

SPECIAL RELEASE

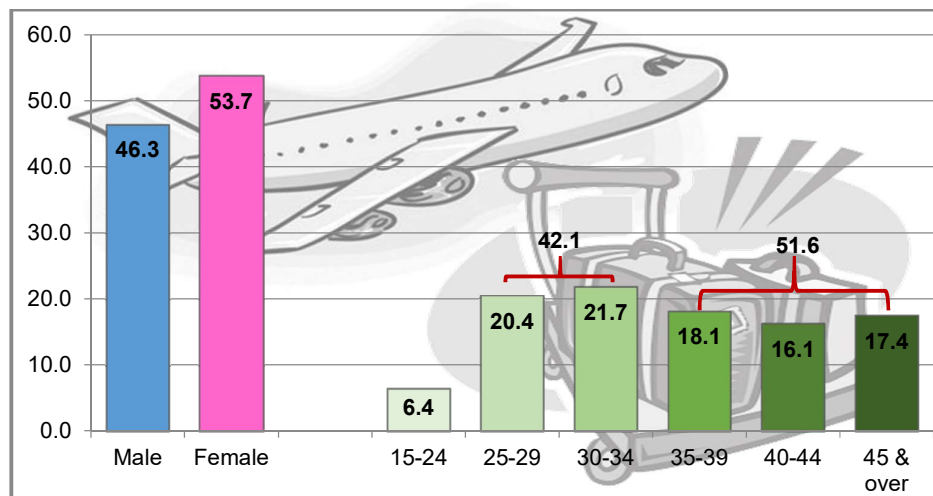
2017 OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS

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Filipinos employed abroad reach 2.3 million in 2017

- Philippine workers abroad were estimated at 2.3 million in 2017. This figure covers those who were working or had worked abroad six months prior to the conduct of the 2017 Survey of Overseas Filipinos (SOF), and whose departure occurred within the last five years.
- These workers were female-dominated (53.7 percent) and most were working on contract basis (97.0 percent). Five in ten overseas Filipinos were adult workers aged 35 years and over (51.6 percent), while four in ten were young adults aged 25-34 years (42.1).
- Top occupations for Filipino employees abroad were: Elementary occupations (37.6 percent), Service and sales workers (18.0 percent), Plant and machine operators and assemblers (13.7 percent), Craft and related trade workers (11.4 percent), and Professionals (8.7 percent).

Figure 1. Percentage distribution of overseas Filipino workers by sex and age group, Philippines: 2017



Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, 2017 SOF

Six in ten overseas women work in elementary occupations

- There were 1.3 million female overseas workers in 2017. Jobs that most women workers did abroad include elementary occupations (59.0 percent), service and sales workers (20.0 percent), and professionals (9.0 percent).
- Women who tried their career overseas were mostly in their late twenties (24.1 percent) or early thirties (23.4 percent), young adults dominated the women workforce abroad with 47.5 percent. On the other hand, older women employees abroad were estimated at 45.4 percent. The youngest of these women, aged 15-24 years old, comprised the remaining 6.4 percent

Six in ten men working abroad are 35 years old and over

- An estimated 1.1 million Filipinos abroad were male employees, wherein 35.8 percent were young adults aged 25-34 years old and 58.8 percent were the older workforce. About 7.2 percent of these workers were 15-24 years old.
- Male overseas workers were mostly engaged in the following activities: Plant and machine operators and assemblers (26.9 percent), Craft and related trade workers (22.1 percent) Service and sales workers (15.7 percent), Elementary occupations (12.8 percent), and Technicians and associate professionals (9.5 percent).

Table 1. Percentage distribution of overseas Filipino workers by top five occupation group and sex, Philippines: 2017

Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)		Male OFWs		Female OFWs	
Elementary occupations	37.6	Plant and machine operators and assemblers	26.9	Elementary occupations	59.0
Service and sales workers	18.0	Craft and related trade workers	22.1	Service and sales workers	20.0
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	13.7	Service and sales workers	15.7	Professionals	9.0
Craft and related trade workers	11.4	Elementary occupations	12.8	Clerical support workers	4.0
Professionals	8.7	Technicians and associate professionals	9.5	Technicians and associate professionals	2.5

