

Filipino Ties

An official publication of the
Commission on Filipinos Overseas
distributed worldwide

Inside:

- ➔ Absentee voting
- ➔ Migration for development
- ➔ Profile of Filipino emigrants
- ➔ Serial and multiple sponsorship database
- ➔ Stock estimate
- ➔ Top places to immigrate

website: www.cfo.gov.ph
April 2010 - August 2010
Vol. XV No. 2
ISSN 1665-1664

Landbank inks agreement with CFO for overseas Filipinos



Partnership for Overseas Filipinos: CFO and LandBank officials during the MOA signing held at the Boardroom of the LBP Plaza in Manila on 16 July 2010.

The Landbank of the Philippines and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas forged a partnership to collaborate on programs, projects and services aimed at Filipinos permanently residing abroad. Through the agreement, Landbank and CFO will collaborate on local and international projects to promote the interest of overseas Filipinos.

With the partnership, Filipino emigrants will have easier access to Landbank's host of banking products and services and the CFO's relevant services. Landbank will participate in CFO's pre-departure orientation seminars for US, Japan, Canada, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand bound emigrants. It will also set up a booth at the CFO registration area and advertise its services through an audio visual presentation and distribution of brochures and other promotional materials. Among the Bank's products that may interest overseas Filipinos are the LBP OFW cash card and OFW ATM cards.

The Bank will also be advertised in selected CFO publications such as the Handbook for Filipinos Overseas and *Gintong Patnubay*, a comics magazine

that reflects real-life stories and experiences of Filipinos overseas.

The Bank will also support and participate in other programs of the Commission such as the conduct of the yearly Community Education Program on Migration in pre-determined provinces; conduct of the *Bayanihan sa Canada* (a conference of Filipino community associations in Canada) in October 2010; and holding of activities relative to the Month of Overseas Filipinos in December 2010.

The CFO and the Landbank had a history of cooperation beginning with the first seafarers national summit in 2002 and the *Bayanihan sa Amerika* in 2007.

Present during the agreement signing are (seated, from left) CFO Deputy Executive Director Minda Cabilao-Valencia, CFO Executive Director Jose Maria J. Palabrica, LBP President and CEO Gilda E. Pico, Executive Vice-President Cecilia C. Borromeo and First Vice President Roberto S. Vergara. Select officers of CFO and LBP were also in attendance.

Heralds of Care

Non-nurses dominate essay writing tilt for nurses

Selfless devotion, compassion and sacrifice – these are the qualities of Filipino nurses which inspired an administrative assistant, a human resources manager and a sales executive to write three interesting compositions which won the recently concluded Heralds of Care Essay Writing Contest sponsored by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas through the Presidential Task Force on NCLEX. Launched on 21 January 2010, the competition for all Filipino writers attracted submissions from at least 12 provinces, 4 cities in Metro Manila, and from Saudi Arabia.

Dennis Cartin, an administrative assistant at an international bank in Saudi Arabia said his wife was the inspiration for his third place winning piece entitled, *Filipino Nurses Abroad: What it takes to be in Saudi Arabia*. Cartin describes the cultural and professional adjustments Filipino nurses experienced in Saudi Arabia, including discrimination in terms of pay scale, inability to join labor unions, poor working conditions and other challenges in the workplace. Cartin's essay also confirms some anecdotal evidence which suggests that Filipino nurses endure hardships in Saudi Arabia to gain enough experience to migrate to the United States and other countries.

A human resources manager by day, Hernani Geronimo writes poetry, essays and short stories for children. Winning 2nd place, Geronimo's *Of Caring Hearts and Nurturing Hands* opens with a jibe on the expansion of nursing enrollment in the Philippines, prompting the reader to expect a satirical account of the nursing "boom" in the country. The sarcasm ends as quickly as it starts, as he subtly fleshes out the cultural

continued on next page

Multi-stakeholder dialogue and knowledge exchange on migration and development

CFO Deputy Executive Director Minda C. Valencia participated in the first activity of the Transnational Coordination for Development Project or TRANSCODE held last 7 – 13 June 2010 at the Hotel Dominique in Tagaytay City.

Activities for the TRANSCODE project are being organized by the Scalabrini Migration Center, the Global Society Foundation (Stichting Mondiale Samenleving or SMS) and the University of Radboud.

The TRANSCODE would include a series of activities within and between the Philippines and the Netherlands bringing together non-government organizations, national and local government agencies, the private sector and funding agencies to discuss initiatives on the issue of migration and development, to promote networking and the exchange of good practices, and to forge better coordination and cooperation among different stakeholders.

The first TRANSCODE activity in the Philippines was joined by thirty delegates from migration-



TRANSCODE delegates with Netherlands Ambassador Robert Gerald Brinks

concerned organizations in the Philippines and the Netherlands. At the beginning of the activity, Fr. Fabio Baggio of the SMC provided theoretical perspectives on migration and development. Ambassador Robert Gerald Brinks of the Royal Netherlands Embassy and Mr. Zeki Shehu of the SMS also gave individual messages. The policy frameworks on migration and development in both countries were presented followed by discussion on good practices on migration and development, and

initiatives of government, non-government and private organizations.

Counterpart talks on the same topics were covered by selected participants from the Netherlands. Lessons and experiences from African, Latin American, Middle Eastern and other Asian countries were also discussed.

Part of the activity was a study tour to selected institutions in the Philippines with programs on migration and development. Participants were brought to the Development Action for Women

Network and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas in Manila, Atikha in San Pablo City and Gawad Kalinga in Calamba, Laguna, where they were given briefings on the projects of the organizations for overseas Filipinos and their families.

The TRANSCODE will run for about a year and is divided into two major activities. The first is the workshop in the Philippines and the second will be a conference to be held in the Netherlands in October 2010.

Heralds of Care (from page 1)

traits that make the Filipino nurse the most sought-after health professional. Geronimo is no stranger to writing about itinerant people. He recently published a book called *A Boat, A Banana and A Smile* inspired by the plight of seafarers and their families. Geronimo says he joined the Heralds of Care Essay Writing Contest to highlight the “growing disconnect between the romantic notion of being a successful nurse in a foreign land with the reality of being unemployed or underemployed in the Philippines.”

An avowed film buff, photography enthusiast, and pop culture blogger, Joseph Mirro



Macatangay

Macatangay won first prize for *The Three Faces of the Filipino Nurse*. Macatangay utilizes a creative mix of formal composition techniques and personal narratives that poignantly describe the intersection of nurse identities as they perform one role after another. A sales manager by profession but a writer at heart, Macatangay anchors a significant part of the essay on his experience as son of a migrant nurse who worked in Saudi Arabia for ten years. “It was my way of paying tribute to my mother,” Macatangay says. “Our migrant nurses have to deal with a lot of challenges in an often intimidating foreign environment, but they have never



Cartin

failed to provide high-quality care. They are the emotional fulcrum of my piece and I am only too glad to have put their journey into words,” he added. A corporate manager with a passion for the art of storytelling, Macatangay

is an alumnus of the Mowelfund Film Institute and is completing post production for his first feature film.

The winning entries of the Heralds of Care Essay Writing Contest are scheduled to be published in a commemorative book that gives a glimpse of the contributions of the Presidential Task Force on NCLEX to the nursing profession. A formal awarding ceremony will take place in December 2010 coinciding with activities commemorating the CFO’s 30th anniversary and the Month of Overseas Filipinos.



Geronimo

9th Conference of Philippine Schools Overseas in Bohol

Moving towards quality standards and quality assurance

To promote excellence in educational institutions that Filipinos brought overseas, the Inter-Agency Committee on Philippine Schools Overseas (IACPSO) conducted the 9th Conference of Philippine Schools Overseas at the Bohol Beach Club in Panglao Island in the historic province of Bohol on 18-20 May 2010. It was attended by 70 representatives from 33 Philippine schools in Greece, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and the newly established school in Timor-Leste.

Themed “*Philippine Schools Overseas: Moving Towards Quality Standards and Quality Assurance*”, the conference aimed to encourage PSOs to work together towards achieving high standards of excellence and greater assurance of quality.

This year’s conference was sponsored by the Abiva Publishing House, Adarna Publishing House, Inc., Businesswise International Resources, Inc., C & E Publishing, Inc., Enderun Colleges, FNB Educational, Inc., Landbank of the Philippines, Phoenix/ SIBS Publishing House, Inc., RBSI International, and Vibal Publishing House, Inc.

The conference was formally opened by the members of the IACPSO represented by Administrator Carmelita S. Dimzon of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), Assistant Secretary Teresita G. Inciong of the Department of Education (DepEd), Former Ambassador Mariano A. Dumia of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), and Secretary Dante A. Ang of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), as the keynote speaker.

The first plenary session began with a discussion of the preparation of schools for “PAASCU Accreditation: A Commitment to Enhanced School Standards” by Dr. Ma. Celeste T. Gonzales. A lively discussion on “History as an Essential Tool in Promoting Good Citizenship among Students” by Chairman Ambeth R. Ocampo of the National Historical Institute followed. Dr. Alexander S. Acosta, School Principal of the Philippine School Doha, also presented his paper,

“From Emotional Flame to Moral Frame: A Phenomenology of the Reflective Mediation Practice of PSOs,” which talked about the conflict mediation and experiences of Filipino school administrators of PSOs.

Concluding the session was a dialogue between the members of the IACPSO and the conference participants. The agenda for action focused on the following: 1.) representations of the education attaché, the DFA and the IACPSO with the host country on the treatment of PSOs; 2.) further study of the implementation of a more internationally attuned duration of Basic Education Curriculum; 3.) strengthen the autonomy of the schools as private institutions but at the same time, ensure that Filipino clients and employees are given ample welfare and labor protection; 4.) schools self-review towards identifying areas of development within their operations to facilitate organizational and curriculum development; 5.) develop a history and culture curriculum; and 6.) better communication between the schools and the embassy, but with respect to the autonomy of the school.

The conference inputs on the second day focused on four major aspects of education: curriculum, instruction, professional development and bringing the quality of schools services above the minimum requirements. Asec. Inciong discussed the “Inclusive Education for Quality Learning.” Dr. Nelia V. Benito of the DepEd’s National Educational Testing and Research Center gave an overview of the National Achievement Test (NAT) to be implemented in PSOs starting SY 2010-2011 in consonance with the thrust of the DepEd to achieve quality learning for all schools.

During the split sessions for the elementary and secondary groups, Dr. Lolita M. Andrada, Director of the Bureau of Secondary Education of the DepEd, discussed the “Understanding by Design,” a core strategy of the 2010 Secondary Education Curriculum. Dr. Yolanda S. Quijano, Director of the Bureau of Elementary Education

gave updates on the “Enriched Elementary Curriculum” designed to achieve best-fit and maximum growth for each learner. Dr. Erlinda C. Pefianco of the SEAMEO-INNOTECH discussed the “Continuing Professional Development for School Managers.” The day ended with a workshop of the school plans towards accreditation which was facilitated by Dr. Angelita M. Esdicol of the DepEd.

The third day started with a discussion on the Application of the “Corporation Code of the Philippines to PSOs” by Atty. Thelma V. Alcoriza of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Atty. Alcoriza discussed the importance of PSOs’ registration with the SEC to acquire Philippine juridical personality. Executive Director Jose Maria J. Palabrica of the CFO presented the summary of PSO concerns and recommendations discussed during the first two days of the conference.

The highlight of the closing ceremonies was the awarding of winners of the literary contest sponsored by the IACPSO, in cooperation with the *Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino* (KWF). KWF Chairman Jose L. Santos delivered a message to promote Filipino language and culture among PSOs and handed the awards to the winners. Vanessa Klaire G. Tolentino of the Philippine School Doha, who won 3rd prize in the nursery rhyme category, personally received her award. The school’s conference representatives received the awards in behalf of the winners who were not able to attend the ceremony.

The closing ceremonies were graced by Municipality of Panglao Mayor Benedicto Alcala and Department of Labor and Employment Regional Director Forter G. Puguon who delivered messages and well wishes for the participants.

The conference was concluded by the awarding of certificates of attendance to the participants followed by the cultural presentation of the BBC Dancers featuring Philippine folk dances.



The participants representing 33 Philippine schools in Greece, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and the newly established school in Timor-Leste.

