



Thailand's Social Outlook of Q2/2025

Social situation in the second quarter of 2025 revealed several significant trends. The employment situation was stable, with the unemployment rate remaining low. Household debt (in the first quarter of 2025) contracted, while non-performing loan (NPL) remained a problem. The situation worsened in several areas, including the consumption of alcohol and tobacco, safety of life and property, the incidence of monitored diseases, and consumer protection complaints. Moreover, three other interesting social situations were presented: (1) Opportunities and Challenges for Fresh Graduates in the World of Work (2) UPF: Easy to Eat, Risky for Health and (3) Cooperative Debt: A Turning Point in Addressing Household Debt. This report also introduces the article "The Challenges Facing Thai Entrepreneurs Amid the Influx of Foreign Capital"

The labor situation in the second quarter of 2025 remained stable, with employment in the non-agricultural sector at a similar level to the previous year. Meanwhile, the agricultural sector continued to contract. Going forward, it will be crucial to closely monitor the effects of recent U.S. import tax adjustments, the possibility of prolonged border disputes, the need to adapt to new employment models, and the growing risks faced by workers on the job.

In the second quarter of 2025, the number of employed people totaled 39.5 million, representing an increase of 0.02 percent from the same quarter in 2024. This was driven by a 0.4 percent expansion in the non-agricultural sector, with the largest growth observed in the transportation and storage sector at 7.9 percent. This was followed by the hotel and restaurant sector which grew by 3.1 percent, and a recovery in the manufacturing sector which grew by 0.5 percent. Meanwhile, the construction and retail/wholesale trade sectors contracted by 3.7 percent and 1.2 percent, respectively. Employment in the agricultural sector continued to decline by 0.9 percent, particularly in the northern region. **Working hours** remained stable, with an average of 42.7 hours per week across all sectors. In the private sector, the average was higher at 46.9 hours per week. The number of people working overtime decreased by 8.0 percent, While the number of underemployed workers also fell by 4.0 percent. Although **wages** grew by 2.4 percent in the private sector and 2.5 percent in the formal sector, the average wage across all sectors declined by 1.9 percent. **The unemployment rate dropped** to 0.91 percent, down from 1.07 percent in the second quarter of 2024. This equates to approximately 370,000 unemployed individuals, with a decline in unemployment among vocational and advanced professional groups. However, the number of quasi-unemployed workers increased by 5.2 percent compared to the same period last year, reaching 2.1 million people.

Key issues to watch out for include 1) **Impact of U.S. Import Tariffs on Employment:** The U.S. has implemented various forms of tariffs, including specific tariffs on certain goods and

reciprocal tariffs, currently applying a 19 percent duty on Thai products. In addition, measures have been introduced to prevent the misuse of rules of origin. Thailand is also required to reduce its import tariffs on over 10,000 items from the U.S., especially agricultural goods, to 0 percent. These developments may reduce the competitiveness of Thai products and could negatively affect employment or working hours. Therefore, the government should support efforts to open new markets, implement measures to protect Thai goods, and monitor for any fraudulent origin claims; 2) **Changing Employment Models due to the uncertain economic climate:** In 2024, 25 percent of Thai organizations were expected to reduce staff and restructure, shifting away from hiring full-time permanent employees. Instead, they are moving toward hiring part-time permanent staff and part-time contract/temporary workers. This could impact job security, income stability, and legal protections. Relevant authorities should ensure that businesses comply with labor laws; 3) **Shortage of Migrant Workers:** Currently, around 388,000 migrant workers have not renewed their work permits or completed the required procedures. Furthermore, the Cambodian government has implemented mandatory measures to encourage its workers to return home, increasing the risk of labor shortages in the construction, manufacturing, and agricultural sectors. In response, the Thai Cabinet has approved the importation of additional foreign workers, particularly from Sri Lanka, as well as Nepal, the Philippines, and Indonesia, to fill the gaps in industries facing labor shortages; and 4) **Increasing Workplace Hazards:** Although serious accidents are a small proportion, research from Silpakorn University found that losing a finger, hand, or arm can significantly worsen a worker's socio-economic status. It also causes psychological impacts that cannot be fully compensated. Therefore, businesses should regularly maintain tools and machinery, provide safety training for employees, and offer compensation that takes into account long-term economic opportunity costs.

