

Title: Filipina Marriage Migration to European Countries, 1995-2004

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Introduction

From only 343 Filipino spouses and other partners of foreign nationals who emigrated to Europe in 1989, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (2009) documented a nearly five-fold increase in the number by 2007. Its proportionate share increased from 4.4 to 6.8 percent over the same period. Such increased are believed to be kindled by the increasing labor mobility of Filipinas, their social networks and demographic conditions in destination countries.

For purposes of this study, marriage migration is defined as any permanent change of residence that involves crossing of national boundaries and is marriage-related. Hence, included in this category are the Filipina emigrants who have been married to foreign nationals and those with intention to marry foreign spouses and therefore departing from the Philippines and using a fiancés visa to enter the destination country.

Objective

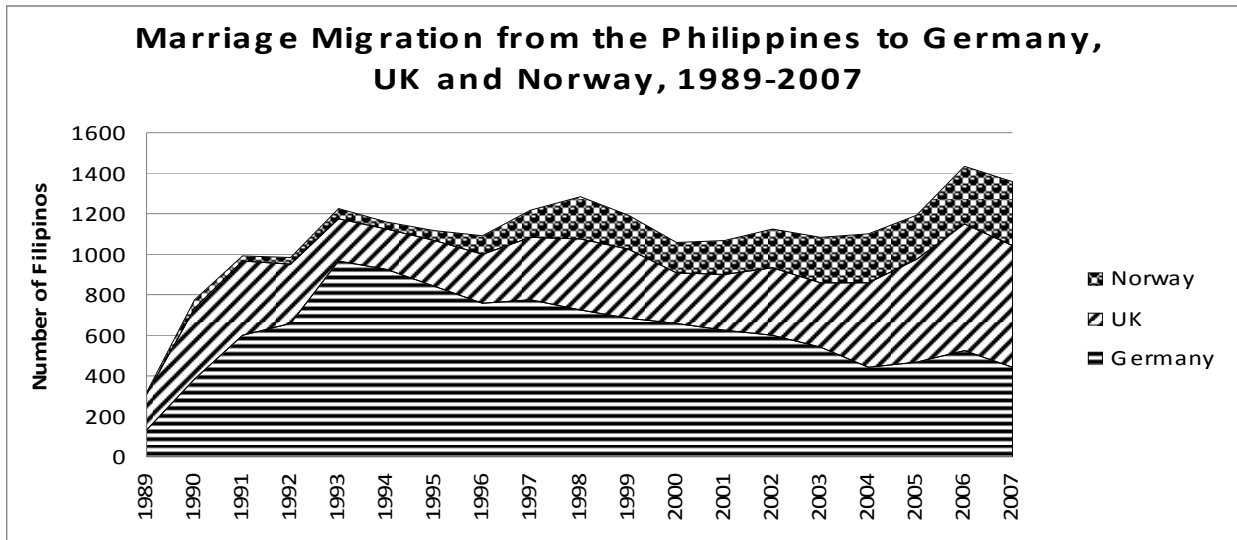
This paper has a three-pronged objective: (1) examine the trend of Filipina marriage migration streams to the top-three European destinations: Germany, United Kingdom (UK) and Norway, (2) examine their socio-demographic differentials by age, education and work status of Filipina emigrants who joined their spouses or fiancés in these countries, and (3) compare selected characteristics of Filipina emigrants by destinations country.

Methods

The study used administrative data collected by the CFO from departing Filipinos who apply for emigration to describe the trend in marriage migration from the Philippines from 1989 to 2006. Since a migration stream involves a group of migrants from a common origin with a specific destination, three Filipina marriage migration streams were examined over two time periods: 1995-1999 (Period 1) and 2000-2004 (Period 2). The administrative data of 10,670 Filipinas who emigrated to Germany (6280), UK (2900) and Norway (1490) were examined. Cross-tabulations of selected variables were estimated to describe the socio-demographic differentials. Odds ratios for Filipinas emigrating to UK and Norway, in contrast to Germany, were examined and her spouse on age, education and work status were compared by country of destination and period.

Results

1. Marriage-related emigration from the Philippines to the top three European destinations has been increasing over the past two decades. Germany was initially receiving the majority of the marriage migrants until 2004. UK-bound marriage migrants has outnumbered their Germany-bound counterparts since 2005.



