OCEANIA

- Oceania\(^1\) is host to five million international migrants (UN DESA, 2005), representing 15.2 per cent of its population, the largest share in any region in the world, and accounting for 2.6 per cent of the global migrant stock.

- Migration accounts for one-quarter of population growth in Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Ocean island countries, with the number of migrants in the Oceania region increasing from 4.8 million to five million over the period 1990-2005 (UN, 2005).

- Women migrants in Oceania have outnumbered men since 2000, when they constituted 50.6 per cent of international migrants. Their share has since risen to 51.3 per cent of total international migrants (UN, 2005).

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

- Migrants make up a fifth of the population of Australia, the highest proportion for any country in the world with a population of 20 million or more.\(^2\) While in Australia the migrant population has increased since 1995, in New Zealand the number of migrants decreased from 708,000 to 642,000 (UN DESA, 2005).

Figure 1:
Stock of migrants in Australia and New Zealand, 2000 and 2005

Part A: Total number of migrants

![Graph showing the stock of migrants in Australia and New Zealand, 2000 and 2005.](image)

Part B: As a share of total population

![Graph showing the stock of migrants in Australia and New Zealand, 2000 and 2005, as a share of total population.](image)

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\(^1\) Oceania includes the following countries and territories: Australia, New Zealand, Melanesia (Fiji, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu), Micronesia (Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau) and Polynesia (American Samoa, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Niue, Pitcairn, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Wallis and Futuna Islands).

\(^2\) Only single countries and not sub-regions are referred to in this statistic. Therefore, GCC countries are not included, although their total share of migrants is higher than in Australia.
In both Australia and New Zealand the number of migrants as a share of the total population declined between 2000 and 2005 (UN DESA, 2005) (see Figure 1). Three main factors may explain this development. First, from 2000 to 2005, the rules concerning migration for family reunion, which in the past had accounted for a substantial share of immigration to both countries, have been tightened. Second, while skilled immigration continued to grow significantly, much of it was, in fact, of a temporary nature of between six months and two years, and therefore does not show up in some statistics. Third, though of less immediate impact, particularly in Australia, the numbers of the older post-World War II immigrants are declining as old age takes its toll (Connell, 2007).

**Australia and New Zealand are among the few countries in the world to have active immigration programmes and are the major destinations in the region for both migrants and refugees**

- The U.K. has traditionally been the leading country of origin for immigrants in Australia. In 1996, however, arrivals from New Zealand, outnumbered British immigrants, reaching 25,000 in 2001. In 2003, the U.K. regained its first position until 2005, when the differential between these two top groups of migrants decreased with 18,220 and 17,345 arrivals from the U.K. and New Zealand, respectively (MPI, 2005).
- In 1996, China became the third country of origin for migrants arriving in Australia, and has maintained this position since (MPI, 2005) (see Figure 2).
- Family reunification has been the traditional cornerstone of migration policies ...
  - During the period 1990-2002, family reunification accounted for 37 per cent of immigrant entries to Australia. For New Zealand, the share of admissions for family reasons was lower and continued to decline over the same period (UN, 2005).
  - ... but many more highly skilled migrants are now admitted under the “points system” ...
    - Between 2006-2007, 97,920 permanent residents were granted permanent residence in Australia under the skills programme, compared to 50,079

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3 Email communication with Professor John Connell, University of Sydney, Australia.
under the family reunification programme (DIAC, 2007).

... and the student population remains large

- In 2006-2007, a total of 228,592 student visas were granted, which represents a significant increase of almost 20 per cent over the 2005-2006 figure of 190,674 visas. The two leading source countries were China and India with 28,949 and 24,915 visa grants, respectively (DIAC, 2007).
- In 2004-2005, foreign graduates of Australian Universities accounted for 20 per cent of Australian immigrants under the skills programme, led by Chinese and Indians (Migration News, January 2006).

Temporary migration for work is gaining in importance

- The number of temporary workers in Australia has increased noticeably since 1996, when the government introduced a new temporary business entry visa that allows employers to sponsor skilled workers from overseas for a stay of up to four years (OECD, 2007) (see Figure 4).

Figure 4:

Inflows of foreign workers to Australia, 1995-2005 (thousands)

- Temporary migration also increased in New Zealand over the last ten years (see Figure 5). In line with this general trend, a pilot programme for seasonal workers from Vanuatu was launched in April 2007 (IMF, 2007).

Figure 5:

Inflows of foreign workers into New Zealand, 1998-2005 (thousands)

- Female migration is also gaining greater prominence

- Recent data show that women are migrating to Australia to take up managerial, professional and other positions that cannot be filled locally. For example, Australia is projecting nursing deficits of 40,000 during the next four to five years (UNFPA, 2006). According to the New Zealand nurse registry figures for 2002, 23 per cent of nurses were foreign-born.

The relatively high emigration levels from Australia and New Zealand primarily reflect the desire of educated young citizens to seek work experience abroad

- Australia has an overall emigration rate of 1.75 and New Zealand 10.7. The highly skilled emigration rate is 3.68 and 17, respectively (OECD, 2005).

Permanent settlers: Skilled workers including the following categories of visas: employer nominations, business skills, occupational shares system, special talents and independent, including accompanying dependants. Period of reference: Fiscal year (July to June).


5 The emigration rate is calculated by dividing the expatriate population from that country by the total native-born population of the country (native-born = expatriates + resident native-born) (OECD, Database on Immigrants and Expatriates, 2005).