Revision of Stock Estimate of Overseas Filipinos

The CFO's revision of its methodology in computing the stock estimate is a result of multi-sectoral efforts to harmonize various statistics generated by different government agencies on Philippine international migration

An estimated 8.1 million Filipinos live and work outside the Philippines, based on the 2008 Stock Estimate of Overseas Filipinos.

The decrease in the number of overseas Filipinos from the previous year is attributed to the Commission on Filipinos Overseas' revision of its methodology in computing the stock estimate as a result of multi-sectoral efforts to harmonize various statistics generated by different government agencies on Philippine international migration.

The stock estimate is the Philippines' official annual stock estimation of Filipinos living or working overseas. It classifies overseas Filipinos into three main categories: permanent migrants (which include immigrants, permanent residents and spouses or partners of foreign nationals), temporary migrants (overseas Filipino workers) and irregular migrants (those without proper documentation and legal status to stay in their host country).

From 1997 to 2007, the CFO only computed the number of overseas Filipinos in major destination countries such as the US, Canada, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom and Malaysia. Minor destination countries and territories per region were lumped to "Others" category. In 2008, the

CFO included all the destination countries in its computation resulting to the presence of Filipinos in about 220 countries and territories.

Several factors led to the change in the methodology. The first is the publication in 2008 by the Institute for Migration and Development Issues of the *Philippine Migration and Development Statistical Almanac* which for the first time, compiled and harmonized the various data on Philippine international migration. The second was the recommendation of the Interagency Committee on Labor, Income, and Productivity Statistics (IACLIPS) - Technical Working Group on Overseas Filipino Statistics (composed of the National Statistical Coordination Board,

Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, National Statistics Office, *Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas* and CFO), which developed a system for measuring stock and flow of overseas Filipinos. Lastly, it would be more helpful for researchers and academicians to make the stock estimate more comprehensive and reliable, covering all the countries where there is presence of Filipinos.

The CFO also started backtracking the computation of the stock estimate for the last five years. Breaking them down into specific countries led to the decrease in the total number of stock. The 8.7 million overseas Filipinos in 2007 was reduced to 7.7 million upon revision. The decrease could also be observed in the remaining years.

For a complete list of the stock estimate, please proceed to: <http://www.cfo.gov.ph>

Figure 1. Comparison of the previous and revised stock estimate of overseas Filipinos from 2004-2008

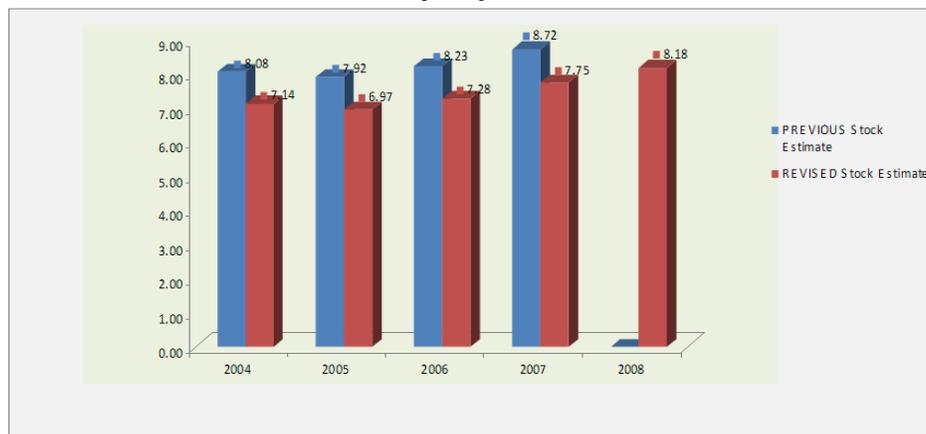


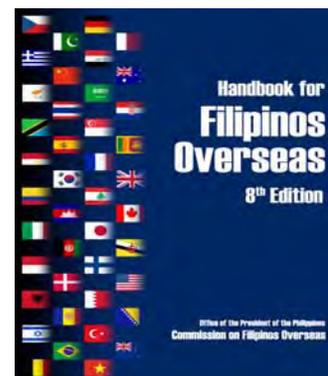
Table 1. Stock estimate of overseas Filipinos from 2004-2008

Year	Previous Stock Estimate	Revised Stock Estimate
2008		8.18 million
2007	8.72 million	7.75 million
2006	8.23 million	7.28 million
2005	7.92 million	6.97 million
2004	8.08 million	7.14 million

Updated Handbook for Filipinos Overseas

CFO has published a revised and updated Handbook for Filipinos Overseas to reflect the changes on policies, programs and activities of the Philippine government affecting Filipinos abroad and returning Filipinos. Now on its eighth edition, the Handbook also provides information on a number of programs through which Filipinos overseas can actively participate in the realization of the Philippine development agenda.

The Handbook also defines, among other things, the rights, obligations and privileges of Filipino immigrants, expatriates and workers. It explains specific programs, projects and services expatriates may invest in or support while living on foreign soil. The publication of the Handbook was made possible by the Land Bank of the Philippines and Globe Telecom, which sponsored its printing.



Programs and Services

This article presents a profile of the Filipinos who left the country in 2008-2009 for permanent residency overseas. It is based on the statistics processed from the database of the CFO which are taken from registration forms required to be filled-up by permanent residents or emigrants. It will explore and identify the general profile of Filipino emigrants in 2008 and 2009 in terms of age, gender, country of destination, major occupational group and educational attainment.

Based on the latest stock estimate for overseas Filipinos, Filipino permanent residents comprise 48% or 3.91 million of the total stock estimate of overseas Filipinos which is 8.19 million. This figure is higher than the total number of overseas workers which was 44% or 3.63 million of the total stock estimate. (Please see related article.)

I. Countries of Destination

Based on the internal mapping of the CFO, United States is still the top country of destination for Filipino emigrants (FEs) with 34,201 FEs. This is followed by Canada with 16,643 FEs and Japan with 7,682 FEs. Other countries include four nations from Europe, two from Oceania and another from Asia. Figure 1 shows the top ten countries of destination of FEs.

It is clear that for this year and in previous years, there is a clear pattern of migration from our developing country to highly developed countries. First world countries are the preferred choice of destination of Filipino permanent residents.

II. Previous Employment (Table 1)

Occupational grouping is categorized by employed and unemployed groups. For the two-year period, majority of the FEs are unemployed which is understandable given the fact that most of the FEs are students which comprised the single biggest group. There is a slight increase of 10% for students who migrated, from 18,885 in 2008 to 20,897 in 2009. This was followed by housewives (6.16%). A large number of emigrants (21.95%) have not reported any occupation at all.

For those who are employed, majority of them are professionals, technical and related workers. From 7,072 in 2008, their number slightly decreased to 6,849. This was followed by sales workers and equipment operators and laborers with 3,037 in 2008 and slightly increasing in 2009 with 3,227.

Table 1 presents a detailed classification of occupations of FEs prior to emigration.

III. Age (Table 2)

In terms of age, almost 22% of registered FEs are 14 years old and below which comprise the largest age group of emigrants for the years 2008-2009. This indicates a movement of future

generation of children of skilled migrants who will continue their studies abroad. The second age group that have emigrated belong to the 25-29 years old bracket who also belong to the generation of young professionals.

These are the people who are highly mobile, working, with lots of surplus cash and at the peak of their physical condition and careers.

This was closely followed by young adults who are 15-19 years old and who left the country while still studying in high school or in college.

On the other hand, the average age of emigrant for this two-year period is 31 years old.

IV. Education (Table 3)

Of the 150,158 emigrants registered for 2008-2009, there were 41,058 who have earned their college degrees prior to migrating. More than 25,000 however were still in their tertiary education when their petition papers came up. Collectively taken, more than a third of the total number of emigrants for these years were children and adolescents who are in their primary and secondary schooling. These data further illustrates the movement of the youngest

Profile of the Filipino emigrants and permanent residents for 2008 and 2009

generation of Filipinos who will reach their adolescent period abroad.

V. Sex (Figure 3)

For the years 2008-2009, there were more females who migrated permanently for abroad than their male counterpart. Their number is almost twice that of males who migrated in 2008 with 61 males for every 100 females. In 2009, the male-female ratio was slightly higher for males with 66 men for every 100 women. This also illustrates that the feminization of migration is not confined to temporary workers or overseas Filipino workers but also to permanent residents. However, this issue may not be that pronounced since emigrants typically leave as an entire family.

In 2008, majority of emigrants came from the National Capital Region with more than 21,000 residents, followed in a distant second by Region

continued on next page

Table 1. Occupational grouping of Filipino Emigrants (2008-2009)

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING	2008		2009		% Inc. (Dec.)
	TOTAL	%	TOTAL	%	
A. EMPLOYED					
1. Professional, Technical, & Related Workers	7,072	9.98%	6,849	8.59%	-3.15%
2. Sales Workers	3,037	4.28%	3,227	4.05%	6.26%
3. Production Process, Transport Equipment Operators, & Laborers	2,188	3.09%	2,801	3.51%	28.02%
4. Clerical Workers	1,979	2.79%	2,451	3.07%	23.85%
5. Managerial, Executive, and Administrative Workers	1,553	2.19%	2,001	2.51%	28.85%
6. Service Workers	1,188	1.67%	1,600	2.01%	34.68%
7. Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Forestry Workers & Fishermen	948	1.33%	1,217	1.53%	28.38%
8. Members of the Armed Forces	226	0.31%	247	0.31%	9.29%
Sub-total	18,191	25.64%	20,393	25.58%	12.10%
B. UNEMPLOYED					
Students	18,885	26.67%	20,897	26.21%	10.65%
Housewives	14,396	20.33%	15,283	19.17%	6.16%
No Occupation Reported	10,753	15.18%	13,113	16.45%	21.95%
Minors (Below 7 years old)	4,954	6.99%	5,831	7.31%	17.70%
Retirees	3,322	4.69%	3,821	4.79%	15.02%
Out of School Youth	299	0.42%	380	0.48%	27.09%
Sub-total	52,609	74.28%	59,325	74.42%	12.77%
TOTAL	70,800	99.92%	79,718	100.00%	12.60%

Programs and Services

Profile of the Filipino emigrant (from page 5)

IV-A with more than 12,000 and Region III (Central Luzon) with 10,898 emigrants. A year later, NCR was still the principal region where migrants came from, as with Region IV-A which came at second and closely followed by Region III. These regions consistently posted double digit increases in their number of emigrants.

VII. Civil Status (Figure 2)

Majority of those who left the country in 2008-2009 are single. They comprise 50% of the entire emigrant population for this period. This was closely followed by those who are married with 67,090. Others are widowed, separated or divorced.

VIII. Conclusion

Based on the foregoing tables, a typical profile of the Filipino emigrant who left in 2008-2009 can be established. The Filipino emigrant is a single career woman who is 31 years old, holder of a bachelor's degree, a resident of the National Capital region and is bound for the United States of America.

Collectively, in terms of age, majority of the 150,518 CFO registered emigrants are single, young and still studying, bound for North America and previous residents of the National Capital Region.



