Immigration and the Role of Civil Society in Singapore

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SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT OF IMMIGRATION
Early Migration Patterns into Singapore

Chief sources of immigration into Singapore 1823 - 1833

North Indian
South Indian
Malay
Chinese
Bugis
Javanese
# National Concerns: Dependency Ratios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2025</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Assuming current birth rates and no immigration from 2013 onwards*

*Source: DOS*
Population Growth – Demographic Composition

2008 Population – 4.5 Million

- Singaporean Citizens: 68%
- PRs: 10%
- Non-residents: 22%

2013 Population – 5.4 Million

- Singaporean Citizens: 61%
- PRs: 10%
- Non-residents: 29%

Engaging Minds, Exchanging Ideas
Composition Of Non-Resident Population

- Employment Pass Holders (170,000) - 45%
- S Pass Holders (130,000) - 9%
- Work Permit Holders (680,000) - 13%
- Dependants of Citizens / PRs / Work Pass Holders (220,000) - 15%
- International Students (84,000) - 6%
- Foreign Domestic Workers (210,000) - 12%
IMPACT AND PERCEPTION ON IMMIGRATION
16 Feb

SINGAPORE FOR SINGAPOREANS
Chinese Bus Workers Strike – Nov 2012
Little India Riots – Dec 2013
Currently, as a whole, how satisfied are you with working in Singapore?

- **WP Holders**
  - 2011: 90.6%
  - 2014: 87.7%

- **S Pass Holders**
  - 2011: 90.4%
  - 2014: 90.7%

- **Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied**: 4.2% (2011), 9.5% (2014), 8.0% (2011), 8.0% (2014)
- **Neutral**: 5.2% (2011), 2.8% (2014), 1.6% (2011), 1.3% (2014)
- **Very Satisfied/ Satisfied**: 90.6% (2011), 87.7% (2014), 90.4% (2011), 90.7% (2014)
SINGAPOREANS' VIEWS OF FOREIGNERS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>% in Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take up jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singaporeans shun</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribute to economic growth</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make Singapore a more interesting and diverse place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needed because there are more jobs than workers here</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can top up population and slow ageing rate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: The percentage in agreement is the sum of those who said they strongly agreed or agreed with the statements.

NOTE: Excludes “Don’t know” or “Refused” replies.
ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN MANAGING MIGRANT ISSUES
Civil Society and Migrants

• CSOs are on a continuum – as junior partners of the state and those who work in resistance of the state.
Immigrant Associations

- Over 40 immigrant associations representing migrants from different geographical spaces
- Focus on better skilled migrants
- Cooperate with the state in integration based activities
- Push for cultural preservation
- Communicate to Singaporeans peculiarities of immigrant norms and remind immigrants about Singaporean obligations
GONGO do not pressure government but try to pressure industries; Focus on social service provision.
Rafiquil and Abubakar paid recruiters over $3,000 each for a job with contracted salary of $660 a month. Seven months later, they were given a choice of termination or transfer to a $420 job, doing the same work. They complained to MOM, but while waiting for resolution, were jobless and broke.

TWC2’s free meals program was their life-line; your donation made a difference.
Civil Society Advocating for the Needs of Individual Migrant Workers

A typical evening in front of TWC2’s soup kitchen. Workers with problems crowd around volunteers trying their best to help.
Civil Society Advocating for the Rights of Migrants to Local Singaporean Employers
IN 2008,
Singapore successfully petitioned for the installation of seatbelts in school buses.

Civil Society
Policy
Advocacy
Strategies
WE ARE AN ANTI HUMAN-TRAFFICKING ORGANISATION

WE WORK FOR THE WELL-BEING, JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT OF MIGRANT WORKERS

BLOG

WARNED NOT TO SIGN
A while back, HOME blog wrote about Warming Letters, which are issued by the Police informing domestic workers that they have been issued a stern warning in lieu of prosecution.

GET YOUR FACTS

1 Human trafficking is the exploitation of human beings to make money.
2 Victims are most commonly trafficked into forced labour, forced sex work, and forced domestic work.
3 Human trafficking is one of the fastest growing

GIVE A GOOD GIFT

Engaging Minds, Exchanging Ideas
Civil Society Increasing Human Capital of Transient Migrant Workers
FDW Trafficking Research Report
December 2012
Collaboration among Civil Society

DAY. OFF
For a regular Day Off for domestic workers in Singapore

0000618 SUPPORTERS
HELP This Campaign GROW

Engaging Minds, Exchanging Ideas
State’s growing acceptance to migration CSOs

• Showcases its commitment to the protection of migrant rights necessary to continue to maintain Singapore’s status as a preferred destination

• Finds legitimacy through CSOs to protect migrant workers

• CSOs have also learned to cooperate with the state
Singaporean migration related CSOs

- Gained legitimacy both from the state and the population as CSOs sincerely interested in the welfare of migrants
- Ability to collaborate with fellow NGOs and international NGOs to present a unified front to the state
- Try to co-exist with the state and be a useful partner even if sometimes adversarial