



POPULATION MOVEMENT & MIGRATION DYNAMICS

An analysis from Census 2022



Maldives Bureau of Statistics
Ministry of Housing, Land & Urban Development





Human Mobility and Migration Dynamics

An analysis from Census 2022



Maldives Bureau of Statistics (MBS) is the National Statistical Office of the Maldives and we provide the public with reliable and timely statistics and cater to all data demands nationally and internationally.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
IOM	International Organisation of Migration
MBS	Maldives Bureau of Statistics
MTCC	Maldives Transport and Contracting Company
PARIS21	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nation Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
RESIDENT POPULATION	Population who has been living in Maldives for more than one year or intends to live in Maldives for 1 year or more. This includes Resident Maldivian Population and Resident Foreign Population.
RESIDENT MALDIVIAN	Maldivian who has been living in Maldives for more than one year or intends to live in Maldives for 1 year or more. Maldivians who are permanently living abroad is excluded from here
RESIDENT FOREIGNER	Foreigners who have living in Maldives for more than one year or intends to live in Maldives for 1 year or more. Foreigners such as tourists, short term stay is excluded from this count.
MAALE	Includes the 4 wards of Maale (Henveiru, Galolhu, Machchangoalhi, Maafannu), Hulumaale, Villimaale, and K.Hulhule with harbour of these areas
ATOLLS	Includes administrative islands and non-administrative islands in an atoll
ADMINISTRATIVE ISLANDS (ADMIN ISLANDS)	These are islands with islands/city councils.
NON- ISLANDS	Includes resorts and industrial islands and other islands. Industrial islands and other islands include resorts under development, islands leased out for agricultural, fisheries purpose, etc. These islands are included if anyone lives and sleep there. It also includes Thilafushi and Gulheefalhu
MAALE ATOLL (K)	Maale Atoll includes only administrative islands within the atoll and excludes Maale (Maale', Villimaale, Hulhumaale, Hulhule)
PLACE OF ENUMERATION	Place of enumeration refers to the island where the person was found on census night (13 September 00.00 hrs). The migration tables however exclude the non-resident Maldivians who were enumerated in the Maldives.
PLACE OF USUAL RESIDENCE	The island where the person resided at the time of census. Usual residence is determined based on the duration of one year or more. If the person has lived in that island for less than one year, but intends to live for one year, that island is considered as the usual residence of the person.
PLACE OF BIRTH	Island/country where the person was born

PLACE OF REGISTRATION

The island where the person is registered at the time of Census. By law, all Maldivians are required to register in a house and upon which their national identity card can be issued.

MIGRANT

A person who has ever changed his/her island of usual residence. In other words, if a person has resided for 1 year or more on another island or country other than his/her current usual place of residence, then that person is considered as a migrant. In cases where the duration is less than 1 year, then his/her or intention is considered.

Census captures the last (or the most recent) migration of a person if they have migrated several times.

INTERNAL MIGRANT

Migration within country, from one island to another

**INTERNATIONAL
MIGRANT**

Migration of Maldivian by crossing international borders

NON-MIGRANT

A person who has never changed his/her island of usual residence. Those who have never been away from their island of usual residence or never lived in another country for longer than 1 year

REASON FOR MIGRATION

This is the main reason for moving to usual residence from previous residence. For persons who have changed the island/ country of usual residence more than once in their life-time, this refers to the most recent migration.

FOREWORD

The Population and Housing Census of Maldives stands as the most extensive national statistical undertaking, offering a highly comprehensive source of data on the population and households. Maldives has been conducting censuses since 1911 with the first modern census conducted in 1977. Censuses were conducted every five years since between 1985 and 2000. The 2005 census was postponed to 2006 due to tsunami of 2004, resulting in an eight-year gap between the last two censuses. The 2022 represents a significant milestone as the 30th census conducted in the Maldives owing to a gap of 8 years.

This series of statistical releases aim to provide an in-depth view of what is behind the census figures, shedding light on the fundamental population issues that underlie them. It is our goal to enhance the understanding of population and development issues within the country, providing a comprehensive view of the data. Additionally, the census plays a crucial role in reporting on numerous SDG indicators by providing essential updates and with necessary disaggregation of data.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all individuals and organisations whose contributions made it possible for us to present the census findings to the public. Special thanks are due to United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA) for providing financial support throughout the process and for facilitating the technical input from consultants, whose expertise and guidance were invaluable in successfully completing these releases. I would like to start by thanking Mr. Andreas Kutka and Mr. Peter Bruekmann for the continuous support they provided our team for the implementation of the census, from designing stage to the release of census preliminary results. My thanks go out to Professor Lakshman Dissanayake and Dr. Liwan Liyanage, for overseeing the progress of each chapter, and guiding the chapter writers and enhancing their capacities throughout the process. Lastly, the success of this census releases owes much to the tireless effort and dedication of the Maldives Bureau of Statistics staff, and I take this moment to express my sincere appreciation to each and every one of them.

This information is accessible through our website www.statisticsmaldives.gov.mv. We believe in the dissemination of reliable statistics in an unbiased manner to the general public. We encourage data users to utilize the Census results effectively, promoting a culture of decision-making in the country.

I am hopeful that the information in this Release and other subsequent census related publications, would be very useful for evidence-based decision-making and formulation of policies and plans. Both the national and local level could use the census information to define service areas, identify current requirement of services and infrastructure, and future demands. Further, it would serve as the basis for measuring progress towards the achievement of key national targets as well as other time-bound targets of the country as we undergo a new phase in administration.

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Ministry of Housing, Land and Urban Development

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The conduct of the 2022 Population and Housing Census of Maldives entailed nationwide coordination and collaboration. The Maldives Bureau of Statistics (MBS), would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all the agencies and individuals who contributed immensely to the success of the Census.

We are truly indebted to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for the immense support provided throughout the process, from census planning stage to the publication of these census Releases. We would also like to extend our sincere gratitude to UNICEF, UNDP, ADB, World Bank, PARIS21 and IOM for their support in the implementation of a successful census. Our sincere appreciation also goes to Ministries, Agencies, CSOs for their cooperation and contribution to complete the census operation across the country. We are indeed grateful to City Councils, Atoll Councils, Island Councils, Atoll Census Managers, island census focal points for their support and leadership in ensuring the successful completion of census in their respective communities. We would like to convey our sincere appreciation to the government for funding and providing other financial support when needed. We would like to thank Maldives Police Services for arranging security services during the entire enumeration process, MTCC for transport arrangement and local media for their coverage and dissemination of census announcements in a timely manner.

We also wish to acknowledge and earnestly thank the 3,974 enumerators and supervisors for their hard work and sincerity. Supervisors and enumerators worked from the early hours of the morning till late in the evening during the census enumeration period. The commitment and dedication shown by the supervisors and enumerators are exemplary and inspiring. We would like to sincerely thank the general public for the unprecedented support and cooperation extended to the census supervisors and enumerators during the enumeration. The support and enthusiasm displayed by the general public were heartfelt and gratifying.

This series of statistical releases would not have been possible without the dedicated efforts of the following MBS staff.

Statistical Release 1: Population dynamics

Ms. Fathimath Yania

Statistical Release 2: Migration

Ms. Fathimath Riyaza

Statistical Release 3: Education

Ms. Ashiyath Shazna

Statistical Release 4: Disability

Ms. Fathimath Riyaza

Statistical Release 5: Mapping the Employment Landscape: A Comprehensive Analysis of the situation in the Maldives Using Census 2022 Data

Ms. Aishath Hassan

Statistical Release 6: Unemployment and outside labour force

Ms. Aishath Shahuda

Statistical Release 7: Resort Sector

Ms. Sajidha Ahmed

Statistical Release 8: Informal Sector

Ms. Lizama Faheem

Statistical Release 9: Nuptiality and fertility

Ms. Mariyam Shadeena

Statistical Release 10: Household characteristics

Ms. Aishath Sobaha

Finally, special thanks, appreciation and gratitude to all staff of Maldives Bureau of Statistics for overseeing the whole processes, from planning, organisation, implementation, cleaning and having the results published.

1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

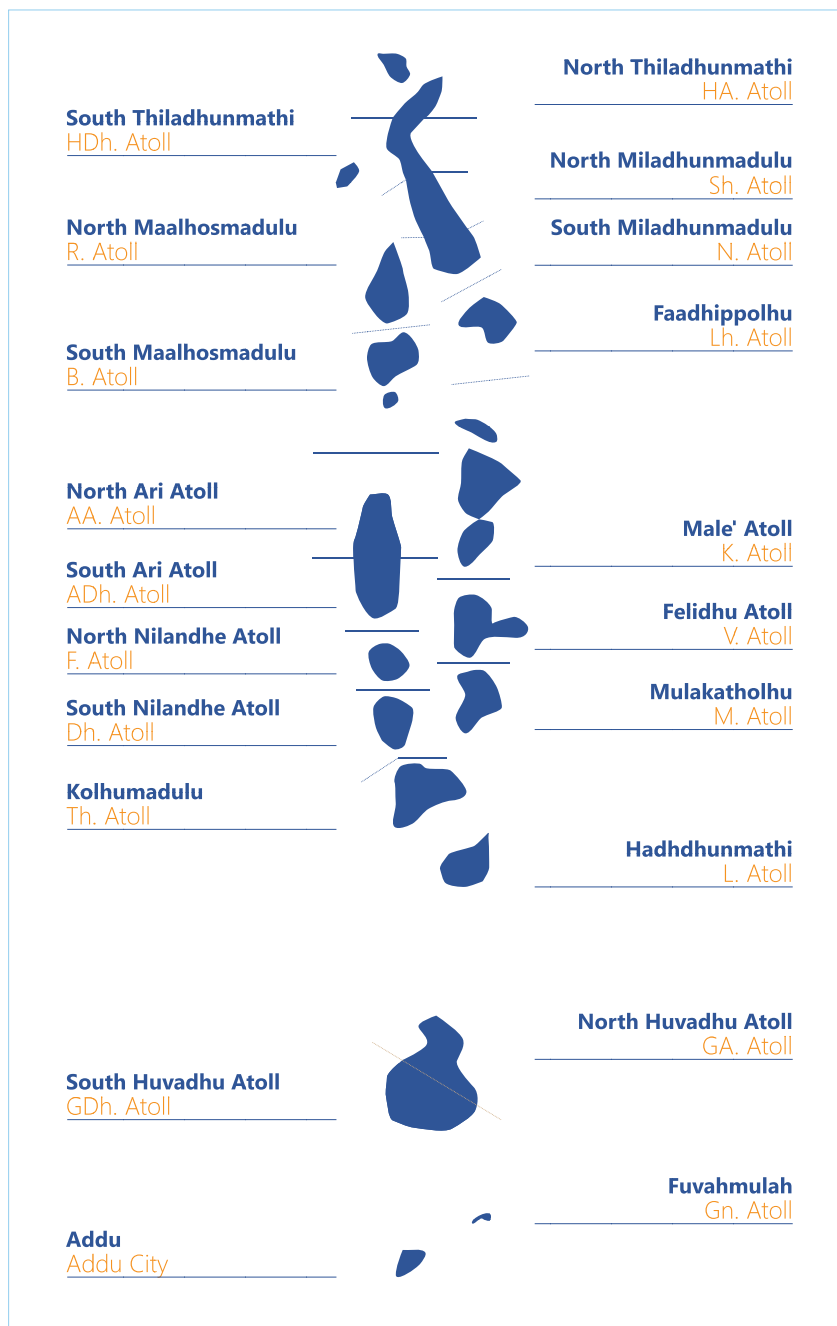
Maldives is an island nation located in the Indian Ocean. It lies southwest of Sri Lanka and India. Maldives consists of 1192 coral islands which form a chain of 82 km in length and 130 km in width, set in a territorial area of 859,000 sq km of Indian Ocean. The country is composed of 20 administrative Atolls with Maale being the Capital City. Maale is located within Kaafu Atoll.