Household debt in the first quarter of 2025 contracted for the first time, while the credit quality of households remains an issue, particularly with auto loans and credit card debt. Key concerns to focus on are the increasing number of online informal lenders and the use of Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) services, which could lead to consumers taking on excessive debt.

In the first quarter of 2025, total household debt was 16.35 trillion baht, a contraction of 0.1 percent after expanding by 0.2 percent in the previous quarter. This has led to a continued decrease in the ratio of household debt to GDP, which now stands at 87.4 percent compared to 88.4 percent in the last quarter. The ability of households to repay their debts remains a concern. Non-performing loans (NPLs), or debts that are more than 90 days overdue, as recorded by the credit bureau, amounted to 1.19 trillion baht. Although the NPLs-to-total-loan ratio slightly decreased to 8.78 percent from 8.94 percent in the previous quarter—with a decline in almost all loan types except for auto loans and credit card debt—this reduction is due to a contraction in lending. Meanwhile, special mention loans (SMLs), which are 1 to 3 months overdue, increased as a percentage of total loans, rising to 4.25 percent from 4.17 percent in the previous quarter.

There are two main concerns to watch out for. 1) The Rise of Informal Online Lending: High levels of existing non-performing loans and stricter lending policies from financial institutions

are making it difficult for some people to access credit. As a result, more borrowers are turning to informal lenders, which are now increasingly available and easy to find online. This is a major vulnerability, as it puts borrowers at risk of being exploited through exorbitantly high interest rates, illegal debt collection methods, and the misuse of their personal information; and 2) **The Use of "Buy Now, Pay Later" (BNPL) Services:** The growing use of BNPL services could lead consumers into excessive debt. The problem is that BNPL credit is often approved based on a person's spending habits within the BNPL system itself, without considering their total income or other existing debts. This can result in some users receiving a credit limit that is far beyond what they can actually afford to repay. Moreover, BNPL services are now being used for more than just platform-based purchases, such as paying for meals at restaurants.

The incidence of monitored diseases increased in the second quarter of 2025. In addition, it is still crucial to address the low milk consumption among Thais, which has led to a rise in stunted growth in children. Other concerns include the potential effects of AI use on brain and mental health, as well as the rising suicide rates due to mental health issues.

In the second quarter of 2025, the number of cases of monitored diseases increased by 27.2 percent. This was driven by a significant rise in cases of influenza, pneumonia, and hand, foot, and mouth disease. Additionally, mental health issues are becoming more prevalent. **Key health issues to address** include: 1) **Low milk consumption has caused a rise in stunted growth among children:** On average, Thais drank only 23.1 liters of milk per person in 2025, which is much lower than the global average of 31.0 liters. According to data from the Department of Health, this low consumption is a contributing factor to the increased rate of stunted growth among Thai children. In the 2025 fiscal year, both the 0-5 and 6-14 age groups showed an increase in stunted growth compared to the 2024 fiscal year; 2) **The use of AI may affect the brain and mental health:** A 2025 study by the MIT Media Lab found that people who used AI language models for work showed less brain connectivity in various areas compared to those who didn't. This suggests that AI may contribute to reduced brain function, which could have long-term effects on learning and analytical thinking skills; and 3) **Suicide rates from mental health issues are increasing:** In the 2024 fiscal year, there were 428,534 cases of depression. The suicide death rate was 8.02 per 100,000 people, the highest in a decade. The age group with the highest suicide rate was 20-59, which includes students and working-age adults.

Consumption of alcohol and tobacco was stable in the second quarter of 2025

In the second quarter of 2025, consumer spending on alcohol and tobacco remained stable. with a slight overall increase of 0.2 percent. This was driven by a 1.1 percent increase in alcohol consumption, while tobacco consumption decreased by 0.9 percent. Issues to monitor include 1) **GEN 6 E-cigarettes:** Despite strict regulations prohibiting them, these products are still a concern. the new GEN 6 models look similar to inhalers, making them difficult to detect and enforce; 2) **Gen Z Drinking Trends:** While alcohol consumption among Gen Z is declining globally, particularly in developed countries, it's trending upward in Thailand; and 3) **Unlocking**

Alcohol Advertisements: A proposed amendment to the Alcohol Beverage Control Act of B.E. could create legal ambiguities. The new Article 32/1 would permit advertisements that provide "information, news, knowledge, or public relations," but would still ban those that "induce" or "persuade" people to drink. This distinction is difficult to interpret and could lead to enforcement challenges.

