



17 March 2023

ASSISTANT SECRETARY JAIME VICTOR B. LEDDA

Office of European Affairs
Department of Foreign Affairs
2330 Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, Philippines

SUBJECT: CFO Input for the 5th Philippines-Sweden Political Consultations

Dear **Assistant Secretary Ledda**:

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas wishes to provide the Department with our input relating to the above-mentioned subject:

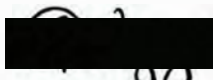
1. The Philippines should consider signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Sweden to support improving the country's labor migrant policies and emphasizing women's rights.
2. The Philippines may want to look into establishing institutions that can supply Filipinos with learning materials and trainings that are crucial in the process of mastering a foreign language.
3. The Philippines may suggest offering livelihood training programs, and educational or financial assistance to aspiring business owners.
4. The Philippines and Sweden may strengthen pre-departure services and implement post-arrival assistance that will assist Filipino migrants.

We also wish to inform the Department that from **2010 to 2020**, we registered **3,647** Filipino emigrants; **2,986** Filipino fiancé(e)s, spouses, and partners of foreign nationals in the same period; and **244** Au Pairs from **2012 to 2020**.

If you have questions, your designated staff may contact our **Policy, Planning, and Research Division** at pprd@cfo.gov.ph and telephone numbers 8-5524 760 to 768.

Thank you for soliciting our input.

Very truly yours,


SECRETARY ROMULO V. ARUGAY
Chairperson



**Office of the President
COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS**

5TH PHILIPPINES-SWEDEN POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS

CFO STATISTICS ON FILIPINO EMIGRANTS, AU PAIRS, AND MARRIAGE MIGRANTS

From **2010-2020**, we recorded **3,647** Sweden-bound Filipino emigrants. Filipino emigrants or those leaving the country to settle permanently abroad must register with the CFO and attend the Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar or the Peer Counseling Program.

SWEDEN	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	TOTAL
		416	401	448	315	333	287	331	452	337	247	80

On the other hand, in the available statistics¹ from **2012-2020**, **244** Au Pairs were recorded in the same period. An Au Pair is a Filipino citizen between 18 to 30 years old and placed under a cultural exchange arrangement with a European host family for a maximum stay of two (2) years. They are required to undergo the CFO's Country Familiarization Seminar (CFS).

SWEDEN	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	TOTAL
		4	15	15	33	34	60	59	19	5

CFO monitors the fiancé(e)s, spouses, and partners of foreign nationals or of former Filipino citizens, who are at risk of being subjected to human trafficking overseas. From **2010-2020**, **2,986** were recorded for Sweden which is the Top 10 destination country for Filipino Marriage Migrants. For the past three decades, CFO has conducted Guidance and Counseling Program (GCP) as a pre-departure counseling service for Filipinos in cross-cultural marriages.

SWEDEN	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	TOTAL
		306	279	339	265	286	265	290	353	267	256	80

¹ <https://cfo.gov.ph/statistics-2/>
https://cfo.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/compendium-2020_Feb-14-2023_smaller.pdf

CFO INPUTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Address present discrimination against women in the labor force.

The Swedish parliament has proposed new regulations on eradicating the exploitation present in the migrant workforce. With more than half of the labor force populated by women, there has also been an evident increase in xenophobia. Women are more prone to experience gender-based challenges and inequalities. The Philippines should consider signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Sweden to support improving the country's labor migrant policies and aim to emphasize women's rights. Through this, both countries will have a chance also to explore other programs and services that will address causes, raise awareness, and stop unlawful discriminatory practices by developing effective reforms.²

2. Establish Swedish language and literacy institutions for Filipino adults and children.

Because of the language barrier, many Filipinos of all ages find blending in with the Swedish community challenging. Despite having an English language-fluent population, most speak the native Swedish language.

With this scenario, Filipino adults should be proficient enough in the language to kindle relations, attract employment probabilities, and access better-paying jobs. On the other hand, children need to be exposed to linguistics to gain self-empowerment, a sense of belongingness, and meaningful interpersonal relationships.

Also, since Sweden now encourages other nationalities to learn the Swedish language before applying for permanent residence, the Philippine delegation may want to look into establishing both physical and online institutions that can supply Filipinos in Sweden with learning materials and oral or written trainings that are crucial in the process of mastering a foreign language.³

3. Implementation of comprehensive livelihood programs for employment and business opportunities.

Filipino communities abroad experience significant consequences for their economic well-being and tend to have insufficient resources and services for their needs. Filipino communities have expressed concern because there is inadequate information on opening a business. The Philippine delegation may suggest offering livelihood training programs; educational or financial assistance to aspiring business owners; teaching income-generating activities; and seminars on savings, investments, and income management. Filipinos can receive certification and recognition for the skills they acquired into use. Other possible interventions include cash grants to address the immediate needs of aspiring entrepreneurs.⁴

² <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/11/racially-marginalized-migrant-women>

³ <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:882895/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

⁴ https://ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/publication/wcms_201588.pdf

4. Review possible policies to protect marriage migrants from unexpected or forced deportation.

Also, it is widely known that marriage migrants, typically women, are at high risk of being subjected to domestic or labor abuse. These migrants may be influenced by their own characteristics, but the disadvantages they face are results of having limited to no access to protection and support services. The Philippines may look into enforcing possible policies with the Swedish government that will protect Filipino marriage migrants. In line with this, the Philippines and Sweden may strengthen pre-departure services and implement post-arrival assistance that will assist migrants in making informed decisions regarding moving to Sweden.⁵

⁵ <https://metropolitics.org/The-Everyday-Realities-of-Marriage-Migration.html>