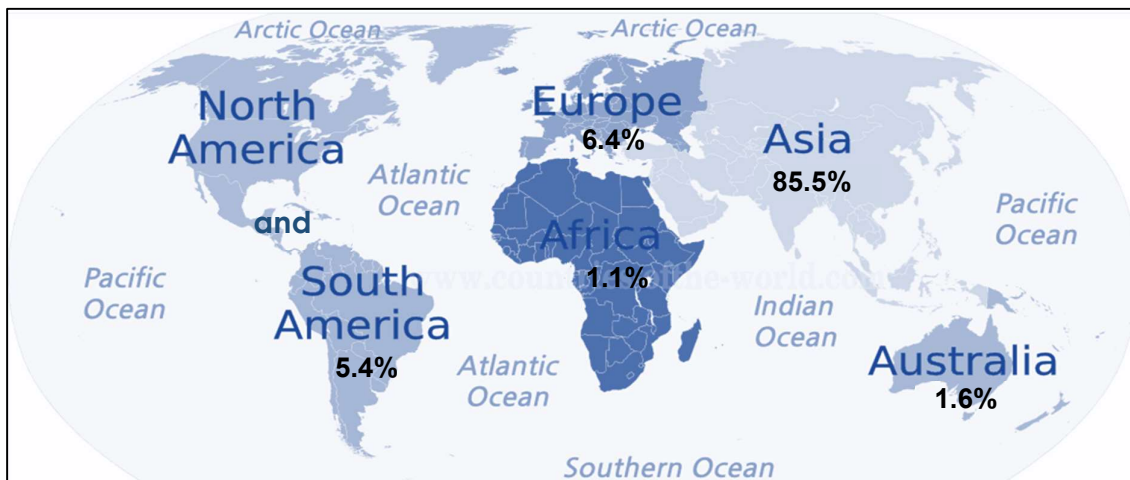
Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, 2017 SOF

Cordilleran overseas workers estimate at 2.3 percent

- Workers abroad from the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) comprised 2.3 percent of the national estimate. Overseas Filipinos originated mostly from CALABARZON area (20.7 percent), Central Luzon (12.9 percent) and National Capital Region (9.5 percent). Caraga (1.7 percent), MIMAROPA (1.8 percent) and Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (1.9 percent) shared the least percentage of Filipino workforce abroad.

- Most Filipino workers were employed in Asia, accounting 85.5 percent of total OFWs in 2017. All others were economically contributing in Europe (6.4 percent), North and South America (5.4 percent), and Australia (1.6 percent).
- Six in ten Filipino workers in Asia (57.1 percent) were employed in Western Asia, mostly in the Arab countries. The rest were working in the eastern countries (18.9 percent) and in the south and south-central part of the continent (9.5 percent).
- Among Asian countries, Saudi Arabia was the top destination for Filipino employment (25.4 percent) followed by United Arab Emirates (15.3 percent). Meanwhile, Hong Kong (6.5 percent) was the top employer for Filipinos in the East Asia and Singapore (5.3 percent) in the south.

Figure 2. Percentage distribution of overseas Filipino workers by place of work (continent): 2017



Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, 2017 SOF
 (Photo credits: www.countries.ofthe.world.com)

Total remittances at 205.1 billion pesos in six months

- Overseas Filipinos boosted the country's economy through remittances with a total estimate of 205.1 billion pesos from April to September 2017. A bulk of this came from money remittances through channels amounting to 146.8 billion pesos (71.6 percent). These workers also brought home a total of 48.2 billion pesos (23.5 percent) in cash, while some sent or brought home 10.1 billion pesos worth of goods.
- In the said period in 2017, an overseas worker remitted an average of 74 thousand pesos, brought home an average of 100 thousand pesos and sent or brought an average of 25 thousand pesos worth of goods from working abroad.
- The most preferred means of remitting cash by overseas workers to their families was through banks with a recorded total remittance of 92.2 billion pesos in six months or 62.8 percent of the total money transmitted to the country. Others sent money through Agency/Local office (3.1 percent), via Door-to-door services (0.8 percent), with the help of friends or co-workers (0.1 percent), and all others transmitted cash by other means (33.1 percent).