Safety of life and property decreased in the second quarter of 2025. Key issues that need to be prioritized are the rising trend of sexual abuse against children and youth, and the continued implementation of measures to block scammers and transnational human traffickers.

In the second quarter of 2025, overall criminal cases increased by 5.3 percent compared to the same period in 2024, driven by a 7.4 percent rise in drug-related cases. In contrast, offenses against property and crimes against life, body, and sex decreased by 3.3 percent and 2.9 percent, respectively. **Regarding road accidents,** the cumulative number of reported victims decreased by 0.2 percent from the second quarter of 2024. This was due to a significant decline in fatalities and permanent disabilities, which dropped by 14.0 percent and 26.2 percent respectively. However, the number of people injured increased by 0.1 percent.

Key issues to prioritize include: 1) **Rising risk of sexual abuse for children and youth:** Data from the Department of Children and Youth in 2024 revealed that the number of children and youth who were sexually abused was the highest in five years. The most affected group was children under 18, accounting for 96.4 percent of all cases. Perpetrators are often family members or people close to the victim. A psychiatric study by the University of Cambridge found that over 50 percent of people who sexually abuse children have a sexual preference for children, particularly those with a tendency toward pedophilia. This behavior can be partly triggered by "pedo" media or media with romantic themes between adults and children, which puts children at a greater risk of becoming victims; and 2) **Sustained measures to combat scammers and transnational human trafficking:** Thailand has implemented effective border control measures that have led to a decline in scamming and human trafficking cases. On June 8, 2025, there were 898 reported cases, a significant 40.7 percent decrease from the day before (June 7, 2025). This shows the effectiveness of the current measures, which must be continued to maintain this positive trend.

Consumer complaints have risen, with issues related to both products and telecommunications services. It is also important to monitor and prioritize the push for comprehensive legislation on food contact materials, addressing misunderstandings about expiration dates on product labels, and tackling the issue of contaminated fruits and vegetables.

In the second quarter of 2025, consumer complaints increased by 52.0 percent compared to the same period last year. This rise was seen in both product and service complaints filed through the Office of the Consumer Protection Board (OCPB) and in telecommunications complaints handled by the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC),

which increased by 54.7 percent and 4.8 percent, respectively. **Key issues to monitor** include 1) **The push for comprehensive legislation on food contact materials:** Examples include recycled paper bags with personal information, permanent markers used to write on food bags, and disposable wooden chopsticks that are often bleached. The widespread use of these items exposes consumers to a risk of microbial or chemical contamination in their food, along with potential violations of personal data; 2) **Misunderstandings about expiration dates:** Some consumers are still confused about expiration date labels. Products labeled "Best Before" may still be safe to consume after the marked date, whereas items labeled "Use By" are unsafe to eat after the specified date. However, neither type of product should be sold after the date indicated on the label.; and 3) **Contaminated fruits and vegetables:** There's a risk of contamination, particularly from pesticide residues and parasites, in both imported produce and produce widely available in local markets.

Opportunities and Challenges for Fresh Graduates in the World of Work

Generation Z (Gen Z) will play an important role in the future labor market. However, their work attitudes and behaviors differ significantly from previous generations, presenting both opportunities and challenges for employers. In Thailand, several notable characteristics have been observed, including: 1) **Some Gen Z individuals choose not to continue studying** due to concerns over the education system, such as quality, high costs, and a limited flexibility in learning; 2) **Delayed entry into the labor market.** In 2014, only 1.2 percent of Gen Z remained unemployed for more than one year, but risen sharply to 13.6 percent in 2024, higher than any other age group. Unemployment among those who have never worked before reached the highest, at 48.5 percent. This trend partly reflects the growing importance placed on self-discovery through gap-year experiences; 3) **Strong entrepreneurial mindset.** The share of Gen Z engaged in own-account businesses without employees increased from an annual average of 0.4 percent before the COVID-19 to 1.8 percent during 2020 to present; 4) **Priority on ethics, values, and work-life balance.** These factors represent core considerations for Gen Z, who demonstrate a readiness to change employment if organizational practices fail to align with their expectations; 5) **Proficiency in leveraging technology at work.** According to the Work Trend Index 2024, 85 percent of Gen Z workers reported using AI in their jobs, higher than any other age group and above the global average of 75 percent; and 6) **Deficiencies in soft skills,** particularly in communication, which are crucial for career advancement.

