations to move out from origins, research and evaluation, potential destinations, and migration decision to Thailand of both IDI and SAQ participants.

### 4.2.1 Motivations to move out from origins

According to **Table 4.14**, the “desirable” factors at origins perceived by SAQ respondents included healthcare facilities, sports, recreation, and entertainment opportunities, natural and cultural amenities, food, lifestyle, language, culture, infrastructure, economic stability, and economic stability.

**Table 4.14: Desirability of factors at home country of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Factors at home country	Desirability level	
	Median score <sup>a</sup>	Interpretation
Cost of living	3.0	Neutral
Climate	3.0	Neutral
Healthcare facilities	4.0	Desirable
Sports, recreation, and entertainment opportunities	4.0	Desirable
Natural and cultural amenities	4.0	Desirable
Food	4.0	Desirable
Lifestyle	4.0	Desirable
Language	4.0	Desirable
Culture	4.0	Desirable
People	3.5	Quite desirable
Infrastructure	4.0	Desirable
Life security and crime rates	3.0	Neutral
Political stability	4.0	Desirable
Economic stability	4.0	Desirable

<sup>a</sup> Median scores of 5-scale rating questions, i.e. "how do you perceive these factors in home country?" (1=very undesirable, 2=undesirable, 3=neutral, 4=desirable, 5=very desirable).

Source: The author.

On the other hand, the factors at origins that SAQ respondents perceived as “neutral” included cost of living, climate, and life security and crime rates. In addition, SAQ respondents perceived people at origins as “quite desirable.”

If only considering quantitative results alone, it might seem that there were no factors at home that really pushed SAQ respondents to move elsewhere; additionally, the majority identified several desirable factors at home, such as beautiful natural amenities, excellent quality of healthcare facilities, and advanced infrastructure that were suitable for people of all age.

However, the qualitative findings from IDI participants, as well as, the additional comments from online SAQ respondents, revealed that the cost of living, climate, and life security and crime rates at their home countries were actually of their major concerns that triggered the thought of migration.

With regard to the push factors of the country of origin, the climate at home countries of IDI participants was reportedly “intolerable” during winter. Besides unpleasant climate, the high cost of living at home was also a major push factor, especially for retirees of moderate wealth. In addition, many retirees from North America mentioned high crime rates and low life security as their major concerns.

W15 said that he was upset most about low life security and war/nuclear threats in the U.S. Likewise, W01 said that his country (Canada) was not as safe as before due to the influx of foreign “mafia” coming to buy houses and lands in his country. Similarly to the UK, W06 were also upset with the influx of immigrants. W06

called his government “traitors” for letting foreigners own houses and lands, in which, he believed that this was greatly pushing native citizens away from their home.

The additional comments from online SAQ respondents regarding their concerns of life security and crime rates at origins were presented as follows.

The USA has some very beautiful country, i.e. mountains, rivers, lakes and beaches. The one problem I have with it now is crime and gang problems (SAQ respondent #12).

England is very different to how it was 50 years ago. Unfortunately, mostly negative. The influx of other cultures with different ideas of living, religion, values etc. has changed England/UK dramatically (SAQ respondent #83).

Besides the aforementioned negative circumstances in the country of origin, the personal characteristics of SAQ respondents, such as sex, life cycle (e.g. dissolution of marriage, and retirement), health status, and/or financial capability, were likely to somehow encourage later life migration of individuals.

According to sex, age at retirement, health status, last marital status before migration to Thailand, and current income of SAQ respondents as presented in **Table 4.2, Table 4.3, Table 4.6, and Table 4.7** under the topic **4.1.2**, it could be seen that the majority of respondents (1) were males (i.e. 89.7% were male retirees), (2) early quitted the labor force and were still in their active years of age when retired (i.e. the median age at retirement was 58), (3) were still healthy (i.e. 70.6% reported having no chronic disease or risky health conditions), (4) stayed or became unmarried/unpartnered prior to their migration to Thailand (i.e. 59.6% of them were

being single, divorced, separated, and widowed before their migration to Thailand), and (5) were of moderate wealth if staying at origins (i.e. 78.8% currently received around 50,000 – 200,000 baht as income per month).

#### 4.2.2 Research and evaluation

This section presented how IDI and SAQ participants obtained more information about Thailand via their at-home research, on-site research, and relationships with both social and professional mediators.

Both qualitative and quantitative results confirmed that Internet and friends/known persons were the main sources of information during their “at-home research” before migration to Thailand.

Consequently, the great majority of research participants reportedly did an “on-site research” to Thailand before migration to the country. The majority of both IDI and SAQ participants came to Thailand for amenity consumption or tourism, while some of them visited the country for productive activities, such as working and/or performing military duties in the past. Some of research participants used to live in Thailand for year(s) and/or married/partnered to local citizens.

**Table 4.15** illustrated how SAQ respondents obtained necessary information for their migration to Thailand via at-home research and on-site research, as well as, from their relationships with social and professional mediators at home and/or in Thailand.

Table 4.15: Factors related to the research and evaluation of the migration to Thailand of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Variables	Percentage
<b>At-home research*</b>	
Internet search by oneself	70.0
Attending exhibitions or seminars	1.8
Using professional consulting services	6.7
Spouse	17.0
Relatives	5.2
Friends/known persons	31.2
Other	7.3
Never searched for any information while at home country	13.3
<b>On-site research*</b>	
Visit Thailand before migrating to the country	93.6
<b>Purpose of visiting Thailand before migration*</b>	
Research for information about migration to the country	20.3
Tourism	70.6
Medical tourism	2.4
Visited friends/relatives	21.2
Visited Thai spouse/partner	17.0
Returned with Thai spouse/partner	11.5
Other	15.2

\*More than one answer is possible.

Source: The author.

While at home country, the majority of respondents mainly obtained the information about the migration to Thailand via the Internet (70%), friends or known persons (31.2%), spouse (17%); however, 13.3% of respondents reportedly never searched for any information about Thailand while they were at their home country. Few respondents reported using professional consulting services (6.7%) or obtained the information via exhibition or seminar attendance at home (1.8%).

In addition, 7.3% of respondents reportedly obtained the information about retirement migration to Thailand via Thai Consulate or Thai Embassy in their home country, Thai language class at home country, as well as, from books and other literature.

With regard to the on-site research, 93.6% of SAQ respondents reportedly used to visit Thailand before migration. The purpose of their visits included tourism (70.6%), visiting friends or relatives (21.2%), research for necessary information for the migration to Thailand (20.3%), visiting Thai spouse or Thai partner (17%), returning with Thai spouse/partner (11.5%), medical tourism (2.4%), and other particular reasons (15.2%), such as business/work visits, volunteering services, military duty, transiting to neighboring country (Vietnam), Buddhism, Thai music, and sex industry.

Likewise, all in-depth interview (IDI) participants reportedly did an “on-site research” by visiting Thailand before their migration, in which, the purposes of their visits were including amenity consumption/ tourism, medical tourism, work, and military duty. Besides the on-site research, several IDI participants did an “at-home research” via the Internet. While being at home country, one participant reportedly consulted property agents or lawyers about his migration plan to Thailand.

Before their retirement, W02, W03, W04, W13, W15, W17, and W18 used to live in Thailand for one year or more for work, business, and/or amenity consumption; additionally, all of them currently were and/or used to be in relationships with native

citizens. In addition, some of them reportedly used to be in relationships with more than one Thai spouses/partners.

Furthermore, the IDI participants who had never been in any relationships with Thais reportedly received the information about retiring to Thailand via their friends in home country or in the country of previous residence. One participant knew about retirement to Thailand from her relative.

#### 4.2.3 Potential destinations

According to **Table 4.16**, 89.4% of SAQ respondents cited Thailand as their ideal place for retirement. On the other hand, mainstream IRM destinations, i.e. Spain and Mexico, as well as, other retirement destinations, such as Italy, Malta and Malaysia, were seldom cited as ideal places for retirement.

**Table 4.16: Ideal retirement place(s) of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Variables	Categories and percentages						
Ideal place for retirement *	Spain	Malta	Italy	Mexico	Thailand	Malaysia	Other
	12.4	1.5	6.1	3.0	89.4	5.8	22.1

\*More than one answer is possible.

**Source: The author.**

In addition, other ideal places for retirement selected by SAQ respondents (22.1%) were: (1) developing countries in Southeast Asia, i.e. Philippines (n=12), Vietnam (n=7), Cambodia (n=3), Myanmar (n=2), and Laos (n=1); (2) developed countries, i.e. the U.S. (n=10), Australia (n=5), France (n=4), Portugal (n=1), New Zealand (n=1), the UK (n=1), and Singapore (n=1); and (3) other developing countries, i.e.



Panama (n=4), Uruguay (n=3), Ecuador (n=3), Chile (n=2), Costa Rica (n=2), Argentina (n=2), China (n=2), India (n=1), Columbia (n=1), Cuba (n=1), Fiji (n=1), Cook Islands (n=1), Paraguay (n=1), and Grenada (n=1).

In accordance with the SAQ results, the evaluation of choices of retirement destinations among IDI participants also revealed that Thailand was their top retirement destination. The IDI findings revealed that the low cost of living, greater opportunity to establish late life intimate relationships with local citizens, pleasant life security/crime rates, relatively high level of country development, acceptable political system (i.e. democracy when in normal situation), and religion (i.e. Buddhism) in Thailand altogether made IDI participants prefer Thailand to other developing countries in Southeast Asia, and even to other mainstream retirement destinations (e.g. Mexico and Spain).

W01 said that he had never considered moving to Mexico or Spain, not because of the cost of living in those countries that were higher than the cost of living in Thailand, but because W01 perceived that there were much higher crime rates and lower life security in Mexico and Spain.

If comparing Thailand to other developing countries in Southeast Asia, such as Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Cambodia, IDI participants preferred Thailand to those destinations due to Thailand's higher life security/ lower crime rates, higher quality of healthcare facilities, more advanced local infrastructure, and more availability of "Western amenities" (W14).

In addition, some participants added that they chose Thailand as (1) they preferred Buddhist country to Muslim country, and/or (2) they preferred democracy to communism (even though Thailand, throughout its political history, has been ruled by military dictatorship from time to time).

With regard to the opportunity to establish late life intimate relationships in Thailand, W10 said that he chose Thailand over other destinations in Southeast Asia, particularly because he perceived that Thai women would always be interested in “White men.” In Malaysia, W10 said that he felt himself “invisible” among Malaysian ladies as he witnessed that Muslim women would be rather attracted to Muslim men and/or Chinese men than Western men.

#### **4.2.4 Migration to Thailand**

This section described the migration to Thailand of both IDI and SAQ participants by examining their perceptions of the push-pull factors in Thailand, intervening obstacles of migration, and factors related to their final migration decision-making to Thailand.

##### **4.2.4.1 Push-pull factors in Thailand**

**Table 4.17** presented the comparison of the perception of SAQ respondents toward the factors at origins and in Thailand.

According to the quantitative findings, it was statistically significant that the cost of living, climate, and people in Thailand were more desirable than those factors of

their home countries. With regard to the positive views of “people in Thailand,” please note that the majority of SAQ respondents married/partnered to Thais.

**Table 4.17: Desirability of factors in home country and in Thailand among SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Factors	Desirability (Median score) <sup>a</sup>		N <sup>b</sup>			Z <sup>c</sup>
	Home country (H)	Thailand (T)	H>T	H<T	H=T	
Cost of living	3.0	4.0	20	230	80	-12.947***
Climate	3.0	4.0	55	171	104	-8.323***
Healthcare facilities	4.0	4.0	132	70	128	-4.215***
Sports, recreation, and entertainment opportunities	4.0	3.0	121	58	151	-5.204***
Natural and cultural amenities	4.0	4.0	109	68	153	-3.960***
Food	4.0	4.0	80	105	145	-1.500
Lifestyle	4.0	4.0	99	108	123	-1.486
Language	4.0	3.0	190	29	111	-10.649***
Culture	4.0	4.0	91	81	158	-0.042
People	3.5	4.0	46	133	151	-6.623***
Infrastructure	4.0	3.0	213	35	82	-11.001***
Life security and crime rates	3.0	3.0	121	89	120	-2.151*
Political stability	4.0	2.0	204	31	95	-11.587***
Economic stability	4.0	3.0	175	41	114	-9.081***
Thailand's visa policy	-	2.0	-	-	-	-
Thailand's property policy	-	2.0	-	-	-	-
Thailand's tax scheme	-	3.0	-	-	-	-

<sup>a</sup> Median scores of 5-scale rating questions, i.e. "how do you perceive these factors in home country?" and "how do you perceive these factors in Thailand?"

(1=very undesirable, 2=undesirable, 3=neutral, 4=desirable, 5=very desirable).

<sup>b</sup> Number of respondents who perceived higher, lower, or equal desirability of each factor at home (H) versus the same factor in Thailand (T).

<sup>c</sup> Z statistics of the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test.

\*p<0.05

\*\*\*p<0.001

Source: The author.

In **Table 4.17**, the author presented the median scores of the factors at home and such factors in Thailand. The author used Wilcoxon Signed Rank test to determine whether the difference of the desirability of the factors at home country and in Thailand were statistically significant.

In each factor, the author reported the number of respondents perceiving a factor at home as “more desirable” than that of Thailand ( $H>T$ ), the number of respondents perceiving a factor at home as “less desirable” than that of Thailand ( $H<T$ ), and the number of respondents perceiving a factor at home and in Thailand as having “equal” level of desirability ( $H=T$ ).

According to Wilcoxon Signed Rank test, it was statistically significant that the desirability of all factors in home country and in Thailand, except food, lifestyle, and culture, were significantly different ( $p<0.05$ ).

If only looking for the cases when  $H>T$  or  $H<T$  and ignoring the cases when  $H=T$ , the following interpretations could be drawn from **Table 4.17**:

(1) more SAQ respondents were significantly more satisfied with the cost of living ( $n=230$ ), climate ( $n=171$ ), and people ( $n=133$ ) in Thailand than those of their home countries. The cost of living, climate, and people in Thailand were perceived as “desirable” (all median scores=4) while such factors at home were perceived as “neutral” (median scores=3, 3, and 3.5); and

(2) On the other hand, more SAQ respondents were significantly more satisfied with the healthcare facilities ( $n=132$ ), sports, recreation, and entertainment opportunities ( $n=121$ ), natural and cultural amenities ( $n=109$ ), language ( $n=190$ ), infrastructure ( $n=213$ ), life security and crime rates ( $n=121$ ), political stability ( $n=204$ ), and economic stability ( $n=175$ ) in their home countries than those factors in Thailand.

The factors that were averagely perceived as “desirable” in both home country and Thailand included healthcare facilities, natural and cultural amenities, food, lifestyle, and culture. Life security and crime rates at home country and in Thailand were averagely perceived as “neutral” (median=3).

However, the factors that were averagely perceived as “desirable” at home (median=4) but as “neutral” in Thailand (median=3) included sports, recreation, and entertainment opportunities, language, infrastructure, and economic stability. In addition, while the political stability at home country was averagely perceived as “desirable” (median=4), the political stability in Thailand was perceived as “undesirable” (median=2).

Furthermore, SAQ respondents perceived Thailand’s visa policy and property policy as “undesirable” (median=2), while the tax scheme was perceived as “neutral” (median=3).

Besides, the IDI findings, as well as, the additional comments from online SAQ respondents helped provide more insights about the motivations of the migration of Western retirees to Thailand.

According to IDI participants, the pull factors in Thailand were including warm climate, low cost of living, Thai spouse/partner, friendly Thai people (e.g. Thai relatives, Thai friends, and other regular Thai people), affordable social care (e.g. personal care givers), affordable healthcare at good or high quality, affordable outdoor and recreational activities (e.g. golfing, traveling to other provinces), beautiful natural and

cultural amenities, availability of Western amenities, active sex life (i.e. high availability of prostitutes at affordable price), availability of expat clubs or any forms of expatriate networking in Thailand, relatively high life security and low crime rate despite political instability, Thai food, natural respect and compassion for older people rooted in Thai culture and society, and religion (i.e. Buddhism).

The additional comments from online SAQ respondents as presented below emphasized that the opportunity to establish late life intimate relationships in Thailand was a major pull factor of the migration of Western retirees to Thailand.

The main things which brought me here were the climate, cost of living and frankly the attractive women (SAQ respondent #83).

Ability to have a good relationship with a lady is the critical advantage of Thailand (SAQ respondent #310).

Not in Thailand for the country, in Thailand for my family (SAQ respondent #170).

Life is good, married to a wonderful woman (SAQ respondent #255).

If it wasn't for family/friends I most likely would consider other options than Thailand (SAQ respondent #91).

In addition, according to the IDI results, W14, W19, and W20, were impressed by the affordable but “very good” healthcare facilities and healthcare personnel at leading private hospitals in Bangkok and in Chiang Mai. W14 came to Thailand in 2002 for both tourism and personal health check-up, she was surprised by the high quality service

and much lower cost of health check-up package (which cost her 350USD) in a renowned private hospital in Bangkok.

Besides the pull factors that were reported in the quantitative results of this study, the qualitative results showed that Buddhism was also one of the factors that made Thailand a desirable retirement destination, especially for Buddhist Westerners.

W19 and W20 reportedly became Buddhists since their 20s. Buddhism was one of significant factors that made them choose Thailand over other countries in Southeast Asia or elsewhere. However, they preferred doing meditation at home rather than regularly attended Buddhist events at Thai temples. Both W19 and W20 thought that Thai people, especially Chiang Mai locals were sincerely kind-hearted. W20 said that she even felt more comfortable talking to Thais than to other Westerners. “I think I might be a Thai in my past life,” W20 said.

With regard to the push factors in Thailand, IDI participants were concerned of several factors, including political instability (i.e. military coup and aggressive protests), unfriendly visa scheme (i.e. foreign retirees had to extend their retirement visa or Thai spouse visa every year, notified their stays in every 90 days, and spent long hours waiting at the immigration offices due to insufficient manpower and poor management), land ownership policy (i.e. foreigners generally cannot own lands/houses in Thailand under their names), poor infrastructure in non-metropolitan areas, double pricing or differential pricing discrimination against foreigners, as well as, bad or pretentious Thai people (e.g. robbers and scammers).

With regard to bad or pretentious Thai people, W04 said that he saw a Thai man snatch the necklace from the neck of his wife right before his eyes. Likewise, W08 was also aware of bad Thai people. “For most Thais, they think all Americans are rich,” W08 said. “It is hard to find a good Thai.”

Though several structural frameworks and external factors in Thailand, based on both IDI and SAQ findings, were perceived to be undesirable for long-term settlement, the restriction of Thailand’s land ownership policy received mixed responses from IDI participants. W01, who was currently married to Thai wife, somehow agreed with the policy as he realized that it would be good for Thailand in long term. “Thailand is very clever for not letting foreigners own lands,” W01 said.

#### **4.2.4.2 Intervening obstacles of migration**

Both qualitative and quantitative results suggested that distance, language barrier, and/or other structural frameworks in Thailand did not significantly impede the migration of the research participants to Thailand at first, mostly due to their indifference to those factors. Nonetheless, two SAQ participants mentioned corruption in Thailand and the inability to sell their properties back home as their intervening obstacles before migration to Thailand.

However, after years of living in Thailand, both IDI and SAQ participants had become more and more concerned about Thailand’s political instability, land ownership policy, and visa policy.



**Table 4.18** presented the median score of the level of agreement among SAQ respondents of whether these intervening factors (e.g. distance, unfamiliarity/ignorance of Thai laws and regulations, language and cultural difference, and political instability) had impeded or delayed their migration to Thailand.

**Table 4.18: Intervening factors of the migration to Thailand of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Factors	Level of agreement (Median score) <sup>a</sup>		
	All <sup>1</sup>	Male (n=296) <sup>2</sup>	Female (n=34) <sup>3</sup>
Distance	3.0	3.0	3.0
Unfamiliarity/ignorance of Thai laws and regulations	3.0	3.0	3.0
language and cultural difference	3.0	3.0	3.0
Political instability	3.0	3.0	3.0
Other (n=3) <sup>b</sup>	5.0	5.0	-

<sup>a</sup> Based on a 5-scale rating question, i.e. "to what extent do you agree that these intervening factors impeded or delayed your migration to Thailand?"

(1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=No opinion/uncertain, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree).

<sup>b</sup> i.e. three respondents "strongly agree" that "corruption" (n=2) and "unable to sell U.S. home" (n=1) are their intervening obstacles.

<sup>1</sup> [Q1, Q3] of all five median values: [2,3], [2,3], [2,3], [2,4], [5,5].

<sup>2</sup> [Q1, Q3] of all five median values: [2,3], [2,3], [2,3], [2,4], [5,5].

<sup>3</sup> [Q1, Q3] of all four median values: [2,3], [2,4], [2,4], [2,4].

**Source: The author.**

All respondents, either male or female, averagely had no opinions or were uncertain about whether the intervening obstacles, such as distance, unfamiliarity/ignorance of Thai laws and regulations, language and cultural difference, and political instability had impeded or delayed their migration to Thailand.

However, it was revealed that some male respondents strongly agreed that the corruption in Thailand (n=2) and the inability to sell a house at home country (n=1) were the main obstacles of their migration to Thailand.

#### 4.2.4.3 Final migration decision-making

This section presented the structural frameworks and relationships/networks that influenced or facilitated the final migration to Thailand decision-making of both IDI and SAQ participants.

Visa policy, property ownership policy, and local infrastructure were mainly considered by both IDI and SAQ participants while making final decision to migrate to Thailand.

In general, unmarried/unpartnered participants reportedly made final migration decision to Thailand by themselves and/or with the suggestions from friends/ known persons and/or professional mediators. On the other hand, the final migration decision of married persons, particularly those who married to Thais, were influenced and/or jointly decided by their spouses.

The quantitative and qualitative results regarding the factors influencing final migration decisions of both IDI and SAQ participants were presented as follows.

**Table 4.19** revealed the influence of structural frameworks and other persons on the final decision-making of the migration to Thailand of SAQ respondents.

Persons influencing the final migration decision to Thailand of SAQ respondents were including Thai spouse or partner (44.2%), friends or known persons (33.9%), professional mediators, such as property agents, lawyers, visa agents, etc. (23.6%), non-Thai spouse (3.9%), and other family member(s) or relative(s) (7%). Other respondents

(16.4%) stated that their final migration decision to Thailand was influenced by themselves only, the press/media, and/or online expat forums.

**Table 4.19: Factors related to the final migration decisions to Thailand of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Variables	Percentage
<b>Person(s) influenced and/or facilitated final migration decision*</b>	
Professional mediators, such as property agents, lawyers, etc.	23.6
Thai spouse	44.2
Non-Thai spouse	3.9
Friends/known persons	33.9
Other family member(s)/relative(s)	7.0
Other	16.4
<b>Structural frameworks being considered before making final migration decision*</b>	
Visa scheme in Thailand	41.5
Property laws in Thailand	44.2
Tax scheme in Thailand	11.8
Transport and communication infrastructures in Thailand	20.9
Other	29.4

\*More than one answer is possible.

**Source: The author.**

With regard to the structural frameworks in Thailand that the SAQ respondents needed to consider before migration and/or purchasing/renting any properties in Thailand were including Thailand's visa scheme (41.5%), property laws (44.2%), transport and communication infrastructures (20.9%), tax scheme (11.8%), and others (29.4%), such as location (i.e. suitable for individual lifestyle and/or proximity to other

family members), construction practices or the quality of property construction, quality of local school for their children, economic stability, and political stability.

In accordance with the SAQ findings, many IDI participants were also concerned of visa scheme and property laws when making final migration decision to Thailand.

IDI participants with no Thai spouse/partner reportedly had less or no intentions to purchase properties in Thailand due to visa insecurities and the restriction of land ownership policy on foreign buyers. Their final migration decisions were mainly influenced and/or facilitated by themselves, their non-Thai spouse/partner, their friends, and/or professional mediators (e.g. property agents and lawyers).

On the other hand, the final migration decision among IDI participants who married/partnered to Thai were unsurprisingly influenced by their Thai spouses/partners; however, one participant (W02) reported that even if he did not marry his (second) Thai wife here, he would still come to retire in Thailand.

## Chapter 5

### Wellbeing and assimilation in Thailand

**Chapter 5** presents both quantitative and qualitative findings of the subjective wellbeing and cultural assimilation of Western retirees in Thailand.