Figure 2. Civil Status of Filipino Emigrants (2008-2009)

CIVIL STATUS	2008		2009		% Inc. (Dec.)
	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE	
Single	35,250	49.78%	41,119	51.58%	16.65%
Married	32,390	45.74%	34,700	43.53%	7.13%
Widower	2,341	3.30%	2,874	3.61%	22.77%
Separated	264	0.37%	347	0.44%	31.44%
Divorced	538	0.75%	581	0.73%	7.99%
Not Reported	17	0.02%	97	0.12%	470.59%
TOTAL	70,800		79,718		12.60%

Figure 3. Sex and Sex Ratio of Filipino Emigrants (2008-2009)

SEX	2008	2009	% Inc. (Dec.)
	TOTAL	TOTAL	
Male	27,839	31,793	14.20%
Female	42,961	47,925	11.55%
TOTAL	70,800	79,718	12.60%
Sex ratio (number of Males for every 100 Females)	61M/100F	66M/100F	

Table 2. Age Group of Filipino Emigrants (2008-2009)

AGE GROUP	2008		2009		% Inc. (Dec.)
	TOTAL	%	TOTAL	%	
14 - Below	15,420	21.77%	17,706	22.21%	14.82%
15 - 19	7,516	10.61%	8,246	10.34%	9.71%
20 - 24	7,443	10.51%	7,907	9.92%	6.23%
25 - 29	8,019	11.32%	8,423	10.57%	5.04%
30 - 34	7,084	10.00%	8,022	10.06%	13.24%
35 - 39	5,826	8.22%	6,544	8.21%	12.32%
40 - 44	4,337	6.12%	4,938	6.19%	13.86%
45 - 49	3,266	4.61%	3,666	4.60%	12.25%
50 - 54	2,718	3.83%	3,128	3.92%	15.08%
55 - 59	2,615	3.69%	3,273	4.11%	25.16%
60 - 64	2,708	3.82%	3,163	3.97%	16.80%
65 - 69	1,918	2.70%	2,304	2.89%	20.13%
70 - Above	1,861	2.62%	2,340	2.94%	25.74%
Not Reported / No Response	69	0.09%	58	0.07%	-15.94%
TOTAL	70,800		79,718		12.60%
Average Age	31		31		

Table 3. Educational Attainment of Filipino Emigrants (2008-2009)

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	2008		2009		% Inc. (Dec.)
	TOTAL	%	TOTAL	%	
Not of Schooling Age	4,842	6.83%	5,813	7.29%	20.05%
No Formal Education	105	0.14%	92	0.12%	-12.38%
Elementary Level	8,907	12.58%	9,986	12.53%	12.11%
Elementary Graduate	2,314	3.26%	2,395	3.00%	3.50%
High School Level	8,216	11.60%	9,218	11.56%	12.20%
High School Graduate	8,251	11.65%	8,702	10.92%	5.47%
Vocational Level	970	1.37%	1,273	1.60%	31.24%
Vocational Graduate	3,368	4.75%	4,092	5.13%	21.50%
College Level	11,852	16.74%	13,668	17.15%	15.32%
College Graduate	19,264	27.20%	21,794	27.34%	13.13%
Post Graduate Level	1,100	1.55%	1,071	1.34%	-2.64%
Post Graduate	1,564	2.20%	1,476	1.85%	-5.63%
Non-Formal Education	31	0.04%	46	0.06%	48.39%
Not Reported / No Response	16	0.02%	92	0.12%	475.00%
TOTAL	70,800		79,718		12.60%

Table 4. Region prior to migration of Filipino Emigrants (2008-2009)

REGION	2008		2009		% Inc. (Dec.)
	TOTAL	%	TOTAL	%	
Region I - Ilocos Region	7,441	10.50%	8,903	11.17%	19.65%
Region II - Cagayan Valley	1,416	2.00%	1,906	2.39%	34.60%
Region III - Central Luzon	10,898	15.39%	12,927	16.22%	18.62%
Region IV A - CALABARZON	12,611	17.81%	15,022	18.84%	19.12%
Region IV B - MIMAROPA	402	0.56%	544	0.68%	35.32%
Region V - Bicol Region	1,120	1.58%	1,363	1.71%	21.70%
Region VI - Western Visayas	2,339	3.30%	2,573	3.23%	10.00%
Region VII - Central Visayas	4,391	6.20%	4,917	6.17%	11.98%
Region VIII - Eastern Visayas	1,241	1.75%	1,331	1.67%	7.25%
Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula	676	0.95%	776	0.97%	14.79%
Region X - Northern Mindanao	1,638	2.31%	1,808	2.27%	10.38%
Region XI - Davao Region	2,663	3.76%	2,367	2.97%	-11.12%
Region XII - SOCCSKSARGEN	800	1.12%	797	1.00%	-0.38%
Region XIII - Caraga	648	0.91%	715	0.90%	10.34%
Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)	28	0.03%	26	0.03%	-7.14%
Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	1,427	2.01%	1,587	1.99%	11.21%
National Capital Region (NCR)	21,053	29.73%	22,063	27.68%	4.80%
Not Reported / No Response	8	0.01%	93	0.12%	1062.50%
TOTAL	70,800		79,718		12.60%

Programs and Services

The Serial and Multiple Sponsorship Database

A software developed by CFO can verify names of foreigners engaged or married to Filipinos in five seconds

Aurora was all set to go abroad and marry the foreigner whom she met over an online chat session a few months ago. The foreigner promised to petition her as his fiancée, and when her visa arrived, it reinforced her belief that she finally found her true love. She has her own initial doubts, but their constant communications erased those anxieties. She has already prepared everything that she might need – including her wedding gown which was tailor fit for her – thanks to the monthly allowances that she receives from him.

She already booked a flight and everything was set. Except for one thing which quite annoyed her. A note included in her travel paper directs her to undergo a counseling with an obscure agency she only heard of now. She did not have a choice but to undergo the counseling procedure.

Little did she know the surprise that awaits her. Upon her arrival at the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, a government agency under the Office of the President, mandated to provide guidance and counseling services to departing Filipinos who are married or engaged to foreigners, her fiancé's name was keyed in the database as a background check. Seconds later, the cursory check generated a red flag. Her would-be husband has a record, and he has been on the watch list for petitioning Filipinas to marry for the past couple of years.

The bad news left Aurora heartbroken but nonetheless thankful. It killed her dream of migrating overseas but she was saved from the peril of a would-be abuser and philanderer. Prior to that, she dismissed the mandatory counseling as just another scheme meant only to collect fees from the public. She now realized the importance of the procedures and was eventually grateful. She is relieved to have been forewarned. She scrapped her marriage plan right then and there. The thought of her being harmed or duped abroad scared her, and she felt lucky she knew everything prior to leaving. Others before her were not so lucky.

There are a number of modus operandi employed in marrying Filipinas by foreigners for reasons not

related to getting married at all. Multiple sponsorship pertains to the practice of sponsoring multiple Filipinas for marriage, which means that a foreigner has been married or engaged to a Filipina more than once, some may have ended in divorce, amicable or otherwise, or death. Serial sponsorship, on the other hand, refers to the practice of marrying one or more Filipinas but with records of domestic violence, abuse, abandonment, undetermined death, etc.

While inclusion in the watchlist does not mean the ban for the Filipina to travel overseas or marry her foreign fiancé, it forewarns would-be partners about the personality, record or past of the

system. A year later, in 2000, the serial and multiple sponsorship database was developed by CFO that could verify names in seconds.

The software database also contains profiles of erring foreigners, case histories and other pertinent personal information involving spouses and partners. If a name gets a positive hit, the system can pull up previous information regarding that individual, including past transgressions in the country.

The database can run on minimal system requirements and is enhanced every year by CFO programmers. Right now, it is an integral part of the Guidance and Counseling Information System (GCIS) of the CFO. The database is linked with PRISM and SMEF-COW, two partner organizations of the CFO that handle the counseling for spouses and other partners of foreign nationals. Information contained in the database is real time and names are added on a daily basis or as the need arises. The system is hosted both on a separate and redundant servers and has multiple firewalls to protect it from cyber attacks.

The database keeps track of the following: (1) Filipinos married to foreigners, (2) foreign and Filipino nationals included in the CFO watch list, (3) Filipinos who attended the guidance and counseling more than once, and (4) foreign nationals who sponsored more than once, with or without derogatory

Screenshot of the database developed by the CFO to monitor possible irregularities in intermarriages.

foreigner. The Filipina has the last say whether to accept the proposal or not. Through the database, the CFO wanted to prevent illegal acts hiding in the guise of marriage and perpetrated against Filipinas that result to trafficking, slavery or domestic violence.

Eleven years ago, the CFO conceptualized a software database wherein names of all foreigners marrying Filipinas or Filipinos can be checked to spot marital fraud, deception and those with undesirable records. It was in 1999 when the practice was to crosscheck the names manually, against a folder full of papers. The plan was to speed up the process by automating the manual

records.

To date, the database had foiled attempts by 5,991 foreigners to marry Filipinas on a multiple basis; identified 2,582 Filipino fiancées/ spouses who attended the guidance and counseling more than once; included 58 Filipino fiancées/ spouses in the CFO watch list; and keeps track of 251 foreign nationals in its watch list.

Had it not been for the warning for Aurora, she could have left the country in the arms of a foreigner who while en route, may have been looking for another Filipina to petition for his nth marriage.

THE TOP 10 BEST COUNTRIES FOR FILIPINOS TO IMMIGRATE

The list of countries was based on the discussions among CFO planning and pre-departure orientation services officers on the country's immigration policies, programs and services for migrants, employment opportunities, educational system, expedient naturalization process, educational system, support network, climate condition, and peace and order situation, among others. The responses were presented during a round table discussion on 30 March 2010.

Canada

Canada, the second biggest country in the world, has the highest quality of life among all the countries, according to the United Nations Human Development Index. Five times in this decade, the country has been ranked number one as the best country in which to live. Canada's capital Ottawa is tied with Zurich, Switzerland for the highest quality of life in any city in the world. Despite the global financial crises, Canada has remained resilient. The banks in Canada are considered "more Swiss than the Swiss bank". These and the fact that Canada has one of the lowest population densities in the world, has made the country an ideal place for anyone to migrate.

Anyone who speaks English and French would be most at home in Canada. Knowing both languages is encouraged because bilingualism makes it easier to integrate into Canadian society and the labour force, which is in need of skilled workers. Those who want to settle in Quebec area must have the ability to speak French, the province's official language and spoken by 80% of the population.

The Canadian government made it easier for those who want to settle down in Canada by putting up the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website (www.cic.gc.ca), where anyone could access information about the immigration and citizenship programs and services of Canada.

Newly-arrived migrants will not have a hard time adjusting because Canada's three levels of government from the federal to provincial to municipal offer a variety of helpful programs and services for newcomers. The Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) help migrants with immediate settlement needs. Through ISAP, migrants could be referred to economic, social, health, cultural, employment-related, educational and recreational services. The federal government also introduced a Host Program designed to match new migrant with a friend familiar with Canadian ways, and help them overcome the anxiety of moving to a new country. Free language trainings across the country are also available for immigrants through the *Cours de langue*



pour les immigrants au Canada (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada). There are also hundreds of immigrant-serving organizations which help migrants in several ways – offering language training, assist in looking for a house or a job; and support for women and children who are dealing with domestic violence.

Finding a job in Canada is not that difficult. The government runs the Service Canada Centers throughout the country. The centers provide information and services for people looking for work. Some offer free use of computers, printers, telephones, fax services and resource libraries. Migrants can also use the Internet free of charge at local public libraries, community centres, and schools.

Migrant workers are provided protection under the provincial and federal labour laws. These laws set minimum wage levels, health and safety standards, hours of work, maternity leave and annual paid vacations. There are also human rights laws that protect employees from unfair treatment by employers based on sex, age, race, religion or disability.

Health care and living standards in Canada are among the highest in the world. Migrants covered by the health insurance program in Canada need not pay directly for most health-care services. The principle of equity is incorporated in the services of government. Through the *Canada Child Tax Benefit*, the government could help migrants with children under 18, with some of the costs in raising them. Moreover, low and modest-income families are eligible to receive a quarterly payment to offset

some of the goods and services tax that they have paid.

A migrant who wishes to become a Canadian citizen should demonstrate a deep commitment by living in Canada for at least three years, learning to communicate in at least one of the official languages, and abiding by Canada's laws.

During the 1980s, Canada saw an influx of Filipino workers, most of them worked as live-in caregivers. Many of these workers later became landed immigrants under the Live-In Caregiver Program. During 1990s and onwards, more Filipinos came as family-sponsored and as independent or skilled workers. To date, there are more than 600,000 Filipinos in Canada, most of them living in urbanized areas, especially in the Greater Toronto Area. This number is growing yearly due to Canada's liberal immigration laws to compensate for its low population growth.

Australia

Stretching from the Great Barrier Reef and the Australian Alps in the East, to the Red Centre in the North, to the coastal cities of Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne, the diverse natural beauty blending with modernity of the *Land Down Under* stands out. Australia is the sixth largest country in the world and has the lowest population density per square kilometre. Its economy, which is powered by agricultural, mineral, and energy exports, is one of the world's strongest *laissez-faire* markets.

With over 500 different ethnic groups, Australia is one of the most diverse societies in the world today. Almost one in four Australian residents was born outside of Australia. This wide variety of cultural backgrounds has helped create a uniquely Australian identity. In addition, more than 200,000 Filipinos have made Australia their home, where they make a significant contribution to the country's vibrant multicultural society.