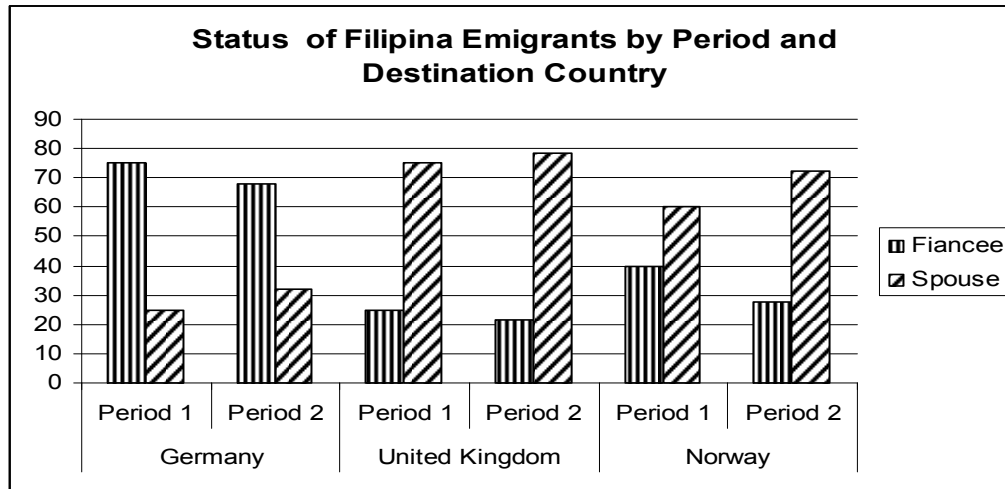
Source: CFO (2009)

2. The majority of marriage migrants from the Philippines are women (98 percent). The mean age of Filipina marriage migrants increased by about one year over the 10-year reference period, i.e., from 28.5 years in Period 1 to 29.5 years in Period 2.
3. Filipinas are younger by more than 12 years, on average, in comparison with their foreign spouses. Filipinas who emigrated to UK and Norway have the highest and lowest mean ages, respectively.

Table 1. Mean Age of Foreign Spouses and Filipina Emigrants by Country of Destination and Period

	Germany		United Kingdom		Norway	
	1995-1999	2000-2004	1995-2000	2000-2005	1995-2000	2000-2005
	Period 1	Period 2	Period 1	Period 2	Period 1	Period 2
Foreign Spouse	40.5	42.4	42.9	44.3	41.2	42.9
Filipina	28.2	29.2	29.5	30.5	28.0	28.6

4. Filipinas who left for Germany between 1995-2004 were mostly fiancés while those who proceeded to UK and Norway emigrated as spouses. The proportion of Filipinas who emigrated as spouse increased during the ten-year period in all three destination countries.



5. The proportion of Filipina marriage migrants with at least college education increased over the ten-year reference period. UK recorded the highest proportion of college educated Filipina marriage migrants.

Table 2. Percentage distribution of Filipina Emigrants' Education by Country of Destination and Period

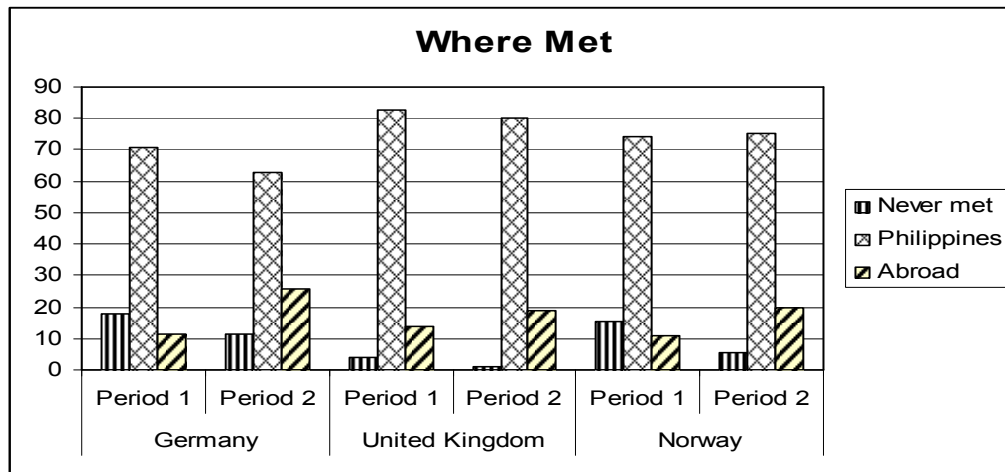
Education	Germany		United Kingdom		Norway	
	1995-1999	2000-2004	1995-2000	2000-2005	1995-2000	2000-2005
	Period 1	Period 2	Period 1	Period 2	Period 1	Period 2
HS or less	50.2	49.5	47.7	38.5	52.9	45.8
College or more	49.8	50.5	52.3	61.5	47.1	54.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

6. Nearly all Filipina marriage migrants have met their partners before departure from the Philippines. There is increasing proportion of women who went to Germany who had known their marital partners for at least 3 years.