#### 5.1 Subjective wellbeing in Thailand

This section presented the SAQ and IDI findings regarding the overall subjective wellbeing (i.e. wellbeing of life as a whole), as well as, the subjective wellbeing in several life domains (i.e. subjective wellbeing indexes), including standard of living (SW1), health status (SW2), personal relationships (SW3), social connections (SW4), personal security (SW5), environmental quality (SW6), and local infrastructure (SW7). The IDI results helped provide more insights about the factors that causing positive or negative subjective wellbeing of Western retirees in Thailand.

**Table 5.1** provided the descriptive statistics of the subjective wellbeing in Thailand of SAQ respondents. **Table 5.2** revealed that the quantitative analysis of the relationships between subjective wellbeing of life as a whole and personal factors (i.e. age, sex, nationality, marital status, and place of usual residence). **Table 5.3** examined the subjective wellbeing of life as a whole, as well as, the subjective wellbeing indexes (SW1-SW7) of respondents, by their place of usual residence in Thailand.

In summary, both IDI and SAQ participants were generally satisfied with their wellbeing in Thailand, attributable to the low cost of living, good healthcare facilities, good personal relationships, and the relatively high life security (See also topic 4.2.4.1). However, several participants reported being suffered from the unwelcoming structural frameworks (e.g. visa policy and land ownership policy) and unpleasant environment or external factors in Thailand (e.g. political instability, human-made pollution, traffic and unsafe drive, and the poor or unfriendly infrastructure).

Both IDI and SAQ results were discussed as follows.

**Table 5.1** revealed that SAQ respondents averagely perceived high wellbeing of life as a whole in Thailand (median=8).

**Table 5.1: Subjective wellbeing in Thailand of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Subjective wellbeing*	Median score [Q1, Q3] (N=330)
Life as a whole	8 [7, 9]
Subjective wellbeing indexes	
Standard of living (SW1)	8 [7, 9]
Health status (SW2)	8 [7, 9]
Personal relationships (SW3)	8 [7, 9]
Social connections (SW4)	8 [5, 9]
Personal security (SW5)	8 [6, 9]
Environmental quality (SW6)	5 [3, 7]
Local infrastructure (SW7)	5 [3, 7]

Note: This table presents median scores with the first quartile (Q1) and the third quartile (Q3) in brackets.

\*Being rated based on 0-10 unipolar scale questions about wellbeing in Thailand in particular aspects, in which, 0=not satisfied at all, 10=completely satisfied.

Source: The author.

Even when looking at specific subjective wellbeing indexes, respondents still averagely perceived high standard of living (SW1), health status (SW2), personal

relationships (SW3), social connections (SW4), and personal security (SW5) in Thailand (median=8). On the other hand, respondents were moderately satisfied (median=5) with the environmental quality (SW6) and local infrastructure (SW7) in Thailand.

In accordance with the SAQ results, the analysis of IDI findings also revealed that IDI participants were generally satisfied with their overall wellbeing in Thailand, particularly due to low cost of living, warm climate, satisfied personal relationships, availability of social connections with people in the same local community and/or expat clubs in Thailand, and the relatively low crime rates.

IDI participants revealed to have good standard of living in Thailand. They travelled to several beautiful and culturally rich cities, enjoyed outdoor activities (e.g. golfing), entertainment (e.g. attending concerts), and the abundance of delicious food at small price. They could afford both formal care (e.g. private hospital) and informal care (e.g. hiring local maids to help clean their home and/or hiring personal care givers to look after themselves, their spouse, and/or their older parents).

Though many IDI participants agreed that the heat during summer in Thailand was quite intolerable, the climate of Thailand was still perceived to be better for their health than the climate in their home countries which was too cold during winter.

With regard to the wellbeing of personal relationships in Thailand, almost all of IDI participants, regardless of their marital status, were generally satisfied with their personal relationships, as well as, social connections in Thailand. Many participants married/partnered to Thais revealed that their Thai spouse/partner had been treating

them so well. Despite the fact that IDI participants had to provide financial supports to their Thai wives/partners, as well as, to the family of their Thai wives/partners, many of them agreed to do so, attributable to their love for their family (i.e. wife/partner and/or child/children) and/or the love and warmth they received from their family and/or extended Thai family.

Among seven participants who married/partnered to Thais, there was only one of them that revealed to have poor relationships with his Thai wife. W04 told that his 24-year-old Thai wife was “ขี้เกียจมาก (very lazy)” as she did not work to earn herself money, but instead wasted his money on cosmetics, clothes, and accessories.

Among participants with non-Thai spouses/partners, only W06 told that his relationship with 59-year-old Vietnamese girlfriend was not good. W06 said that she left him after he gave her money, in which, he thought that she might be with her niece in Cambodia. “For Asian people, family came first, so she left me” W06 said.

With regard to social connections in Thailand, many participants, regardless of their marital status, reportedly managed to create and/or sustain their social connections in Thailand by socializing with other Westerners or Thais who were living in the same community, attending the activities organized by the expat clubs or charity clubs in their community, and/or engaging in online expat community to exchange individual experience of the living in Thailand.

Regarding the personal security of IDI participants, the majority of participants reportedly felt high life security in Thailand due to the relatively low crime rates. W14



said that Chiang Mai had less of gangsters, so she felt safe when walking alone along the street.

As it was revealed by the SAQ results that the SAQ respondents were moderately satisfied with the environmental quality and local infrastructure in Thailand, the IDI findings, as well as, the additional comments from SAQ respondents further identified the problems in those areas as follows.

Many IDI participants in Chiang Mai were most concerned of the air pollution/smog caused by Thai farmers and their slash-and-burn agriculture practices, specifically during March-April of the year.

Factors relating to the local infrastructure in Thailand that made the health and/or life of IDI participants become at risk or less comfortable included third-world infrastructure (e.g. many electrical wiring, broken sidewalk, small road, and the lack of universal architecture), lack of public transport outside Bangkok and nearby cities, bad traffic congestion, and poor driving/riding skills of many Thai people.

Beyond the concerns or dissatisfaction toward environmental quality and local infrastructure, the IDI findings revealed that the subjective wellbeing of Western retirees in Thailand was also affected by the unwelcoming structural frameworks and/or unpleasant external factors in Thailand.

With regard to the dissatisfied structural frameworks in Thailand, many IDI participants were reportedly both physically and mentally suffered from the unfriendly visa policy and/or poor management at the immigrations, e.g. a lot of paperwork, long

queue of applicants and understaffed immigrations, unclean toilets at immigrations, and poor English proficiency of immigration staff.

Despite the fact that he had been living in Thailand for 8 years and married to a Thai wife, W01 still had to renew his visa every year and notify his presence in every 90 days at the immigration. “Why do they (the immigration) have to make it as difficult as when the first time I entered,” W01 said. “I am a good man and I have never done bad things.”

Regarding Thailand’s retirement visa, several participants suggested that the visa duration should be longer (e.g. five years or more) instead of just one year (the status quo), and the management of immigration offices nationwide should be more facilitating, by increasing manpower, operating both walk-in and online queue in all immigrations, as well as, promoting clean and safe immigration offices (i.e. waiting areas and toilets) for all migrants.

Based on the interviews of the IDI participants in Chiang Mai, it had become common knowledge and practices of the retired migrants in Chiang Mai that they had to go to the immigration several hours before it opened at 8 a.m. in order to make sure that they could get their visa extension done on that day as they experienced that the immigration could only proceed around 20-30 applicants per day.

According to the author’s own observations, the author went to the immigration at 6 a.m. and surprisingly saw that there were already around 15-20 retired migrants queuing up in front of the immigration office, in which, it was reported that

the first person(s) might come to wait since 2 a.m. A Thai lady who operated a coffee shop nearby said that when she came to the immigration at 4 a.m. she saw several retirees already show up there. Toward this maladministration of Chiang Mai immigration, W15 said “I am too old for that stress.” And W10 said “I have no problem with the visa policy itself, but only the immigration here (Chiang Mai immigration).”

With regard to other external factors that negatively affected the subjective wellbeing of Western retirees, IDI participants revealed that the political instability, military dictatorship, and corruption in Thailand actually disturbed their wellbeing to a great extent as such factors could produce high uncertainty for the future of the country itself, so as to the future of the foreign retirees in the country. Nonetheless, some participants were indifferent about Thai politics, thinking of themselves as the outsiders.

Based on the additional comments of online SAQ respondents, the respondents emphasized their concerns toward the slash-and-burn agricultural practices, bad littering habits, immigration difficulties, poor driving standards, as well as, the violence caused by alcohol and drug use.

Thai people in general do not care about the environment, like burning fires with dangerous smoke, nobody cares or they just blame the neighboring countries while they burn themselves their rice fields every year! (SAQ respondent #185).

The quality of the environment in Thailand is very poor. Places that could be beautiful are ruined by the rubbish that Thai people seem happy to dump

anywhere & everywhere – Koh Samet and many other National Parks are good examples of this. Outside the big cities, people are happy to burn their rubbish, causing atmospheric pollution, rather than take it to a Thesaban (municipality) collection point. Burning of farm fields causes extensive pollution of the atmosphere at certain times of the year (SAQ respondent #195).

Too much violence in Thailand, craziness, often fuelled by drink and/or drugs. Driving standards are very poor. There's not too many countries where the road is quicker than the train! (SAQ respondent #83).

**Table 5.2** revealed that there was no significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the wellbeing of life as a whole in Thailand and age ( $p = 0.065$ ), sex ( $p = 0.581$ ), nationality ( $p = 0.426$ ), marital status ( $p = 0.857$ ), and place of usual residence ( $p = 0.390$ ).

However, based on the reported median scores in **Table 5.2**, it could be stated that the respondents, regardless of age, sex, nationality, marital status, and place of usual residence, generally perceived high wellbeing of life as a whole in Thailand (median=8).

**Table 5.2: Subjective wellbeing of life as a whole of SAQ respondents by age, sex, nationality, marital status, and place of usual residence (N=330).**

Variables	Median score [Q1,Q3] <sup>a</sup> (N=330)	p value <sup>b</sup>
Age		
50-59 (n=78)	8 [7, 9]	0.065
60-69 (n=179)	8 [7, 9]	
70-79 (n=67)	8 [7, 9]	
80 and above (n=6)	9 [7.75, 10]	
Sex		
Male (n=296)	8 [7, 9]	0.581
Female (n=34)	8 [7, 9]	
Nationality		
British (n=87)	8 [7, 9]	0.426
American (n=107)	8 [7, 9]	
Australia (n=29)	8 [7, 9]	
German (n=29)	8 [7, 9.5]	
Swedish (n=14)	8 [7, 9]	
Other (n=64)	8 [7, 8]	

Marital status			
Married/partnered to Thai (n=208)	8	[7, 9]	
Married/partnered to non-Thai (n=38)	8	[7, 9]	
Single (n=24)	8	[7, 9]	
Divorced (n=39)	8	[7, 9]	0.857
Separated (n=12)	8	[7, 8]	
Widowed (n=9)	8	[7, 8.5]	
Place of usual residence			
Bangkok (n=35)	8	[8, 9]	
Pattaya (n=52)	8	[7, 9]	
Chiang Mai (n=83)	8	[7, 9]	
Udon Thani (n=48)	8	[7, 9]	0.390
Hua Hin (n=31)	8	[7, 9]	
Other (n=81)	8	[7, 8.5]	

Note: this table presents median scores with the first quartile (Q1) and the third quartile (Q3) in brackets.

<sup>a</sup> Based on 0-10 unipolar scale question about the wellbeing of life as a whole in Thailand, in which, 0=not satisfied at all, 10=completely satisfied.

<sup>b</sup> Kruskal-Wallis test.

Source: The author.

**Table 5.3** examined the subjective wellbeing of life as a whole and subjective wellbeing indexes (SW1-SW7) of respondents by their place of usual residence in Thailand. Based on Kruskal-Wallis test, it was revealed that there was no significance relationships between place of usual residence and the satisfaction of life as a whole or the satisfaction of any subjective wellbeing indexes (SW1-SW7).

However, regardless of the places of usual residence, respondents were moderate to lowly satisfied with the environmental quality (SW6) and local infrastructure (SW7) in Thailand (median scores  $\approx$  4-6). On the other hand, respondents, regardless of their places of usual residence in Thailand, were quite highly satisfied with their life as a whole, as well as, their standard of living (SW1), health status (SW2), personal relationships (SW3), social connections (SW4), and personal security (SW5) (median scores  $\approx$  7-9).

**Table 5.3: Subjective wellbeing indexes by place of usual residence of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Subjective wellbeing <sup>a</sup>	Place of usual residence						p value <sup>b</sup>
	Bangkok (n=35)	Pattaya (n=52)	Chiang Mai (n=83)	Udon Thani (n=48)	Hua Hin (n=31)	Other (n=81)	
Life as a whole	8 [8,9]	8 [7,9]	8 [7,9]	8 [7,9]	8 [7,9]	8 [7,8.5]	0.390
Subjective wellbeing indexes (SW1 – SW7)							
Standard of living	8 [7,9]	8 [7,9.8]	8 [7,10]	8 [7.3,10]	8 [7,9]	8 [7,9]	0.140
Health status	7 [6,9]	8 [6,10]	8 [7,9]	8 [7,9]	7 [5,9]	8 [7,9]	0.322
Personal relationships	8 [7,9]	8 [7.3,10]	8 [7,10]	8 [7,9]	9 [7,9]	8 [6,9]	0.542
Social connections	7 [7,9]	8 [5,9]	8 [6,9]	8 [5,8.8]	8 [6,9]	7 [5,9]	0.546
Personal security	8 [6,8]	8 [6,9]	8 [6,9]	8 [5,9]	7 [5,9]	8 [6.5,9]	0.420
Environmental quality	5 [4,7]	5 [3.25,7]	5 [4,7]	4 [2,6]	6 [3,7]	5 [3,7]	0.179
Local infrastructure	6 [4,7]	5 [3.25,7]	6 [4,7]	4.5 [3,6]	6 [3,7]	5 [3,7]	0.537

Note: This table presents median scores with the first quartile (Q1) and the third quartile (Q3) in brackets.

<sup>a</sup> Rated based on 0-10 unipolar scale questions about wellbeing in Thailand in particular aspects, in which, 0=not satisfied at all, 10=completely satisfied.

<sup>b</sup> Kruskal-Wallis test.

Source: The author.

## 5.2 Cultural assimilation in Thailand

According to **Table 4.7** in the **Chapter 4** of this study, it was revealed that there was high cultural assimilation in terms of intermarriage between Western retirees and local citizens (i.e. 63% of SAQ respondents married/partnered to Thais), in which, around a quarter of them had biological child/children with their Thai spouses.

Besides intermarriage and the availability of biological children with local citizens, which were already explored under the topic **4.1** in **Chapter 4**, this section would explore other indicators of cultural assimilation, including:

(1) skills and knowledge of Thai language and Thai culture (i.e. ability to listen/speak Thai, ability to read/write Thai, knowledge about Thai culture, the desire to learn more about Thai language, and the desire to learn more about Thai culture);

(2) social interaction in Thailand (i.e. language mainly used in Thailand, persons they mainly socialized with, participation/volunteer in social and cultural activities in Thailand, and contribution/exchange of knowledge and skills in local community); and

(3) perceptions of cultural assimilation in Thailand (i.e. the feeling of the acceptance of general Westerners in Thailand, the feeling of the acceptance of oneself in Thailand, the perception of Thai-Western intermarriage, and the feeling of own national identity). Please note that the feeling of the acceptance of oneself in Thailand was used in this study as the main indicator for the cultural assimilation of Western retirees in Thailand.

In addition, the author provided the quantitative analysis of the relationship between the feeling of the acceptance of oneself in Thailand and other personal factors (**Table 5.7**), and the relationship between the feeling of own national identity and other personal factors (**Table 5.8**).

The IDI and SAQ results regarding cultural assimilation of research participants were presented as follows.

**Table 5.4** revealed Thai language ability and knowledge of Thai culture among SAQ respondents. The majority of respondents reportedly had “poor” (47.3%) or “very

poor” (24.5%) ability to listen or speak Thai; furthermore, they had “very poor” (73.3%), or “poor” (17%) ability to read or write Thai.

**Table 5.4: Thai language proficiency and knowledge of Thai culture of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Variables	Categories and percentages				
	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Ability to listen/speak Thai	24.5	47.3	20.3	6.7	1.2
Ability to read/write Thai	73.3	17.0	6.4	3.3	0.0
Knowledge about Thai culture	1.2	10.0	52.1	34.2	2.4
Desire to Thai language more	Yes	No	Maybe		
	63.3	12.4	24.2		
Desire to learn Thai culture more	Yes	No	Maybe		
	63.9	8.5	27.6		

Source: The author.

Only 7.9% perceived their Thai listening or speaking skills to be “good” or “excellent,” while only 3.3% perceived their Thai reading and writing skills as “good.” In addition, 63.3% said that they were interested to learn more about Thai language.

Regarding the knowledge about Thai culture, the majority of respondents reportedly knew “some” (52.1%) or “a lot” (34.2%) about Thai culture. In addition, 63.9% said that they were interested to learn more about Thai culture.

**Table 5.5** revealed social interactions of SAQ respondents in Thailand, by examining the language they mainly used, persons whom they mainly socialized with, their participations in social or cultural activities, and their contribution and/or exchange of knowledge and skills with Thai people. There were 40.3% of respondents



mainly spoke non-Thai languages, including those who spoke English only (31.5%), and those who spoke English and own language (8.8%). On the other hand, 43.9% reportedly spoke English and Thai, 13.3% spoke English, Thai, and own language, and 2.4% spoke more than three languages.

**Table 5.5: Social interactions of SAQ respondents in Thailand (N=330).**

Variables	Categories and percentages				
Language mainly used in TH	Only English	English and own language	English and Thai	English, Thai, own language	Other
	31.5	8.8	43.9	13.3	2.4
Persons mainly socialized with*	Other Westerners	Thai spouse	Non-Thai spouse	Thai friends	Other
	73.3	53.9	5.2	49.4	14.8
Participate/volunteer in Thai social or cultural activities	Hardly ever	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost always
	33.3	27.9	23.0	13.3	2.4
Contribute knowledge and skills with Thais	Hardly ever	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost always
	40.6	25.8	16.7	13.9	3.0

\*More than one answer is possible.

**Source:** The author.

Persons whom SAQ respondents mainly socialized with in Thailand were including other Westerners (73.3%), Thai spouse (53.9%), Thai friends (49.4%), non-Thai spouse (5.2%), and others (14.8%), including Thais at bar scene, Thai girlfriends, family of Thai spouse or Thai girlfriend, friends of Thai spouse or Thai girlfriend, family of son-in-law /daughter-in-law, Thai neighbors, and people at local clubs (e.g. photo club and football club).

With regard to the social interactions to wider Thai society, 33.3% reported “hardly ever” participated or volunteered in Thai social and cultural activities; however, there were respondents “occasionally” (27.9%), “sometimes” (23%), “frequently” (13.3%), and “almost always” (2.4%) participated or volunteered in Thai social and cultural activities.

Based on additional comments from online SAQ respondents, the Thai social and cultural activities that were reportedly attended by SAQ respondents were including local cultural festivals (e.g. Loy Kratong and Song Kran), Buddhist ceremonial events (e.g. monk ordination ceremony and Tod Kratin), household events (e.g. wedding, funerals, and house dedication), sport events (e.g. Bike for Mom/ Bike for Dad, sports match (e.g. attending football matches of Thai Premier League), art and music events (e.g. Luktung or Morlam concert, art gallery viewing, traditional performances, and youth orchestra), charity or humanitarian service activities (e.g. Thai Rotary Club, Tsunami relief activities, Alcoholics Anonymous Thailand or AA Thailand, Thai orphanage supports, student sponsorship, beach cleaning, and dog/cat rescue), and other community events (e.g. university events or school activities, wife’s school reunion, Khon Kaen Friendship Festival, and other events organized by local expat clubs).

Regarding the contribution and exchange of knowledge and skills with local people, 40.6% reported “hardly ever” contributed or exchanged any knowledge or skills with Thais; however, there were respondents “occasionally” (25.8%),

“sometimes” (16.7%), “frequently” (13.9%), and “almost always” (3%) contributed or exchanged their knowledge or skills with Thai people.

The knowledge or skills that the SAQ respondents had shared to local community were reportedly including English or other language, Western culture, marketing and branding knowledge, IT or technology assistance, construction of wheelchairs for the disabled, ways to recover from alcoholism, golf teaching, workout training, dog handling, hygiene/cleaning, accounting skill, legal matters, writing skills, mathematics, and even responsibility and honesty.

Based on additional comments from SAQ respondents, many Western retirees were reportedly reluctant to share their knowledge and skills with Thai people for several reasons, including the feeling of being unwelcome by the locals whom they used to get in touch with (SAQ respondent #35, #55, #190, #195), the fear that their social contributions or volunteering might violate retirement visa regulations (SAQ respondent #25, #63, #224), and their own preference to limit their social contacts with others (SAQ respondent #245).

I have science, technical and leadership skills to offer but feel unwelcome to share them. (SAQ respondent #190).

I try to share knowledge of English and advice people based on my former profession as an engineer. I generally find that Thai people do not like to be advised by a foreigner, however well qualified in their field, and would prefer to listen to a Thai who might know comparatively little. For that reason, I now rarely advise Thais (apart from my family) on anything. (SAQ respondent #195).

I have tried on a couple of occasions to voluntarily assist with teaching English in schools, but the feeling I got was that there was little appreciation for the free contribution I was trying to make. Thai teachers who could barely speak English thought they were right even though their English skills were terrible (SAQ respondent #55).

I tried but Thais are never interested in knowledge and skills from stupid Westerners. "The grandfather did, the father did, so I do". They listen and smile - and do what they ever did. Not interested in new knowledge (SAQ respondent #35).

Have tried but this would be seen as work by immigration, thus not allowed (SAQ respondent #63).

Many retirees are not really social in their own country so have limited social contacts there too (SAQ respondent #245).

In accordance with the findings in **Table 5.4** and **Table 5.5** of SAQ results, the IDI results also revealed that almost all IDI participants could barely speak Thai and their social interactions in Thailand were quite limited.

The IDI participants who currently married/partnered to Thais revealed that no matter how long they had lived in the country, they could only speak Thai a little or some of them even could not speak Thai at all.

After staying for 24 years straight in Thailand with a Thai wife, W17 said that he still barely spoke Thai. W01 who had already been in Thailand for eight years reportedly was able to speak Thai "nid noi (a little bit)." Hence, most Thai-Western

couples participating in the interviews then mostly communicated in English and/or in other Western language (e.g. Dutch).

Among the IDI participants who married/partnered to Thais, their socializing was mostly limited within their own family and/or wife's family. Some participants also reportedly socialized with the Thai employees working in their household, e.g. maids and care givers. Besides, many participants also revealed to have been occasionally socializing with other Westerners and Thais in the community, such as other Westerners at the expat clubs, other Thai-Western couples, Thai friends of their wives/partners, and both Thais and Westerners at golf courses (e.g. Thai or Western golfers, Thai caddies and other Thai staff working in the golf courses).

Unmarried/unpartnered participants and the IDI participants who currently married/partnered to non-Thais reportedly mostly socialized with other Westerners, including their non-Thai partner/spouse and/or children in Thailand and other expats in the local community. However, some of the unmarried/unpartnered participants reportedly socialized with Thai girlfriends, Thai friends or known persons, Thai bar girls, and/or local/Thai maids and care givers.

IDI participants generally reported that they occasionally attended Thai festive and cultural events. Those who married/partnered to Thais reportedly frequently accompanied their Thai spouse/partner to religious and household events, e.g. going to temples, weddings, funerals, and house dedication ceremony.

**Table 5.6** illustrated the perceptions of SAQ respondents regarding the acceptance of Westerners in general in Thai society, the acceptance of SAQ respondents themselves in Thailand, Thai-Western intermarriage, and the feeling of national identity.

**Table 5.6: Perceptions of acceptance in Thailand, Thai-Western intermarriage, and the feeling of national identity of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Variables	Categories and percentages				
Acceptance of Westerners	Very poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Excellent
	3.9	14.2	31.8	44.5	5.5
Acceptance of Yourself	Very poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Excellent
	0.6	4.8	24.5	54.2	15.8
Thai-Western intermarriage	Common	Not common	Maybe		
	76.1	6.7	17.3		
Feeling of national identity	As non-Thai	More as Non-Thai	As Thai and as non-Thai	More as Thai	As Thai
	68.8	15.8	13.3	0.9	1.2

Source: The author.

