

Country Report

Singapore

by

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Summary

In 2003, Singapore suffered the effects of SARS and global and regional events such as the war on Iraq and terrorism. The unemployment rate among Singapore citizens and permanent residents (the resident population) rose to over 6% in September 2003 while the overall rate nation-wide was 5.9%. Early estimates show that economic growth in 2003 slowed to only 0.8%. However, there are signs of recovery of both the economy and the labour market. According to the latest preliminary estimates (released by the Ministry of Manpower at end-January 2004), the resident unemployment rate ameliorated to 5.0%, and the overall unemployment rate to 4.5%, in December 2003. The economy is expected to grow by 3-5% in 2004.

Singapore strategy to employment creation continues to be through attracting foreign direct investment and building a network of free trade agreements. Efforts to assist the unemployed find new employment through counselling and training also continue. The Workforce Development Agency was set up, and began operation in September, for this purpose.

Despite the rising unemployment rate, the government continued to reiterate the useful role played by the foreign workforce. There are currently about 500,000 work permit holders, including more than 140,000 foreign domestic workers, in Singapore. Employment pass holders (comprising those with degrees, professional qualifications or specialist skills and who command monthly salaries of more than S\$2500) number about 70,000.

During the year, another accreditation scheme for employment agencies dealing in foreign domestic workers was endorsed by the Ministry of Manpower. This brought the total of such accreditation schemes to two. First time employers of foreign domestic workers would also be required to undergo an orientation from January 2004. Indonesia also announced that it would accredit Singapore agencies recruiting domestic workers in Indonesia. Employers are also required to sign an agreement with certain stipulated conditions. It was also announced that the Indonesian island of Batam would be the only exit point for Indonesian domestic workers leaving for employment in Singapore. Training and the various tests would also take place in Batam.

Due to continued weakness in the construction sector, the government postponed indefinitely its plan to introduce multi-skilling for foreign workers in this sector. Under the proposed scheme, employers of foreign construction workers with more than one certified skills would qualify for the lower, skilled worker levy of S\$30 per month. The levy for workers with the minimum requirement of a single certified skill would be S\$320. In announcing the postponement in December 2003, the government also announced that the levy for foreign construction workers with a single certified skill would be raised to S\$50 from the current S\$30, while the levy for workers with no certified skill would remain at S\$470.

An EntrePass Scheme was launched to facilitate entry of entrepreneurs and innovators to start business ventures in Singapore. This scheme recognises that entrepreneurs and innovators may not necessarily possess the educational qualifications required under the Employment Pass scheme. The Singapore Medical Council approved direct hiring of foreign doctors by private hospitals and clinics, in line with Singapore's goal to be medical hub.

End.

1 Introduction

Highlights of most important developments in the last 12 months

Singapore experienced record high unemployment rate during the year as the economy slowed down. The government defended its foreign worker policy on grounds that the foreign workforce forms a useful buffer helping Singapore to adjust to economic cycles. This is perhaps the reason that there were fewer foreigners living in the country as compared to 2002. To help Singaporeans look for jobs, the Workforce Development Authority (WDA) was set up and came into operation in September. This agency provides counselling, advice and training where needed.

To raise the skills levels in the ailing construction industry which has been suffering from low/negative productivity growth, the government announced a scheme that would require foreign workers to be certified in 2 or more skills before their employers could qualify for the skilled worker levy (see below). The implementation of this scheme was postponed indefinitely, however, due to the weakness in the construction industry. The minimum levy (for workers with one certified skill) was also raised from S\$30 to S\$50 per month. The levy for workers with no certified skill (unskilled workers) remained at \$470 per month. A new registration system for construction firms wanting to hire non-traditional source foreign workers (i.e. foreign workers from Asian sources other than Malaysia) was announced in February. The objective is to stem abandonment, exploitation and illegal deployment (see item f below).

Developments regarding foreign domestic workers include the Ministry of Manpower's endorsement of a second accreditation scheme for maid employment agencies. Indonesia also announced that Singapore employment agencies would have to be accredited by the country. Employers of Indonesian foreign domestic workers would also have to sign an agreement containing a list of about 10 items and pay a fee.

An EntrePass Scheme was launched to facilitate entry of entrepreneurs and innovators to start business ventures in Singapore. The EntrePass scheme recognises that these entrepreneurs and innovators may not necessarily possess the educational qualifications and salary levels required under the Employment Pass scheme.