To attract the right migrant workers that could fill labor shortages, the Australian government introduced the General Skilled Migration Program (GSM), which offers a range of visa options for skilled workers who want to live in Australia and who do not have an employer. These include

continued on next page

Special Feature

Top ten best countries (from page 8)



options for skilled people applying as an independent migrant, as well as those sponsored by a relative, or nominated by a state or territory government. The GSM program uses a “points system” of evaluating applicants in certain professions, based on the skilled migrant and skilled worker applicant’s qualifications, job experience, and ability with the English language.

First-time migrants in Australia could get assistance from Centrelink, a government agency, which delivers a range of services to the community. It functions as a one-stop shop system in delivering services, including social security and employment services, on behalf of a number of government departments. Centrelink helps migrants in finding a job, arranging for recognition of skills and qualifications, and accessing certain courses. It also aids with Family Assistance payments to help with the cost of raising children. Among other social security payments and benefits that newly-arrived residents could receive from the Centrelink include Austudy Payment, Carer’s Payment, Commonwealth Senior Health Care Card, Crisis Payment, Health Care Card, Mature Age Allowance, Mobility Allowance, Newstart Allowance, Partner Allowance, Sickness Benefit, and Youth Allowance, among others.

The Adult Migrant English Program provides English language teaching and related services to recently-arrived migrants in Australia. A new migrant is entitled to receive free English language tuition up to 510 hours.

The Skill Matching Database helps match skilled people who have applied to migrate with skilled vacancies in Australia. The database contains the educational, employment and work details of skilled migrants who are interested in living and working in regional Australia. Workers are protected by new Federal industrial relations laws which aim to counter workplace discrimination on grounds including race, color, gender or age.

The government is also very supportive and provides funding for organizations that help new arrivals settle in Australia, through the Settlement Grants Program. The Department of Immigration

and Citizenship provides funding assistance to various Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) and Migrant Service Agencies (MSAs). There are about 30 MRCs / MSAs across Australia which address migrants’ settlement concerns. They also provide various training courses, including conversation classes and free childcare facilities for parents attending these courses.

Under Australian law, children must attend school until they are 15 years old. Health of the people is also of utmost priority by the government, which provides help with basic medical expenses through Medicare. Those who are eligible to join Medicare would gain immediate access to health care services and programs, which include free public hospital care, help with the cost of out-of-hospital care, and subsidized medicines.

Under the Social Security Act, the following are the main social security benefits provided by the Australian government: Family Allowance, Maternity Allowance, Childcare Assistance, Guardian Allowance, Child Support Scheme, Child Disability Allowance, Education Entry Payment, Employment Entry Payment, Rent Assistance, Remote Area Allowance, Disaster Relief Payment, Pensioner Concession Card, and Assistance for Sole Parents, Carers and Widow Pensioners.

Those who wish to be naturalized citizens must meet the following conditions: must have lived in Australia as a lawful resident for four years, including 12 months as permanent resident; at least 18 years of age; speak and understand basic English; understand the responsibilities and privileges of an Australian citizen; of good moral character; and intend to live permanently in Australia or maintain a close and continuing association with Australia.

New Zealand

With a temperate climate, small population and stunning variations in geography as beautiful and pristine as the mythical Middle Earth populated by hobbits, New Zealand has become one of the most ideal places to relocate, retire and raise a family. And why not - there is basically no abject poverty or hunger, pollution, congestion or corruption. According to the latest Global Peace Index, New Zealand has the distinction of being the most peaceful country in the world,

making it a haven for those seeking peace, relaxation and adventure.

As a secular and democratic country, New Zealand has laws protecting human rights. It is illegal to discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, religion or ethnicity; and everyone living in the country is offered the same rights and opportunities.

Every person in New Zealand is either an immigrant or a descendant of one. The first settlers were the tribal Maori who arrived over 700 years ago, and now make up about 16% of the total population. The influence of Pacific island and the arrival of European and Asian immigrants have helped shape the country into an even more vibrant and diverse multicultural society. The immigration policies of the late 1980s and early 1990s, which favoured skilled migrants, made it attractive for Filipinos to settle and become permanent residents in New Zealand. The Philippines is actually one of the largest source countries of foreign labor.

The government of New Zealand is committed in assisting newcomers in settling easily, through its Settlement Support New Zealand network. The Settlement Support coordinators work with local government and other local agencies to provide newly-arrived migrants with expert guidance on how to access local services and direct them to services they might need during their first years in the country.

Migrants with family income below a certain level, may be eligible for Working for Families and Tax Credits. It is available for low to middle income families with children aged 18 years and younger who are not financially independent. There is also a *KiwiSaver*, a voluntary work-based savings initiative, which aims to encourage long-term saving and asset accumulation by citizens who want to enjoy more than a basic standard of living in their retirement.



continued on next page

Special Feature

Top ten best countries (from page 9)

Migrants' children are also assured of good education. School is compulsory for children between six and 16. Schooling is free at state-funded and state-integrated schools for New Zealand citizens, residents and children of workers. For tertiary education, student loans are available to permanent residents.

New Zealand has a good publicly-funded health services, which include free public hospital treatment, free 24-hour accident and emergency treatment at public hospital clinics, subsidies on medicines and prescription items, subsidized fees for visits to general practitioners, no charge for health care during pregnancy and childbirth, and government-funded accident compensation, among others.

Among the naturalization requirements for those who want to become citizens are: five-year permanent residency and three years of physical presence in New Zealand, no trips of over six months outside of New Zealand, proficiency in English, knowledge of responsibilities and privileges of a New Zealand citizen, and good moral character.

Spain

For Filipinos, there is more to Spain than bullfights, flamenco dancers and crowded beaches. The religion in the country, the colorful fiesta

citizens. In Spain, equality is of utmost importance for the government. It is embedded in the 1978 Spanish Constitution that "Aliens shall enjoy in Spain the public freedoms" also guaranteed to its nationals. In general, Spanish legislation and practices provide sufficient protection for foreign workers. Non-European Union residents are allowed to work in Spain under the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty. Those who want to have a good job, however, should have the ability to speak Spanish fluently.

The state-run National Employment Institute in Spain called *Instituto Nacional de Empleo* (INEM) is the only legal employment agency permitted in Spain for offering job placement. INEM, which has over 700 offices, also provides help with those wishing to start a business.

Education in Spain is free. Public schools provide compulsory cost-free education to those aged six to 16 years old, including children of foreign residents.

Workers (employees and self-employed) who contribute to the Spain's Social Security Service are entitled to its benefits. Public health benefits include general and specialist medical care, hospitalization, subsidized drugs, dressings and medicines, and basic dental care, among others. The *Tarjeta Sanitaria Europea* also known as the European Health Insurance Card allows legal residents of Spain to benefit from emergency medical treatment and care when temporarily in a member country of European Economic Community.

But what really makes it attractive for Filipinos to make Spain its second home are the shorter length of stay requirement (only two years) for those who want to apply for naturalization, and the fact that like Filipinos, Spaniards are predominantly Roman Catholics.

United States of America

Almost everybody longs for the American dream – better, richer and happier life. And getting the green card is only the beginning of the fulfillment of that dream. There are 50 states to choose from that stretch from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, and reach out to include the wintry Alaska and the sunny Hawaii.

http://www.travelblog.org/Wallpaper/san_francisco_usa.html



Immigration since the 17th century has been a major source of population growth and cultural change throughout American history. Wave after wave of immigrants seeking greener pastures, the US has now become the nation of immigrants. Almost 38 million foreign-born immigrants mostly coming from Mexico, China, India and the Philippines, have now made US their home, according to the 2008 US Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

The *Immigration Act* limits the annual number of immigrants to 700,000. Though immigration to the US became restrictive after the devastating "9/11 Attack", migrants still flock to the "Land of Milk and Honey." The US promotes family unity and reunification by allowing US citizens and permanent residents to petition for certain relatives to come and live permanently in the US. Aside from family sponsorship, most immigrants also become permanent residents through employment or job offer, investment and self petition.

Homesickness for first time migrants will not be much of a problem because major states in the US, such as New York and California, and the island state of Hawaii are populated with Filipinos. There are several Filipino associations where migrants can join, notably the National Federation of Filipino American Associations. Moreover, there are organizations in many communities that provide free or very low-cost assistance to immigrants, concerning about the local community and migrant-services. Public libraries, located in almost every community, are free and open to everyone. Some of them also provide English language classes and other programs for children and adults.

The federal government offers benefit programs for migrants. Some low-income families may be eligible for food stamp assistance, where they will be allowed to obtain some food for free at grocery stores. Immigrants and their children who are survivors of domestic violence may also claim federal benefits and services, such as battered women's shelters or food stamps. The *Temporary*

continued on next page



<http://www.galenfryinger.com/toledo.htm>

celebrations, the Filipino language – they have been largely influenced by Spain's colonization of the Philippines in the 1500s. In fact, it was the Spaniards who named the country *Las Islas Filipinas* or the Philippine Island. There is even a chocolate bar named "Filipinos", only sold in Spain. Indeed, the ties that bind the two countries are indelible.

Most Filipinos in Spain work in the service sector and live in the cities of Barcelona, Madrid, Valencia and Bilbao. Many families, mostly from European countries usually move to Spain because of its better climate, lower cost of living and "laid back" way of life.

It is ideal to migrate in a country where foreigners will be treated the same way as the

Special Feature

Top ten best countries (from page 10)

Assistance for Needy Families is a program that gives money to states to provide assistance and work opportunities for low-income families. Medicaid, which is a joint federal and state program, pays for medical services such as visits to the doctor and hospitalization for low-income families.

Migrants could also get assistance from the government in finding a job. The federal government funds career centers that offer training referrals, career counseling, job listings, and other employment-related services.

To ensure the future of the children, the US provides free public education and has compulsory school attendance laws. State laws require all children ages five to 16 to attend school in most states. To improve learning, the government provides healthy low-cost or free meals to more than 26 million children each school day.

Though permanent residents already have most of the rights of US citizens, there are many important reasons to consider becoming a US citizen: the right to vote in federal elections; US citizens generally get priority when petitioning to bring family members permanently; becoming eligible for federal jobs; becoming an elected official; and becoming eligible for federal grants, scholarships, Medicare and other government benefits, among others.

A permanent resident can apply for naturalization once the following requirements are met: settlement in the US for at least five years as a permanent resident (or three years if married to and living with a US citizen), present in the US for at least 30 months out of the past five years (or 18 months out of the past three years if married to and living with a US citizen), and live within a state or USCIS district for at least three months before applying.

Japan

During one of the darkest chapters of Philippine history, the fate of Japan and the Philippines became forever intertwined. The American-controlled Philippines then, suffered grievously during the Japanese military occupation from 1942 to 1945, which claimed the lives of many. But turning over a new leaf, more than 230,000 Filipino migrants, mostly married to Japanese nationals, have now found a brighter future in the "Land of the Rising Sun".

Shaped like an arc in the Pacific Ocean to the East of the Asian continent, Japan is comprised of four large islands namely Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku, and surrounded by more than 4,000 smaller islands. Its total land area is only 1/25th the size of the US, which is slightly smaller than California. Japan is known as the country of modern technology where the latest and most high technology gadgets are created. Every type of

transportation is available in Japan, from bicycle to bullet trains, which are very efficient and almost always on time, linking some of the major cities.

The Japanese have high respect for their culture and traditions. They are known for being disciplined, organized and respectful. Some of their distinctive traits include their love for entertainment, sports, food and environment. They have the world's highest life expectancy reaching on the average, up to 85 years.

Many foreign residents work in Japan as English language teachers. Other professional fields, in which qualified foreign residents have a good chance to find work, include language translation, information technology, modeling, food and entertainment. Knowledge of *Nihongo* or the Japanese language is often an important requirement in finding work.

Filipinos have been going to Japan since the 1970s. Through the years, it has become the favorite destination of Filipino entertainers, until the Japanese government issued a restrictive policy on the deployment of overseas performing artists (OPAs) in 2007, one means of combating human trafficking. Despite the lesser number of OPAs now going to Japan, many Filipinas are still going to Japan as wives of Japanese nationals. It is said that one third of interracial marriage in Japan is between Filipinos and Japanese, with about 6,000-7,000 recorded marriages every year since 1995. Other nationalities who inter-marry include the Koreans, Chinese and Brazilians. Foreigners, who are married to Japanese national or permanent resident of Japan can engage in any paid activity in Japan.