SAQ respondents perceived that the acceptance of Westerners in Thailand was generally “good” (44.5%) and/or “excellent” (5.5%). Likewise, the respondents also perceived that the acceptance of themselves in Thai society were “good” (54.2%) and/or “excellent” (15.8%). However, it could be observed that the percentage of the respondents perceiving positive acceptance of themselves was higher than that of Westerners in general. In addition, the majority of respondents perceived that Thai-Western intermarriages were common these days (76.1%).

Lastly, regarding the feeling of national identity, SAQ respondents perceived themselves as Thai (1.2%), more as Thai (0.9%), as Thai and as non-Thai (13.3%), more as non-Thai (15.8%), and as non-Thai (68.8%).

In accordance with the SAQ results regarding the perception of individual acceptance and own national identity, the IDI findings also reported similar results. In terms of the feeling of acceptance in Thailand, the majority of IDI participants perceived that they were well accepted by Thai society. However, many of them still perceived themselves as “non-Thai.” Only W02 perceived his national identity as “Thai,” in which, he even proudly changed his surname to be that of his former Thai wife whom he had one biological daughter with.

**Table 5.7** revealed that there were no statistically significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the feeling of acceptance in Thailand and the following factors, including age ( $\chi^2 = 16.515$ ,  $p = 0.169$ ), sex ( $\chi^2 = 2.516$ ,  $p = 0.642$ ), nationality ( $\chi^2 = 16.625$ ,  $p = 0.677$ ), and marital status ( $\chi^2 = 16.147$ ,  $p = 0.707$ ). However, it was obvious that regardless of age, sex, nationality, and marital status, SAQ respondents generally felt positively accepted by Thai society.

Table 5.7: Relationships of the feeling of acceptance in Thailand and age, sex, nationality, and marital status of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Variables	Feeling of acceptance in Thailand				
	Very poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Excellent
<b>Age</b>					
50-59 (n=78)	2 (2.6%)	3 (3.8%)	23 (29.5%)	40 (51.3%)	10 (12.8%)
60-69 (n=179)	0 (0.0%)	9 (5.0%)	49 (27.4%)	94 (52.5%)	27 (15.1%)
70-79 (n=67)	0 (0.0%)	2 (5.9%)	5 (14.7%)	20 (58.8%)	7 (20.6%)
80 and above (n=6)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (66.7%)	2 (33.3%)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.515				
<b>Sex</b>					
Female (n=34)	0 (0.0%)	2 (5.9%)	5 (14.7%)	20 (58.8%)	7 (20.6%)
Male (n=296)	2 (0.7%)	14 (4.7%)	76 (25.7%)	159 (53.7%)	45 (15.2%)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.516				
<b>Nationality</b>					
British (n=87)	1 (1.1%)	5 (5.7%)	21 (24.1%)	43 (49.4%)	17 (19.5%)
American (n=107)	0 (0.0%)	4 (3.7%)	25 (23.4%)	62 (57.9%)	16 (15.0%)
Australian (n=29)	1 (3.4%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (27.6%)	16 (55.2%)	4 (13.8%)
German (n=29)	0 (0.0%)	3 (10.3%)	3 (10.3%)	19 (65.5%)	4 (13.8%)
Swedish (n=14)	0 (0.0%)	1 (7.1%)	3 (21.4%)	8 (57.1%)	2 (14.3%)
Other (n=64)	0 (0.0%)	3 (4.7%)	21 (32.8%)	31 (48.4%)	9 (14.1%)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.625				
<b>Marital status</b>					
Thai <sup>1</sup> (n=208)	1 (0.5%)	13 (6.3%)	50 (24.0%)	114 (54.8%)	30 (14.4%)
Non-Thai <sup>2</sup> (n=38)	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.6%)	10 (26.3%)	19 (50.0%)	8 (21.1%)
Single <sup>3</sup> (n=24)	1 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (29.2%)	12 (50.0%)	4 (16.7%)
Divorced (n=39)	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.6%)	10 (25.6%)	24 (61.5%)	4 (10.3%)
Separated (n=12)	0 (0.0%)	1 (8.3%)	1 (8.3%)	6 (50.0%)	4 (33.3%)
Widowed (n=9)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (33.3%)	4 (44.4%)	2 (22.2%)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.147				

<sup>1</sup>Married to Thai spouse or have a live-in Thai partner.

<sup>2</sup>Married to non-Thai spouse or have a live-in non-Thai partner.

<sup>3</sup>Single (never married).

Source: The author.

Table 5.8 revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ) only between the feeling of national identity and nationality ( $\chi^2 = 35.568, p = 0.017$ ).



Table 5.8: Relationships of the feeling of national identity and age, sex, nationality, and marital status of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Marital status	Feeling of national identity				
	As non-Thai	More as Non-Thai	As Thai and as non-Thai	More as Thai	As Thai
<b>Age</b>					
50-59 (n=78)	50 (64.1%)	14 (17.9%)	11 (14.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (3.8%)
60-69 (n=179)	135 (75.4%)	20 (11.2%)	21 (11.7%)	2 (1.1%)	1 (0.6%)
70-79 (n=67)	37 (55.2%)	18 (26.9%)	11 (16.4%)	1 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)
80 and above (n=6)	5 (83.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (16.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.174				
<b>Sex</b>					
Female (n=34)	22 (64.7%)	5 (14.7%)	6 (17.6%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.9%)
Male (n=296)	205 (69.3%)	47 (15.9%)	38 (12.8%)	3 (1.0%)	3 (1.0%)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.927				
<b>Nationality</b>					
British (n=87)	64 (73.6%)	13 (14.9%)	10 (11.5%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
American (n=107)	80 (74.8%)	12 (11.2%)	13 (12.1%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)
Australian (n=29)	22 (75.9%)	7 (24.1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
German (n=29)	16 (55.2%)	5 (17.2%)	7 (24.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.4%)
Swedish (n=14)	11 (78.6%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (7.1%)	1 (7.1%)	1 (7.1%)
Other (n=64)	34 (53.1%)	15 (23.4%)	13 (20.3%)	1 (1.6%)	1 (1.6%)
Pearson Chi-Square	35.568*				
<b>Marital status</b>					
Thai <sup>1</sup> (n=208)	137 (65.9%)	37 (17.8%)	27 (13.0%)	3 (1.4%)	4 (1.9%)
Non-Thai <sup>2</sup> (n=38)	29 (76.3%)	4 (10.5%)	5 (13.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Single <sup>3</sup> (n=24)	15 (62.5%)	4 (16.7%)	5 (20.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Divorced (n=39)	29 (74.4%)	5 (12.8%)	5 (12.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Separated (n=12)	10 (83.3%)	1 (8.3%)	1 (8.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Widowed (n=9)	7 (77.8%)	1 (11.1%)	1 (11.1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.738				

<sup>1</sup>Married to Thai spouse or have a live-in Thai partner.

<sup>2</sup>Married to non-Thai spouse or have a live-in non-Thai partner.

<sup>3</sup>Single (never married).

\*p<0.05

Source: The author.

It could be seen that the majority of respondents of all nationalities perceived their national identity as “non-Thai.” Nonetheless, more than 10% of British, American, and German perceived their national identity to be “as Thai and as non-Thai.” In addition, there were four respondents, including one American, one German, one

Swedish, and one Finnish (all were married/partnered to Thais) perceiving their national identity to be “as Thai.”

Though there were no statistically significant relationships between the feeling of national identity and other factors, including age ( $\chi^2=20.174$ ,  $p=0.064$ ), sex ( $\chi^2=1.927$ ,  $p=0.749$ ), and marital status ( $\chi^2=8.738$ ,  $p=0.986$ ), it should be noticed that the majority of SAQ respondents, regardless of their age, sex, and marital status, perceived their national identity to be as “non-Thai.”



## Chapter 6

### Future migration plans

**Chapter 6** presents both quantitative and qualitative results regarding the overview of future migration plans of research participants, i.e. future migration decisions in 5-10 years, possible leave reasons, and potential next destinations. In addition, this chapter provided a quantitative analysis of the determinants of future migration decisions of Western retirees in Thailand (hypothesis testing).

#### 6.1 Overview of the future migration plans

Both SAQ and IDI results regarding the overview of future migration plans of Western retirees in Thailand were presented as follows.

**Table 6.1** revealed descriptive characteristics of future migration plans of SAQ respondents. With regard to their future migration decisions in 5-10 years, 28.5% would leave Thailand, 30.9% would not leave Thailand, and 40.6% were still uncertain.

In other words, the percentage of SAQ respondents who remained indecisive was highest, while the percentage of those preferred to stay was slightly higher than the percentage of those who preferred to leave Thailand. It was no surprise that only 28.5% would leave the country, as according to **Table 4.17** in **Chapter 4**, it was statistically significant that more of SAQ respondents perceived the cost of living, climate, and people in Thailand as more desirable than such factors at home. In other

words, the factors that pushed Western retirees away from their home countries were actually the pull factors of Thailand.

**Table 6.1: Future migration decisions, possible leave reasons, and potential next destinations of SAQ respondents (N=330).**

Variables	Categories	n	%
Future migration decisions in 5-10 years	Leave	94	28.5
	Not leave	102	30.9
	Maybe	134	40.6
Possible leave reasons*	Financial reasons	35	10.6
	Visa reasons	101	30.6
	Missing life in the West	41	12.4
	Crucial life events	69	20.9
	Disillusionment of Thailand	91	27.6
	Other	85	25.8
Next destinations*	Don't know yet	87	26.4
	Country of origin/ homeland	111	33.6
	Other	49	14.8

\*More than one answer is possible.

Source: The author.

Regarding possible leave reasons (more than one reason was possible), SAQ respondents mentioned financial reasons (10.6%), visa reasons (30.6%), missing life in the West (12.4%), crucial life events (20.9%), disillusionment of Thailand (27.6%), and other reasons (25.8%).

The other reasons for leaving Thailand (25.8%) were including the concerns of Thailand's political instability (10.3%), resuming healthcare benefits back home and/or returning to receive care and support from children or relatives (7.3%), reuniting with

other family member(s) (4.5%), and the rest (3.9%), e.g. no family ties in Thailand, returning to home country for better education for own children, corruption in Thailand, current land ownership policy, lack of legal certainty for foreigners, environmental degradation in Thailand, hard communication, and double pricing or differential pricing against foreigners.

For potential next destination, 33.6% would rather return to their home country, 26.4 still did not make a decision about their next destination, and 14.8% mentioned other destinations, such as Philippines (n=14), Vietnam (n=10), Cambodia (n=10), Myanmar (n=7), Spain (n=6), and Malaysia (n=4).

With regard to the SAQ participants who preferred to remain in Thailand, the additional comments below from SAQ respondents revealed that the existence of Thai family member(s) could somehow mitigate the downside of Thailand, such as visa policy, land ownership policy, and political instability.

Thailand is now my home. I haven't returned to the UK in 14 years, even for holiday. I have Thai wife, smashing son, and a house. It would need something very dramatic to force me to leave. Returning to UK would be very difficult (emotionally and financially) - I've "burnt my bridges" (SAQ respondent #83).

Regarding "Disillusionment with Thailand," I'm afraid negative aspects of Thailand make me question my stay here at least once or twice a year. Fortunately, my lovely, wonderful wife makes the bad side of Thailand something I can tolerate for now. In reality, she is the ONLY reason I stay in Thailand (SAQ respondent #195).

Similar to the SAQ results, the IDI findings also revealed that there were IDI participants who preferred to (I.) remain in Thailand, (II.) leave Thailand, and (III.) those who were indecisive or uncertain about their future migration decision. Their insights were revealed as follows.

(I.) The IDI participants who preferred to remain in Thailand in the future revealed that they would continue staying in the country due to good wellbeing in Thailand and the desire to stay together with their Thai family in Thailand (if applicable).

Having been in Thailand for more than two decades, W17 revealed to be very satisfied with his relationships with Thai wife, as well as, the wellbeing in Thailand, so he preferred to continue staying in the country. Likewise, a non-Thai couple (W19 and W20) were very satisfied with their livings in Thailand. Though W19 and W20 revealed to be financially well-off persons who could afford living anywhere, they preferred to stay in Thailand, attributable to friendly and “genuinely sincere” local people, high medical standard and good healthcare facility, and the fact that their children were also living together in Thailand.

The unmarried/unpartnered participants preferred to stay in Thailand because of the low cost of living, availability of other family members in Thailand, affordable healthcare (both formal and informal care), as well as, the rejuvenating sexual lifestyle. W05 was very satisfied with his wellbeing in Thailand, attributable to low cost of living, availability of affordable active sex life, and affordable medical costs.

On the other hand, though W04 revealed to have bitter relationships with his Thai wife, as well as, found no other impressive factors in Thailand except the low cost of living, he felt obliged to be in Thailand only for his 4-year-old biological daughter. “She (his daughter) is my angel, and I am only here for her,” W04 said.

In addition, W11 revealed that he was too old to live alone in his home country after his wife’s death, so his son (who married a Thai wife) brought him to stay together in Thailand. Therefore, W11 would remain in Thailand until the end of his life.

(II.) The IDI participants who preferred to leave Thailand in the future revealed that they would return to their home country. Three IDI participants did not seem to think of Thailand as their final destination, in which, two of them reported that the unwelcoming structural frameworks and political instability in Thailand greatly contributed to their leave decision.

A widowed male participant (W06) revealed that he was currently going back and forth between his home country (the UK) and Thailand, in which, he used tourist visa while staying in Thailand. W06 stated that he could not be in Thailand for too long as he had to look after his house, where he lived there alone.

Despite the fact that he was very satisfied with his relationships with Thai wife, the overall wellbeing in Thailand, and the acceptance of himself in Thai society, W02 revealed that he planned to return to his home country (Sweden) with his Thai wife in the next 5-10 years. Thailand’s current visa scheme was partly contributed to his leave

decision. Besides, W02 revealed that his former Thai wife and their biological daughter were currently living in Sweden.

A non-Thai couple (W07 and W12) revealed that they would leave Thailand in the next 5-10 years, in which, they would probably return to their home country (USA), attributable to visa insecurity, political instability in Thailand, and possible crucial life events (e.g. divorce and widowhood). In addition, the husband (W12) revealed that he was interested in retiring to Philippines as well.

(III.) With regard to the IDI participants who were still uncertain about their future migration decision, they remained indecisive as they were uncertain about the future of their financial conditions, health status, relationship status (e.g. divorce or widowhood), as well as, the possible urgent call from other family members back home. However, if these circumstances really happened in the future, the majority of participants would return to their home country.

Though many of IDI participants divorced his/her spouse back home or became widowed, they still had ties with other family members (i.e. children, relatives), whom they would return for if necessary, e.g. if they could no longer handle themselves financially or physically, and/or if the family back home wanted them to return.

Besides the uncertainty about their future conditions, some participants reported that their long term settlement in Thailand was tremendously challenged by the current visa policy.



W10 was upset about the short visa duration of Thailand's retirement visa and the inefficient management of Thailand's immigration office. Besides the return option, W10 stated that he might want to retire in Philippines.

On the other hand, W14 reportedly used visa agents to deal with her retirement visa extension. However, W14 was most concerned about the future of her health condition. If having severe health problems, W14 would have to return to live with her niece and nephew at home country (USA). Nonetheless, W14 said that the return migration to home country would be her last resort option as she wanted to live independently in Thailand as long as possible.

In addition, some participants who migrated to Thailand as a couple reportedly might have to return home if one person in a couple wanted to. W15 revealed that he was asked by his non-Thai wife to return home. While he enjoyed all the living in Thailand, his non-Thai wife did not (for example, she could not eat Thai food at all) and always wanted to return home (USA).

## **6.2 Determinants of the future migration plans**

The analysis of SAQ results were mainly used to test the hypotheses (1), (2), and (3) of the study (See the **topic 1.7 of Chapter 1**); however, the IDI findings were also discussed in the summary of hypothesis testing results.

According to hypotheses (1), the author used: (a.) Chi-Square statistics to test the relationships between future migration decisions and several personal factors,

including age, sex, nationality, health conditions, marital status, availability of biological child with Thai spouse, education, income, the total number of years living in Thailand, place of usual residence, and visa status (**Table 6.2** and **Table 6.3**); and (b.) multinomial logistic regression model of future migration decision to test the predicting ability of the personal factor variables (i.e. age, sex, nationality, marital status, and place of usual residence) in the model (**Table 6.6**).

According to hypotheses (2), the author used: (a.) Chi-Square statistics to test the relationships between future migration decisions and subjective wellbeing variables, including subjective wellbeing of life as a whole, and seven subjective wellbeing indexes (**Table 6.4**); and (b.) multinomial logistic regression model of future migration decision to test the predicting ability of the subjective wellbeing variable (i.e. subjective wellbeing of life as a whole) in the model (**Table 6.6**).

According to hypotheses (3), the author used: (a.) Chi-Square statistics to test the relationships between the future migration decisions and several cultural assimilation indicators used in this study, including “marital status” (**Table 6.2**) and other cultural assimilation indicators in (**Table 6.5**); and (b.) multinomial logistic regression model of future migration decision to test the predicting ability of cultural assimilation variables (i.e. marital status, and the feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand) in the model (**Table 6.6**).

In **Table 6.5**, the cultural assimilation indicators being explored were including the perception of intermarriage between Thais and Westerners, ability to listen/speak

Thai, knowledge of Thai culture, participation/volunteers in Thai social or cultural activities, contribution/exchange of knowledge or skills with Thais, the feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand, and the feeling of national identity.

### 6.2.1 Quantitative analysis for hypothesis testing

The quantitative analysis of the future migration decision and other factors, including personal factors, subjective wellbeing factors, and cultural assimilation factors, were presented as follows.

**Table 6.2** examined the relationships between future migration decision and personal factor variables, including age, sex, nationality, health conditions, marital status, and the availability of biological child/children with Thai spouse.

The Chi-Square test revealed that there was a significant relationship between future migration decision and the marital status of SAQ respondents ( $\chi^2=22.930$ ,  $p=0.011$ ); additionally, if comparing the number/percentage of those selecting to “leave” or “not leave,” it could be seen that single respondents, divorced respondents, and the respondents who married/partnered to non-Thais all tended to leave rather than stay in Thailand for the next 5-10 years.

Though the respondents who married/partnered to Thai ( $n=208$ ) were more likely to continue their stay in Thailand ( $n=75$ ) rather than to leave ( $n=48$ ), the majority of them ( $n=85$ ) were still uncertain about their future migration decision.

Table 6.2: Future migration decisions by age, sex, nationality, health conditions, marital status, and biological child with Thai spouse of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Variables	Future migration decisions			p value <sup>a</sup>
	Leave (n=94)	Not leave (n=102)	Maybe (n=134)	
<b>Age</b>				
50-59	23 (24.5%)	18 (17.6%)	37 (27.6%)	0.184
60-69	55 (58.5%)	54 (52.9%)	70 (52.2%)	
70-79	15 (16.0%)	26 (25.5%)	26 (19.4%)	
80 and above	1 (1.1%)	4 (3.9%)	1 (0.7%)	
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	81 (86.2%)	96 (94.1%)	119 (88.8%)	0.171
Female	13 (13.8%)	6 (5.9%)	15 (11.2%)	
<b>Nationality</b>				
British	17 (18.1%)	34 (33.3%)	36 (26.9%)	0.268
American	37 (39.4%)	24 (23.5%)	46 (34.3%)	
Australian	10 (10.6%)	11 (10.8%)	8 (6.0%)	
German	6 (6.4%)	10 (9.8%)	13 (9.7%)	
Swedish	3 (3.2%)	5 (4.9%)	6 (4.5%)	
Other	21 (22.3%)	18 (17.6%)	25 (18.7%)	
<b>Chronic disease/risky health conditions</b>				
Yes	20 (21.3%)	29 (28.4%)	48 (35.8%)	0.058
No	74 (78.7%)	73 (71.6%)	86 (64.2%)	
<b>Marital status</b>				
Married/partnered to Thai	48 (51.1%)	75 (73.5%)	85 (63.4%)	0.011*
Married/partnered to non-Thai	13 (13.8%)	9 (8.8%)	16 (11.9%)	
Single (never married)	12 (12.8%)	7 (6.9%)	5 (3.7%)	
Divorced	17 (18.1%)	4 (3.9%)	18 (13.4%)	
Separated	1 (1.1%)	4 (3.9%)	7 (5.2%)	
Widowed	3 (3.2%)	3 (2.9%)	3 (2.2%)	
<b>Biological child with Thai spouse</b>				
Never had Thai spouse/ none	79 (84.0%)	79 (77.5%)	107 (79.9%)	0.503
One or more child/children	15 (16.0%)	23 (22.5%)	27 (20.1%)	

Note: n(%) or number and percentage in the column variable (future migration decisions) are presented.

<sup>a</sup> Chi-Square.

\*p < 0.05.

Source: The author.

On the other hand, there were no statistically significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ) between future migration decisions and other personal factors (i.e. age, sex, nationality, health conditions, and the availability of biological child/children with Thai spouse); however, it should be observed that the majority of respondents, regardless of their

age, sex, nationality, health conditions, and the availability of biological child/children with Thai spouse, were still uncertain about their future migration decision.

Though there were no statistically significant relationships among those variables, it could be noticed that (1) respondents with older age groups (70-79 or 80 and above) preferred stay to leave, (2) male respondents preferred stay to leave, while female respondents preferred leave to stay, (3) American respondents preferred leave to stay, while British respondents, German respondents, Australian respondents, and Swedish respondents preferred stay to leave, (4) respondents with chronic disease or risky health conditions preferred stay to leave, and (5) respondents who had at least one biological child with Thai spouse preferred stay to leave.

**Table 6.3** revealed the relationships between future migration decision and other personal factor variables, including education, income, total number of years lived in Thailand, place of usual residence, and visa status of SAQ respondents.

The Chi-Square test revealed that there was significant relationships only between future migration decision and visa status ( $\chi^2=13.330$ ,  $p=0.038$ ). In addition, it could be noticed that the respondents who had retirement visa or Thai spouse visa preferred stay to leave Thailand.

Table 6.3: Future migration decisions by education, income, total number of years in Thailand, place of usual residence, and visa status of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Variables	Future migration decisions			p value <sup>a</sup>
	Leave (n=94)	Not leave (n=102)	Maybe (n=134)	
<b>Education</b>				
Lower than bachelor's degree	31 (33.0%)	42 (41.2%)	54 (40.3%)	0.427
Bachelor's degree or higher education	63 (67.0%)	60 (58.8%)	80 (59.7%)	
<b>Current monthly income</b>				
<50,000 baht	8 (8.5%)	10 (9.8%)	13 (9.7%)	0.707
50,000 - 100,000 baht	37 (39.4%)	51 (50.0%)	54 (40.3%)	
>100,000 - 200,000 baht	36 (38.3%)	32 (31.4%)	50 (37.3%)	
>200,000 baht	13 (13.8%)	9 (8.8%)	17 (12.7%)	
<b>Total year(s) living in Thailand</b>				
1-5 years	45 (47.9%)	36 (35.3%)	59 (44.0%)	0.458
>5 - 10 years	28 (29.8%)	35 (34.3%)	42 (31.3%)	
>10 years	21 (22.3%)	31 (30.4%)	33 (24.6%)	
<b>Place of usual residence</b>				
Bangkok	7 (7.4%)	15 (14.7%)	13 (9.7%)	0.134
Pattaya	14 (14.9%)	14 (13.7%)	24 (17.9%)	
Chiang Mai	34 (36.2%)	19 (18.6%)	30 (22.4%)	
Udon Thani	10 (10.6%)	13 (12.7%)	25 (18.7%)	
Hua Hin	9 (9.6%)	12 (11.8%)	10 (7.5%)	
Other	20 (21.3%)	29 (28.4%)	32 (23.9%)	
<b>Visa status</b>				
Retirement visa	74 (78.7%)	81 (79.4%)	108 (80.6%)	0.038*
Thai spouse visa	9 (9.6%)	19 (18.6%)	13 (9.7%)	
Tourist visa	5 (5.3%)	1 (1.0%)	9 (6.7%)	
Other	6 (6.4%)	1 (1.0%)	4 (3.0%)	

Note: n(%) or number and percentage in the column variable (future migration decisions) are presented.

<sup>a</sup> Chi-Square.

\*p < 0.05.

