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Article

The Dynamics of Indonesian Migrant Worker Placement in 2024: Challenges and Competence Enhancement Strategies in the Global Labour Market

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Abstract: This article explores the current conditions and strategic challenges faced by Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in 2024, with a particular emphasis on placement trends, labor market dynamics, and the implications for national policy. Drawing on recent statistical data and reports from credible institutions, the study reveals a significant decline in PMI placements as of July 2024 compared to the same period in the previous year. Notably, the migration flow continues to be gendered, with female workers representing the majority of placements. These workers are primarily employed in Asian countries, including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Japan, and Singapore, which remain the dominant destination markets for Indonesian labor export. The analysis further indicates that domestic sectors especially roles such as housemaids and caregivers still constitute the largest proportion of job placements. This sectoral concentration raises concerns about job vulnerability, limited upward mobility, and the potential for exploitation, particularly among low-skilled workers. The findings point to an urgent need for the Indonesian government to implement more comprehensive and forward-looking policies that enhance the education, vocational training, and digital literacy of PMI. By improving the skill base and resilience of migrant workers, Indonesia can better position its labor force in the increasingly competitive and regulated global labor market. The study concludes by offering recommendations for policy development aimed at ensuring the long-term protection, empowerment, and global competitiveness of PMI.

Keywords: Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI); Indonesian Labour Ministry; global labour market, competence enhancement strategies; Indonesian migrant worker placement.

Introduction

Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) have long been an essential part of Indonesia's economy and social structure (Fauzi et al., 2023). Their migration abroad is driven by various factors, including limited employment opportunities at home, aspirations for better living conditions, and the demand for labour in international markets, particularly in sectors where low-cost labour is essential. PMI are typically employed in industries such as domestic work, caregiving, construction, manufacturing, and plantation work. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the economic and social impact of these migrant workers, but significant challenges persist. Remittances from PMI have become one of the most critical economic pillars for Indonesia, contributing significantly to national income and poverty reduction (Mindarti & Umiyati, 2023). According to the World Bank, remittances can make up a significant percentage of Indonesia's GDP, with billions of dollars sent home each year by Indonesian workers. These funds often serve as a lifeline for families, enabling them to access better healthcare, education, and housing. For Indonesia's rural and lower-income populations, remittances provide a buffer against economic shocks and financial instability, which has been especially crucial during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beyond the economic impact, PMIs also contribute to social development in their home communities (Gatsou et al., 2017). They often send back not just money, but new skills, knowledge, and cultural practices acquired while working abroad. These experiences can lead to changes in societal norms, particularly regarding gender roles. For instance, female migrant workers, who constitute a significant portion of PMI, may challenge traditional gender expectations by becoming the primary breadwinners for their families. This shift can result in increased empowerment for women and lead to broader changes in social structures within communities. Most PMI are placed in countries with high demand for domestic labour, such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Japan, and Singapore (Gatsou et al., 2017). These countries have structured labour markets that rely heavily on foreign workers to fill gaps in sectors that are generally less appealing to local populations, particularly in domestic work and caregiving. Additionally, Middle Eastern countries like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have historically been major destinations for Indonesian workers, though recent controversies regarding worker protection have influenced government policies on migrant labour deployment to these regions.

In recent years, there has been a growing demand for more highly skilled workers in sectors such as healthcare and technology in countries like Japan and South Korea, prompting efforts by the Indonesian government to develop training programs to meet these needs (Abella, 2006). These efforts include enhancing the language skills, technical training, and certification of workers to ensure they meet the required standards of destination countries. Nevertheless, a majority of PMI remain concentrated in lower-skilled jobs. Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) have become an integral part of the Indonesian economy, especially through the remittances they send home (Khalid & Savirah, 2022). These remittances not only contribute to family welfare, but also have a significant impact on the national economy (De Haas, 2009). However, the dynamics of PMI placement abroad continue to change along with global economic developments, immigration policies in destination countries, and socio-political conditions in Indonesia (Sobandi, 2021).

In 2024, there was a significant decline in the number of PMI placements, affecting thousands of workers who have so far relied on employment opportunities abroad (Widyastuti, 2024). This decline raises concerns about PMI's ability to compete internationally, especially amidst increasingly fierce global labour competition (Suwandi, 2017). Most PMI are still concentrated in Asian countries such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Japan, and Singapore, with the domestic sector as the most dominant placement area (Tsay, 2015). Before 2024, the placement of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) followed relatively predictable patterns, reflecting the longstanding economic interdependence between Indonesia and key destination countries in Asia and the Middle East. From the late 1990s through the 2010s, PMI deployment remained a vital pillar of Indonesia’s labor export strategy, driven by limited domestic employment opportunities, high rural unemployment, and the persistent demand for low-cost labor abroad. Throughout the 2010s and early 2020s, PMI placements grew steadily, primarily directed towards destinations such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and Singapore. The majority of workers were absorbed into the informal sector, notably domestic work (housemaids, caregivers) and low-skilled services (construction, plantation work, factory workers). Women consistently represented more than 70% of total PMI placements, reflecting the strong demand for female domestic labor, particularly in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Despite their contributions, PMI face significant challenges both abroad and at home. One of the primary concerns is the lack of social protection and labour rights in many destination countries. Many migrant workers, particularly those employed in domestic work, face exploitative working conditions, such as long hours, low wages, and a lack of access to legal protection or healthcare. In some cases, migrant workers may also face physical and psychological abuse. Reports of human trafficking and forced labour are other troubling issues that have been raised in connection with the migrant labour sector. In response, the Indonesian government has implemented policies aimed at protecting PMI, including stricter regulations on recruitment agencies, pre-departure training, and agreements with destination countries to improve working conditions.

