



Bridging the Gap:
Rebalancing
information
asymmetries for
aspiring Filipino
migrant domestic
workers

Feb 2024



who are we?

Founded in 2018, Migrasia is a social enterprise incubator for solving migration-related problems in Asia. We focus on a wide range of issues, from unethical labor migration to modern slavery and human trafficking. Migrasia leverages technology, novel legal strategies, and knowledge-sharing to promote change within the labor migration industry at large. In collaboration with the Global Migration Legal Clinic within The University of Hong Kong's Faculty of Law, Migrasia has reached millions of current, former, and prospective migrant domestic workers (MDWs) through social media. Migrasia's programs have led to the direct assistance of thousands of migrant workers in countries throughout Asia, Africa, and Europe, with over HK\$287,000,000 in monetary recoveries and illegal proceeds blocked to date.

executive summary

This research aims to reduce instances of human trafficking, forced labor, and debt bondage during the labor migration of Filipino MDWs. In particular, it investigates the informational needs of and most efficient information channels to reach aspiring Filipino MDWs, defined in this research as any person planning to work abroad as a domestic worker, from the moment of consideration until their departure. It complements a first report, published in 2021 by Migrasia and Winrock International, which looked at the information asymmetries between Filipino migrants and migration intermediaries involved in the migration process. It focused on how intermediaries reach and inform Filipino migrants and the accuracy of the information provided.¹ Together, these reports provide a much clearer picture of the needs and challenges faced by Filipino migrant workers

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before departure. Based on our findings and our direct client engagement, we have identified scalable, cheap, accessible, and effective preemptive intervention points in order to ensure a safer migration for Filipino migrant workers around the world.

Research objectives and methodology

This research begins with the premises that migrant protection starts at home and that information builds a foundation for migrant empowerment and protection. Since the 1970s, the Philippines has developed institutions and processes to ensure its nationals migrate safely. Among these measures, pre-departure programs such as the Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS) were implemented early as a result of the Philippines' labor-export policy, providing an example for other labor-exporting countries in East Asia. Despite these measures, previous research conducted by Migrasia and recent cases of illegal charging of training fees in Hong Kong point to the fact that information asymmetries still exist between migrants and migration intermediaries, who have a commercial incentive to uphold this status quo. Such knowledge gaps can have important consequences on a migrants journey, as they increase the likelihood of mistreatment, inflate

the amount of money necessary to undertake migration, and ultimately increase the risk of debt bondage, the most common indicator of forced labor.²

Understanding how to provide migrants with the right information at the right time and through the right channels is then critical to help them avoid unethical actors, and to empower them to identify and report illegal practices. Ensuring access to relevant, transparent, and timely information would ultimately lead to a strong reduction in the prevalence of forced labor and human trafficking in Filipino migration corridors.

This research focuses on Filipino MDWs, a category of migrants disproportionately exposed to trafficking, gender-based violence, discriminatory practices, and forced labor. To identify preemptive intervention points, the research specifically targets aspiring Filipino MDWs, encompassing all the stages before physically moving abroad: from the moment of first considering migrating to the moment of securing a job overseas, before departure.

The objective of this research is to gain insights into how to best communicate with aspiring Filipino

MDWs in order to counter the spread of misinformation that exposes migrants to a higher risk of debt bondage. Its focus is then twofold: (i) to identify the most impactful resources needed by aspiring Filipino MDWs; and (ii) to identify the most efficient channels to reach aspiring Filipino MDWs.

This objective is summarized by the following research questions:

- How satisfied are aspiring Filipino MDWs with the migration-related information that they have access to when preparing for migration?
- Which kind of information are aspiring Filipino MDWs most interested in when preparing for migration?
- What are the channels most used by aspiring Filipino MDWs to receive information on migration?

To answer these questions, an online survey was used to gather the insights of randomly selected aspiring Filipino MDWs located in the region of Metro Manila, identified as a transit hub for aspiring migrants. The survey was disseminated in Tagalog via “Random Device Engagement”, a survey administration mode relying on mobile phone applications. Data collection took place on 2-14 July

2020. Among the 5,495 questionnaires electronically fielded, our target population of aspiring Filipino MDWs was identified through two screening questions (see Annex 1), leading to a final sample size of 560. Taking a conservative proxy for the size of the whole population, the sample size allows for findings to be generalizable at a 95% confidence level with a 4.1% margin of error. Furthermore, tests for statistical significance of particular aspects of our results were conducted. A known limitation of this sampling approach is the potential for selection bias towards smartphone owners and digitally-inclined individuals. However, the approach was cost-effective, time-efficient, highly replicable, and particularly well adapted to reach our target population of aspiring Filipino MDWs, who are more likely to be younger than the general population of domestic workers already deployed abroad, and more prone to using mobile applications (see Methodology section).

summary of findings

1. Aspiring Filipino MDWs express a strong and consistent interest for more information relating to the migration process

- When asked to report on how well informed they were about their plan to migrate, 63.2% of respondents reported being well or very well informed.
- Despite this, participants indicated a strong interest in additional information on how to become a MDW: 66.1% of respondents expressed high interest (“8” to “10” on a ten-point scale) in additional information about migrating as a caregiver or domestic helper.
- Interest for additional information did not seem to decrease with time. The early migration process can be divided into three phases: “Considering migrating”, “Attending training”, and “Deploying”. Throughout these phases the percentage of respondents who expressed a high interest in additional information on migration stayed constant, exceeding 60% of respondents.

2. Aspiring Filipino MDWs information needs are included in but remain unmet by mandatory government pre-departure programs, including information on legal rights, choosing an employment agency and accessing resources

- When asked to select migration-related topics they would like to know more about, a significant portion of respondents chose topics that should be covered by mandatory, free governmental pre-departure programs (see Annex 2): almost half of respondents (44.9%) cited “Overview of the migration process”, and about a third cited “Legal rights” (30.8%) and “Resources or services for OFWs” (30.5%).
- Since the need for additional information does not decrease for aspiring Filipino MDWs who are undertaking or who have undertaken training (see finding 1), the findings suggest that this information is not being delivered during training, or if it is, that information uptake among participants is low.
- A significant proportion of respondents (34.8%) were interested in learning more about “how to choose an employment agency,” though there was less interest in information on how to choose a training center (9.2%) or loan provider (3.2%). These findings indicate the centrality of the role of the employment agency when compared with other service providers.

3. Expectations of aspiring Filipino MDWs in terms of destination countries and salaries do not match actual migration trends

- In line with other studies about pull factors for migration, the primary motivation for migration was a higher income: 76% of respondents reported “A bigger salary” among their top two motivations for undertaking migration.
- Within a year, almost all respondents (87.1%) expected to earn more as a single MDW than their reported collective household income. More than a fifth (20.4%) of the respondents expected to earn as much as 700,000 PHP (14,160 USD), more per year than their yearly household income in the Philippines.
- Salary expectations of aspiring Filipino MDWs were in line with wages received in countries where they would prefer to migrate, but far higher than salaries in destination countries that they actually migrated to. More than half of participants aimed to emigrate to Canada (33.4%) or the United States (18.0%). However, very few MDWs are actually deployed there: according to data from the Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA), in 2018, only 3.3% of female migrants were deployed to the region “North and South America”.

4. Facebook and YouTube are aspiring Filipino MDWs’ preferred media channels, including for getting information about migration

- Facebook and YouTube are by far the media channels most used by aspiring Filipino MDWs: 78.2% of respondents mentioned Facebook and 57% mentioned YouTube as one of their two most frequently visited, read or watched media channels. In 93.9% of answers, respondents mentioned some type of social media platform as their preferred channel.
- For getting information on migration in particular, “Social media (Facebook, YouTube)” was overwhelmingly cited as a preferred source for getting information on migration, as reported by 60% of respondents.
- “Government agencies, such as the DOLE or TESDA” was the second most commonly reported source of information on migration (28.6%), while NGOs were the least cited source of information on migration (2.3%).

5. Aspiring Filipino MDWs prefer in-person training, but there is a strong support base for digital learning

- To the question “Which kind of training do you prefer?”, a majority of respondents favored in-person training (52%).
- Almost a third (29.6%) of respondents preferred online training, and an additional 9.6% preferred “Online videos on social media”, which suggests

Migrasia - 2024

a strong support base among aspiring Filipino MDWs for training through a digital platform.

- There was a statistically significant correlation between aspiring MDWs' primary source of information on migration and their preferred training method: respondents who chose social media as one of their main sources of information on migration tended to prefer digital training.

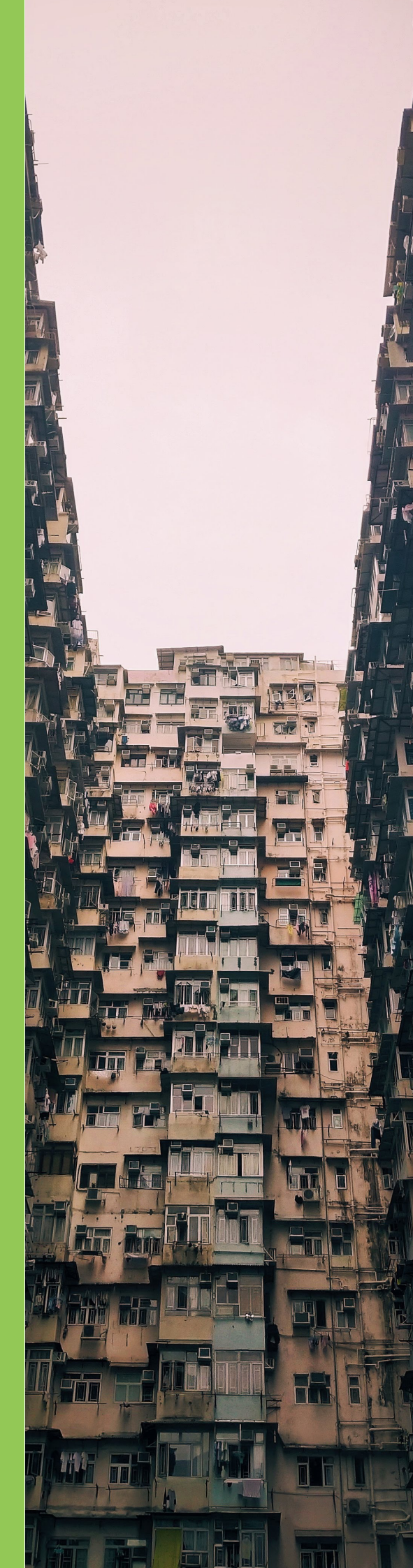
recommendations

Develop a comprehensive, beneficiary-led digital communication strategy dedicated to the protection of Filipino MDWs

Using novel digital sampling techniques, this research helped understand better how aspiring Filipino MDWs inform themselves about migration. Findings revealed a strong and consistent interest for information when preparing to migrate, and identified the resources and channels that could be the most impactful in reaching aspiring migrants. Such a finding incidentally speaks to the gaps left by mandatory government pre-departure programs, which force aspiring migrants to seek information elsewhere.

These gaps reveal that the main challenge is not to provide information, but to provide information on a large scale, on migrants own terms: with the type of knowledge they are interested in, when they need it via the channels they use most. This beneficiary-led approach is the starting point of this research and oriented the drafting of the set of recommendations below. They should not be taken individually but as a coherent set of research-based guidelines to develop a comprehensive digital communication strategy targeted at Filipino MDWs. These recommendations involve all the actors dedicated to ensuring a safer migration for Filipino workers (Philippines governmental agencies, NGOs, and international organizations) and can more generally be leveraged to improve information sharing with the broader population of aspiring Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), not only those interested in undertaking domestic work abroad.

To ensure their feasibility, Migrasia's experience and lessons learned in leveraging digital tools to assist Filipino MDWs in Hong Kong have also inspired



the drafting of these recommendations. Migrasia’s approach to protecting migrants shows that existing and ubiquitous digital technologies already provide the opportunity to reach millions of aspiring OFWs, with limited additional overhead cost. Migrasia already successfully leverages these technologies to help equip migrants with critical information that can protect migrants from exploitation and human trafficking.

1. Accelerate capacity building in digital communication skills

NGOs and—to a greater extent—government agencies related to migration should dedicate resources, full-time staff, and time to build and manage an effective, coherent, and reactive digital communication strategy hinged on social media platforms. The recent creation of the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) in 2022 is an unprecedented opportunity to build a centralized and coherent digital communication strategy along with the consolidation of the various agencies that will constitute the new department. To do so would include rapid capacity building in critical digital communication skills such as: social media marketing, storytelling, digital marketing tools, data analysis, and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) for example.

In addition, the strategy should be coordinated with government agencies overseeing any type of fees related to migration in order to communicate a clear, accurate, and unified message to migrants; provide fact-checking mechanisms; and avoid overcharging. Such government agencies include

Migrasia - 2024

for example the Department of Health (DoH), which regulates the prices of mandatory health examinations, or TESDA, the government agency in charge of managing and supervising technical education and skills development in the Philippines, which regulates the price of the skills assessment tests that OFWs are required to take to be able to migrate.

International organizations fighting against human trafficking and forced labor can then have an important role in identifying and sharing good communication practices with government agencies and NGOs or by implementing or financially supporting programs dedicated to developing the skills needed by government agencies and NGOs' staff to improve their digital communication strategy.

2. Prioritize media channels that are already popular with migrants, especially Facebook and YouTube

To better inform aspiring Filipino MDWs, channels they use predominantly such as Facebook and YouTube should be prioritized in order to meet migrants where they are. Among this population is strong mobile phone penetration and high levels of literacy, and digital literacy rates compared with migrants from other labor-exporting countries. According to the Global Web Index in 2022, the Philippines ranks a close second worldwide in the average amount of time spent daily on social media networks, making it one of the most digitally connected source countries of migrant workers globally.³ Philippines government actors and NGOs are therefore presented with an unprecedented opportunity to leverage these behaviors to protect Filipino migrants.

3. Prioritize easy access to information explicitly needed by migrants

The findings of this research point towards an unequivocal and constant interest from aspiring Filipino MDWs for additional and trusted information, free and easily accessible, on topics such as: the migration process, the role of employment agencies, their rights as migrant workers, the realities of their work, or their future life in the destination country. Because these topics have a strong potential to influence the rest of the migration process, particularly, in avoiding unethical actors or illegal practices, related information should be made widely available by relevant stakeholders working to support aspiring Filipino MDWs.

4. Make the information contained in governmental mandatory pre-departure seminars publicly available at all stages of the migration process

Topics of interest for aspiring Filipino MDWs according to the study are in some cases supposed to be covered by free and mandatory governmental pre-departure programs such as the online Pre-Employment Orientation Seminar (PEOS) or the in-person Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS). The study indicates that the information that is supposed to be conveyed by these programs is not reaching migrants: either the information is not adequately covered or information uptake is low. Aspiring Filipino MDWs express a strong interest in this type of information throughout the three stages of their preparation for working abroad. As the main purpose of these programs is to better equip migrants and ensure safer migration, access to their content should not be restricted. This is especially the case for the PDOS, which arrives quite late in the migration process, as migrants can only attend it after obtaining a working visa and an employment contract.⁴

Given that the PDOS was conducted online instead of in-person during the COVID-19 pandemic, it would be possible for the information contained to be recorded and made publicly available online. It would allow migrants to access the information very early in their migration process, or to come back to it if need be. Online PDOS (including videos and slides) already exist for future permanent emigrants to Canada or the USA.⁵ However, for migrant workers bound to more important migration corridors such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries or Hong Kong, only isolated modules and very basic information is available, shared on non-governmental websites. On YouTube, videos related to the PDOS for migrant workers are non-official and mostly consist of OFWs sharing their personal experience of attending the seminar.