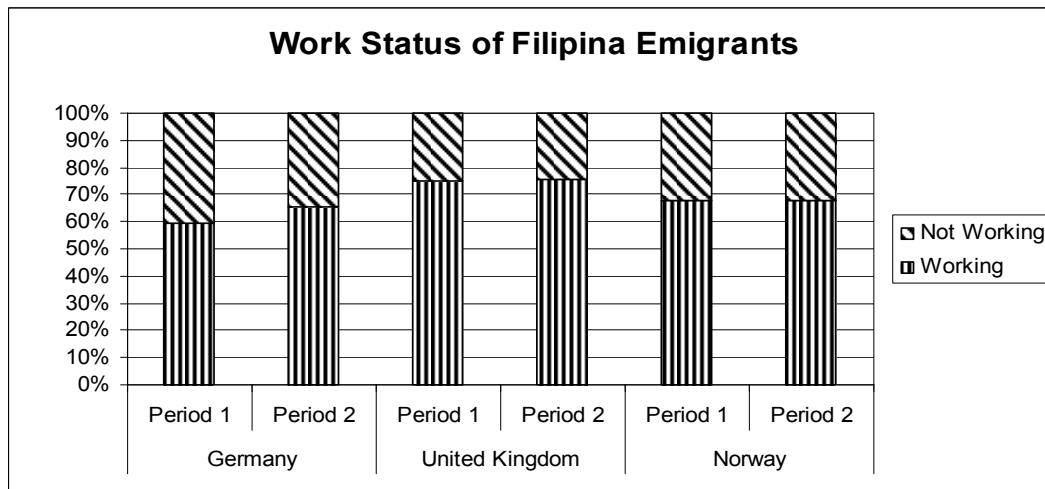
Table 3. Percentage distribution of Filipina Emigrants who had met their partners by Duration since meeting partner, Country of Destination and Period

	Germany		United Kingdom		Norway	
	1995-1999	2000-2004	1995-2000	2000-2005	1995-2000	2000-2005
	Period 1	Period 2	Period 1	Period 2	Period 1	Period 2
less than 24 months	29.5	31.5	30.1	28.9	28.5	29.4
24 to 35 months	55.4	51.0	44.7	46.3	58.4	57.1
36 months or more	15.1	17.4	25.2	24.9	13.1	13.5

7. The majority of Filipina emigrants met their marital partner in the Philippines. The proportion who met their partners abroad increased over the ten-year period in all three countries.



8. The majority of Filipina marriage migrants are working. The proportion who works among Filipinas that emigrated to Germany increased over the ten-year period.



Multivariate Results:

9. Filipina marriage migration towards the UK and Norway as compared to Germany is more likely during the 2000-2004 period than in the earlier 5-year period.
10. Among Filipinas below the age of 24, marriage migration to the UK is less likely in contrast to Germany; but this age-group is more likely to emigrate to Norway than to Germany.
11. Being a spouse rather than a fiancé increases the odds of Filipina marriage migration to the UK and Norway than to Germany.
12. Having a job increases the odds of marriage migration to the UK than to Germany.
13. Compared to college education, completion of a high school or vocational education reduces the odds of marriage migration to the UK than to Germany.
14. Not meeting a prospective partner reduces the odds to marriage migration to the UK but it increases the odds for marriage migration to Norway than to Germany.. On the other hand, meeting in the Philippines rather than abroad increase the likelihood of marriage migration of Filipinas to the UK and Norway.
15. Knowing a prospective partner for less than three years reduces the odds of Filipina marriage migration to the UK than to Germany; conversely knowing a prospective partner for more than three years reduces the odds of marriage migration to Norway than to Germany.

Table 4. Odds of Filipina marriage migration to the UK and Norway vs. Germany (N=10,670)

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Categories</i>	<i>Destination Country</i>	
		<i>United Kingdom vs Germany</i>	<i>Norway vs Germany</i>
Migration stream	0 1995-1999	0.82 **	0.53 **
	1 2000-2004 (Ref.)		
R's age	1 Less than 24 years	0.74 **	1.23 **
	2 24-29	0.91	1.12
	3 30 years or more (Ref.)		
R classification	1 Fiancée	0.14 **	0.17 **
	2 Spouse (Ref.)		
Work Status	1 Working	1.17 **	0.96
	2 Not working (Ref.)		
Highest Educational Attainment	1 Elementary/No education	0.81	1.01
	2 High school/Vocational	0.78 **	0.95
	3 College education or more (Ref.)		
Where did you meet?	0 Never met	0.54 **	1.69 **
	1 Philippines	1.62 **	1.37 **
	2 Abroad (Ref.)		
How long have you known ...?	1 Less than 22 months	0.84 *	1.42 **
	2 24 to 35 months	0.82 **	1.66 **
	3 36 moths or more (Ref.)		

* p<.05, ** p<.01

Conclusion and policy implications

Like most gendered migration topics, the process and consequences of marriage migration of Filipinas to European countries lie in the center of the global politics of reproductive labor in an era when new forms of migration and mobility abound. As increasingly higher educated Filipinas are emigrating to the UK, Germany and Norway for marriage purposes, the accreditation of education and skills in destination countries becomes a basic issue for those who would seek appropriate employment.

Since the number of emigrants meeting their spouses overseas is increasing over the last 10 years, it may be opportune to introduce orientation seminars for foreign spouses to focus on Philippine culture and values. The comprehensive counseling or pre-departure orientation seminar (PDOS) remains crucial as the majority of the Filipina marriage migrant meets her foreign spouse in the Philippines. Seminar topics should include the wives' social integration into the host country, the wives' new status/identity, access to proper social capital, problems and issues of children born to cross-border couples, etc. Post-arrival assistance by the governments and concerned organizations should be encouraged. Concerned organizations should also continuously conduct information campaign on the realities of international migration, particularly marriage migration.