

PRESS NOTE



IOM ROK Hosts Final Training for Humane and Gender-Inclusive Border Management for ASEAN Countries

Bangkok – The International Organization for Migration (IOM) Country Office in the Republic of Korea (ROK) organized a final training of the project titled *Humane and Gender Inclusive Immigration and Border Management Capacity-building Support for ASEAN Countries*. The event brought together 24 immigration and border management officials from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.

On 9-10 December 2024, the training kicked off with a masterclass led by Fons Knopjes, a fellow and member of the board of advisors of Centre for Identity, University of Texas at Austin. These sessions delved into identity management, covering topics such as identity management ecosystems and infrastructure, biometrics and digital identity.

“Over the past three years, we have convened border management practitioners from across the ASEAN region to enhance their capacity for humane and gender-inclusive border governance, exchange experiences, and build a strong network. The conclusion of this project reflects their remarkable progress and dedication,” said Steven Hamilton, IOM Chief of Mission in ROK. “With border governance becoming increasingly tech-driven, such opportunities are vital for equipping officials to tackle emerging challenges and shape the future of migration management. IOM remains committed to supporting border officials through tailored capacity-building efforts,” he added.

Following the class on identity management and biometrics, participants attended the seventh Border Management and Identity Conference (BMIC7), co-organized by IOM and the Asia Pacific Smart Card Association (APSCA) from 11 to 13 December 2024.

As Asia’s largest gathering of government authorities and relevant stakeholders on border management, BMIC7 provided unique learning opportunities for the attendees, including the sessions on travel credentials, identity verification technologies and border management strategies. The conference also featured technical workshops on topics such

as information sharing and international cooperation. Participants attended workshops aligned with their professional interests and expertise, gaining practical knowledge and skills directly applicable to their daily practice.

“Participating in this project has been a transformative experience. It has not only deepened my understanding and practical skills but also enabled me to consider and incorporate principles such as gender-inclusiveness – a concept I once thought was less connected to border control. Much was learned and will be cascaded back home,” said a full-time participant in the program. Another participant added, “This training reminded us that our role as border officers is not just to protect borders, but to protect people. By adopting humane and gender-inclusive approaches, we must ensure the voices of the vulnerable and marginalized are prioritized in our decision-making.”

Launched in 2022 and funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), IOM’s three-year Capacity Building on Humane and Gender Inclusive Immigration and Border Management in ASEAN Project has aimed to enhance the capacity of the border officials from selected ASEAN Member States.

The project focuses on ensuring that the human rights of all individuals at international borders, particularly women and those crossing irregularly, are respected and protected. Previously, the project successfully delivered [Legal Identity Training](#) in 2022, [Training on Rights and Gender-based Approaches to Border Management](#) in 2023, and [Training on Passport Examination and Procedure Manual](#) in September 2024.

Through inter-governmental capacity-building programmes, IOM plays a pivotal role in advancing the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) objectives within ASEAN States. As a key resource facilitator, IOM works closely with governments to implement GCM principles, fostering a coordinated, rights-based approach for regular, orderly and safe migration within the South-East Asian region.

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