Migration
Summary of The Analytical Report

2022 TIMOR-LESTE POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS
A migrant – is a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons.

Net Internal Lifetime Migration Rate: is the balance between in-migration and out-migration in a given total population of a place per 1000 people. According to direction of the balance, it may be characterized as net in-migration or net out-migration. Thus, net flow in or out is indicated by a plus (+) or minus (-) sign. Figure 1 shows that in Timor-Leste, all the municipalities are lifetime out-migration areas, except Dili Municipality.

**Figure 1: Net Internal Lifetime Migration Rate**

Source: Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2022 (GDS)
The population pyramid of lifetime migrants is broad-based (Figure 2). There is a reduced number at age 10-14 and an increase at ages 15-19 through 35-49. It is noted that at age 20-24 years is when the majority of internal lifetime migrants move. Ages 20-24 through 60-64 are mainly active labour force mobility, while ages 0-4 through 5-9 are children who migrate with their parents. The reduction in migrants at age 10-14 could be children who the parents sending to join secondary schools in other municipalities. The reduced number at ages 65+ may be retirees.
The sex ratios of internal lifetime migrants by age in urban at age 0-4 through 10-14, there are more male than female in the urban areas, whereas at age 15-19 through 30-34, there are more female than males, and from age 35-39 through 70-74, it is the men that dominate. However, in the rural areas, it is women who are the majority, except for the ages below 14 years (Figure 3).
The mean age of lifetime migrants is 26 for both sexes, with a median age of 24. The median age of lifetime migrants in the urban areas is 23 years, while that of their counterpart non-migrants is 18. In the rural areas, there is a difference of six years (i.e. lifetime migrants at 26 and 20 for non-migrants, (Figure 4).
Internal lifetime migrants consider three key reasons for migration, namely: marriage (36%); follow family (24%), education or training (23%) (Figure 5).
Dili Municipality is the only in-migration area in Timor-Leste (Figure 6)

**Figure 6: Net internal Recent Migration Rate**

Source: Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2022 (GDS)
The recent migration structure shows a very broad base population pyramid, particularly among children of age 0-4 years (majority are female). The reduced number of recent migrants at ages 5-9 and 10-14 years implies that they children of school-going age, who are in school because they are not staying with their parents. The increase at ages 15-19 through 35-39 implies they are persons who have migrated to join tertiary education or in search of employment or job transfers. Yet there are fewer people at ages 40-44 through 75+ (Figure 7).
Recent Migrants Sex Ratio by Age and Place of Residence

Figure 8 shows that between ages 0-4 through 10-14 there are more males than females in the rural areas, just as it is in the urban areas. While between ages 15-19 through 30-34, there are more females than males in the rural areas. Nonetheless, at ages 15-19 through 25-29, there were more female than male in the urban areas; which then changed to more male than female in the urban areas at ages 30-34 through 60-64.

Figure 8: Recent migrants Sex Ratios by Age and Areas of Residence

Source: Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2022 (GDS)
Recent Migrants Key Reasons For Move

The main reasons for internal recent migrants to move are education or training (32%), followed by following family (30%) and marriage (20%) (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Recent migrants Key reasons for move

Source: Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2022 (GDS)
Source Countries of Immigrants

The top seven immigrants’ countries of origin; with Indonesia contributing more than 80% of all the immigrants that move to Timor-Leste. It is followed, in a descending order by China (772), Angola (416), Philippines (298), Australia (188), Portugal (166) and Bangladesh (119) (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Seven top countries of origin of Immigrants

Source: Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2022 (GDS)
The age-sex structure of the lifetime immigrants is narrow-base; showing a low number of children at age 0-4 years, which thereafter, increases gradually through age 15-19. Ages 20-24 through 55-59 have the majority of lifetime immigrants; with the highest number being at ages 40-44 and 45-49 (Figure 11).

**Figure 11: Lifetime Immigrants Age-Sex Structure (%)**

Source: Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2022 (GDS)
At age 0-4 in both the urban and rural areas, the sex ratio of lifetime immigrants shows that there were more female children than were boys. However, at age 5-9 through 15-19, it shows that there are more boys than girls in the rural areas, and also in the urban areas at ages 5-9 and 10-14. Notably, from age 55-59 through 75+, in both the rural and urban areas, there are more male lifetime immigrants that are female (Figure 12).
The five main reason for immigration, namely: marriage (38%), followed by "followed family" (24%), employment (15%) and in search of employment (15%) (Figure 13).

**Figure 13: Five Main Reasons for Move**

Source: Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2022 (GDS)
Main Destination Countries For Emigration

The top six preferred countries of destination by Timor-Leste emigrants are UK (5326), Ireland (3,435), South Korea (2,275), Australia (2,175), Indonesia (2,119), and Portugal (1,633) (Figure 14).

Source: Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2022 (GDS)
The five key reasons for emigration from Timor-Leste are: move in searching of employment (57%); employment (22%); education or training (14%); followed family (5%), and marriage (2%) (Figure 15).

Source: Timor-Leste Population and Housing Census 2022 (GDS)
• Internal migrants are more than international migrants.
• There are more female internal and international migrants than male.
• All municipalities except Dili, are net out-migration areas.

**Recommendations**

**Future Research**
1) Undertake regular migration surveys to provide accurate and timely migration data, to better understand causes, drivers and consequences of migration, as most of these cannot be explained because of the limitation of the migration data.
2) Strengthen migration data gathering and analysis by building capacity of institutions that are responsible for national statistic.

**Policy and Planning**
1) Decentralize the allocation, distribution and development of welfare facilities that would reduce the migration to urban areas.
2) Provide assistance to Timorese nationals abroad (including consular protection, migrant worker rights, diaspora social protection and cooperation with foreign counterparts).
3) Initiate whole-of-Government and whole-of-society approach to migration governance to ensure that migrants’ needs are mainstreamed across all policy areas, laws and regulations from health to education and from fiscal policies to trade.
4) Initiate micro, meso and macro-economic and sectoral policies in concert with stakeholders and development partners to provide investment opportunities and employment in places of origin and destination for the migrant population.
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