The Singapore Medical Council approved direct hiring of foreign doctors by private hospitals and clinics from 14 March. Previously these were required to be supervised for one year in public hospitals and clinics before they could register with the council and work in the private sector. This move was in line with Singapore's goal to be medical hub.

In April 2003, a new agency, the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority came into operation combining the functions of the former Singapore Immigration and Registration and the Customs and Excise Department. Thus in addition to immigration control, it also handles passport issue, citizenship and residency matters, issuance of re-entry permits and visitor passes, among others.

2 Domestic economy and labour market

(a) Recent trends in domestic economy (including economic policy and development strategy)

The most recent estimates show that the Singapore economy grew by only 0.8% in 2003, well below the 2.2% recorded for 2002 (Press Release: Advance GDP Estimates for Fourth Quarter 2003, Ministry of Trade and Industry [http://www.mti.gov.sg/public/NWS/frm_NWS_Default.asp?sid.=38&cid=1899]).

Growth was led by the manufacturing sector, with 2.5% (see table below). The impact of SARS (which infected 239 and caused 33 deaths), terrorism and the US-led war on Iraq was fully felt in the second quarter. However, by the fourth quarter of 2003, favourable external factors such as growth in regional economies and the electronics and pharmaceutical industries raised the growth rate to nearly 8%. The services producing sector also grew, due to stronger trade, increased sales of motor vehicles and increased activities in the financial services sector. The construction sector remained weak although the rate of decline is slowing.

Gross Domestic Product at 1995 Market Prices (Advance Estimates)

	4Q02	2002	1Q03	2Q03	3Q03	4Q03*	2003
Overall GDP	3.0	2.2	1.6	-3.7	1.8	3.7	0.8
Goods-producing Industries							
Manufacturing	9.9	8.3	6.2	-6.4	3.3	7.5	2.5
Construction	-11.9	-10.8	-14.4	-9.0	-9.1	-8.9	-10.4
Services-producing Industries	1.9	1.5	0.9	-2.8	1.8	3.2	0.8

* Advance estimates

Figures are percentage change over corresponding period of the previous year.

(b) Recent trends in domestic labour market (including surplus workforce and domestic wage disparities)

According to the latest (third quarter) report released by the Ministry of Manpower, total employment showed positive growth in the third quarter of 2003 after eight consecutive quarters of decline (Ministry of Manpower Press Release, "Labour Market, Third Quarter 2003 Report, 15 December 2003). The turnaround was brought about by return of jobs in the services sector as companies affected by SARS in previous quarter (when jobs declined by nearly 26,000) hired again against backdrop of strengthening economy. Employment in services sector grew by 3025, reversing the previous decline. Employment in the goods producing sector declined by 2125 but this was the smallest decline in nearly three years. The construction industry accounted for the most employment losses.

The overall seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate rose to 5.9% in September. The unemployment rate among the resident population (comprising citizens and permanent residents), however, rose 6.3% in the same quarter. This increase was partly due to an increase in the number of “discouraged” job-seekers re-entering the labour market after being inactive. Retrenchment moderated in Q3, with the total retrenchment for the year up to Q3 numbering nearly 14,000. The largest improvement was in the manufacturing sector with a 36% decline, followed by a 15% decline for the services sector. Retrenchment in construction remained unchanged.

Re-employment of retrenched local workers improved in Q3 compared to Q1 and Q2. However, the number of new job openings was insufficient to meet demand from new entrants and re-entrants, with only 18 job openings per 100 job seekers (as compared to more than 30 at the same time in 2001 and 2002).

2 Migration

(a) Number of foreign workers and trends in their employment

There are currently more than 500,000 Work Permit and more than 70,000 Employment Pass holders in Singapore (Ministry of Manpower, personal communication). The former includes more than 140,000 foreign domestic workers. Work Permits are granted to skilled (with at least one certified skill relevant to the job) and unskilled foreigners with a basic monthly of up to S\$2,500. Covered under the Employment of Foreign Workers Act, WP holders are subject to certain restrictions such as not bringing their families with them and not being eligible for permanent residency. The foreign worker cannot be deployed to occupations or employers other than what is stated in their WP card. Foreigners with acceptable degrees, professional qualifications or specialist skills and command a monthly basic salary of more than S\$2500 qualify for Employment Passes if they want to work or do business in Singapore. EP holders are not subject to the Employment of Foreign Workers Act. Certain EP holders are allowed to bring their families to Singapore and eligible for consideration for permanent residency after a short stay.