Most of the islands are quite small and low-lying, with an average elevation of 1.6m above mean sea-level. The islands are surrounded by shallow, crystal-clear lagoons enclosed by coral reef. Maldives has a tropical climate. With 2 monsoons in the year, it is warm and humid throughout the day. Maldives is famous for its tourism and has been world's leading tourist destination for 2 consecutive years.

Maldivian society is very consistent, with one language, one culture and one religion. The official language is Dhivehi, which is unique to the Maldives. Education is in English medium, and widely used in business and commerce.

The islands of Maldives are formed into 26 natural atolls. However, for administrative purpose, the country is divided into 20 administrative islands, with Maale being the capital City. Male' is location within Kaafu Atoll, but the results presented for Kaafu Atoll excludes Maale.

The map below illustrates the 20 atolls with their names and abbreviations.:



1.2 Census administration in 2022

Maldives conducted its first modern census in 1977. Starting from 1980, Maldives has been conducting census every 5 years, with a break in this cycle in 2005 due to Tsunami. The next census was held in 2006 and then in 2014. The 2022 census marks the 30th census undertaking in the country.

This section gives a brief summary of how census operation was administered in 2022.

1.2.1 Census coverage:

The most important aspect of census coverage is the geographical coverage and the population that is being covered.

Out of the total islands, Census covered a total of 463 islands. This includes:

- 186 administrative islands
- Capital city, Maale
- 168 resorts (which was in operation at the time of census)
- 108 industrial islands

In census Releases, results are presented according to the administrative hierarchy as stated below:

- Republic
- Maale' (includes the 4 wards of Maale, Hulhumale, villimale and Hulhule)
- Atolls (includes admin and non admin islands within the 20 atolls)
- Administrative islands (includes only the administrative islands in an atoll. Administrative islands are those with island councils and where local community lives)
- Non-administrative islands (these islands include resorts, industrial islands, resorts under renovation, islands given out for commercial purpose, or any island where a person resides and which is not being used for administrative purpose)

In terms of population coverage in these islands:

- As in all past census, all Maldivian nationals were enumerated in the census living in the country as well as abroad.
- Since 2014 Census, Foreigners residing in the country has been enumerated. The 2022 Census also made efforts to increase the coverage of the foreigners residing in the country.

1.2.2 Data Collection tool:

For the first time in census, data was collected using tablets. The questionnaire was developed in Survey Solution together with the support of International Consultants. A total of 2 questionnaires was used in the Population and Housing census 2022. This includes:

1. Haa form (Listing form) – Haa form is used on the first day of the census to list structures, unit, households and persons living in the household.
2. Shaviyani form (Household and individual form)- Shaviyani form is used during census week to collect detail information on households and individuals present in the household at the time of census.

1.2.3 Census organisation:

Maldives Bureau of Statistics under Maldives Statistics Act (Act No: 16/2021) is mandated to conducted Population and Housing census once every 10 years.

Preparation for census started in 2019. However due to the outbreak of COVID, census was postponed to 2022.

Planning for census started in 2019 with data user's workshop. Census questionnaire was developed and pre-tested at various locations. Pilot census was conducted in June 2022 and minor revision was made to the questionnaire flow and organisation of the operation.

All the preparatory work for the census was distributed among MBS staff. In order to have a smooth census operation in the Atolls, Atoll census managers from each atoll was identified.

Training of trainers was conducted in July 2022. Training of enumerators was carried out in 6 rounds across the country including Maale.

Coordinators were sent to each atoll during the census period. The coordinators' role was to oversee the whole census operation within the atolls during the census period.

During census week, the main operation centre was set up in Maale, at Dharubaaruge. Similarly, census centres were also set up in Villimale and Hulhumale.

1.2.4 Census block maps:

For the first time in census history, GIS was used to prepare census block maps. MBS staff reached out to all island/city councils and collected the island maps, which was received in different formats such as CAD, pdf, etc. A team was recruited for this purpose and they converted these maps into GIS maps. In consultation with island councils, island map was divided into census block maps. These maps were printed and sent back to islands right before the field operation.

Maale map was updated based on the latest updates received from Male' City Council. In Maale, census blocks and Enumeration Area demarcation was done using 2014 census information. The preparation of Hulhumale map was done as a collaboration between MBS and Urbanco.

Each census block in the islands and Enumeration Area in Maale consisted of 40-50 household or a population of 250 to 350 people.

1.2.5 Census reference time and field operation:

The reference time for the 2022 census in the Maldives was 12th September 00:00hrs (or 13th September mid-night). This point in time is the reference point for census enumeration and all questions in the census will relate to it.

Census data collection was carried out from 13- 26 September 2022. From 13 to 14 September, listing operation was carried out across country. However, since listing could not be completed within 2 days in some locations, it was extended over the next 2 days.

From 17 September onwards, enumerators went back to field to fill Shaviyani form. Since in some location, especially in Maale, there was many unlocked places, the field operation was extended till 28 September. In Hulhumale, it was extended up to 29 September.

During field operation enumerators visited every household in the assigned census block. Census enumeration team consist of two enumerators, each team assigned to a census block of around 50-60 households to complete during census week.

This time in the census, daily updates was viewed automatically once enumerators completes the form and submit it through survey solution.

At the end of census field operation, there were many unlocked places especially in Hulhumale area. MBS continued with attempting unlocked placed till 10 November 2022. This operation was carried out by MBS staff.

1.2.6 Census results:

The preliminary results of Census 2022 were published on 30th March 2023 on MBS website. This included population count, population by island, sex and nationality. It also included household counts, household counts in island and average household size.

The final result of census was launched on 11th July 2023, at the World's Population Day function. This included a video on the final results, infographic and summary tables.

Following the release of the final census results, the MBS has issued summary findings across various sectors, including population, migration, education, and the labor market. This includes infographics with sector-specific tables. In addition, MBS has also released island level indicators on population and employed. These results can be accessed via: <https://census.gov.mv/2022/statistical-releases/>

2

BACKGROUND AND BASIC CONCEPTS

2.1 Introduction

Migration, the movement of people from one place to another, is a multifaceted and dynamic process with far-reaching implications for individuals and communities alike. Migration's role in population change is not limited to increases or decreases of population size, but also includes its impact on spatial distribution of population. This distribution of population through migrations raises, among others, substantial questions of demographic and socio-economic importance.

The geography of the small islands makes the Maldives one the most uniquely dispersed and fragmented countries in the world. Despite Maldives being a small country, the movement of the population from one place to another for various reasons are an everyday occurrence. Internal migration among Maldivian is common and people migrate for various reasons.

Internal migration is more towards Maale, where 41% of the population currently resides. Maale has seen its share of development, both in terms of services and in infrastructure. The recent expansion of bridge connectivity to Hulhumale' has relieved much of the population concentration in Maale (4 wards of Maale). The government's allocation of 7000 housing flats in 2020 has further driven population growth towards Hulhumale, making it one of the most fast-paced growing wards withing Maale city. Moreover, the 'Maldives Population projection 2014-2054' estimates that close to 64% of the Maldives resident population will reside in Maale by 2050.

Maldives also has the largest proportion of migrants in South Asia, with constitute to one fourth of the resident population (one in every 4 people is a migrant worker) (Census, 2022). Inbound labour migrants from neighbouring South Asian countries, especially lower skilled workers from Bangladesh and India, are key contributors to the economic development of the Maldives, providing the workforce needed for key industries such as tourism and hospitality, construction, agriculture and fisheries, and services¹ (IOM, 2022).

Challenges with regard to international migrants is not trivial. Till date, no official record exists to benchmark the estimated number of undocumented workers in the country. The Maldives has remained on the 'Tier 2 Watchlist' in Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report for three consecutive years (2018 – 2020) due to inaction on trafficking and labour exploitation. If the current trend continues, by 2050, half of Maldives population will consist of foreigners (MBS, 2018).

¹ https://migrationnetwork.un.org/sites/g/files/tmzbdl416/files/docs/tor_un_network_on_migration_in_the_maldives_final_0.pdf

Against this background, the Maldives has endorsed the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)² as a multilateral framework that complements national development plans on ensuring safe, orderly, and regular migration for all. GCM was developed to protect the safety, dignity, human rights, and fundamental freedoms of all migrants (inward and outward), integrate migrants – addressing their needs and capacities – in humanitarian and development assistance frameworks and planning, combat xenophobia, racism and discrimination towards all migrants, and strengthen governance of migration.

Maldives currently lacks a comprehensive migration policy or a population policy to effectively steer and manage both internal and international migration. The absence of such policies has led to mismanagement, placing undue pressure on the receiving end and straining limited infrastructure and social service systems.

The complexity regarding migration is undermined in the country and requires further exploration. When it comes to a Maldivian, determining who is a migrant has its nuances as each one of us has a place of birth, place of registration and place of usual residence.

The need for understanding migration issues advocates for better migration data. Obtaining accurate and timely statistics on the stock and flow of migrants is crucial. Currently, migration data is primarily available either through Census or Household Income and Expenditure Survey. Developing more robust policies and mechanisms for gathering migration data will contribute to a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with migration in the Maldives.

This chapter presents findings from census on the distribution of the population or movement of the population and measures the migration specific to Maldivians and covers some aspects of foreign migrants.

