

REPUBLIC OF PALAU | PROFILE 2023

MIGRATION
GOVERNANCE
INDICATORS



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**ECONOMIST
IMPACT**

Required citation: International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2023. *Migration Governance Indicators Profile 2023 – Republic of Palau*. IOM, Geneva.

ISBN 978-92-9268-766-3 (PDF)

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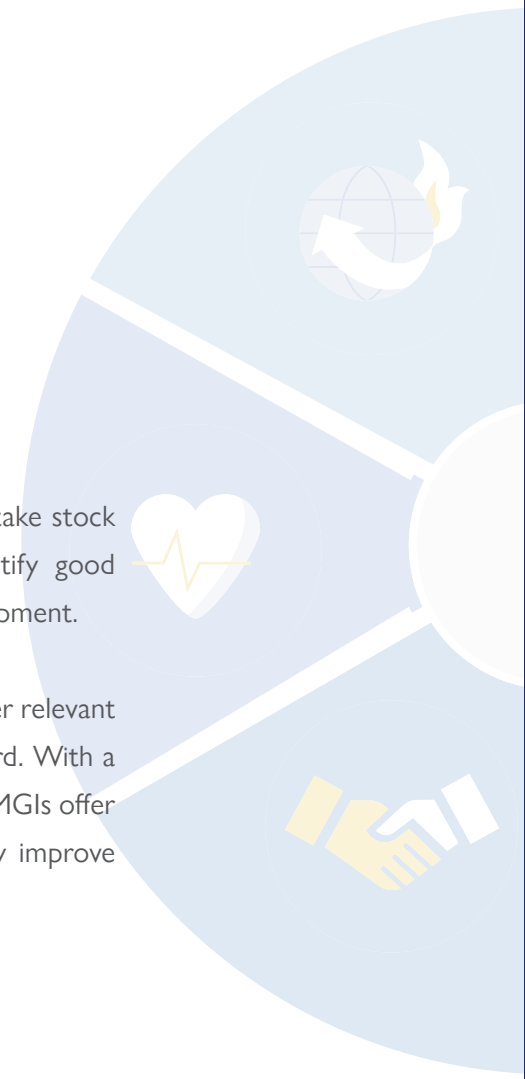
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OBJECTIVES

The MGIs aim to help governments, upon request, take stock of their migration policies and strategies to identify good practices and areas with potential for further development.

The MGIs open dialogues with governments and other relevant stakeholders to identify priorities on the way forward. With a focus on government ownership of the process, the MGIs offer support at the national and local levels to gradually improve migration management systems.



INTRODUCTION

“ Migration has been part of the human experience throughout history, and we recognize that it is a source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development in our globalized world, and that these positive impacts can be optimized by improving migration governance.¹

The need to maximize the opportunities and to face the challenges that mobility brings has been recognized with the inclusion of migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and with the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The incorporation of target 10.7 into the 2030 Agenda created the need to define “planned and well-managed migration policies”. This is why, in 2015, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) developed the Migration Governance² Framework (MiGOF). This Framework³ offers a concise view of an ideal approach that allows a State to determine what it might need to govern migration well and in a way that suits its circumstances. That same year, IOM in collaboration with Economist Impact developed the Migration Governance Indicators (MGIs), a standard set of almost 100 indicators that help States assess the comprehensiveness of their migration governance structures.

The indicators constitute a starting point to engage governments in a consultative process that allows them to identify areas that are well developed and others that would benefit from further development, and most importantly priorities that are in line with the specific challenges and opportunities that a given country is facing.

The MGIs are characterized by three main fundamental attributes:

1. The MGI process is a **voluntary** exercise: The MGIs are conducted in countries that have requested to be part of the process.
2. The MGIs are **sensitive to national specificities**: The MGIs recognize the different challenges and opportunities of each context, and therefore, do not propose a one-size-fits-all solution, but rather aim to spark a discussion on what well-governed migration can mean.
3. The MGIs constitute a **process**: The MGI process is not a static tool to collect data on countries’ migration frameworks. It is rather the first step of a dynamic exercise that can enable governments to identify areas of their migration policy in need of further development, or that could benefit from capacity-building.

The MGIs recognize that all countries have different realities, challenges and opportunities in relation to migration. Therefore, the MGIs do not rank countries on the design or implementation of their migration policies.

Finally, the MGIs do not measure migration policy outcomes or institutional effectiveness. Instead, they take stock of the migration-related policies in place and operate as a benchmarking framework that provides insights on policy measures that countries can consider as they further progress towards good migration governance.

The following government bodies took part in the process of consultation and validation of the MGIs in Palau and helped put together the profile resulting therefrom: the Office of the President; the Ministry of Justice (Bureau of Public Safety and Anti-Human Trafficking Unit); the Ministry of State (Bureau of Foreign Affairs and Trade); the Ministry of Finance (Bureau of Customs and Border Protection and Bureau of Budget and Planning); the Ministry of Education (Bureau of Education Administration); the Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development (Division of Employment Services and Office of Labor Compliance); the Ministry of Health and Human Services (Bureau of Public Health); the National Emergency Management Office; the Palau Election Commission; and the Social Security Administration. The following non-governmental entities also

¹ United Nations, [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#) (A/RES/73/195 of 11 January 2019), paragraph 8.

² “Migration governance” refers to the system of institutions, legal frameworks, mechanisms, and practices aimed at regulating migration and protecting migrants. It is used almost synonymously with the term “migration management”, although the latter is also sometimes used to refer to the narrow act of regulating cross-border movement at the State level.

³ IOM Council, [Migration Governance Framework](#), 106th Session, C/106/40 (4 November 2015), page 1, footnote 1.

took part in the consultation process: the Palau Chamber of Commerce and the Palau Community College. This MGI profile was produced under the auspices of the IOM Development Fund and the Migration Resource Allocation Committee.

This country profile presents a summary of the well-developed areas of the migration governance structures of the Republic of Palau (hereinafter referred to as Palau), as well as the areas with potential for further development, as assessed by the MGIs.⁴

⁴ The MGI initiative is a policy-benchmarking programme led by IOM and implemented with the support of Economist Impact. Funding is provided by IOM Member States.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

MiGOF

IOM's MiGOF sets out the essential elements to support planned and well-managed migration. It seeks to present, in a consolidated, coherent and comprehensive way, a set of three principles and three objectives which, if respected and fulfilled, would ensure that migration is humane and orderly, and benefits migrants and society.

At the basis of

PRINCIPLES

1. **Adhere** to international standards and fulfil migrants' rights.
2. **Formulate** policy using evidence and a whole-of-government approach.
3. **Engage** with partners to address migration and related issues.

OBJECTIVES

1. **Advance** the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society.
2. **Effectively address** the mobility dimensions of crises.
3. **Ensure** that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.



MGIs

WHAT THEY ARE

-  A set of indicators that offers insights on policy levers that countries can use to strengthen their migration governance structures
-  A tool that identifies good practices and areas that could be further developed
-  A consultative process that advances dialogues on migration governance by clarifying what "well-governed migration" might look like in the context of SDG target 10.7 and the Global Compact for Migration implementation*

Which support the measurement of

WHAT THEY ARE NOT

-  Not a ranking of countries
-  Not an assessment of policy impacts
-  Not prescriptive



Note: "The Global Compact is framed in a way consistent with target 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in which Member States committed to cooperate internationally to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration."

The MGIs consist of almost 100 indicators grouped under the six different dimensions of migration governance that draw upon the MiGOF categories:



MIGRANTS'
RIGHTS
PAGE 20

Indicators in this domain look at the extent to which migrants have access to certain social services such as health, education and social security. They look at family reunification, access to work, and access to residency and citizenship. The international conventions signed and ratified are also included.



WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT
APPROACH
PAGE 24

Indicators in this area assess countries' institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks related to migration policies. This area also looks at the existence of national migration strategies that are in line with development objectives and overseas development efforts, as well as institutional transparency and coherence in relation to migration management.