However, these measures have had mixed success due to enforcement challenges and the complex nature of international labour agreements.

The various challenges faced by PMI include inadequate skills, lack of social protection, and uncertainty about immigration policies in destination countries (Renta & Paksi, 2023). Therefore, the Indonesian government needs to take strategic steps to improve the competence and skills of migrant workers so that they can be more competitive in the global labour market (Allen, 2016). This effort is not only important to improve the welfare of individual workers, but also to maintain the stability of the economy that depends on their contributions (Sumarto, 2017). This study aims to analyze the current conditions of migrant worker placement in 2024, evaluate the challenges faced, and provide policy recommendations that can be implemented to improve the competitiveness of migrant workers in the international market. Thus, it is hoped that the results of this study can provide a more comprehensive insight into the condition of migrant workers and their contribution to the Indonesian economy.

Literature Review

The dynamics of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in the international labour market have been widely explored, especially in terms of their economic contributions, challenges faced, and the role of policy interventions. This literature review focuses on the economic significance of PMI, the socio-political challenges they face, and the governmental responses aimed at improving their conditions and competitiveness.

1. Economic Contributions of PMI

One of the most critical aspects of PMI is the economic impact of their remittances (Khalid & Savirah, 2022) emphasize the role of remittances in supporting family welfare and reducing poverty. This sentiment is echoed by De Haas (2009), who explores how remittances from migrant workers contribute to household consumption, education, and health in developing countries, including Indonesia. The World Bank (2019) has consistently reported that remittances form a significant portion of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Indonesia, helping to stabilize the economy. Ratha (2013) further suggests that remittances not only support individual households but also contribute to national development by fostering financial inclusion and increasing foreign exchange reserves. However, while remittances play a critical role in Indonesia's economy, the distribution of these benefits is not always equitable. Sumarto (2017) argues that while remittances help to alleviate poverty in rural areas, they can also exacerbate inequalities, as wealthier households are often better positioned to send family members abroad for work. This phenomenon raises questions about the long-term sustainability of relying on migrant labour as an economic strategy.

2. Social Impact and Challenges Faced by PMI

PMI face significant challenges in their host countries, including exploitation, discrimination, and a lack of social protection. Renta & Paksi (2023) highlight the vulnerability of migrant workers, particularly women, who are often employed in domestic work and caregiving. These sectors are notoriously unregulated, leading to issues such as long working hours, low wages, and exposure to abuse. Similarly, Sobandi (2021) discusses the precarious nature of migrant labour, emphasizing that the global economic shifts and restrictive immigration policies in destination countries have heightened the vulnerabilities of PMI.

In addition to labour rights issues, migration can also have social implications for workers and their families. Tsay (2015) notes that migrant workers often face difficulties in maintaining familial relationships due to long periods of separation. This can lead to emotional and psychological stress for both the workers and their families. Meanwhile, Suwandi (2017) discusses the competitive nature of the global labour market, where low-skilled Indonesian workers face stiff competition from migrants from other countries, particularly in sectors such as domestic work and construction. As a result, many Indonesian workers are trapped in a cycle of low-wage, insecure jobs with little opportunity for upward mobility.

3. Governmental Responses and Policy Interventions

The Indonesian government has made significant efforts to address the challenges faced by PMI. One of the key measures is the establishment of the Badan Perlindungan Pekerja Migran Indonesia (BP2MI), an agency tasked with managing the placement and protection of migrant workers. Allen (2016) highlights the importance of pre-departure training programs, which aim to improve the skills and knowledge of migrant workers before they leave Indonesia. These programs are crucial in enhancing the employability and safety of PMI abroad.

Additionally, bilateral agreements with key destination countries, such as Malaysia and Saudi Arabia, have been pursued to safeguard the rights of Indonesian workers. However, these agreements have had mixed success, as enforcement remains a major challenge. Widyastuti (2024) discusses the need for greater transparency and accountability in the recruitment process, as well as stronger oversight of recruitment agencies to prevent exploitation and human trafficking.