2 *Maldives Population Projection, 2014-2054*

2.2 Resident Population in the context of census:

When addressing the resident population, census data categorizes this demographic through four distinct methods:

TERM	DEFINITION
RESIDENT POPULATION BY PLACE OF ENUMERATION	This is where the person was present at census night (CRT) (Census Reference Time (CRT): 00:00 hrs of 13 Sept 2022)
RESIDENT POPULATION BY PLACE OF BIRTH	Island/country where the person was born
MALDIVIANS BY PLACE OF REGISTRATION (ONLY SPECIFIC TO RESIDENT MALDIVIANS)	The island where the person is registered at the time of Census. By law, all Maldivians are required to register in a house and upon which their national identity card can be issued.
PLACE OF USUAL RESIDENCE	The island where the person resided at the time of census. Usual residence is determined based on the duration of one year or more. - Place where a person has lived for more than one year or more OR - Place where a person intends to live for more than one year or more (if less than one year in their usual residence) This is also referred to as 'population living in an island' or usual residents of a place

In order to carry out this analysis, we will benchmark each of these concepts against the individual's usual place of residence.

3

**RESIDENT POPULATION
BY PLACE OF USUAL
RESIDENCE AND CHANGE
OVERTIME**

This chapter explores the resident population based on their usual place of residence compared to their place of enumeration. Additionally, it delves into the changes in usual residence over time, drawing comparisons with the findings from Census 2014.

As defined before, usual residence refers to:

Usual residence:

A usual residence is defined as the place where a person has lived for more than one year. Or where a person intends to live for more than one year or more (if the duration is less than one year in current residence).

Individuals living in their usual residence is referred to as usual residents.

3.1 Usual Resident population at a glance – usual residents vs enumerated population

Census 2022 reported a total population of 515,132 residents in the country. Including foreigners, Maale host a population of 210,053 people. Notably, the population counted during the enumeration process in Maale surpassed the usual residents by an additional 1800 people. This surplus is recognized as a floating or moving population, expected to be present in Maale, at any given point in time. The concept of a floating or moving population recognizes individuals who may temporarily reside in Maale for various purpose such as visitors, seasonal workers.

Apart from Maale, K. Atoll has the greatest number of people residing within an atoll (42,677 people). This is mostly due to the resorts and industrial islands, and foreign population (22,864) outnumbered the Maldivian population (19,813) within the atoll.

Slight differences can be observed in each atoll between the enumerated Maldivian population and usual resident Maldivian population. About 160, 187 Maldivian lived in Maale, while close to 157,254 was enumerated in Maale.

According to usual resident population, more Maldivians lived in HDh. Atoll followed by Addu City.

Locality	Usual Resident Population			Enumerated Population		
	Total	Maldivian	Foreign	Total	Maldivian	Foreign
Republic	515,132	382,639	132,493	515,132	382,639	132,493
Maale	210,053	157,254	52,799	211,908	160,187	51,721
Atolls (Admin and Non-Admin Islands)	305,079	225,385	79,694	303,224	222,452	80,772
HA	15,564	13,834	1,730	15,311	13,544	1,767
HDh	22,976	20,592	2,384	22,845	20,284	2,561
Sh	14,928	13,121	1,807	14,654	12,880	1,774
N	16,912	12,531	4,381	16,637	12,289	4,348
R	23,541	17,723	5,818	23,253	17,498	5,755
B	17,433	10,980	6,453	17,168	10,776	6,392
Lh	12,962	9,017	3,945	13,272	9,184	4,088
K	42,677	19,813	22,864	43,247	20,101	23,146
AA	11,003	7,768	3,235	10,948	7,677	3,271
ADh	15,998	10,295	5,703	15,821	10,138	5,683
V	2,769	1,631	1,138	2,737	1,574	1,163
M	6,186	4,963	1,223	6,086	4,857	1,229
F	5,209	4,574	635	5,123	4,488	635
Dh	9,751	6,640	3,111	9,677	6,484	3,193
Th	10,747	9,488	1,259	10,537	9,225	1,312
L	15,933	13,522	2,411	15,901	13,239	2,662
GA	11,865	8,716	3,149	11,590	8,456	3,134
GDh	13,230	11,288	1,942	13,430	11,412	2,018
Gn	9,550	8,300	1,250	9,177	7,907	1,270
S	25,845	20,589	5,256	25,810	20,439	5,371

Table 3 1: Resident Population by their usual residence and place of enumeration, Census 2022

3.2 Dynamic shifts: evolution of Usual resident population from 2014 to 2022

A comprehensive analysis of census data overtime revealed that K.Atoll had the highest gain in the usual resident population with an annual growth rate exceeding 5% per year. This growth was mainly due to the rise in foreign population which grew by 10.7% per year.

The increase in usual residents among Maldivians was mostly witnessed in R. Atoll, recording a growth rate of 2% per annum. This was followed by the increase in usual Maldivian population in N, K, Dh and L Atoll.

On the other hand, the highest growth in the usual foreign population was in Raa Atoll, followed by V Atoll.

While some atolls experienced a surge in population, few atolls recorded a reduction in the Maldivian population residing in these Atolls. GA, GDh and Vaavu atoll reported a decrease in the Maldivian population residing in these atolls compared to 2014, leading to a negative growth of the usual resident Maldivians.

Locality	2014			2022			Intercensal annual population growth rate of usual resident		
	Total	Maldivian	Foreign	Total	Maldivian	Foreign	Total	Maldivian	Foreigners
Republic	402,071	338,434	63,637	515,132	382,639	132,493	3.1	1.5	9.2
Maale	153,904	129,381	24,523	210,053	157,254	52,799	3.9	2.4	9.6
Atolls (Admin and Non-Admin Islands)	248,167	209,053	39,114	305,079	225,385	79,694	2.6	0.9	8.9
HA	14,666	13,392	1,274	15,564	13,834	1,730	0.7	0.4	3.8
HDh	19,649	18,531	1,118	22,976	20,592	2,384	2.0	1.3	9.5
Sh	13,095	12,266	829	14,928	13,121	1,807	1.6	0.8	9.8
N	12,831	11,072	1,759	16,912	12,531	4,381	3.5	1.5	11.4
R	16,649	15,088	1,561	23,541	17,723	5,818	4.3	2.0	16.5
B	13,507	10,012	3,495	17,433	10,980	6,453	3.2	1.2	7.7
Lh	10,659	8,734	1,925	12,962	9,017	3,945	2.4	0.4	9.0
K	27,360	17,630	9,730	42,677	19,813	22,864	5.6	1.5	10.7
AA	9,075	6,838	2,237	11,003	7,768	3,235	2.4	1.6	4.6
ADh	13,256	10,039	3,217	15,998	10,295	5,703	2.4	0.3	7.2
V	2,043	1,669	374	2,769	1,631	1,138	3.8	-0.3	13.9
M	5,478	4,817	661	6,186	4,963	1,223	1.5	0.4	7.7
F	4,627	4,164	463	5,209	4,574	635	1.5	1.2	4.0
Dh	7,448	5,872	1,576	9,751	6,640	3,111	3.4	1.5	8.5
Th	9,893	8,968	925	10,747	9,488	1,259	1.0	0.7	3.9
L	13,498	11,992	1,506	15,933	13,522	2,411	2.1	1.5	5.9
GA	10,862	8,772	2,090	11,865	8,716	3,149	1.1	-0.1	5.1
GDh	13,104	11,695	1,409	13,230	11,288	1,942	0.1	-0.4	4.0
Gn	8,510	7,984	526	9,550	8,300	1,250	1.4	0.5	10.8
S	21,957	19,518	2,439	25,845	20,589	5,256	2.0	0.7	9.6

Table 3 2: Intercensal population change and intercensal population growth rate for usual resident population, 2014 & 2022

3.3 Population usually living in islands: Losses & Gains

As census is the only source that provides usual resident population at the lowest geographical level, it is important to look at the changes that has taken place in the usual resident population between 2014 & 2022. These changes reflect the movement of the population overtime, as these shifts serve as indicators of population dynamics over time, carrying implications for policymaking.

Annex 1 provides a comprehensive overview of the usual resident population by island and tracks changes in growth patterns over the intercensal period. In this section, we will focus on the islands experiencing significant population gains and losses during this timeframe.

Out of the 186 islands, B. Fehendhoo saw the highest growth in usual resident population. This was followed by V. Thinadhoo and B. Fulhadhoo. In almost all the islands the increase in the growth rate was mainly due to the increase in foreign population, but at the same time these islands also recorded positive growth of the Maldivian population. The concurrent rise in both foreign and Maldivian population highlights the multifaceted nature of demographic changes across these islands.

Atoll	Locality	2014			2022			Intercensal population growth (2014- 2022)		
		Total	Maldivian	Foreign	Total	Maldivian	Foreign	Total	Maldivian	Foreign
B	Fehendhoo	109	106	3	201	173	28	7.7	6.1	28.0
V	Thinadhoo	146	64	82	255	70	185	7.0	1.1	10.2
B	Fulhadhoo	201	186	15	332	227	105	6.3	2.5	24.4
K	Maafushi	2,967	2,553	414	4,508	3,215	1,293	5.2	2.9	14.3
N	Fodhdhoo	236	224	12	356	285	71	5.1	3.0	22.2
L	Gamu	3,123	2,832	291	4,687	3,924	763	5.1	4.1	12.1
M	Raimandhoo	112	109	3	165	117	48	4.8	0.9	34.7
N	Kudafari	471	434	37	640	560	80	3.8	3.2	9.7
AA	Mathiveri	673	629	44	909	816	93	3.8	3.3	9.4
Adh	Dhigurah	575	510	65	776	545	231	3.8	0.8	15.9

Table 3 3: 10 islands with highest intercensal annual population growth rate of the usual resident population, 2014 & 2022

Among the islands exhibiting the lowest growth rate, GA. Kolamaafushi showed the lowest growth rate, followed by HA. Thakandhoo. The overall growth rate in these islands was low mainly due to the negative growth of the Maldivian population. In other words, even though these islands lost Maldivian population, much of the gain in these islands was mainly due to the increase in the foreign population as all the 10 islands recorded a positive growth of the foreign population compared to 2014.

Atoll	Locality	2014			2022			Intercensal population growth (2014- 2022)		
		Total	Maldivian	Foreign	Total	Maldivian	Foreign	Total	Maldivian	Foreign
Sh	Komandoo	1,166	1,108	58	1,000	914	86	-1.9	-2.4	4.9
HDh	Neykurendhoo	780	743	37	666	587	79	-2.0	-2.9	9.5
GDh	Rathafandhoo	555	520	35	466	402	64	-2.2	-3.2	7.6
GDh	Fares-Maathodaa	1,128	1,048	80	941	837	104	-2.3	-2.8	3.3
M	Maduvvari	391	375	16	326	273	53	-2.3	-4.0	15.0
Dh	Badidhoo	783	716	67	646	547	99	-2.4	-3.4	4.9
V	Rakeedhoo	106	104	2	86	79	7	-2.6	-3.4	15.7
GDh	Vaadhoo	725	674	51	576	505	71	-2.9	-3.6	4.1
HA	Thakandhoo	365	347	18	282	243	39	-3.2	-4.5	9.7
GA	Kolamaafushi	945	859	86	720	613	107	-3.4	-4.2	2.7

Table 3 4: 10 islands with lowest intercensal annual population growth rate of the usual resident population, 2014 & 2022

3.4 Urban Dynamics: Comparative analysis of City dynamics over time

At the time of census 2014, Maale and Addu was considered as the only cities in the country. Since 2014, the government has designated additional islands as cities. Fuvahmulah attained city status in January 2016. This was followed by Kulhudhuffushi being designated as a city in January 2020.