**Source: The author.**

On the other hand, though there were no statistically significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ) between future migration decisions and other personal factors, including education, income, the total number of years lived in Thailand, and place of usual residence, it could be observed that (1) respondents with lower than bachelor's degree education preferred stay to leave, (2) respondents who had less than 100,000 baht monthly income preferred stay to leave, (3) respondents who totally spent more than

5 years in Thailand preferred stay to leave, while respondents who totally spent 1-5 years in Thailand preferred leave to stay, and (4) only the respondents in Chiang Mai preferred leave to stay.

**Table 6.4** revealed the relationships between future migration decisions of SAQ respondents and subjective wellbeing variables, including the subjective wellbeing of life as a whole, and seven subjective wellbeing indexes (SW1-SW7).

The Chi-Square test revealed that there were significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ) between future migration decisions and the subjective wellbeing of life as a whole ( $\chi^2 = 10.091$ ,  $p = 0.039$ ), in which, it was revealed that respondents with high subjective wellbeing of life as whole in Thailand (score 8-10) preferred stay to leave Thailand.

Furthermore, the Chi-Square test also revealed that there were significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ) between future migration decisions and six subjective wellbeing indexes, including “standard of living” ( $\chi^2 = 16.700$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), “personal relationships” ( $\chi^2 = 37.192$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), “social connections” ( $\chi^2 = 32.164$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), “personal security” ( $\chi^2 = 18.185$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), “environmental quality” ( $\chi^2 = 29.381$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), and “local infrastructure” ( $\chi^2 = 16.323$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ).

However, according to the data, there was no significant relationship between future migration decisions and the subjective wellbeing of “health status” among SAQ respondents ( $\chi^2 = 13.330$ ,  $p = 0.038$ ).

Table 6.4: Future migration decisions by subjective wellbeing in Thailand of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Variables	Future migration decisions			p value <sup>a</sup>
	Leave (n=94)	Not leave (n=102)	Maybe (n=134)	
Subjective wellbeing of life as a whole				
Low (0-4)	2 (2.1%)	2 (2.0%)	5 (3.7%)	0.039*
Moderate (5-7)	45 (47.9%)	28 (27.5%)	46 (34.3%)	
High (8-10)	47 (50.0%)	72 (70.6%)	83 (61.9%)	
Subjective wellbeing indexes				
Standard of living (SW1)				
Low (0-4)	8 (8.5%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (3.0%)	0.002**
Moderate (5-7)	36 (38.3%)	26 (25.5%)	49 (36.6%)	
High (8-10)	50 (53.2%)	76 (74.5%)	81 (60.4%)	
Health status (SW2)				
Low (0-4)	5 (5.3%)	7 (6.9%)	10 (7.5%)	0.343
Moderate (5-7)	34 (36.2%)	34 (33.3%)	60 (44.8%)	
High (8-10)	55 (58.5%)	61 (59.8%)	64 (47.8%)	
Personal relationships (SW3)				
Low (0-4)	16 (17.0%)	3 (2.9%)	5 (3.7%)	0.000***
Moderate (5-7)	35 (37.2%)	17 (16.7%)	51 (38.1%)	
High (8-10)	43 (45.7%)	82 (80.4%)	78 (58.2%)	
Social connections (SW4)				
Low (0-4)	21 (22.3%)	10 (9.8%)	13 (9.7%)	0.000***
Moderate (5-7)	41 (43.6%)	22 (21.6%)	63 (47.0%)	
High (8-10)	32 (34.0%)	70 (68.6%)	58 (43.3%)	
Personal security (SW5)				
Low (0-4)	16 (17.0%)	5 (4.9%)	24 (17.9%)	0.001**
Moderate (5-7)	39 (41.5%)	28 (27.5%)	45 (33.6%)	
High (8-10)	39 (41.5%)	69 (67.6%)	65 (48.5%)	
Environmental quality (SW6)				
Low (0-4)	42 (44.7%)	19 (18.6%)	51 (38.1%)	0.000***
Moderate (5-7)	40 (42.6%)	49 (48.0%)	68 (50.7%)	
High (8-10)	12 (12.8%)	34 (33.3%)	15 (11.2%)	
Local infrastructure (SW7)				
Low (0-4)	43 (45.7%)	24 (23.5%)	53 (39.6%)	0.003**
Moderate (5-7)	37 (39.4%)	48 (47.1%)	62 (46.3%)	
High (8-10)	14 (14.9%)	30 (29.4%)	19 (14.2%)	

Note: n(%) or number and percentage in the column variable (future migration decisions) are presented.

<sup>a</sup> Chi-Square.

\*p < 0.05.

\*\*p < 0.01.

\*\*\*p < 0.001.

Source: The author.

If looking at the “not leave” option of future migration decisions, it was obvious that the majority of respondents who preferred to remain in Thailand in the future (n=102) were those perceiving “high” subjective wellbeing (8-10 score) of their



standard of living (74.5%), health status (59.8%), personal relationships (80.4%), social connections (68.6%), and personal security (67.6%).

Likewise, the respondents who perceived “moderate” subjective wellbeing (5-4 score) or “high” subjective wellbeing (8-10 score) of environmental quality and/or local infrastructure were more likely to remain in Thailand than those who perceived “low” subjective wellbeing (0-4 score) of environmental quality and/or local infrastructure.

**Table 6.5** revealed the relationships between future migration decisions of SAQ respondents and several cultural assimilation variables, including the perception of intermarriage between Thais and Westerners, ability to listen/speak Thai, knowledge of Thai culture, participation/volunteers in Thai social or cultural activities, contribution/exchange of knowledge or skills with Thais, the feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand, and the feeling of national identity.

The Chi-Square test revealed that there was only significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ) between future migration decisions and the feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand ( $\chi^2 = 25.103$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), in which, it was revealed that respondents who perceived “good” or “excellent” acceptance in Thailand preferred stay to leave.

Besides the feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand, marital status was also the cultural assimilation indicator that had statistically significant relationships with the future migration decisions (See the analysis and descriptions in **Table 6.2**)

Table 6.5: Future migration decisions by several cultural assimilation indicators.

Variables	Future migration decisions			p value <sup>a</sup>
	Leave (n=94)	Not leave (n=102)	Maybe (n=134)	
Intermarriage between Thais and Westerners				
Common	64 (68.1%)	82 (80.4%)	105 (78.4%)	0.136
Not common	11 (11.7%)	5 (4.9%)	6 (4.5%)	
In between	19 (20.2%)	15 (14.7%)	23 (17.2%)	
Ability to listen/speak Thai				
Very poor or poor	66 (70.2%)	72 (70.6%)	99 (73.9%)	0.437
Average	22 (23.4%)	18 (17.6%)	27 (20.1%)	
Good or excellent	6 (6.4%)	12 (11.8%)	8 (6.0%)	
Knowledge of Thai culture				
Little to none or little	11 (11.7%)	8 (7.8%)	18 (13.4%)	0.741
Some	50 (53.2%)	55 (53.9%)	67 (50.0%)	
A lot or expert level	33 (35.1%)	39 (38.2%)	49 (36.6%)	
Participation/volunteers in Thai activities				
Hardly ever or occasionally	51 (54.3%)	67 (65.7%)	84 (62.7%)	0.423
Sometimes	27 (28.7%)	22 (21.6%)	27 (20.1%)	
Frequently or almost always	16 (17.0%)	13 (12.7%)	23 (17.2%)	
Contribution/exchange knowledge or skills				
Hardly ever or occasionally	66 (70.2%)	67 (65.7%)	86 (64.2%)	0.240
Sometimes	14 (14.9%)	22 (21.6%)	19 (14.2%)	
Frequently or almost always	14 (14.9%)	13 (12.7%)	29 (21.6%)	
Feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand				
Very poor or poor	7 (7.4%)	1 (1.0%)	10 (7.5%)	0.000***
Neutral	37 (39.4%)	15 (14.7%)	29 (21.6%)	
Good or excellent	50 (53.2%)	86 (84.3%)	95 (70.9%)	
Feeling of national identity				
As non-Thai	69 (73.4%)	66 (64.7%)	92 (68.7%)	0.298
More as non-Thai	11 (11.7%)	14 (13.7%)	27 (20.1%)	
As Thai and as non-Thai	12 (12.8%)	19 (18.6%)	13 (9.7%)	
More as Thai	1 (1.1%)	2 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
As Thai	1 (1.1%)	1 (1.0%)	2 (1.5%)	

Note: n(%) or number and percentage in the column variable (future migration decisions) are presented.

<sup>a</sup> Chi-Square.

\*\*\*p < 0.001.

Source: The author.

On the other hand, though there were no statistically significant relationships ( $p < 0.05$ ) between future migration decisions and other cultural assimilation indicators, it still could be observed that (1) respondents who perceived that intermarriage between Thais and Westerners were common these days preferred stay to leave Thailand; (2) respondents who had poor or very poor ability to listen or speak Thai

preferred stay to leave; (3) respondents who had some, a lot, or expert level of the knowledge about Thai culture preferred stay to leave; (4) respondents who hardly ever or occasionally participated or volunteered in Thai social or cultural activities preferred stay to leave; (5) respondents who sometimes contributed or exchanged knowledge or skills with Thais preferred stay to leave; and (6) respondents who perceived their national identity as “non-Thai” preferred leave to stay.

**Table 6.6** presented multinomial logistic regression of future migration decisions, in which, the option “not leave” was selected as baseline or reference category. This model yielded the likelihood ratio chi-square of 88.318 ( $p=0.000$ ), which indicating that this model could better predict the outcome than the intercept-only model (null model). In addition, Nagelkerke’s pseudo R-square of this model is 0.265.

According to **Table 6.6**, there were no statistically significant relationships between future migration decisions and two personal factor variables, including sex and place of usual residence.

Table 6.6: Multinomial logistic estimation of future migration decisions of SAQ respondents (N=330).

Variables	Future migration decisions	
	Leave (n=94) RRR	Maybe (n=134) RRR
Age	0.942*	0.954*
Female [ref. male]	1.418	1.618
Nationality [ref. American]		
British	0.205***	0.372*
Australian	0.417	0.279*
German	0.385	0.568
Swedish	0.576	0.652
Other	0.56	0.446
Marital status [ref. Thai spouse/partner]		
Non-Thai spouse/partner	3.074	2.141
Single (never married)	2.780	0.635
Divorced	6.796**	4.670*
Separated	0.455	2.224
Widowed	2.509	1.158
Place of usual residence [ref. Chiang Mai]		
Bangkok	0.318	0.776
Pattaya	0.668	1.397
Udon Thani	0.721	1.626
Hua Hin	0.633	0.630
Other	0.426	0.739
Subjective wellbeing of life as a whole in Thailand	0.696**	0.751**
Feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand	0.451***	0.571**
Likelihood Ratio (Chi-Square)	88.318***	
Pseudo R-Square (Nagelkerke)	0.265	

Note: relative risk ratios (RRR) are reported.

Reference category of dependent variable is 'Not leave' (n=102).

\*p < 0.05.

\*\*p < 0.01.

\*\*\*p < 0.001.

Source: The author.

Given other variables in the model being held constant, it was statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) that (1) as age increased, respondents would be less likely to prefer to leave rather than stay (RRR=0.942,  $p=0.017$ ), additionally, respondents of older age would be less likely to choose “maybe” option rather than “not leave” option (RRR=0.954,  $p=0.036$ );

(2) British respondents were less likely than American respondents to prefer to leave rather than stay ( $RRR=0.205$ ,  $p=0.00064$ ), additionally, British respondents were less likely than American respondents to choose “maybe” option rather than “not leave” option ( $RRR=0.372$ ,  $p=0.013$ );

(3) divorced respondents were more likely than the respondents who married/partnered to Thais to prefer to leave rather than stay ( $RRR=6.796$ ,  $p=0.004$ ), additionally, divorced respondents were more likely than the respondents who married/partnered to Thais to choose “maybe” option rather than “not leave” option ( $RRR=4.670$ ,  $p=0.015$ );

(4) respondents with higher subjective wellbeing of ‘life as a whole’ in Thailand were less likely than respondents with lower subjective wellbeing of ‘life as a whole’ to prefer to leave rather than stay ( $RRR=0.696$ ,  $p=0.0012$ ), additionally, respondents with higher subjective wellbeing of ‘life as a whole’ in Thailand were less likely than respondents with lower subjective wellbeing of ‘life as a whole’ to choose “maybe” option rather than “not leave” option ( $RRR=0.751$ ,  $p=0.005$ ); and

(5) respondents who perceived higher acceptance of themselves in Thailand were less likely than the respondents who perceived lower acceptance of themselves to prefer to leave rather than stay ( $RRR=0.451$ ,  $p=0.0003$ ); additionally, the respondents who perceived higher acceptance of themselves in Thailand were less likely than the respondents who perceived lower acceptance of themselves to choose “maybe” option rather than “not leave” option ( $RRR=0.571$ ,  $p=0.005$ ).

## 6.2.2 Summary of hypothesis testing results

### *Hypothesis 1*

As a result, the quantitative analysis supported the hypotheses 1 that “personal factors or characteristics of migrants could influence migrant’s future migration decisions,” in which, the determinant personal factors included *age*, *nationality*, *marital status*, and *visa status*. The quantitative analysis of such variables were presented in **Table 6.2**, **Table 6.3**, and **Table 6.6**.

According to IDI results regarding the future migration plans (See IDI results in **6.2.1**), it was revealed that age, health conditions, marital status, and children (i.e. biological children with Thai spouse and/or biological children with non-Thai spouse), were personal factors that played an important role in determining future migration decisions of IDI participants.

The reason why health conditions was not a determinant factor for future migration of SAQ respondents might be because SAQ participants were revealed to be averagely younger (median age = 65) than the IDI participants. In addition, only around one quarter of SAQ respondents reportedly had chronic disease and/or risky health conditions.

Several IDI participants who aged below 70 were more likely to move out than those who were older. Older participants, regardless of their marital status, wished to stay in Thailand as long as possible. However, the IDI participants who were currently not in good health were most concerned of their future in Thailand. Though marrying

to a Thai wife, W01 revealed that he might have to return to his home country if he could no longer handle his health.

### ***Hypothesis 2***

The quantitative analysis also supported the hypotheses 2 that “subjective wellbeing of migrants in a host country could influence migrant’s future migration decisions,” in which, the determinant subjective wellbeing factors included *subjective wellbeing of life as a whole* and six subjective wellbeing indexes, i.e. *standard of living (SW1)*, *personal relationships (SW3)*, *social connections (SW4)*, *personal security (SW5)*, *environmental quality (SW6)*, and *local infrastructure (SW7)*. The quantitative analysis of those variables were presented in **Table 6.4** and **Table 6.6**.

In accordance with the SAQ results, it was revealed that the subjective wellbeing in Thailand also played an important role in determining future migration decisions of IDI participants. Several participants revealed that they were satisfied with the overall wellbeing in Thailand, particularly their standard of living, health status, personal relationships, and personal security.

Though many of them were concerned of the environmental quality (e.g. air pollution and littering) and unfriendly infrastructure for elderly, such factors were not powerful enough to make them leave Thailand. On the other hand, several IDI participants were more concerned of the structural frameworks (i.e. visa policy) and external factor (i.e. political instability) in Thailand as these factors reportedly caused anxiety and reduced their wellbeing in Thailand.

### *Hypothesis 3*

Lastly, the quantitative analysis also supported the hypotheses (3) that “cultural assimilation of migrants in a host society could influence migrant’s future migration decisions,” in which, the determinant cultural assimilation factors included *marital status* and *the feeling of acceptance of oneself in Thailand*. The quantitative analysis of such variables were presented in **Table 6.2**, **Table 6.5**, and **Table 6.6**.

According to the IDI results, it was revealed that the intermarriage/ partnership and the availability of biological child with Thai spouse particularly affected their future migration decisions. Male IDI participants perceived that the chances of getting married or remarried at older age were high for Western retirees in Thailand. Therefore, such opportunity to rejuvenate late life intimate relationships had become a powerful pull factor of Thailand and was likely to be the determinant factor that kept many of them stay in the country in long term.

Apart from marital assimilation, other aspects of cultural assimilation of both IDI and SAQ participants were reported to be quite low, greatly attributable to low Thai language proficiency, and limited socialization. Many IDI participants perceived themselves as “non-Thai.” However, despite the difference of ethnics and culture, the majority of both IDI and SAQ participants reportedly knew quite well about Thai culture and felt accepted by Thai society.



## Chapter 7

### Impacts and planning

In **Chapter 7**, the author presents an analysis of the in-depth interviews (IDI) of Thai stakeholders (i.e. local Thai citizens, the representatives from Thai private sector, and the representatives from Thai public sector) regarding the impacts of the international retirement migration (IRM) of Westerners to Thailand, and the planning for the phenomenon in long term.

#### 7.1 IRM impacts from a perspective of local (Thai) people

Characteristics of local interviewees (Thais) and their perspective on the impacts of the IRM of Westerners to Thailand were presented as follows.

##### 7.1.1 Characteristics of local interviewees

**Table 7.1** presented the characteristics (i.e. age, gender, location, occupation, and relationships to Western retirees) of local interviewees (N=10). Local interview participants aged 27-58 years old. They were consisting of 8 Thai females and 2 Thai males from major cities (i.e. Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and Pattaya), and a remote province in the North (i.e. Nan). Their occupations included business owner/ self-employed, employee, student, teacher/lecturer, education administrator, and police. In addition, LOC02 and LOC06 reportedly married to Western retirees (i.e. a Dutch retiree and a Swedish retiree).

Table 7.1: Characteristics of local interviewees (N=10).

No.	Age	Gender	Location	Occupation	Relationships to Western retirees
1	27	Female	Pattaya	Business owner	-
2	48	Female	Nan	Business owner	Wife
3	50	Female	Nan	Employee	-
4	45	Female	Nan	Employee	-
5	43	Female	Pattaya	Employee	-
6	44	Female	Pattaya	Employee	Wife
7	36	Female	Bangkok	Student	-
8	27	Female	Udon Thani	Teacher/ lecturer	-
9	58	Male	Nan	Education administrator	-
10	35	Male	Chiang Mai	Police	-

Source: The author.

### 7.1.2 Economic, social, and environmental impacts on local community

Based on a perspective of 10 local interviewees, the impacts of the IRM of Westerners to Thailand were generally perceived to be positive in terms of economic, social, and environmental aspects.

#### *Economic impact:*

In terms of economic impacts, local participants viewed that the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand could benefit both foreigners and Thais in the community.

Based on their observations and experiences, local participants perceived that the influx of tourists and the abundance of Western retirees in local community could actually lead to good economy, job creations for local workforce, more business opportunity for local entrepreneurs, as well as, city development in both physical/material and intellectual aspects. The development of local infrastructure,

healthcare facilities, large shopping complex, and other related business that serving the demands of both tourists and expats, could lead to the development of human capital of local workforce (i.e. English and/or other Western language proficiency, as well as, occupational and/or managerial skills to meet international standards).

LOC01 said that the development of Pattaya city to meet the demands of both tourists and expats could also enhance the standard of living of the locals in Pattaya.

Pattaya locals can have the opportunity to enjoy the new development, such as large shopping complex, world-class standard hospitals, and nice infrastructure which are better than many other provinces of Thailand (LOC01).

Likewise, LOC07, now living in a condominium in popular area in Bangkok, told that seeing several Western residents (i.e. Western family or single/unmarried retirees) in the condominium made her believe that this building must be a good choice for living and/or investment/speculation, as she perceived that the properties that were popular among Westerners would be of international standards, and situated in attractive locations (e.g. closing to public transport, shopping malls, and hospitals).

In Udon Thani, LOC08 perceived that many Western expats would prefer going to large shopping malls, while average local people would normally go to non-air conditioned markets where they could buy cheaper food.

With regard to the development of human capital of local people in tourist attraction and/or expat-based communities, local people in the workforce could reportedly develop their English and/or other Western language skills as they had to

communicate with Westerners every day. LOC09 stated that he, along with his co-workers (i.e. Thai teachers/ lecturers and administrative staff), could develop their English skills by communicating with Western lecturers (i.e. American, British, and Canadian) who were working part-time at their organization. Some of those lecturers aged 50-55 and already retired from their full-time jobs at home. “We asked them not to speak Thai with us, so we could improve our English,” LOC09 said.

However, with regard to their financial supports when living in Thailand, LOC09 stated that the part-time Western lecturers still mostly depended on their own savings, while the salaries received from LOC09’s organization (i.e. approximately 25,000-30,000 baht a month) could partially help support their living expenses in Thailand.

From a perspective of local participants who were married to Western retirees, both LOC02 and LOC06 reported that their husbands (i.e. a Dutch retiree and a Swedish retiree) were the main providers of financial supports to their family, as well as, their extended family (i.e. their parents and relatives). LOC02 reported that her husband gave her money to build a house under her name and helped her start a local business. On the other hand, LOC06 reported that her husband helped build a house in Phetchabun province (her hometown), as well as, supported the education of her daughter (i.e. a child of LOC06 and her former Thai husband).

However, instead of just living on their husbands’ pensions, both LOC02 and LOC06 were also working. LOC02 was diligently working for the local business that was invested/sponsored by her husband, while LOC06 was encouraged by her husband to

work in order to pay for her own debt by herself. However, LOC06 said that she was quite not afraid if her husband left her and return to his home country. Yet, she still had no plans if that would really happened to her in the future.

***Environmental and social impacts:***

With regard to the environmental impacts, the majority of Thai participants noticed that many of the retired expats from the Western world were generally “civilized” persons with good personalities, e.g. taking good care of their own personal hygiene, having good littering habits, not making loud noise, and not causing problems to Thai environments. However, some retired Western expats might have bad habits which left negative impression for any passersby; for example, LOC08 told that she was heard about the incident of old drunken Western men fighting at the local bars in Udon Thani.

On the other hand, several participants observed that the degrading environments and pollutions in Thailand, particularly along the coastline areas and other tourist attractions, were instead caused by the irresponsible local people. “Most of the dirty spots on the beach were actually caused by the irresponsible Thai vendors who often toss any of their leftovers or garbage on the beach,” LOC01 said.

Regarding the social impacts of the IRM, all local participants in this study perceived that the migration of Western retirees to Thailand generally yielded neutral or positive impacts, rather than negative impacts on Thai society.

Many local participants revealed that most retired Western expats (both males and females) they had known/met so far were good migrants. Normally, the local participants perceived that older Western expats were not the populations that would cause problems in Thailand.

Though we have seen the news of old Western men having sex with teenage boys or the stories of some of them being drunk, smashing things, and causing problems, those were probably accounted for a very small percentage of the total populations of the retired Western migrants in Thailand (LOC10).

Also, several local participants suggested that instead of looking at Western retirees as a potential threat to national security or Thai society, we should increase the morality of our citizens in order to help reducing the cases of Western male retirees being deceived by local people for money. Such damages did not only affect Thailand's reputation, but also caused burden for the Thai government and responsible authorities who must have to provide repatriation assistance, legal remedy, and/or social relief to the older foreign victims.

In addition, the integration of Western retirees into wider Thai society was perceived to be varied among different receiving areas.

The local participants in Bangkok and Pattaya said that they rarely saw Western retirees in their communities socialize with local people, except their Thai wives and/or partners. On the contrary, local participants in a remote interior city like Nan perceived quite high cultural assimilation of Western retirees in the local community. Nan locals observed that many of the Western retirees in Nan (both males and females) generally

tried to learn and speak conversational Thai language, and seemed enthusiastic when exchanging knowledge, culture, and/or values with local people. Furthermore, Western retirees in Nan were found attending several local events and Buddhist events (though many of them were not Buddhists), as well as, casually dressing in contemporary Northern Thai native clothes.

For the two Thai participants who married to Western retirees, both LOC02 and LOC06 were reportedly very proud of their husbands whom they thought as being very “responsible,” “mature,” and “straightforward” persons. However, both LOC02 and LOC06 observed that their Western husbands preferred not to meet or stay with other Thai relatives (i.e. Wife’s family) for long hours as they would feel more comfortable when staying with own family and/or socializing with their Western friends.

With regard to the intermarriages between Western retirees and Thais, LOC05 observed that the marriages between older Western men and teenage or young adult Thai women rarely lasted long, attributable to a very large age gap (e.g. more than 30 years difference), and the fact that many of the local young ladies married older Westerners solely for money.

I saw many young Thai girls leave their older Western husbands/partners when those men were run out of money, and sooner or later the girls would find new older Western men to support them (LOC05).

Besides, some local participants added that what really disturbed the Thai society the most was the picture of Thai women from teenage to middle-age wearing revealing outfits and staying side by side with their older Western husbands/partners.