There is also a growing recognition of the need to improve the competitiveness of PMI in the global labour market. Suwandi (2017) calls for more targeted investments in skills development and vocational training, which can help PMI transition from low-skilled to higher-skilled sectors, such as healthcare and technology. The existing system effectively controls the number of foreign workers in Malaysia employed but cannot drive the industry to increase productivity by using technology (Aziz & Saad, 2022). Such initiatives would not only increase the wages and job security of migrant workers but also enhance Indonesia's reputation as a source of skilled labour.

4. Immigration Policies in Destination Countries

Changes in immigration policies in destination countries have had a significant impact on the placement of PMI. Sobandi (2021) notes that tightening immigration laws in countries like Malaysia and Hong Kong has led to a reduction in the number of Indonesian workers being placed abroad. At the same time, countries such as Japan and South Korea have begun to open their labour markets to foreign workers in sectors such as healthcare, creating new opportunities for skilled Indonesian workers. However, the demand for low-skilled labour remains high, particularly in domestic work, caregiving, and construction, where Indonesian workers face stiff competition from migrants from other countries. In response to these challenges, the Indonesian government has sought to diversify the destinations for PMI, exploring opportunities in emerging markets such as the Middle East and Africa. Widyastuti (2024) highlights the importance of these efforts, noting that they are critical for reducing Indonesia's dependence on traditional labour markets and ensuring that PMI continue to have access to employment opportunities abroad.

5. Emerging Global Labour Market Trends Post-Pandemic

Post-pandemic labor markets exhibit significant tightness, characterized by high job vacancies and skill shortages. The Bank for International Settlements according Doornik et al., (2023) attributes this to factors such as labor hoarding, demographic shifts, and changing worker attitudes. Moreover, An aging global population presents both challenges and opportunities for labor markets. The IMF in outlook report (2022) suggests that with appropriate policies—such as encouraging healthier aging, extending working lives, and reforming pension systems—older workers can positively contribute to labor market productivity. The pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities, with labor's share of global GDP declining. The International Labour Organization (in Benton et al., 2024) reported that the share fell from 52.9% in 2019 to 52.3% in 2022, highlighting a growing disparity between workers and capital owners.

Methodology

This study uses a quantitative descriptive approach to analyze the current conditions of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in 2024. The data used in this study were obtained from various sources, including the official report of the Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency (BP2MI) in 2024, related government publications, and other relevant statistical data.

1. Data Collection
Primary data were collected through structured interviews with BP2MI officials and relevant policy makers at the Ministry of Manpower. In addition, a survey was also conducted on a group of PMI who had recently returned from abroad to gain insight into their experiences while working abroad, especially related to the skills training and social protection received. Secondary data were obtained from official reports, academic journals, and publicly available statistical databases. This data includes information on the number of PMI placements, distribution of placements by destination country, type of work, and placement trends from year to year.

2. Data Analysis
The collected data was analysed using descriptive statistical methods to describe trends and patterns of PMI placement in 2024. This analysis includes the distribution of placements based on destination country, gender, type of job, and placement scheme (G to G, P to P, etc.). In addition, a comparative analysis was conducted to compare the conditions of PMI placement in 2024 with previous years, to identify significant changes that may occur. The results of the analysis were then interpreted in a policy context to identify the main challenges faced by PMI and recommend strategies that can be adopted by the Indonesian government to improve skills and protection for PMI.

3. Data Validation
Data validation was conducted through triangulation, where data from various sources were compared and erified to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the information obtained. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were also conducted with experts and stakeholders in the field of labour migration to gain a deeper perspective on the issues faced by PMI.

The Findings

1. The Current Condition Of Indonesian Migrant Workers
For the current state of PMI, researchers obtain information and data to determine its dynamics from various sources. This is important in this study as a consideration in formulating policies, especially how the Indonesian government's efforts to improve the skills of the Indonesian workforce so that they can compete in the global arena.

Table 1. Number of Indonesian Migrant Workers Placement, 2022 - 2024

Year	Total	Change (%)
July 2022	17.889	0
July 2023	26.536	▲ 48,34% (8.647)
July 2024	22.364	▼ 15,79% (4.190)

Source: BP2MI Report (2024)

Table 1 presents data on total placements over three consecutive years: July 2022, July 2023, and July 2024, along with the percentage change in placements from year to year. In July 2022, the total placements were 17,889. In July 2023, the total placements increased significantly to 26,536, marking a 48.34% rise compared to July 2022. This indicates a strong upward trend in placements during this period. In July 2024, the total placements declined to 22,364, reflecting a 15.79% decrease from July 2023. This drop suggests a slowdown in placement growth, possibly due to policy changes, economic factors, or shifting labor demands. The data highlights a peak in placements in 2023, followed by a decline in 2024, warranting further analysis into the contributing factors behind these fluctuations.