Children and descendants of Japanese nationals before and after World War II in the Philippines – the Filipino-Japanese (*Nikkei-jin*) are also given the opportunity by the Japanese government to trace their roots, as well as live and work in Japan.

The cost of living in Japan may be among the highest in the world, but the Japanese government takes care of its people, as well as the migrants fairly. Compulsory, primary and secondary education are given free, and failure to send children to school is punishable by law.

Foreigners who intend to live in Japan for more than a year and are not members



of the employees' insurance program are required to avail of any of the government's health insurance programs. All Japanese nationals aged 20-60, are required to join the National Pension Program.

There are also different kinds of financial assistance given to families such as the child care allowance, special dependent child allowance, welfare allowance, mother and child welfare loan, daily life security services, and infantile medical assistance.

To become a naturalized citizen, one must need to meet the following requirements: must have resided in Japan for five consecutive years; must be able to maintain a livelihood; and must renounce his/her nationality. For those who are married to Japanese nationals, the required length of stay in Japan is only three consecutive years.

Starting 2007, all foreigners, including foreign residents, get fingerprinted and photographed upon entering Japan as a measure aimed at preventing terrorism. People refusing to cooperate are not granted entry into the country.

United Kingdom

The Englishmen are said to be famous for their politeness, sense of humour and quite very



continued on next page

Special Feature

Top ten best countries (from page 11)

reserved and aristocratic manners. But this did not deter Filipino migrants, comprised mainly of nurses and health workers, to settle in the United Kingdom in the late 1960s, in response to the country's need for inexpensive labor. Almost four decades have passed and the UK (made up of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) now hosts more than 200,000 Filipinos.

There is much to see and enjoy in one of the few remaining monarchies in the world - from the history of the royal family, medieval castles, Shakespeare's home and Stonehenge, to the Big Ben and striking skyscrapers of the city of London.

The UK has a good managed migration system. It has introduced a points-based immigration system composed of different tiers, replacing all other previous schemes. It also has an ethical recruitment policy, specifically concerning foreign health workers. Most importantly, the UK government believes that each UK citizen, as well as the foreigners should enjoy basic human rights, as evidenced in its national laws. The 1998 Human Rights Act enshrined the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law. The Race Relations Act aims to eradicate racism by obligating public authorities such as the police and immigration services, to take action to rectify ethnic inequalities in recruitment, employment and service delivery. Moreover, the Racial and Religious Hatred Act made it illegal to stir up hatred against persons on racial or religious grounds.

Education in the UK is compulsory between the ages of five and 16 in England, Scotland and Wales, and between four and 16 in Northern Ireland.

The main benefit of British citizenship is the right of abode in the UK. But those who want to be naturalized, must first live in the UK exactly five years before the date of application. Under the European Community law, having British citizenship also confers rights of free movement, residence and opportunity to work (without a work permit) in the European Union and European Economic Area member states.

British citizens as well as foreign workers are required to pay the taxes in UK. Some of the social security benefits one may get based on National Insurance (NI) contributions are the Job Seekers Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Maternity Allowance, Retirement Pension, Bereavement Allowance, and Widowed Parent's Allowance. Other benefits not based on NI include Attendance Allowance, Council Tax Benefit, Disability Living Allowance, Housing Benefit, Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit, Carer's Allowance, Reduced Earnings Allowance, and Severe Disablement Allowance.

Filipinos will have a strong support system once they migrate in the UK. One such organization which provides exemplary social services is the

Centre for Filipinos. The Centre is one of the oldest registered charities in London which aims to empower Filipinos to enrich the quality of their lives, and facilitate their social development and integration to the mainstream British society.

Italy

Imagine walking on the busy cobbled streets while admiring the architectural glories of Rome's magnificent past, enjoying a relaxing gondola ride in Venice, marveling at the art treasures of Florence, running in the sunflower field of Tuscany, or being serenaded by romantic Italians. Move to Italy and enjoy *la dolce vita*. In fact, more than a hundred thousand Filipinos are now enjoying the good life in one of the most beautiful countries in the world.

Located in the south of continental Europe, Italy is a peninsula bounded by the Mediterranean Sea, having common land borders in the north with France, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia. It is in the center of the temperate zone and is renowned for its favorable climatic condition. Italy's landscapes are as stunning as they are diverse. Historic walled towns, timeless villages crowning dozens of little hilltops, quaint vineyards, beautiful beaches and jewel-like Alpine lakes are found throughout the country. Although Roman Catholics account for 98% of the population, all religious faiths have equal freedom before the law.

Within Europe, Italy is the second major destination of Filipino migrants, mostly women, who are employed in the domestic service sector. They are largely concentrated in Milan and Rome. And what is there not to love about Italy especially when the government shows concern for migrant workers, even the irregulars. Every year, the government awards amnesty to irregular migrants; and more than 10,000 Filipinos usually avail of it. Italian laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, sex, ethnic background or political opinion, and provide some protection against discrimination based on disability, language, or social status.

Italy offers free compulsory education in state schools to all foreign children, even without valid residence permit. It has also a national health plan

(*servizio sanitario nazionale*), which provides residents and their dependents with hospital and medical benefits, free of charge. Even irregular migrants are entitled to outpatient treatment and basic and emergency hospital assistance, in the event of accidents or sickness. Also, those who are registered as unemployed have free access to the health system.

Permanent residents could easily petition immediate family members through Family Reunion Visa (*Visto per Coesione Familiare*). Those who want to be naturalized must have had their legal residence in Italy for at least 10 years. Those married to Italian nationals, however, only need three years of residency.

Filipinos' love for Italy is evidenced by the large homes and villas built from remittance money sent by OFWs particularly to a small mountain village in Batangas known as "Little Italy."



Norway

It may be extremely cold during winters and taxes may be a little bit high compared to other countries, but Norway may be an ideal place for immigrants to settle, for being one of the countries with the highest standards of living in the world. It is the "quality of life" that is a major deciding factor when it comes to choosing Norway over any other country. It was also lauded for its high literacy rate in addition to educational levels and material wealth. Norwegians themselves generally point to their country's scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, clean water and fresh air. It has very low crime and maintained a robust labor market despite recessions.

The Norwegian government treats its native population and immigrants equally, a founding principle anchored in its Immigration Act of 1988. Its migration policy has two basic principles - immigration must be managed and all immigrants who are admitted to Norway should have equal opportunities in society. Even refugees from war-torn countries are most welcome to stay in Norway.

Norway is a great environment to raise a family mainly because it has a strong welfare system. Everyone has access to pensions, and child, unemployment, maternity and paternity and

continued on next page

Special Feature

Top ten best countries (from page 12)



medical benefits. In fact, Norway is one of the best countries in the world to give birth, because all medical care is free for pregnant women and children. Education is free in Norway. Even university studies is free for all.

Upon arrival, immigrants are encouraged to register with the Foreigner's Police or at the local offices of the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration to get information on migrant services and in settling in Norway.

Among the requirements for naturalization include becoming a resident and staying in Norway for a total of seven years during the last ten years, having sufficient knowledge of Norwegian language, and renouncing original citizenship.

Norway is an emerging destination country for Filipinos who are mainly seafarers, health workers, partners of Norwegians, domestic helpers and *au pairs*. They are living in the Oslo urban area, and enjoys not only the cool weather but also the good working conditions of the country.

South Korea

Many Filipinas find themselves in the shores of South Korea usually in search for work and love. South Korea is in fact one of the major destination countries for Filipinas marrying foreign nationals.

South Korea is a mountainous country which enjoys four distinct seasons. With its scenic natural wonders and well-preserved cultural and heritage

sites such as ancient temples and shrines, the *kimchi-lover Koreans* have often likened their country to a beautifully embroidered brocade. Its capital Seoul, the world's 10th largest city, produces major industrial products such as semiconductors, automobiles and electronics.

The Korean government runs various programs for migrants. Most of these programs are organized in coordination with the migrant support centers.

Counseling and support centers for migrants offer free Korean language and culture classes. Taking into consideration that immigration sometimes causes stress and difficulties for migrants, the government also offers free mental healthcare service for immigrants who might have a hard time adjusting in the country. Elementary and middle school attendance for children is also compulsory and free.

Foreign workers are also assured of protection against abuses and exploitation from their employer with the passage of three new labor laws (Act on Employment of Foreign Workers, Contractual and Part-time Worker Protection Act, Dispatched Worker Protection Act, and New Labor Relations Act). Discriminatory treatment of foreigners, whether legitimate industrial trainees or illegal aliens, is prohibited. A foreign spouse of a Korean national is free of specific restrictions on the scope of employment activities and is allowed to work in Korea.

The government provides the following social security benefits to both Korean nationals and foreign workers: National Pension, National Health

Insurance, Industrial Accident Compensation, and Employment Insurance which include Employment Retention Subsidy, Subsidy for Long-Term Job Seeker, Out-Placement Service Subsidy, Subsidy for Adoption of Working Hour Reduction, Re-employment Subsidy, Unemployment Benefits, Maternity Leave Allowance and Childcare Leave Allowance.

There are also several support NGOs, support groups and Filipino associations serving and advocating for the rights and welfare of women and spouses of Korean nationals, foremost of which is the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center for Filipino Migrants in Hyehwadong. Among the major requirements for naturalization are five years of residence in Korea and basic knowledge befitting a Korean national such as understanding of the Korean language, customs and culture. Those married to Koreans are allowed to obtain Korean citizenship if they are married and have lived in Korea for over two years.

Even before the *Koreanovela* craze invaded the homes of Filipino families recently, Philippine-South Korean relations date back in the 1950s when Filipino soldiers fought side by side with South Koreans against the North Koreans in the Korean War.



Sources:

"Canada Immigration Information", <http://www.canada-city.ca/canada-immigration.php>

"Expats in Italy", <http://www.expatsinitaly.com/node/21>

"Filipino-Canadian", http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filipino_Canadian

"Immigration of Filipinos to New Zealand", <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/filipinos/1>

"Immigration to Norway Increasing", <http://www.workpermit.com/news/2007-05-08/norway/record-immigration-statistics-2006.htm>, May 8, 2007

"Immigration to Norway", http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration_to_Norway

"Immigration to the United Kingdom since 1922", http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration_to_the_United_Kingdom_since_1922

"Introduction to Spanish Taxes" <http://www.livinginspain.org/Contents/Subjects/Finance%20%20Taxes/IntrotoSpanTaxes.htm>

"Japan Fact Sheet", <http://web-japan.org/>

"Japan Travel Guide", <http://www.japan-guide.com>

"Japan", http://www.workandliveabroad.com/country_page.php?country_id=1027

"Know Your Rights Guide for Filipino and Other Foreign Migrants in Japan",

Published by Kafin Center, Printed by Sobun-sha, Tokyo, 2006

"Life in New Zealand", <http://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/life-in-new-zealand-5.html>

"More Filipino Workers Moving in Europe", http://www.workandliveabroad.com/article_item.php?articleid=637, December 10, 2009

"Norway still the world's best place to live", <http://www.aftenposten.no/english/local/article828724.ece>

"Norway", <http://www.udi.no/defaultRedesign.aspx?id=2112>

"Reasons for Living in Spain", http://www.euroresidentes.com/euroresiu/reaons_live_in_spain.htm

"Spain Migration Visa", http://www.migrationvisa.info/spain_visa/spain_facts.htm

"Spanish people of Filipino ancestry", http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_people_of_Filipino_ancestry

"Taxes in Japan", <http://inijapan.gaijinpot.com/category/live/tax/>

"UK in the Philippines", <http://ukinthephilippines.fco.gov.uk/en/visiting-uk/about-uk/>

"United Kingdom: A Reluctant Country of Immigration", <http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=736>, July 2009

"Working in Korea?" http://www.workandliveabroad.com/article_item.php?articleid=354

Anderson, James, "Filipino Migrants to Japan: Entertainers, House Helpers, and Homemakers", http://www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/anderson_filipina_migrants.pdf

Batalova, Jeanne, and Aaron Terrazas, "Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States", Migration Policy Institute, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=488>, October 2009

Contreras, Volt, "OFWs turn Batangas town into La Dolce Vita", Philippine Daily Inquirer, March 12, 2009

Ministero Dell Interno, "Staying in Italy Legally"

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan website <http://www.mofa.go.jp>

Sabbatini, Mark, "Refugees find harmony on Norway's northern edge at Varangerfestivalen 2007", <http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=28277>

USCIS Website, <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>

Uy, Veronica, "OFWs still welcome in Spain", Philippine Daily Inquirer, March 25, 2009

Mailbox

We attended PDOS today for Canada-bound. Thank you very much for the way you handled your presentation. My husband and I appreciate all the information you gave us. May I ask for a copy of your presentation please? And if you have other references or tips which might be of use to us, I will greatly appreciate, too. I am a Registered Nurse and it is still a long way before I finally become licensed there but all of these are part of the journey which me, my husband and son will try to savor and enjoy with the Lord's guidance, of course.