Based on the way they dressed and behaved, I could only assume that many of them were uneducated, relatively deprived, and/or even used to work as prostitutes before marrying older Westerners (LOC08).

On the other hand, some participants suggested that the Thai society should no longer criticize the intermarriages/relationships between local women and older Western men.

If anyone seeing differently and thinking of this as another form of disgusting sex trade, then you must help those ladies find a better solution; for example, giving them an opportunity to earn enough money to support themselves and/or their family, which possibly included their parents, relatives and/or children from previous marriage (LOC01).

## **7.2 IRM impacts and planning from a perspective of Thai private sector**

Characteristics of the representatives from Thai private sector and their perspective on the impacts and planning for the IRM phenomenon were presented as follows.

### **7.2.1 Characteristics of the representatives from Thai private sector**

**Table 7.2** presented the characteristics (i.e. description of their business organizations, location, gender and position) of the representatives from Thai private sector (N=8, from 6 organizations).



Table 7.2: Description of business organization, location, gender, and position of the representatives from Thai private sector.

#Org.	Description of business organization	Location	Representative(s)	
			Gender	Position
1	Hotel	Bangkok and Pattaya	Female	Manager
2	Visa agent company	Pattaya	Female	Manager
3	Private hospital	Chiang Mai	Male	Board member
4	Visa and legal consulting company	Chiang Mai	Female	Visa agent
			Male	Legal consultant
5	Nursing home business	Chiang Mai	Male	Co-owner/ director
6	Real estate agent company	Bangkok	Female	Director
			Male	Manager assistant

Source: The author.

The interviewees from Thai private sector worked in accommodation business (i.e. real estate developer, hotel, and nursing home), private hospital business, and visa and legal consulting business, situated in Pattaya, Chiang Mai, and Bangkok. The representatives from Thai private sector were consisting of four males and four females. Their positions in their organizations ranged from co-owner to junior employees.

### 7.2.2 Impacts of the IRM on private business and future plans

With an increasing number of retired expats/ long-stay tourists from the Western World coming to Thailand for amenity consumption every year, many local tourism-related business viewed the IRM phenomenon as a great opportunity for them to expand and/or sustain their business.

The impacts of international retirement migration (IRM) of Western retirees to Thailand on accommodation and property business, private hospital business, and visa and legal consulting business were discussed as follows.

### ***Accommodation and property business***

This sector summarized the interviews of the representatives from Thailand's accommodation and property business, including hotel, nursing home, and real estate developer.

Even for a very tourism-based business like hotel, the IRM was seen as an opportunity to sustain the business in long term. PRI01 said that even though the expat customers (most were retirees) were accounted for only 10% of the total income of her small-sized hotels (less than 50 guest rooms) in Bangkok and Pattaya, she believed that the IRM phenomenon would continue to grow.

Most of the expats coming to stay for 6 months or more at my hotels in Bangkok and Pattaya were Western retirees. Also, there were several older expats living nearby (particularly in Pattaya city) regularly coming to find some food and drinks at my hotel. Though that did not make a large sum of money, the income from the expats could at least help me pay my employees, as well as, cushion the costs during the low season (PRI01).

PRI01 also added that she experienced punctual payments from the Western expats who rented a room for several months.

Aside from punctual payments, PRI01 also experienced that receiving older customers from developed countries also yielded other advantages, including (1)

reducing the chance of hosting criminals, such as drug dealers and gangsters, and (2) maintaining the good condition of the rooms and the furniture as the elderly were more careful with the hotel properties than teenagers and/or customers who came as family with little children. Furthermore, towards the future of her business, PRI01 planned to build an all-in-one retirement resort that could provide both accommodation and affordable care, catering to the needs of older customers.

On the other hand, PRI06 was currently operating both hotel and nursing home business within the same area, in which, the hotel was opened to attract tourists of all age while the nursing home was operated to attract long-term older customers from over the world. PRI06 revealed that his nursing home business most struggled during the first year of operation with a very low business growth. However, from the second year onwards, the nursing home had received at least one newcomer every month, resulting in a total of 14 nursing home customers by the end of 2015.

Besides accommodation service, PRI06 said that the nursing home also provided non-medical care services, as well as the first aid care and 24-hour transport service to nearby hospital in case of emergency. As of 2015, PRI06 said he already hired 22 local nurses to work at the nursing home, including two professional nurses and 20 practical nurses. In addition, PRI06 revealed that a unit at the nursing home would cost each older customer around 45,000 baht per month.

With regard to the impacts of IRM on real estate development in Thailand, the author interviewed PRI07 and PRI08 who currently worked for one of Thailand's leading

real estate developers. PRI07 and PRI08 stated that their company had been doing a research on property development for older customers for quite some time. According to both PRI07 and PRI08, foreign buyers were accounted for around 20% of the annual revenue of their company. PRI08 said that most of Western buyers would buy the properties for own living, unlike Chinese buyers from Hong Kong or China mainland who would buy the properties for investment/speculation.

More than a decade ago, their company launched a housing estate with less than 20 units in Hua Hin that aimed to attract older Scandinavian buyers. However, it took quite long time for all the units to be sold and the transaction costs were quite high (i.e. the costs of interpreters/translators and maintenance staff that had to be available throughout the 30-year property lease contract between the company and non-Thai buyers).

In addition, in the next five year, PRI07 and PRI08 said that their company would be unlikely to invest in building specialized individual homes or condominiums that mainly focused on attracting older foreign customers.

Instead, the company would continue the property projects that partially incorporated universal design in their property/building, e.g. attaching handrails along the passage hall and/or placing medical alert systems in some floors of the condominium building to attract older customers (both Thais and non-Thais) who wanted to live in a safer environment.

### *Private hospital business*

The author interviewed a board member of one of leading private hospitals in Chiang Mai. At the status quo (2015), PRI03 reported that foreigners were accounted for 30-40% of the hospital's total income, in which, most of foreign patients were the retired expats who were currently living in Chiang Mai (e.g. Americans, British, Swiss, French, German, and Japanese), as well as, Chinese tourists. Most common disease found among foreign patients were including infectious disease, diarrhea, fever, and Dengue. There were not so many foreign patients who had cancer or heart disease coming to his hospital.

In addition, PRI03 reported that most of the foreign patients coming to his hospital were the Americans. From January to October 2015 there were 1,304 American outpatients and 8 American inpatients admitted to his hospital, in which, the hospital received around 3.8 million baht from the American outpatients, and around 800,000 baht from American inpatients.

At the moment, PRI03 revealed that his hospital had currently hired several full-time medical interpreters/translators that could communicate in English, Chinese, German, French, and Japanese; however, it was hard to find highly skilled medical interpreters/translators who could be both fluent in foreign languages and accurately understood the medical terms and procedure.

Besides, with regard to the advertising strategies, PRI03 stated that his hospital currently relied upon the use of radio, Internet, bill board, as well as, the word of mouth from former/current patients to reach new patients.

However, in the near future, PRI03 planned to (1) utilize more of the digital marketing and social media to reach new patients (2) build new buildings outside town to increase the hospital capacity and serve the needs of patients in suburban areas, and (3) implement mobile care service, in which, the hospital would send physicians, nurses, and/or other medical staff to visit patients at their homes.

#### ***Visa and legal consulting business***

PRI02, PRI04, and PRI05 stated that the increasing number of retired expats in Thailand, particularly Western retirees, had both created and sustained their business.

According to PRI02 and PRI04, the visa assistant service would cost each customer around 10,000 - 12,000 baht in Chiang Mai, and around 10,000 – 20,000 baht in Pattaya. PRI02, PRI04, and PRI05 said that most of their clients knew their business via the Internet. In addition, PRI02 revealed that half of her company's yearly income came from the retirement visa service to the foreign retirees who applied for Thailand's retirement visa in Pattaya.

Though foreign retirees could apply and/or extend the visa by themselves, PRI04 said that most of her retired Western customers were willing to pay for the visa assistant service at her company as they wanted to make sure that they could

definitely and conveniently get the visa. In addition, PRI04 said that many of her customers were relatively affluent retirees who could easily afford the service.

Our clients may be able to do the visa by themselves, but they are old people who want to make sure of everything, so they come to us (PRI04).

In addition, PRI04 said that the high season of her business was during August – October, in which, most of her clients came from the UK, the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, and Switzerland.

With regard to the legal service, PRI05 said that more than 80% of his works just involved the preparation and checking for accuracy of documents, such as title deeds, sale and purchase property contracts, and will and testament. The majority of his clients in Chiang Mai were including Americans, Australians, British, and French.

Most of the lawsuits PRI05 had dealt with for the customers in Chiang Mai were family lawsuit and property lawsuit. PRI05 said that the property lawsuit between Thai wives and their Western husbands could take years or even more than 10 years to reach the final judgment.

Towards the future, both PRI04 and PRI05 said that according to their company's policy, they would have to maintain the standard of their service (both legal and visa service) to their clients. In addition, PRI05 said that the improvement of English proficiency would help enhance the performance of Thai lawyers.

### 7.3 IRM impacts and planning from a perspective of Thai public sector

Characteristics of the representatives from Thai public sector and the preparations or long-term plans for the IRM phenomenon were presented as follows.

#### 7.3.1 Characteristics of the representatives from Thai public sector

**Table 7.3** presented the characteristics (i.e. organization, location, gender and position) of the representatives from Thai public sector (N=9, from 6 organizations). The representatives from Thai public sector were consisting of five males and four females, who were currently working in Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and Nan.

**Table 7.3: Organization, location, gender, and position of the representatives from Thai public sector.**

#Org.	Organization	Location	Representative(s)	
			Gender	Position
1	Immigration bureau	Chiang Mai	Male	Junior commissioned police officer
		Nan	Female	Junior commissioned police officer
		Nan	Female	Non-commissioned police officer
2	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Bangkok	Male	Senior officer
		Bangkok	Female	Junior officer
3	Ministry of Public Health	Bangkok	Male	Senior officer
4	Ministry of Finance	Bangkok	Male	Senior officer
5	Department of Land	Nan	Male	Senior officer
6	Ministry of Tourism and Sports	Nan	Female	Junior officer

**Source:** The author.

Junior-ranked police were being interviewed at Nan immigration and Chiang Mai immigration. Both senior officers and junior officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of



Interior (Department of Land), and the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, were being interviewed in Bangkok and Nan.

### 7.3.2 IRM impacts and planning from Thai public sector

This section provided an analysis of current implementations of IRM-related policy and the suggestions on the preparations for the future from the interviews of the representatives from Thai public sector.

#### *Visa policy*

With regard to retirement visa policy, PUB01, PUB02, and PUB03 unanimously agreed that it should be granted for only one year and the 90-day report should still remain (the same as the status quo); however, the management of the immigration could have been a lot improved if increasing the budget and manpower to all immigrations nationwide.

Such status quo conditions of Thailand's retirement visa should be continued as all the representatives had experienced that not all of older foreigners aged 50 and above were good or innocent. Though all three representatives from the Immigration Bureau acknowledged that this current visa policy might discourage the permanent settlement of good migrants, they perceived that an extension of the visa to be more than one year or the cancellation of 90-day report would weaken Thailand's borders and national security.

We must prioritize national security and strengthen our borders first, and it is hard to change the regulations as we had to treat everyone equally. We cannot

favor migrants of particular nationalities/races and/or economic status over the others (PUB03).

With regard to the financial requirements of retirement visa, PUB03 suggested that the imposed amount of two-month fixed deposit (i.e. 800,000 baht) as being required under the application of Thailand's retirement visa should be increased in response to the increasing cost of living in Thailand.

In order to provide faster immigration service, Chiang Mai immigration used to implement an online queue for retirement visa applicants; however, it turned out to be a failure due to a lack of adequate manpower. "It was hard for our few staff to properly handle with both online and walk-in applicants," PUB03 said.

In addition, in case of the retired expats who were married to Thai nationals, PUB01 said that she would suggest them to apply for retirement visa instead of Thai spouse visa, as the latter required more paperwork and further investigations that might take longer time for the visa to be approved.

### ***Land ownership policy and tax policy***

According to the interviews of the representatives from the Department of Land (Ministry of Interior) and the Ministry of Finance, they suggested Thailand should continue the status quo conditions for land ownership policy for foreign buyers, as well as tax policy for retired expats.

PUB08 insisted that Thailand should protect freehold ownership of lands to local citizens, and the 30-year lease policy was already a good alternative for those who

wanted to reside on land, instead of living in other real estate with shared properties, such as condominium or apartment. However, based on his experience in the field, PUB08 stated that the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand did not really pose a threat to the overall land ownership in Thailand as most of them bought houses/lands to reside with their Thai spouses, not for investment/speculation.

Though the Thai law actually allowed the tax officers to collect the income tax from retired foreign expats (e.g. from the pensions they brought to use in Thailand), PUB07 suggested that Thailand should not directly collect tax from the retired expats due to two following reasons: first, it would discourage the IRM of foreign retirees which could yield more income to the country; and second, the requirements for tax collection from the pensions or savings from abroad were quite challenging. The tax officers had to prove that the retired expats (1) had brought their pensions/savings to use in Thailand during the tax year (i.e. usually the year prior to the year each individual filed his/her taxes), and (2) had been living in Thailand for 180 days or more.

PUB07 stated that Thailand already gained the income from the taxes on goods and services, as well as, the taxes on their savings and business/investments in Thailand. For instance, PUB07 revealed that the tax officers could collect taxes worth of 600,000 baht per month from a nursing/retirement home business in an Isan province.

### *Long-stay and second-home tourism policy*

According to the interviews of the representatives from the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, it was suggested that Thailand had instead been focusing on tourism (e.g. amenity tourism and/or medical tourism) instead of the long-term settlements of foreigners; however, they were still aware of the economic opportunity from the IRM of Westerners from the First World to Thailand.

PUB09 stated that the Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS) imposed a Thai tourism standard for accommodation business in Thailand, i.e. hotel, that every hotel should reserve at least 10% of its property to serve the needs of long-stay tourists or expats. Besides, the MOTS would give a certificate, as well as, helped promote the accommodation business that met long-stay accommodation standard. In addition, with regard to the unsuccessful “Thailand Elite Card” program that was launched since 2003 to attract affluent long-stay visitors to come stay in Thailand by offering privileged entry visa and additional luxury services, PUB04 reported that the MOTS still currently operated the program; nonetheless, they were uncertain about its future.

PUB06 stated that the policy of the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) toward “legal foreign patients” was to sustainably help promote Thailand’s medical tourism. However, due to the insufficient of health manpower, and lower English proficiency in Thai public health sector, the MoPH then instead acted as a supporter to the private healthcare sector in achieving a goal of becoming a medical hub in Southeast Asia. In

addition, PUB06 revealed that the areas of Thailand's medical competitiveness included cosmetic surgery, sex reassignment surgery, dental services, and general health check-up.

Despite low English proficiency, Thailand still had high-quality medical facilities and the readiness to become a medical hub of Asia. PUB04 revealed that comparing to other Asian countries, Thailand had the largest number of hospitals that received JCI (Joint Commission International) accreditation which is a renowned standard for global healthcare.



## Chapter 8

### Concluding remarks and recommendations

**Chapter 8** presents the concluding remarks (i.e. the summary of the main conclusions and discussion) and recommendations (i.e. policy recommendations, limitations of the study, and recommendations for further research).

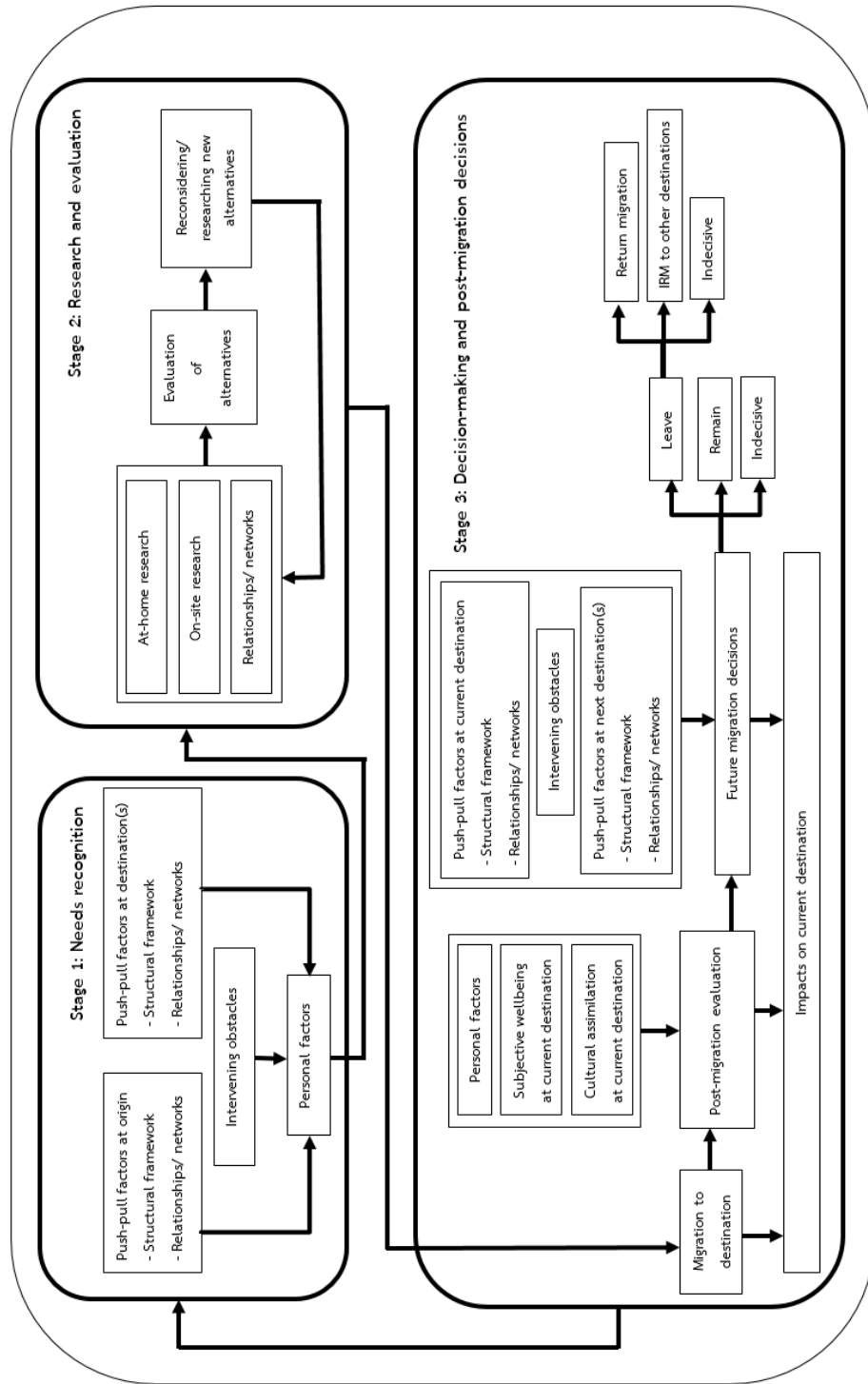
#### 8.1 Concluding remarks

As in accordance with the research question and objectives of this study, **Chapter 4 – Chapter 7** presented both quantitative and qualitative findings regarding the pre-migration to Thailand decision-making process, post-migration subjective wellbeing and cultural assimilation, post-migration decision-making process (i.e. future migration plans), and impacts of the migration of Western retirees to Thailand.

The author revises the conceptual framework in **Chapter 2 (Figure 2.6)** and presents the new framework, namely the “International Retirement Migration Model of Western Retirees in Thailand” (**Figure 8.1**) based on the empirical findings of this study, as well as, the revisiting of related theories and concepts.

The “International Retirement Migration Model of Western Retirees in Thailand,” as well as, the summary of the main conclusions and discussions from **Chapter 4 – Chapter 7** are presented as follows.

Figure 8.1: International Retirement Migration Model of Western Retirees in Thailand



In **Figure 8.1**, Lee's four sets of factors for migration (Lee 1966), including push-pull factors at origin, push-pull factors at destination, intervening obstacles, and personal factors, are all placed in the needs recognition stage. Based on the theories and concepts related to migration selectivity (Lee 1966, Borjas 1987, 1989, Borjas 1991), "personal factors" (micro factor) of individuals are the key internal factors that decide whether he/she will migrate. Other external factors, including the push-pull factors at origin, the push-pull factors at destination(s), and the intervening obstacles for migration will be filtered or assessed by individual personal factors before moving to the next stage of decision making.

Besides the conventional push-pull economic factors and amenity factors of origin and destinations, the findings of this study found that the "structural frameworks" (macro factor) and "relationships/ networks" (meso factor) were also revealed to be major aspects when migrants considering push-pull factors at origin and the push-pull factors at destination(s).

In research and evaluation stage, migrants will seek to obtain more information about destination(s) via "at-home research," "on-site research," and/or from the "relationships/ networks." All information regarding potential destination(s) will be evaluated through this mechanism.

In decision-making and post-migration decision stage, migrants make their final migration decision to a certain destination. In accordance with Haas and Serow (1993)



and Åkerlund (2013), this study also found that after migration, migrants would continue to evaluate their personal factors, their subjective wellbeing at current destination, their cultural assimilation at current destination, the push-pull factors at current destination, the push-pull factors at potential next destination(s), as well as, the intervening obstacles of future migration.

In addition, from the immigration of migrants to a destination until their departure, there will be impacts posted on a destination. The study of the impacts of the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand from the perspective of Thai stakeholders reveals that the IRM of Western retirees tends to produce positive impacts in Thailand, particularly in economic aspects.

With regard to the quantitative analysis for hypothesis testing, it is statistically significant that personal factors (i.e. age, nationality, marital status, and visa status), post-migration subjective wellbeing (i.e. subjective of life as a whole, standard of living (SW1), personal relationships (SW3), social connections (SW4), personal security (SW5), environmental quality (SW6), and local infrastructure (SW7)), and post-migration cultural assimilation (i.e. marital status and the feeling of individual acceptance in Thai society) can predict future migration decisions of Western retirees in Thailand.

Among several choices of future migration decisions, the indecisive migration choice or the waiting option (Burda 1995) were more popular option among research participants than the decisive migration choices (i.e. leave or remain). In case of leaving the current destination, this study found that the Western retirees would mostly return

to their home countries (return migration). Some of them were interested in moving to other destinations (IRM to other destinations), while some still remained uncertain about their next destination.

### *Summary of the main conclusions and discussion*

This section presents the summary of the main conclusions and discussions of the findings in **Chapter 4 – Chapter 7** of this study.

### *Migration patterns and immigrant characteristics*

Both quantitative and qualitative results of this study suggest that the migration of Western retirees to Thailand can be well defined as an international retirement migration (IRM) of the lonely/heart-broken Caucasian Western male retirees who are of good health. This study found that the bulk of migrants were unmarried/unpartnered Western male retirees who just moved to Thailand after their early retirement at home or elsewhere rather than previously had stayed in Thailand before retirement and “aged in place” (Warnes and Williams 2006) in the country.

The prevalence of unmarried/unpartnered migrants in this study supports the notions that marital instability promotes migration (Mincer 1978). Furthermore, since many of the migration of Western retirees to Thailand just happened after their retirement at home, this study supports the notions from Greenwood (1985) that the life cycle of individuals (i.e. retirement) could trigger migration.

Migration of female Western retirees to Thailand was revealed to be relatively sparse, which is contrary to the fact that the populations aged 65+ of 24 developed Western countries are females, i.e. females were accounted for around 56% of the total 65+ populations in 2016 (United Nations 2017).

Contrary to the findings of the IRM to other retirement destinations where there were a gender balance of migrants and unnoticeable number of intermarriage between retired migrants and local citizens (Rodriguez, Fernandez-Mayoralas, and Rojo 2004, Casado-Díaz et al. 2004, Casado-Díaz 2006, Liesl 2013, Lardiés-Bosque, Guillén, and Montes-de-Oca 2015, Wong and Musa 2014b), this study revealed that many Western male retirees migrated to Thailand and later married/partnered to local citizens.

Besides, it is revealed that the majority of Western retirees in Thailand are highly educated persons. The majority of research participants obtained bachelor's degree or higher education. Though the majority of research participants are revealed to be of moderate wealth at home, they are relatively financially capable in Thailand, in which, the majority currently received around 50,000 – 200,000 baht a month from their pension or savings abroad.

Western retirees in Thailand are less likely to depend on Thai public services (i.e. public health services or public school services for interracial children). As the majority of Western retirees in Thailand are still reportedly in good health and they preferred private healthcare services to public healthcare services.