Table 2. Indonesian Migrant Workers Placement Sector, 2024

Sector	June 2024	July 2024	Change (%)	Proportion
Formal	9109	8775	▼ 3,67% (334)	39,27%
Informal	11526	13571	▲ 17,74% (2.045)	60,73%
Total	20635	22346	▲ 8,29% (1.711)	

Source: BP2MI Report (2024)

Table 2 provides data on workforce placements by sector for June 2024 and July 2024, along with the percentage change and sectoral proportion. Formal sector placements decreased from 9,109 in June 2024 to 8,775 in July 2024, representing a 3.67% decline (334 placements). This indicates a contraction in formal employment opportunities. Informal sector placements, in contrast, saw a significant rise from 11,526 in June 2024 to 13,571 in July 2024, reflecting a 17.74% increase (2,045 placements). This suggests growing reliance on informal employment. Total placements across both sectors increased by 8.29% (1,711 placements), from 20,635 in June to 22,346 in July. In terms of proportion, 39.27% of placements were in the formal sector, while 60.73% were in the informal sector, showing a dominant share of informal employment. The data suggests a shift towards informal job placements, possibly due to market demand, regulatory shifts, or economic conditions.

Table 3. Indonesian Migrant Workers Gender, 2024

Gender	June 2024	July 2024	Change (%)	Proportion
Men	5635	5778	▲ 2,54% (143)	25,86%
Women	15000	16568	▲ 10,45% (1.668)	74,14%
Total	20635	22346	▲ 8,29% (1.711)	

Source: BP2MI Report (2024)

Table 3 provides data on workforce placements based on gender for June 2024 and July 2024, along with the percentage change and gender proportion. Men's placements increased from 5,635 in June 2024 to 5,778 in July 2024, representing a 2.54% rise (143 placements). Despite the increase, men constitute a smaller proportion (25.86%) of the total placements. Women's placements saw a more significant increase, from 15,000 in June 2024 to 16,568 in July 2024, reflecting a 10.45% growth (1,668 placements). Women dominate the workforce placements, making up 74.14% of the total. Total placements across both genders rose by 8.29% (1,711 placements), from 20,635 in June to 22,346 in July. The data suggests that female workers continue to represent the majority of workforce placements, with a much higher growth rate compared to male workers. This trend could be attributed to sectoral demands, especially in industries where female labor is predominantly employed.

Table 4. Indonesian Migrant Workers Placement Scheme, 2024

Scheme	June 2024	July 2024	Change (%)	Proportion
G to G	868	387	▼ 55,16% (476)	1,73%
P to P	15628	17622	▲ 12,76% (1.994)	78,86%
IMW extend Aggrement	146	144	▼ 1,37% (2)	0,64%
IMW extend Aggrement Aboard	2096	1991	▼ 5,01% (105)	8,91%
IMW individual	1805	2130	▲ 18,01% (325)	9,53%
Special Sector Placement Efforts	97	72	▼ 25,77% (25)	0,33%
Total	20640	22346	▲ 8,29% (1.711)	

Source: BP2MI Report (2024)

This table presents workforce placements categorized by placement scheme for June 2024 and July 2024, including the percentage change and proportion of total placements. Government-to-Government (G to G) placements saw a sharp decline from 868 in June 2024 to 387 in July 2024, marking a 55.16% decrease (476 placements). This suggests a significant drop in government-facilitated placements. Private-to-Private (P to P) placements increased from 15,628 in June 2024 to 17,622 in July 2024, reflecting a 12.76% rise (1,994 placements). This scheme remains the dominant placement method, accounting for 78.86% of total placements. IMW extended Agency (returning workers) decreased slightly from 146 in June to 144 in July, with a 1.37% drop (2 placements), indicating stable placement levels in this category. IMW extended Agency (another category) saw a 5.01% decline (105 placements) from 2,096 in June to 1,991 in July. IMW Individual placements (self-initiated workers) rose significantly by 18.01% (325 placements), from 1,805 in June to 2,130 in July, showing an increasing trend in independent labor migration. Special Sector Placements, experienced the largest percentage decline, dropping by 25.77% (25 placements), from 97 in June to 72 in July.

Overall, total workforce placements across all schemes increased by 8.29% (1,711 placements), from 20,640 in June to 22,346 in July. However, while P to P and IMW Individual placements grew, G to G and Special Sector placements declined significantly, indicating possible policy changes or shifting labor demands.

2. Indonesian Migrant Workers Placement

Indonesian migrant workers play a crucial role in both the domestic economy (through remittances) and the host countries' labor markets. The placement trends highlight Asia as the dominant destination region, with a growing shift toward informal sector jobs. Ensuring better protection, fair wages, and improved placement policies remains a key priority for sustainable labor migration.