PARTNERSHIPS
PAGE 26

This category focuses on countries' efforts to cooperate on migration-related issues with other States and relevant non-governmental actors, including civil society organizations and the private sector.



WELL-BEING
OF MIGRANTS
PAGE 27

Indicators in this area assess countries' policies on the recognition of migrants' educational and professional qualifications, provisions regulating student migration and the existence of bilateral labour agreements between countries. Aspects of diaspora engagement in the country of origin and migrant remittances are also under this domain.



MOBILITY DIMENSION
OF CRISES
PAGE 29

This category looks at the type and level of preparedness of countries when they are faced with mobility dimensions of crises. The questions look at the processes in place for nationals and non-nationals in relation to disasters and climate change, including if humanitarian assistance is equally available to migrants as it is to citizens.



SAFE, ORDERLY AND
REGULAR MIGRATION
PAGE 32

This area looks at countries' approach to migration management in terms of border control and enforcement policies, admission criteria for migrants, preparedness and resilience in the case of significant and unexpected migration flows, as well as the fight against trafficking in persons.



SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Migrants' rights

All regularly employed persons, regardless of their nationality, have access to Palau's national health-care financing programme – the HealthCare Fund – while unemployed persons can make voluntary contributions.

Primary and secondary education in Palau is provided free of charge and is compulsory for all students, regardless of their nationality and residency status.

Citizens of Palau living abroad can vote in national elections under Title 23 of the Palau National Code and the General Rules and Regulations for elections, which allow absentee voting through the Palau Election Commission.

Palau requires proof of identity to access civil registration services, as per Title 34 of the Palau National Code.

While international migrant workers in Palau contribute to the country's social security system, they do not enjoy the same benefits as citizens of Palau. International migrant workers leaving Palau are only able to access six months' worth of benefits from abroad.

Whole-of-government approach

The Coordinated Border Management Working Group is an interministerial coordination mechanism for migration issues that meets monthly or as needed and has the primary responsibility for developing and implementing a Coordinated Border Management Strategic Plan and related standard operating procedures, focusing on migration management and related policy development and coordination, among other things.

Palau does not yet have a national migration strategy defined in a programmatic document or manifesto. The Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development launched a project in October 2023 to develop a national migration policy.

The Bureau of Budget and Planning under the Ministry of Finance of Palau publishes migration data on an annual basis, including on the number of foreign workers on work permits disaggregated by sex and country of origin.

Partnerships

Palau participates in the Pacific Immigration Development Community alongside 20 other States and territories in Oceania, as well as the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime alongside 44 other States.

Under the Compact of Free Association with the United States of America, which came into force in 1994, Palau enjoys certain benefits, including visa-free access for citizens of Palau to travel and work in the United States; United States Government funding for Palau's infrastructure, health care and education programmes; and protection of the United States military. Additionally, Palau is part of the "Agreement between the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Ministry of State of the Republic of Palau Concerning Cooperation in Immigration Affairs and Human Trafficking Prevention" (2017).

The engagement of civil society organizations, the private sector and diaspora communities in agenda-setting and the implementation of migration-related policies is an area with potential for further development.

Well-being of migrants

Developing and streamlining new policies for monitoring the labour market demand for immigrants and the effects of emigrants on the domestic labour market is an area with potential for further development.

Palau participates in the Pacific Qualifications Framework and the Pacific Register of Qualifications and Standards, together with the other countries and territories of the Pacific Islands Forum, to enable the recognition of regional qualifications.

Mobility dimension of crises

Palau actively engages in the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility, which includes specific provisions on internal and cross-border movements in the context of climate change. In June 2022, a national consultation on climate mobility was organized in Palau, where participants provided inputs for developing the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility, which was endorsed by leaders at the Pacific Islands Leaders Forum in November 2023.⁵

The National Emergency Management Office implements communications systems to receive and transmit information regarding the evolving nature of crises. Moreover, the Government sets up hotlines in the aftermath of a disaster.

Palau does not have a disaster risk reduction strategy in place that specifically addresses the displacement impacts of disasters. Similarly, climate change policies of Palau do not take human mobility issues into adequate consideration.

There is no contingency plan in place for managing large-scale population movements during crises.

Safe, orderly and regular migration

The Anti-Human Trafficking National Action Plan 2022–2025 (2022), published by the Bureau of Public Safety under the Ministry of Justice, focuses on the enforcement of laws in deterring and preventing human trafficking, increasing efforts on victim protection and assistance, amending human trafficking legislation where necessary, and coordinating government and community responses.

In April 2023, Palau adopted amendments to its existing anti-human smuggling and anti-human trafficking legislation to ensure compliance with relevant international laws. The amendment, inter alia, increased imprisonment times and fines for those found guilty of committing human trafficking, made both fines and imprisonment mandatory, increased State reporting obligations, and made the consent of trafficked, smuggled or exploited persons irrelevant as a defence in court.

Palau's Anti-Human Trafficking Unit publishes information about its counter-trafficking activities only on an ad hoc basis via its Facebook page.

The development of formal governmental programmes or policies focused on attracting nationals who have migrated from the country and facilitating the reintegration of returning nationals are areas with potential for further development.

⁵ Read more on the [regional dialogue](#) on the website of the International Labour Organization.