5. Develop a comprehensive digital training program for aspiring migrant domestic workers

As discussed in the introduction (see Box 1), undertaking training physically in a training center is in most cases not mandatory to be allowed to take the TESDA skills assessment test (NC II) required to work abroad. Moreover, TESDA already provides “Self-Assessment Guides” to help migrants identify which skills are needed in order to pass the NC II examination and become a domestic worker.⁶ Unless the employer requires specific training (in which case they need

Migrasia - 2024

to pay for it),⁷ skills-training could then be provided entirely online. This would allow aspiring MDWs to prepare for their NC II examination independently, thus reducing the risk of being charged illegal training fees and falling into debt bondage.⁸

While in-person training or consultations can be useful, particularly for first-time MDWs, making information available online would simply provide another source of verified information that can be accessed when circumstances warrant it. Moreover, the research suggests that there would be a strong support for online training in different forms. The creation of such a program could be piloted in partnership with international organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) or the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Various alternative formats could then be explored, such as blended-learning. One promising example is the recent collaboration between the ILO, TESDA, and The Fair Training Center to develop a 12-day needs-based blended pilot training program for domestic workers consisting of ten days online training and two days of in-person training.⁹ Communication about the online training program should be supported by a strong presence on YouTube and Facebook and should be a central part of the digital strategy of governments and NGOs.

6. Create a performance monitoring system centered on migrants' protection

Dedicated performance indicators on migrant's protection through social media should be defined in order to monitor and improve the digital communication strategy of the entities involved. Such indicators do not exist today, but could include, as research suggests:¹⁰ (1) information dissemination; (2) monitoring OFWs through social media platforms; and (3) responsiveness to complaints and requests from OFWs educated through social media platforms. As it is common for unethical actors to use official logos to elicit confidence in job offers or other online resources, the monitoring strategy should also include better control of governmental agencies' logos and images.

7. Make flexibility and reactivity a key component of the communication tools used

Digital landscapes change quickly and, with the unprecedented growth of new social media platforms such as TikTok, the predominant position of Facebook and

YouTube as aspiring Filipino MDWs' preferred information channels will probably rapidly change in the coming years.¹¹

It is important that governments and NGOs allocate resources to closely monitor these digital communication trends. This would mean regularly conducting research to identify changes in the type of channels most utilised by and the challenges faced by MDWs during their migration process. Indeed, as rules and regulations evolve and the migration landscape changes (in terms of destination countries or occupations for example), so do information gaps between ill-intentioned actors and migrants. As such, governments and NGOs should be equipped to swiftly adapt interventions accordingly.

To better inform migrants, real time communication and information dissemination could be integrated, allowing timely notifications relating to scams, changes in law, or other time-sensitive information to be shared with overseas Filipino workers globally. Such a strategy has proven useful in other contexts, for example during the COVID-19 pandemic. Direct messaging platforms such as Viber were used by the Department of Health (DoH) to share timely and accurate information. Thanks to the Viber page, more than 2.4 million Filipinos got access to critical information on COVID-19.¹² Such reach corresponds to the worldwide OFW population which amounted to about 1.77 million in 2019.

Additionally, closely monitoring communication trends could unveil unconventional yet effective ways to reach migrants, including Key Opinion Leaders (KOL, also known as “influencers”), whose popularity can be leveraged.

8. Complement the digital communication strategy with localized offline support

It is important to remember that apps and other digital solutions are not a silver bullet on their own. For example, digital interventions present risks linked to data management and privacy, which could jeopardize the safety and protection of actual or potential human trafficking victims.¹³ Connection to the situation “on the ground” should still be an essential part of the strategy developed by government agencies and NGOs, in order to reduce blind spots of those without

Migrasia - 2024

access to digital tools. National government agencies should rely on the help and knowledge of local governments in the Philippines to develop a dual strategy of online/offline support that also integrates traditional outreach and engagement within the digital strategy prescribed above.

9. Leverage local governments' knowledge to disseminate tailor-made information to migrants at the local level

This dual strategy of online/offline support (see point 8 above) also allows for the dissemination of tailor-made information to migrants, in the Philippines and abroad. For example, dedicated Facebook groups at the provincial or even barangay (village) level could inform prospective and current migrants about local resources available to them, as well as tailor-made advice for going abroad depending on the migration patterns of the region. Offline, these pages could be monitored by local government authorities and law enforcement, and complemented by the support of local grassroot organizations such as NGOs, church groups, etc., to provide in-person assistance.

Such social media pages could also be created for each destination country, providing localized knowledge for Filipino migrants—in Tagalog—about critical information. This includes the laws and regulations governing migrant workers in these particular countries, their migration and visa processes, where to get help from Philippines government agencies, and even where to find and how to contact OFWs communities abroad. Since the research shows that aspiring Filipino MDWs do not often use family or relatives abroad as a source of information about migration, it is essential to provide this localized knowledge as it provides aspiring migrants with information about the reality of life abroad as an OFW or MDW.

Finally, OFWs who are quickly integrated into destination-country communities such as religious congregations, trade unions, etc. are more likely to seek and receive assistance if in need. So integrating links to online communities into information dissemination portals could be another important step toward alleviating mistreatment, or facilitating reporting and enforcement when mistreatment occurs.

Box 1: Training requirements for Filipino migrant domestic workers

Before 2007 and the implementation of the 2006 “Household Service Workers Reform Package,”¹⁴ abusive employment agencies in the Philippines would make substantial financial gains by charging aspiring Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) with excessive placement fees. These fees sometimes compelled workers to contract debt and accept difficult working conditions in order to repay the debt, making them vulnerable to human trafficking.¹⁵ In order to protect domestic workers—a population considered particularly vulnerable to abuse—the 2006 Philippines government reform aimed to limit the ability of employment agencies to charge excessive fees by prohibiting placement fees (as defined in Annex 1) for Filipino Migrant Domestic Workers (MDWs). Today, Section 51(a), Rule V, Part II of the Revised POEA Rules and Regulations Governing the Recruitment and Employment of Landbased Overseas Filipino Workers of 2016 (later referred to as “Revised POEA Rules of 2016”) clearly states domestic workers as a group of OFWs that are exempted from placement fees. However, abusive employment agencies regularly circumvent the POEA rules by replacing placement fees with other types of service fees spread across the migration process.¹⁶

Skills training fees are among them: abusive employment agencies often require MDWs to undertake exaggerated skills training at high costs.¹⁷ Since 2008,¹⁸ the possession of a skill certification, the National Certificate for Household Service Workers (NC II) issued by TESDA—the government agency in charge of managing and supervising technical education and skills development in the Philippines—is required for the processing and issuance of exit permits to MDWs. The certification determines whether the worker can perform to the standards expected in the workplace based on competency standards defined by TESDA.¹⁹ Such certification is meant to ensure the productivity, quality and global competitiveness of the middle-level Filipino workers, which constitutes one of the main mandates of TESDA. In the case of domestic work, it consists of competencies that a person must achieve to clean living rooms, dining rooms, bedrooms, toilets, kitchens; wash and iron clothes, linen, fabric; prepare hot and cold meals/food; and provide food and beverage service.²⁰

Migrasia - 2024

Section 118, Rule II, Part III, of the rules states the documentary requirements for the processing of domestic workers. It carries over the 2008 decision to make the NC II mandatory to be allowed to migrate as it mentions “(g) TESDA Skill Certification”, but no reference to skills training is made in that section of the rules, and no other section states that undertaking skills training is mandatory for an OFW or a MDW to work abroad. Undertaking training has never been mandatory in order for an OFW to migrate, only getting their skills certified is.

In order to get the skills certification—which is valid for five years, migrants need to take an assessment test. According to Section 56, Rule VI, Part II of the Revised POEA Rules of 2016, only when an OFW has been pre-qualified by their employment agency for an approved job order should they undergo the skills assessment test in a TESDA-accredited skills assessment center.²¹ The fees for taking the test are also regulated by TESDA.²² In Section 50, Rule V, Part II of the Revised POEA Rules of 2016, where fees and costs chargeable to OFWs are listed, only “(a) 6. Certificate of Competency issued by TESDA or other competent certifying body for the job applied for” is mentioned. In other words, only taking the TESDA skills assessment (which is distinct from skills training) and the NC II are considered as documentation costs chargeable to the MDW. The cost of issuing the NC II is included because applicant MDWs cannot be issued a NC II unless they pass the TESDA skills assessment. Moreover, Section 76(t), Rule X, Part II of the Revised POEA Rules of 2016 explicitly states that “impos[ing] a compulsory and exclusive arrangement whereby an Overseas Filipino Worker is required to undergo training, seminar, instruction or schooling of any kind only from specifically designated institutions, entities or persons [...]” constitutes illegal recruitment, unless the employer or a foreign placement agency hiring the worker (called “principal” in the POEA rules) pays for it. Only in the case that a candidate fails the assessment for two consecutive times will they be required to go through a “refresher course” before taking another assessment.²³

list of abbreviations

Per theme and alphabetical order

Terms Relating to Migrants:

- MDW: Migrant Domestic Worker
- OFW: Oversea Filipino Worker

International Organizations on Migration

- ILO: International Labour Organization
- IOM: International Organization for Migration

Filipino Government Agencies Related to Migrants and Migration:

- DFA: Department of Foreign Affairs
- DMW: Department of Migrant Workers
- DOLE: Department of Labor and Employment
- DoH: Department of Health
- OWWA: Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
- POEA: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
- POLO: Philippine Overseas Labor Office
- PSA: Philippine Statistics Authority
- TESDA: Technical Education and Skills Development Authority

Mandatory Training Programs for Aspiring Filipino Migrants:

- CPDEP: Comprehensive Pre-Departure Education Program
- NC II: National Certification II
- PAOS: Post-Arrival Orientation Seminar
- PDOS: Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar

contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Methodology	6
2.1. Target population and research design	7
2.2. Survey administration and data validity.	7
2.3. Sampling strategy.	8
2.4. Data analysis	8
2.5. Advantages and limitations	9
3. Demographics	11
3.1. Gender composition	12
3.2. Age distribution	12
3.3. Educational attainment.	13
3.4. Occupation and work status	14
3.5. Advantages and limitations	3
4. Information gaps for aspiring Filipino MDWs	16
4.1. Needs for additional migration information	18
4.2. Areas of interest for migration information.	20
4.3. Migration and income expectations	25
5. Information channels used by aspiring Filipino MDWs	29
5.1. Media channels most frequently used	30
5.2. Media channels for migration information	32
5.3. Training preferences	34

6. Conclusion	36
---------------	----

7. Sources & Annexes	41
----------------------	----

7.1. Annex 1: Useful definitions	42
7.2. Annex 2: Pre-departure information seminars & assessments.	46
7.3. Annex 3: Survey questionnaire	51
7.4. Annex 4: References.	57



Introduction

Migrasia - 2024

In November 2020, in Hong Kong, a group of Filipino MDWs used their only weekly day off to go to the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO). They went there to reclaim training fees that had been illegally charged to them by their employment agencies in the Philippines when preparing for migration.²⁴ What prompted their action was a statement of Labor Attaché Melchor Dizon during a Zoom meeting between officials of the Consulate and some Filipino community leaders: as training is not required under the rules of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) to take the TESDA skills assessment test for domestic work (NC II examination),²⁵ a domestic worker should not be mandated by their employment agency to pay a training fee before they can work abroad.

Although critical, this piece of information was not new: it was clarified already in 2007, right after a series of reforms affecting MDWs.²⁶ Thirteen years later, the information only partially reached Filipino MDWs, and the statement of the Labor Attaché came as a surprise for many. In February 2021, the local NGO United Filipinos in Hong Kong (UNIFIL) reported assisting 3,000 Filipino MDWs in filing their refund claims for training fees paid to employment agencies.

This single example highlights the information gaps between migration intermediaries—especially employment agencies—and aspiring Filipino MDWs preparing to work abroad. Inaccurate information during that phase can increase migrants exposure to mistreatment in the Philippines,²⁷ inflate the amount of money they pay to undertake migration and, ultimately, increase their risk of becoming victims of debt bondage, the most common indicator of forced labor.²⁸

This research is part of a series of projects launched by Migrasia in order to better understand the creation of these information gaps and how to reduce them. While Migrasia's previous research²⁹ looked at the role of migration intermediaries—how they reach and inform Filipino migrants and the accuracy of the information provided, this project focuses on the particularly vulnerable population of Filipino MDWs, the information they need and the channels they use when preparing for migration. As such, this research project complements the first one by providing further insights and identifying additional preventive intervention points to ensure a safer migration for Filipino MDWs.

Since the institutionalization of migration as a tool for economic development in the 1970s, the Philippines has been a key sending country of migrant workers.³⁰

Called Overseas Filipino Workers, (OFWs), they represented in 2020 a total of 1.77 million workers,³¹ and their remittances accounted for as much as 9.7% of the country's GDP.³² Until the 1990s, OFWs were predominantly male workers migrating to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)³³ countries for construction work. However, after the “East Asian Miracle”, women in high-performing East Asian economies started to enter the workforce. As a result, the demand in these new markets grew particularly strong for domestic work, a highly gendered occupation.³⁴ Filipino women started to enter the migration streams and, since 1992, they have generally outnumbered men among the newly hired land-based workers legally deployed every year.³⁵ In 2020, women accounted for 59.6% of the total population of OFWs, and “Elementary work” (the category in Philippines statistics containing domestic work) was the top occupation, accounting for 46,7% of OFWs and as much as 70,3% of female OFW.³⁶

In the global migration context, MDWs are a particularly vulnerable population. They tend to be disproportionately exposed to trafficking, gender-based violence, discriminatory practices, and forced labor.³⁷ The nature of their work, which falls in the domestic sphere, makes them particularly exposed to overwork and verbal, physical, psychological, or sexual abuse from their employer. In 2016, domestic workers represented the largest share of adults that were engaged in forced labor (24%),³⁸ and frequent news articles and NGOs report the mistreatment suffered by Filipina MDWs in major migration corridors like Hong Kong³⁹ or the GCC countries.⁴⁰ The COVID-19 pandemic only worsened the situation.⁴¹

With the premise that migrants' protection begins at home, the Philippines developed free and mandatory governmental pre-departure programs to help OFWs prepare for migration, turning the country into an example to follow for other labor-exporting countries in the region.⁴² The first pre-departure program was formalized in 1983, with the creation of a mandatory one-day Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS) for first-hires and rehires. Throughout the years, the topics covered by the PDOS were extended and additional programs were developed by the government to adjust to evolving migration patterns (gender, occupation, and destination countries) and to the difficulties faced by OFWs, especially those undertaking domestic work abroad.⁴³ These governmental pre-departure programs have a crucial role in informing migrants about various aspects of migration including for example labor laws in the destination country, their rights as foreign workers, and how to request for assistance when needed.

Migrasia - 2024

While previous work by researchers⁴⁴ and international organizations⁴⁵ has already looked at the efficiency of the Philippines governmental pre-departure programs (especially the PDOS), this knowledge needs to be complemented with insights on aspiring Filipino MDWs' information needs and habits outside these governmental programs. In particular, with the rapid uptake of mobile devices and the increasing Internet coverage across major labor-exporting countries in East Asia, regional organizations like the ASEAN and international organizations such as the ILO identified the major potential of digitalization and Internet Communication Technologies (ICTs) as a tool to promote decent work for domestic workers in main migration corridors.⁴⁶ The first step towards an efficient use of these technologies is to understand how migrants interact with them, by adopting a beneficiary-led approach. Yet, data about how aspiring migrants use digital tools is lacking.⁴⁷

This study contributes to building knowledge about this aspect of migration by bringing quantitative insights on how aspiring Filipino MDWs use digital media channels, especially social media, to prepare for migration. In 2020, with a population ranked highest in terms of time spent on the Internet and social media globally⁴⁸ and with a smartphone penetration rate of 72.1% of the total population,⁴⁹ the Philippines is one of the most digitally savvy labor-exporting countries. As such, it is a particularly fertile ground for the development of social media as a tool for migrants' empowerment and protection.