Thanks and keep up the good work!

Maria Cecilia Margarita D. Morella,
via email

I'm Myrene Rodrigo, working at the National Library of the Philippines. I just had my orientation seminar awhile ago.

I am pleased to have met a wonderful person like you (PDOS officer). I will take this opportunity to express my sincerest gratitude for the comprehensive and detailed orientation seminar and the warm accommodation you had provided to us.

Lastly, can I add you to my Facebook account?

Myrene Rodrigo
via email

Thanks for the documents!

It is very easy to apply for Tax File Number, Medicare and Bank Account in Australia. Document required is mainly passport. The "BIR" here will send you a letter in two weeks time informing you of the TFN Number (no card will be issued). Medicare card arrived less than a week. Bank ATM (they call it bank keycard here!) needs to be activated first and normally arrive within a week.

Registration with Centrelink was done on the same day.

Right now, I'm still looking for work. Most businesses here look for local experience so it's a bit difficult here to get a job. But I guess, when you finally get one, it will be easier next time around to apply for jobs. And there are lots of vacant jobs here.

Thanks again and more power to you and your group.

Melchor,
via email

First of all, thanks for that wonderful presentation during our PDOS last May 20. I am now in Australia and I must say many of the things you discussed have been very helpful to me. For that, I thank you.

If you don't mind, would you please send me the resources or documents you mentioned last time. I'm sure it would be of further help to me.

Well, I think I've held you long enough. I wish you more blessings and more power to CFO.

Melchor Bangug, Jr.,
via email

I am one of those who attended your orientation yesterday for Australia/ New Zealand Immigrants. I'd like to thank you for all the information which you shared to us, and I believe that they will be very helpful in my move to Australia soon.

Luicito,
via email

Ok naman po ako sa Los Angeles LAX nung dumating po kami ng anak ko. Medyo natagalan lang po kami sa port of entry sa dami po ng pumapasok na new immigrant. Malamig po noong winter. Nagkasakit po ang anak ko. Hindi po kame makatagal sa labas sa sobrang lamig. Ang work position ko po na inaplyan ay care giver, labor maintainance, sales associate, receiver, bagger.

Then, nag enroll na po ako ng security training last 01-02 March 2010. So far, hindi pa po dumadating yun, Guard card ko kaya hindi po ako maka-apply as security guard.

Nung wala pong hiring, nalungkot na po ako at naiyak sa lungkot. Lalo na po noong naalala ko ang 5-year old son ko kasi po, inuwi na sa Pilipinas last 17 February 2010 with my mother po. Hindi ko po na try yung Department of Labor dito. Ang

napupuntahan ko po yung South Metro Career Center po nila kung saan may mga naka advertise na job hiring. I'm planning po to go home and stay in the Philippines for 4 months and 2 weeks po.

Aris Beltran
via email

Hi! I would like to request for a copy of the presentation you had this afternoon and anything that might be of help, because I really need all the information I can get since I will be migrating by myself and I have no family in Australia.

I will be residing in Seven Hills suburb in Sydney. I think and plan to apply as pharmacy assistant/ intern. Please send me any information regarding the city, any hotline/helpline for lodging, job application centers, etc.

Thank you so much! God Bless you!

Louise Elaine Go,
via email

Thank you very much for the email. I really appreciate all the information you have provided us. I have noted your contact information if we need to consult you for any other concern. I commend CFO for replying and giving us this reliable information. Thank you again and more power.

Andrew E. Rocha,
via email

Kung may mairerecommend ba kayong site para sa mga job seekers and anything na posibleng magamit in the future. Plano po namin alis ng last week of September for Adelaide, South Australia. Thank you very much po and we really enjoyed your company during the PDOS orientation. Madami po kaming nakuha na mga tips and hopefully, we can adjust to Australia in the future.

Lally,
via email



FILIPINO TIES
Editorial Board

Editors-in-Chief Jose Maria J. Palabrica, Minda Cabilao Valencia **Associate Editors** Rodrigo V. Garcia Jr., Golda Myra R. Roma
Contributors Marie del Rosario-Apattad, Rino D. Paez, Beniilda S. Raro, Frencl Louie Tingga **Lay-out** Rodrigo V. Garcia Jr.
Tables and graphs Rodrigo V. Garcia Jr.

Special Feature

The fact that migrant remittances prop up the Philippine economy is old news for many. Having emerged relatively unscathed in the 2008 global financial crisis, economists were proven right that remittance flows tend to be resilient compared to other financial flows, cushioning the poor from economic shocks and even financing external gaps. Remittances are widely recognized in the Philippines as contributing to the country's development. But aside from remittance flows, the other contributions of international migration to development - as well as its less salutary outcomes - are less appreciated, particularly by local government units.

According to the Migrants' Associations and Philippine Institutions for Development (MAPID) Project, despite the significance of international migration since the 1970s, many local governments do not consider how international migration has affected their development prospects. Even provinces, cities or municipalities where many overseas Filipinos come from have not paid much attention to migration issues in their midst. The local governments which did implement good practices can provide examples which may be replicated by other communities.

These are some of the insights from the MAPID Project which will be presented in a series of forums to be conducted this August: Manila (August 12), Cebu City (August 17), Davao City (August 19) and Naga City (August 24). Launched in 2008, the MAPID Project is a three-phase, three-country, three-year initiative which aims to enhance the understanding of the migration-development nexus and to build the partnership between Philippine government institutions and migrants' associations in Italy and Spain in promoting development in the Philippines.

Spearheaded by the Scalabrini Migration Center, in cooperation with the Commission on Filipinos

FROM LOCAL TO TRANSNATIONAL: CONNECTING THE DOTS TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES



Overseas in the Philippines, Fondazione ISMU in Italy, and the University of Valencia in Spain, the MAPID conducted research in the three countries in 2008. Findings from the research contributed to the design of the training programs which were carried out in 2009. In the Philippines, the research and capacity building activities were focused on Philippine government institutions, while in Italy and Spain, the activities were directed at Filipino migrants and migrants' associations. The project is supported by the Aeneas Programme of the European Union [Aeneas Grant Contract No. MIGR/2007/130-548(11)].

The research, capacity building programs and engagement with national, regional and local policy makers, civil society organizations and Filipino migrants revealed gaps in policies, perspectives and partnerships that must be minded, according to Dr. Maruja Asis of the Scalabrini Migration Center. Migration policies in the Philippines are basically labor migration policies which are not linked to development policies. While the Philippines has successfully managed to break into the global labor market and to provide some safety nets for Filipino workers, there is not much evidence that this approach has contributed to real development.

Thus, labor migration continues year in and year out and the country seems headed to become the training ground of workers for the world. If national development plans do not say much beyond deployment and protection issues, it does not come as a surprise that regional and local development plans hardly consider how migration realities may

affect development prospects. According to her, the divide between stakeholders in the migration sector on the one hand, and

those in the development sector must be bridged. Also, the disconnect between the national government and local governments concerning migration policies must be narrowed. Only a few local government units have an office or personnel tasked with migration-related concerns.

Highlighting local governments, MAPID findings suggest possibilities for cooperating with overseas Filipino communities. Migrants are not only concerned about their families. The research with Filipinos in Italy and Spain indicate that migrants continue to maintain active ties with their home communities. In fact, hometown associations are commonly formed by migrants. Although migrants' associations are put up mostly for social reasons, they also support development projects back home.

This is further supported by examples of migrant giving documented by the MAPID research in the Philippines. Individually or collectively, migrants support relief and rehabilitation efforts, scholarship programs, health programs (including medical missions), equipment donations (e.g., hospital equipment, computer donations), small infrastructure and livelihood programs. Some of these examples – including successful migrants' investments and partnerships between overseas Filipinos and local institutions – are featured in the newly released book, *Transnational Bridges: Migration, Development and Solidarity in the Philippines*, co-published by the Scalabrini Migration Center and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

The policy options, perspectives and partnerships for mapping out how the country can benefit from international migration and mitigate adverse consequences will be presented and discussed with stakeholders from government, migrants, civil society, private sector, and international organizations during the forums. To move the country forward will require the collective efforts of Filipinos at home and abroad, backed by effective government institutions that will provide policies and mechanisms to make this happen.

“Migration policies in the Philippines are basically labor migration policies which are not linked to development policies.”

PIDS study reveals trends and prospects in Philippine international migration

International labor migration continues to be an enduring feature of Philippine development



In the last three decades, international labor migration has helped shape the Philippine economy. It is considered an enduring feature of Philippine development.

In their study titled “Philippine International Labor Migration in the Past 30 Years: Trends and Prospects,” Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) Senior Research Fellow Dr. Aniceto C. Orbeta, Jr. and Research Analyst Mr. Michael Ralph Abrigo said that the drivers and prospects both in the local economy and in the major destination countries will define the future of migration streams in the country.

The annual flow of Filipino migrants shows that temporary migrant workers dominate in terms of volume, with around 36,000 workers leaving the country in 1975 up to more than 1.2 million in 2007. Among the temporary migrant workers, land-based workers have comprised around eight of every ten workers leaving annually since the 1990s.

This includes the increasing number of new-hire and the even faster increasing proportion of rehired workers, which show that employers prefer workers with prior international experience.

In the early years of the overseas employment program, the flow of sea-based workers was greater than that of the land-based workers, with around 23,500 sea-based workers leaving the country in 1975. But 2007 registered only about 267,000 sea-based workers leaving the country, compared with around 800,000 land-based workers leaving during the same period.

The Middle East is the primary destination of land-based temporary migrants followed by Asia, particularly the newly industrialized countries, which turned to labor importation to sustain their economic growth.

Land-based temporary migrants are composed of professionals, service workers, production process workers, transport workers, and laborers. The dominance of professionals in 1975 was replaced by production process workers, transport

workers, and laborers in the 1980s, coinciding with the construction boom in the Middle East. The professionals consist of architects and engineers, health professionals, and composers and performing artists. Service workers, on the other hand, are mainly composed of maids and housekeepers deployed around the world.

When compared with the domestic labor force, Filipino temporary migrant workers are shown to be younger and better educated. Around seven of every ten temporary migrant workers are of ages between 24 to 44 years old and half of them have at least some tertiary education. Temporary labor migration is likewise selective of sex, with majority of temporary migrant workers being women.

Meanwhile, Filipino permanent migrants are in the developed countries of North America, particularly the United States. Other destinations

of permanent migrants are countries in Asia, Oceania, and Europe but the proportion is far lower than that in North America.

Unlike temporary workers who are mostly professionals and service workers, the larger proportion of permanent migrants are unemployed—housewives, students, and minors—dependents of professionals who emigrated because of more career advancement opportunities, over and above the differences in wages. This scenario is created by the family reunification goal of permanent migration in the US - the prime destination of Filipino emigrants. Permanent migrants are highly educated which may reflect US immigration policy “to admit workers with skills needed by the economy.” In terms of age, however, the 44 years old and above age category comprises the largest group, reflecting

the preference of employers in hiring more experienced workers, in addition to the family reunification program in the US.

In the case of irregular migrants, a large proportion is likewise in North America but this is already declining from 37 percent in 1997 to 28 percent in 2007. However, there is an increasing number of irregular migrants in East Asia, comprising around 30 percent of the total number of irregular migrants in 2007. Other regions with irregular migrants are Europe and the Middle East, representing 9 and 10 percent of all irregular migrants, respectively, in 2007.

Looking forward, Ducanes and Abella (2008)[1] argued that the future of Philippine international migration will depend on long-term prospects highly determined by certain factors:

Domestic economy — it is tied to the country’s ability to redeem itself in its history of ‘inconsistent economic boom’ and catch up with other developing countries. The continuing limited opportunity for career and professional growth is a push factor that will determine the flow of migrants out of the country.