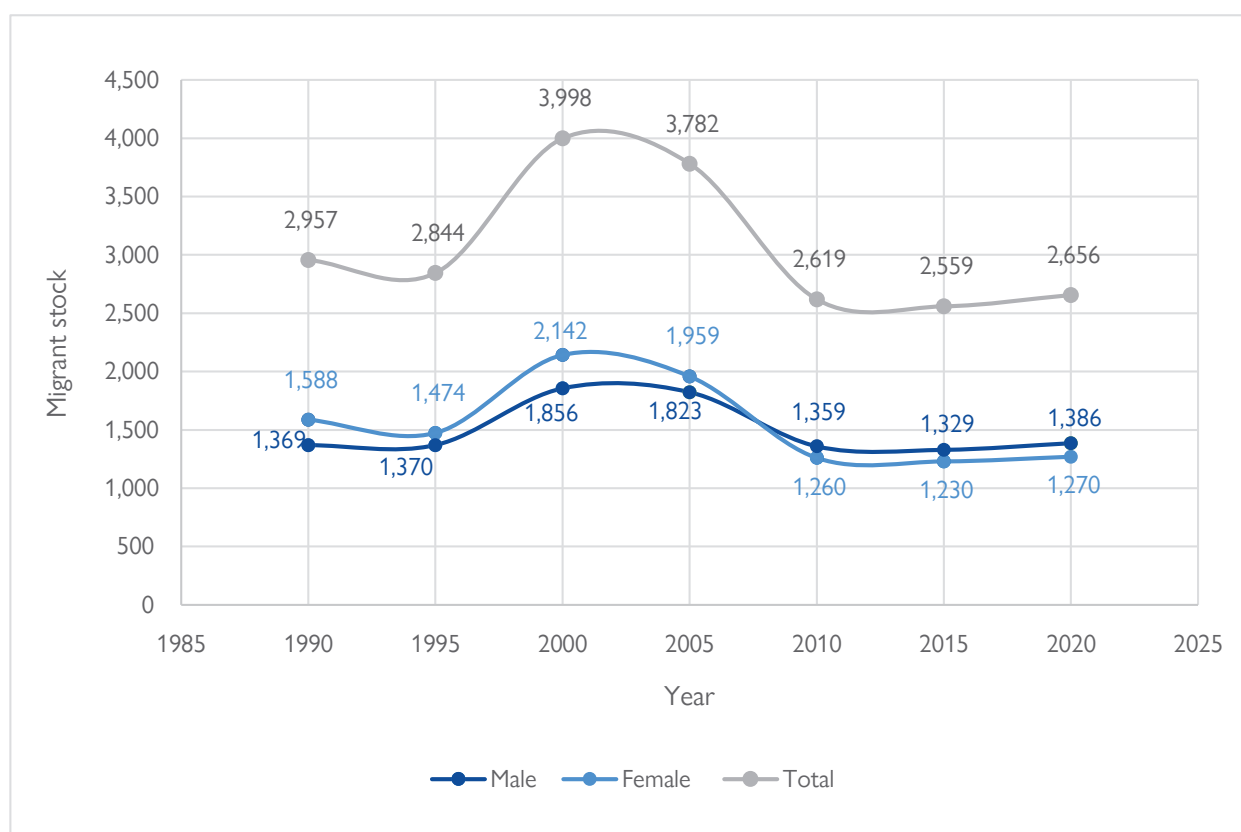


CONTEXT

The number of international migrants living in Palau has decreased in the past two decades – with a slight increase in 2020 – after reaching its highest number of 6,310 people in the year 2000 (see [Figure 2](#)). United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) figures indicate that 5,088 international migrants were living in the country as of midyear 2020 (see [Figure 2](#)), which represent 28.1 per cent of the country’s total population.⁶ The distribution of immigrants by sex shows that 43.2 per cent are female and 56.8 per cent are male (see [Figure 3](#)). Similar to immigration data, the number of citizens of Palau living abroad has decreased since 2000, with numbers reaching 2,656 people in 2020 (see [Figure 1](#)), which is 14.7 per cent of the total population (18,100, according to data estimates by DESA).⁷ Disaggregated data indicate that the share of female emigrants (47.8%) in 2020 is slightly lower than the share of males (see [Figures 1 and 3](#)).

Comparing the numbers of international migrants living in Palau against the number of citizens of Palau living abroad shows that the estimated net migration in Palau in 2022 is 3 migrants, and the difference in the share of migrants in the total population between 2000 and 2020 is -4.9 .⁸ In addition, data from the World Bank indicate that personal remittances received in Palau accounted for 1.1 per cent of the country’s GDP (USD 2 million) in 2021.⁹ Finally, [Figure 4](#) shows that the majority of immigrants in 2020 were 20 to 64 years old (86.7%).

Figure 1. International migrant stock at midyear with Palau as country or area of origin



Source: DESA, [International Migrant Stock 2020](#) (2020).

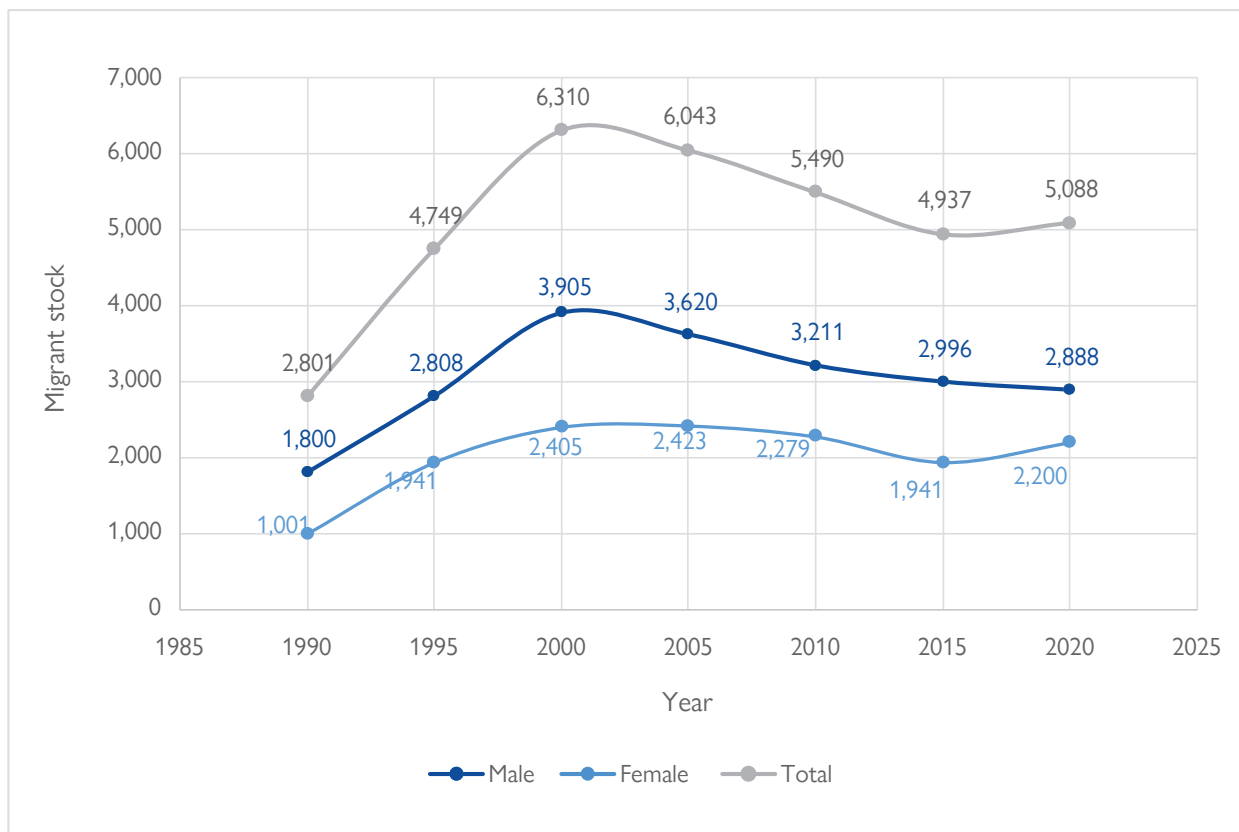
⁶ Visit the [Migration Data Portal](#) for more information.

⁷ See footnote 6.

⁸ See footnote 6.

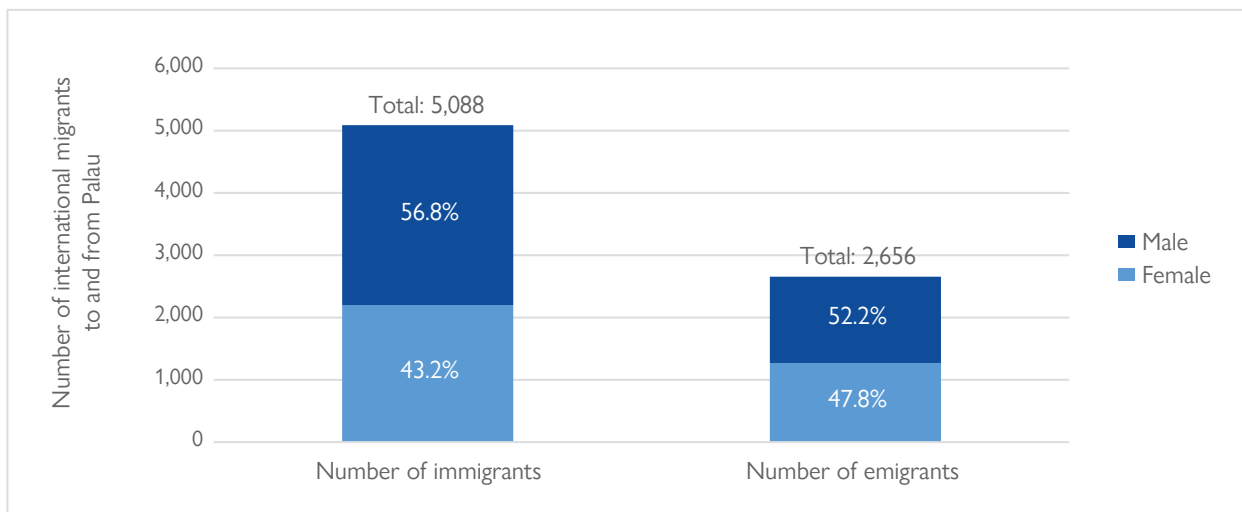
⁹ See the [World Bank's data on Palau](#) to know more.