Overall, the 3 cities saw an increase in its population between 2014 & 2022. Out of the 3 cities, Kulhudhuffushi City displayed the highest growth in its usual resident population overtime. This was mainly due to the increase in the foreign population living in the city. The growth of the Maldivian population was remarkable in Kulhudhuffushi City, surpassing the growth observed in Fuvahmulah and Addu City.

City	Usual resident population						Inter Censal Growth Rate (2014-2022)		
	2014			2022					
	Resident Popn	Maldivian	Foreign	Resident Popn	Maldivian	Foreign	Resident Popn	Maldivian	Foreign
HDh. Kulhudhuffushi	8,450	8,194	256	10,199	9,379	820	2.4	1.7	14.6
Gn. Fuvahmulah	8,556	8,035	521	9,550	8,300	1,250	1.4	0.4	11.0
Addu city	21,367	19,414	1,953	25,249	20,516	4,733	2.1	0.7	11.1

Table 3 5: Population usually living in the cities, and changes overtime, 2014 & 2022

3.5 Resident population living in Maale by ward

Maale, as the capital city of the Maldives stands as the socio-economic nucleus of the country. The availability of essential services, health and education has significantly contributed to population influx towards Maale, a trend that has intensified over the years. The reclamation of land within Maale area has led to the development of Hulhumale, recognized as the sixth ward of Maale with many taking residence in this ward. Maale is also known for its infrastructure, housing projects and other service sector activities, which has led to an increase in foreign workforce within the region.

The population of Maale has shown a consistent increase since 2014, with 4% annual growth in its usual resident population over the past 7 years. This growth is mainly due to the increase in the foreign population which saw an annual growth of 9%.

Within the four wards of Maale (Henveiru, Galolhu, Machchangoalhi and Maafannu) there has been a modest increase in usual residents, driven by a rise in the foreign population while the resident Maldivian population declined. Similarly, there has been a decrease in the population living in Villimale over the years, primarily attributed to the reduction in the Maldivian population residing in Villimale.

The most remarkable demographic shift was observed in Hulhumale, where the population experienced a substantial growth. Hulhumale recorded the highest annual growth rate at 17% with Maldivians living in the area increasing by 16% annually and the foreign population saw a growth rate exceeding 20%. Such a drastic increase in the Hulhumale was mainly due to the social housing given by government, especially with people starting to live in Hiya flat one year before the conduct of census 2022. This phenomenon is a significant factor contributing to the decline in the Maldivian population in other wards of Maale. Additionally, the thriving real estate business has attracted many individuals to choose Hulhumale as their place of usual residence.

Ward	2014			2022			Intercensal growth rate of usual resident Population (2014-2022)		
	Resident	Maldivian	Foreign	Resident	Maldivian	Foreign	Resident	Maldivian	Foreign
Maale (4 wards)	127,114	104,890	22,224	137,377	99,428	37,949	0.97	-0.67	6.70
Hulhumaale	16,617	14,063	2,554	65,228	51,990	13,238	17.11	16.36	20.59
Villimale	7,734	7,127	607	6,631	5,786	845	-1.93	-2.61	4.14
Total	151,465	126,080	25,385	210,053	157,254	52,799	4.09	2.77	9.17

*Excludes Hulhule population

Table 3 6: Usual residents in Maale by ward, 2014 & 2022

4

RESIDENT MALDIVIAN POPULATION

This section gives a special emphasis on the resident Maldivian population, delving into the distribution based on their place of birth and place of registration. The analysis of each of these concepts will be done using population residing in each location.

Therefore, when referring to the resident Maldivian population in the subsequent discussion, the term ‘Maldivian population’ will be used interchangeably. This interchangeable usage streamlines the narrative and ensures clarity as we explore the intricacies of population distribution concerning both place of birth and place of registration among resident Maldivians.

4.1 Resident Maldivian by Place of Birth

Place of birth records where the birth occurs. In Maldives, birth occurs at health facilities and census captures the island where the birth occurred. Most of the time, Maldivians prefer to travel to nearby regional hospitals, Atolls hospitals or the capital city Maale to give birth.

The results showed that more births occurred in Maale compared to 2014. The percentage of people born in Maale rose from 24% (in 2014) to 30% in 2022. Interesting, the number of people born abroad also increased from 1% in 2014 to 2% in 2022.

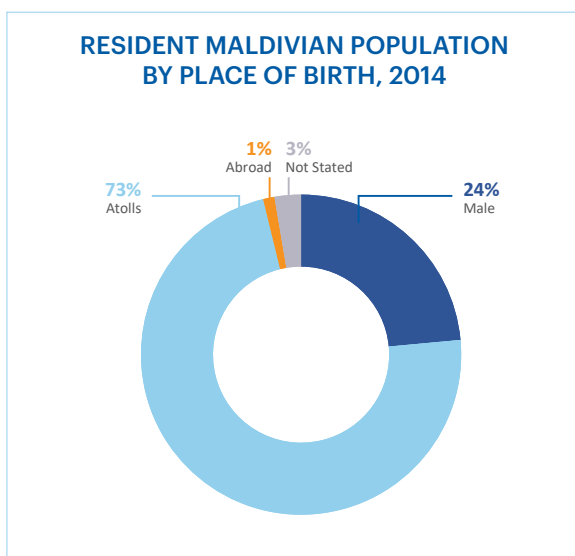


Figure 4 1: Resident Maldivian population by place of birth, 2014

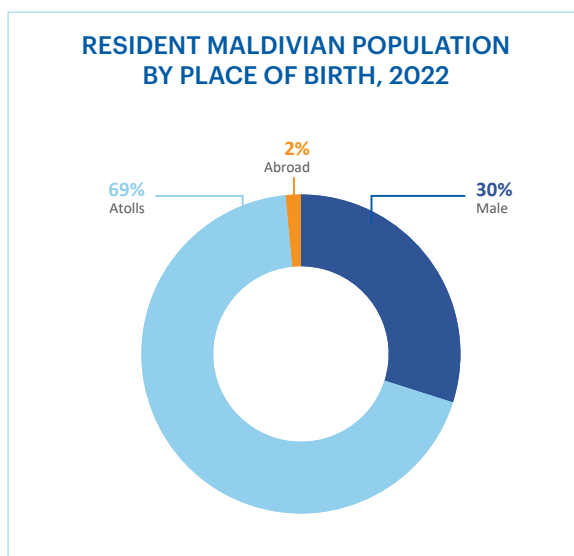


Figure 4 2: Resident Maldivian population by place of birth, 2022

Since majority of the Maldivians were born in the Atolls, it is equally important to examine the dynamics of births occurred within these atolls in relation to the individuals' usual residence. The results showed that over 50% of those who were born within the atoll also resided within the atoll (admin islands). Notably, there is a correlation between the availability of better health services, as higher percentage of people were born and living in atolls where there are regional hospitals (HDh, R, L, GDh, Gn & S Atoll).

On the other hand, central atolls opt to give birth in Maale due to close proximity to Maale, possibly indicating a perceived advantage in accessing medical services within close proximity to the capital.

This underscores the developmental strides in the country's health sector, with regional hospitals playing a significant role in providing childbirth services. The preference of individuals to be born within these atolls reflects the positive impact of improved healthcare accessibility in those regions.

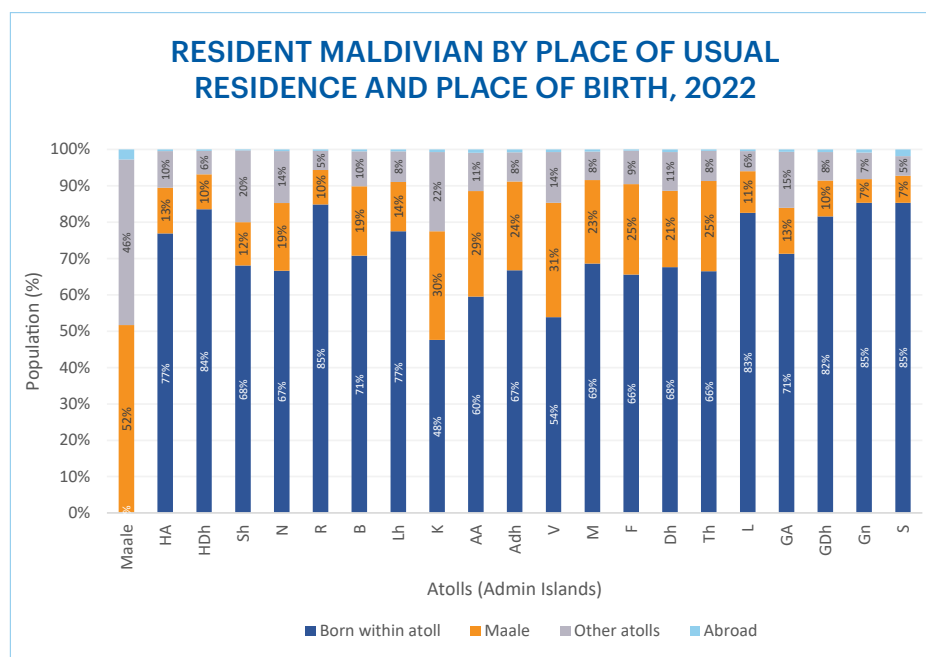


Figure 4 3: Resident Maldivian by place of usual residence and place of birth, 2022

4.2 Registered Population by Place of Usual Residence

Place of registration is the island where each Maldivian is registered. The law mandates Maldivians to register in a house upon birth. This process is carried out when doing birth registration and issuing birth certificate.

A look at Maldivians by their place of registration and where they live has its significance and policy importance.

Figure 4 4 shows the where the registered population resides (with a focus on admin islands). The results revealed that more than 50% of the population that is registered in each Atoll also lived within the Atoll. However, it is important to note that a significant proportion of the registered population lived in Maale.

Compared to registered population in each Atoll, the share of registered population living in Maale was more from GA & GDh Atoll. Two in every 5 people registered in these atolls was living in Maale. This was followed by people moving from Th. Atoll to Maale.

The share of population registered and living within the same atoll was higher in central atolls (K, AA & ADh) compared to other atolls.

