



## **INCREASE IN TOURISM AND GAMING INDUSTRY JOB OPENINGS EXPECTED IN MACAU**

The Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in Macau has reported on the rapid development of the service and export oriented economy of Macau. Tourism, hospitality (hotel and restaurant services) and gaming businesses are estimated by economists to have generated about half of Macau's gross domestic product last year.

As of January 2005, there are 16 casinos in Macau, 14 of which are owned and operated by casino mogul Stanley Ho Hung Sun, who has dominated Macau's gaming industry since 1962. The other two casinos are separately owned by the Hong Kong Galaxy Group and the Venetian from Las Vegas, USA (Sands Casino). Macau's gaming industry has reportedly generated a record 40 billion patacas (US\$5 billion) in gross revenue last year, an increase of some 40 per cent in 2003. The government's income from gross revenue taxes is estimated to have reached 15 billion patacas (US\$2 billion) last year.

The expansion and liberalization of Macau's hotel and gaming industry have resulted to a shortage of qualified manpower in certain industries, particularly the gaming industry. Presently, Macau's small population is unable to create an adequate manpower pool that could fill in the demand of a rapidly changing labor market. Considering this development, the Macau government is considering to reform the labor import authorization process to make it more objective and standardized. The proposal has gained support from the business sector, who believes that increasing the labor quota for foreign workers would address the current labor shortage and will keep the economy growing. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2004, 1,763 companies and 3,226 households employed about 25,000 imported workers from Mainland China, the Philippines, Indonesia, Nepal, and other Asian countries. The construction sector in Macau is dominated by workers from mainland China and Hong Kong, since majority of the sub-contractors comes from the mainland.

The proposed reform in the importation of foreign labor is expected to generate employment opportunities for Filipino hotel and gaming workers, who was the preferred choice by the executives in the industry. Filipinos are regarded in Macau as ideal casino and hotel employees because of their multilingual communication and service industry skills.

With the bright employment prospects in the hotel and gaming industry of Macau for Filipinos, the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) foresees a significant growth of the Filipino community in the next couple of years. As of year-end 2004, there were 6,768 Filipinos legally staying in Macau, of which 4,271 (63%) are non-resident workers or blue card/work permit holders. The rest are permanent residents (18%), temporary residents (14.7%) and dependents of work permit holders (3.6%).

Source: POLO  
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