The objective of this research is to gain insights on how to best communicate with aspiring Filipino MDWs in order to fight the spread of misinformation exposing migrants to a higher risk of debt bondage. Its focus is twofold:

- (i) to identify the most impactful resources needed by aspiring Filipino MDWs
- (ii) to identify the most efficient channels to reach them, that is the ones they use most

To that end, this research considers the following research questions:

- When preparing for migration, how satisfied are aspiring Filipino MDWs with the available information ?
- When preparing for migration what kinds of information are aspiring Filipino MDWs most interested in?
- When preparing for migration, what are the channels most used by aspiring Filipino MDWs to get information on migration?

To answer these questions, we analyzed the survey answers of 560 randomly selected aspiring Filipino MDWs located in the region of Metro Manila, identified as a stepping stone for migrants. The survey was disseminated via mobile phone applications through the survey platform Lucid, using a “Random Device Engagement” methodology, which was particularly adapted to target a population that tends to be younger than MDWs already deployed and to be heavy users of mobile apps and games.

The characteristics of our respondents and the methodology used to reach them are explained in more detail in the following Methodology and Demographics sections. Then, main findings are presented through two sections. Section 1 presents the information needs expressed by aspiring Filipino MDWs, both in terms of quantity (do they feel informed enough?) and quality (which information do they feel is missing?). In doing so, we also compare migrants’ information needs with the information provided by the main governmental mandatory pre-departure programs and provide insights on their effectiveness, from an informational perspective. In Section 2, we analyze the main channels used by aspiring MDWs to get information in order to identify the ones with the most potential to reach migrants on a large scale. We also probe aspiring Filipino MDWs for their readiness in undertaking training through online channels, as a way to allow them to complement their skills if needed while avoiding illegal training fees.



Methodology

target population & research design

Using a quantitative individual survey, Migrasia collected primary data from a target population of aspiring Filipino migrant domestic workers (MDWs). In this research, we consider that the term “aspiring migrant” encompasses all the stages migrants go through before physically moving abroad: from Filipinos who are just considering working abroad to those who have found a job abroad but who have not embarked for the destination country yet. Respondents in this survey include both aspiring MDWs planning to migrate for the first time (first-hires) or preparing for a new migration (re-hires).

The survey was randomly disseminated to mobile phone users in Tagalog via an online service provider (Lucid). Primary data collection took place on 2-14 July 2020. Geolocalization of the mobile devices allowed us to target individuals located exclusively in the National Capital Region (Metro Manila). The region was selected for its role of stepping stone for aspiring migrants, as most of them travel there to fulfill administrative procedures at some point of the migration process.

survey administration & data validity

The survey was disseminated using a “Random Device Engagement” approach, in which users are targeted on mobile devices through mobile applications and games. Users are then asked to participate in the survey in exchange for a small incentive. Incentives varied depending on the application or game, but generally corresponded to small monetary rewards like coupons, access to certain elements of the app normally only accessible behind a paywall, or game “currencies”.

The online service provider did not allow for respondents under 18 to take the survey and, before entering the survey, all respondents were prompted a message by the service provider informing them on the use of their data in the context of the research. At all times, respondents were able to drop out, and

Migrasia - 2024

responses were gathered entirely anonymously. Additionally, the mobile device of each respondent utilized to complete the survey was assigned a unique identifier in order to prevent fraud originating from single users on multiple accounts.

| sampling strategy

The “Random Device Engagement” methodology allowed us to randomly disseminate the survey to individuals in their natural environment. Among the 5,495 individuals who accepted to participate in the survey, two screening questions were used to identify the proportion among them that was our target population of aspiring Filipino MDWs. The first screening question probed for interest in becoming a migrant domestic worker while the second filtered out current or past migrant domestic workers, leaving in the survey only individuals who were: located in the Philippines; over 18; with a strong or very strong interest in undertaking domestic work abroad; and who were either considering, training, or in the process of being deployed to become a MDW.

Out of the 740 potential respondents who passed the two screening questions, 598 completed the questionnaire in its entirety. Additionally, 38 completed questionnaire were removed for flaws like completing the survey too quickly or following suspicious patterns such as repeatedly selecting the same option (for example the first) over several questions. After data cleaning, the total sample size consisted of the responses of 560 individuals, for a final incidence rate of 10.2%. To complete the 32 questions, the time-span of accepted survey respondents ranged from five to twenty seven minutes while the average response time was about twelve minutes. The two screening questions, the follow-up questions as well as technical details of the questionnaire can be found in Annex 3.

| data analysis

Once collected, the data was exported in Microsoft Excel for data analysis. Frequency tables were created, and free-text contained in “Other, please specify” was analyzed and re-coded in existing categories when relevant.

The sample of 560 randomly selected respondents allows for findings to be generalisable at a 95% confidence level with a 4.1% margin of error. Given that there are no explicit categories for domestic work in the Philippines statistics, this confidence level was computed based on the total population of OFWs with “Elementary Occupation” in 2019, so about 872,000 OFWs.⁵⁰ Because domestic work is a subset of the category “Elementary Occupation” in official statistics, we expect this number to be a conservative proxy.

Given that most of the data collected in this study is categorical, Pearson’s chi-square tests for association or homogeneity were punctually used throughout the study to analyze the independence of categorical variables or the goodness-of-fit of their distribution. When questions related to some of these tests could allow multiple-choice answers, dichotomous variables were created when needed in order to study the impact of a particular variable, for example having the response “Social media (Facebook, YouTube)” as one of the two preferred sources of information about migration. Whenever the statistical significance of a result was tested, the type of test used and test statistics were explicitly mentioned in the text. The significance level retained was $\alpha = 0.05$.

| advantages & limitations

The target population of this research is a population that is harder to identify and reach, both in person and online, especially when they are considering migrating. Administering the questionnaire via mobile applications was particularly appropriate to circumvent this difficulty.

First, using smartphones as a dissemination device is adequate for the Philippines, where 72.1% of the population owned a smartphone in 2020.⁵¹ Second, the age demographic of mobile applications and games users corresponds to that of aspiring MDWs. In general, Filipino individuals who are engaged in overseas work are quite young: according to 2018 statistics from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), 47.5% of female and 28.9% of male Filipino migrant workers were aged between 24 and 35.⁵² Because we are targeting a population that has not migrated yet and is only considering doing so, we can expect the proportion of 24-35 years-olds to be even higher for our target population. Third, mobile video games are popular among young Filipinos. In 2020 in the Philippines, about 26

Migrasia - 2024

million people (or 23.6% of the population)⁵³ played video games, among whom 70.7% were aged between 18 and 34.⁵⁴

Moreover, the “Random Device Engagement” administration mode allowed for quick, cost-effective and highly replicable data collection. It was particularly suitable in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which made in-person research methods such as interviews difficult to carry on. Survey coverage was broad, especially in the urban area of Metro Manila, where rates of smartphone usage and access to the internet are comparably high.⁵⁵

That said, the methodology applied in this research implies a digital bias as it favors digitally inclined migrants who are more likely to consume information online while excluding individuals without access to a mobile phone. In the Philippines, this part of the population represents an estimated 30% of the population.⁵⁶ Moreover, by targeting the geographic area of Metro Manila, our sample might be over-representative of aspiring migrants previously or currently working in the service sector (see Demographics section below).

Another disadvantage of online dissemination was respondent fatigue, which was anticipated to influence response rates. To mitigate this, efforts were made to keep the questionnaire succinct and questions closed-ended, resulting in the average response time being around 12 minutes (see Annex 3 for additional details).





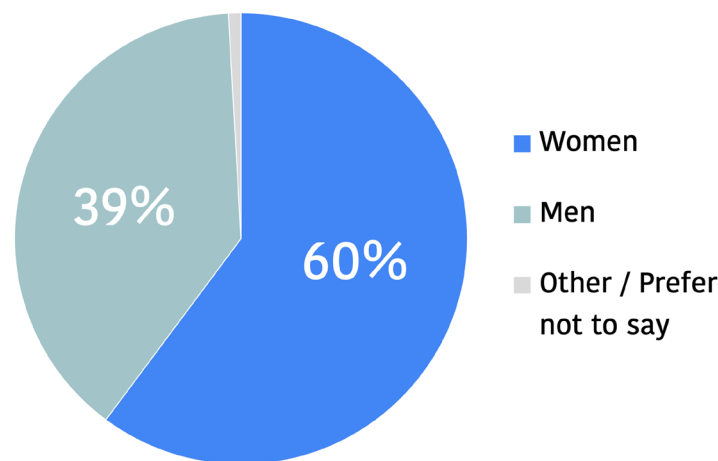
Demographics

As mentioned in the Methodology section above, aspiring Filipino MDWs are a population that is hard to identify and thus hard to monitor. As such, national statistics from the Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA) focus on Filipinos who are already deployed. Moreover, national statistics do not have a separate category for migrant domestic workers: domestic work is accounted for by the category “Elementary Occupation”.⁵⁷ By describing the characteristics of our sample, this section complements the 2019 PSA statistics and gives rare insights into the specificities of aspiring Filipino MDWs.

gender composition

Domestic work is a highly gendered occupation. According to recent data from the ILO, women make up the majority of the sector (76.2%)⁵⁸ and, in some destinations like Hong Kong, as much as 97.8% of Filipino MDW are women.⁵⁹ Although our sample is predominantly composed of women, it contains a higher proportion of men compared with what was expected from a population aspiring to become domestic workers (see Figure 1 below): 337 of our respondents were women and 218 respondents were men, accounting respectively for 60.2% and 38.9% of the total.

Figure 1: Gender distribution in the sample (% of total)



The first screening question to enter the survey being “How interested are you in working overseas as a care worker or domestic worker?”, the gender distribution of our sample suggests that both male and female respondents in our sample were interested in working abroad as a MDW. Given the heavy gender imbalance observed in international statistics, there seems to be a selection operated further down in the migration process: employers and employment agencies seem to be predominantly offering domestic work jobs to women.

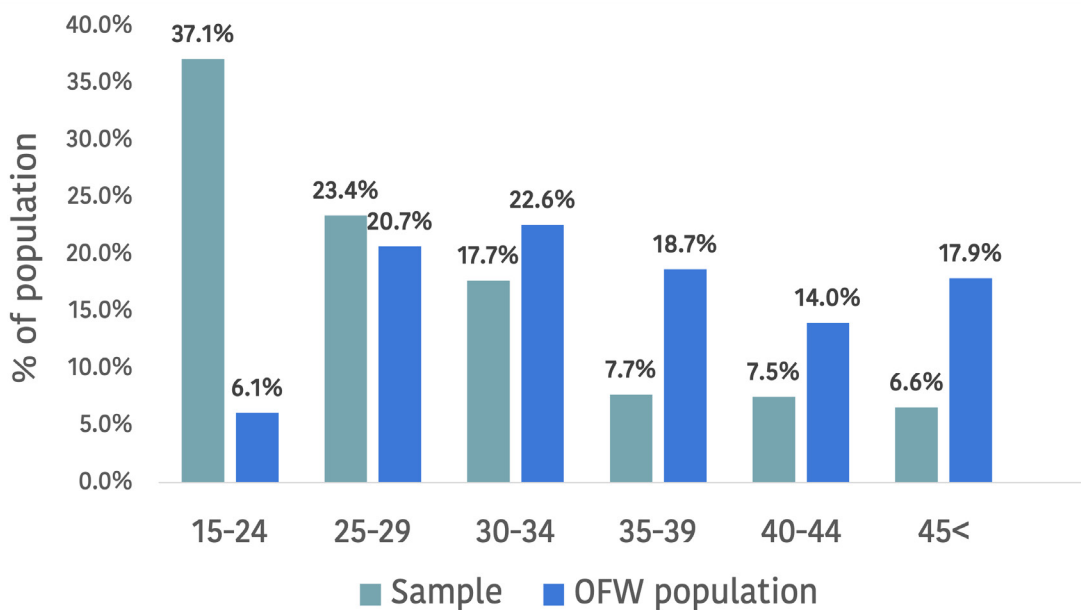
age distribution

To isolate aspiring Filipino MDWs from current or returned MDWs, three stages were identified among the target population—“Considering”, “Training”, and “Deploying” for migration. Respondents were then asked to indicate in which stage they were currently in. A strong majority of our final sample (61.8%) was

considering becoming a MDW, 24.3% were undertaking training to become a MDW, and 13.9% were in the process of being deployed to work abroad as a MDW, meaning migrants who have completed all the administrative processes and requirements and who are waiting to physically move abroad.

According to the PSA, Overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) are in large majority deployed after 25, meaning that a population like the one in our sample that is considering or preparing for migration is expected to be younger. This characteristic is perfectly reflected in the age distribution of our sample, as displayed in Figure 2 below, which compares the age distribution of OFWs in PSA statistics and the age distribution of our sample.

Figure 2: Age distribution of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) compared to sample



In PSA statistics, only 6.1% of deployed OFWs were aged between 15 and 24 while our sample population is composed of 37% of respondents within the “18 to 24” range.⁶⁰ All in all, our sample’s age distribution seems to indicate that our survey administration mode was adequate in capturing a young population of aspiring MDWs: 78% of our respondents were between 18 and 34 years old.

educational attainment

Respondents were particularly well educated: 98% had completed secondary education or higher, and 59% had post-secondary education (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Distribution of highest education level

Education	Count	% of respondents
Graduate degree or higher	50	8.9%
Bachelor's degree	273	48.8%
Trades or Technical Education	104	18.6%
Secondary education	111	19.8%
Elementary education	7	1.3%
No formal education	5	0.9%
Other	7	1.3%
Prefer not to say	3	0.5%
Total	560	100.0%

Although there is no specific table dedicated to the distribution of OFWs' highest educational attainment in the PSA statistics, the high level of educational attainment in our sample is representative of the overall level of education in the country. Indeed, despite being a developing country, the Philippines performs well in terms of educational indicators.⁶¹ This characteristic of our sample is also consistent with an OECD/Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC) study showing that Filipino migrants are generally well educated, with a vast majority that received post-secondary education.⁶²

This specificity enhances Filipino migrants' competitiveness in the global labor market and contributes to high rates of migration. However, these statistics also mean that educated young people are interested in careers as overseas domestic workers, even though they are most probably overqualified for this type of occupation. This observation is coherent with the problem of "brain waste", which has been observed in the Philippines since the start of the '00s.⁶³


occupation & work status

In our sample, the unemployment rate was relatively low (12%) compared with the national unemployment rate in April 2020 (17.7%) as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁶⁴ Most of our respondents (42.3%) had some sort of temporary job, either part-time, gig-based or seasonal, and as much as 39.5% had a full-time job.