Based on the attitudes and behaviors of Gen Z, several implications can be observed. **Positive impacts include:** 1) Opportunities for diverse learning experiences, such as self-learning in areas of personal interest without relying solely on formal education, as well as from taking time for self-reflection during breaks; 2) Although new graduates may face limitations in work experience, their proficiency in artificial intelligence, which highly sought after in the labor market, can enhance employability, particularly for applicants holding GenAI certifications; 3) Expansion of the digital economy. The growing diversity of digital economic activities creates new forms of employment, particularly within the gig economy, and fosters the emergence of innovative business models such

as the Creator Economy and Social Gaming. **Negative impacts include:** 1) Employer concerns regarding new hires. This is in particular for certain attitudes and behaviors that may discourage recruitment, such as frequent job-hopping, delayed entry into the labor market causing insufficient work experience; 2) Higher unemployment risks. In 2024, the unemployment rate among Gen Z reached 3.8 percent, higher than all other age groups. By education level, university graduates recorded the highest unemployment rate at 2.0 percent, compared with the national average of just 1.0 percent; 3) Gen Z's reliance on AI does not necessarily translate into effective workplace application. Excessive dependence on AI can hinder personal learning capacity, limit deep technical understanding of AI applications, and reduce the ability to critically evaluate AI-generated outputs.

From the foregoing, it reflects that both employers, new graduates, and the government must undertake adjustments to address emerging opportunities and challenges. **Employers** must adjust workplace practices and provide benefits that better align with the expectations of younger employees. This includes promoting skills development, adopting hybrid work arrangements, and investing in technological innovation. **The workforce**, particularly Generation Z, must deepen their understanding of and adapt to real-world work environments by strengthening both hard skills and soft skills. Meanwhile, **the government** must restructure workforce development to align with employer needs. Simultaneously, the government should promote and facilitate labor upskilling and reskilling initiatives, while ensuring that workers across all groups have access to diverse training opportunities through multiple channels.

UPF: Easy to Eat, Risky for Health

Ultra-Processed Foods (UPF) are food products that undergo multiple stages of industrial processing and typically contain synthetic additives not commonly used in household cooking. These processes alter the original structure of natural ingredients to the extent that their source is difficult to identify. As a result, such foods are often high in saturated fats, sugar, and sodium, such as cereals, packaged bread, instant meals, snacks, and sweetened beverages. However, several scientific studies indicate that regular consumption of UPFs is strongly associated with a range of health risks, including cardiovascular disease, overweight and obesity, insulin-resistant diabetes, low levels of good cholesterol (HDL), and unhealthy dietary behaviors that contribute to the development of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). For consumption situation, data published in the British Medical Journal in 2024 show that calories derived from UPFs accounted for as much as 58 percent of daily intake in the U.S. and 57 percent in the United Kingdom. In comparison, populations in Asia and South America derived about 20–30 percent of their calories from UPFs. For Thailand, while official statistics on UPF consumption are not available, survey data from the National Statistical Office reveal that a large proportion of Thais consume unhealthy foods between 3–7 days per week. Specifically, 42.1 percent reported consuming high-fat foods, 39.2 percent consumed processed meats, and 34.2 percent consumed sweetened beverages which fall within the UPF category. Moreover, convenience store purchasing behavior further highlights the prevalence of UPF consumption among Thais. A 2025 survey found that 40.9 percent of Thai respondents visited convenience stores 1–3 times per week,

while 21.8 percent reported visiting daily. The most frequently purchased items were food and beverages, followed by snacks and confectioneries.