Demography — there is a high population growth in the Philippines accompanied by a slow decline in fertility rate in neighboring and in destination countries. Given this dual situation, Filipino migrants can obviously fill the population gaps and lack of human labor in major destination countries.

Politics — since the 1980s, the political ‘adventurisms’ of the country has contributed to the lack of political stability and led to a push migration to ‘safer and more stable’ developed countries.

Environment — involves frequency of intense storms visiting the country and the vulnerability they bring especially to large coastal areas.



Overseas Absentee Voting (OAV) Reflections

The 2010 national elections marked the third time that the Philippines has implemented OAV. How does it compare to the 2004 and 2007 OAV exercises?

Partial and unofficial reports from the Commission on Elections (“Comelec”) state that the voter turnout on overseas absentee voting (“OAV”) is around 24% - half of Comelec’s projection of a 50% turnout. The 2010 national elections marked the third time that the Philippines has implemented OAV. It is also the second time that OAV was conducted in a presidential election. How does it compare to the 2004 and 2007 OAV exercises?

The first time OAV was implemented in 2004, the over-all turnout was 65% (233,092 out of 359,297 registered voters). It was generally touted as a successful exercise given the substantial participation of overseas Filipinos and the cooperation and coordination between and among Filipino communities and organizations on one hand, and the Philippine embassies/consulates, the Commission on Elections (“Comelec”) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (“DFA”), on the other hand.

Of course, the 2004 OAV exercise was not a walk in the park. In fact, the exercise was plagued with a lot of problems: a short registration period (2 months only), lack of voter information and education, difficulties in registering and voting in person, restrictions on the voting rights of immigrants and dual citizens, errors in the certified list of overseas absentee voters, seafarers were unable to register and vote, a lot of wasted ballots

in postal voting in 3 countries (28% of postal ballots were returned undelivered or invalidated), cynicism and apathy over the election exercise, etc. But having achieved a 65% turnout, the 2004 OAV was considered over-all as a success.

In the 2007 elections, the OAV turnout nosedived to 16.22% over-all (81,732 out of 503,896 registered voters). Most of the problem areas already identified in the 2004 OAV were again also experienced in 2004: lack of voter information and

Election Registration Board” was created within Comelec for the purpose of approving applications for overseas absentee voting in lieu of the municipal/city election registration boards. Second, pre-departure registration at the POEA and at the airport was implemented that boosted the number of registered voters. Third, postal voting was implemented in 56 more countries. Fourth, seafarers were allowed to vote at any port, unlike the 2004 exercise where they were required to indicate upon registration where they will vote.

But why did the 2007 OAV turnout dive to 16.22%? Many attributed the drop in voter turnout to the fact that the 2007 elections was not a presidential elections. Their thinking was that overseas Filipinos are more interested in presidential elections and thus, it is expected that the turnout for the 2007 OAV would be much lower compared to the 2004 elections.

A more systematic assessment conducted by Filipino organizations in Hong Kong and in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia revealed that a significant factor that contributed to the drop in voter turnout in the 2007 elections was the low level of voter education and mobilization and less coordination and cooperation between and among Filipino communities and

“There are systemic problems within the Philippine overseas absentee voting system that disenfranchise the great majority of overseas Filipinos.”



education, difficulties in registering and voting in person, restriction on the voting rights of immigrants, errors in the certified list of overseas absentee voters, seafarers were unable to register and vote, a lot of wasted ballots in postal voting (30% over-all but more this time due to the expansion of coverage of postal voting), cynicism and apathy over the electoral exercise (especially in the light of the “Hello Garci” scandal), etc.

There were also several significant innovations that were implemented preparatory to the 2007 OAV for the purpose of increasing OAV registration and voter turnout. First, a centralized “Resident

continued on next page

PIDS study (from page 16)

The primary pull factors to lead international migration of Filipinos are the demographic and migration policy scenario of destination countries. Aging countries are expected to increase their demand for health professionals and eventually other set of professionals who will fill the gap in their labor force. Likewise, migration policies provide the structure on the flow of both permanent and temporary workers.

The last of the long-term prospects to look into are the network effects—the increasing number of migrants in the population is expected to deepen

(more in the same household) and widen (other households in the same geographic area) the scope of migration because of a high probability that migrants will effectively reduce migration costs.’

In the meantime, short-term prospects suggest that Middle East countries will continue their demand for foreign workers in the near future due to the failure of their programs to lessen dependence on foreign labor. One reason is the continued reluctance of locals to take on the jobs that have been considered as ‘foreigner’s work.’

The 2009 global financial crisis has highlighted the need to understand the international labor

migration and remittances market better. For instance, at the beginning of the crisis, it was reasonable to worry about the prospects for the Filipino seafarers because of the documented decline in global trade brought about by the crisis. Available seafarer deployment data up to the third quarter of 2009, however, did not show a decline but only a deceleration of the growth. Everyone was also expecting a decline in the flow of remittances. Remittance data up to the last quarter of 2009, though, likewise show only a deceleration in growth but not an actual decline.

Source: www.pids.gov.ph

Special Feature

Overseas absentee voting (from page 17)

organizations and the diplomatic posts, as compared to the 2004 OAV exercise. Many accounts of non-participation of voters due to cynicism and apathy of overseas voters after the “Hello Garci” scandal were also reported by overseas Filipino organizations.

Several innovations introduced for the 2007 OAV seemed to have backfired. While pre-departure registration in the POEA and at the airport increased the number of registered overseas absentee voters, there was no indication that these were translated into actual votes cast on-site. While seafarers were allowed to vote at almost any Post, the increase in the number of seafarers who registered and voted was minimal. While the coverage of postal voting was increased, so did the number of return to sender ballots. More than half of postal ballots were also presumed to have been received but were not cast by the overseas voters.

Going into the 2010 elections, the Comelec delisted 132,817 names from the official list of overseas absentee voters. This figure represented those who registered for the 2004 elections but failed to vote in both the 2004 and 2007 elections. On the other hand, there were 224,884 new registrants bringing the total number of overseas voters to 589,830 for the 2010 OAV exercise.

Again, Comelec and Congress did not deem it fit to provide a budget for voter information and education for OAV. All the other problems already identified in the 2004 and 2007 OAV were still valid for the 2010 OAV. Pre-departure registration at the POEA and at the airport was continued that increased voter registration without any plan on how to increase voter turn-out. Postal voting was again implemented and further expanded to – countries without addressing the problem why 30% of the postal ballots are wasted and why the postal ballots that were presumably received by the voters were not cast during the voting period. Personal registration and voting remains to be a problem. Seafarers still found it difficult to register and vote. There are still a lot of complaints concerning the accuracy of the certified list of overseas absentee voters. The Filipino immigrants’ right to vote remains to be restricted (although dual citizens were now allowed to vote even without residence in the Philippines). One bright spot for the 2010 OAV was the introduction of automated counting of votes in overseas

absentee voting, at least in Hong Kong and Singapore.

Against this backdrop, Comelec was hoping for a 50% turn-out in the 2010 elections. Comelec backtracked later. Now that the voting period for the 2010 elections is over, the over-all partial and unofficial results tend to show that the 2010 OAV turn-out was around 24% (141,846 out of 589,830 registered voters). Filipinos in Hong Kong were able to post a decent 40% turn-out. So did the Filipino voters in Switzerland. The voter turn-out in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was around 22.4%. OAV turn-out in the rest of the world hovered around 22%.

The 24% turn-out in the 2010 OAV disproved the theory that the low turn-out in the 2007 OAV (16.22%) was due to the fact that the 2007 elections was not a presidential elections. The 2010 elections was a presidential elections, and yet, there was only an 8% increase in t u r n - o u t

compared to the 2007 OAV and way below the 65% turn-out for the 2004 elections. In fact, the Hong Kong turn-out of 40% pulled up the worldwide average of less than 24%.

Given these results, critics and opponents of OAV will again have a field day in criticizing overseas Filipinos. Some legislators would again ask: Why are we allocating hundreds of millions to OAV when most of them do not care to vote anyway? Would it not be better if we just scrap OAV?

Given the results of the three (3) OAV exercises, there are several observations that may be made:

First, it appears that the baseline voter participation rate of overseas Filipinos may be around 16% - meaning, that in the absence of voter information and education and with minimal efforts from government and the Filipino communities and

organizations abroad, 16% of registered overseas absentee voters will vote – this was the 2007 OAV experience.

Second, voter turn-out is higher in a presidential elections (2010) compared to a mid-term elections (2007) but presidential elections does not appear to be the determining factor in attaining a high voter turn-out. In fact, there was only an 8% increase in voter turn-out from 2007 to the 2010 elections.

Third, there are systemic problems within the Philippine overseas absentee voting system that disenfranchises the great

majority of overseas Filipinos. Millions of Filipino immigrants do not register and vote because if they do so, they are required by law to return permanently to the Philippines within 3 years from registration as an overseas absentee voter. Failure to do so is penalized with permanent disqualification from voting, stamping of the passport with the phrase “not allowed to vote” and criminal prosecution. Millions of overseas Filipinos are undocumented workers who won’t even dare enter the premises of the Philippine embassies and consulates. Seafarers still find it hard to register

and vote. The requirement of registration in person and voting in person discourages many from registering and voting. Even more basic, they have limited access to the necessary information for registration and voting.

Fourth, even with a significant number of registered overseas absentee voters, there are systemic problems that prevents a higher voter turn-out. The coverage of postal voting was increased notwithstanding the fact that the problem of 30% wastage of postal ballots was not addressed. The question of why postal ballots presumably received by the registered voters were not cast during the voting period remains unanswered. Pre-departure registration at the POEA

continued on next page



“The apparent growing apathy and cynicism within the ranks of overseas Filipinos on Philippine electoral exercises need to be addressed. In order to project its true strength as a sector, overseas Filipinos need to reassess if they really can, and truly be, a global community of overseas Filipinos.”

Filipino immigrants in the United States

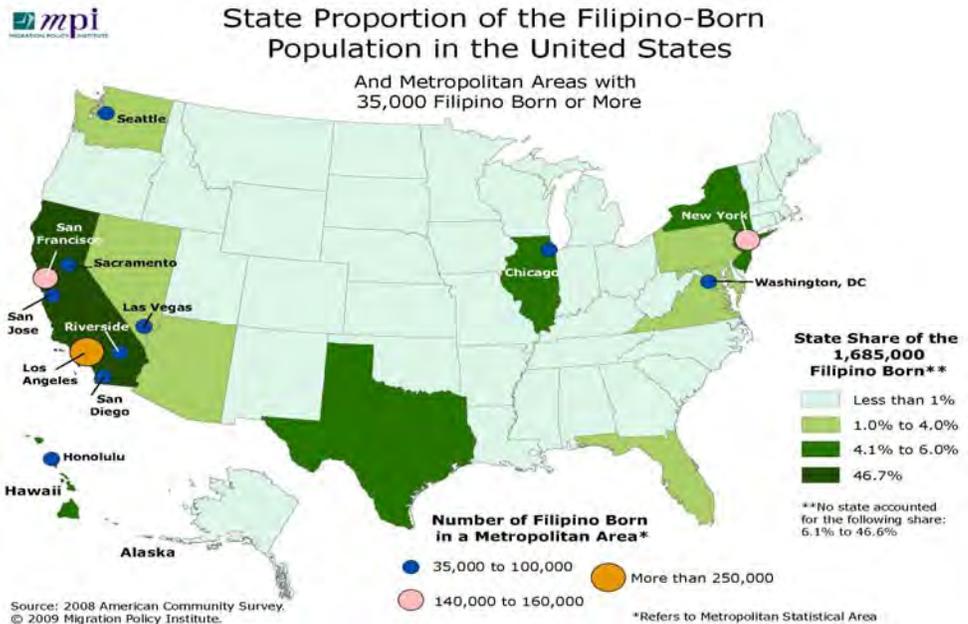
Filipino immigrants continue to be the second-largest immigrant group in the United States after Mexican immigrants

The United States is home to about 1.7 million Filipino immigrants, making them the second-largest immigrant group in the United States after Mexican immigrants.

The Filipino immigrant population grew rapidly during the 1970s and 1980s and has continued to grow (although at a slightly slower pace) since then. In addition, the United States is home to about 1.4 million native-born US citizens who claim Filipino ancestry.