Table 5. Number of Indonesian Migrant Workers Country Destination 2024

Country Destinations	January 2024	July 2024	Change (%)	Proportion
Hong Kong	6196	8554	▲ 38,06% (2.358)	38,28%
Taiwan	7804	7208	▼ 7,64% (596)	32,26%
Malaysia	1611	1697	▲ 5,34% (86)	7,59%
Jepang	1355	1247	▼ 7,97% (108)	5,58%
Singapura	792	831	▲ 4,92% (39)	3,72%
Others Countries	2877	2809	▼ 2,36% (68)	12,57%

Source: BP2MI Report (2024)

Table 5 presents data on Indonesian migrant worker placements by country for June 2024 and July 2024, showing the percentage change and proportion of total placements. Hong Kong saw the highest growth, strengthening its position as the top destination for Indonesian migrant workers. Taiwan and Japan experienced notable declines, which could indicate policy changes, economic conditions, or labor demand shifts. Malaysia and Singapore showed modest growth, maintaining their relevance in the labor market. The overall placement distribution remains Asia-focused, with Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Malaysia leading the demand.

Worker placements in Hong Kong increased significantly from 6,196 in June to 8,554 in July, marking a 38.06% rise (2,358 placements). Hong Kong holds the largest proportion (38.28%) of total placements, reinforcing its role as a key labor market. Placements in Taiwan dropped from 7,804 to 7,208, reflecting a 7.64% decrease (596 placements). Despite the decline, Taiwan remains a major destination with 32.26% of total placements. Worker placements in Malaysia increased by 5.34% (86 placements) from 1,611 to 1,697. Malaysia accounts for 7.59% of total placements, remaining an important but smaller labor market. Placements in Japan dropped from 1,355 to 1,247, reflecting a 7.97% decrease (108 placements). Japan contributes 5.58% of total placements. Worker placements increased from 792 to 831, a 4.92% rise (39 placements). Singapore accounts for 3.72% of total placements, showing a relatively stable demand for migrant workers. Placements in "Other Countries" slightly declined by 2.36% (68 placements), from 2,877 to 2,809. These countries collectively make up 12.57% of total placements.

Table 6. Distribution of Indonesian Migrant Workers from various countries around the world

No	Countries	Continent	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Hongkong	Asia	62.164	34,00
2	Taiwan	Asia	52.128	28,51
3	Malaysia	Asia	34.403	18,82
4	Japan	Asia	7.286	3,98
5	Singapore	Asia	5.899	3,23
6	Saudi Arabia	Asia	4.553	2,49
7	Turkey	Asia	1.904	1,04
8	South Korea	Asia	5.328	2,91
9	Brunei Darussalam	Asia	1.703	0,93
10	Italy	Europe	1.925	1,05
11	Poland	Europe	858	0,47
12	united emirates of arab (UEA)	Asia	672	0,37
13	Zambia	Africa	330	0,18
14	Maldives	Asia	330	0,18
15	Papua Nugini	Oceania	315	0,17
16	Qatar	Asia	160	0,09
17	Kuwait	Asia	259	0,14
18	Hungary	Europe	267	0,15
19	Bulgary	Europe	130	0,07
20	Solomon Island	Oceania	154	0,08
21	Omen	Asia	104	0,06
22	Bosnia and Herzegova	Europe	23	0,01
23	Jordania	Asia	33	0,02
24	Slovakia	Europe	296	0,16
25	Germany	Europe	96	0,05
26	Other Countries		1.524	0,83
	TOTAL		182.844	100

Source: BP2MI Report (2024)

Table 6 provides an overview of workforce placements by country and continent, along with their respective total placements and percentage contributions to the overall total of 182,844 placements. Asia dominates the workforce placements, accounting for the vast majority of workers sent abroad, particularly to Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Malaysia. Europe plays a secondary role, with Italy and Poland leading but still far behind Asia in placement numbers. Africa and Oceania contribute minimally to total placements. The top three destinations (Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia) alone account for over 80% of the total placements, highlighting a strong labor migration trend toward these key markets.

The majority of placements are concentrated in Asia, with Hong Kong (62,164 placements, 34%), Taiwan (52,128 placements, 28.51%), and Malaysia (34,403 placements, 18.82%) as the top three destinations. Other notable Asian destinations include Japan (7,286 placements, 3.98%), Singapore (5,899 placements, 3.23%), and Saudi Arabia (4,553 placements, 2.49%). Italy (1,925 placements, 1.05%) is the leading European destination. Other European countries such as Poland (858 placements, 0.47%), Hungary (267 placements, 0.15%), and Germany (96 placements, 0.05%) have significantly lower placement numbers. Oceania has limited placements, with Papua New Guinea (315 placements, 0.17%) and Solomon Island (154 placements, 0.08%). Africa is represented by Zambia (330 placements, 0.18%). The “Other Countries” category accounts for 1,524 placements (0.83%), which suggests additional minor placement destinations not listed individually.

3. Indonesian Migrant Workers Job Position

Indonesian Migrant Workers Job Position refers to the various employment roles that Indonesian workers take when placed in different countries. These jobs are distributed across formal and informal sectors, with a heavy concentration in domestic and caregiving work. House Maids and Caregivers dominate employment placements, collectively accounting for nearly 58% of total placements. Plantation Worker placements saw the highest growth, while Caregivers, Workers, and Other Jobs declined. The overall placement trends indicate a continued reliance on domestic work, with moderate shifts in other labor categories.