According to the business weekly, The Edge Singapore, a “good chunk” of imported labour comes from the Indian subcontinent, an “even greater chunk” from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and nearly 400,000 or about one in ten from Malaysia (“The global workforce”, 14 April 2003). Citing a Watson Wyatt survey in 2001, it also offered that almost half of the foreign professionals in Singapore companies come from India, with China and Malaysia trailing closely behind. Most are brought to fill in information technology or engineering positions. The biomedical field is another area heavily reliant on foreign talent – “some figures put the proportion of foreigners at 40% of Singapore’s research scientists”. Even statutory boards and the public sector which traditionally hire only Singapore citizens have reportedly also begun to place foreigners in high level positions. Foreigners are also filling very senior positions in traditional Chinese companies.

(b) Number of emigrants and trends in their employment in foreign countries.

The estimated stock of Singaporeans overseas is about 100,000. In the article cited above, The Edge Singapore reported that some 29,000 Singaporeans are said to be working and living in Australia; over 10,000 in China and Hong Kong; and another 6,000 in the US.

(c) Trends in illegal immigration (number of persons and extent of illegal brokerage), number of visa over-stayers and number of illegal workers. (provide information on trends in detection of such persons)

The number of illegal immigrants arrested at checkpoints in Singapore from April to end-December 2003 was 254, with about 20% being made at land checkpoints (ICA press release, I CHECK ALL: Enhanced checks at land checkpoints yield effective results, 30 December 2003). According to the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (which replaced the former Singapore Immigration and Registration and the Customs and Excise Department), heightened security checks at checkpoints due to concern over the terrorist threat has effectively deterred smuggling of people in and out of Singapore. Mobile x-ray is also used to detect contraband and illegal immigrants hidden in vehicles.

(d) Trends in remittances to home countries made by national working overseas and foreigners working in country (including assessment of economic impact at macro and micro levels)

No information is available.

(e) Trends in the social integration of foreigners working in the country (including information on social protection e.g. labour rights granted to foreign workers and social benefits available to them e.g. healthcare)

As reported previously, foreign workers in Singapore are subject to the same terms and conditions of work as locals. Only difference is that foreign workers who are not permanent residents are not required to contribute to the mandatory old-age savings scheme, the Central Provident Fund (CPF). By the same token, employers do not have to make CPF contributions for their foreign workers, unlike for local workers.

(f) Policy changes and trends in policy debate regarding migrants and their employment (including policies preventing illegal employment, facilitating entry of high skilled workers, remittances to home countries, social integration, encouraging migrants' return to their home countries and deportation)

i) A new registration system to curb rising trend of foreign workers being abandoned, exploited or deployed illegally was announced in February 2003. Beginning in 2004, all construction firms are required to register either with the Building Construction Authority (BCA) or the Singapore Contractors Association before they can hire people on work permits from countries other than Malaysia (non-traditional sources).

The measure is to ensure that firms reach minimum standards in their financial resources, track record and performance before they can hire non-Malaysian workers.

ii) The government announced in February 2003 that it would require foreign workers in the construction sector to be certified in more than one skill before their employers could qualify for the lower, skilled worker levy. The minimum entry standard would be one certified skill, and the levy on such workers would be reduced to \$320 (instead of \$470). The package was aimed at reducing reliance on foreign workers, upgrading the industry (which has long suffered low productivity), and improving foreign workforce management in the industry. It would complement ongoing efforts at expediting the transformation of the industry to technologically advanced and high value added one (Joint press release by MOM and the Building Construction Authority, “Construction Foreign Worker Policy Changes – To Help Upgrade the Industry, Improve its Productivity and Enhance Its Foreign Workforce Management”, 11 February 2003).