Figure 2. International migrant stock at midyear with Palau as country or area of destination

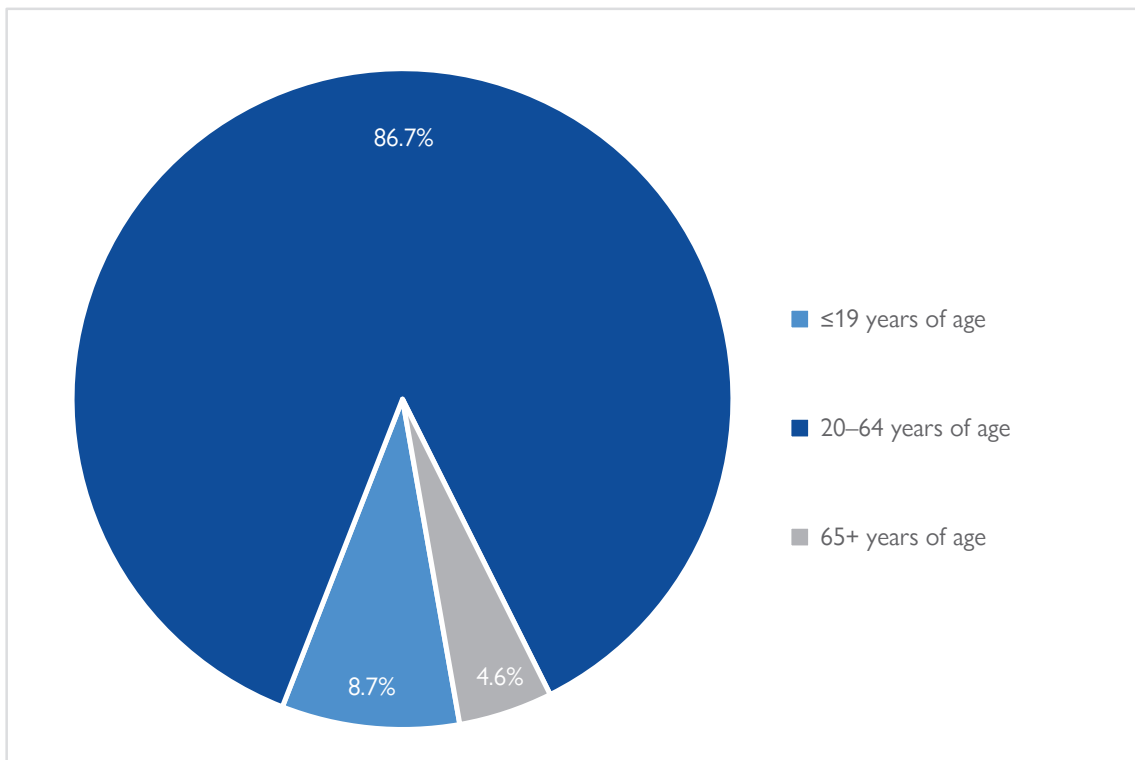


Source: DESA, International Migrant Stock 2020 (2020).

Figure 3. Female migrants as a percentage of the international migrant stock in Palau



Source: DESA, International Migrant Stock 2020 (2020).

Figure 4. Distribution of migrants by age group (at midyear 2020)

Source: Migration Data Portal, 2020 data from DESA (2020).



KEY

FINDINGS



1

ADHERE TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND FULFIL MIGRANTS' RIGHTS

1.1. International conventions ratified

Table 1. Signature and ratification of international conventions

| Convention name | Ratified (Year) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| International Labour Organization (ILO) Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97) | No |
| United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (also known as the Refugee Convention), 1951 | No |
| United Nations conventions on statelessness, 1954 and 1961 | No |
| ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) | No |
| Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989 | Yes (1995) |
| International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), 1990 | No* |
| Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2007 | Yes (2013) |

* However, Palau signed the convention on 20 September 2011.

1.2. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The national health-care financing programme, the HealthCare Fund (HCF), provides coverage for all regularly employed persons regardless of their nationality. Unemployed individuals have the option to make voluntary contributions. The HCF was established under the National Healthcare Financing Act (2010) and is managed by the Social Security Administration, which is a self-supporting and self-funding organization. The HCF consists of two components: the individual Medical Savings Account (MSA) and a pooled universal social health insurance fund called the National Health Insurance (NHI).¹⁰ Both MSA and NHI are funded through mandatory contributions based on earned income from employers and employees regardless of nationality.¹¹ The Government of Palau covers the subscription costs of health insurance for citizens aged 60 and above, as well as those who are disabled and not employed. Dependants of migrant workers can also avail themselves of the migrant worker's health insurance if they possess a social security number. While irregular migrants are not eligible for health insurance, they can still access health-care services by paying the actual cost of the services provided.

¹⁰ Under the National Health Insurance, beneficiaries are entitled to inpatient care at Belau National Hospital, off-island medical treatment, medical transportation for off-island medical referrals, and preventive care services, while the Medical Savings Accounts covers ambulatory care, over-the-counter pharmaceuticals, private health insurance policy premiums, dental care, prosthetics and eye care.

¹¹ This involves an automatic deduction of 2.5 per cent from the employee's pay cheque, which is then matched by the employer.

The Constitution (1981, last amended in 1992) mandates “free and compulsory” education for its citizens (Article VI) and makes no specific reference to nationality in this regard. In practice, there is free and compulsory primary and secondary education provided to all students in Palau, regardless of their nationality, country of origin or residency status. Palau Community College offers vocational and tertiary education, which requires payment. However, citizens of Palau and students from the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, the United States and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands pay significantly lower fees than other international students.

Citizens of Palau living abroad can vote in the country’s national elections. Pursuant to Title 23 of the Palau National Code and the General Rules and Regulations for elections (Section 4), voters who “[leave] the Republic before the date of the election” are eligible to cast their ballots as absentee voters. Individuals with origins in Palau residing outside the country are required to request for an absentee ballot through the Office of the Palau Election Commission. Upon verification by the Commission of the voter’s qualifications, an official ballot, a ballot envelope, an affidavit and a covering reply envelope in which to return the materials to the Commission are sent to the voter. The voter is responsible for completing the absentee ballot and obtaining a notarization before returning it to the Commission.

The Compact of Free Association between the United States and Palau came into force in 1994. In May 2023, the United States and Palau agreed to extend the Compact beyond 2024.¹² The Compact includes provisions for the portability of social security entitlements. As a result, residents of both countries are eligible to work in the other country. Under this bilateral agreement, all citizens of Palau admitted to the United States are entitled to a social security number and a social security card. These credentials provide eligibility for a range of benefits, such as retirement, disability, survivorship, supplemental income, medical aid and insurance. To apply for social security in Palau, citizens of the United States are required only to present a valid passport.

Birth certificates are issued to all children born in Palau, regardless of their nationality. Palau follows the principle of *jus sanguinis*, as stated in Section 201 of the Citizenship and Immigration Act (1994, last amended in 2013), granting citizenship based on Palauan lineage.¹³ The Clerk of Courts, acting as the Civil Registrar of Palau, is responsible for registering births and deaths under Section 4003 of Title 34 of the Palau National Code (1966). The Belau National Hospital handles civil registration since the majority of births occur there. The hospital number is used to match birth records with the Clerk of Courts. Following delivery, a parent must sign a certificate of live birth, which serves as the basis for issuing the child’s birth certificate.

1.3. Areas with potential for further development

Despite the mandate for “free and compulsory” education for its citizens contained in the Constitution, irregular migrants with no legal identity documents face challenges when enrolling their children in primary and secondary education, given that enrolment in public schools requires the submission of the applicant’s birth certificate, passport and immunization card, and the work permit and social security number of the parent, along with a completed application.

Only long-term residents and residents with family reunion permits and certain categories of residents with permanent work permits have access to social protection in Palau. Palau’s social security system works via an opt-in mechanism and extends coverage to all individuals with regular status. The Republic of Palau Social Security Administration (ROPSSA) is responsible for administering retirement benefits, survivor benefits for the children and the spouse, disability benefits, and death benefits. These benefits are provided to covered wage earners and self-employed individuals, as well as their survivors.