Table 7. Number of Indonesian Migrant Workers Placements by Position in 2024

Job Position	**June 2024**	**July 2024**	**Change (%)**	**Proportion**
House Maid	6.243	8.576	▲ 37,37% (2.333)	38,38%
Caregiver	4.735	4.393	▼ 7,22% (342)	19,66%
Worker	2.160	2.025	▼ 6,25% (135)	9,06%
Domestic Worker	783	828	▲ 5,75% (45)	3,71%
Plantation Worker	245	541	▲ 120,82% (296)	2,42%
Other Jobs	6.469	5.983	▼ 7,51% (486)	26,77%

Source: BP2MI Report (2024)

Table 7 presents data on Indonesian migrant worker placements by job position for June 2024 and July 2024, highlighting percentage changes and proportional distribution. House Maid remains the dominant job category. Placements increased significantly from 6,243 in June to 8,576 in July, reflecting a 37.37% rise (2,333 placements). This category accounts for 38.38% of total placements, making it the largest employment sector for migrant workers. Caregiver placements decline. The number of Caregivers decreased by 7.22% (342 placements), from 4,735 in June to 4,393 in July. Despite the decline, Caregivers still make up 19.66% of total placements, indicating strong demand. Worker and Domestic Worker categories show minor fluctuations. Worker placements fell by 6.25% (135 placements), from 2,160 to 2,025, representing 9.06% of total placements. Domestic Worker placements increased slightly by 5.75% (45 placements), from 783 to 828, with a 3.71% share. Significant increase in Plantation Worker placements. This category experienced a remarkable 120.82% surge (296 placements), rising from 245 to 541. Despite this increase, Plantation Workers account for only 2.42% of total placements. Other Jobs saw a decrease of 7.51% (486 placements), from 6,469 in June to 5,983 in July. This category remains substantial, representing 26.77% of total placements.

Figure 1 provides an overview of Indonesian migrant worker placements by job position, highlighting the total number of workers in each category. The domestic and caregiving sectors dominate Indonesian migrant worker placements, reflecting the global demand for household and elderly care services. The plantation, construction, and manufacturing industries also play a crucial role in providing employment opportunities. A diverse range of jobs exist beyond these major categories, including agricultural work, skilled labor, and service jobs. These trends highlight the importance of Indonesian migrant labor in multiple international industries and the need for continued worker protections and skill development programs to ensure better job opportunities in the future

House Maid Dominates the Placements. The largest category is House Maid, with 62,389 workers placed in this role. This accounts for a significant portion of migrant labor, primarily in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Singapore, where domestic work demand is high. Caregiving and Healthcare Roles are Prominent. Caregiver roles (32,060 placements) make up a substantial portion of placements, reflecting strong demand in aging populations, particularly in Taiwan and Japan. Care Workers (1,043 placements) and Nursing Home Workers (894 placements) also indicate a growing demand for elderly and medical care services. Manufacturing Worker (3,654 placements) and Construction Worker (6,884 placements) suggest a stable demand in industrial and infrastructure sectors, particularly in Malaysia, South Korea, and the Middle East. Plantation Worker (12,142 placements) highlights Indonesia's role in supplying labor for palm oil, rubber, and agricultural sectors, mainly in Malaysia and other Southeast Asian nations. Other related roles include Agriculture Farming (672 placements), Agricultural Worker (387 placements), and Agrikultur (627 placements). Office and Facility Cleaning Worker (551 placements), Waiter (701 placements), and Harvester (938 placements) indicate a variety of service-sector opportunities. Bus Driver (245 placements) represents a niche but important category of employment.