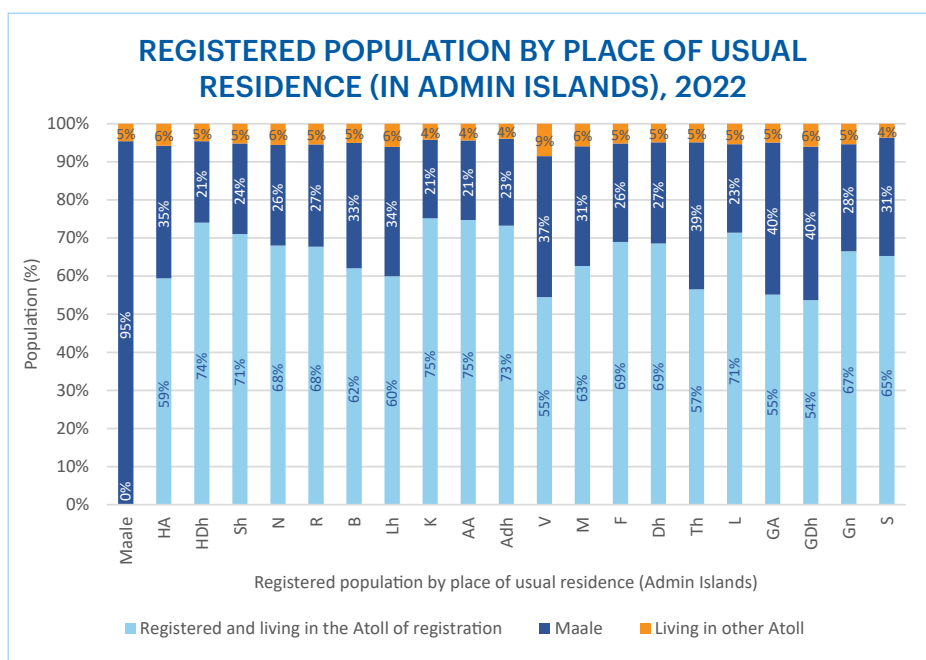


Figure 4 4: Registered population by place of usual residence (in admin islands), 2022

4.3 Island Dynamics: Exploring Registered Population and Usual Residence Patterns

Apart from looking at atoll of registration, it is equally important to look at where the registered population of each island is residing. This information is also made available in census and important to decipher at island level.

Annex 2, discloses registered population in each island by their usual residence. In this section we will display the islands at the both extremes of this table.

Table 4 1 displays the top 10 islands with the highest number of registered populations living in the island. As such, these islands were mostly located in the central region, where tourism flourishes and is within close proximity to Maale.

Apart from central islands, islands in Laamu atoll had the potential to retain its registered population on the island. Kulhudhuffushi stood out as the only city, which has more than 80% of its registered population living in the city.

Atoll	Island	Registered resident Maldivian population	Registered population by place of usual residence				Registered population by place of usual residence (%)			
			Registered and living in the island	Maale	Registered and living within the atoll	Living in other atoll	Registered and living in the island	Maale	Registered and living within the atoll	Living in other atoll
AA	Ukulhas	1099	928	120	24	27	84%	11%	2%	2%
K	Maafushi	2390	1956	342	21	71	82%	14%	1%	3%
HDh	Kulhudhuffushi	10211	8180	1164	110	757	80%	11%	1%	7%
Th	Veymandoo	1352	1078	197	21	56	80%	15%	2%	4%
L	Hithadhoo	1263	1001	114	78	70	79%	9%	6%	6%
AA	Himandhoo	859	675	122	12	50	79%	14%	1%	6%
K	Himmafushi	1194	934	179	41	40	78%	15%	3%	3%
Sh	Narudhoo	639	498	65	31	45	78%	10%	5%	7%
Adh	Kuburudhoo	595	457	55	28	55	77%	9%	5%	9%
L	Fonadhoo	2938	2248	392	140	158	77%	13%	5%	5%

Table 4 1: 10 Islands with the greatest number of registered population living in the island, 2022

On the other hand, some islands had less than 50% of its registered population living in the island and the bottom 10 islands are displayed in Table 4 2. Islands with the lowest number of registered populations living in the island include V. Rakeedhoo and V. Thinadhoo. The loss in registered population living in these islands was mainly due to many of them living in Maale.

In instances where the registered population living in the island decreased, an observable increase in the population living in Maale was observed. In such islands, more than 50% of its registered population lived in Maale. Few people opted to live in other islands within the atoll or lived in another atoll, indicating a preference for living in the capital city.

Atoll	Island	Registered resident Maldivian population	Registered population by place of usual residence				Registered population by place of usual residence (%)			
			Registered and living in the island	Maale	Registered and living within the atoll	Living in other atoll	Registered and living in the island	Maale	Registered and living within the atoll	Living in other atoll
HDh	Vaikaradhoo	1665	626	852	49	138	38%	51%	3%	8%
Th	Gaadhiffushi	668	238	386	11	33	36%	58%	2%	5%
GA	Kolamaafushi	1539	543	806	38	152	35%	52%	2%	10%
GDh	Vaadhoo	1305	454	677	35	139	35%	52%	3%	11%
GA	Dhevvadhoo	1356	428	869	11	48	32%	64%	1%	4%
GDh	Rathafandhoo	1169	353	669	55	92	30%	57%	5%	8%
S	Hulhudhoo	3097	885	1773	161	278	29%	57%	5%	9%
HA	Thakandhoo	892	211	573	53	55	24%	64%	6%	6%
V	Thinadhoo	203	43	136	13	11	21%	67%	6%	5%
V	Rakeedhoo	335	67	173	35	60	20%	52%	10%	18%

Table 4 2: 10 Islands with least number of registered populations living in the island, 2022

4.4 Usual Residents by Place of Registration

In section 3, we delved into the resident population, exploring changes over time in both Maldivian and Foreign populations. In this section we will focus on the resident Maldivian Population living in each location by their place of registration.

The result displayed that more than 90% of the registered population in each atoll live within the same atoll. And exception to this was found in B, V, Dh Atoll where less than 90% of the usual residents were registered and living within the atoll. Among the usual residents of Kaafu atoll, 79% of the population living in the Atoll was registered in Kaafu atoll, while 17% of the population living in the atoll was registered in other atolls.

Maale showed the opposite of this, where out of the population living in Maale, only 46% was registered in Maale. More than half of the population living in Maale was registered in other atolls. In other words, for each registered person in Maale, there is a person registered in another island who resides in Maale.

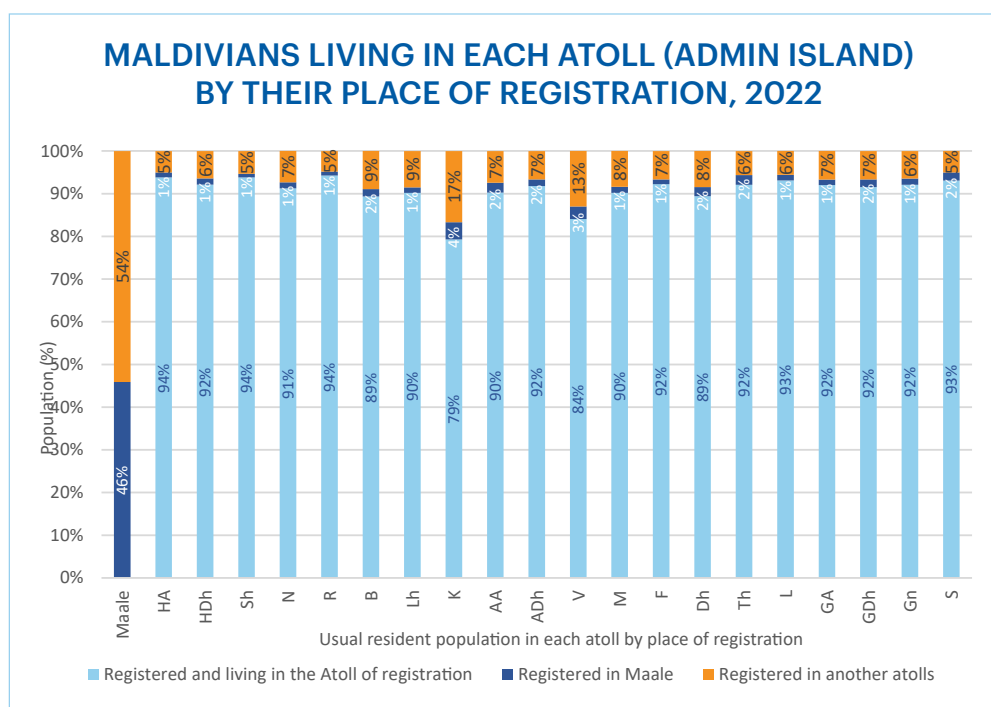


Figure 4 5: Maldivians living in each atoll (Admin Island) by their place of registration, 2022

4.5 Usual Residents in Maale by Place of Registration

Since more than half of the population living in Maale is registered elsewhere, it is important to look at the detail breakdown of their place of registration. Among those living in Maale, majority was from most populous atolls such as Addu City, GDh and HA Atoll. Addu city accounted for 6% of the population living in Maale. This prompts the need for further exploration to understand why many people from Addu City chose to reside in Maale despite the development in the city over the past decades.

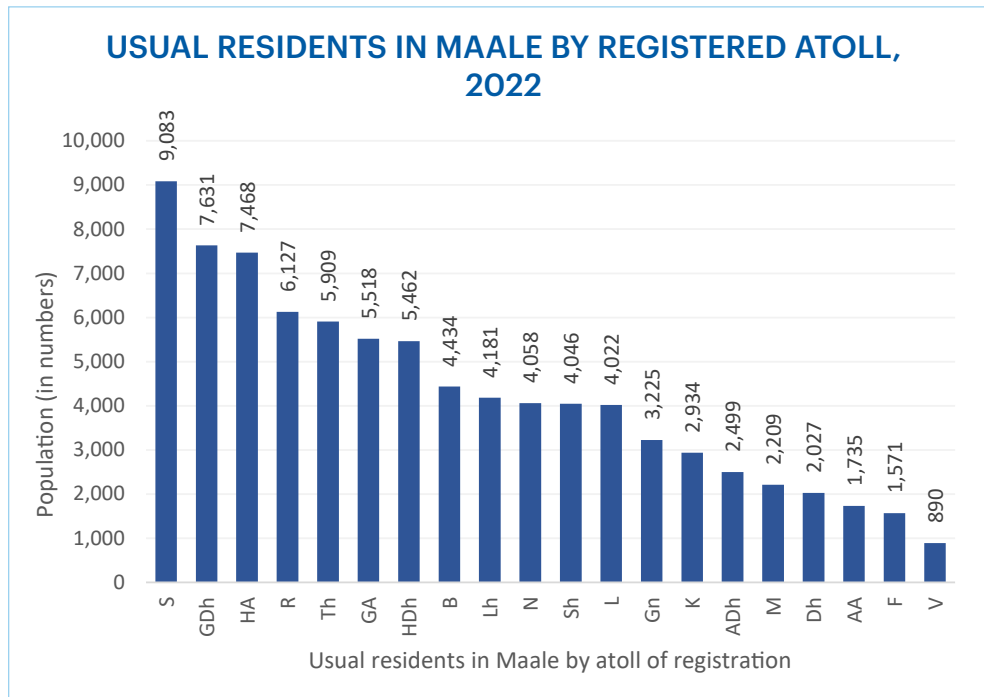


Figure 4 6: Usual residents in Maale by registered atoll, 2022

A closer look at the population living in different wards of Maale revealed a consistent pattern as above. Across the four wards of Maale, majority of the residents was registered in Addu City (6%) with the second-highest number coming from HA atoll (5%). Among those living in Hulhumale, most was registered in Addu city and GDh Atoll, followed by people coming from HA and Thaa Atoll. On the other hand, people living in Villimale mainly came from GDh and HDh Atoll.