¹² See this [article on the signing of the United States–Palau 2023 Agreement](#) on the website of the United States Department of State.

¹³ “*Jus sanguinis*” is a principle of nationality law by which a person’s citizenship or nationality is determined by the nationality or citizenship of one or both of their parents.

All migrants with a work permit must contribute to the social security fund.¹⁴ Citizens and migrant workers in Palau contribute 7 per cent of their salary to the social security scheme. An equal amount must be paid by the employer. Migrant workers are able to claim social security benefits if they have earned the required quarters, have reached the retirement age of 60 and hold a valid permit as proof of legal residency within the Republic. They are also able to claim social security benefits from abroad through the ROPSSA website, given that they meet certain requirements (have earned for the required number of quarters and have reached the age of 60), but are entitled to only six months' worth of benefits (see Title 41 of the Palau National Code, Section 760). After six months, their benefits will be put on hold, and after 12 months, these benefits will close according to the SSA Policy on reduction to, withholding of and suspension of benefits (updated in 2020). If migrant workers return to the Republic within 12 months and have a valid permit under the Division of Labor's Rules and Regulations, they may report to ROPSSA and have their benefits reinstated (see the SSA Policy: Foreign reinstatement 3.3.1, 3.2 and 3.3). If benefits have been closed, a beneficiary will have to reapply to continue receiving them.

Migrants do not have equal access to employment as nationals of Palau. The country provides two types of work visas: the work permit, which is issued by the Office of Labor Compliance for foreign workers seeking employment in the private sector; and the foreign government/international organization permit, issued by the Division of Immigration. The Protection of Resident Workers Act (1995), which is part of Title 30, Chapter 1, of the Palau National Code (1986), states that preference in employment in occupations and industries within Palau should be given to citizens of the Republic. The employment of non-citizen workers in such occupations and industries should not compromise the wages and working conditions of citizen workers (Section 102). Moreover, resident workers are given priority in employment over non-resident workers, as stated in Section 121. To obtain a work visa, employees must submit an employment contract to the immigration authorities of Palau.

Under Provision 9.2 of the Division of Labor's Rules and Regulations (2019), a migrant worker who has finished his/her employment contract (or contracts) cannot work for another employer for a period of five years except where certain highly specific criteria apply. Some of these criteria include if the non-resident worker is the spouse of a citizen of Palau, if the employer of the non-resident worker dies and the legal successor agrees to retain the employee, and if the company where the non-resident worker is working is sold or transferred to a new owner and that owner decides to retain the non-resident worker.¹⁵ Some parties perceive this as being unduly restrictive, noting that the worker concerned has already fulfilled their obligations towards the initial contracting employer, highlighting an area with potential for further development.

Palau does not allow for permanent residency in the country. Instead, individuals may apply for a resident visa, which is granted for a maximum period of two years, as per Section 309 of the Immigration Regulations (2006).¹⁶ However, there is no limit on the number of times a resident visa can be renewed.

The establishment of systems to keep formal records of nationals living abroad is an area with potential for further development. However, embassies and consulates of Palau make efforts to collect such data on a voluntary ad hoc basis. The responsibility for maintaining records of entries and exits from the country through ports and airports, as well as monitoring migration patterns, lies with the Division of Immigration of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection and the Office of Planning and Statistics of the Bureau of Budget and Planning, as per the Citizenship and Immigration Act.¹⁷ They do not, however, maintain a list of nationals living abroad.

¹⁴ Social security contributions are made equally by employers and employees at the rate of 7 per cent each.

¹⁵ See Part 9.2 of the Division of Labor's Rules and Regulations (February 2019).

¹⁶ As per Section 309, "In granting the Visa, the Director shall consider: (1) the purpose of the presence of the Alien in the Republic; (2) whether or not the Alien has Dependents who may lawfully stay in the Republic; (3) the ability of the Alien to provide support for the Alien; and (4) other factors relating to the best interests of the Republic."

¹⁷ See Sections 103, 104, 1001 and 1002.

Palau does not offer civil registration services to migrants who do not have proof of legal identity. Division 5 of Title 34 of the Palau National Code – Public Health, Safety and Welfare – contains all procedures and substantive laws regarding birth and death registration in Palau. It does not take into consideration the issues that may be faced by migrants without legal proof of identity.

There is no specific policy or strategy in place to combat hate crimes, violence, xenophobia and discrimination against migrants. The National Master Development Plan (1996) for a vision for Palau 2020 comprises 16 chapters outlining the objectives and policies to achieve the national development vision, none of which contains any measures to protect the welfare of migrants in the country.



2

FORMULATE POLICY USING EVIDENCE AND WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

2.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Established in 2022 through Executive Order No. 475, Palau's Coordinated Border Management (CBM) Working Group is an interministerial coordination mechanism that addresses migration issues. The CBM Working Group meets monthly and when needed, as per the Executive Order, and includes members from various ministries.¹⁸ The Minister of Finance and the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Industries co-chair the CBM Working Group. Its primary responsibility is the “[d]evelopment and implementation of a Coordinated Border Management Strategic plan and any related Standard Operating Procedures” focusing upon, among other things, migration management and related policy development and coordination (Section 3). The Executive Order also promotes information-sharing, inter-agency collaboration and the cross-delegation of officials (Section 4).

The Bureau of Budget and Planning, a division of the Ministry of Finance, is responsible for collecting and publishing migration data on an annual basis. It compiles a wide range of economic, social and geographic statistics, including climate change impact assessments. The Bureau's Statistical Yearbook, last published in 2022, offers comprehensive vital statistics for Palau, covering demographics, labour and employment, finance, education, and tourism. The Yearbook includes migration data such as the number of foreign workers categorized by sex and nationality, as well as information on citizenship and residence. Additionally, the Bureau of Human Resources of the Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development published a report in 2021, providing data on non-resident workers, including their nationalities and occupations. The census of Palau, conducted in 2020 by the Bureau of Budget and Planning, included questions about migration, respondents' citizenship and migrants' reasons for migration.

2.2. Areas with potential for further development

There is no single government department or agency solely responsible for designing, coordinating and implementing an overarching migration policy or strategic plan, or for enacting immigration policy. The responsibility for immigration functions is divided among various agencies. These include the Division of Employment Services and the Office of Labor Compliance, operating under the Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development, as well as the Division of Immigration, which falls under the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection under the Ministry of Finance, as per Executive Order No. 451 (2021b) and the Citizenship and Immigration Act (1994, last amended in 2013). The Bureau of Customs and Border Protection is responsible for “[protecting] the Palauan public by closely monitoring the Republic's points of entry and the import and export of restricted and illegal goods”.¹⁹

The establishment of a dedicated government entity or agency responsible for enacting emigration and diaspora policy, and the development of specific national legislation on emigration represent an area with significant potential for further development. The Citizenship and Immigration Act does not contain any provisions regarding emigration, except the procedure to be followed when an individual intends to give up their Palauan nationality. Nonetheless, the Ministry of State handles policy and procedural matters related to emigration and the diaspora on a case-by-case basis.

¹⁸ It comprises the Minister of Finance; the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Industries; the Director of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection; the Director of the Bureau of Aviation; the Administrator of the Palau National Aviation Administration; the Director of the Bureau of Marine Transportation; the Director of the Bureau of Public Health; the Attorney General; the National Security Coordinator; the Director of the Bureau of Public Safety; the Director of the Bureau of Human Resources under the Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development; and the Director of the Bureau of Tourism. As per Executive Order No. 475, the members of the working group can vote to approve an amendment or expansion to the group's membership.

¹⁹ Visit the Government of Palau's web page for the [Bureau of Customs and Border Protection](#) for more information.

Palau does not currently have a national migration strategy defined in a programmatic document or manifesto. However, on 1 October 2023, the Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development initiated the process for the development of a national migration policy.²⁰ Additionally, the Government places a high priority on aligning the national migration strategy with the Palau Development Plan, which is also under development as of October 2023.