6 The emigration rate of highly educated persons is calculated by dividing the highly educated expatriate population from that country by the total highly educated native-born population.
MELANESIA, POLYNESIA AND MICRONESIA

Figure 6:
Stock of migrants in Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia, 2000 and 2005

Part A: Total number of migrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micronesia</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanesia</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polynesia</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part B: As a share of total population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micronesia</td>
<td>24,17</td>
<td>23,06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanesia</td>
<td>10.68</td>
<td>10.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polynesia</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UN DESA, 2005.

All sub-regions of Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia experienced an increase in their migrant population between 2000 and 2005 (see Figure 6). Micronesia leads with 134,000, or 24 per cent of its population (UN DESA, 2005).

Under the influence of globalization, Fiji has become a source of temporary skilled migrants in response to specific opportunities abroad, especially in the Middle East and in other Pacific countries.

Between 2000 and 2004, 27,000 Fijian citizens emigrated. A breakdown of these figures reveals that the vast majority were of Indo-Fijian origin and that more than 3,800 had a professional or technical background (Mohanty, 2006) (see Figure 7).

Figure 7:
Emigration of Fijian citizens by ethnic group and profession, 1987-2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fijians</th>
<th>Indo-Fijians</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Average annual emigration rate</th>
<th>Professionals**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987-1999</td>
<td>3,926</td>
<td>57,159</td>
<td>3,124</td>
<td>64,209</td>
<td>4,939</td>
<td>6,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2004*</td>
<td>2,373</td>
<td>23,585</td>
<td>1,126</td>
<td>27,084</td>
<td>5,413</td>
<td>3,826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987-2004*</td>
<td>6,299</td>
<td>80,744</td>
<td>4,250</td>
<td>91,293</td>
<td>5,070</td>
<td>10,695</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * The figure for 2004 is from January to September. ** Includes professionals, technical and related workers.


In addition to continuing permanent Indo-Fijian emigration from the country, Fiji has also witnessed new trends in temporary migration of mostly indigenous Fijians, as members of peacekeeping forces, security personnel, nurses, sportspeople and students to distant parts of the world.

- Fijian soldiers have been deployed to Iraq, continuing a long-standing tradition of Fijian soldiers working in multinational peace-making and peace-keeping operations. Many Fijians are also employed in security, engineering and IT occupations in major cities in Iraq.

- Estimates of the number of temporary contractual workers recruited to the Middle East from Fiji are variable but are as high as 20,000, though such figures relate to those who applied and paid fees of more than FJD 150 to private recruitment agencies,
rather than those who were finally selected for employment overseas, which might be about 2,500 (Connell, 2006).

- Nurses from Fiji have also migrated to the U.K. and to other Pacific countries such as the Marshall Islands (Rokoduru, 2006).

Overseas remittances play a crucial role in Fiji’s foreign exchange earnings

- Fiji’s economy has relied historically on sugar and gold mining and, more recently, also on tourism and garment manufacturing; but, in the decade between 1994 and 2004, the amount of remittances has increased to a level where they bring in more foreign exchange than all other sectors except tourism (Maclellan and Mares, 2006) (see Figure 8).

Figure 8:
Increase in foreign exchange earnings in Fiji, 1994-2004 (millions of Fijian Dollars)

Note: 1 Fiji Dollar (FJD) equals about 0.63 U.S. Dollar as of August 2008.
Source: Maclellan and Mares, 2006.

- Niue is currently seeking immigration from Tuvalu, as its population has declined sharply after being hit by Cyclone Heta in 2004, continuing a long-term “culture of migration” (Connell, 2006). Niue’s declining population has been of concern to successive governments and currently stands at around 1,500. Over 20,000 Niueans live in New Zealand and despite government attempts to encourage them to return home, migration patterns persist (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, 2007).

- Many, but by no means all, South Pacific economies rely heavily on remittances from migrants abroad. Tonga is among the Pacific nations that have been identified since the 1980s as MIRAB economies, that is, sustained principally by Migration, Remittances, Aid and Bureaucracy. In 2006, Tonga was globally the second main recipient country (after Moldova and Liberia) of remittances as a share of GDP (32.2%) (World Bank, 2008). According to Small and Dixon (2004), in the case of Tonga, “it is migration, along with the remittances of cash and goods from migrants who live and work overseas, that keeps the Tongan economy afloat”. Remittances are its major source of foreign exchange.

- On the other hand, Vanuatu experiences almost no emigration and receives few remittances, in marked contrast to Samoa and Tonga (IMF, 2007).

All countries in this sub-region will experience an oversupply of labour by 2015

- According to World Bank projections, Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia will register an excess labour supply by 2015. This large increase (except in Fiji, where the increase is expected to be more

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7 The acronym was developed originally by Bertram and Watters (1985) in relation to Pacific states linked to New Zealand, and expanded to include other Pacific nations in similar economic situations.
moderate) is driven by the strong growth rate of the working-age population combined with a low increase in jobs. Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are likely to be the most affected (World Bank, 2007) (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9:**

*Working-age population of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu not employed in the formal sector, 2004 and 2015*

Regional Overviews

Map showing the total emigrant population by country of origin.

- **Micronesia total**
- **Melanesia total**
- **Polynesia total**

**Total emigrant population by country of origin**
- less than 105,700
- 105,700 to 211,400
- 211,400 to 317,200
- 317,200 to 422,900
- more than 422,900
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