Atoll of Registration	Usual residents in Maale by place of registration				Usual residents in Maale by place of registration (%)			
	Total	Maale (4 wards)	Vilimaale	Hulhumaale	Total	Maale (4 wards)	Vilimaale	Hulhumaale
Maale'	72,177	47,531	2,618	22,026	46%	48%	45%	42%
S	9,083	5,851	183	3,046	6%	6%	3%	6%
GDh	7,631	4,371	370	2,889	5%	4%	6%	6%
HA	7,468	4,508	303	2,651	5%	5%	5%	5%
R	6,127	4,155	186	1,782	4%	4%	3%	3%
Th	5,909	3,284	269	2,352	4%	3%	5%	5%
GA	5,518	3,301	184	2,032	4%	3%	3%	4%
HDh	5,462	3,008	376	2,076	3%	3%	6%	4%
B	4,434	2,689	153	1,591	3%	3%	3%	3%
Lh	4,181	2,381	139	1,660	3%	2%	2%	3%
N	4,058	2,250	194	1,612	3%	2%	3%	3%
Sh	4,046	2,619	118	1,305	3%	3%	2%	3%
L	4,022	2,530	121	1,365	3%	3%	2%	3%
Gn	3,225	1,786	50	1,389	2%	2%	1%	3%
K	2,934	1,893	97	941	2%	2%	2%	2%
ADh	2,499	1,635	60	802	2%	2%	1%	2%
M	2,209	1,384	114	708	1%	1%	2%	1%
Dh	2,027	1,362	59	605	1%	1%	1%	1%
AA	1,735	1,222	57	455	1%	1%	1%	1%
F	1,571	1,087	66	416	1%	1%	1%	1%
V	890	549	68	272	1%	1%	1%	1%
Not registered	48	32	1	15	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	157,254	99,428	5,786	51,990	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 4 3: Maldivian population living in different wards by their place of registration, 2022

4.6 Usual Residents in Maale by Island of Registration

Examining the usuals residents by their island of registration yields useful insights, offering context to the concentration of residents from various islands in the capital city.

Firstly, apart from those registered in Maale, people from Hithadhoo Avah constitute the largest group living in Maale in terms of absolute numbers. In general, most of the people living in Maale was from most populous islands and in absolute numbers, Southern atolls contributed to most residents in Maale.

Secondly, the table also indicates, the share of registered population from these islands residing in Maale. Close to 1 in every 4-person registered in these islands were living in Maale. In particular, even though 1773 people from Hulhudhoo Avah lived in Maale, it accounted to almost half of their registered population living in Maale.

Atoll	Island of registration	Population living in Maale by island of registration	Registered Population in each Island	Share of registered population living in Maale
S	Hithadhoo	3,602	15,267	24%
Gn	Fuvahmulah	3,225	12,319	26%
GDh	Thinadhoo	2,616	7,169	36%
Lh	Hinnavaru	2,125	4,725	45%
S	Hulhudhoo	1,773	3,097	57%
S	Feydhoo	1,649	5,122	32%
HA	Hoarafushi	1,479	3,341	44%
GDh	Gadhdhoo	1,370	2,938	47%
Th	Thimarafushi	1,315	2,509	52%
Lh	Naifaru	1,250	5,668	22%

Table 4 4: 10 Islands with the greatest number of people living in Maale (in absolute numbers) by their island of registration, 2022

Similarly, in terms of numbers, the data revealed the 10 islands with least number of people registered in an island that lives in Maale. These islands were predominantly characterised by their close proximity to the capital. Even among these islands, such as B. Fehendhoo and ADh. Dhidhdhoo, the population living in Maale accounts to fifth of their respective population.

Atoll	Island of registration	Population living in Maale by island of registration	Registered Population in each Island	Share of registered population living in Maale
N	Henbadhoo	76	743	10%
B	Fehendhoo	70	281	25%
Th	Vandhoo	69	384	18%
M	Naalaafushi	68	515	13%
Sh	Narudhoo	65	639	10%
L	Mundhoo	64	273	23%
Adh	Kuburudhoo	55	595	9%
B	Kihaadhoo	51	527	10%
Adh	Dhidhdhoo	50	196	26%
Sh	Noomaraa	41	493	8%

Table 4 5: 10 Islands with least number of registered people living in Maale (in absolute numbers), 2022

The aforementioned trends highlight the important of looking at islands where more than 50% of their registered population was living in Maale (refer to Annex 2).

As per the findings, a total of 13 islands had more than 50% of their registered population residing in Maale. These movements are potentially influenced by factors related to accessibility, educational and economic opportunities and urban amenities. It also has its impact on who gets left behind in the island, a crucial point to address during island development planning process.

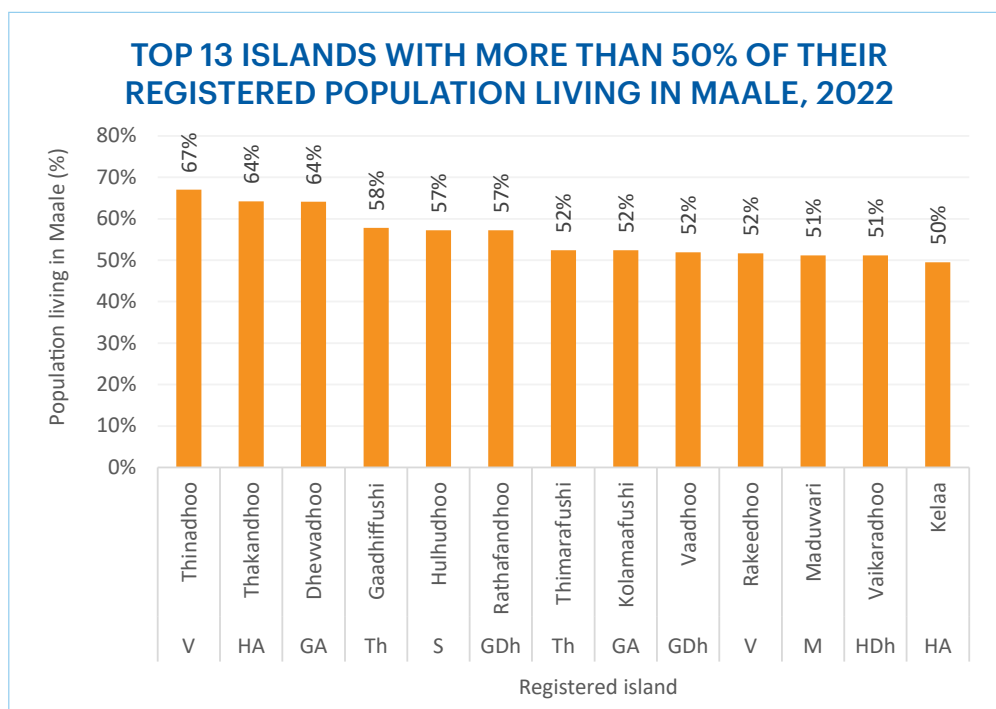


Figure 4 7: Top 13 islands with more than 50% of their registered population living in Maale, 2022

Furthermore, 16 islands had 40-49% of their registered population living in Maale, indicating a notable concentration of residents from these islands in the capital. The data also highlights 41 islands have a substantial portion, with one in every three persons registered in these islands preferring to live in Maale (refer to Annex 2).

4.7 Usual Residents in Non-Administrative Islands by Place of Registration

About 4% of the resident Maldivian population usually resided in non- Admin islands, often driven by employment opportunities. In most of the atolls, more than 30% of the local population that worked there was registered within the atoll. Addu City stood out with 88% of individuals working within atoll, while being registered in the city and indicates a high degree of community-based employment within the city.

In contrast, K, AA & ADh where a significant number of resorts are located, a distinct trend emerged. Majority of the Maldivians employed in non-administrative islands were registered in other atolls. This pattern suggests a unique employment dynamic in these resort-centric atolls, where the workforce is driven by diverse origins within the country.

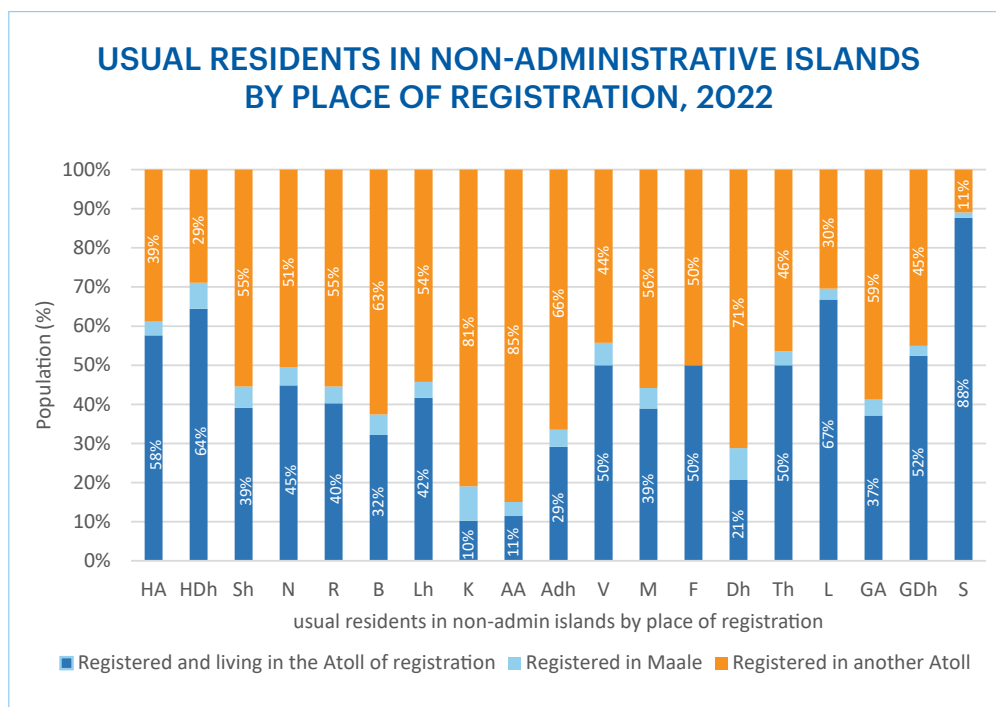


Figure 4 8: Usual residents in non-administrative islands by place of registration, 2022

4.8 Birth Registration of Children Under 5 Years (SDG 16.9.1)

Registering children at birth is the first step in securing their recognition before the law and ensuring lifelong protection and is a prerequisite for exercising all other rights³. A dedicated target (16.9.1) under Goal 16 of the SDGs aims to provide legal identity for all, including birth registration by 2030.