In addition, this study found that the dependence on public school services in Thailand was reported to be very low among the biological children of Western retirees in Thailand. Only 11.2% stated that their biological children attended public schools or universities in Thailand.

As in accordance with the immigration statistics (Immigration Bureau 2014b), most research participants of this study are also reportedly living in major cities in Thailand, e.g. Chiang Mai, Pattaya, Udon Thani, Bangkok and Hua Hin, respectively.

With regard to the three types of lifestyle destinations (Benson and O'Reilly 2009), Pattaya, Bangkok, and Hua Hin can obviously be considered as “residential tourism” destinations. On the other hand, other popular destinations in Thailand like Chiang Mai and Udon Thani are instead having the combined characteristics of “residential tourism,” “rural idyll,” as well as “bourgeois Bohemian,” due to their high ethnic cultures and high variation of city development within those cities.

In addition, this study further found that 16.4% of SAQ respondents were living alone in the household. The majority of those married/partnered to Thais were staying in houses with lands, and many of them were residing in Udon Thani. Interestingly, there were none of the SAQ respondents who married with non-Thais, single respondents, separated respondents, or widowed respondents currently living in Udon Thani; on the other hand, the majority of them were living in Chiang Mai.

With regard to the mobility practices of Western retirees after their migration to Thailand, this study reveals that Western retirees actually prefer to limit their

mobility after their migration to Thailand as 33% reportedly never relocated or changed the place of their usual residence, 54.5% reportedly moved within Thailand, and only 13.3% moved to live outside Thailand. Similarly, the study of Benson (2011) also reported that retired British migrants in rural France rarely travelled beyond their usual residence.

Therefore, if considered the typologies of lifestyle migrants (O'Reilly 2000) based on their mobility practices after migration, the Western retirees in Thailand can be rather considered as “full residents” or “returning residents” than merely “seasonal visitors” and/or “peripatetic visitors.”

#### *Pre-migration decision-making process*

According to the quantitative analysis of push-pull factors of origin and destination (Thailand) in **Table 4.17**, research participants significantly perceived the cost of living, climate, and people in Thailand as more desirable than those factors at their home countries.

As cost of living is revealed to be one of the determinant pull factor of Thailand, this study supports the notions that “economic motives” are the major contributors of migration (Ravenstein 1885, 1889) and the difference in such material aspect and other aspects between origins and destination (Thailand) will continuously produce and sustain the migration stream (Lee 1966).

Nonetheless, the spatial differences in amenities (i.e. climate), and the opportunity to establish late life intimate relationships in Thailand are also considered as determinant pull factors for the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand.

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis reveal that many Western male retirees who firstly come to Thailand as divorced or single persons will later marry/partner to local citizens after their migration. The quantitative result reveals that more than half of the respondents are currently married/partnered to Thais. Therefore, the findings of this study support the notions that the opportunity for rejuvenating late-life intimate relationships is considered one of the determinant factors that motivates foreign retirees to come to Thailand (Howard 2008, 2009, Sunanta 2014, Sunanta 2009, Sunanta and Angeles 2012, Esara 2009, Koch-Schulte 2008).

Besides the satisfaction toward the opportunity to establish late life intimate relationships with local citizens, both male and female Western retirees also reported that they were satisfied with Thai people in general. They perceive that Thai people are generally friendly and have respect and compassion for senior or older people.

With regard to the choices of destinations, the great majority of both IDI and SAQ respondents only identified Thailand as their ideal place for retirement. Contrary to the 2017 retirement country ranking, Thailand is not even ranked in the top ten of the best places for retirement by the International Living (International Living 2017). However, the country was ranked 7<sup>th</sup> best place for retirement by the International Living in 2016 (Eisenberg 2017).

As in accordance with the SAQ findings regarding the ideal place for retirement, the IDI results reveal that the higher chance of establishing late life intimate relationship with local citizens in Thailand has distinguished the country from other retirement destinations. Besides the perceived higher chance of establishing late life intimate relationships in Thailand, the country is reportedly preferred to other developing Southeast Asian destinations due to its relatively advanced development and healthcare facilities, favor of democracy (in normal political situation), and religion (Buddhism).

With regard to the strategies the Western retirees used during the research and evaluation stage before migration, this study reveals that Western retirees usually implemented an “on-site research” or travelled to Thailand before their migration. In addition, many of them obtained the information about the living in Thailand via the Internet, friends, and/or their Thai spouse/partners.

### ***Post-migration subjective wellbeing***

Similar to the study of Howard (2008) regarding the wellbeing of Western retirees in Thailand, this study also finds that Western retirees are positively satisfied with their life as a whole in Thailand. However, this study further investigate the wellbeing in specific life domains, in which, Western retirees reveal to be highly satisfied with their standard of living, health status, personal relationships, social connections, and personal security in Thailand. Nonetheless, their satisfaction toward

the environmental quality and local infrastructure are relatively moderate or low due to the lack of care for the environment in Thailand, the perceived unsafe transport infrastructure, and the reckless driving habits of Thai people in general.

### *Post-migration cultural assimilation*

Besides the prevalence of Thai-Western intermarriages/intimate relationships or “marital assimilation” of the immigrants (Gordon 1964), other cultural assimilation indicators of this study reveal that Western retirees in Thailand are still only in their early stage of cultural adaptation.

Similar to the study of Howard (2008) about the assimilation indicators of Western retirees in Thailand, this study also found that Western retirees generally perceived that they were well accepted by Thai society. Even though the majority reveal to have good knowledge about Thai culture and/or feel well accepted in Thai society, they still have low Thai language proficiency and limited social interactions with local people in the community, which indicating low adoption of “cultural and behavioural assimilation” (Gordon 1964). Besides, the “identificational assimilation” (Gordon 1964) is also low among research participants as most of them generally perceive their national identity as “non-Thai.”

However, if compared to other retirement destinations where thin assimilation of older migrants in wider host societies were reported (O'Reilly 2000, Casado-Díaz 2006, Gustafson 2008, 2001), Thailand is the only retirement destination that has



noticeable late life intermarriages/intimate relationships between older migrants and local citizens.

### ***Future migration plans***

According to the hypotheses of this study, all hypotheses are supported by both qualitative and quantitative findings, in which, personal factors or characteristics of migrants (e.g. marital status), and the subjective wellbeing at destination (i.e. satisfaction of life as a whole) and cultural assimilation at destination (i.e. marital status, and the feeling of acceptance in Thai society) could statistically and significantly predict migrant's future migration decisions.

Based on the current mobility practices of Western retirees in Thailand as shown by this study, the future migration option of going back and forth between their home countries and Thailand or the so-called "circulation migration" tends to be unlikely. On the other hand, the study of Western retirees in other retirement destinations, i.e. France and Switzerland, revealed that the retired migrants there tended to adopt the going back and forth strategy (de Coulon and Wolff 2010, Bolzman, Fibbi, and Vial 2006).

Furthermore, the findings of this study reveal that the availability of the newly established family or intimate relationships in Thailand can somehow outweigh other undesirable factors that the retired migrants experienced in the country so far and that may somehow suspend or delay their future migration.

Despite the prevalence of intermarriages between Western male retirees and local women, not many of them reportedly have biological child together. The quantitative result of this study reveals that the majority of those who have biological children with Thai spouses prefer to continue staying in Thailand in the future, there is no statistically significant relationships between the availability of biological child with Thai spouse and future migration decisions of Western retirees.

If compared to the participants who perceived to have lower wellbeing of life as a whole and/or lower acceptance by Thai society, the quantitative analysis reveals that the participants who perceive higher satisfaction of life as a whole in Thailand and/or higher acceptance in Thai society will be more likely to continue staying in Thailand in the next 5-10 years. Though the majority of the research participants reveal to have positive wellbeing in Thailand and high intermarriages/marital assimilation, the majority are still uncertain about their future migration decisions and many of them are likely to leave Thailand in the future.

Besides the concerns of future crucial life events (e.g. widowhood and divorce), deteriorating health, and possible financial hardships at older age, Western retirees generally perceived the current Thailand's visa policy, land ownership policy, and political instability as major obstacles for their long term or permanent settlement. Though return migration to home country is popular among research participants, some of them also expressed an interest to retire in other countries, particularly other developing countries in Southeast Asia, such as Philippines, Vietnam, and Cambodia.

### *Impacts on destination*

With regard to the IRM impacts and planning, Thai stakeholders reveal that they rather see the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand as an opportunity for Thailand to improve the economy, and perhaps enhance human capital of the local workforce, e.g. boosting English proficiency and promoting better professional and/or managerial skills. Besides, since most of the retired Western participants reveal to have usually spent most of the year in Thailand, it is positive that the IRM could lead to job creations for the working-age local citizens, as well as, the improvements of local products and services as a whole.

However, while the private sector had already been aware of their business potential with an ongoing IRM phenomenon, the public sector seemed to remain static and reluctant to change towards more facilitating policies. Besides, the local participants unanimously agree that the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand should be encouraged as they perceive that retired Western migrants generally have good character and their existence in Thailand will rather yield positive economic impacts with little to none negative impacts on the environment or the Thai society.

## **8.2 Recommendations**

Policy recommendations, limitations of the study, and the recommendations for further research are discussed as follows.

### *Policy recommendations*

The findings regarding the impacts from the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand from the perspective of Thai stakeholders, as well as, the SAQ findings from Western retirees, suggest that Western retirees in Thailand generally are of good characters (e.g. being financially independent, healthy, highly educated/skilled, and well-behaved/tidy). The Thai stakeholders of this study perceive that the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand generally yield positive economic impacts with little to none negative social or environmental impacts on local community.

In addition, the study of future migration plans suggest that Western retirees in Thailand will unlikely be the burden of the host society in the future. Many of them will return to their home countries if their financial circumstances, health condition, and/or personal relationships become at risk.

Therefore, the Thai authorities should support long-term settlement of Western retirees in Thailand.

In order to sustainably achieve mutual benefits from the IRM, a change towards more hassle-free retirement scheme for foreign retirees is needed. Especially in Thailand where the majority of retired migrants are married/partnered to local citizens, the difficult visa policy and management will negatively affect the wellbeing of the migrants themselves, as well as, their local family. López (2015) stated that the “really long and frustrating” legal immigration process and deportation threats could affect

both migrants themselves and their local family members, i.e. native spouses and/or racially-mixed children (López 2015).

Also, the managerial capacity and community readiness are key factors of sustainable retiree-attraction policies which can create “promising economic development strategies” and perhaps “social resource” for local communities through the intellects and skills, as well as, the volunteering spirits of retired migrants (B. Douglas 2004).

Nonetheless, unlike the retirement visa in Malaysia and Australia which allow foreign retirees to work part-time, foreign retirees in Thailand are prohibited from work under the current retirement visa. Therefore, so far, Thailand has not yet utilized the full benefits of the IRM. Based on the comparison with the retirement visa in Malaysia or Australia, Thailand’s retirement visa is perceived to be (1) “less profitable” (on the host country side) due to much lower financial requirements and the absence of work permits to foreign retirees, and (2) “less facilitating” (on the retired migrant side) due to short duration of stays, too regular notification of stay at immigration, and inefficient immigration service.

In the near future, Thailand should (1) improve the environmental quality and the sense of responsibility for the environment among Thai people, as well as, promote the safety and accessibility of local infrastructure for people of all age, and

(2) provide a more hassle-free visa policy that helps facilitate the migration of Western retirees to Thailand. The visa policy should grant longer duration of stays, as

well as, allow the host country to receive full benefits of IRM beyond the financial benefits. For example, by taking the retired migrants who have intellects and skills as potential human resource for the host country and allowing them to do part-time works and/or volunteering activities in Thailand.

With regard to the current restriction of land ownership in Thailand to foreign buyers, though many of retired Western participants were not satisfied with the current policy, the IDI of Thai representative from the Department of Land and some of Western retirees suggest that the status quo policy should still remain.

### ***Limitations of the study***

This study has the following limitations. First, a random sampling and larger sample size of questionnaire respondents are not achievable not only because of the limitations of cost and time, but also the lack of effective communication channels to reach Western retirees nationwide.

In addition, though the snowball sampling is a useful for the recruitment of IDI participants, it was still difficult to get the access to marginalized population, such as old and frail Western retirees who were less mobile and sociable.

Second, as the questionnaire was self-administered, it is possible that the questionnaire answers can be affected by selective memory, exaggeration, and so on.

Third, as the researchers traded off interview audio recording for higher IDI participation rate and more genuine answers from the IDI participants, it is inevitable

that most of the elaborations on particular issues from the interviews were instead narrated by the interviewer (i.e. the author).

Fourth, since all the research instruments and interviews were being conducted in English, it is possible that the study results may be affected by language deficiency of the author and/or some Western participants who were not English native speakers.

In addition, with regard to the SAQ for Western retirees, it would have been better if the author included more questions about religions, the availability of dependable children/relatives, the availability of properties at home countries, and future migration plans (i.e. adding the “going back and forth/ circulation migration” option to the question of future migration decisions).

### ***Recommendations for further research***

As the majority of Western retirees participated in this study are those from English speaking countries (e.g. the U.S., the UK, and Australia), future research studies (either qualitative or quantitative research) should perhaps focus more about the IRM to Thailand of Western retirees from Germany and/or from Scandinavian countries.

Perhaps due to the samples of this study being nonrandom, the quantitative analysis of this study found no significant relationships between future migration decisions and several important personal factor variables, such as income, education, and total years of living in Thailand. Therefore, future research should further examine these variables.

In addition, since there is a prevalence of late life intimate relationships/ intermarriages of Western retirees and Thai citizens, future research should further explore more about their economic and social consequences in long term, as well as, perhaps provide more knowledge about the availability and contexts of homosexual relationships which is still rarely explored in the IRM literature.





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APPENDIX



## Appendix 1: Questionnaire survey

Survey number:

### Self-administered questionnaire for Western retirees in Thailand

**Place where the questionnaire is completed:**

At home     At Immigration office     Other (please specify.....)

District.....Province.....

**Objectives:** This questionnaire is part of the Ph.D. dissertation entitled “International Retirement Migration of Westerners to Thailand: Decision-Making Process, Wellbeing, Assimilation, and Impacts on Destination.” The main objective of this questionnaire is to examine the international retirement migration (IRM) of Western retirees to Thailand from several aspects: their decision-making process; their well-being; their assimilation; and their impacts on the destination. Your contributions via this questionnaire will become part of policy recommendations, which aim to constitute mutual benefits for both retired expats and Thai society as a whole.

**Respondent selection criteria:**

1. **Age:** 50 years and older
2. **Employment status:** Already retired or currently in retirement transition.
3. **Length of residence:** Have been staying in Thailand for at least one year.
4. **“Western Retiree”:** Citizens of Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand, and the countries in Northern Europe, Western Europe, and Southern Europe.

**Questionnaire structure:** This questionnaire has 8 pages (including the cover page) divided into three parts: PART 1 Personal information (32 items); PART 2 Migration to Thailand decision-making process (12 items); and PART 3 Level of well-being and assimilation in Thailand (15 items).

**General instructions:** Please complete all questions below by writing your answers in the provided space or putting a tick (✓) in the box in front of your answer; however, please select only one answer, if not explicitly stated otherwise. Once you have completed the questionnaire, please return it to the survey distributor.

**Further information:** If you are interested to participate in an in-depth interview session to share more details about your retirement in Thailand and/or wish to learn more about the research results, please contact the researcher via e-mail: Kanokwan.Tang@student.chula.ac.th.

## PART 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Age:.....years old
2. Biological sex:  Male  Female
3. Gender identity:  Male  Female  Other (Please specify.....)
4. Nationality:..... Race:.....
5. Home country:.....
6. How long have you already lived in Thailand?: .....Years.....Months
7. Visa status:
  - Business  Retirement  Thai spouse  90-day  30-day tourist
  - Other (Please specify.....)
8. Retirement status:
  - Retired already (Please specify your age at retirement: .....years old)
  - Not retired yet  Other (Please specify.....)
9. Did you ever live in Thailand for at least one year **before your retirement**?
  - No  Yes (For how long?: ..... Year(s) ..... Month(s))
10. Highest educational attainment:
  - Less than high school  High school  Bachelor's degree
  - Postgraduate degree  Other (Please specify.....)
11. What was your main occupation **before retirement**?
  - Business owner/ Self-employed (Please specify.....)
  - Company officer (Job title: .....
  - Military officer (Job title: .....
  - Teacher/ lecturer (Institution:.....)
  - Other (Please specify.....)
12. Your current monthly income:
  - Less than 50,000 baht (less than 1,485 USD/ 1,352 EUR)
  - 50,000 – 100,000 baht (1,485 – 2,970 USD/ 1,352 - 2,703 EUR)
  - 100,001 – 200,000 baht (2,970 – 5,940 USD/ 2,703 - 5,406 EUR)
  - More than 200,000 baht (more than 5,940 USD/ 5,406 EUR)
13. Main source(s) of income while in Thailand (more than 1 answer allowed):
  - Retirement pension  Savings/ investments abroad  Business abroad
  - Local savings/ investments  Local business (Please specify.....)
  - Other (Please specify.....)
14. Current marital status:
  - Single (never married)  Married to *Thai*  Married to *non-Thai*
  - Have a live-in *Thai* partner  Have a live-in *non-Thai* partner  Divorced
  - Separated  Widowed  Other (Please specify.....)
15. Last marital status **before migrating to Thailand**:
  - Single (never married)  Married to *Thai*  Married to *non-Thai*
  - Have a live-in *Thai* partner  Have a live-in *non-Thai* partner  Divorced
  - Separated  Widowed  Other (Please specify.....)

16. How many children do you have (including biological children, adopted children, and/or step-children)?  
 I have no children    None    1    2    3  
 More than 3 children    Other (Please specify.....)
17. How many of your **biological children** attend public schools/ universities in Thailand?  
 I have no biological children    None    1    2    3  
 More than 3 children    Other (Please specify.....)
18. How many **biological children** do you have **with a Thai spouse**?  
 Never had a Thai spouse    None    1    2    3  
 More than 3 children    Other (Please specify.....)
19. Which sector of **healthcare services** do you mainly use while in Thailand?  
 Private healthcare services    Public healthcare services  
 Other (Please specify.....)
20. Do you have any **chronic diseases or risky health conditions**?  
 No    Yes (Please specify.....)
21. **Place of usual residence in Thailand:**  
 Bangkok    Pattaya    Chiang Mai    Phuket    Hua Hin  
 Koh Samui    Other (Please specify.....)
22. **Type of usual residence in Thailand:**  
 Condominium    Apartment    Penthouse    Townhouse  
 Single-detached house    Other (Please specify.....)
23. **Household size (in Thailand):**  
 1 person    2 persons    3 persons    More than 3 persons
24. **Type of ownership of your place of usual residence in Thailand:**  
 Freehold (life-time rights)    Leasehold (temporary rights, e.g. 30-Year lease)  
 Other (Please specify.....)
25. Who is the **OWNER** or the **LEASEHOLDER** of your place of usual residence in Thailand?  
 Yourself    Your *Thai* spouse    Your *non-Thai* spouse    Your child  
 Thai majority company    Other (Please specify.....)
26. While living in Thailand, did you ever change your place of usual residence? (More than 1 answer allowed)  
 Yes, I moved to live in other place(s) in Thailand (i.e. moving within the same province, and/or moving to another province).  
 Yes, I moved to live outside Thailand but then come back to Thailand again (i.e. moving to home country, and/or moving to other countries).  
 Other (Please specify.....)
27. **Total monthly expenditure while living in Thailand:**  
 Less than 50,000 baht (less than 1,485 USD/ 1,352 EUR)  
 50,000 – 100,000 baht (1,485 – 2,970 USD/ 1,352 - 2,703 EUR)  
 100,001 – 200,000 baht (2,970 – 5,940 USD/ 2,703 - 5,406 EUR)  
 More than 200,000 baht (more than 5,940 USD/ 5,406 EUR)

**28. Major expenditures while in Thailand (More than 1 answer allowed):**

- Accommodation rent fees/ accommodation installment payments  
 Housing costs (e.g. cost of utilities, household maintenance, etc.)  
 Health related costs (e.g. medical treatments, medical products/equipment)  
 Recreation and culture (e.g. package tours, spa treatments, golfing, etc.)  
 Other (Please specify.....)

**29. How long did you stay in THAILAND last year?**

- 11 or 12 months     6-10 months     Less than 6 months     No time

**30. How many times did you visit your HOME COUNTRY last year?**

- 0     1     2     3     More than 3 times

**31. How long did you stay in your HOME COUNTRY last year?**

- No time     Less than 1 month     1-2 months     3 months or more

**32. Besides Thailand, did you ever have the experience of living in any country other than your country of origin for at least a one-year period?**

- No     Yes (Please specify.....)

**PART 2: MIGRATION TO THAILAND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

**1. How do you perceive these factors in your home country? (Please rate each of the following items on a 1-5 rating scale, while 1=Very undesirable, 2=Undesirable, 3=Neutral, 4=Desirable, and 5=Very desirable)**

Factors	1 Very Undesirable	2 Undesirable	3 Neutral	4 Desirable	5 Very Desirable
1. Cost of living	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Climate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Healthcare facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Sports, recreation, and entertainment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Natural and cultural amenities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Lifestyle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. People	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Life security and crime rates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Political stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Economic stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Other (.....)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Which country is your ideal place for retirement? (More than 1 answer allowed):  Spain  Malta  Italy  Mexico  Thailand  Malaysia  Others (Please specify.....)

3. How do you perceive these factors in Thailand? (Please rate each of the following items on a 1-5 rating scale, while 1=Very undesirable, 2=Undesirable, 3=Neutral, 4=Desirable, and 5=Very desirable)

Factors	1 Very Undesirable	2 Undesirable	3 Neutral	4 Desirable	5 Very Desirable
1. Cost of living	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Climate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Healthcare facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Sports, recreation, and entertainment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Natural and cultural amenities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Local/Thai food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Local/Thai lifestyle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Local/Thai language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Local/Thai culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Local/Thai people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Local/Thailand's infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Life security and crime rates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Thailand's visa policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Thailand's property policy for foreign buyers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Thailand's tax scheme for permanent foreign residents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Political stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Economic stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. Other (.....)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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4. When you were in your home country, how could you obtain information about **retirement migration in Thailand**? (More than 1 answer allowed)
- Via Internet search by myself     By attending exhibitions or seminars at home
- Via consulting services with property agents, lawyers, etc.
- Via spouse     Via relatives     Via friends/known persons
- Others (Please specify.....)
- I have never searched for such information while at home
5. Did you ever visit **Thailand** before migrating to the country?
- No     Yes
6. What was/were the purpose(s) of your previous visits to **Thailand** before your migration to the country? (More than 1 answer allowed)
- Researched and gathered information about migration to the country
- Tourism     Medical tourism     Visited friends/relatives
- Visited Thai spouse/partner     Returned with Thai spouse/partner
- I never visited Thailand before migrating here
- Other (Please specify.....)
7. Who could influence and/or facilitate **your final decision** to purchase a freehold/leasehold dwelling in Thailand? (More than 1 answer allowed)
- Professional mediators, such as property agents, lawyers, etc.
- Thai spouse     Non-Thai spouse     Friends/known persons
- Other family members/relatives     Other (Please specify.....)
8. Which structural frameworks did you consider when you made **your final decision** to purchase a freehold/leasehold dwelling in Thailand? (More than 1 answer allowed)
- Visa scheme in Thailand     Property laws in Thailand
- Tax scheme in Thailand     Transport and communication infrastructures
- Other (Please specify.....)
9. To what extent do you agree that these **intervening factors** impeded or delayed your migration to Thailand? (Please rate each of the following items on a 1-5 rating scale, while 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=No opinion/Uncertain, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree)

Factors	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 No opinion/ uncertain	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree
1. Distance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Unfamiliarity/ignorance of Thai laws and regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Language and cultural difference	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Political instability in Thailand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Others (.....)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





### 3.2 ASSIMILATION

1. What do you feel is the general level of acceptance of *farangs* or Westerners in Thailand?  
 Very poor  Poor  Neutral  Good  Excellent
2. What do you feel is the level of acceptance of YOU personally by Thai society?  
 Very poor  Poor  Neutral  Good  Excellent
3. Do you think intermarriage between Thais and Westerners is common these days?:  
 Yes  No  Maybe
4. Who are the persons you mainly socialize with while staying in Thailand? (More than 1 answer allowed)  
 Other Westerners  Thai spouse  Non-Thai spouse  Thai friends  
 Thais at bar scene  Other (Please specify.....)
5. How often do you participate/ volunteer in Thai social and cultural activities arranged by the local Thai community and/or Thai public or private sectors?  
 Hardly ever  Occasionally  Sometimes  Frequently  Almost always
6. How often do you contribute and/or exchange your knowledge and skills with the local Thai community and/or Thai public or private sectors?  
 Hardly ever  Occasionally  Sometimes  Frequently  Almost always
7. Which language do you mainly use while staying in Thailand?  
 Only English  English and my nature language  English and Thai  
 English, Thai, and my nature language  Other (Please specify.....)
8. How do you rate your ability to listen/speak Thai language?  
 Very poor  Poor  Average  Good  Excellent
9. How do you rate your ability to read/write Thai language?  
 Very poor  Poor  Average  Good  Excellent
10. Do you want to learn more about Thai language?  
 Yes  No  Maybe
11. How much knowledge of Thai culture do you have?  
 Little to none  Little  Some  A lot  Expert level
12. Do you want to learn more about Thai culture?  
 Yes  No  Maybe
13. How do you identify yourself in terms of nationality?  
 As non-Thai  More as non-Thai  As Thai and as non-Thai  
 More as Thai  As Thai

\*\*\*\*\* The End of the questionnaire \*\*\*\*\*

Thank you so much for your valuable time and effort

## Appendix 2: Interview questions for Western retirees

Interview Number:

### In-depth interview questions for Western retirees in Thailand

**Place where the interview is being taken:**

At Immigration office     Others (please specify.....)  
District.....Province.....