Palau's Citizenship and Immigration Act and the Immigration Regulations (2006) constitute the country's legislation on immigration. Yet they lack legal provisions to support the introduction of modern border management mechanisms, such as electronic visa arrangements and advance passenger information. Providing the legislative basis for the introduction of modern border management mechanisms is an area for further development.

There is no dedicated user-friendly government website of Palau publishing the rules and regulations pertaining to migration to and from Palau. There is some migration-related information available, but it is dispersed across various government websites. The Palau Visitors Authority provides information on entry requirements for tourists only, the Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development publishes on its website the rules and regulation for hiring migrant labour, while national immigration legislation has been published on the Palau Legal website.²¹

Developing a national migration strategy that aligns with national development strategies is an area with potential for further development. Palau is implementing the Palau Development Plan for a four-year period from 2023 to 2026. This Plan incorporates and revises previous national and sectoral plans, including the Palau 2020 National Master Development Plan (1996), the Medium-Term Development Strategy of 2009 to 2014 (2009) and the first National Voluntary Review on the Sustainable Development Goals (2019). These previous national development plans included specific references to migration. For instance, the Palau 2020 National Master Development Plan stated that the immigration of migrant workers is far outpacing the rate of emigrating citizens of Palau, while Palau's National Voluntary Review on the Sustainable Development Goals made reference to weak labour laws contributing to the outmigration of citizens of Palau and an unhealthy dependence on migrant workers. The Medium-Term Development Strategy of 2009 to 2014 called for improvements to the business environment to prevent citizens of Palau from leaving the country and to mitigate the "threat" posed by migrant workers.

Enhancing vertical coherence of migration-related policies is another area with potential for further development. At the time of drafting this report, the CBM Working Group is cooperating with the United Nations Development Programme, the Pacific Immigration Development Community and IOM to develop a strategic plan to inform its activities.

²⁰ An Inter-Bureau Working Group will be established once the project commences to oversee its implementation.

²¹ Visit the website of [Palau Legal](#) to know more.



3

ENGAGE WITH PARTNERS TO ADDRESS MIGRATION AND RELATED ISSUES

3.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Palau participates in the Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) – a regional consultative forum established in 1996 – alongside 20 other States and territories in Oceania.^{22,23} PIDC enables the immigration agencies of member States to discuss issues of mutual interest and foster multilateral cooperation. Its current thematic focus includes migration policy, migration legislation, migration data, irregular migration, cooperation on governance, and border management. Palau is also a member of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, which was established in 2002 comprising 45 member States and focuses on cooperation and information-sharing to raise awareness of and combat human trafficking.²⁴

Under a Compact of Free Association (COFA) with the United States, Palau has established a partnership to streamline immigration procedures and combat human trafficking. The COFA came into force in 1994 and is expected to be extended beyond 2024. According to the agreement, citizens of Palau can “lawfully engage in occupations and establish residence as a non-immigrant in the United States and its territories and possessions” (Section 141) and that the right to live and work freely in Palau is granted equally to United States citizens (Section 142).

In October 2023, the Government of Palau, represented by the Minister of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development, was engaged in bilateral migration discussions with the Philippines and Bangladesh. This initiative is undertaken due to the significant presence of immigrant labour from these two countries in Palau.

3.2. Areas with potential for further development

No arrangements for formal intraregional mobility have been achieved as a result of Palau’s participation in PIDC or the Bali Process. However, Palau is a member of the Australian Government’s Pacific Engagement Visa programme, established in 2023, which provides a pathway for permanent migration and residence in Australia.²⁵

The engagement of civil society organizations, the private sector or diaspora communities in agenda-setting or the implementation of migration-related policies is an area with potential for further development. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are mandated to register with the Office of the Attorney General in Palau, but there is no evidence that these NGOs have a specific focus on migrant-related issues. Bangladeshi and Filipino workers’ associations operate in Palau in order to improve the welfare of their workers, but these associations are not officially registered as NGOs.

²² The members of the [Pacific Immigration Development Community](#) are American Samoa, Australia, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Wallis and Futuna.

²³ Oceania refers to the region as defined by the [United Nations](#).

²⁴ Visit the website of the [Bali Process](#) to know more.

²⁵ Visit the Australian Government’s web page for the [Pacific Engagement Visa](#) to know more.



4

ADVANCE THE SOCIOECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF MIGRANTS AND SOCIETY

4.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Palau's Bureau of Budget and Planning under the Ministry of Finance regularly collects and publishes data on the number of migrant workers with a work permit, disaggregated by sex and nationality, in its Statistical Yearbook (last published in 2022).

The Government of Palau has established accreditation criteria for recognizing foreign qualifications for some professions, such as teaching, medicine and law. As per Section 1 of Republic of Palau Public Law No. 10-44 (2019), physicians not from Palau must be licensed by the Board of Health Professions after meeting requirements, such as graduating from an approved health professions programme, completing an approved educational programme, demonstrating language proficiency and having a clean disciplinary record. Any non-citizen applicant must be, at a minimum, board eligible or board certified in the jurisdiction where the applicant's residency was completed. Additionally, ad hoc accreditation services are provided by the Government for teachers not from Palau seeking employment, with the World Education Services – affiliated with the Ministry of Education – verifying their degree and transcript. Meanwhile, lawyers not from Palau must sit for the local bar exam and pass to practice in the country, like lawyers from Palau have to.

As part of the Pacific Islands Forum, established in 1971, Palau actively engages in the Pacific Qualifications Framework (PQF) and the Pacific Register of Qualifications and Standards (PRQS).²⁶ Introduced in 2011, the PQF serves as a meta-framework for countries without national qualifications authorities, allowing them to align their national qualifications with the PQF. It is used to establish comparability with other international training and education systems. Alongside this, the PRQS encompasses all levels of education and aims to enable members to compare their national qualifications against international standards, particularly in the health sector.

The Division of Labor's Rules and Regulations (2019) in Palau includes provisions aimed at promoting ethical recruitment practices for migrant workers. These regulations contain various measures to safeguard the rights and interests of migrant workers, such as the minimum wage requirement of USD 3.50 per hour (Part VII); standards for living conditions, including with regard to cleanliness, shelter, toilet facilities, and sewage and rubbish disposal (Part VIII); and limitations on food and housing deductions to 25 per cent of the worker's wages (Article 6.7). However, there are no specific provisions addressing recruitment practices in these regulations.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development operates a job board on its website, where recruiters from Palau are mandated to post job vacancies that cannot be filled by residents.²⁷ The Non-Resident Worker Application contains declarations from the employer to the Government of Palau about the job applicant's pay, housing address and conditions, safe return home, and working conditions.

²⁶ The Pacific Islands Forum includes Australia, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

²⁷ The job board can be found on the website of the Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development.

4.2. Areas with potential for further development

Establishing mechanisms for conducting a national assessment to monitor the demand for immigrant labour in Palau's labour market is an area with potential for further development. Moreover, there is a notable absence of evidence regarding the publication of migrant labour data on the websites of key government entities responsible for labour-related matters, such as the Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development and its subsidiary – the Office of Labor Compliance. Similarly, the Bureau of Budget and Planning, responsible for data collection in Palau, does not provide any information on migrant labour data publications.

Additionally, Palau does not possess a national assessment mechanism to monitor the domestic labour supply and the effects of emigration on the domestic labour market. There are no defined programmes for managing labour immigration into Palau based on labour market demand. Neither Palau's Division of Labor's Rules and Regulations nor the Citizenship and Immigration Act (1994, last amended in 2013) contains any measures in this regard.