Indicator 16.9.1: Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age

Census also collected information on island where each Maldivian is registered. This in a way measures the completeness of birth registration in the country. According to census results, Maldives has achieved almost 100% birth registration of the Maldivian population. In order to achieve SDG goal on this and leave no one behind, it is important to reach extra miles to register the remaining 0.2%.

Indicators	Resident Maldivian		
	Republic	Maale	Atolls
16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority			
Proportion of children under 5 years with birth registration	99.90%	99.60%	99.90%

Table 4 6: Update on SDG indicator 16.9.1, 2022

Census showed that a total of 70 people was not registered in the country, with 55 of them being unregistered births among children below 5 years of age. Most of these children were found in Maale and below the age of 1 year. This indicates the importance of addressing delayed and late registration to achieve 100% birth registration among children.

3

<https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/birth-registration/>

Age	Locality		
	Republic	Maale	Atolls
0	52	43	9
1	0	0	0
2	2	1	1
3	0	0	0
4	1	0	1
5	0	0	0
Total	55	44	11

Table 4 7: Children under 5 years who were not registered by locality, 2022

5

MIGRATION AMONG MALDIVIANS

Individuals often relocate from one place to another in pursuit of improved access to social services, educational opportunities, employment prospects and other factors contributing to a higher quality of life. This movement of people significantly shapes the demographic landscape and plays a crucial role in the dynamics of population distribution in the country.

Internal migration within Maldives is frequent phenomenon and characterised by education, employment, medical and various other reasons. This move results in movements of the whole family sometimes.

It is thus important to look at migration among Maldivian, their driving factors and change in migration overtime in order to provide better understanding of the internal migration within the country.

In doing, it is crucial to determine who is a migrant among Maldivian given the complexities associated with the different movement among the population.

5.1 Challenges in measuring migration among Resident Maldivians

When it comes to resident Maldivians, it is difficult to measure migration by fixing it solely on place of birth or place of registration. This is mainly due to:

Challenges in measuring internal migration based on place of birth:

It is a common practice among Maldivians to travel to the nearest hospital to give birth. This is often the case where many prefer to consult a gynaecologist and in doing so gives delivery at the nearest Atoll/ regional hospital or come to Maale, the capital city. In many cases, their usual residence would be different from their place of birth (as this move might be for very short duration). Additionally, a person born in a certain island might not live there at any point in their life.

Challenges in measuring internal migration based on place of registration:

By law Maldivians are mandated to register birth and obtain a birth certificate. It is during this process, each one of us is registered in a 'house' registry. This becomes place of registration for Maldivian. In the census, the place of registration was captured not by address but as island where the person is registered. When it comes to place of registration, this island can be a place where the person has never resided in their life.

5.2 How Migration has been Measured in the Past and Change Overtimeans

Up to census 2006, Maldives has been measuring the lifetime migration of the population based on UN definition of 1970. Below is a snapshot of how it was defined in the 2006 census.

5.2.1 Lifetime Migration

A life-time migration refers to a person who was enumerated at a place other than their place of birth (UN 1970). When interpreting lifetime migration statistics one needs to be aware of their limitations. Life-time migration taken from census data is only a snapshot of migratory behavior among the people. It does not reveal, for example, when the migration took place. It also does not take into account people who may have completed migrations during the years preceding the census. Nevertheless, it shows the general level of mobility within the country and is a good measure of the population redistributive function of migration. For the purposes of this analysis, a life-time migrant is defined as one who was born outside their island of usual residence, and had lived in that island for more than one year.

During the development of 2014 census questionnaire, it was felt that this definition did not capture the actual internal migration that is taking place in the country. Birth often takes place 'not in their usual residence' and it is not necessary for people to live in their place of registration. For example, a person born in Kulhudhuffushi City can be registered in HDh. Vaikaradhoo but could spend their entire life in Maale.

The internal movement of the local population is a concern for the government with most of the people moving towards Maale, capital city. To ease the population burden in Maale (the 4 wards) the government reclaimed and developed Hulhumaale as part of Maale and to provide housing for the 'registered population of Maale'. However, there has been change in government policies over the years. However, government policies on population concentration have evolved over the years, with a shift from concentrating 70% of the local population in Maale area to a focus on the spatial development of the entire country in subsequent regions.

Nonetheless, the people's movement towards Maale remained the same and MBS tried to find a better way to measure migration. In 2014, a new question was introduced (for persons 1 year and above) with the aim to measure migration among Maldivians. This was:

M14- (...) Have you ever resided in a place other than (the place stated in M13) for 1 year or more?

For example: For purposes such as education, accompanying family member, job, seamen etc

1- Yes

2- No  Skip to M18

The migration was determined based on the change in usual residence. If the person has ever resided in a place (island/country) other than their island of usual residence for one year or more, then that person is considered as a migrant.

The use of registered address and place of birth is NOT used for defining internal migration due to the nature of the ambiguity involved in them (and for the reasons mentioned above).

5.3 Defining migration and migrant

Starting from 2014, migration has been measured based on the concept of change in usual residence for a duration of more than 1 year. This definition was used to measure migration among Maldivians in Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2019⁴.

Census 2022 also relied on this definition and captured information with regard to migration among Maldivians.

Migrant:

‘If a person has resided in a place (island/country) other than their usual residence for one year or more’ he/she is considered as a migrant.

Individuals who have never moved from their place of usual residence is considered as non-migrant

Census captures the most recent migration of a person; i.e, if a person has migrated for more than once, information with regard to their most recent migration is collected.

This section analyses the migration pattern among Maldivians and looks at their reason for migration, duration in usual residence and place of previous residence among other characteristics.

⁴ <https://statistics.maldives.gov.mv/hies-2019-population-distribution-and-migration/>

5.4 Migrants among Maldivians

The census showed that close to half of the Maldivian population were migrants. More than half of the population in Maale were migrants with female predominant as migrants towards Maale. On administrative islands, one in every 3 person was a migrant and no gender difference was observed among migrants.

Locality	Resident Maldivian population			Migrants			Migrant population (%)		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Republic	377,609	192,012	185,597	174,314	91,368	82,946	46%	48%	45%
Maale	155,245	77,320	77,925	83,317	40,007	43,310	54%	52%	56%
Atolls (ALL)	222,364	114,692	107,672	90,997	51,361	39,636	41%	45%	37%
Administrative Islands	206,270	99,524	106,746	74,903	36,193	38,710	36%	36%	36%

Table 5 1: Migrants among Maldivians, 2022

5.5 Migrants among Maldivians- at atoll level

A glance at migration pattern in administrative islands showed varied migration dynamics. In this regard, Vaavu atoll had a higher share of migrant population. Higher share of migrants was within men in the atoll compared to women. Interestingly, central atolls displayed a lower share of migrants compared to many other atolls. This could be attributed to the fact that this table shows only administrative islands and the overall picture might change with the inclusion of non-administrative atolls.

Fuvahmulah city recorded the lowest share of migrants among the usual residents.

Locality	Resident Maldivian population			Migrants			Migrant population (%)		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
HA	13,401	6,194	7,207	4,367	2,067	2,300	33%	33%	32%
HDh	20,249	9,223	11,026	7,074	3,345	3,729	35%	36%	34%
Sh	12,697	5,838	6,859	4,973	2,336	2,637	39%	40%	38%
N	11,322	5,280	6,042	4,232	1,939	2,293	37%	37%	38%
R	16,120	7,818	8,302	6,509	3,040	3,469	40%	39%	42%
B	9,227	4,370	4,857	3,536	1,589	1,947	38%	36%	40%
Lh	8,065	3,779	4,286	2,424	1,025	1,399	30%	27%	33%
K	13,304	7,501	5,803	5,321	3,155	2,166	40%	42%	37%
AA	6,773	3,454	3,319	2,562	1,281	1,281	38%	37%	39%
Adh	8,603	4,283	4,320	2,712	1,303	1,409	32%	30%	33%
V	1,543	795	748	774	415	359	50%	52%	48%
M	4,822	2,362	2,460	2,096	1,014	1,082	43%	43%	44%
F	4,454	2,109	2,345	1,295	599	696	29%	28%	30%
Dh	5,767	2,764	3,003	2,268	1,012	1,256	39%	37%	42%
Th	9,275	4,451	4,824	3,910	1,884	2,026	42%	42%	42%
L	13,056	6,298	6,758	4,963	2,324	2,639	38%	37%	39%
GA	8,143	4,106	4,037	2,593	1,310	1,283	32%	32%	32%
GDh	10,984	5,397	5,587	4,624	2,295	2,329	42%	43%	42%
Gn	8,183	3,833	4,350	2,161	1,096	1,065	26%	29%	24%
S	20,282	9,669	10,613	6,509	3,164	3,345	32%	33%	32%

Table 5 2: Migrant population by atoll (administrative islands), 2022

5.6 Net migration rate

The analysis of internal migration in the Maldives involved a comprehensive examination of data pertaining to individuals' usual place of residence and their previous residence.

In-migration rate shows the rate at which an atoll is gaining population whereas out-migration rate shows that rate at which an atoll is losing its population. The difference between in-migration and out-migration gives us the net migration, and represents the number of people staying or leaving an atoll as a proportion of the resident population. A positive net migration rate indicates that there are more people entering than leaving an atoll. When more people leave than entering an area, the result is a negative net migration rate.

By leveraging on this information, the net migration rate for each atoll has been calculated. All atolls except Maale, ADh, M, Dh, Th Atoll and Addu City had net migration losses. The biggest loss in population was seen in Vaavu atoll, followed by Fuvahmulah City.

The capital city, Maale, saw a positive net migration rate, indicating an influx of people. Similarly, M, Dh, Th Atoll and Addu City exhibited positive net migration, indicating attraction and growth within the atoll.