In response, several countries have proactively regulated the production and restrict the consumption of ultra-processed foods (UPFs), including: 1) **The mandatory use of black octagonal warning labels.** The distinctive feature of the label is a black octagonal sign resembling a stop sign, prominently displaying bold text such as High Calories, High Sugar, High Sodium, and High Saturated Fat. This enables consumers to immediately understand that the product contains nutrients exceeding recommended health standards. By contrast, under the Guideline Daily Amount (GDA) nutrition labeling system currently used in **Thailand**, survey results indicate that 40.8 percent of consumers noticed the information on front-of-pack GDA labels, yet it did not influence their purchasing decisions. This reflects that providing purely numerical information does not effectively prompt immediate awareness of health risks; 2) **Marketing controls and restrictions**, particularly on products targeted at children. This includes: (1) **prohibition of cartoon characters or similar techniques on packaging** for products carrying two or more octagonal warning labels; (2) **ban on advertising and promotional activities in convenience stores.** For instance, **the United Kingdom** is preparing to enforce legislation prohibiting the advertising of HFSS (High Fat, Sugar, Salt) foods, alongside restrictions on price promotions and the placement of HFSS products near checkout counters. **Chile** also prohibits advertising of unhealthy foods on television during morning and after-school hours, as well as promotional campaigns for products categorized as UPFs; and (3) **prohibition of sales within educational institutions.** In countries such as **Chile, Mexico, Argentina, and Uruguay**, policies explicitly prohibit the sale or distribution of food products carrying octagonal warning labels in schools at all levels. By contrast, in **Thailand**, measures have been limited to health-promotion campaigns within schools, without regulatory controls to restrict marketing practices that encourage children to consume unhealthy foods; 3) **Fiscal measures on unhealthy food products.** In **Colombia**, a tiered tax system has been introduced on UPFs that are high in sugar, sodium, and saturated fats, including products with synthetic additives and artificially sweetened beverages. This measure aims to incentivize the food industry to reformulate products while encouraging healthier consumption behaviors at the population level. In **Thailand**, taxation currently applies only to sugar-sweetened beverages, without extending to artificial sweeteners or other UPF food products.

The aforementioned measures provide useful approaches that Thailand could adopt to strengthen food policies. This would include establishing a clear definition of UPF products and conducting a comprehensive classification of existing food items to determine which fall under the UPF category. This would support the development of regulatory measures to control production and restrict consumption, particularly among children and youth who are often the primary targets of food marketing. In addition, Thailand may consider the appropriateness of extending taxation to UPF categories that typically contain high levels of sugar, sodium, saturated fats, and synthetic additives, many of which are not adequately covered under the current tax framework. There should also be efforts to improve access to nutritious food options, such as fresh foods and home-cooked

meals, which rely on natural ingredients and minimal processing. This will enhance long-term public health outcomes.

Cooperative Debt: A Turning Point in Addressing Household Debt

Cooperatives are an important financial mechanism, originally established to promote savings and provide low-cost credit services to members. However, they have increasingly become a major source of borrowing, involving millions of members. In 2024, there were 6,092 cooperatives across the country, covering more than 11 million members. Among them, savings cooperatives accounted for the largest share of lending, with a total loan value of 2.27 trillion baht, and the amount of lending continues to rise. Debt from savings cooperatives represented 15 percent of total household debt, ranking just below commercial banks and state-owned specialized financial institutions (SFIs). Nevertheless, the operations of cooperatives have become an obstacle to resolving household debt problems due to: 1) **Easy access to cooperative loans and limited credit screening often result in excessive borrowing.** Loan approvals rely primarily on internal information such as members' shareholding value, while certain loan products do not require collateral but only guarantors; 2) **Lack of integration of borrower information with other financial institutions.** This prevents other financial institutions from verifying the outstanding debt of cooperative members; 3) **Most cooperatives set dividend rates at high levels, which are financed through the expansion of lending programs and relatively high loan interest rates,** which has placed burdens on debtors; 4) **Some savings cooperatives set excessively low thresholds for members' residual income after debt repayments,** or less than 30 percent of their monthly salary. This severely constrains liquidity and often compels borrowers to seek additional loans from other sources, trapping them in a long-term debt cycle that is difficult to resolve; 5) **Cooperatives lack incentives to implement effective debt-relief measures with existing assistance programs as voluntary.** This reflects the fact that cooperatives hold preferential rights to deduct repayments directly from salaries before other creditors.

These challenges have prompted relevant agencies to introduce various measures aimed at addressing the problem of savings cooperative debt. For example, the Department of Cooperative Promotion has issued guidelines for cooperative members, including: capping lending interest rates at no more than 4.75 percent per year, requiring that borrowers retain at least 30 percent of their monthly salary after debt repayments, and providing recommendations from the Registrar of Cooperatives on responsible and fair lending practices for members. In addition, efforts are underway to integrate savings cooperatives into the National Credit Bureau system and to implement a Credit Lock measure, under which information on members participating in debt-resolution programs would be reported to the credit bureau. Other initiatives include financial literacy programs targeting members of teachers' savings cooperatives, the largest and most indebted group, along with the amendment to the Cooperative Act in 2019, which expanded regulatory oversight of savings cooperatives and credit unions, supported by the issuance of ministerial regulations to enforce the provisions of the amended Act. Nevertheless, **the resolution of cooperative debt continues to face several significant constraints,** including: 1) **Legal limitations.** The issuance of ministerial