**Objectives:** This in-depth interview session is part of the Ph.D. dissertation entitled “International Retirement Migration of Westerners to Thailand: Decision-Making Process, Wellbeing, Assimilation, and Impacts on Destination.” The main objective of this interview is to probe further about the decision-making process of the migration to Thailand; well-being; and assimilation of Western retirees in Thailand.

**Respondent selection criteria:**

1. **Age:** 50 years and older
2. **Employment status:** Already retired or currently in retirement transition.
3. **Length of residence:** Have been staying in Thailand for at least one year.
4. **“Western Retiree”:** Citizens of Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand, and the countries in Northern Europe, Western Europe, and Southern Europe.

**Interview structure:** In-depth or the so-called semi-structured interviews would be conducted, in which, the interview questions are divided into three parts: PART 1 Personal information; PART 2 Migration to Thailand decision-making process; and PART 3 Level of well-being and assimilation in Thailand.

#### **PART 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Interviewees would be required to provide information about their personal information, as in accordance with 32 items in Part 1 of the questionnaire survey, including the questions about demographic factors, residence in Thailand, mobility practices, expenditure, dependence on public school services and healthcare services in Thailand. However, interviewees did deserve the rights not to answer to some questions.

## **PART 2: MIGRATION TO THAILAND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

In accordance with the conceptual framework of this study, the questions regarding the decision-making process of the international retirement migration (IRM) of Western retirees to Thailand and future migration plans were presented as follows.

- What brought you to live in Thailand (i.e. motivations of migration, push-pull factors at origin, push-pull factors in Thailand)?
- How could you obtain information about moving to Thailand (i.e. at-home research, on-site research, relationships with social mediators and/or professional mediators)?
- Were there any problems or obstacles you faced when migrating to Thailand (i.e. intervening obstacles of migration to Thailand)?
- Would you consider leaving Thailand in the next 5-10 years? What would be your leave reasons? Where would be your next destination?

## **PART 3: LEVEL OF WELL-BEING AND ASSIMILATION IN THAILAND**

The questions about subjective well-being and cultural assimilation in Thailand were presented as follows.

- What do you think about your wellbeing in Thailand?
- Do you feel accepted in Thai society?
- Who do you socialize with the most while living in Thailand?
- Have you ever participated in any Thai events?
- Have you ever volunteered or contributed your knowledge or skills in Thailand?
- What do you think about your national identity (e.g. as your nationality, more as your nationality, as your nationality and as Thai, more as Thailand, or as Thai).

**\*\*\*\*\* The End of the interview \*\*\*\*\***

**Thank you so much for your valuable time and effort**

### Appendix 3: Interview questions for Thai stakeholders

Interview Number:

#### Interview questions for Thai stakeholders

Place where the interview is being taken: .....

District.....Province.....

**Objectives:** This interview session is part of the Ph.D. dissertation entitled “International Retirement Migration of Westerners to Thailand: Decision-Making Process, Wellbeing, Assimilation, and Impacts on Destination.” The main objective of this interview is to examine the impacts of the international retirement migration (IRM) of Western retirees to Thailand, based on the perceptions and opinions of Thai stakeholders, including those from the public and private sectors, as well as, the local Thais. The interview results will become part of policy recommendations, which aim to constitute mutual benefits for both retired expats and Thai society as a whole.

**Interview structure:** In-depth or the so-called semi-structured interviews would be conducted, in which, the local Thais who living in the same community with the Western retirees would be broadly asked about the impacts of IRM in the economic, social, and environmental aspects, while the representatives from each public and private organizations would be asked by specific questions which relate to their responsibilities and/or interests.

#### Interview questions for the local Thai interviewees:

1. What do you think about the **economic impacts** of the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand on your local community?
2. What do you think about the **social impacts** of the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand on your local community?
3. What do you think about the **environmental impacts** of the IRM of Western retirees to Thailand on your local community?

## Interview questions for Thai representatives from public and private sectors

The researcher interviewed the representatives from the Immigration Bureau, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Interior (Department of Land), and the representatives from private sectors whose business are related to foreign retired immigrants in Thailand.

### 1. Question for the representatives from the Immigration Bureau:

Do you think that the law and regulations of retirement visa, especially in terms of applicant requirements and the allowed length of stay, should be revised or changed to sustain both economic benefits and public security for Thailand, and also help facilitating the application process of the retirement visa applicants whose majority came from developed countries.

### 2. Question for the representatives from the Ministry of Tourism and Sports:

How long-stay or second-home tourism business in Thailand, which attracted and facilitated foreign nationals from developed countries to stay in Thailand for long-term, have affected the country so far, and how the strategies of those business should be in the future.

### 3. Question for the representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

How long-stay or second-home tourism business in Thailand, which attracted and facilitated foreign nationals from developed countries to stay in Thailand for long-term, have affected the country so far, and how the strategies of those business should be in the future.

### 4. Question for the representatives from the Ministry of Public Health:

How long-term migration of the retired or elderly migrants from developed countries, particularly the Western countries, has affected the overall healthcare system in Thailand, and what do you think about how Thailand's healthcare

policy/strategies should be implemented in the future in order to maintain the international standards and be able to cover the needs for healthcare services of both Thai people and the foreigners living in Thailand.

**5. Question for the representatives from the Ministry of Finance:**

Currently, what types of taxes have already been imposed on the long-term foreign residents who are already retired, and how the tax policy for those long-term foreign residents in Thailand should be improved?

**6. Question for the representatives from the Ministry of Interior (Department of Land):**

How the foreign ownership of land and property in Thailand has affected on Thailand's economy, as well as, the ownership of land and property of Thai citizens as a whole, and how the laws and regulations of foreign ownership of land and property in Thailand should be improved or changed?

**7. Question for all representatives from Thai private sector:**

How the long-term residence of those retired or elderly migrants from developed countries, especially the Western countries, has meant to your business so far, and what about your business plan to deal with the demands of those people in the future?

**\*\*\*\*\* The End of the interview \*\*\*\*\***

**Thank you so much for your valuable time and effort**

Appendix 4: Thai translations of Appendix 1 – 3





## ภาคผนวก 1: แบบสอบถาม

หมายเลขแบบสอบถาม:

## แบบสอบถามสำหรับผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกในประเทศไทย

## สถานที่ทำแบบสอบถาม:

ที่บ้าน  ที่สำนักงานตรวจคนเข้าเมือง  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)  
เขต/อำเภอ.....จังหวัด.....

**จุดประสงค์:** แบบสอบถามนี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของดัชนีชี้วัด เรื่อง “การย้ายถิ่นระหว่างประเทศของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกมาสู่ประเทศไทย: กระบวนการตัดสินใจ ความอยู่ดีมีสุข การผสมกลมกลืน และผลกระทบต่อพื้นที่ปลายทาง” แบบสอบถามนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์หลักเพื่อศึกษาการย้ายถิ่นระหว่างประเทศของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกในประเทศไทยในหลายมิติ ได้แก่ กระบวนการตัดสินใจย้ายถิ่น ความอยู่ดีมีสุข การผสมกลมกลืน และผลกระทบต่อพื้นที่ปลายทาง โดยการมีส่วนร่วมของท่านในแบบสอบถามนี้จะกลายเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของข้อเสนอแนะเชิงนโยบายซึ่งมีความมุ่งหมายเพื่อสร้างประโยชน์ร่วมกันทั้งสำหรับผู้เกษียณอายุชาวต่างชาติและสังคมไทยในภาพรวม

## เกณฑ์การคัดเลือกผู้ตอบแบบสอบถาม:

1. อายุ: 50 ปี ขึ้นไป
2. สถานภาพการทำงาน: เกษียณอายุแล้วหรือกำลังอยู่ในช่วงเปลี่ยนผ่านเป็นผู้เกษียณอายุ
3. ระยะเวลาการอยู่อาศัย: อาศัยอยู่ในประเทศไทยรวมเป็นเวลาอย่างน้อย 1 ปี
4. “ผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตก” หมายถึง ประชากรของแคนาดา สหรัฐอเมริกา ออสเตรเลีย นิวซีแลนด์ และประเทศในยุโรปเหนือ ยุโรปตะวันตก และยุโรปใต้

**โครงสร้างแบบสอบถาม:** แบบสอบถามนี้มีทั้งหมด 8 หน้า (รวมหน้าแรก) ซึ่งแบ่งออกเป็น 3 ส่วน ประกอบด้วย ส่วนที่ 1 ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคล (32 ข้อ) ส่วนที่ 2 กระบวนการตัดสินใจย้ายถิ่นมาสู่ประเทศไทย (12 ข้อ) และ ส่วนที่ 3 ระดับความอยู่ดีมีสุขและการผสมกลมกลืนในประเทศไทย (15 ข้อ)

**คำชี้แจงทั่วไป:** กรุณาตอบแบบสอบถามข้างล่างนี้ให้ครบทุกข้อ โดยเติมข้อความลงในช่องว่างที่กำหนดหรือเขียนเครื่องหมายถูก (✓) ลงในกล่องสี่เหลี่ยมหน้าคำตอบของท่าน ทั้งนี้ โปรดเลือกเพียง 1 คำตอบ หากในคำถามมิได้ระบุเป็นอย่างอื่นจะระบุเป็นอย่างอื่น และหากท่านกรอกแบบสอบถามเรียบร้อยแล้ว กรุณาส่งคืนให้กับผู้แจกแบบสอบถามด้วย

**สอบถามข้อมูลเพิ่มเติม:** หากท่านสนใจที่จะเข้าร่วมการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกเพื่อให้รายละเอียดเพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับการเข้ามาเกษียณอายุในประเทศไทยของท่าน และ/หรือ ต้องการทราบผลการวิจัย กรุณาติดต่อผู้วิจัยทางอีเมล [Kanokwan.Tang@student.chula.ac.th](mailto:Kanokwan.Tang@student.chula.ac.th)

ส่วนที่ 1: ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคล

1. อายุ:.....ปี
2. เพศ:  ชาย  หญิง
3. เพศวิถี:  ชาย  หญิง  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)
4. สัญชาติ:..... เชื้อชาติ:.....
5. ประเทศบ้านเกิด:.....
6. ท่านได้อาศัยอยู่ในประเทศไทยมาแล้วเป็นเวลาเท่าใด?.....ปี.....เดือน
7. สถานะวีซ่า:
  - วีซ่าธุรกิจ  วีซ่าเกษียณอายุ  วีซ่าคู่สมรสไทย  วีซ่า 90 วัน
  - วีซ่าท่องเที่ยว 30 วัน  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)
8. สถานภาพเกษียณอายุ:
  - เกษียณอายุแล้ว (อายุของท่านขณะเกษียณอายุ.....ปี)
  - ยังไม่เกษียณอายุ  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)
9. ท่านเคยอาศัยอยู่ในประเทศไทยเป็นเวลาอย่างน้อย 1 ปี ก่อนหน้าที่จะเกษียณอายุ หรือไม่?
  - ไม่เคย  เคย (เป็นเวลานานเท่าใด?: .....ปี.....เดือน)
10. ระดับการศึกษาสูงสุดของท่าน:
  - ต่ำกว่าระดับมัธยมปลาย  ระดับมัธยมปลาย  ระดับปริญญาตรี
  - ระดับหลังปริญญาตรี  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)
11. อาชีพหลักของท่านก่อนเกษียณอายุ:
  - เจ้าของกิจการ/ อาชีพอิสระ (โปรดระบุ.....)
  - พนักงานบริษัท (ตำแหน่งงาน: .....
  - ทหาร (ยศ: .....
  - ครู/อาจารย์ (สถาบัน.....)
  - อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ: .....
12. รายได้รายเดือนของท่านในปัจจุบัน:
  - ต่ำกว่า 50,000 บาท (ต่ำกว่า 1,485 USD/ 1,352 EUR)
  - 50,000 – 100,000 บาท (1,485 – 2,970 USD/ 1,352 - 2,703 EUR)
  - 100,001 – 200,000 บาท (2,970 – 5,940 USD/ 2,703 - 5,406 EUR)
  - มากกว่า 200,000 บาท (มากกว่า 5,940 USD/ 5,406 EUR)

13. แหล่งรายได้หลักของท่าน ขณะพำนักอยู่ในประเทศไทย (ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ):

- เงินบำนาญ  เงินออม/ การลงทุน ในต่างประเทศ  ธุรกิจต่างประเทศ  
 เงินออม/ การลงทุน ในประเทศ  ธุรกิจในประเทศไทย (โปรดระบุ.....)  
 อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

14. สถานภาพสมรสปัจจุบัน:

- โสด (ไม่เคยแต่งงาน)  แต่งงานกับคนไทย  แต่งงานกับคนต่างชาติ  
 อยู่ร่วมกับคนไทย  อยู่ร่วมกับคนต่างชาติ  หย่า  
 แยก  หม้าย  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

15. สถานภาพสมรสสุดท้ายก่อนการย้ายถิ่นเข้ามาอยู่ในประเทศไทย:

- โสด (ไม่เคยแต่งงาน)  แต่งงานกับคนไทย  แต่งงานกับคนต่างชาติ  
 อยู่ร่วมกับคนไทย  อยู่ร่วมกับคนต่างชาติ  หย่า  
 แยก  หม้าย  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

16. ท่านมีลูกทั้งหมดกี่คน (นับรวม ลูกแท้ๆ ลูกบุญธรรม และลูกเลี้ยง)?

- ไม่เคยมีลูก  ไม่มี  1  2  3  
 มากกว่า 3 คน  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

17. ท่านมีลูกแท้ๆ ที่เข้าศึกษาใน โรงเรียน/ มหาวิทยาลัย ของรัฐในประเทศไทยกี่คน?

- ไม่เคยมีลูกแท้ๆ  ไม่มี  1  2  3  
 มากกว่า 3 คน  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

18. ท่านมีลูกแท้ๆกับภรรยาคนไทยกี่คน?

- ไม่เคยมีภรรยาคนไทย  ไม่มี  1  2  3  
 มากกว่า 3 คน  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

19. ท่านใช้บริการสาธารณสุขประเภทใดเป็นหลัก ขณะพำนักอยู่ในประเทศไทย?

- บริการสาธารณสุขของเอกชน  บริการสาธารณสุขของรัฐ  
 อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

20. ท่านมีโรคประจำตัวหรือภาวะเสี่ยงทางสุขภาพ หรือไม่?

- ไม่  ใช่ (โปรดระบุ.....)

21. สถานที่อยู่ปกติในประเทศไทย:

- กรุงเทพฯ  พัทยา  เชียงใหม่  ภูเก็ต  หัวหิน  
 สมุย  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

22. ประเภทของสถานที่อยู่ปกติในประเทศไทย:

- คอนโดมีเนียม  อพาร์ทเมนท์  เพนท์เฮาส์  ทาวเฮาส์  
 บ้านเดี่ยว  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

23. ขนาดครัวเรือน (ในไทย):

- 1 คน    2 คน    3 คน    มากกว่า 3 คน

24. ประเภทกรรมสิทธิ์ของสถานที่อยู่ปกติของท่านในประเทศไทย:

- สิทธิที่ได้จากการซื้อ (ได้สิทธิตลอดชั่วอายุคน)    สิทธิที่ได้จากการเช่า (ได้สิทธิชั่วคราว เช่น สิทธิการเช่า 30 ปี)    อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

25. ชื่อเจ้าของ/ผู้เช่า สถานที่อยู่ปกติของท่านในประเทศไทยคือใคร?

- ตัวท่านเอง    ภรรยาไทย    ภรรยาที่ไม่ใช่คนไทย    ลูกของท่าน  
 บริษัทที่คนไทยเป็นผู้ถือครองหุ้นส่วนใหญ่    อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

26. ระหว่างการพำนักในประเทศไทย ท่านเคยย้ายสถานที่อยู่ปกติหรือไม่?(ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)

- เคยย้าย ไปอยู่ในสถานที่อื่นๆ ภายในประเทศไทย (เช่น ย้ายภายในจังหวัดเดียวกัน และ/หรือ ย้ายข้ามจังหวัด)  
 เคยย้าย โดยย้ายไปอยู่ต่างประเทศ แล้วจึงค่อยกลับเข้ามาในประเทศไทย (เช่น ย้ายไปอยู่ที่ประเทศบ้านเกิด และ/หรือ ย้ายไปอยู่ในประเทศอื่นๆ)  
 อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

27. ยอดรายจ่ายรายเดือน ขณะพำนักอยู่ในประเทศไทย:

- ต่ำกว่า 50,000 บาท (ต่ำกว่า 1,485 USD/ 1,352 EUR)  
 50,000 – 100,000 บาท (1,485 – 2,970 USD/ 1,352 - 2,703 EUR)  
 100,001 – 200,000 บาท (2,970 – 5,940 USD/ 2,703 - 5,406 EUR)  
 มากกว่า 200,000 บาท (มากกว่า 5,940 USD/ 5,406 EUR)

28. ที่มาของรายจ่ายขณะที่พำนักอยู่ในประเทศไทย (ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ):

- ค่าเช่าบ้าน/ ค่าผ่อนบ้าน  
 ค่าใช้จ่ายเกี่ยวกับบ้าน (เช่น ค่าน้ำค่าไฟ ค่าซ่อมบ้าน และอื่นๆ)  
 ค่าใช้จ่ายด้านสุขภาพ (เช่น ค่าบริการทางการแพทย์ ค่าผลิตภัณฑ์/อุปกรณ์ทางการแพทย์)  
 ค่าท่องเที่ยวพักผ่อนหย่อนใจ (เช่น แท็กซี่ทัวร์ สปา ติกอล์ฟ และอื่นๆ)  
 อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

29. เมื่อปีที่แล้ว ท่านอาศัยอยู่ในประเทศไทยเป็นเวลานานเท่าไร?

- 11 หรือ 12 เดือน    6-10 เดือน    น้อยกว่า 6 เดือน    ไม่ได้อยู่เลย

30. เมื่อปีที่แล้ว ท่านกลับไปเยี่ยมบ้านเกิดของท่านกี่ครั้ง?

- 0    1    2    3    มากกว่า 3 ครั้ง

31. เมื่อปีที่แล้ว ท่านอาศัยอยู่ที่บ้านเกิดของท่านเป็นเวลานานเท่าไร?

- ไม่ได้อยู่เลย    น้อยกว่า 1 เดือน    1-2 เดือน    3 เดือนหรือมากกว่า

32. นอกจากประเทศไทย ท่านเคยมีประสบการณ์อาศัยอยู่ในต่างประเทศที่ไม่ใช่ประเทศบ้านเกิดของท่าน เป็นเวลาอย่างน้อย 1 ปีหรือไม่?:

ไม่เคย  เคย (โปรดระบุ.....)

ส่วนที่ 2: กระบวนการตัดสินใจย้ายถิ่นมาสู่ประเทศไทย

1. ท่านคิดว่าปัจจัยต่างๆเหล่านี้ในประเทศบ้านเกิดของท่านเป็นอย่างไร? (กรุณาประเมินปัจจัยต่อไปนี้โดยใช้มาตรวัด 1 ถึง 5 ซึ่ง 1=ไม่น่าพอใจอย่างยิ่ง 2=ไม่น่าพอใจ 3=ปานกลาง 4=น่าพอใจและ 5=น่าพอใจอย่างยิ่ง)

ปัจจัย	1 ไม่น่า พอใจ อย่างยิ่ง	2 ไม่น่า พอใจ	3 ปาน กลาง	4 น่าพอใจ	5 น่า พอใจ อย่างยิ่ง
1. ค่าครองชีพ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. สภาพอากาศ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. สถานบริการสุขภาพ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. โอกาสในการเล่นกีฬา พักผ่อนหย่อนใจ และความบันเทิง	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. สถานที่ดึงดูดทางธรรมชาติและวัฒนธรรม	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. อาหาร	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. วิถีชีวิต	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. ภาษา	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. วัฒนธรรม	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. คน	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. โครงสร้างพื้นฐาน	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. ความปลอดภัยในชีวิตและอัตราการเกิดอาชญากรรม	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. ความมั่นคงทางการเมือง	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. ความมั่นคงทางเศรษฐกิจ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. อื่นๆ (.....)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. ประเทศใดคือประเทศในฝันสำหรับการเกษียณอายุของท่าน? (ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)

สเปน  มอลตา  อิตาลี  เม็กซิโก  ไทย  มาเลเซีย

อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

3. ท่านคิดว่าปัจจัยต่างๆเหล่านี้ในประเทศไทยเป็นอย่างไร? (กรุณาประเมินปัจจัยต่อไปนี้โดยใช้มาตรวัด 1 ถึง 5 ซึ่ง 1=ไม่น่าพอใจอย่างยิ่ง 2=ไม่น่าพอใจ 3=ปานกลาง 4=น่าพอใจและ 5=น่าพอใจอย่างยิ่ง)

ปัจจัย	1 ไม่น่า พอใจ อย่างยิ่ง	2 ไม่น่า พอใจ	3 ปาน กลาง	4 น่าพอใจ	5 น่า พอใจ อย่างยิ่ง
1. ค่าครองชีพ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. สภาพอากาศ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. สถานบริการสุขภาพ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. โอกาสในการเล่นกีฬา พักผ่อนหย่อนใจ และความบันเทิง	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. สถานที่ดึงดูดทางธรรมชาติและวัฒนธรรม	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. อาหารไทย/ท้องถิ่น	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. วิถีชีวิตไทย/ท้องถิ่น	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. ภาษาไทย/ท้องถิ่น	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. วัฒนธรรมไทย/ท้องถิ่น	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. คนไทย/ท้องถิ่น	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. โครงสร้างพื้นฐานของไทย/ท้องถิ่น	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. ความปลอดภัยในชีวิตและอัตราการเกิดอาชญากรรม	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. นโยบายวิซ่าของไทย	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. นโยบายการถือครองอสังหาริมทรัพย์ในไทยของชาวต่างชาติ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. ระบบภาษีของไทยต่อผู้อยู่อาศัยถาวรชาวต่างชาติ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. ความมั่นคงทางการเมือง	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. ความมั่นคงทางเศรษฐกิจ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. อื่นๆ (.....)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. เมื่อท่านพำนักอยู่ที่ประเทศบ้านเกิด ท่านได้รับข้อมูลข่าวสารเกี่ยวกับการย้ายถิ่นไปใช้ชีวิตหลังเกษียณในประเทศไทย ได้อย่างไร? (ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)
- โดยตนเอง ผ่านทางอินเทอร์เน็ต  โดยการเข้าร่วมงานนิทรรศการ/สัมมนาในประเทศ
- ผ่านทางการขอคำปรึกษาจากตัวแทนขายอสังหาริมทรัพย์ นักกฎหมาย และอื่นๆ
- ผ่านทางคู่มือ  ผ่านทางญาติ/สมาชิกครอบครัวคนอื่นๆ  ผ่านทางเพื่อนหรือคนรู้จัก
- อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)
- ฉันไม่เคยหาข้อมูลดังกล่าว เมื่อพำนักอยู่ในประเทศบ้านเกิด
5. ท่านเคยเดินทางเข้ามาในประเทศไทยก่อนที่จะย้ายถิ่นเข้ามาอยู่หรือไม่?
- ไม่เคย  เคย
6. เพราะเหตุใด ท่านจึงเดินทางเข้ามาในประเทศไทยก่อนที่จะย้ายถิ่นเข้ามาอยู่ (ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)
- เพื่อเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลสำหรับการย้ายถิ่นเข้ามาในประเทศไทย
- เพื่อการท่องเที่ยว  เพื่อการท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพ  เพื่อเยี่ยมเพื่อนหรือญาติ
- เพื่อเยี่ยมคู่มือหรือคู่วงที่เป็นคนไทย  กลับเข้ามาในไทยกับคู่มือคนไทย
- ฉันไม่เคยเดินทางเข้ามาในประเทศไทยก่อนที่จะย้ายถิ่นเข้ามาอยู่อาศัย
- อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)
7. ใครเป็นผู้มีอิทธิพล/สนับสนุนการตัดสินใจครั้งสุดท้ายของท่านในการซื้อหรือเช่าที่อยู่อาศัยในประเทศไทย? (ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)
- ที่ปรึกษามืออาชีพ เช่น ตัวแทนขายอสังหาริมทรัพย์ นักกฎหมาย
- คู่มือคนไทย  คู่มือต่างชาติ  เพื่อนหรือคนรู้จัก
- สมาชิกในครอบครัวคนอื่นๆหรือญาติ  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)
8. กรอบโครงสร้างใดบ้างที่จำเป็นต่อการตัดสินใจครั้งสุดท้ายของท่านในการซื้อหรือเช่าที่อยู่อาศัยในประเทศไทย? (ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)
- ระบบวีซ่าของไทย  กฎหมายเกี่ยวกับอสังหาริมทรัพย์ของไทย  ระบบภาษีของไทย
- โครงสร้างพื้นฐานทางการคมนาคมสื่อสาร  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

9. ท่านคิดเห็นว่าปัจจัยแทรกกลางเหล่านี้ เป็นอุปสรรคกีดขวางหรือทำให้การย้ายถิ่นเข้ามาในประเทศไทยของท่านช้าลงมากน้อยเพียงไร? (กรุณาประเมินปัจจัยต่อไปนี้โดยใช้มาตรวัด 1 ถึง 5 ซึ่ง 1=ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง 2=ไม่เห็นด้วย 3=ไม่มีความเห็น/ไม่แน่ใจ 4=เห็นด้วยและ 5=เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง)

ปัจจัย	1 ไม่เห็น ด้วยอย่าง ยิ่ง	2 ไม่เห็น ด้วย	3 ไม่มี ความเห็น/ ไม่แน่ใจ	4 เห็นด้วย	5 เห็น ด้วย อย่าง ยิ่ง
1. ระยะทาง	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. ความไม่คุ้นเคย/ไม่รู้เกี่ยวกับกฎหมาย และข้อบังคับของไทย	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. ภาษาและวัฒนธรรมที่แตกต่างกัน	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. ความไม่แน่นอนทางการเมืองของไทย	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. อื่นๆ (.....)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. ท่านคิดว่าท่านจะย้ายถิ่นออกจากประเทศไทยภายใน 5 ถึง 10 ปีข้างหน้าหรือไม่?