The establishment of visas designed to attract specific labour skills is an area for development. As per the Immigration Regulations (2006), Palau offers the following visa categories: tourist, business, student, dependent, foreign government/international organization, missionary, resident, temporary, work and investor. Most non-citizens who are granted work visas require a work permit issued by the Office of Labor Compliance, except in the case of temporary work permits issued under Section 5.8 of the Division of Labor's Rules and Regulations for a period of 90 days or less. There are some other visas that have work rights, including the foreign government/international organization visa issued by the Division of Immigration for those working for embassies and international organizations, and the government employee visa for those contracted to work for the national Government or a public corporation or State agencies.²⁸ Holders of some other visas (e.g. dependent visas) may also undertake employment subject to obtaining a work permit.

Palau does not have any mechanisms or measures in place to protect the rights of its nationals working abroad. Nonetheless, Palau's embassies and offices abroad are required to protect and safeguard the rights of citizens of Palau in coordination with the Ministry of State.

While the Division of Labor's Rules and Regulations contains some provisions aimed at promoting ethical recruitment practices for migrant workers, occupational safety and hazards standards are not always enforced in practice by employers in relation to activities such as operating heavy equipment and transportation; thus, developing specific provisions to address employment practices related to migrant workers is an area with significant potential for further development.

²⁸ Unskilled workers seeking to work for State agencies must also obtain a labour work permit issued by the Office of Labor Compliance.



5

EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS THE MOBILITY DIMENSIONS OF CRISES

5.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Disaster Executive Council (DEC), established under Palau's National Disaster Risk Management Framework (2010, last amended in 2016), provides overall strategic direction and undertakes responsibilities for disaster management and response in the country. The National Emergency Committee (NEC) under DEC is responsible for implementing and monitoring the National Disaster Risk Management Framework, coordinating emergency responses and operating the National Emergency Operations Centre, providing policy oversight for disaster management and disaster risk reduction activities, and overseeing recovery efforts following a disaster.²⁹ The National Emergency Management Office (NEMO), which reports to NEC, is responsible for maintaining the National Disaster Plan and providing assistance to national and State agencies in the development of Agency Support Plans, coordinating the development of public education programmes regarding disaster planning, and coordinating and assisting in specific disaster-related skills training.

The Government of Palau actively participates in various regional frameworks and initiatives related to climate mobility and disaster risk management. The country is a member of the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility, which focuses on internal and cross-border movements in the context of climate change. In June 2022, a national consultation on climate mobility was organized in Palau, where participants provided inputs for developing the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility, which was endorsed by leaders at the Pacific Islands Leaders Forum in November 2023.³⁰ Furthermore, Palau is a member of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), an intergovernmental organization that aims to enhance cooperation between the countries and territories of Oceania. Under the PIF initiatives, Pacific leaders approved the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific in 2016, serving as the comprehensive regional framework for climate change and disaster risk management.³¹ Additionally, Palau is part of the Nansen Initiative, launched in 2012,³² and the subsequent Platform on Disaster Displacement.³³ These initiatives aim to address the challenges faced by individuals displaced across borders due to disasters and climate change, fostering collaboration and the development of a protection agenda for displaced populations.

Palau was also one of the countries that supported the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and is actively taking action in line with the Framework's four priorities to build disaster resilience. These actions include maintaining and testing the National Disaster Plan, providing assistance to national and State agencies in the development of Agency Support Plans, coordinating the development of public education programmes regarding disaster planning, coordinating and assisting in specific disaster-related skills training, coordinating State and national disaster management planning, and periodically reviewing State and national legislation and regulations to ensure that they are in compliance and coordination with the National Disaster Plan.

The country is also an active participant in climate change negotiations, having ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1999),³⁴ the Kyoto Protocol (1999) and the Paris Agreement (2016).³⁵

²⁹ The National Emergency Committee consists of the Central Control Group and the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO).

³⁰ The Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility, which can be accessed on the Pacific Islands Forum website, aims to guide governments in addressing legal, policy and practical issues that arise, particularly in respect of four main types of climate mobility: displacement, migration, evacuations and planned relocation.

³¹ Information on the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific can be accessed on the website of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

³² The Nansen Initiative is a State-led, bottom-up consultative process intended to build consensus on the development of a protection agenda for people displaced across borders due to disasters and the negative impacts of climate change.

³³ The Nansen Initiative's member States are Australia, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Germany, Kenya, Mexico and the Philippines. Co-chair countries of the Initiative are Norway and Switzerland.

³⁴ Read more on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the United Nations Treaty Collection webpage.

³⁵ Visit Palau's web page on the website of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to know more.

Palau has communications systems in place to receive and transmit information on the evolving nature of crises. The National Disaster Risk Management Framework assigns to NEMO the responsibility for ensuring that “timely and appropriate messages are broadcasted to the public, advising of the degree of the threat and action that should be taken before, during and after the impact” (Section 3.10.6). According to the Framework, “[n]ational warning systems must be people-focused and integrated to ensure effective dissemination and communications networks from national to outlying states and community levels”, and they must be “able to reach all vulnerable communities”. Emergency-related information is provided via the national radio station and social media channels. Additionally, Palau uses Chatty Beetle, a portable iridium satellite terminal that facilitates text-based alerts and messages about potential weather hazards in remote locations where communications options are limited.³⁶

Additionally, in September 2022, Palau received “effective and low-cost, low-tech early warning systems, installed through the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) Pilot Project”, which have been installed in the regions of Ngaraard, Ngilwal and Kayangel by the Palau National Weather Service, in partnership with NEMO and the Palau Red Cross Society.³⁷ Finally, in the aftermath of disasters, a hotline is set up, and NEMO typically visits the affected areas to assess the damage and engage with the community to identify their needs.

5.2. Areas with potential for further development

Palau’s emergency management framework lacks specific measures to provide assistance to migrants before, during and after crises, although migrants, both internal and international, are provided with assistance on an ad hoc basis.

While Palau’s 2015 Climate Change Policy calls to develop immigration and labour policies to better manage migrant workers during emergencies, the country’s National Disaster Risk Management Framework does not make specific reference to migrants.³⁸

Nonetheless, in September 2022, NEMO and NEC partnered with IOM and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to kick off the Inclusive Mitigation and Preparedness in Action (IMPACT) project.³⁹ The project aims to support the Government of Palau’s preparedness plans, facilitate and inform national-level planning and response efforts, and boost capacities of disaster committees to review and update preparedness and response plans, including to ensure considerations of protection and specific needs of vulnerable groups. In addition, the IMPACT project does not provide a strategy to address displacement caused by disasters, but it has provision for strengthening disaster preparedness plans and allocating funds for evacuation shelters in four states.

The National Tsunami Support Plan (2015) primarily addresses human mobility concerns by designating evacuation zones during disasters. Developing environmental and climate change policies that comprehensively incorporate human mobility considerations is an area with significant potential for further development.

Another area with potential for improvement is the development of a disaster risk reduction strategy that specifically addresses the displacement impacts of disasters. NEMO and the Government have taken steps to address the displacement impacts of disasters. For example, during Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, students from the badly impacted State of Kayangel were integrated into the schooling system in the main island of Koror, and arrangements were made for them to live with extended families. While Palau’s 2015 Climate Change Policy calls for a relocation/displacement programme for vulnerable members of society,

³⁶ Chatty Beetles are devices that receive and send text alerts designed by Rural Communications using radio and the Internet for remote applications where other communications do not exist or are unreliable, or where a simple notification is needed. NEMO is responsible for their operation.

³⁷ More information is available in this [article](#) on the website of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

³⁸ See page 15 of *Palau Climate Change Policy: For Climate and Disaster Resilient Low Emissions Development* (Government of Palau, 2015a).

³⁹ More details on the project is available in this [article](#) on IOM’s website.

including students, the National Disaster Risk Management Framework makes no reference to a disaster risk reduction strategy that specifically addresses the displacement impacts of disasters.⁴⁰

Palau does not have a contingency plan in place to manage large-scale population movements in times of crisis, and neither did the Palau 2020 National Master Development Plan (1996) contain displacement-related measures. Palau launched a National Infrastructure Investment Plan in 2021, which is valid until 2030, but it contains no provisions regarding displacement as well.

