



Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration

Hon. Pio Tikoduadua

PARLIAMENTARY - WRITTEN QUESTION NO. 19/2024

Tuesday 16th April, 2024

QUESTION

Hon. Premila Kumar to ask the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration –
Can the Minister inform Parliament on –

- (a) **The number of overseas workers who have entered the workforce from January 2023 until 31 January 2024, by country and trade/skill sectors; and**

RESPONSE

In the specified period, more than three thousand (3,800) overseas workers were issued with permits to work in the various sectors of Fiji's economy. These individuals have contributed to key industries and sectors of the economy, enriching our workforce with diverse skills and experiences.

The Ministry remain committed to maintaining a balance of ensuring that employment of overseas workers meets the needs and priorities of key sectors for economic growth and upholding standards of fairness and compliance with Immigration laws and regulations.

Summary of non-citizens entering the workforce by nationalities report in *Annex 1*, provides insight on the distribution of work

permits granted to nationalities in major labour source markets. Countries such as Bangladesh, India, and the Philippines, have significantly higher numbers, indicates increasing trends of migration for employment purpose. Others have fewer permits issued, possibly reflecting smaller-scale or less frequent migration patterns.

The distribution of permits granted indicates a sector that has a high demand for overseas workers. According to the permit records, sectors demanding trade and skills include: Construction and Building Trades, Hospitality and Food Services, Engineering and Technical Trades, Healthcare, Management and Administration, Transportation and Logistics, Education and Training, Religious Services, Manufacturing and Production, and Agriculture/Farming. Notably, the construction, hospitality, engineering, and management sectors top the list of demand for skilled workers.

- (b) The number of skilled and professional Fijians who left our shores for work, education or immigration in 2023 to date by sector and professional categories.**

RESPONSE

On the period, 2023 to February 2024, approximately more than fifteen thousand (15,528)¹ skilled and professional Fijian citizens departed for work, education, or migration purposes.

The specific sectors of engagement or employment abroad cannot be identified from the passenger departure declaration (or departure card). Apart from the Seasonal Work Scheme and PALM program, Fijian citizens were likely to pursue opportunities in various sectors and professional fields abroad, including but not

¹ *Source: Passenger departure declaration, FBOS- April 2024.*

limited to: Healthcare, Finance and Accounting, Information technology (IT), Engineering, Hospitality and Education.

Permanent migration is also increasing due to migration pathways offered by countries such as US on the Green Card lottery, NZ on the Pacific Access category and Australian through the Pacific permanent resident visa program for nationals of participating Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste.

Annex 1.

Table 1. Summary of non-citizens entered the workforce by nationalities

COUNTRY	NO. OF PERMIT GRANTED
ARGENTINA	1
AUSTRALIA	170
Bangladesh	1522
BELGIUM	3
BRAZIL	18
BOTSWANA	1
CANADA	31
CHINA	512
COLOMBIA	4
CUBA	12
CHEZIA	1
DENMARK	15
CONGO	3
ALGERIA	1
EGYPGT	1
SPAIN	5
ETHIOPIA	1
FRANCE	20
FSM	1
GABON	1
UNITED KINGDOM	42
GHANA	1
GAMBIA	1
GREECE	3
GUYANA	1
INDONESIA	115
INDIA	342
IRELAND	7
IRAN	1
IRAQ	1
ISRAEL	1
ITALY	11
JAPAN	24
KENYA	2
CAMBODIA	4
KIRIBATI	10
KOREA	30
LEBANON	1

SRI LANKA	157
MALAYSIA	10
MEXICO	4
MALI	1
MYANMMAR	4
MONGOLIA	2
MAURITIUS	1
NAMIBIA	1
NEPAL	1
NEW ZEALAND	113
NIGERIA	18
NEPAL	5
PAKISTAN	14
PANAMA	5
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	11
PHILIPPINES	211
POLAND	4
PORTUGAL	1
ROMANIA	1
RUSSIA	1
SINGAPORE	3
SOLOMON ISLANDS	14
SOUTH AFRICA	7
SPAIN	3
SURINAME	28
SWEDEN	2
SWITZERLAND	3
THAILAND	3
TONGA	29
TURKEY	4
TUVALU	3
TAIWAN	1
TANZANIA	1
UGANDA	2
UKRAINE	2
UNITED KINGDOM	11
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	136
VANUATU	12
VENEZUELA	3
VIETNAM	16
WESTERN SAMOA	7
SOUTH AFRICA	43
ZIMBABWE	3