Filipino workers in Asia remit 114.4 billion pesos

- Money remittances from Filipinos working in Asian countries accumulated an amount of 114.4 billion pesos, or 77.9 percent of the total cash remitted. Contributing largely to this figure were the remittances from the Middle East or Western Asia countries, with 72.7 billion pesos. Workers from East and South/South Central Asia remitted 23.9 billion pesos and 17.8 billion pesos, respectively.
- A Filipino employee in South and South Central Asia country remitted an average of 95 thousand pesos. Those working in Western and East Asia remitted 64 thousand and 63 thousand pesos on the average, respectively. Overall, a Filipino worker in any Asian country remitted about 67 thousand pesos on average in a six-month period in 2017.
- Workers in other continents sent cash to the country with the following totals: 14.4 billion pesos from European countries, 12.3 billion pesos from North and South Americas, 3.5 billion pesos from Australia, and 2.2 billion pesos from Africa. However, OFWs in Europe, the North and South Americas, and Australia sent the highest average remittances of more than a hundred thousand pesos per worker.

HIGHEST TOTAL REMITTANCE

By Place of work:

Asia countries

PhP 114.4 B

By Occupation:

Elementary occupations

PhP 38.6 B

HIGHEST REMITTANCE PER WORKER

By Place of work:

Europe – PhP 118,000

By Occupation:

Technician/Associate

Professionals – PhP 125,000

Technicians/Associate professionals top remittance per worker

- Technical and associate professionals brought in the biggest average remittance per OFW in the occupation with 125 thousand pesos sent within the 6 months in 2017. They were followed by professionals and managers, with average remittance of 107 thousand pesos and 103 thousand pesos per worker, respectively.
- Professionals sent a total of 17.8 billion pesos in remittances, technical and associate professionals remitted an accumulated value of 14.1 billion pesos, while managers brought in the country 2.7 billion pesos.
- Among skilled workers, those employed in elementary occupations sent an aggregated amount of 38.6 billion pesos. This comprised 26.3 percent of the total remittances of all overseas workers but this translated to an average remittance of only 52 thousand per OFW in the occupation group.
- Plant and machine operators and assemblers, service and sale workers, and craft and related trade workers remitted to the country 27.5 billion pesos, 22.9 billion pesos and 18.3 billion pesos, respectively, from compensation received from their employers abroad.

VILLAFE P. ALIBUYOG

Regional Director

Technical Notes

Who are the Overseas Filipinos? For purposes of this survey, the following are considered as overseas Filipinos as long as their departure occurred within the given five-year period:

1. Filipino Overseas Contract Workers (OCWs) who are presently and temporarily out of the country to fulfill an overseas work contract for a specific length of time, or who are presently at home on vacation but still has an existing contract to work abroad. They may either be landbased or seabased.
 - a. *Landbased workers* – these are OCWs who are hired either by direct hiring of an employer abroad, or through the assistance of Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), or through a private and licensed recruitment agency. They may have returned to the Philippines for a vacation (annual or emergency leave), or have transferred to other employers, or were rehired by their former employer.
 - b. *Seabased workers* – these are OCWs who worked or are working in any kind of international fishing/passenger/cargo vessels. Included also are OCWs who worked or are working for a shipping company abroad.
2. Other Filipino workers abroad with a valid working visa or work permit. Included also are crew members of airplanes such as pilots, stewards, stewardesses and others whose employers are foreign nationals.
3. Filipino workers other than those who work on contractual basis. These include Filipinos who went out of the country through backdoor means and worked there during the reference period.
4. Filipinos whose place of employment is outside the Philippines but whose employer is the Philippine government.
5. Filipinos who are sent abroad by the Philippine government or by private institutions for training, scholarship or any other similar purpose, even if they are known to be working abroad.
6. Filipinos working in other countries who are hired as consultants/ advisors of international organizations such as the United Nations, International Monetary Fund and others.
7. Filipino immigrants and residents in other countries.
8. Filipinos abroad who are holders of other types of non-immigrant visa such as visa for tourist/visitor, student, medical treatment and others.

Who are the Overseas Filipino Workers? OFWs include OCWs who were presently and temporarily out of the country during the reference period to fulfill an overseas contract for a specific length of time, or who were presently at home on vacation during the reference period but still had an existing contract to work abroad. Also included were other Filipino workers abroad with valid working visas or work permits. Those who had no working visa or work permit (tourists, visitors, students, those seeking medical treatment, and other types of non-immigrants) but were presently employed and working full time in other countries were also classified as OFWs.

The **Survey on Overseas Filipinos (SOF)** is an annual survey that seeks to gather information on Filipino citizens abroad, including overseas workers, who left the country for employment during the five years preceding the survey. SOF is conducted as a rider survey to the October round of the Labor Force Survey.