Multi-skilling scheme

Timeline	1 January 2004	1 January 2005	From 1 January 2006
New NTS workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-skill required for lower levy • Single skill as new entry criterion on high levy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-skill required for lower levy • Single skill as new entry criterion on high levy 	Multi-skilled workers required to be re-certified every 2 years to retain low levy status
Existing NTS workers on low levy (with single skill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change – status quo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-skill required for lower levy • Single skill required for high levy 	
Existing NTS workers on high levy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change – status quo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work permits terminated if workers are without a single skill 	

Note: The above multi-skill requirement will also apply to TS work permit holders on lower levy if they are skills certificate holders.

Source: Joint Press Release by MOM and BCA, Construction Foreign Policy Worker Policy Changes – To Help Upgrade the Industry, Improve its Productivity and Enhance its Foreign Workforce Management. 11 February 2003.

In December, however, the government announced that it would postpone the implementation of the scheme indefinitely. This was in view of the poor outlook in the construction sector and industry feedback on the potential cost implication [MOM Press Release, “Deferment Of Multi-Skilling And Revision To The Foreign Worker Levy For The Construction Industry”, 1 December 2003]. Only one skill certification would be needed to qualify for the lower levy which would, however, be raised from S\$30 to S\$50 from 1 July 04. The levy for unskilled workers would remain at S\$470. The Ministry of National Development/Building Construction Authority and MOM would monitor the situation in the construction industry closely and make further adjustments, if necessary, in the future

iii) First announced in August 2003, all first time employers of foreign domestic workers would be required to undergo an orientation course with effect from 1 January 2004. The purpose is to “help them forge a good working relationship with their foreign domestic workers” and “to ensure that they are fully aware of their responsibility” for the latter’s welfare while in Singapore.

iv) The Ministry of Manpower endorsed a new accreditation scheme for employment agencies dealing with foreign domestic workers. Put up by the Association of Employment Agencies (AEA) (Singapore), the scheme was developed under MOM guidelines and is similar to that of Case Trust (an accreditation scheme of the Consumers Association of Singapore) but with slightly different approaches and emphasis. As of May 2003, 19 out of more than 600 had been accredited with Case Trust.

v) Indonesia also began to accredit Singapore agencies from 1 August 2003. All employment agencies in Singapore recruiting Indonesians for domestic work in the country must meet the requirements of the Indonesian Department of Manpower and Transmigration, including providing training and informing them of their rights before they leave for Singapore. A total of 186 agencies reportedly paid the annual fee of \$240 to be accredited by the Indonesian Embassy in Singapore. In September, it was also announced that there would be only one exit point for Indonesian domestic workers headed for Singapore. This would be from Batam, an island less than hour’s journey by ferry from Singapore. The objective is so that the Indonesian government can better monitor the safety and whereabouts of Indonesian domestic workers. Training, health checks and other tests will be conducted out before departure for Singapore (The Electric New Paper, 18, 19 and 20 September 2003).

vi) Indonesia also announced in July that employers of Indonesian domestic workers would be required to sign an agreement and pay a fee of S\$260. The terms of the agreement would include employment of at least two years, 12 days of annual leave or payment in lieu, return airfare for home leave or its cash value, 3 meals daily, a rest day on Sunday, protection from violence and no cleaning of window exteriors or hanging out of clothes from high-rise homes (Straits Times Interactive 30 July 2003). The penalty for failure to comply was apparently not specified.

vii) The Singapore government hinted that single (unmarried) Singaporeans could soon be eligible for income tax relief on the foreign domestic worker levy paid. This tax relief has been given to working mothers as part of the procreation incentives implemented since the late 1980s. This change is to address the needs of many singles who take care of elderly or handicapped parents.

viii) A civil society group, The Working Committee 2 (TWC2) called for foreign domestic workers to be included under the Employment Act, the implementation of a standard contract and provision for mandatory rest days. The group also began a public education programme for students.

ix) The EntrePass Scheme launched on 30 October 2003 (MOM Press Release, "Introduction of the Entrepass scheme will further boost Singapore's position as a regional business hub", 23 October 2003). This scheme is designed to make it easier for global entrepreneurs and innovators to come to Singapore to start their business ventures. Unlike Employment Pass criteria, the EntrePass scheme does not rely solely on educational qualifications and salary as criteria. MOM will take into account recommendations and support by relevant economic agencies and some indicators for evaluation will be growth potential and funding availability.

x) To facilitate Singapore's development as a medical hub, hospitals and clinics can now hire doctors and nurses directly from overseas without having these personnel to first be affiliated with public hospitals.