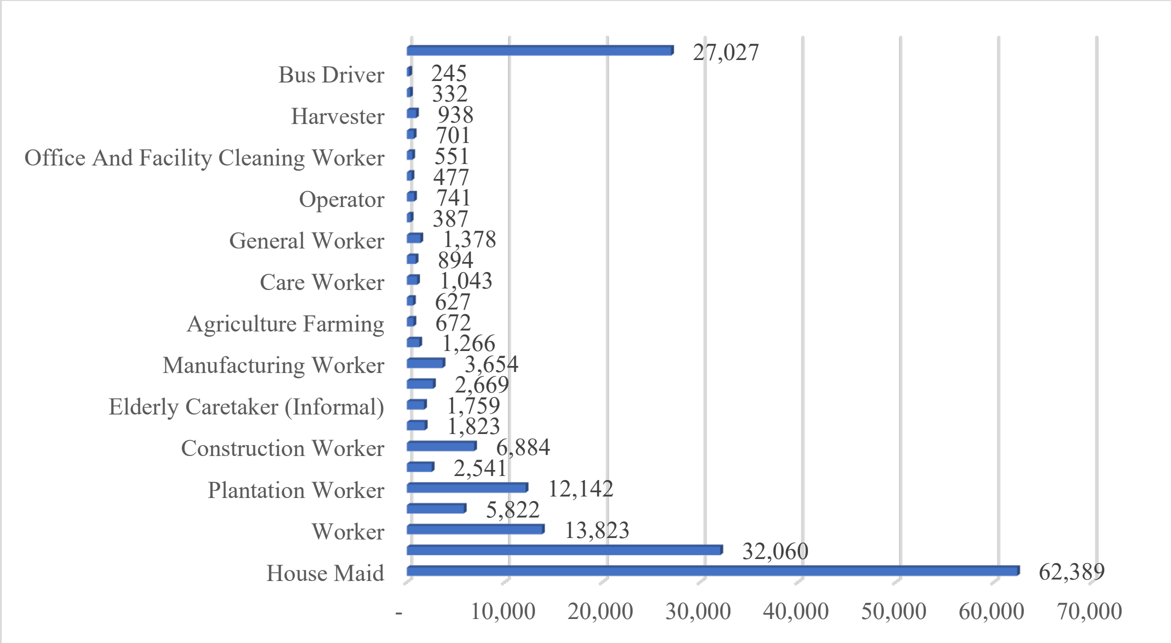

Figure 1. Graphic of Indonesian Migrant Workers Distribution by Occupation in 2024

5. Indonesian Migrant Workers Origin Destination

The placement of Indonesian migrant workers (PMI) is influenced by their province of origin and the destination countries where they seek employment. The majority of Indonesian migrant workers come from a few key provinces, primarily on Java, Sumatra, and Nusa Tenggara. Java remains the dominant province for migrant worker origins, with East Java, West Java, and Central Java leading the placements.

Table 8. Number of Indonesian Migrant Workers Based on Province of Origin in 2024

Province	June 2024	July 2024	Change (%)	Proportion
East Java	5.617	6.320	▲ 12,52% (703)	28,28%
West Java	4.998	5.197	▲ 3,98% (199)	23,26%
Central Java	4.598	5.169	▲ 12,42% (571)	23,13%
Lampung	1.904	2.052	▲ 7,77% (148)	9,18%
West Nusa Tenggara	1.064	1.336	▲ 25,56% (272)	5,98%
Other Provinces	2.454	2.272	▼ 7,42% (182)	10,17%

Source: BP2MI Report (2024)

Top provinces sending migrant workers is Jawa Timur (East Java) which reached 6,320 workers (28.28%). Many workers from this region seek employment in domestic, caregiving, and plantation sectors. Second, Jawa Barat (West Java) with 5,197 workers (23.26%) and employed in manufacturing, domestic work, and factory labor. Third is Jawa Tengah (Central Java) with 5,169 workers (23.13%). Similar to East and West Java, this province contributes heavily to caregiving and factory jobs. Forth is Lampung with 2,052 workers (9.18%). This province supplies workers mainly to agriculture and plantation sectors, with a 7.77% growth. Fifth is Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB) with 1,336 workers (5.98%). The fastest-growing contributor (25.56% increase), often sending workers to Middle Eastern countries. While Other Provinces remain 2,272 workers (10.17%).

Table 9. Number of Indonesian Migrant Workers Based on Region of Origin in 2024

Regions	June 2024	July 2024	Change (%)	Proportion
Indramayu	1.800	1.792	▼ 0,44% (8)	8,02%
Cilacap	942	1.097	▲ 16,45% (155)	4,91%
Cirebon (Kab)	874	1.013	▲ 15,90% (139)	4,53%
Ponorogo	793	945	▲ 19,17% (152)	4,23%
Blitar	754	893	▲ 18,44% (139)	4,00%
Kab./Kota Lainnya	15.472	22.460	▲ 45,17% (6.988)	74,31%

Table 9 provides data on the regional origins of Indonesian migrant workers, comparing their placement numbers between June 2024 and July 2024, along with percentage changes and their overall proportion. Indramayu (8.02% of total placements). Slight decline from 1,800 in June to 1,792 in July, a 0.44% decrease (8 placements). Despite the minor drop, Indramayu remains the largest individual city contributor outside of the general category "Other Regions". Cilacap (4.91% of total placements). Significant increase of 16.45% (155 placements) from 942 to 1,097. Indicates rising labor migration from Cilacap, potentially due to higher recruitment efforts or demand in specific sectors. Cirebon (Kabupaten) (4.53% of total placements). Grew by 15.90% (139 placements) from 874 in June to 1,013 in July. A steady rise in placements, suggesting strong labor mobility from this region. Ponorogo (4.23% of total placements). Significant growth of 19.17% (152 placements) from 793 to 945. Ponorogo has a long history of sending workers abroad, particularly to Middle Eastern countries. Blitar (4.00% of total placements). Experienced an 18.44% increase (139 placements) from 754 in June to 893 in July. Similar to Ponorogo, Blitar is known for strong migration patterns toward caregiving, domestic work, and plantation jobs.