regulations required under Section 89/ 2 of the Cooperative Act to supervise savings cooperatives remains protracted. Critical regulations are still lacking, particularly those related to lending, loan guarantees, and data management which are essential for establishing lending interest rate ceilings and ensuring the submission of credit information to the credit bureau. Moreover, **Section 89/4 establishes an Advisory Committee on the Supervision of Savings Cooperatives and Credit Unions** whose role is confined to only providing recommendations to the Registrar of Cooperatives. At the same time, **the Act continues to authorize cooperatives to deduct debt repayments** directly from members' salaries prior to other creditors, thereby permitting unlimited deductions and reducing incentives to support members in resolving their debts; 2) **Supervisory capacity.** The Department of Cooperative Promotion is currently responsible for overseeing all cooperative types. However, savings cooperatives differ substantially from other cooperatives, operating in a manner that closely resembles financial institutions through both deposit-taking and lending activities. This necessitates supervisory standards equivalent to those applied to financial institutions to mitigate risks to the economy, society, and financial stability; and 3) **Operational challenges.** Cooperative boards exercise independent decision-making authority, resulting in inconsistencies in debt-assistance measures. In addition, some cooperatives face capital shortfalls and are compelled to borrow from financial institutions or other cooperatives to finance member loans, thereby raising costs. Many also operate with underdeveloped data systems, face concerns regarding member privacy, and incur high administrative expenses.

Therefore, in order to ensure the sustainable operation of savings cooperatives and to mitigate the risks posed by cooperative debt to overall financial stability, it is imperative to **accelerate the issuance of comprehensive ministerial regulations and to enforce relevant laws effectively.** Clear rules and operational guidelines must be established, such as requiring the use of credit bureau information in loan assessments and setting standards for responsible and fair lending practices to members. Consideration may also be given to **subjecting savings cooperatives to a supervisory framework equivalent to that applied to financial institutions, thereby creating mechanisms and safeguards to prevent potential risks and losses.**

Article “The Challenges Facing Thai Entrepreneurs Amid the Influx of Foreign Capital”

Although Thailand was facing the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, foreign investment in the accommodation and food service sectors increased dramatically. The investment was concentrated in major tourist destinations, namely Bangkok, Chonburi, Surat Thani, Phuket, and Chiang Mai. This entry of foreign investors has generated wide-ranging impacts. The **Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC)**, in collaboration with the **Center for Social and Business Development Research (SAB)**, conducted a survey and study on the situation, perceptions, and attitudes of Thai entrepreneurs in the accommodation and food service industries, particularly small and micro enterprises in those five provinces, with respect to the influx of foreign investment. The findings revealed that **Thai entrepreneurs are well aware of the entry of foreign capital, which is largely perceived as illegal and monopolistic in nature.** Notably, 81.5 percent of respondents observed that foreign-owned hotel and food businesses have expanded

rapidly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis. At the same time, among those aware of foreign investment, more than half believed that such investments were conducted illegally: for example, through the use of nominee structures, aggressive price-cutting strategies, frequent promotional campaigns, or collaborating with related businesses to monopolize customer bases. Consequently, 68.0 percent of Thai entrepreneurs viewed foreign capital as creating unfair competition. **More than half of Thai entrepreneurs were affected.** Most of them were small enterprises (SMEs) rather than micro enterprises. Thai businesses lost both customers and market share to foreign competitors. Furthermore, one in three Thai entrepreneurs faced rising operating costs, including higher expenses for equipment, raw materials, and labor. These pressures have increased the risk of mounting losses and have created difficulties in servicing debt obligations. In addition, **more than one-third of Thai businesses expressed uncertainty about their survival**, a proportion that is expected to increase if competition from foreign enterprises intensifies. Although more than half of entrepreneurs have attempted to adapt in response to these challenges, over two-thirds of accommodation businesses and 58.4 percent of restaurants reported that their performance had either not improved at all or improved only marginally. This outcome may reflect persistent constraints in financial management capacity and limited access to business partnerships. **Entrepreneurs further noted that the entry of foreign businesses has altered the cultural identity of local areas, while creating additional challenges such as shortages of public utilities, waste management issues, pollution, and unpleasant odors.** They also expressed concerns over broader social problems, including conflicts and drug-related issues. However, **25.2 percent of accommodation and restaurant operators viewed the presence of foreign businesses as having positive impacts**, citing the increase in tourist arrivals and the resulting stimulus for them to further develop and improve their own businesses.