(g) Trends in overseas employment placement services (provide information on the extent of involvement of private sector placement services and details of the regulations governing their activities; details of bilateral or multilateral agreements should also be included)

Information on this is not available.

(h) Trends in job creation policy (e.g. in public sector and grants for job creation in private sector)

Singapore continues its policy of attracting foreign direct investments and creating a network of free trade agreements as strategies to create jobs for Singaporeans. The amount of FDI secured in 2003 was \$7.51 billion, the lowest level since 1995. This is expected to create 16,900 jobs (Straits Times Interactive 16 Jan 04). The US-Singapore FTA is expected to create 3,000 more jobs in the textile industry alone while the Japan-Singapore FTA has boosted the petrochemical sector (Singapore Bites of the Week, 30 Aug – 5 Sep [<http://app.sgnews.gov.sg/data/Bites/20030830.htm>]). Singaporeans are also encouraged to pursue job opportunities overseas, with the WDA and the Singapore Professionals and Executives Cooperative (Spec) coming up with a

scheme to help this group find permanent or contract employment in Singapore and overseas (Straits Times Interactive, 12 January 2004).

(i) Latest research/statistics on international migration

Hui, Weng Tat (2004). “Balancing Employment of Foreigners and Employment for Singaporeans”. Paper prepared for presentation at the Institute of Policy Studies Conference on “Singapore Perspectives 2004: At the Dawn of a New Era”, 13 January.

Pertinent findings:

- a) While foreign workers were indeed a buffer in the 1985 recession, empirical evidence on aggregate employment changes in the manufacturing sector in the last decade does not seem to support this argument. However, more data on a disaggregated level would be needed to permit validation or rejection of this hypothesis.
- b) In the face of an ageing population and the prospect of falling indigenous population growth due to declining birth rates, it is inevitable that Singapore will have to continue to depend on foreign manpower to sustain modest economic growth in the coming decades. Projections have shown that even with a permanent immigration intake of 50,000 over the next 30 years, the growth rate of the resident labour force will drop from an annualised growth rate of about 2% in 2004 to less than 1% from 2020. This means that increases in the labour force will drop to about 28,000 from 2020. Simulations have shown that a growth target of 5% GDP growth will lead to excess demand for labour requiring further import of foreign manpower.
- c) While this will be the long-term trend, there should be scope for deviation from the liberal policy towards foreign manpower in the short term, especially in times of economic slowdown. In particular, a pro-business policy with relatively free access to employment of foreigners should be weighed against the financial hardship of unemployed residents and the attendant economic costs of skills atrophy, increased welfare dependence, smaller domestic consumption due to remittance leakages, and the proclivity of employers to avoid investment in training of locals.
- d) In light of the current unemployment situation and the prospect of jobless recovery, it would be pertinent to consider the following short-term measures which would enhance employment of residents – i) tax incentives and wage subsidies for employers and administrative measures that would require employers to hire local talent first; ii) tighten eligibility rule for employment passes; iii) lower dependency ceilings and minimum wages for permit holders.

(j) International co-operation on international migration (including development of human resources, for example training programmes)

Singapore continues to offer technical training on a bilateral or multilateral basis to other developing countries. These are offered under the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP). In 2003, 60 students from ASEAN received the Singapore Scholarship which provides for their living expenses and university tuition. Recipients are encouraged to return to help serve the development of their home countries, and are not bound by any bond. The Singapore scholarship scheme was set up in 1998 as the Singapore government was concerned that the 1997 economic downturn could cause students in the region to miss out on higher education (Straits Times Interactive, 11 September 2003).

The Japan-Singapore FTA provides for co-operation in the field of human resource development. Under the agreement, the parties shall encourage exchanges of their scholars, teachers, students, members of educational institutions and other persons engaging in scientific or educational activities, also between youth and youth organisations.

4 Outlook for economic and migration policies and their likely impact.

The economic outlook for 2004 is upbeat, with the economy expected to grow 3-5% (Prime Minister's New Year Message 2004 [<http://app.sprinter.gov.sg/data/pr/2003122102.htm>]). The employment outlook is also expected to improve, with the unemployment rate ameliorating to 4% (Trish Saywell, Far Eastern Economic Review, 15 January 2004, p 57, citing Labour Chief Lim Boon Heng). New foreign investments, while expected to be higher than in 2003, are likely however likely to generate fewer jobs due to their high-skilled, high value-added nature.