ใช่       ไม่       อาจจะย้าย

11. สิ่งที่ท่านคิดว่าคือเหตุผลของการย้ายถิ่นออกจากประเทศไทยในอนาคตคืออะไร

(ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ):

- ไม่มี     เหตุผลเรื่องเงิน     เหตุผลเรื่องวิชา     คิดถึงชีวิตในโลกตะวันตก  
 เหตุการณ์ชีวิตที่สำคัญ เช่น หย่าร้าง การเป็นหม้าย และอื่นๆ  
 ความผิดหวังกับสิ่งต่างๆในไทย (การรับรู้เกี่ยวกับลักษณะด้านลบของไทย)  
 อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

12. ท่านคิดว่าประเทศใดเป็นประเทศปลายทางถัดไปที่ท่านจะย้ายถิ่นเข้าไปอยู่ หากท่านย้ายถิ่นออกจากประเทศไทยในอนาคต? (ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)

ไม่มี       ยังไม่ทราบ       ประเทศต้นกำเนิด/บ้านเกิด  
 อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)



### ส่วนที่ 3: ระดับความอยู่ดีมีสุขและการผสมกลมกลืนในประเทศไทย

#### 3.1 ความอยู่ดีมีสุข

โปรดให้คะแนนความพึงพอใจต่อความอยู่ดีมีสุขของท่านตามมาตร 11 จุด (0 ถึง 10) โดย ศูนย์ หมายถึง ไม่พอใจเลย และ 10 หมายถึง พพอใจทั้งหมด

##### 1. ความพึงพอใจของท่านต่อชีวิตโดยภาพรวมในประเทศไทยเป็นอย่างไร?

ไม่ พอใจเลย											พอใจ ทั้งหมด
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

##### 2. ความพึงพอใจของท่านต่อองค์ประกอบต่อไปนี้ เกี่ยวกับความอยู่ดีมีสุขในประเทศไทยเป็นอย่างไร?

องค์ประกอบความอยู่ดีมีสุข ในประเทศไทย	0=ไม่พอใจเลย				←→				10=พอใจทั้งหมด			
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1. มาตรฐานการครองชีพ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. สถานะสุขภาพ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. ความสัมพันธ์ส่วนบุคคล	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. เครือข่ายทางสังคม	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. ความปลอดภัยส่วนบุคคล	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. คุณภาพสิ่งแวดล้อม	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. โครงสร้างพื้นฐานในท้องถิ่น	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

#### 3.2 การผสมกลมกลืน

##### 1. ท่านรู้สึกว่าการยอมรับฝรั่งหรือชาวตะวันตกในประเทศไทยโดยทั่วไปเป็นอย่างไร?

แย่มาก  แย่  เฉยๆ  ดี  ดีมาก

##### 2. ท่านรู้สึกว่าคุณได้รับการยอมรับโดยสังคมไทยอย่างไร?

แย่มาก  แย่  เฉยๆ  ดี  ดีมาก

##### 3. ท่านคิดว่าการแต่งงานข้ามชาติระหว่างคนไทยกับชาวตะวันตกเป็นเรื่องปกติในปัจจุบันหรือไม่?

ใช่  ไม่  อาจจะ

##### 4. ผู้ที่ท่านสนทนาด้วยเป็นส่วนใหญ่ เมื่อพำนักอยู่ในประเทศไทย? (ตอบได้มากกว่า 1 ข้อ)

ชาวตะวันตกคนอื่นๆ  คู่สมรสคนไทย  คู่สมรสต่างชาติ  เพื่อนคนไทย

คนไทยในบาร์  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

5. ท่านได้เข้าร่วม/อาสา ในกิจกรรมทางสังคมหรือวัฒนธรรมไทยซึ่งจัดโดยชุมชนคนไทยท้องถิ่น หรือหน่วยงานภาครัฐและเอกชนของไทย บ่อยครั้งเพียงใด?
- แทบไม่เคย  บางโอกาส  บางครั้ง  บ่อย  แทบทุกครั้ง
6. ท่านได้สนับสนุน/แลกเปลี่ยนความรู้ความชำนาญของท่านกับชุมชนคนไทยท้องถิ่น หรือหน่วยงานภาครัฐและเอกชนของไทย บ่อยครั้งเพียงใด?
- แทบไม่เคย  บางโอกาส  บางครั้ง  บ่อย  แทบทุกครั้ง
7. ส่วนใหญ่แล้วท่านใช้ภาษาอะไร ขณะพำนักอยู่ในประเทศไทย?
- ภาษาอังกฤษเท่านั้น  ภาษาอังกฤษและภาษาบ้านเกิด  ภาษาอังกฤษและภาษาไทย  ภาษาอังกฤษ ภาษาไทย และภาษาบ้านเกิด  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)
8. ท่านคิดว่าความสามารถในการฟัง/พูด ภาษาไทยของท่านเป็นอย่างไร?
- แย่มาก  แย่  เฉยๆ  ดี  ดีมาก
9. ท่านคิดว่าความสามารถในการอ่าน/เขียน ภาษาไทยของท่านเป็นอย่างไร?
- แย่มาก  แย่  เฉยๆ  ดี  ดีมาก
10. ท่านต้องการที่จะเรียนภาษาไทยเพิ่มเติมหรือไม่?
- ใช่  ไม่  อาจจะ
11. ท่านคิดว่าท่านมีความรู้เรื่องวัฒนธรรมไทยมากน้อยเพียงใด:
- น้อยมากหรือแทบไม่มี  น้อย  รู้บ้าง  รู้มาก  รู้ระดับผู้เชี่ยวชาญ
12. ท่านต้องการที่จะศึกษาวัฒนธรรมไทยเพิ่มเติมหรือไม่?
- ใช่  ไม่  อาจจะ
13. ในการระบุตัวตนในเรื่องสัญชาติ ท่านคิดว่าท่านมีสัญชาติอะไร?
- ต่างชาติเท่านั้น  ค่อนข้างเป็นคนต่างชาติ  ทั้งไทยและต่างชาติ
- ค่อนข้างเป็นคนไทย  คนไทยเท่านั้น

\*\*\*\*\* สิ้นสุดแบบสอบถาม \*\*\*\*\*

ขอขอบพระคุณเป็นอย่างสูงสำหรับเวลาอันมีค่าและความอุตสาหะของท่าน

## ภาคผนวก 2: คำถามสัมภาษณ์สำหรับผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตก

หมายเลขสัมภาษณ์:

## คำถามสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกสำหรับผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกในประเทศไทย

## สถานที่สัมภาษณ์:

 ที่สำนักงานตรวจคนเข้าเมือง  อื่นๆ (โปรดระบุ.....)

เขต/อำเภอ.....จังหวัด.....

**จุดประสงค์:** การสัมภาษณ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของดัชนีนิพนธ์ เรื่อง “การย้ายถิ่นระหว่างประเทศของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกมาสู่ประเทศไทย: กระบวนการตัดสินใจ ความอยู่ดีมีสุข การผสมกลมกลืน และผลกระทบต่อพื้นที่ปลายทาง” แบบสัมภาษณ์นี้มีวัตถุประสงค์หลักเพื่อศึกษาเพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับ กระบวนการตัดสินใจย้ายถิ่น ความอยู่ดีมีสุข การผสมกลมกลืน ของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกในไทย

## เกณฑ์การคัดเลือกผู้ตอบแบบสอบถาม:

1. อายุ: 50 ปี ขึ้นไป
2. สถานภาพการทำงาน: เกษียณอายุแล้วหรือกำลังอยู่ในช่วงเปลี่ยนผ่านเป็นผู้เกษียณอายุ
3. ระยะเวลาการอยู่อาศัย: อาศัยอยู่ในประเทศไทยรวมเป็นเวลาอย่างน้อย 1 ปี
4. “ผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตก” หมายถึง ประชากรของแคนาดา สหรัฐอเมริกาออสเตรเลีย นิวซีแลนด์ และประเทศในยุโรปเหนือ ยุโรปตะวันตก และยุโรปใต้

**โครงสร้างการสัมภาษณ์:** การสัมภาษณ์เป็นการสัมภาษณ์แบบเชิงลึก หรือที่เรียกว่าการสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งโครงสร้าง โดยคำถามการสัมภาษณ์แบ่งได้ออกเป็น 3 ส่วน ประกอบด้วย ส่วนที่ 1 (ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคล) ส่วนที่ 2 (กระบวนการตัดสินใจย้ายถิ่นมาสู่ประเทศไทย) และ ส่วนที่ 3 (ความอยู่ดีมีสุขและการผสมกลมกลืนในประเทศไทย)

## ส่วนที่ 1: ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคล

ผู้ตอบสัมภาษณ์จะต้องให้ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคล ดังสอดคล้องกับคำถามในส่วนที่ 1 ของแบบสอบถาม (จำนวน 32 ข้อ ซึ่งประกอบด้วยคำถามเกี่ยวกับข้อมูลทางประชากร ข้อมูลทางเศรษฐกิจและสังคม ข้อมูลการอยู่อาศัยในไทย ข้อมูลพฤติกรรมการย้ายถิ่น และข้อมูลการใช้บริการของรัฐและเอกชนในไทย อย่างไรก็ตาม ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์มีสิทธิที่จะไม่ตอบคำถามข้อที่ไม่ประสงค์จะตอบ

## ส่วนที่ 2: กระบวนการตัดสินใจย้ายถิ่นมาสู่ประเทศไทย

ตามกรอบแนวคิดของการศึกษาวิจัย คำถามเกี่ยวกับกระบวนการการตัดสินใจย้ายถิ่นเข้ามาสู่ประเทศไทยและแผนการย้ายถิ่นอนาคต มีดังนี้

- อะไรทำให้ท่านเข้ามาอยู่อาศัยในประเทศไทย (แรงจูงใจการย้ายถิ่น ปัจจัยผลักดันในประเทศต้นทาง ปัจจัยผลักดันในประเทศปลายทาง)
- ท่านได้รับข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับการย้ายถิ่นเข้ามาในไทยได้อย่างไร (สืบค้นข้อมูลในประเทศต้นทาง สืบค้นข้อมูลในประเทศปลายทาง ความสัมพันธ์กับบุคคลที่รู้จักหรือบุคคลที่มีอาชีพให้ข้อมูล)
- เมื่อตอนดำเนินการย้ายถิ่นเข้ามาอยู่ในไทย ท่านได้ประสบกับปัญหาหรืออุปสรรคหรือไม่ (อุปสรรคแทรกกลางของการย้ายถิ่นเข้ามาในไทย)
- ท่านมีแผนที่จะย้ายถิ่นออกจากประเทศไทยใน 5-10 ปีที่จะถึงนี้หรือไม่ เหตุผลของการย้ายถิ่นคืออะไร และท่านต้องการจะย้ายถิ่นไปที่ใด

## ส่วนที่ 3: ระดับความอยู่ดีมีสุขและการผสมกลมกลืนในประเทศไทย

คำถามเกี่ยวกับความอยู่ดีมีสุข แบบ subjective well-being และการผสมกลมกลืนทางวัฒนธรรม หรือ cultural assimilation มีดังนี้

- ท่านคิดว่าความอยู่ดีมีสุขในไทยของท่านเป็นอย่างไร
- ท่านรู้สึกได้รับการยอมรับในไทยหรือไม่
- ขณะท่านอาศัยอยู่ในประเทศไทย ใครคือผู้ที่ท่านสนทนากันเป็นประจำ
- ท่านเคยเข้าร่วมกิจกรรมของไทยหรือไม่
- ท่านเคยอาสาหรือให้ความรู้ความชำนาญของท่านในไทยหรือไม่
- ท่านคิดว่าท่านเป็นคนชาติใด เช่น คนของประเทศต้นทาง ค่อนข้างเป็นคนของประเทศต้นทาง ทั้งคนประเทศต้นทางและคนไทย ค่อนข้างเป็นคนไทย หรือเป็นคนไทยโดยสมบูรณ์

\*\*\*\*\* สิ้นสุดการสัมภาษณ์ \*\*\*\*\*

ขอขอบพระคุณเป็นอย่างสูงสำหรับเวลาอันมีค่าและความอุตสาหะของท่าน

## ภาคผนวก 3: คำถามสัมภาษณ์สำหรับผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียฝ่ายไทย

หมายเลขสัมภาษณ์:

## คำถามสัมภาษณ์สำหรับผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียฝ่ายไทย

สถานที่สัมภาษณ์:.....  
 เขต/อำเภอ.....จังหวัด.....

**จุดประสงค์:** การสัมภาษณ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของดัชนีนิพนธ์ เรื่อง “การย้ายถิ่นระหว่างประเทศของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกมาสู่ประเทศไทย: กระบวนการตัดสินใจ ความอยู่ดีมีสุข การผสมกลมกลืน และผลกระทบต่อพื้นที่ปลายทาง” โดยแบบสัมภาษณ์นี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาผลกระทบจากการย้ายถิ่นระหว่างประเทศของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกมาสู่ประเทศไทย ผ่านทางมุมมองและข้อคิดเห็นของผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียฝ่ายไทย ได้แก่ หน่วยงานภาครัฐและภาคเอกชน รวมไปถึงประชาชนทั่วไป อนึ่ง ผลการสัมภาษณ์นี้จะกลายเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของข้อเสนอแนะเชิงนโยบายซึ่งมีความมุ่งหมายเพื่อสร้างประโยชน์ร่วมกันทั้งสำหรับผู้เกษียณอายุชาวต่างชาติและสังคมไทยในภาพรวม

**โครงสร้างการสัมภาษณ์:** การสัมภาษณ์เป็นการสัมภาษณ์แบบเชิงลึก หรือการสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งโครงสร้าง โดยคำถามสำหรับประชาชนทั่วไปจะครอบคลุมเรื่องผลกระทบด้านเศรษฐกิจ สังคม และสภาพแวดล้อม จากการย้ายถิ่นระหว่างประเทศหลังเกษียณอายุของชาวตะวันตกมาสู่ประเทศไทย ในขณะที่คำถามสำหรับตัวแทนจากภาครัฐและเอกชนจะมีความเฉพาะเจาะจงและเกี่ยวข้องกับความรู้ฝังลึก หรือความสนใจของหน่วยงานนั้นๆ

## คำถามสัมภาษณ์สำหรับคนไทยในท้องถิ่น

1. ท่านคิดว่าการย้ายถิ่นของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกมาสู่ประเทศไทยได้ส่งผลกระทบต่อสภาพเศรษฐกิจในชุมชนของท่านอย่างไรบ้าง?
2. ท่านคิดว่าการย้ายถิ่นของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกมาสู่ประเทศไทยได้ส่งผลกระทบต่อสภาพสังคมในชุมชนของท่านอย่างไรบ้าง?
3. ท่านคิดว่าการย้ายถิ่นของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวตะวันตกมาสู่ประเทศไทยได้ส่งผลกระทบต่อสภาพแวดล้อมในชุมชนของท่านอย่างไรบ้าง?

## คำถามสัมภาษณ์สำหรับหน่วยงานภาครัฐและภาคเอกชนของไทย

หน่วยงานที่ผู้วิจัยจะสัมภาษณ์ ได้แก่ สำนักงานตรวจคนเข้าเมือง กระทรวงการท่องเที่ยวและกีฬา กระทรวงการต่างประเทศ กระทรวงสาธารณสุข กระทรวงการคลัง กระทรวงมหาดไทย (กรมที่ดิน) และหน่วยงานภาคเอกชนที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการเข้ามาอยู่อาศัยของผู้เกษียณอายุชาวต่างชาติในไทย

## 1. คำถามสำหรับตัวแทนจากสำนักงานตรวจคนเข้าเมือง:

ท่านคิดว่า กฎหมายและระเบียบข้อบังคับต่างๆในการขอวีซ่าประเภทใช้ชีวิตบั้นปลาย โดยเฉพาะประเด็นคุณสมบัติผู้ยื่นขอยุ่ต่อ และระยะเวลาที่อนุญาตให้อยู่ต่อ ควรมีการทบทวนหรือเปลี่ยนแปลงหรือไม่

อย่างไร เพื่อประโยชน์ทางเศรษฐกิจและความมั่นคงของไทย รวมทั้งเป็นการอำนวยความสะดวกให้กับผู้ที่ยื่นขอวีซ่าประเภทดังกล่าว ซึ่งส่วนใหญ่เป็นผู้เกษียณอายุจากประเทศที่พัฒนาแล้ว

## 2. คำถามสำหรับตัวแทนจากกระทรวงการท่องเที่ยวและกีฬา:

อยากทราบว่า ธุรกิจประเภท long-stay หรือ second-home tourism ซึ่งได้ดึงดูดและอำนวยความสะดวกให้ชาวต่างชาติจากประเทศที่พัฒนาแล้วเข้ามาพักอาศัยแบบระยะยาวในไทยนั้น ได้ส่งผลกระทบต่อประเทศไทยอย่างไรบ้าง และท่านคิดว่ายุทธศาสตร์เกี่ยวกับธุรกิจประเภทดังกล่าวจะเป็นเช่นไรในอนาคต?

## 3. คำถามสำหรับตัวแทนจากกระทรวงการต่างประเทศ:

อยากทราบว่า ธุรกิจประเภท long-stay หรือ second-home tourism ซึ่งได้ดึงดูดและอำนวยความสะดวกให้ชาวต่างชาติจากประเทศที่พัฒนาแล้วเข้ามาพักอาศัยแบบระยะยาวในไทยนั้น ได้ส่งผลกระทบต่อประเทศไทยอย่างไรบ้าง และท่านคิดว่ายุทธศาสตร์เกี่ยวกับธุรกิจประเภทดังกล่าวควรจะเป็นเช่นไรในอนาคต?

## 4. คำถามสำหรับตัวแทนจากกระทรวงสาธารณสุข:

อยากทราบว่า การเข้ามาพักอาศัยแบบระยะยาวในไทยของผู้เกษียณอายุหรือผู้สูงอายุจากประเทศพัฒนาแล้ว โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งกลุ่มประเทศตะวันตกนั้น ได้ส่งผลกระทบต่ออย่างไรบ้างต่อระบบบริการสาธารณสุขของไทยในภาพรวม และท่านคิดว่านโยบายและยุทธศาสตร์การให้บริการด้านสาธารณสุขของไทยควรเป็นเช่นไรในอนาคต เพื่อให้คงความเป็นมาตรฐานสากลและครอบคลุมความต้องการของทั้งคนไทยและคนต่างชาติที่อาศัยอยู่ในประเทศไทย

## 5. คำถามสำหรับตัวแทนจากกระทรวงการคลัง:

อยากทราบว่า ปัจจุบันประเทศไทยมีการเรียกเก็บภาษีประเภทใดบ้างกับชาวต่างชาติที่เป็นผู้เกษียณอายุซึ่งเข้ามาอยู่อาศัยแบบระยะยาวในไทย และท่านคิดว่าไทยควรมีการปรับปรุงกฎหมายการเรียกเก็บภาษีประเภทต่างๆ กับคนต่างชาติที่เกษียณอายุแล้วในไทยอย่างไรบ้างในอนาคต?

## 6. คำถามสำหรับตัวแทนจากกรมที่ดิน กระทรวงมหาดไทย:

อยากทราบว่า ปัจจุบันการครอบครองกรรมสิทธิ์ที่ดินหรืออสังหาริมทรัพย์ประเภทอื่นๆ ของคนต่างชาตินในไทย ได้ส่งผลกระทบต่อเศรษฐกิจไทยและสิทธิที่ดินและอสังหาริมทรัพย์ของคนไทยโดยภาพรวม และท่านคิดว่ากฎหมายถือครองกรรมสิทธิ์ที่ดินและอสังหาริมทรัพย์ของคนต่างชาตินในไทยควรมีการปรับปรุงหรือเปลี่ยนแปลงหรือไม่ อย่างไร?

## 7. คำถามสำหรับตัวแทนทั้งหมดจากภาคเอกชนไทย:

อยากทราบว่า การเข้ามาพักอาศัยแบบระยะยาวในไทยของผู้เกษียณอายุหรือผู้สูงอายุจากประเทศพัฒนาแล้ว โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งจากกลุ่มประเทศตะวันตก ได้ส่งผลกระทบต่อธุรกิจของท่านอย่างไรบ้าง และท่านมีแผนงานหรือโครงการในอนาคตไว้อย่างไรเพื่อรองรับกลุ่มคนเหล่านี้ในอนาคต

\*\*\*\*\* สิ้นสุดการสัมภาษณ์ \*\*\*\*\*

ขอขอบพระคุณเป็นอย่างสูงสำหรับเวลาอันมีค่าและความอุตสาหะของท่าน

## VITA

Miss Kanokwan Tangchitnusorn received a bachelor's degree in communication management (English program) from the Faculty of Communication Arts, Chulalongkorn University in 2011. Then, in 2012, she received a master's degree in European Studies from the Graduate School, Chulalongkorn University, in which, her master's thesis was entitled "Migration of specialist physicians in an economic community: a comparison of Thailand and Poland." During 2012-2013, she worked as a project coordinator at Division II of the Department of European Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since June 2013, she attended a Ph.D. program in Demography at the College of Population Studies (CPS), Chulalongkorn University.