Thailand has adopted measures to regulate foreign businesses and support domestic entrepreneurs, such as the Foreign Business Act of 1999, the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 1999, and various business management skill development programs. Nonetheless, 85.5 percent of entrepreneurs believed that the government has been unable to effectively address foreign businesses operating illegally. Meanwhile, foreign countries have adopted stricter regulatory measures than Thailand. For example, in **Singapore**, foreign investors are required to register legal entities exclusively through accredited registration firms. In **the U.S.**, nearly all types of companies are mandated to report their beneficial owners to agencies under the Department of the Treasury. In **Malaysia**, enforcement authorities are granted access to information on beneficial ownership, while restrictions are imposed on foreign shareholding in the hotel sector based on star rating, along with minimum registered capital requirements for businesses in the restaurant industry. With respect to **support measures for Thai entrepreneurs**, initiatives have included training programs in various business-related areas as well as financial support schemes. However, 43.8 percent of accommodation operators and 46.2 percent of food service operators reported having little to no awareness of such measures. 85.7 percent indicated that government communication and public relations efforts remain inadequate, leaving them without sufficient access to information. At the same time, 84.8 percent of entrepreneurs believed that current measures are still insufficient, while 86.7 percent stated that these measures do not align with their needs.

In order to enable Thai businesses to compete fairly with foreign enterprises and to ensure that foreign investment contributes appropriately to Thailand's economic and social context, two key areas are required: 1. **Regulation of foreign investment and business operations.** In terms of **investment entry**, consideration could be given to requiring foreign entities to register legal entities exclusively through accredited registration firms. In addition, all businesses should be mandated to report their beneficial owners, while stringent verification of board members, shareholders, and registered business addresses should be enforced. Furthermore, limits on investment or shareholding proportions could be established according to the size of the enterprise. In terms of **business operations**, there must be rigorous, continuous, and comprehensive monitoring across businesses of all sizes. Consideration should also be given to linking beneficial ownership information with law enforcement agencies and developing mechanisms for reporting violations.

2. **Support for Thai entrepreneurs**, in the following areas: 1) **Financial support for business start-up, improvement, and expansion**, with relaxing certain conditions as well as developing new funding sources; 2) **Capacity building in marketing and financial management**, including the creation of training programs or the establishment of dedicated business support centers to provide continuous guidance and advisory services on financial management, accounting, and taxation; 3) **Promotion of business associations and business matching**, across the entire tourism value chain; and 4) **Enhanced communication of government measures**, through upgraded promotion to ensure entrepreneurs understand the benefits and requirements of programs/policies, and can easily access information on application procedures.

