

Population, migrations and minorities in Hong Kong

Overview

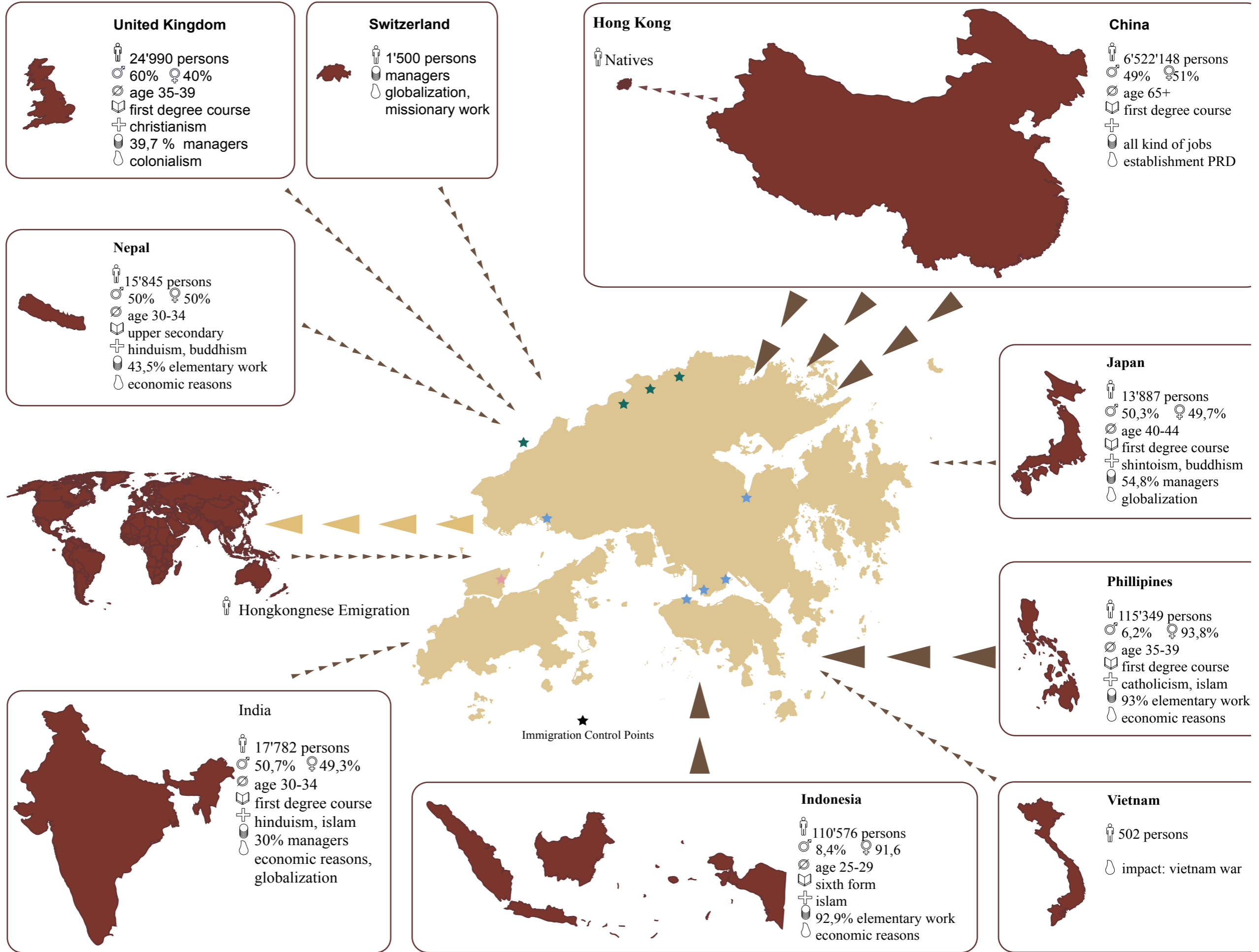
Basically, Hong Kong is a society of migrants. Within the population, about 5% are non-Chinese who came from various places in Asia, Europe and North America. They have their own social groups, and they turn Hong Kong into an international city. 95% of the population is of Chinese descent, and they speak Cantonese, Jiaozhou, Hakka, Fujian, Shanghai and other Chinese dialects, creating a diversified society. Still, the fact is that 95% of the population understands Chinese and more than 60% can use English.