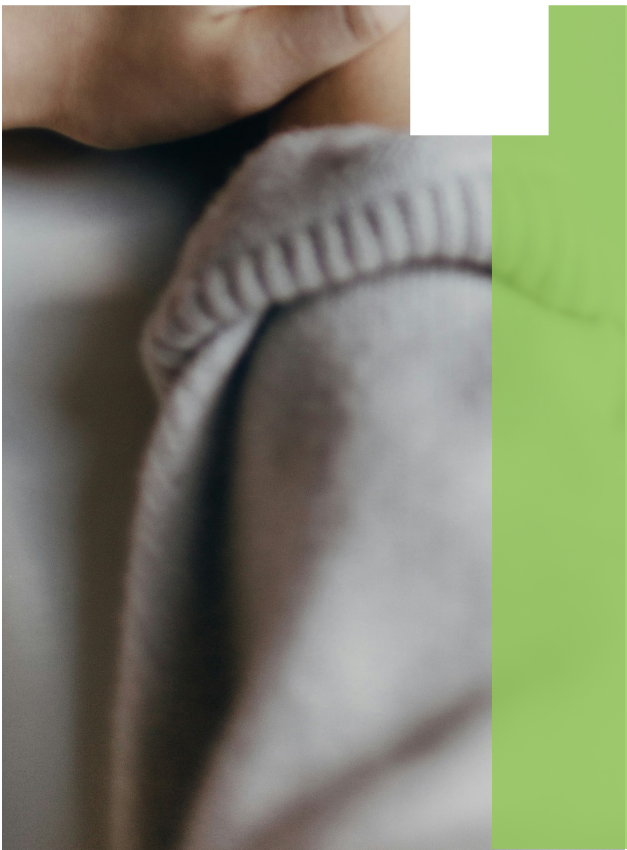
In terms of occupation, Table 2 below shows that, after “Other” (17%), most aspiring MDWs indicated that their current or previous occupation was office staff like “Call center agent” (14.5%), “Cashier/office staff” (11.6%), and “Sales worker” (9.3%). Typically, our respondents’ worked or previously worked in the service industry, which is coherent with the structure of the Filipino economy— heavily reliant on services—⁶⁵ and the high level of education of our sample. This strong representation of service workers might also be the result of the targeted geographical area, Metro Manila. “Undertaking personal family care” arrived third, with 12% of responses, showing that few respondents had full-time domestic occupation before considering migration.

Table 2: Current or most recent occupation

Occupation	Count	% of respondents
Call center agent	81	14.5%
Caretaker of my own family	67	12.0%
Cashier / Office staff	65	11.6%
Sales staff	52	9.3%
Waiter / Waitress	38	6.8%
Cleaner	33	5.9%
Secretary	32	5.7%
Cook	25	4.5%
Construction worker	21	3.8%
Working in tourism	15	2.7%
Agricultural worker	9	1.6%
Furniture manufacturer	4	0.7%
Fisherman	1	0.2%
Other	95	17.0%
Prefer not to say	22	3.9%
Total	560	100.0%



Information gaps for aspiring Filipino MDWs



According to international organizations, the Philippines stands out as an example of good practices on many aspects of migrant protection, including pre-departure orientation programs.⁶⁶ Yet, the migration process remains complex to navigate and the potential for information asymmetries between migrants and commercial actors is high.

First, the process differs from migrant to migrant depending on various factors, the main one being the type of work that will be undertaken abroad. As those entering domestic work are especially

vulnerable to exploitative practices,⁶⁷ The Philippines developed dedicated rules in order to offer Filipino MDWs additional protection. For example, Filipino MDWs are exempted from placement fees,⁶⁸ and must attend⁶⁹ an additional training program, the Comprehensive Pre-Departure Education Program (CPDEP), created in 2009 to “address the needs of the vulnerable groups, especially the household service workers.” Destination countries can also impose special sets of rules on migrants. Migrants bound to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries for example must undertake their medical examinations in medical clinics accredited by the Gulf Approved Medical Centers Association (GAMCA).⁷⁰

Second, various governmental actors are involved in the migration process, which makes it hard to know where information about migration can be found. Before the creation of the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) in February 2022,⁷¹ at least seven Philippines government agencies spanning four different departments were in charge of overseeing different aspects of migration.⁷² The new DMW assumes and performs all the powers and functions of these agencies, but is, at the time of writing, still in a transition period that is expected to last until 2023.⁷³ In addition to governmental actors, a broad range of businesses can be involved in the migration process. For instance, given that direct hiring is prohibited,⁷⁴ aspiring Filipino migrants must use the services of an employment agency in order to be allowed to work abroad. Besides employment agencies, the migration process usually involves other migration service providers such as training centers, medical centers, or money-lending companies. Previous research conducted by Migrasia⁷⁵ shows that these businesses—especially employment agencies—play an instrumental role in informing aspiring migrant workers, and that the information they communicate is sometimes misleading. It is then important to allow aspiring migrants to take control of their migration process by reducing their dependence on migration service providers for getting information.

In order to better understand how to reduce this information asymmetry between aspiring migrants and migration intermediaries, Section 1 aims to explore the information needs of aspiring Filipino MDWs: to what extent they feel informed about their migration and, more importantly, which information they feel is lacking to best prepare for working abroad as a domestic worker. In doing so, we also explore the gaps left by mandatory government pre-departure programs which force aspiring migrants to seek information elsewhere.

needs for additional information on migration

The first step of our inquiry consisted of asking our respondents, on a 10-point scale, how well they felt they were informed on their plan to migrate. Overall, a majority of our respondents felt well (7 and 8 on the scale) or very well (9 and 10) informed, as 63.2% chose 7 or above on the scale.

Despite feeling well informed on planning their migration, our respondents showed a strong demand for additional information on how to become a MDW. When asked the question “From 1 to 10, please rate how much you are interested in additional information about migrating as a caregiver or domestic helper” with 10 being “Extremely interested”, 66.1% of respondents answered 8 and above (see Figure 3 below).

Figure 3: Interest in additional information on migration

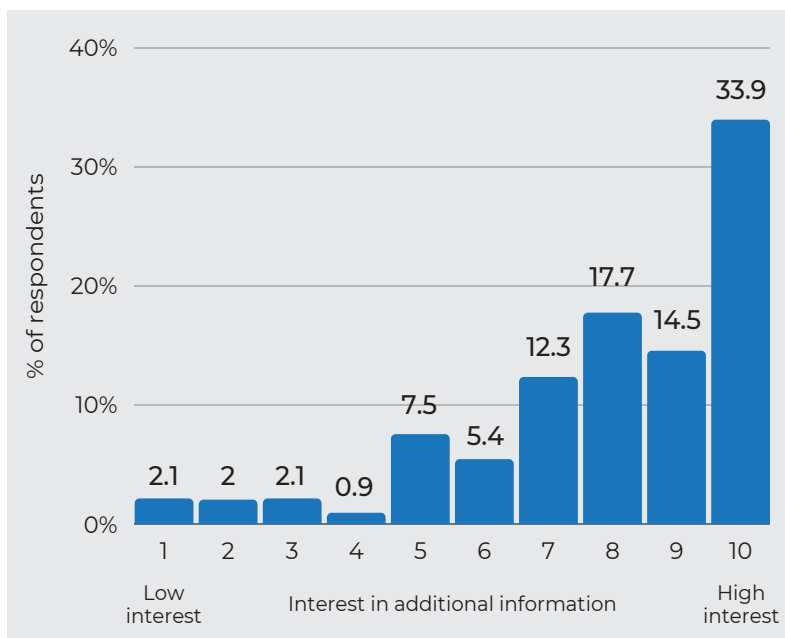
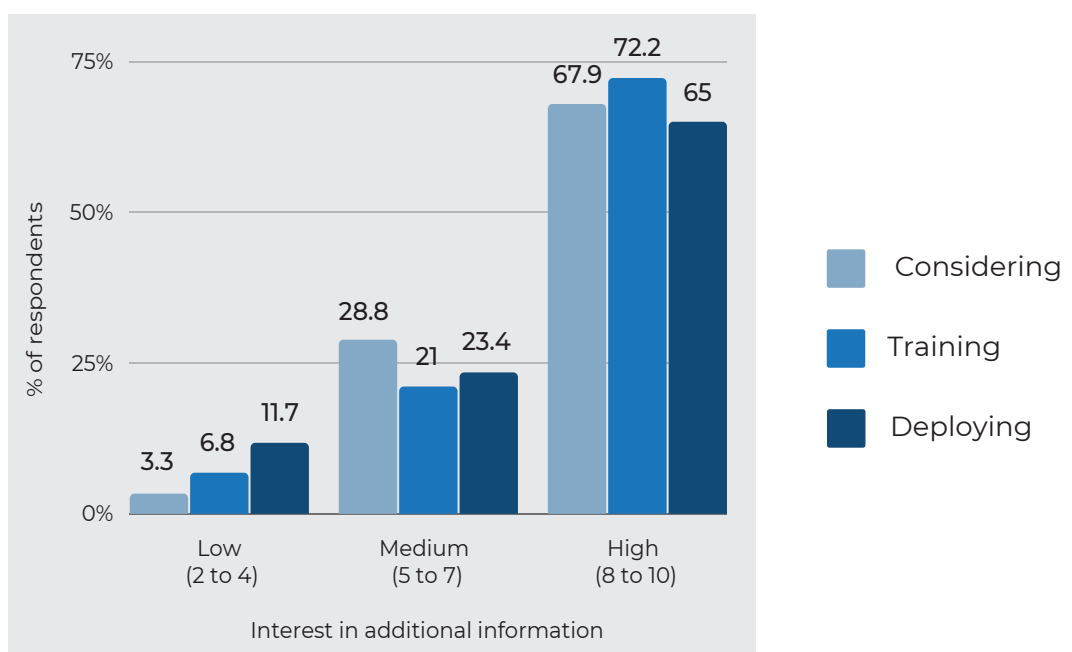


Figure 4 analyses the need for information of our respondents depending on the three stage of their migration process in the Philippines (“Considering”, “Training”, “Deploying”),⁷⁶ displayed as a percentage of the population per stage. Responses have been grouped in three levels of interest: low (2 to 4 on the scale),

medium (5 to 7), and high (8 to 10). Respondents selecting 1 have been excluded from the representation as they are considered to be not interested in additional information. For the three stages, most of the respondents were highly interested in additional information: in each stage, more than 60% of respondents replied 8 and above on the scale.

We then tried to see if the level of interest in additional information was changing through time, hypothesizing that the closer migrants would be to leave the Philippines, the less information they would need because they would have already accumulated that knowledge along the migration process. We tested that hypothesis using a chi-square test of homogeneity for the “Considering” and “Deploying” sub-groups. The “Deploying” category was omitted from the test because the sample size of the sub-group was too small to fulfill the large count condition of the test. We found that there was no statistically significant association ($\chi^2(2, N=560) = 5.52, p > .05$) between the interest for additional information and the stage before departure for aspiring Filipino migrants, meaning that the stage before departure does not influence the interest for additional information. The interest does not increase the closer migrants are to departure, but it does not diminish either, as we could expect for aspiring migrants undertaking training for example.

Figure 4: Interest in additional information on migration per migration phase



Migrasia - 2024

Our results then show a strong and consistent interest from aspiring Filipino MDWs for more information about migration, despite the fact that they seemed to feel they had enough information on their plans to migrate. The next step of our inquiry was to know which kind of topic they were most interested in.

areas of interest for migration information

In order to gather both qualitative and quantitative insights, aspiring Filipino MDWs' topics of interest for additional information on migration were probed twice.

First, our respondents were asked an open-ended question regarding the type of information that would help them migrate (“What information can help you migrate?”). The question was asked early, before any mention of training materials or migration topics, so as not to prompt respondents with ideas. The responses were then translated, coded, and the main themes of interest regarding migration were identified. They include (their order does not reflect the frequency of their occurrence):

- the process of becoming a MDW in the Philippines, especially the administrative process, the qualifications needed, and the governmental agencies involved;
- information about safe migration, with mention of legal agencies, “correct steps”, and safe jobs;
- the visa and citizenship processes in destination countries;
- job opportunities and potential earnings in destination countries;
- wellbeing and housing in destination countries;
- expected costs overseas.

The themes mentioned by respondents converged largely with those who have been identified through discussions with Filipino MDWs at Migrasia’s Global Legal Migration Clinic as well as through punctual and small-scale online surveys disseminated on Facebook on pages managed by Migrasia. Only two respondents

mentioned the COVID-19 pandemic. Interestingly, the themes mentioned by our respondents do not overlap with the themes covered by the Comprehensive Pre-Departure Education Program (CPDEP), a two-to-six days program developed by the government to address the need of vulnerable migrants, especially domestic workers.⁷⁷ The CPDEP is free, conducted in-person, and is mandatory for domestic workers. It addresses three topics that are mostly absent from our sample’s responses: language training (in the destination country’s language), stress management, and culture familiarization. Only the latter was punctually mentioned by respondents, which suggests that these topics are not a priority nor a concern for aspiring migrants compared with the list cited above.

For the second question, respondents were presented with a list of topics of potential interest for them and were asked to select two. The list of options was created based on experience gathered at Migrasia’s Global Legal Migration Clinic. The results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Interest of aspiring Filipino MDWs on different aspects of migration

Topic of interest	Count	% of respondents
Overview of the migration process	249	44.5%
How to choose employment agency	193	34.5%
Legal rights as an OFW	171	30.5%
Sources of information or services	169	30.2%
Directory of good service providers	107	19.1%
Budgeting	96	17.1%
How to choose a training center	51	9.1%
Ratings by service providers	34	6.1%
Dispute resolution	22	3.9%
How to choose a loan provider	18	3.2%
Prefer not to say	8	1.4%
Other	2	0.4%
Total	560	100.0%



Almost half of the respondents (44.5%) cited “Overview of the migration process” as one of the two topics they express interest in, followed by “How to choose an employment agency” with 34.5%. “Legal rights” and “Resources or services for OFWs” arrived third and fourth, with about 30% of the respondents. The combination “Overview of the migration process; How to choose an employment agency” tallied the higher response rate, with almost 12% of the total responses. The second most frequent combination was “Overview of the migration process; Legal rights”, with 10.36% of the responses.

Importantly, “How to select a training center,” “Ratings of service providers,” and “How to select a loan provider” all performed relatively poorly, with 9.1%, 6.1%, and 3.2% of the respondents respectively. The low ranking of these responses compared with the high percentage of respondents interested in how to choose an employment agency (34.5%) indicates the centrality of the role of employment agencies across the migration service supply chain compared with other migration intermediaries. This was confirmed by the findings of another study conducted by Migrasia⁷⁸ which found that, despite the prohibition of exclusive referrals practices by the POEA,⁷⁹ it was common for employment agencies to mandate OFWs to utilize specific migration intermediaries like training centers, medical clinics, or money lenders.

As such, both the open-ended and multiple-choice questions point to the fact that aspiring migrants are interested in knowing more about the migration process, what to expect in the destination country, as well as their rights as migrant workers. Most of these interrogations are supposed to be covered during the PEOS and the PDOS, two free and mandatory governmental pre-departure programs which provide aspiring workers with information on the migration process before departure. The PEOS is an online seminar whose eight modules' goal is to provide aspiring migrants with information before they take the decision to work overseas. It mainly covers information on: overseas job application procedures, documentary requirements and cost involved for the migration, and information on how to safeguard against illegal recruitment.⁸⁰ The PDOS, a six-hours in-person seminar (conducted online during the COVID-19 pandemic) is provided later. Migrants can only take it once they obtained their visa,⁸¹ which they can only get once they have secured a job abroad already, most likely with the help of an employment agency. The PDOS are country-specific and typically include the following topics:⁸²

- travel regulations;
- immigration procedures;
- cultural differences;
- settlement concerns;
- employment and social security concerns;
- rights and obligations of Filipino migrants.

This overlap between the topics of interest for aspiring Filipino MDWs and the topics that are supposed to be covered by the PEOS or PDOS suggests that the information does not properly reach aspiring Filipino MDWs.

Moreover, as seen above in Figure 4 of Section 1.1, the interest for additional information does not decrease with time, even for aspiring migrants undertaking training or waiting to be deployed. The quantitative and qualitative insights then suggest that the information given during governmental pre-departure programs



was insufficient according to aspiring migrants, or that their format was not adapted to transmit the information in an efficient and long-lasting way.

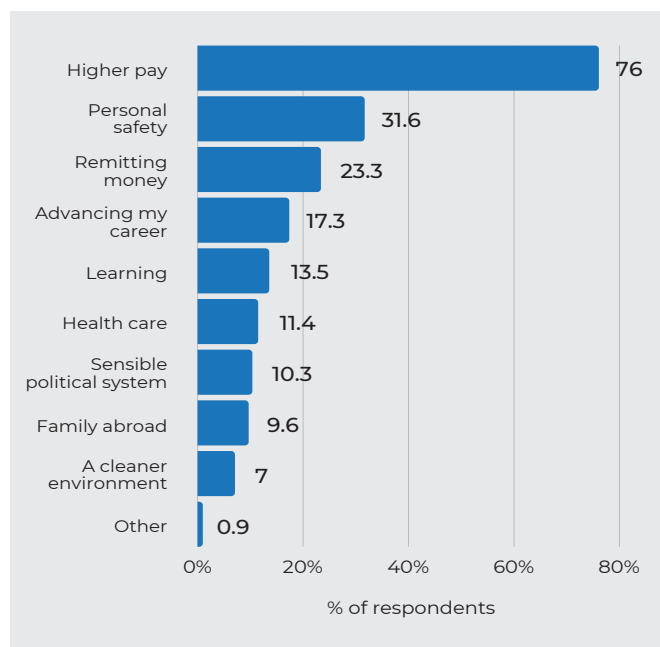
On that last point, a qualitative research project conducted by The Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW)⁸³ confirms anecdotal evidence gathered at Migrasia's Global Legal Migration Clinic. When asked about their experience of the PDOS, Filipino MDW in the GAATW study were critical of the real added value of the mandatory governmental pre-departure programs. For example, they point to the fact that the PDOS is usually administered by employment agencies, who are profit-oriented entities, and that the amount of information that needs to be assimilated in those six hours is discouraging. It corresponds to knowledge that would take months for them to properly assimilate in the destination country, and is often not representative of the reality in the destination country.

Regardless of its cause, the high demand for fundamental information on migration among our respondents shows that, currently, existing information is not reaching aspiring Filipino MDWs in an efficient and timely manner. Moreover, Section 1.3 to be presented below suggests that the information reaching aspiring Filipino MDWs might be building skewed expectations on the reality of their migration in terms of destination countries and associated salaries.

migration and income expectations

In line with previous studies about the factors pushing Filipino to work abroad,⁸⁴ respondents in our survey were also looking for better financial prospects when considering migration. When asked “Which of the following is the most interesting for you about working abroad? Choose two”, 76% of respondents selected “A bigger salary” among their top two motivators for migrating, and an additional 23.3% chose “Remitting money” (see Figure 5 below). In total, these two criteria represented about half of the responses (49.6%). The second most frequent reason for migration cited by aspiring migrants was “Personal safety”. Although it gathered less than half as many respondents as “A bigger salary”, the reason was mentioned by 31.6% of our sample, suggesting that about a third of respondents considered migration as a way to safeguard or improve their personal safety.

Figure 5: Main reasons for interest in overseas work

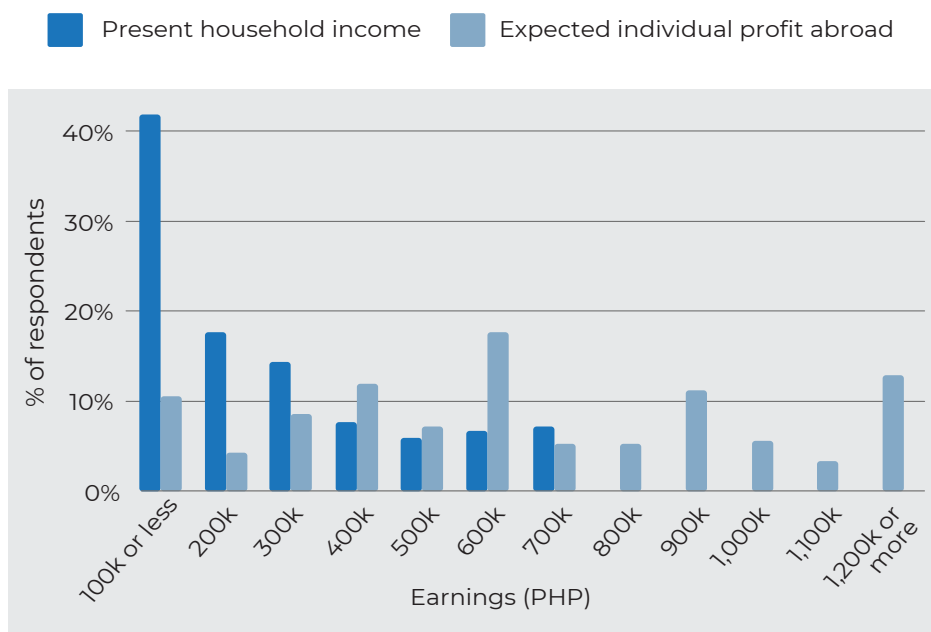


Earning a higher income was an important factor for aspiring Filipino MDW, but our results show that, in general, they expected as a single individual to earn more than their whole household combined (see Figure 6 below). When

Migrasia - 2024

asked the question “How much do you think you will earn in the country where you want to work?” almost all respondents (87.1%) expected to earn more as a single individual MDW than what they declared to be earning collectively in the household. By working abroad, more than 20% of the respondents expected to earn as an individual as much as 700,000 PHP (or about 14,160 USD) more per year than what their household earned in the Philippines, which translates in an expected income increase of 58,333 PHP (or 1,180 USD) per month.

Figure 6: Comparison of expected yearly individual income with current yearly household income



What can seem over-optimistic is in fact in line with the wages perceived in countries where our respondents planned to migrate: as shown in Figure 7 below, a short majority of our sample wished to work as a MDW in Canada or the United States. To the question “Which is your top deployment destination for working overseas?”, 51.4% chose one of these two countries as their preferred destination (represented in the graph by the region “North and South America”).⁸⁵ England came third, with 10% of the replies.

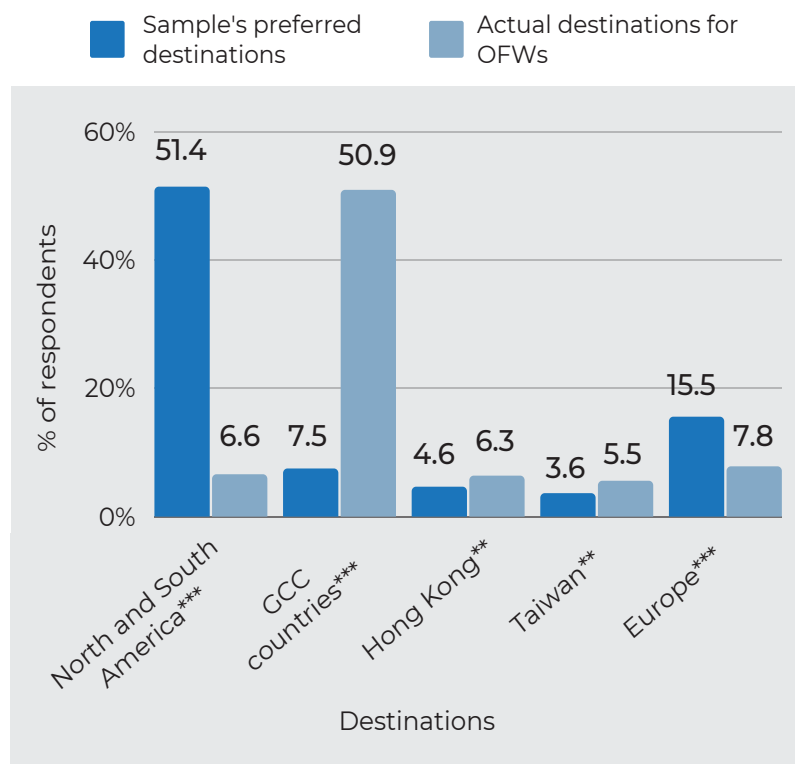
In the United States and Canada, individual yearly wages tend to be very high compared with the household incomes in the Philippines. For example, in the United States, the median hourly wage for domestic workers is 12.01 USD,⁸⁶ meaning that the median yearly wage in the United States is about 1,370,000 PHP.⁸⁷ Likewise, in Canada, depending on the provinces, workers can expect a

yearly wage between 870,000 and 1,190,000 PHP.⁸⁸ These salaries are more in line with the financial expectations of our sample (displayed in Figure 6).

In reality though, chances are very small that the aspiring Filipino MDWs in our sample will get a position in these countries. According to the PSA,⁸⁹ the region “North and South America” was the destination for only 5.2% of OFWs. For female OFWs, more likely to be deployed as domestic workers, the proportion was even lower, with 3.4% of female OFWs deployed in the region in 2020.

Instead, most OFWs are found in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and more particularly in four countries: Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. These four GCC countries are, by far, the first destination region for OFWs, with 53% of OFWs being deployed there. There, wages migrants can expect are much lower. For example, in Saudi Arabia—the first destination country for OFWs in 2020 (26.6%)—a survey conducted by the organization Helper Choice shows that the average yearly wage for a foreign domestic worker in 2017 was about 262,203 PHP.⁹⁰ According to the same survey, wage levels for other GCC countries are similar, ranging from 248,559 PHP per year in Kuwait to 293,051 PHP in the United Arab Emirates. In our survey, the GCC countries as preferred destinations for aspiring MDW gathered only 7.5% of the responses.

Figure 7: Comparison between preferred and actual destination region




Migrasia - 2024

Similarly, the proportion of respondents in the sample who planned to migrate to Europe was considerably higher (15.5%) than the proportion of OFWs actually deployed there (6.7%). Only for the East Asia region did the proportion of respondents (17.1%) matched actual deployment patterns (17.7%). The discrepancy between the preferred destination and the actual percentage of total OFWs deployed in these destinations is illustrated in Figure 7 below.

This analysis shows that aspiring MDWs do not have an over-optimistic expectation on their future earnings. On the contrary, our results could suggest that they seem to be informed of the salaries they can get in such destinations, which might explain why they would prefer destinations like North America or Europe. However, results show a clear mismatch between where aspiring Filipino MDWs plan to work and where they will be deployed in reality.

This mismatch between expectations and actual trends in OFWs destination countries could be explained by enticing but false information that is spread online about their migration prospects, both in terms of destination and corresponding wages. Several deceiving social media accounts have been detected by the POEA, warning for example about supposedly official POEA accounts or licensed employment agencies posting fake job advertisements on Facebook,⁹¹ suggesting that the source of information for aspiring migrants on social media might not be the one they think it is. These practices also suggest that social media are another vector for aspiring MDWs abuse from ill-intentioned actors: the job descriptions will typically advertise advantageous conditions such as high salary, free transportation, free food and accommodation, high overtime pay rate, paid vacation leave, and other benefits. These fake positions are often advertised for attractive destination countries like the United States, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, or Australia, which corresponds with the expectation patterns shown in Figure 7 above.

Although no clear causality can be drawn between anecdotal fake job advertisements and the expectations of a whole population of aspiring Filipino MDWs, our data suggest that our respondents have a skewed picture of the outcome of their migration process, and that it originates before leaving the Philippines. It supports the need for accurate information about the reality of work abroad and about the real chances migrants have to be deployed in such countries with the corresponding salaries.



Information channels used by aspiring Filipino MDWs

In key labor-exporting countries, the rapid rise of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)—technologies that provide access to information through telecommunications such as smartphones, the Internet, mass media, and social media platforms—⁹² has had a strong impact on migrants' lives abroad. Previous research has explored the use of these tools by migrants from a network perspective, focusing on how ICT and especially social media have facilitated migration in various migration corridors by allowing migrants to maintain and create

Migrasia - 2024

social ties, both at home and abroad.⁹³ In recent years, interest has grown at the international level about how to further leverage these technologies to ensure safer migration. With the theme “Digitalisation to Promote Decent Work for Migrant Workers”, the 11th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML) in 2018 illustrates this ambition. During this forum, ICT were identified as potential channels to disseminate pre-departure orientation and support to aspiring migrant workers. However, limited data is available on the channels used by aspiring Filipino MDWs to get information when preparing for their migration, and whether they use ICT for that purpose or not.

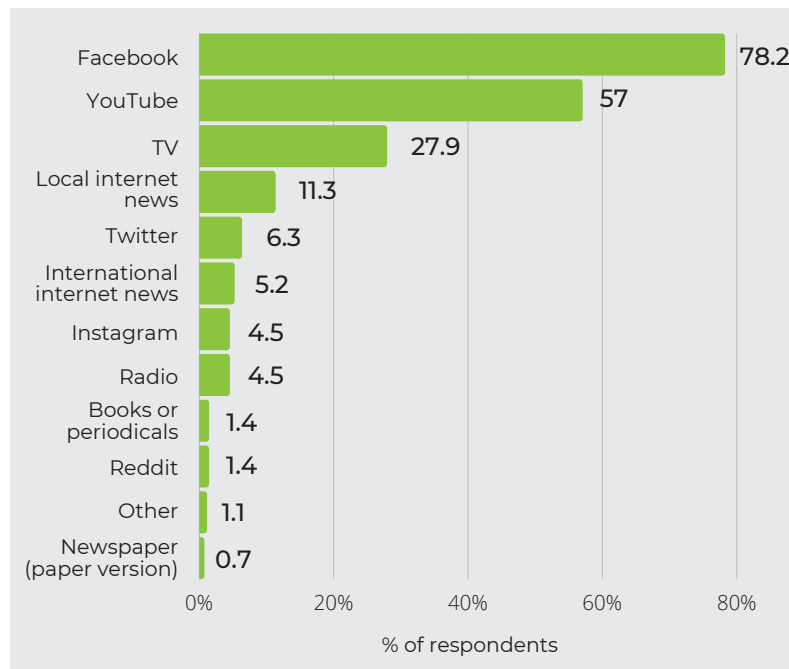
Using a beneficiary-led approach, Section 2 aims to reach aspiring Filipino MDWs where they are. It focuses on the media channels most used by aspiring Filipino MDWs, followed by the ones they use most to get information about migration specifically. By doing so, it aims to uncover the channels through which accurate information has a higher chance to reach Filipino MDWs when they prepare for their migration. In addition, it also probes respondents about their

media channels most frequently used

As mentioned in the introduction, the Philippines ranked highest in terms of time spent on the Internet and on social media in 2020.⁹⁴ Figure 8 below shows that media consumption habits of aspiring Filipino MDWs are in line with these underlying trends: Facebook and YouTube are by far the most used media among our respondents. In a mix of two media channels most frequently visited, read, or watched, “Facebook” was chosen by 78.2% of respondents, and “YouTube” by 57%. Interestingly, “Television” came third, mentioned by more than one in four respondents (27.9%), suggesting that the media channel is relevant in order to develop a dual strategy of online-offline information dissemination.

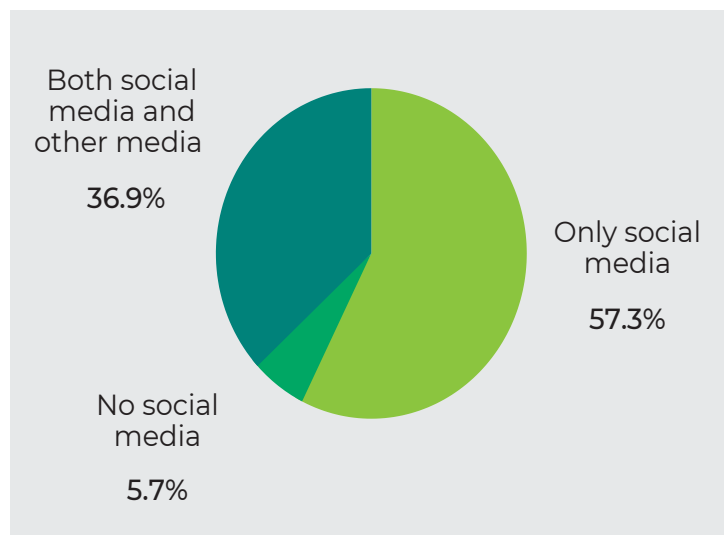
This question also allowed us to analyze the mix of media channels most frequently used by respondents, and confirms the strong predominance of Facebook and YouTube in aspiring Filipino MDWs everyday life. The “Facebook; YouTube” combination alone was chosen by 44.8% of the respondents and “Facebook; Television” was the second most popular, with 15.9% of the answers.⁹⁵

Figure 8: Media most visited, watched, or read



In Figure 9, we classified media channels by type (social media and traditional media),⁹⁶ and found that 57.3% of the respondents' combinations were composed of social media only ("Facebook; Twitter", "YouTube; Reddit", or "Instagram; Twitter" for example), while 36.9% of respondents had a mixed use, having both social media and traditional media as main information sources. Only 5.7% of the respondents did not have any social media in their two choices, meaning that, in 94.3% of the answers, respondents gave some type of social media as one of the two information sources.

Figure 9: Distribution of the types of media channels used

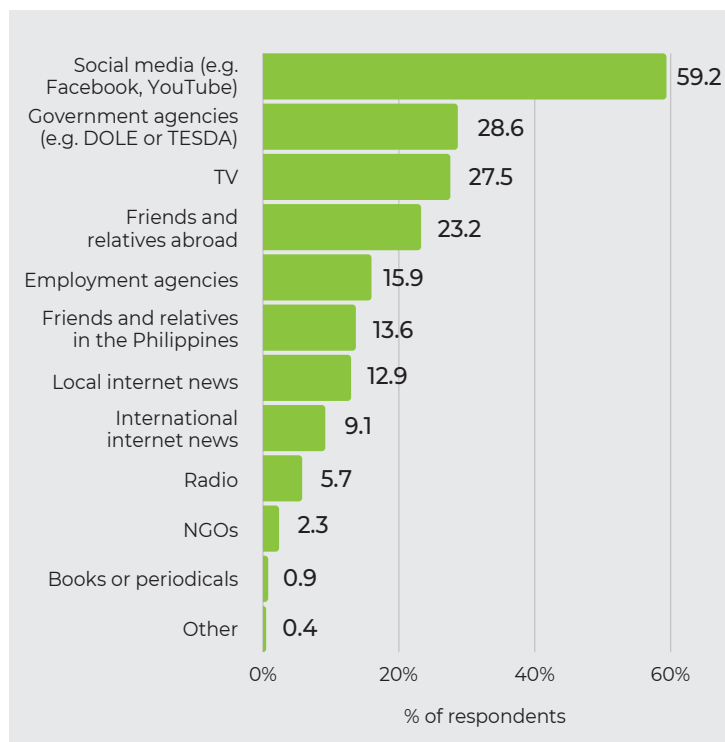


media channels for migration information

Respondents were asked through which media they got information on migration specifically and were required to select two responses.

In line with the findings in Section 2.1, social media platforms also appear to be the primary channels of information used by aspiring migrants to find information on migration (see Figure 10 below). “Social media (Facebook, YouTube)” appears in the responses of almost 60% of respondents (59.3%). This finding suggests that social media is not only used for social connectivity purposes, which is in line with trends observed in the general population in the Philippines where Facebook is also a source of news. According to a 2019 Social Weather Station survey,⁹⁷ Facebook is the second source of daily news for Filipinos, behind TV: about 21% of adult Filipinos or an estimated 13.9 million individuals use Facebook daily for reading the news.

Figure 10: Principal source of information about migration



“Government agencies” came second but far behind, with 28.6% of respondents selecting it as one of their two main channels for getting information on migration.

About the same percentage of respondents chose “Television” (27.5%), where various public programmes feature or specifically focus on migration issues.⁹⁸ It is also the case for radio programs, but this channel was lesser cited (5.7%).

“Friends and relatives abroad” also constitute a common information channel for aspiring Filipino MDWs and was mentioned by more than one in five respondents (23.2%). This relatively low representation of friends and relatives abroad among the channels for getting information on migration is actually in line with findings of the National Migration Survey conducted by the PSA.⁹⁹ According to the survey, a strong majority (62%) of international migrants do not have relatives or friends in their country of destination when migrating for the first time. Although the percentage was higher for men (67%) than for women (59%), we can conjecture that a substantial part of aspiring Filipino MDWs do not have access to a trusted source that can accurately describe what life and work actually looks like in the destination country. Furthermore, a majority of our respondents (51.3%) said that they had never been to their preferred destination country, meaning that aspiring migrants most likely cannot rely either on personal experience to get to know about the reality of life and work abroad.

“Employment agencies” were also a non-negligible information channel (15.9% of respondents) for respondents. This is problematic given that employment agencies are businesses whose economic incentives do not necessarily align with migrants’ actual needs. Indeed, a previous study conducted by Migrasia shows that, on critical questions related to migration fees such as “Can employment agencies legally require an OFW to use a specific training center at the OFW own expense?”, “Migration intermediaries” as a source of information appeared in 55.5% of those who responded incorrectly. The fact that more than one in seven respondents mention “Employment agencies” as a source of information about migration suggests a need to oversee information given by actors with economic incentives that are involved in the migration process and to develop fact-checking mechanisms. In stark contrast, aspiring Filipino MDWs do not seem to consult NGOs when looking for information about migration: only 2.3% of respondents mentioned them in their two choices.

The study analyzed information channels reported. Compared with the previous sub-section, the combination of channels for getting information on migration was more spread out and less concentrated. While, in the previous section, the combination “Facebook; YouTube” was chosen by almost half of

Migrasia - 2024

respondents (44.8%), the most popular combination of information channels on migration was “Social Media; Television”, chosen by relatively few respondents (15%), followed by “Social Media; Government Agencies” (11.3%), and “Friends and Family abroad; Social Media” (10.7%).¹⁰⁰

Both government agencies in charge of OFWs, employment agencies and NGOs have a presence on social media and, on Facebook. The Department of Labour and Employment’s (DOLE) Facebook page for example was created in 2016 and has 950,000 followers. Several deceiving social media accounts have been detected by the POEA, warning for example about supposedly official POEA accounts or licensed employment agencies posting fake job advertisements on Facebook,¹⁰¹ suggesting that the source of information for aspiring migrants on social media may not be trustworthy. Better monitoring of the impact and reach

| training preferences

Aspiring MDWs have a clear preference when it comes to training delivery formats. Table 4 below shows that a majority of them favor in-person training (52%) while almost a third (29.6%) prefer online training, like the one provided by TESDA for example.¹⁰²

Table 4: Preferred training format

Training delivery method	Count	% of respondents
In person (in the Philippines)	291	52.0%
Course on the internet	166	29.6%
Online videos on social media	54	9.6%
Books	27	4.8%
Prefer not to say	11	2.0%
Newspapers	10	1.8%
Other	1	0.2%
Total	560	100.0%

Additionally, 9.6% preferred “Online videos on social media,” suggesting that, together, 39.3% of respondents favored training across a digital platform, may it be a dedicated website, social media, or potentially a dedicated app. While



being mindful of a selection bias towards digitally-inclined individuals, print-based forms tallied only 7% of respondents.

These findings are in line with the previous sections about media channels preference (Section 2.1) and preferred information channels on migration (Section 2.2) and suggest that additional training material disseminated online could have a substantial user base among aspiring Filipino MDWs. As the survey was filled in summer 2020, further research could measure the effect of the COVID-19 outbreak on the future demand for online training, especially since, during the COVID-19 pandemic in-person PDOS were conducted online. The pre-departure program could then be recorded and easily shared on YouTube.

Finally, we tried to see if there was a correlation between the aspiring migrants primary source of information about migration and their preferred training method. Using a chi-square test for association, our results give statistically significant evidence ($\chi^2(1, N=560) = 4.90, p < .05$) that people who choose social media as one of their main sources of information about migration prefer digital training. Given the rapid social media adoption trends of the Philippines, we can expect the coming generation of Filipino MDWs to be even more inclined to adopt digital or blended-learning training experiences when preparing to work abroad.



Conclusion

This research is the second in a series of research projects conducted by Migrasia aimed at understanding how Filipino migrants get information when preparing for migration, a crucial step in fighting abuses perpetrated throughout the whole migration process. Some of these abuses originate from asymmetries of information between aspiring migrants and unethical migration intermediaries who have a business incentive to create these asymmetries. On that point, the example of the NC II examination is telling: unethical migration intermediaries (especially employment agencies and training centers) have an interest in making aspiring migrants believe that training is mandatory to be allowed to take the exam in order to charge them training fees. Equal or greater efforts should then be provided to counter the misinformation spread by various unethical actors along the migration service chain, in particular when the information is linked to migration fees. This research informed how to achieve that goal.

While previous research by Migrasia focused on the role of migration intermediaries in providing information to aspiring migrants and influencing their migration process, this research complements previous findings by looking at the receiver's side: aspiring migrants' information needs and habits. Following a beneficiary-oriented approach, it aimed to understand how to provide Filipino migrant domestic workers (MDWs) with the right information, through the right channels, at the right time in order to fight the spread of misinformation exposing them to a higher risk of debt bondage.

Using quantitative insights from a population of 560 aspiring Filipino MDWs located in the region of Metro Manila, this research first identified the information needs of a population that is mostly young, educated, and professionally active. Despite feeling well informed about their plan to migrate, findings reveal that aspiring Filipino MDWs show a strong and consistent interest for additional information throughout the whole process of preparing for migration. In particular, respondents expressed interest in essential topics linked to the migration process such as a general overview of the migration process (and the associated administrative paperwork), the role of employment agencies, their rights as migrant workers, the realities of their work abroad, and their future life in the destination country. While the information gap is in principle covered by the two main mandatory government



pre-departure programs, the fact that the gap persists throughout various migration stages suggests additional efforts should be made in order to make the information contained in these programs widely available, at all stages of migration. Our findings also revealed that our respondents had high ambitions in terms of destination countries and the associated salaries they were expecting to earn abroad. Respondents were mostly aware of the salaries to be expected in the various destination countries, and adjusted their preferences accordingly in order to maximize the expected income. However, these preferences did not reflect the actual deployment patterns of overseas Filipino migrants (OFWs) and suggest that there is a mismatch between where aspiring Filipino MDWs would like to migrate and the country where they will most probably be deployed.

After identifying the information needs and the information gaps, the research investigated which channels were most used by aspiring Filipino MDWs when preparing for migration. In that respect, our findings show that aspiring Filipino MDWs are following national trends: they are heavy users of social media platforms. Facebook and YouTube in particular were by far the media channels most visited, read, or watched. The social media platforms

were also used beyond just their primary use of social connectivity as they were also the channels most used by aspiring migrants to get information about migration specifically. The analysis of the main sources of information also showed that aspiring Filipino MDWs relied on government agencies and TV to get information about migration. To a lesser extent, they also consulted employment agencies. As previous research conducted by Migrasia shows that actors with economic incentives involved in the migration process can constitute a source of misinformation, this finding suggests a need to oversee the information given by actors with economic incentives involved in the migration process and to develop easily accessible fact-checking mechanisms. Finally, the research explored the training format preferred by aspiring Filipino MDWs in order to evaluate a potential user base to develop free training accessible through digital means. Although respondents preferred online training, results show a strong uptake potential for digital training methods. Given that the data collection happened still early in the COVID-19 pandemic (early July 2020), this uptake could be even greater now that in-person mandatory pre-departure programs have been experimented online.

Based on these findings, the set of recommendations that was drawn is mostly related to how to reach migrants where they are: on social media. Filipino migrants present the characteristics to enjoy a strong mobile phone penetration rate, a strong literacy rate, as well as a strong digital literacy rate compared with other labor-exporting countries in the world. This potential should be fully harnessed by governmental agencies, NGOs, and international organizations in order to protect migrants early in their project to migrate so as to reduce the risk of debt bondage during their migration process. In particular, the merger of seven government agencies related to migration to create a Department of Migrant Workers provides the country with an unprecedented opportunity to start anew and dedicate resources to the elaboration of a comprehensive digital communication strategy hinged on scalable, cheap, and accessible technology such as social media platforms. In that respect, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a real-life experiment whose successes and lessons learned can also be used. For example, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) adopted social media as its main tool to offer assistance for OFWs located outside the Philippines, especially in the Middle East where the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases among OFWs was

Migrasia - 2024

highest.¹⁰³ Similarly, direct messaging platforms such as Viber were used by the Department of Health (DoH) to share timely and accurate information. Thanks to the Viber page, more than 2.4 million Filipinos got access to critical information on COVID-19.¹⁰⁴ Such reach corresponds to more than the OFW population in the world in 2020, which amounted to about 1.77 million.

While ICT have already been identified to a large extent by international organizations as a powerful tool that empowers migrants (especially women)¹⁰⁵ and increases their autonomy and independence, they cannot constitute a silver bullet on their own to eradicate instances of abuses against migrant workers. Social media platforms and digital tools should not become a substitute for in-person programs and support, especially for the sector of domestic work, where migrants are likely to either have their phones confiscated or have their access to Wi-Fi restricted by their employer for example.¹⁰⁶ Institutions also face challenges when trying to adopt digital tools to provide help to migrants.¹⁰⁷ However, this research shows that these solutions need to be further explored and more institutionalized in order to provide aspiring Filipino MDWs with proper information rights before starting their migration journey.





Sources & Annexes

annex 1: useful definitions

In alphabetical order

Debt bondage:

The notion of debt bondage has been defined in Section 1, Article 1(a) of the [UN's Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery of 1956](#). In the Supplementary Convention, it is listed as a practice similar to slavery and refers to “the status or condition arising from a pledge by a debtor of his personal services or of those of a person under his control as security for a debt, if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied towards the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined.” Made more explicit by the IOM, debt bondage can be understood as “[...] when someone is forced to pay off a loan by working for an agreed-upon or unclear period of time for little or no salary” and when “[t]he work performed to pay off the debt greatly exceeds the worth of the initial loan.” The debt is then used to coerce and psychologically control the worker. Debt bondage is considered as one of the eleven indicators of forced labor by the [ILO](#) (see the definition of Forced labor below).

Domestic work:

[Convention No. 189 and recommendation No. 201 of the ILO](#) defines domestic work as “work performed in or for a household or households”. In TESDA’s [Training Regulations for Domestic Work](#), domestic work includes tasks such as: cleaning the house, cooking, washing and ironing clothes, taking care of children, or elderly or sick members of a family, gardening, guarding the house, driving for the family, and taking care of household pets. As such, this definition of domestic work encompasses the scope of care work.

Domestic worker:

According to the [Revised POEA Rules and Regulations Governing the Recruitment and Employment of Landbased Overseas Filipino Workers](#) of 2016 (hereafter referred to as “Revised POEA Rules of 2016”), a domestic worker is “any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship”. However,

different jurisdictions have different terms to cover the same concept. For example, “Foreign Domestic Helper” is specific to Hong Kong legislation, and “Household Worker” can sometimes be found in publications from institutions like Philippines government agencies or international organizations.

Employer:

An employer is defined in the [Revised POEA Rules of 2016](#) as a person, partnership, or corporation that directly signs an employment contract, and employs, and pays salaries and benefits of workers, as well as repatriates hired Overseas Filipino Workers.

Forced labor:

the definition of forced labor is specified in Article 2, Section 1 of the [ILO Forced Labour Convention No. 29](#) of 1930 as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily”. This definition consists of three elements that are clarified below:

- “Work or service” refers to all types of work occurring in any activity, industry or sector including in the informal economy.
- “Menace of any penalty” refers to a wide range of penalties used to compel someone to work.
- “Involuntariness” is in contrast to a job that would be “offered voluntarily”, meaning with the free and informed consent of a worker to take a job and their freedom to leave it at any time. Involuntariness refers for example to a situation when an employer or recruiter makes false promises so that a worker takes an employment offer they would not otherwise have accepted.

According to the [ILO](#), there are 11 indicators whose presence, individually or collectively are signs of forced labour: abuse of vulnerability; deception; restriction of movement, isolation; physical and/or sexual violence; intimidation and threats; retention of identity documents; withholding of wages; debt bondage; abusive working and living conditions; and excessive overtime.

Household:

According to the [National Migration Survey](#) conducted by the PSA, a household is a person or group of related or unrelated persons who live together in the

Migrasia - 2024

same housing unit(s), who acknowledge one adult male or female as the head of the household, who share the same housekeeping arrangements, and who are considered a single unit.

Human trafficking / Trafficking in persons:

Under Article 3(a) of the UN's [Palermo Protocol](#) of 2000,¹⁰⁸ the term “trafficking in persons” is defined as: “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation, which shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of

Illegal recruitment:

Under Philippine law, illegal recruitment is described in Part II, Rule X of the [Revised POEA Rules of 2016](#). The term covers “any act of canvassing, enlisting, contracting, transporting, utilizing, hiring or procuring workers and includes referrals, contract services, promising or advertising for employment abroad, whether for profit or not, when undertaken by a non-licensee or non-holder of authority [...]” The rules also include a detailed list of prohibited acts that constitute illegal recruitment, such as arranging exclusive referrals with training centers, medical clinics, or loan providers; deceiving the workers; illegitimate withholding of travel documents; or arranging, facilitating or granting a loan to an OFW with the interest rate exceeding 8% per annum.

Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs):

According to the [PSA](#), an overseas worker is “a household member who is currently out of the country due to overseas employment. He/she may or may not have a specific work contract or may be presently at home on vacation but has an existing overseas employment to return to.”

Placement fee:

refers to any and all amounts charged by a recruitment agency from a worker for its recruitment and placement services as prescribed by the Secretary of Labor and Employment. (POEA, 2016). According to Book I, Title I, Chapter I, Article 13(b) of the [Labor Code of the Philippines](#), “Recruitment and placement” refers to “any act of canvassing, enlisting, contracting, transporting, utilizing, hiring or procuring workers, and includes referrals, contract services, promising or advertising for employment, locally or abroad, whether for profit or not [...]”

Pre-departure:

In its [Safe Labour Migration Information Guide](#) for low-skilled workers, the ILO defines “pre-departure” as the first phase in the labor migration cycle before “departure”, “in service”, and “return”. The ILO further splits the pre-departure phase into the following sub-phases:

- Pre-decision making;
- Decision making;
- Selection of job;
- Recruitment;
- Pre-departure preparation requirements such as—in the case of the Philippines—visa and passport applications, medical checks, skills training and mandatory orientation seminars (PEOS, PDOS, and CPDEP for domestic workers); and
- Pre-departure self-preparation.

Recruitment agencies:

As per the [Revised POEA Rules of 2016](#), the term refers to “any person, partnership or corporation engaging in the recruitment and placement of workers for overseas employment”. They are private entities with business interests whose main activities cover the whole migration process.¹⁰⁹ As Part III, Rule II, Section 123 of the Revised POEA Rules of 2016 forbids direct-hires for low-skilled workers, recruitment agencies are an unavoidable intermediary between aspiring migrants and foreign employers, foreign placement agencies, or foreign service contractors/staffing agencies. In order to be duly authorized to engage in their activities, recruitment agencies in the Philippines must be licensed by the POEA. Otherwise, their activity is considered as illegal recruitment.

annex 2: pre-departure information seminars & assessments

In order to better understand which information is provided to Filipino nationals wishing to work abroad, Annex 2 summarizes the way information is disseminated to Filipino migrants in order to ensure a safer migration. Given that this report focuses on the population of Filipino migrant domestic workers (MDWs), Annex 2 presents information that is specific to this subgroup of OFWs. As domestic workers belong to land-based OFWs, the specificities of the migration process for distinct groups of migrants such as Filipinos wishing to settle permanently abroad or who undertake sea-based work are not presented here. Before being able to leave the Philippines, aspiring Filipino migrant workers must show they have acquired knowledge about:

1. The migration process and their rights as migrant workers, both in the Philippines and in the destination country;
2. The technical skills needed for their occupation abroad; and
3. How to best adapt to their life abroad and seek help if needed.

While knowledge about the migration process, rights as migrant workers, and knowledge to best adapt in the destination country is provided by government pre-departure programs, the technical skills are assessed through a specific skills assessment test. The various pre-departure programs as well as the test that aspiring Filipino MDWs have to go through are described in Table A below.

Acronyms for Philippines government agencies

DOLE: Department of Labor and Employment

DMW: Department of Migrant Workers

OWWA: Overseas Workers Welfare Administration

POEA: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

TESDA: Technical Education and Skills Development Authority

Table A: Pre-departure procedures for Filipino migrant domestic workers

Name of the program	Administration mode and duration	Implementing agency	Requirements	Fee	Purpose/Content	Mandatory
Pre-Employment Orientation Seminar (PEOS)	Online seminar Completion time: about an hour.	DMW (formerly administered by the POEA)	The worker has to e-Register before accessing the program.	Free	<p>Provides aspiring migrants with basic information about overseas work in order to prepare and guide them in their decision to go abroad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It consists of 8 modules covering topics such as: • General information about working overseas • Job application process and document requirements • Precautionary measures for illegal recruitment practices • List of required fees for pre-departure • Minimum provisions required in the standard overseas employment contract. • Security and health risks overseas • DMW presence and support abroad. 	Mandatory for all OFWs, including domestic workers.
Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS)	In-person seminar 6 hours	The PDOS is administered by providers that are accredited by the OWWA. These providers include: Philippine Recruitment Agencies; Industry Associations; and Non-Governmental Organizations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Original Passport and Working Visa 2) Endorsement Letter 3) Employment Contract verified by POLO in the country of work 4) Certified true copy of the PEOS certificate + potential additional country-specific administrative requirements	Free	<p>Orient departing migrant workers with basic information, e.g. work standards, general profile of the country of destination, stages of the OFW's life abroad, health & safety, travel tips, airport procedure, and government programs & services.</p> <p>The PDOS are country-specific and, in some cases, skill-specific.</p>	Mandatory for all OFWs, including domestic workers.

<p>Comprehensive Pre-Departure Education Program (CPDEP)</p>	<p>In-person seminar 2 to 6 days depending on the language training provided.</p>	<p>OWWA</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Valid Passport 2) Employment Contract verified by POLO in the country of work 3) Certificate of Attendance of the PDOS 4) Endorsement letter 	<p>Free</p>	<p>Program developed to address the need of vulnerable migrants, especially domestic workers.</p> <p>It mainly addresses three topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language training (Arabic/Cantonese/Hebrew/Mandarin); • Culture familiarization; and • Stress management. 	<p>Mandatory for domestic workers only.</p>
<p>National Certificate II (NC II) assessment</p>	<p>In-person skills assessment test</p>	<p>A worker can apply for assessment in the following institutions: Private TESDA-accredited assessment centers; TESDA Regional and Provincial Offices; or TESDA TVET Institutions-Assessment Centers.</p>	<p>Employment agencies can refer workers for a skills test only when the worker has been pre-qualified to an existing overseas position that has been duly covered by an approved job order by the Administration.</p> <p>Most importantly, undertaking training is not a requirement in order to be able to apply for the skills assessment test.</p> <p>In case an employer mandates an OFW to undergo a particular training, the cost should be shouldered by the employer, not by the worker.</p>	<p>Only the skills assessment fee (the cost of taking the assessment test) and the cost of the Certificate of Competency delivered by TESDA (the cost of issuing the NC II certificate) can be charged to the worker.</p> <p>The skills assessment fee is regulated by TESDA.</p>	<p>The NC II is an assessment in order to determine whether the worker can perform to the standards expected in the workplace based on defined competency standards. Certification is provided to those who meet the competency standards. This ensures the productivity, quality and global competitiveness of the middle-level workers.</p> <p>The Domestic Work NC II Qualification consists of competencies that a person must achieve to clean living rooms, dining rooms, bedrooms, toilet, kitchen; wash and iron clothes, linen, fabric; prepare hot and cold meals/ food; and provide food and beverage service.</p>	<p>Mandatory for all OFWs, including domestic workers (who then need to pass a Domestic Work NC II).</p> <p>The NC II is valid for 5 years and can be renewed without undertaking additional training.</p>

Sources for Table A:

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Migrasia - 2024

About the NC II examination:

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- TESDA (n.d.) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on Assessment and Certification. URL: <https://www.tesda.gov.ph/About/Tesda/127>
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- Governing Board Resolutions No. 8, (2008) (POEA) (Phil.) URL: <https://www.dmw.gov.ph/poea/gbr/gbr.html>. NOTE: At the time of writing, documents from the POEA website are currently inaccessible due to the creation of the Department of Migrant Workers' website.
- TESDA (n.d.) Promulgated Assessment Fees as of 31 January 2021. URL: https://www.tesda.gov.ph/Uploads/File/AssessmentFees/Promulgated%20Assessment%20Fees_31Jan2021.pdf
- TESDA (n.d.) Training Regulations - Domestic Work NC II. URL: <https://tesda.gov.ph/Downloadables/TR%20Domestic%20Work%20NC%20II.pdf>

annex 3: survey questionnaire

Language of the survey: Tagalog

Total number of questions: 2 screening questions, 30 follow-up questions

Response time-range of accepted questionnaires: 5 min 00 secs to 27 min 03 secs

A: Screening Questions

#	Question and translation	Possible answers and screening process
SQ1	How interested are you in working abroad as a caregiver or a domestic helper? [Gaano ka ka-interesado magtrabaho sa ibang bansa bilang isang tagapag alaga o isang katulong sa bahay?]	Not interested at all (Sobrang Hindi Interesado) Exclude Not interested (Hindi Interesado) Exclude Somewhat interested (Medyo Interesado) Exclude Interested (Interesado) Go to Screening Question 2 Very interested (Sobrang Interesado) Go to Screening Question 2
SQ2	Which option best describes your status as an overseas Filipino worker (OFW)? [Aling opsyon ang pinakamainam na naglalarawan sa iyong katayuan bilang isang OFW?]	I am considering pursuing a job as an OFW (Isinasaalang-alang ko na maging isang OFW) Continue to the survey I am currently training to be an OFW (Kasalukuyan akong nagsasanay upang maging isang OFW) Continue to the survey I am in the deployment process to be an OFW (Ako ay nasa proseso ng pag-alis o pag-deploy upang maging isang OFW) Continue to the survey I am currently working as an OFW (Kasalukuyan akong nagtatrabaho bilang isang OFW) Exclude I am a former OFW (Ako ay dating OFW) Exclude I am none of these (Wala ako sa mga ito) Exclude

B: Questionnaire

#	Question and translation	Possible answers and screening process
Q1	Which gender do you identify with? [Aling kasarian ang inyong pagkakakilanlan?]	Male (Lalaki) Female (Babae) I prefer not to say (Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin) Other (please specify) [Iba pa (Pakitiyak)]
Q2	How old are you? [Ilan taong ka na?]	Free text

Migrasia - 2024

<p>Q3</p>	<p>Which of the following best describes your current or latest occupation in the Philippines? [Alin dito ang pinakanaglalarawan sa kasalukuyang o huling trabaho mo Pilipinas?]</p>	<p>Agricultural worker [Manggagawa sa bukirin] Fishermen [Mangingisda] Construction worker [Trabahador sa construction] Manufacturer [Tagagawa ng kasangkapan] Cleaner [Tagalinis] Restaurant server [Waiter / Waitress] Tourism worker [Nagtrabaho sa turismo] Food preparer [Tagaluto] Call center agent [Ahente sa call center] Sales worker [Kahero / Sales staff] Secretary [Sekretarya] Clerical support staff [Kahera / Tauhan sa opisina] Undertaking personal family care [Tagaalaga ng sariling pamilya] Other [Iba]</p>
<p>Q4</p>	<p>What is your current work status? [Ano ang kalagayan mo sa trabaho ngayon?]</p>	<p>Employed full time [Nagtrabaho nang full time] Employed part time [Nagtrabaho nang part time] Employed in seasonal work (In season) [Nagtrabaho nang panapanahon lamang; at kasalukuyang mayroon] Employed in seasonal work (out of season) [Nagtrabaho nang panapanahon lamang; at sa kasalukuyan, wala] Employed in gig labor [Nagtrabaho sa paisa-isang proyekto, kapag may maghire] Unemployed and looked for work within two weeks [Walang trabaho at dalawang linggo nang naghahanap] Unemployed and haven't looked for work within two weeks. [Walang trabaho at dalawang linggo nang hindi naghahanap] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin] Other [Iba]</p>
<p>Q5</p>	<p>What is your highest level of education? [Ano ang iyong pinakamataas na antas sa edukasyon?]</p>	<p>No formal education [Walang pormal na edukasyon] Elementary education [Edukasyong Elementarya] Secondary education [Edukasyong Sekundarya] Vocational Education and Training or Technical Education [Bokasyonal na Edukasyon at Pagsasanay o Teknikal na Edukasyon] Bachelor's degree [Degree ng Bachelor] Graduate Degree or higher [Graduate Degree o mas mataas] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin] Other, please specify [Iba, {paki-tukoy}]</p>
<p>Q6</p>	<p>With yourself, how many individuals are there in your household? [Kasama ang inyong sarili, gaano karami ang mga indibidwal o tao sa inyong sambahayan?]</p>	<p>No one (only me) [Isa (Ako lamang)] 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 or more [11 o higit pa] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]</p>
<p>Q7</p>	<p>What is your relationship status? [Ano ang katayuan ng inyong kasal?]</p>	<p>Single [Walang asawa] Married for more than 2 years [Nagpakasal mahigit na sa dalawang taon ang nakalipas] Live-in partners [May ka live-in] Married within 2 year [Nagpakasal sa loob ng dalawang taon] Common law marriage [Matagal na nagsasama pero walang kasal] Divorced or annulled and separated [Divorced o annulled at magkahiwalay] Divorced or annulled and living together in the same house [Divorced o annulled at magkasama sa bahay] Other, please specify [Iba, {paki-tukoy}] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]</p>

Q8	How many members of your household are children under 15 or adults over 65 years old? [Ilan sa mga miyembro ng sambahayan nyo ang mga batang wala pang 15 taong gulang o higit sa 65 taong gulang?]	None [Wala] 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more [Pito o higit pa] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]
Q9	In Pesos, approximately, which of the following is your household income or income? (Please include all income or income of all members of your household). [Sa Pesos, sa humigit-kumulang, alin sa mga susunod ang inggreso o kinikita ng inyong sambahayan? (Pakisama lahat ng inggreso o kinikita ng lahat ng miyembro ng inyong sambahayan).]	1,700 per month or 20 000 per year [1,700 kada buwan o 20,000 kada taon] 3,300 per month 40 000 per year [3,300 kada buwan o 40,000 kada taon] 5,000 per month or 60,000 per year [5,000 kada buwan o 60,000 kada taon] 6,700 per month or 80,000 per year [6,700 kada buwan o 80,000 kada taon] 8,300 per month or 100,000 per year [8,300 kada buwan o 100,000 kada taon] 17,000 per month or 200,000 per year [17,000 kada buwan o 200,000 kada taon] 25,000 per month or 300,000 per year [25,000 kada buwan o 300,000 kada taon] 33,300 per month or 400,000 per year [33,300 kada buwan o 400,000 kada taon] 41,700 per month or 500,000 per year [41,700 kada buwan o 500,000 kada taon] 50,000 per month or 600,000 per year [50,000 kada buwan o 600,000 kada taon] More than 50,000 per month or more than 600,000 per year [Mahigit 50,000 kada buwan o Mahigit 600,000 kada taon] Prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]
Q10	In Pesos, how much does your household save? [Sa Pesos, magkano ang ipon ng inyong sambahayan?]	0 1 - 5,000 5,001 - 10,000 10,001 - 20,000 20,001 - 30,000 30,001 - 40,000 40,001 - 50,000 50,001 - 60,000 60,001 - 70,000 More than 70,000 [Mahigit 70,000] Prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]
Q11	In Pesos, how much does your household owe? [Sa Pesos, magkano ang utang ng inyong sambahayan?]	See list in Q10
Q12	Does your household own a permanent home? [Ang inyong sambahayan ba ay may pagmamay-ari ng isang permanenting tirahan?]	Yes [Oo/Meron] No [Hindi/Wala] Prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]
Q13	Which is your top deployment destination for working overseas? [Alin sa mga bansang ito ang pinakagusto mong puntahan para magtrabaho?]	England Italy Cyprus Canada United States Cayman Islands Kuwait Qatar Saudi Arabia United Arab Emirates Singapore Hong Kong Taiwan Malaysia Prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin] Other (please specify) [Iba, {paki-tukoy}]

Migrasia - 2024

<p>Q14</p>	<p>Putting all your visits together, how long did you stay in the country you want to work in the most? [Kung pinagsama ang lahat ng dalaw mo, gaano ka katagal nagstay sa bansang pinakagusto mong pagtrabahuan?]</p>	<p>I have never been [Hindi pa ako nakakapunta doon] Two weeks [Dalawang linggo] One month [Isang buwan] Two months [Dalawang buwan] Three months [Tatlong buwan] Four months [Apat na buwan] Five months [Limang buwan] Six months [Anim na buwan] Seven Months [Pitong buwan] Eight months [Walong buwan] Nine months or more [Siyam na buwan o higit pa]</p>
<p>Q15</p>	<p>How much do you think you will earn in the country where you wish to work? [Magkano ang tingin mong kikitain mong piso sa gusto mong pagtrabahuan na bansa?]</p>	<p>0 PHP 4,200/month or 50,000/year 8,300/month 100,000/year 17,000/month or 200,000/year 25,000/month or 300,000/year 33,300/month or 400,000/year 41,700/month or 500,000/year 50,000/month or 600,000/year 58,300/month or 700,000/year 66,700/month or 800,000/year 75,000/month or 900,000/year 83,300/month or 1,000,000/year 91,700/month or 1,100,000/year 100,000/month or 1,200,000/year and over I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]</p>
<p>Q16</p>	<p>Which of these countries would be your second choice for working abroad? [Alin sa mga bansang ito ang pangalawang pinakagusto mong puntahan para magtrabaho?]</p>	<p>See list in Q13</p>
<p>Q17</p>	<p>Of these media channels, which are the two you most frequently visit, read or watch? [Sa mga media channel na ito, alin ang dalawang pinaka madalas mong bisitahin, basahin o pinapanood?]</p>	<p>Facebook Instagram Reddit YouTube Twitter Television [Telebisyon] Print newspapers [Pahayagang papel] Radio [Radyo] Online Filipino news (Philippine Star) [Balita sa internet na gawang lokal, tulad ng Philippine Star] Online international news (New York Times) [Balita sa internet na nagmula abroad, tulad ng New York Times] Books or magazines [Mga libro o peryodiko] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong di sabihin] Other (please specify) [Iba {paki-tukoy}]</p>
<p>Q18</p>	<p>Where do you often get information about migration? Choose two. [Saan ka madalas nakakakuha ng impormasyon tukol sa pag-migrate? Pumili ng dalawa.]</p>	<p>Friends or family in the Philippines [Mga kaibigan at kamaganak sa Pilipinas] Friends or family overseas [Mga kaibigan at kamaganak na nasa abroad] Employment Agencies [Mga ahensyang pang-employment] Social media (Facebook, YouTube) The Pilipino Government (DOLE or TESDA). [Ahensya ng gobyerno, tulad ng DOLE o TESDA] Television [Telebisyon] Books or magazines [Mga libro o peryodiko] Radio [Radyo] Online Pilipino news (Philippine Star) [Balita sa internet na gawang lokal, tulad ng Philippine Star] Online international news (New York Times) [Balita sa internet na nagmula abroad, tulad ng New York Times] NGOs (Scalabrini Migration Center) I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin] Other [Iba]</p>

Q19	From one to ten, please rate how well you think you are informed on your plan to migrate? [Mula isa hanggang sampu, paki-rate kung gaano ka ka-informed, sa tingin mo, sa plano mong magmigrate?]	One for not at all [Isa = hindi talaga] Two [Dalawa] Three [Tatlo] Four [Apat] Five [Lima] Six [Anim] Seven [Pito] Eight [Walo] Nine [Siyam] Ten for exceptionally [Sampu = napaka informed] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]
Q20	What information would be helpful for your migration? [Anong impormasyon ang makakatulong sa iyong mag-migrate?]	Free text
Q21	From one to ten, please rate how much you are interested in additional information about migrating as a caregiver or domestic helper. [Mula isa hanggang sampu, paki-rate kung gaano ka kainteresado sa pandagdag na impormasyon tungkol sa pag-migrate bilang isang caregiver o domestic helper.]	One for not at all [Isa = hindi talaga ako interesado] Two [Dalawa] Three [Tatlo] Four [Apat] Five [Lima] Six [Anim] Seven [Pito] Eight [Walo] Nine [Siyam] Ten for extremely [Sampu = interesadong interesado ako] I prefer not to say [mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]
Q22	Which of these topics related to migration are you most interested in? Choose two. [Alin sa mga paksang ito na tungkol sa pag-mamigrate ang Interested ka? Pumili ng dalawa.]	Overview of the migration process [Pangkalahatang proseso ng migration] Directory of good service providers [Direktoryo ng mga nagbibigay serbisyo sa OFW] How to select a training center [Kung paano pumili ng training center] How to select an employment agency [Kung paano pumili ng ahensyang pang-employment] How to select a loan provider [Kung paano pumili ng tagabigay pautang] Forming a budget [Ang pagbabadyet] Resources for overseas workers [Mga mapagkukunan ng impormasyon o serbisyo para sa OFW] Legal rights [Mga karapatang ligal] Ratings of service providers [Mga rating ng mga tagapagbigay serbisyo] Handling disputes [Paglutas ng alitan] Other [Iba] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]
Q23	What would be your preferred format of training? [Anong uri ng training ang mas gusto mo?]	In person (in Philippines) [Sa personal {sa Pilipinas}] Online training courses [Kurso sa internet] Online videos on social media [Bidyo sa social media] Text materials like books [Mga basahin tulad ng mga libro] Text materials like magazines [mga basahin tulad ng mga peryodiko] Other [Iba] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]
Q24	On a scale of one to ten, how readily available are legal resources for migrating? [Mula , paki-rate kung gaano kadaling makahanap ng impormasyong ligal ukol sa pag-migrate.]	One for none at all [Isa = hindi talaga] Two [Dalawa] Three [Tatlo] Four [Apat] Five [Lima] Six [Anim] Seven [Pito] Eight [Walo] Nine [Siyam] Ten for plenty of resources [Sampu = madami akong nahahanap] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]

Migrasia - 2024

<p>Q25</p>	<p>Which two things interest you the most in working overseas? [Aling dalawa dito ang pinaka-interesane para sa yo ukol sa patratrabaho sa ibang bansa?]</p>	<p>Advancing a career [Pagpapasulong ng karera] Higher earnings [Mas malaking sweldo] remitting income [Pagpapadala] Schooling [Pag-aaral] Healthcare [Pangangalang pangkalusugan] Safety [Kaligtasan] Political stability [Matinong systemang politikal] Overseas family [Pamilya na nasa abroad] Cleaner environment [Mas malinis na kapaligiran] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin] Other</p>
<p>Q26</p>	<p>What is your main barrier to migration? [Ano ang pinakamalaki mong hadlang sa pag-migrate?]</p>	<p>Financing my training [Pondo para sa training] Financing my travel [Pondo para sa paglakbay] Finding an employer [Paghahanap ng employer] Family commitments [Mga tungkulin sa pamilya] Completing the necessary training [Pagkompleto ng training] Finding a training facility [Paghahanap ng training center] Visa issues or immigration policies [Isyu sa visa o imigrasyon] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin] Other please specify [iba, paki-tukoy]</p>
<p>Q27</p>	<p>On a scale of one to ten, how much does helping family incentivize you to migrate? [Mula isa hanggang sampu, paki-rate kung gaano kalaking insentibo ang pagtulong sa pamila para mag-ibang bansa?]</p>	<p>One for not at all [Isa = hindi talaga] Two [Dalawa] Three [Tatlo] Four [Apat] Five [Lima] Six [Anim] Seven [Pito] Eight [Walo] Nine [Siyam] Ten for extremely [Sampu = napakalaki] I prefer not to say [Mas gusto kong hindi sabihin]</p>
<p>Q28</p>	<p>On a scale of one to ten, how much does remitting money to the Philippines incentivize you to migrate? [Mula isa hanggang sampu, paki-rate kung gaano kalaking insentibo ang pagtulong sa pamila para mag-ibang bansa?]</p>	<p>See list in Q27</p>
<p>Q29</p>	<p>On a scale of one to ten, how mistreated have you felt during your migration? [Mula isa hanggang sampu, paki-rate kung gaano kalala ang naramdam mong panga-api bilang migrant worker?]</p>	<p>See list in Q27</p>
<p>Q30</p>	<p>Could you describe what happened? [Pwede mo bang ikwento ang nangyari?]</p>	<p>Free text</p>

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Migrasia - 2024

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70. Labour Market Authority of Bahrain, Authorised Health Centres (Philippines). Accessed 8th June 2022. [Link](#).
71. The Department of Migrant Workers Act (RA 11641), December 30, 2021. [Link](#).
72. The seven agencies are: the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA); the Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs (OUMWA) of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA); the International Labor Affairs Bureau (ILAB) and all Philippine Overseas Labor Offices (POLO) under the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE); the National Maritime Polytechnic (NMP); the National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRC) under the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), and the Office of the Social Welfare Attaché (OSWA) under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). Source: Department of Migrant Workers' website, www.dmw.gov.ph
73. Patinio, F. (2022). Department of Migrant Workers may start by 2023: POEA. Philippines News Agency. 13 January. [Link](#).
74. POEA (n.5) Part III, Rule II, Section 123.
75. Migrasia (n.1)
76. See the Demographics part for the distribution of our sample across the different stages of migration before departure.
77. More information about the CPDEP and the various governmental pre-departure programs mentioned in this section can be found in Annex 2.
78. Migrasia (n.1)
79. POEA (n.5) Part II, Rule X, Section 1.
80. Department of Migrant Workers (n.d.). PEOS e-registration page. [Link](#). Accessed 8th June 2022.
81. CFO (n.d.). Reservation and Registration (R&R) PDOS. B. Requirements. [Link](#).
82. OWWA (n.d.). Pre-Departure Education Program. [Link](#). Accessed 8th June 2022.
83. Inspiron, D. (2019). Expectations and Realities in Labour Migration: Experiences of Filipino Domestic Workers in a government run shelter in Kuwait, Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women. P. 19-20. [Link](#).
84. PSA (2019). 2018 National Migration Survey, p.66. [Link](#).
85. In our study, respondents were presented with choices of countries while, in the PSA statistics, destinations are presented as a mix of countries and regions. As such, we used regional figures when comparing our sample's responses with PSA statistics. For example, "North and South America" in official statistics are compared with the results for the United States and Canada in our sample. "Europe" in official statistics is compared with the results for England, Italy and Cyprus. "East Asia"

Migrasia - 2024

in our sample comprises Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and Malaysia while “GCC countries” comprises Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait. For the four regions considered, the countries proposed to our respondents represent the bulk of destination countries for OFWs and are thus a good estimation of the regional statistics.

86. This hourly wage takes into account overtime, tips and commissions. Source: Wolfe, J. et al. (2020). Domestic workers chartbook: A comprehensive look at the demographics, wages, benefits, and poverty rates of the professionals who care for our family members and clean our homes. Economy Policy Institute. [Link](#).
87. On a basis of 8 hours a day, 6 days a week, 4 weeks a month.
88. Government of Canada (2022, January 7). Hiring a domestic worker and related accreditation program. Global Affairs Canada. [Link](#).
89. PSA (2022, March 7). 2020 Overseas Filipino Workers (Final Results). TABLE 3: Distribution of Overseas Filipino Workers by Place of Work and Sex 2019 and 2020. [Link](#).
90. Helper Choice (2017) Helper Choice Foreign Domestic Worker Salary Survey, Middle East Edition. [Link](#).
91. See for example: Department of Labor and Employment (2019, November 5) Beware of job ads using fake POEA FB. DOLE website. [Link](#). - Patinio, F. (2019). Jobseekers warned about fake job ads using POEA logo. Philippines News Agency. 5 November. [Link](#). - Paunan, J. C. (2021). DOJ warns public against proliferating text scams. Philippines Information Agency. 25 November. [Link](#).
92. ILO (2019) Mobile women and mobile phones: Women migrant workers' use of information and communication technologies in ASEAN. [Link](#).
93. Dekker, R., & Engbersen, G. (2014). How social media transform migrant networks and facilitate migration. *Global Networks*, 14(4), 401-418.
94. Chua, K. (2021). PH remains top in social media, internet usage worldwide – report. Rappler. 28 January.
95. The order of appearance of the answers is not representative of the respondent's preference: the questionnaire did not invite respondents to rank the answers, only to choose two.
96. “Social media” being Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Reddit, and Instagram; and “traditional media” being television, radio, newspapers, books, and online local/international news.
97. Social Weather Stations (2019, June 29). First Quarter 2019 Social Weather Survey: 1 of 5 adult Pinoys use Facebook daily as a source of news. Social Weather Stations.

Bridging the Gap

Rebalancing information
asymmetries for
aspiring Filipino migrant
domestic workers

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The logo for 'migrasia' features the word in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters 'migr' are in blue, and 'asia' is in green. A blue curved line arches over the 'i' and 'r'.