Key Social Indicators

Key Components	2023	2024	2023				2024				2025	
	Year	Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Year	Year	Q1	Q2	Q4	Q1	Q2
1. Employment ^{1/}												
Workforce (Thousands)	40,407.2	40,556.6	40,281.0	40,302.2	40,531.8	40,673.9	40,226.4	40,178.1	40,484.1	40,537.7	40,484.1	40,114.4
% YOY	1.4	-0.2	1.7	1.4	1.1	1.3	-0.1	-0.3	-0.1	-0.3	0.6	-0.2
Employed Person (Thousands)	39,912.0	39,806.4	39,629.2	39,677.5	40,091.3	40,250.1	39,579.0	39,500.7	40,039.5	40,106.2	39,383.3	39,510.0
% YOY	1.8	-0.3	2.4	1.7	1.3	1.7	-0.1	-0.4	-0.1	-0.4	-0.5	0.02
Unemployed Person (Thousands)	395.2	402.2	421.1	429.0	401.2	329.3	407.7	429.1	413.9	358.2	357.7	365.5
Unemployed Rate (%)	0.98	1.00	1.05	-21.5	0.99	0.81	1.01	1.07	1.02	0.88	0.88	0.91
Underemployed Person (Thousands)	202.1	192.3	227.9	202.6	166.9	210.9	199.5	162.4	191.9	223.6	176.3	155.9
2. Household Debt ^{2/}												
Household debt value (Trillion baht)	16.4	16.4	16.0	16.1	16.2	16.4	16.4	16.4	16.4	16.4	16.4	N.A.
% YOY	3.0	0.2	3.8	3.8	3.3	3.0	2.4	1.6	0.8	0.2	-0.1	N.A.
Ratio to GDP (percent)	91.3	88.4	90.7	90.8	90.8	91.3	90.7	89.7	88.9	88.4	87.4	N.A.
NPL (Billion baht)	1.05	1.22	0.95	1.03	1.05	1.05	1.09	1.16	1.20	1.22	1.19	N.A.
% YOY	6.6	16.4	-0.2	-7.3	-4.0	6.6	14.9	12.2	14.1	16.4	8.7	N.A.
% NPL to Total Loan ^{3/}	7.65	8.94	7.18	7.66	7.73	7.65	8.01	8.48	8.78	8.94	8.78	N.A.
3. Health and Illness												
Number of patients under disease surveillance (person)^{4/}												
- Measles	317	1,868	58	88	107	113	543	136	504	685	389	352
- Meningococcal fever	11	11	2	2	4	3	2	2	3	4	2	0
- Encephalitis	893	967	303	209	194	187	516	216	242	193	312	435
- Cholera	3	4	1	0	1	1	2	0	0	2	1	0
- Hands, feet and mouth	64,021	89,794	11,483	9,305	29,974	13,636	15,957	7,847	49,410	16,380	10,684	13,004
- Dysentery	1,541	1,823	401	370	396	314	485	373	553	432	506	598
- Pneumonia	292,676	398,201	78,403	57,880	81,054	76,945	96,395	75,975	115,246	110,585	138,418	97,040
- Leptospirosis	4,460	4,187	622	797	1,591	1,473	767	732	1,308	1,340	782	955
- Dengue fever	157,142	103,601	10,948	23,636	76,579	46,568	24,131	17,702	42,328	19,440	7,236	15,036
- Influenza	478,175	650,931	39,457	25,682	211,103	202,741	121,074	99,895	220,228	209,734	267,952	130,683
- Rabies	4	3	1	1	0	2	0	1	2	0	4	2
Rate per 100,000 population of death with major chronic non-communicable diseases												
- High blood pressure	13.50	N.A.	No quarterly data available									
- Ischaemic heart disease	33.50	N.A.										
- Cerebrovascular disease	58.30	N.A.										
- Diabetes	22.00	N.A.										
- Cancer and tumors	132.60	N.A.										
4. Safety of life and property ^{5/}												
- Against life, body, and sexuality crimes (cases)	18,716	20,294	4,641	4,790	4,601	4,684	5,122	4,964	5,239	4,969	5,078	4,820
- Property crimes (cases)	63,527	74,322	14,839	14,308	16,854	17,526	17,605	17,198	20,724	18,795	19,705	16,628
- Narcotics (cases)	303,414	372,411	84,551	70,069	69,204	79,590	89,732	90,742	95,597	96,340	92,537	97,470
- Receiving notification of cumulative victims ^{6/}	822,828	869,198	208,616	200,054	196,850	217,308	224,114	203,844	212,625	228,615	225,860	203,491
- Fatalities due land accidents (deaths)	14,122	14,168	3,782	3,349	3,133	3,658	3,748	3,448	3,129	3,843	3,410	2,967
5. Consumer Protection												
5.1 Number of Complaints filed to OCPB ^{7/} (case)												
- Contracts	1,924	2,172	477	561	455	431	467	420	686	599	625	666
- Labelling	2,421	2,860	793	508	474	646	584	533	886	857	911	850
- Advertising	3,634	2,594	2,474	330	360	470	807	397	742	648	788	674
- Direct Selling and Direct Marketing	2,378	2,793	741	513	588	536	609	600	711	873	1,418	744
- Others	21,807	14,989	8,146	5,592	4,428	3,641	3,319	3,567	3,869	4,234	4,310	5,603
5.2 Consumer Complaints filed to NBTC ^{8/} (case)												
	1,593	1,459	474	371	297	451	414	340	310	395	394	367

Source : ^{1/} Labor force survey report, National Statistical Office, Ministry of Digital Economy and Society

^{2/} Bank of Thailand

^{3/} National Credit Bureau

^{4/} Bureau of Epidemiology, Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health

^{5/} Criminal Record and Information Management Enterprise System (CRIMES), Royal Thai Police

^{6/} Claims filed under Protection for Motor Vehicle Victims Act., Road Accidents Data Center for Road Safety Culture (THAI RSC)

^{7/} Office of the Consumer Protection Board, Office of the Prime Minister

^{8/} Office of The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC)