

Abstract

A Study of the Readiness of SMEs' Entrepreneurs along the Thai Border towards Labor Liberalization under AEC Mission was aimed to be the guideline for SME businesses and Thai government to prepare and handle.

The survey and interview was undertaken for 200 respondents in 2 provinces, Mukdahan and Tak. The result of Mukdahan showed that the surveyed businesses in the province were mainly small, with lower than 1 million baht of registered capital, performing service such as consumer goods retailing. The operation was lower than 5 years, with hardly found any certificates from the government. Wage rate was around 100-400 baht a day, while the payment was not different between Thai and foreign workers. Preferable characteristics of labor was good human relations, demanded skills were technical skill, language in the AEC, cultural skill, and English skill. More than 50 percent knew about free labor mobility via TV. Expected foreign workers were from Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar, respectively. The strong points of Thailand and Thai worker were efficient labor mobility control, cheaper wage compared with the developed nations, and technical skill. The weak points were such as lack of English skill, higher wage compared with those of the neighboring countries, and the control of work standard for the foreign workers in Thailand.

The result of Tak showed that the surveyed businesses in the province were mainly small, but bigger than in Mukdahan, with 1-5 million baht of registered capital, performing in production sector. The operation was 10-15 years, with 72% were found certification from the government, OTOP and OPC. Wage rate was around 100-300 baht a day. The payment between the Thai and the foreigners was different. Preferable characteristics of labor was good human

relations, demanded skills were cultural skill, English skill, and language in the AEC. More than 50 percent knew about free labor mobility via meeting and seminar. Expected foreign workers were from Myanmar, Vietnam, and Cambodia, respectively. The strong points of Thailand and Thai worker were cheaper wage compared with the developed nations, the use of technology to ease the production, and technical skill. The weak points were such as lack of higher wage compared with those of the neighboring countries, lack of labor training in the business, and English skill.

Although free labor mobility can increase business chance, the negative effect might be considered. The suggestion from the respondents was such as the increase of worker number control, strict laws, and promotion of employment that could be fit to position and ability.

Keywords: AEC, labor mobility