Discussion

The data on Indonesian migrant worker placements by region highlights the critical role that certain areas of Indonesia, particularly Java and Nusa Tenggara, play in supplying labor for international markets. The concentration of migrant workers from Indramayu, Cilacap, Cirebon, Ponorogo, and Blitar aligns with previous studies that emphasize historical migration patterns, socio-economic push factors, and government labor export policies.

1. Regional Migration Trends and Economic Push Factors

Previous studies (Mindarti & Umiyati, 2023; Fauzi et al., 2023) have demonstrated that labor migration from rural and economically disadvantaged areas is driven by limited employment opportunities, low wages, and income disparities. Regions like Indramayu and Cilacap have historically been among the largest contributors to Indonesia's migrant workforce, with many workers seeking jobs in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Malaysia as domestic helpers, caregivers, and factory workers. This is consistent with earlier findings by Tsay (2015) and De Haas (2009), who identified that Java has long been a key region for labor migration due to its dense population, high unemployment rates, and well-established recruitment networks.

2. Government Policies and Labor Protection Efforts

The Indonesian government, through BP2MI (Badan Perlindungan Pekerja Migran Indonesia), has attempted to formalize and regulate migrant labor deployment. However, despite these efforts, G to G (Government-to-Government) placements remain low, as seen in the report, with private recruitment agencies (P to P) continuing to dominate the placement process. Experts like Allen (2016) and Widyastuti (2024) argue that Indonesia's reliance on private sector recruitment has contributed to issues such as labor exploitation, high placement fees, and weak worker protections. This has led to persistent cases of human trafficking, contract violations, and abuse, particularly in domestic work sectors (Khalid & Savirah, 2022). Different cultures in communication make it complicated and further conflict between the understanding of two cultures faced by Indonesian maids working in Malaysia (Saad et al., 2022).

3. Impact of Migration on Sending Regions
Beyond economic benefits, migration has social and cultural implications for sending regions. Studies by Gatsou et al. (2017) and Sumarto (2017) highlight how female labor migration, particularly in caregiving and domestic work, has reshaped gender roles and family structures. Many households in Indramayu, Cilacap, and Cirebon now rely on remittances from female family members, challenging traditional expectations of male financial responsibility. However, migration also creates social costs, such as family separation, child displacement, and emotional distress, as documented by Sobandi (2021). Many children of migrant workers are raised by grandparents or other relatives, impacting their educational and emotional development.

4. Policy Implications and Specific Recommendations
The findings about emerging global labour market trends, including skill shortages, sectoral shifts, technological acceleration, and demographic transitions, demand strong, proactive policies from the Indonesian government to ensure that Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) remain competitive internationally. The following specific recommendations are proposed: (1) Competency Enhancement Through Sector-Specific Training which policy action by develop a mandatory certification (e.g., caregiver license) for workers heading to Japan and Taiwan where elderly care sectors are booming, (2) Diversification of Placement Sectors Beyond Domestic Work which policy action by introduce a PMI Tech Talent Program for young workers to access digital economy jobs in South Korea or Singapore, and (3) Upscaling Language and Cross-Cultural Competency by Partner with language centers and online platforms to deliver certified language courses for outbound workers.

Conclusion

This study highlights the current conditions of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in 2024, focusing on the dynamics of placement, challenges faced, and strategies that need to be adopted to improve PMI competitiveness in the global labor market. The results of the study show that there was a significant decline in the number of PMI placements in July 2024 compared to the previous year. This decline, although worrying, also provides an indication of the need for more adaptive policy adjustments to global changes. Most PMI placements are still concentrated in Asian countries, with the domestic sector, such as House Maid and Caregiver, being the most dominant job categories. The skills gap among PMI, especially in the face of increasingly tight international competition, is one of the main issues that must be addressed immediately.

The Indonesian government needs to strengthen efforts to improve PMI skills and competencies, especially in sectors that are in high demand in the global market. These steps include increasing pre-departure training, better social protection, and increasing cooperation with destination countries to ensure better working conditions for PMI. The regional concentration of Indonesian migrant workers in Java and Nusa Tenggara reflects both historical migration patterns and ongoing economic pressures. While remittances play a crucial role in supporting local economies, the risks associated with informal placements and worker exploitation require stronger policy interventions. By implementing skill development programs, expanding formalized placements, and ensuring stronger labor protections, Indonesia can enhance the welfare of its migrant workers while maintaining its role in the global labor market.

Looking ahead, the Indonesian government must not only strengthen immediate protection and competency enhancement measures but also anticipate future labor market shifts. This includes aligning PMI training programs with emerging sectors (e.g., healthcare, digital economy, green jobs), expanding formal placement channels through bilateral agreements, and reinforcing social protection frameworks to safeguard workers' rights across borders. Future implications suggest that failure to adapt could lead to Indonesia's declining relevance as a major labor-sending country, increased vulnerability of its workers, and potential socio-economic instability due to reduced remittance inflows. Conversely, proactive and strategic investments in skills development, worker protection, and market diversification could position Indonesia as a leading provider of skilled, competitive labor in the evolving global economy

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