Heavily concentrated in the western United States, the Filipino born account for almost half of all immigrants in Hawaii. Compared to other immigrant groups, Filipinos are better educated than the immigrant population overall, and Filipino immigrant women are more likely than other immigrant women to participate in the civilian labor force.

This spotlight focuses on Filipino immigrants residing in the United States, examining the population's size, geographic distribution, and socioeconomic characteristics using data from the US Census Bureau's 2008 American Community Survey (ACS) and 2000 Decennial Census, and the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS) for 2008.



Size and Distribution

- There were about 1.7 million foreign born from the Philippines residing in the United States in 2008.
- Nearly half of the Filipino born resided in California.
- The Filipino born accounted for a large share of all immigrants in Western states.

- Between 2000 and 2008, three states saw the size of their Filipino immigrant population grow by 25,000 people or more.
- More than one-third of Filipino immigrants resided in three metropolitan areas.
- Filipinos were two of every five immigrants in Honolulu.

continued on next page

Overseas absentee voting (from page 18)

and at the airport boosts the number of registered voters without consideration on how this can be translated into actual voter turn-out. Voter information and education remains to be the lowest priority of the government – the Comelec in particular - since no budget was allotted for this purpose.

Fifth, between the low end turn-out (16.22% in 2007) and the high-end turn-out (65% in 2004), it appears that the conscious and coordinated efforts of Filipino communities and organizations abroad for the purpose of voter information and education, and for the purpose of mobilization for registration and voting together with close coordination with

the Philippine embassies and consulates for the conduct of elections are the main key factors that would determine whether voter turn-out would be high or low.

And finally, the apparent growing apathy and cynicism within the ranks of overseas Filipinos on Philippine electoral exercises need to be addressed. Overseas Filipinos remain part of Philippine society and economy. A low level of participation in electoral exercises would translate into a weaker political voice for overseas Filipinos. In order to project its true strength as a sector, overseas Filipinos need to re-assess if they really can, and truly be, a global community of overseas Filipinos.

While a high OAV voter turn-out is a desirable objective, it must be remembered that the exercise

of the right to vote, or not to vote, is both a political and human right. The conscious refusal to vote is a political act that must be respected. But the failure to register and vote due to causes beyond the control of the voter indicates the existence of problem areas that must be addressed. What is important is that the right to overseas absentee voting has been won and can be exercised. It is up to the overseas Filipinos to prove their own strength and place in Philippine society and politics.

Atty. Henry S. Rojas, legal counsel of the Center for Migrant Advocacy, wrote the article to advocate for a more effective application of Republic Act 9189 and politically empower more overseas Filipinos.

Special Feature

Filipino immigrants in the US (from page 19)

- There were 2.9 million members of the Filipino diaspora residing in the United States in 2008, including 1.4 million native-born US citizens of Filipino ancestry.

Demographic and Socioeconomic Overview

- Over one-quarter of all Filipino foreign born in the United States arrived in 2000 or later.
- Almost two-thirds of Filipino immigrants in 2008 were adults of working age.
- Filipino immigrant women outnumbered men in 2008.
- Filipino immigrants were much more likely than other immigrant groups to be naturalized US citizens.
- Less than one-third of Filipino immigrants in 2008 were limited English proficient.
- A minority of limited English proficient Filipinos did not speak Tagalog, one of the national languages of the Philippines.
- Over three-quarters of Filipino foreign-born adults had some college education or higher.
- Filipino immigrant women were more likely to participate in the civilian labor force than foreign-born women overall.
- Almost one-third of employed Filipino-born men worked in health-care support or in construction, extraction, and transportation.

- Nearly one of every four employed Filipino-born women worked as a registered nurse.
- Filipino immigrants were far less likely to live in poverty than other immigrant groups.
- Filipino immigrants were more likely than other immigrants to own their own home, but they were also more likely to have a mortgage.
- One in 10 Filipino immigrants did not have health insurance.
- About 87,000 Filipino immigrants have served in the US Armed Forces.

Legal and Unauthorized Filipino Immigrant Population

- The Filipino foreign born accounted for about 4.5 percent of all lawful permanent residents living in the United States in 2008.
- More than half a million Filipinos gained lawful permanent residence in the United States between 1999 and 2008.
- Over half of Filipino-born lawful permanent residents in 2008 were admitted as the immediate relatives of US citizens.
- Filipino-born lawful permanent residents made up 3.7 percent of all those eligible to naturalize as of 2008.
- In 2009, 2 percent of all unauthorized immigrants in the United States were from the Philippines.
- The number of unauthorized immigrants from the Philippines increased by one-third between 2000 and 2009. (Migration Policy Institute)



Compared to other immigrant groups, Filipinos are better educated than the immigrant population overall, and Filipino immigrant women are more likely than other immigrant women to participate in the civilian labor force.

Global Migration Data

Did you know that according to recent estimates from the United Nations Population Division:

* There are about 214 million international migrants around the world, representing 3 percent of the world's population. About 52 percent of them reside in just ten countries.

* While the United States accounts for 5 percent of the world population, it is home to about 20 percent of all international migrants.

* Among traditional countries of immigration (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States), New Zealand's immigrants account for the highest share of the country's population (22 percent). But it is certainly not a world record: More than 85 percent of people in Qatar are international migrants.

* The only country that is among both the top ten countries with the largest size and highest share of international migrants in its population is Saudi Arabia: the 7.3 million international migrants account for 28 percent of its population.

Check out our charts showing the top ten countries in terms of the size and share of international migrants by visiting Quick World Migration Stats at www.migrationpolicy.org.



Anniversary Gift-Giving

As part of the CFO's celebrations commemorating its 30th year anniversary, a gift giving activity was held on 16 June 2010 for the less fortunate residents of Anakbayan Street, Barangay 641, Quirino Highway, Malate, Manila. Employees of the CFO volunteered their time to pack and distribute gift bags to pre-identified 129 indigent families living in the slum areas of the barangay. Each family received a gift bag that contained the following: 3

kilos of rice, 10 various types of canned goods, a 50 gram coffee, 1 kilo of sugar, 1 liter of king oil, half a kilo of pancit canton, a bottle of vinegar and soy sauce, 3 packs of noodles, 3 pieces of bath soap and a bar of detergent soap.

For the past few years, the CFO has been very active in relief aid and distribution as a way of giving back to the community. Among its relief efforts are for victims of Typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng in Metro Manila, Rizal, Laguna, Zambales and Pangasinan.

Ontario modifies its Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) to attract more qualified applicants

Opportunities Ontario is a largely employer-driven PNP, which means that applicants generally need job offers from Ontario employers in order to be eligible for the program. There are two categories under the program:

Under the **General category**, eligible Ontario employers and investors can recruit qualified foreign workers to fill permanent, full-time positions in their organizations. The positions must be in a skilled, managerial or professional occupation, identified as Skill Type 0 or Skill Level A or B in the [National Occupation Classification](#).

Those foreign workers would then be eligible to apply to immigrate to Canada under the Opportunities Ontario PNP.

The **International Students category** now has two streams: the **With Job Offer stream** and the **PhD Graduate stream**:

- Under the **With Job Offer stream**, Ontario employers can extend permanent, full-time

job offers (also in skilled, managerial or professional positions) to international students who have completed their post-secondary education at publicly-funded Canadian institutions. Those students would then be eligible to apply for an Ontario Provincial Nomination Certificate.

- Under the **PhD Graduate stream**, candidates must have obtained their PhDs from an Ontario publicly-funded university. Applicants who meet this requirement do not need job offers to be eligible for the Opportunities Ontario Program.

Under all PNPs, including Opportunities Ontario, applicants who receive nomination certificates must then submit their applications to [Citizenship and Immigration Canada](#) for federal approval (medical and security checks are done at this stage) and issuance of Canadian permanent resident visas.

In February 2010, a report predicting a drastic shortage of skilled workers in



Canada as a whole and Ontario in particular was released by Rick Miner, past president of Seneca College and a former management professor. The report described an upcoming discrepancy between the increase in knowledge-based jobs in Ontario and the number of available skilled, experienced workers to fill those positions.

In this regard, the above update in the Ontario PNP is good news both for international students who have obtained their PhDs in Ontario and the economy of Ontario.

Source: www.canadavisa.com

Canadian Immigration Options for Temporary Workers and International Students

Since 2008, the Canadian federal and provincial governments have had programs in place to make it easier for individuals working or studying in Canada to obtain Canadian permanent residency. The governments recognize that individuals currently living in Canada, contributing to Canadian society and to the economy are likely to be successful Canadian permanent residents. There are four categories under which a person working or studying in Canada can qualify for a Canadian permanent resident visa.

Canadian Experience Class: Individuals with some proficiency in English or French who have an intention to live in Canada, outside of the province of Quebec may qualify if they have Canadian experience as a:

Foreign student having obtained at least a 2 year diploma or degree from a post-secondary institution and at least 12 months of full-time work experience in a skilled, managerial or professional occupation in Canada, on a valid work permit; or Temporary Foreign Worker currently working or

having worked within the last year in Canada for at least 24 months of full-time in a skilled, managerial or professional occupation in Canada, on a valid work permit.

Quebec Experience Class (PEQ): An individual may qualify if they have intermediate level French proficiency and are a: foreign student having obtained a 2 year diploma or degree from an educational institution recognized by the Quebec Ministry of Education, while on a valid study permit; or Temporary foreign worker currently working in Quebec for at least 12 months in a skilled, managerial or professional occupation in the 24 months prior to their application, while on a valid work permit.

Provincial Nomination Programs: all of the remaining provinces and two of the territories in Canada have programs where they nominate individuals who intend to settle in that province. These programs are largely dependent on the applicant obtaining a full-time permanent job offer in a skilled occupation within the province, or

having study and/or work experience in that province. Generally the provinces proceed quite quickly to issue nomination certificates at which point Citizenship and Immigration Canada completes their assessment of the application. Provinces and territories with nomination programs: Alberta, Manitoba, Newfoundland, Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Yukon & the Northwest Territories.

Federal Skilled Worker Program: individuals who have legally resided in Canada for one year as a foreign student or as a temporary foreign worker are eligible for this program, without the requirement of one year of experience in one of the 38 eligible occupations. Individuals who meet this requirement will then be required to obtain 67/100 points based on six selection factors: education, work experience, official language proficiency, age, arranged employment and other adaptability factors.

Source: www.canadavisa.com

PUBLIC ADVISORY

PUBLIC ADVISORY ON THE CFO APPOINTMENT AND PDOS SYSTEM

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas reiterates its call for the public, particularly CFO clients and their relatives, to be wary of individuals/groups/organizations/companies offering their services in connection with the pre-departure orientation (PDOS) seminar, guidance and counseling, and other services of the CFO. Among their modus operandi include:

1. Facilitating, for a FEE, registration to PDOS and/or guidance and counseling. They claim that they can facilitate these services without securing an appointment. Further, they will claim that they know someone from CFO who can arrange these transactions.

2. Claiming they can accompany said client to the CFO to assist in the registration and the PDOS without an appointment or reservation.

The CFO wishes to reiterate that securing an appointment for PDOS is **FREE** and that there are no charges whatsoever. There are two ways to secure an appointment: (1) through telephone, and (2) through website of the CFO at www.cfo.gov.ph.

A detailed illustration of the entire registration procedures is posted in our website. Information such as requirements, schedules, illustrated registration procedures and a step by step flowchart are posted for convenience of the public. The procedures are simplified and user-friendly, and can be

accomplished with ease. Just click on the link "For Emigrants/Spouses/Partners" located on the left side of the CFO homepage.

We enjoin you to report to CFO any person/group that charges for these **FREE** services and claim to know people from the CFO. The CFO does not condone these **FIXERS** and will **PROSECUTE** those who are guilty to the fullest extent of the law. Kindly approach any CFO employee to report the matter or to our contact details below:

Telephone No.: 561-8321
Local 103-105,200-203;
563-1965
Fax: 561-8332
Email: info@cfo.gov.ph
Website: www.cfo.gov.ph



**THE CFO PDOS APPOINTMENT IS FREE OF CHARGE AND CAN BE
ACCOMPLISHED EITHER THRU A TELEPHONE CALL OR VIA THE CFO WEBSITE**