In the past, there were large numbers of immigrants from mainland China and a small number of foreigners also moved here. More recently, considerable numbers of Hong Kong persons have emigrated overseas. The continual movement of the population is a characteristic of Hong Kong.

Since the 1980's, people began to move out of Hong Kong. As the future of Hong Kong was unclear to many, there was a decade of emigration, principally to the United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. In the early 1980's, it was about 20,000 per year; 30,000 in 1987; 60,000 in 1991; a peak of 66,000 in 1992. Thereafter, it slowed down a bit. In the year of the return, 1997, it was still 30,000. Over that ten-year period, more than 400,000 people moved away from Hong Kong, or more than 5% of the population. In many foreign cities, there are now Hong Kong migrant communities. Fortunately, the capital did not flow out, because Hong Kong was still economically productive.

www.zonaeuropa.com, 03. March 2008
www.immd.gov.hk, 26. February 2008

sources



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Legal Status

Character

Hong Kong has all along adopted a liberal and open immigration policy. Nationals of about 170 countries and territories are allowed visa-free visits to Hong Kong for periods ranging from seven to 180 days.

Professionals and businessmen are welcome to work and invest in Hong Kong. While every effort is made to facilitate the entry of visitors and those who contribute to Hong Kong's development and prosperity, immigration controls are designed and operated to prevent the entry of undesirable persons. Immigration can have a direct or indirect effect on such fields as housing, trade, tourism, economy, education, employment, aviation, shipping, crime prevention and public order. All these factors have to be taken into account in the operation of controls.

Every visitor to Hong Kong must have adequate funds for the visit and an onward booking. Persons applying for permission to live, work or study in Hong Kong are required to obtain visas or entry permits before arrival.

After reunification, the Basic Law provides the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government with full autonomy on immigration control matters.

sources:

www.immd.gov.hk
www.immd.gov.hk

Hong Kong Passport Holders

Visit or Transit

Working Holiday Scheme *

- for Australia, Ireland and New Zealand
- no permanent employment

Training

- to acquire special skills and knowledge

Education

- sponsor responsible for lodging and repatriation

Capital Investment Entrant Scheme *

- possible for chinese nationals & stateless persons

Re-entry into Hongkong *

- within the validity of the holders ID

Employment as Professional or Entry for Investment *

Residence as dependant *

- proof of genuine relationship

Quality Migrant Admission Scheme *

- quota and points-based system
- compete other applicants

Foreign Domestic Helpers

- no permission to take up any driving duties

* admission to bring in their dependants

Imported Workers

- filling gaps in the local labour market
- certain categories of jobs are excluded

Employment of Mainland Students graduating from Educational Institutions in HKSAR *

Employment under the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals *

- no sectoral restriction or quota being imposed

Refugees

- End of 'First Asylum' policy for Vietnamese

Illegal Immigrants

bona fides are not in doubt

substantial contribution to the economy of HK

confirmed admission to school etc.

confirmed offer of employment

net assets more than HK\$6.5 million

good education background

no local work force available

pay one's living

work experience

contract limited in time

A - right of abode in Hong Kong

R - right to land in Hong Kong

U - unlimited stay in Hong Kong

C - limited stay in Hong Kong

- a) Chinese citizen born in HK before 1997
- b) Chinese citizen living in HK for a continuous period more than 7 years
- c) Children of a) and b)
- d) permanent resident living in HK for a continuous period more than 7 years
- e) Children of d)
- f) person who had the ROA before 1997

Travel Documents in Circulation 2006

HKSAR Passport	3'670'115
Document of Identity	304'500
HKSAR Re-Entry Permit	469'900

Name in Chinese (if any)

Name in English

First alphabet denotes residential status



Investigation (2)

	2006	2007
Forged travel documents	2'387	1'598
Mainland illegal immigrants	3'151	3'175
Illegal workers *	6'893	3'811
Employers of illegal workers	333	221
No. of prosecution	16'581	12'042

* incl. 3'190 prosecuted for illegal employment and 3'703 for prostitution