Table 1

⑦ Singapore

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Real GDP growth(%)	12.7	11.4	8.0	7.7	8.5	-0.9	6.4	9.4	-2.4	2.2
Indigenous GNI growth%(a)					8.9	-2.9	-0.4	11.7	-7.0	2.0
Current balance(S\$m)	6804.2	17412.5	21119.1	17725.6	22136.0	31035.9	25736.9	22894.4	28913.6	33490.6
Inward direct investment(S\$m)(b)			92804.7	105015.1	125274.3	139905.4	157593.8	181939.8		
Foreign direct investment (S\$m)©			39145.0	42224.0	57192.0	53211.0	65072.0	68811.0		
Producer price index(1995=100)(d)	102.1	100.0	100.0	97.0	93.1	90.1	92.0	101.3	99.6	98.2
Consumer price index (nov97-oct98=100)	92.2	95.1	96.7	98.0	100.0	99.7	99.8	101.1	102.1	101.7
Exchange rate of currency toward USD	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8
Indigenous GNI per person(a)					35169.0	33578.0	32954.0	36345.0	33233.0	33309.0
Indigenous GNI per person (US\$)(e)					23762.8	20106.6	19499.4	21130.8	18565.9	18505.0
Real wage growth(%)	-	-	4.5	4.3	3.6	3.1	2.6	7.5	1.3	1.1

Notes:

(a) at current market prices

(b) Stock of foreign direct equity investment in Singapore (end of period)

© Stock of Singapore's direct equity investment abroad (end of period)

(d) Domestic supply price index

(e) Indigenous GNI per person divided by the exchange rate

Source: Data for the last 5 years have been updated based on Yearbook of Statistics 2003

Table 2									
⑦ Singapore									
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Population (million)	3.42	3.53	3.67	3.79	3.92	3.95	4.02	4.13	4.17
Labour force (million)	1.69	1.75	1.80	1.88	1.93	1.98	2.19	2.12	2.13
Number of employed person (million)	1.65	1.70	1.75	1.83	1.87	1.89	2.10	2.05	2.02
-Manufacturing	0.42	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.39	0.37
-Construction	0.11	0.11	0.12	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.27	0.12	0.12
-Commerce	0.38	0.35	0.41	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.43	0.43
-Transport,storage and communications	0.17	0.18	0.20	0.21	0.21	0.20	0.20	0.23	0.22
-Financial,insurance,real estate and business services	0.20	0.25	0.25	0.27	0.29	0.30	0.32	0.35	0.35
-Community,social and personal services	0.36	0.38	0.37	0.39	0.42	0.44	0.45	0.51	0.52
-others	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.15	0.01	0.02	0.02
Number of the unemployed (1,000)	34.00	34.90	37.30	34.80	62.70	69.50	65.40	71.90	94
Rate of unemployment (%)	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.80	3.20	3.50	3.10	3.30	4.4
Number of lay-off	9,444	8,788	10,956	9,784	29,086	14,622	11,624	25,838	19086

Sources: Yearbook of Statistics Singapore and Yearbook of Manpower Statistics

⑦ Singapore

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Emigration flow of nationals									
Number of nationals residing abroad(a)						150,000- 200,000	about 200,000	100,000- 200,000	100,000- 200,000
Immigration flow of foreigners									
Number of foreigners residing in your own country(b)	433,300	481,000	567,700	633,200	702,100	676,200	754,500	812,100	785,400
Number of foreign workers in your own country						530,000	612,000	590,000	590,000
-holders of unskilled work permit						450,000	509,000*	500,000	500,000
-holders of employment passes						80,000	103,000*	90,000	90,000
Number of permanent residents		181,700				257,000	290,100		
Number of illegal foreign workers							2,615	3400	
Number of arrests of illegal immigrant					22,973	17,000	16,500	15,996	9,400**
-illegal immigrants				9,449	14,700			10,369	
-over-stayers				5,425	8,300			5,627	
-turned back at immigration checkpoints				92,400	70390#				
Number of returnees									
Number of nationals having been repatriated									
Remittance from nationals residing abroad									

* Estimated by author

for first 6 months only

** first 8 months only

(a) These numbers are estimates by various sources.

(b) Derived from difference between total and resident population.