Although citizens of Palau can request ad hoc assistance from embassies and consulates abroad, the Government's establishment of formal measures to support its nationals living abroad in times of crisis is an area for further development. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government repatriated citizens stranded abroad when requested, including from New Zealand and Guam in 2020.

⁴⁰ See pages 14 and 16 of *Palau Climate Change Policy*.



6

ENSURE THAT MIGRATION TAKES PLACE IN A SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MANNER

6.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Bureau of Customs and Border Protection, established in 2016 under the Ministry of Finance, is responsible for integrated border control and security, including visa monitoring and overseeing the ports of entry in Palau as reaffirmed by Executive Order No. 450 (2021). The Bureau maintains a digital spreadsheet file that contains a record of all entries into Palau. This file is manually completed and regularly checked by officials, and overstays are identified through this database. Visa checks take place at Palau International Airport and Malakal Port, which are the two points of entry into Palau. The airport utilizes an electronic system to monitor visas, while the Bureau employs both paper and electronic systems for monitoring purposes.⁴¹

The Anti-Human Trafficking National Action Plan 2022–2025 (2022), published by the Bureau of Public Safety under the Ministry of Justice, outlines four overarching goals: enforcement of laws in deterring and preventing human trafficking, increasing efforts on victim protection and assistance, amending human trafficking legislation where necessary, and coordinating government and community responses. Under the Ministry of Justice, Palau’s Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU), previously known as the Anti-Human Trafficking Office, was established in 2018 (as per Executive Order No. 412 of 2018). AHTU reports to the Division of Transnational Crime, which in turn reports to the Bureau of Public Safety. Furthermore, AHTU receives support from various government and non-government stakeholders, including the Division of Immigration, the Office of Labor Compliance, the Office of the Special Prosecutor, the Ministry of State, the Ministry of Health and Human Services, the National Security Coordinator, Micronesia Legal Services Corporation and IOM.

Since the National Action Plan came into force, the Government finalized and started implementing the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for identifying victims of trafficking. Officials tasked with implementing the SOPs receive regular training. Once those requiring assistance are identified, a multi-agency process between the police, the Office of Labor Compliance, the Division of Immigration and AHTU is triggered, and immediate assistance is provided. Republic of Palau Public Law No. 11-28, approved in April 2023, amended Palau’s Anti-People Smuggling and Trafficking Act (2005, last amended in 2023) to include (a) a mandate for imprisonment and fines for those found guilty; (b) provisions to guarantee immunity to individuals who have been smuggled, exploited or trafficked; and (c) increased reporting obligations for the Government.

Amendments to Palau’s Anti-People Smuggling and Trafficking Act impose greater reporting obligations on the Government regarding its counter-trafficking activities. The amendments call on the Division of Transnational Crime within the Bureau of Public Safety to prepare an annual report on Palau’s efforts to eliminate human trafficking. They also call on the Attorney General and the Special Prosecutor to each submit an annual report on human trafficking in Palau.

In 2017, Palau entered into an “Agreement between the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Ministry of State of the Republic of Palau Concerning Cooperation in Immigration Affairs and Human Trafficking Prevention”, which covers information exchange between the two countries and their consent to cooperate in “the prevention of human trafficking and smuggling ... ; [t]o foster cooperation between the immigration agencies in both countries as set out in the preamble of this Agreement specifically in relation to human trafficking, smuggling and other transnational crimes; [t]o foster cooperation and sharing of experience in relation to detecting, and resolving cases of human

⁴¹ The electronic system is not able to accommodate advance passenger information and electronic visa arrangements.

trafficking, smuggling and other transnational crimes and personnel training on these issues; and [t]o facilitate cooperation on other matters related to human trafficking, smuggling and other transnational crimes”.

The Government’s measures to combat labour exploitation apply to all workers, with specific provision for the protection of migrants with work permits. For instance, the Citizenship and Immigration Act (1994, last amended in 2013) contains a chapter on “Foreign labor”, which establishes the minimum wage in the country and states that the same minimum wage is payable to all workers (Section 1025). Section 6.5 of the Division of Labor’s Rules and Regulations (2019) imposes a threshold for minimum workplace conditions and states that it applies for “resident and non-resident workers alike”. Section 6.6 requires employers to cover all medical expenses arising from employment, while Section 6.7 provides that no more than 25 per cent of a non-resident worker’s pay may be deducted in lieu of the mandated employer-provided food and accommodation expenses. Sections 8.1 and 8.2 state that all workers must be provided with adequately clean and safe accommodation and food, with details on the minimum facilities that must be offered.

6.2. Areas with potential for further development

The establishment of a formal and regular training curriculum on migration is an area for further development. Border management personnel are trained in an ad hoc fashion. Currently there are three to four training courses organized every month for officials across Customs, Biosecurity and Immigration. The Bureau of Customs and Border Protection liaises with international organizations (such as the Pacific Immigration Development Community and the Oceania Customs Organisation) and local organizations (such as the Financial Intelligence Unit) to organize these trainings.

All nationals, except for nationals of Bangladesh and Myanmar, are granted a visa on arrival facilities. As per Sections 201 and 202 of the Immigration Regulations (2006), non-citizens entering Palau are required to present a valid passport and an Entry Form that must be duly completed and presented to the immigration officer and “which shall include an address at which the Alien can be reached”. The ability to switch status from having a visitor visa to being granted a work permit, once in the country, has thus far contributed to obviating the need for a visa prior to arrival.

Palau does not currently have a website clearly outlining all visa options. The Palau Visitors Authority provides information only for those arriving as tourists in Palau. The primary portal containing the names, relevant laws and policies of all ministries of Palau and their subordinate bureaus does not contain information about visa application procedures or the visa categories available to migrants.⁴²

The development of a formal governmental programme or policy focused on either attracting nationals who have migrated from the country or facilitating the reintegration of returning nationals is considered an area with potential for further development.

While the Citizenship and Immigration Act contains a chapter on “Foreign labor”, which establishes the minimum wage in the country and states that the same minimum wage is payable to all workers (Section 1025) as mentioned above, foreign migrants working as agricultural labourers and domestic workers aren’t covered under this provision. The lack of an established minimum wage for these two groups of workers makes them highly vulnerable to being trafficked.

Palau publishes information about its counter-trafficking activities only on an ad hoc basis. AHTU publicizes its activities through a Facebook page on an intermittent basis, and efforts to establish a website are ongoing as of October 2023.⁴³

⁴² Visit the portal PalauGov.pw to know more.

⁴³ Visit the [Facebook page of the Palau Anti-Human Trafficking Unit](#) to know more.

After the MGI assessment

IOM would like to thank the Government of Palau for their engagement in this process. IOM hopes that the results of this assessment can feed into the Government's strengthening of their migration governance. After an MGI assessment, the following are recommended:



The MGI report can be used to inform policy work with the support of IOM (if desired).



The findings can feed into capacity-building activities, which may connect to other IOM initiatives.



A follow-up assessment can be conducted after three years to verify progress.



Governments can exchange best practices and innovative solutions with other governments that have conducted the MGI process.



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ANNEX

The MGI process



1

Launch of the MGI process

The first step of the process is to explain what the MGIs entail to key government officials, in order to ensure full understanding of the project and complete buy-in.



2

Data collection

The second step of the process is to start the collection and analysis of data, based on about 90 indicators grounded in the six dimensions of the MiGOF. A migration governance profile based on the analysis of the findings is then drafted and shared with the government counterparts.



3

Interministerial consultation

The third step of the process is to convene an interministerial consultation where all relevant ministries and other stakeholders discuss the good practices and main areas that could be developed further as identified in the draft migration governance profile, as well as priorities on the way forward. It is also an opportunity for them to comment and provide suggestions on the draft profile.



4

Publication of the report on the Global Migration Data Portal

After the migration governance profiles are finalized and vetted by government counterparts, they are published on the [Migration Data Portal](#) and the [IOM Publications Platform](#).



www.migrationdataportal.org/mgi

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