Place of usual residence	Total Number of In-migrants	Enumerated Population	In-migration rate	Out-Migration Rate	Net Migration Rate
Maale	62,820	157,254	39.9	23.8	16.1
HA	3,293	13,834	23.8	55.2	-31.4
HDh	4,629	20,592	22.5	34.4	-11.9
Sh	2,624	13,121	20.0	34.4	-14.4
N	3,520	12,531	28.1	34.6	-6.5
R	3,735	17,723	21.1	31.7	-10.6
B	3,148	10,980	28.7	39.7	-11.1
Lh	2,296	9,017	25.5	50.2	-24.7
K	8,773	19,813	44.3	22.0	22.3
AA	2,753	7,768	35.4	46.2	-10.7
ADh	3,067	10,295	29.8	18.7	11.0
V	619	1,631	38.0	152.6	-114.7
M	1,655	4,963	33.3	18.5	14.8
F	1,053	4,574	23.0	52.9	-29.9
Dh	2,022	6,640	30.5	23.8	6.7
Th	3,004	9,488	31.7	22.6	9.1
L	2,805	13,522	20.7	39.9	-19.2
GA	2,446	8,716	28.1	47.7	-19.6
GDh	3,538	11,288	31.3	40.6	-9.3
Gn	1,793	8,300	21.6	86.1	-64.5
S	4,323	20,589	21.0	16.8	4.2

Table 5 3: Total in-migrants, out-migrants, net migration rate among Maldivians, 2022

5.7 Migrants by Their Current Age- Generation of Migrants

Analysis of migrants by their current age provides insights into the historical migration trends spanning several years (and based on the most recent migration of a person who has migrated several times). Majority of the migrants fall within the working age-group. A similar pattern was observed in Maale and Atolls (including admin and non-admin islands), with the latter largely influenced by the work force in the resorts.

A significant proportion of migrant were in their late adult and elderly age, and indicate the ageing of the migrant's overtime. This demographic shift suggests that individuals who migrated in earlier years might continue to reside in their usual residence despite their reason for migration has been fulfilled.

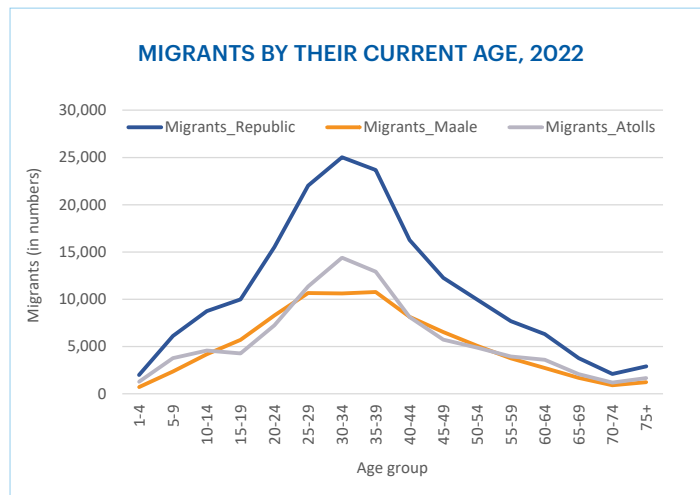


Figure 5 1: Migrants by their current age, 2022

5.8 Internal and international migration among Maldivians

For the 174,314 migrants, further insight is generated to determine their place of previous residence. This helps to determine whether a Maldivian has moved within the country or have crossed international borders.

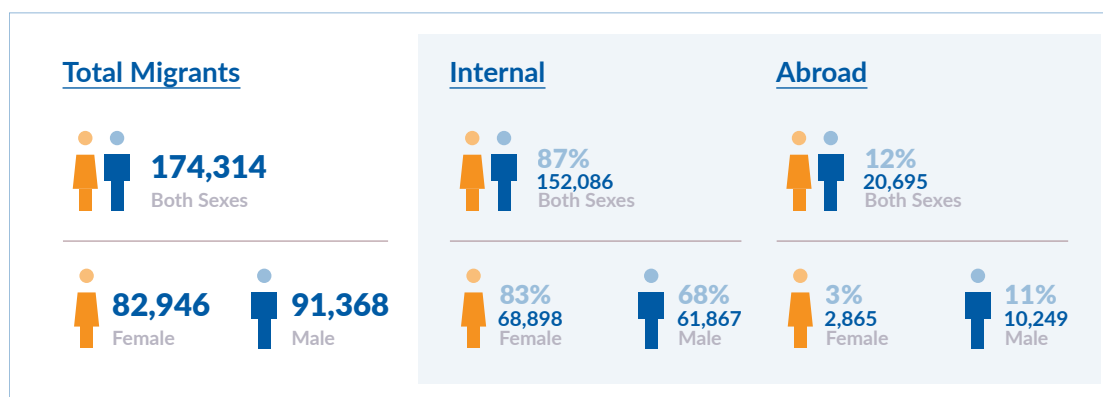
Internal migration is defined as movement within the country, from one island to another. International migration among Maldivians pertains to the relocation of the population to the Maldives by crossing international borders.

Migration among Maldivians was mostly within the country, 87% of the migration was due to internal migration. Out of the total migrations, 12% of the migrants were considered international migrants, as they previously lived abroad.

Internal migration was more prevalent among females, whereas international migration was more common among men.

Sex	Numbers			Migrants (%)	
	Total migrants	Internal	Abroad	Internal	Abroad
Both Sexes	174,314	152,086	20,695	87%	12%
Male	91,368	61,867	10,249	68%	11%
Female	82,946	68,898	2,865	83%	3%

Table 5 4: Migrants by migration status, 2022



5.9 Duration in current residence- flow of internal migration

Information collected on the duration in current residence allows us to determine most recent migrants and flow of migration towards Maale and Atolls. Those whose duration in current residence is less than one year has been considered as recent migrants.

A total of 16,673 people migrated less than one year ago. Maale received 6484 migrants as most recent migrants (less than 1 year). Maale saw an increase in migrants between 2021 and 2022. Compared to 2021, an addition of 1168 people moved to Maale. Maale has been gaining migrants compare to administrative islands. This also gives a crude estimation of migration to Maale, where Maale can expect to received 6400 migrants annually, equating to an average of 18 migrants per day. More women migrated to Maale compared to men.

Administrative islands received 6761 people as migrants within the past year, while a total of 3428 migrants moved to non-admin islands within the same timeframe. Over the last 11 months, more men migrated to Admin islands compared to women.

On the other hand, migrants stayed back in their destination for a longer period in Maale than in the administrative islands. Maale had more than 28,000 migrants who have lived in the city for more than 15 years, suggesting a higher rate of long-term settlement in the capital city.

Duration in usual residence (in years)	Republic			Maale			Admin islands			Non-Admin islands		
	Both sexes	Female	Male	Both sexes	Female	Male	Both sexes	Female	Male	Both sexes	Female	Male
0	16,673	6,958	9,715	6,484	3,612	2,872	6,761	3,045	3,716	3,428	301	3,127
1	15,002	6,130	8,872	5,316	2,886	2,430	6,006	2,982	3,024	3,680	262	3,418
2	10,248	5,021	5,227	3,398	1,796	1,602	6,015	3,174	2,841	835	51	784
3	11,703	5,637	6,066	4,691	2,607	2,084	5,790	2,979	2,811	1,222	51	1,171
4	8,953	4,429	4,524	4,273	2,213	2,060	4,039	2,191	1,848	641	25	616
5	7,265	3,690	3,575	3,344	1,804	1,540	3,396	1,876	1,520	525	10	515
6-7	12,945	6,622	6,323	6,368	3,357	3,011	5,892	3,240	2,652	685	25	660
8-9	11,076	5,859	5,217	6,075	3,394	2,681	4,486	2,453	2,033	515	12	503
10-11	10,730	5,755	4,975	5,683	3,157	2,526	4,621	2,589	2,032	426	9	417
12-13	9,046	4,674	4,372	4,496	2,388	2,108	4,169	2,280	1,889	381	6	375
14-15	10,247	5,087	5,160	4,410	2,265	2,145	5,500	2,816	2,684	337	6	331
15+	48,107	22,925	25,182	28,733	13,817	14,916	18,205	9,080	9,125	1,169	28	1,141
Don't know	2,319	159	2,160	46	14	32	23	5	18	2,250	140	2,110
Total	174,314	82,946	91,368	83,317	43,310	40,007	74,903	38,710	36,193	16,094	926	15,168

Table 5 5: Duration in usual residence by locality, 2022

5.10 Why do Maldivians migrate?

Individuals migrate for various reasons, from pursuing education to returning to their hometown. Within Maldives, internal migration is a common phenomenon, driven by a combination of push and pull factors. Census takes into account the reason behind their migration and allows for a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics influencing internal migration within the country.

Figure 5 2 allows to understand the primary motivation behind migration across the country. At national level, education and employment were the main drivers of migration. This was followed by family migration to live with family and those moving back as return migrants.

What drives individuals to migrate towards Maale and atolls can be seen from the same figure. Till date, most of the migration towards Maale was primarily for education. Almost 1 in 3 migrants came to Maale for education. This was followed by family migration to live with family (14%). When family migrates, this leads to dependents such as children/spouse and relative migrating with them. As a result of this, the dependents move to live with family. Only 14% of the migrants to Maale cited employment opportunities as their primary motivation.

On the other hand, migration towards admin island was mainly as return migrants. Almost 1 in 3 people migrated back to their islands as return migrants. Migration to atolls, on the other hand, was marked by a significant number of people moving to reside with family members. While education remained as the main reason for migration to Maale, only 4% migrated to and within atolls for education.

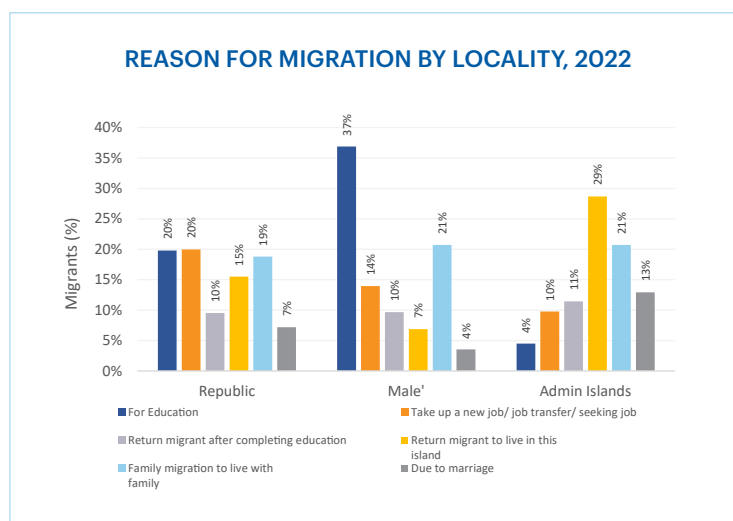
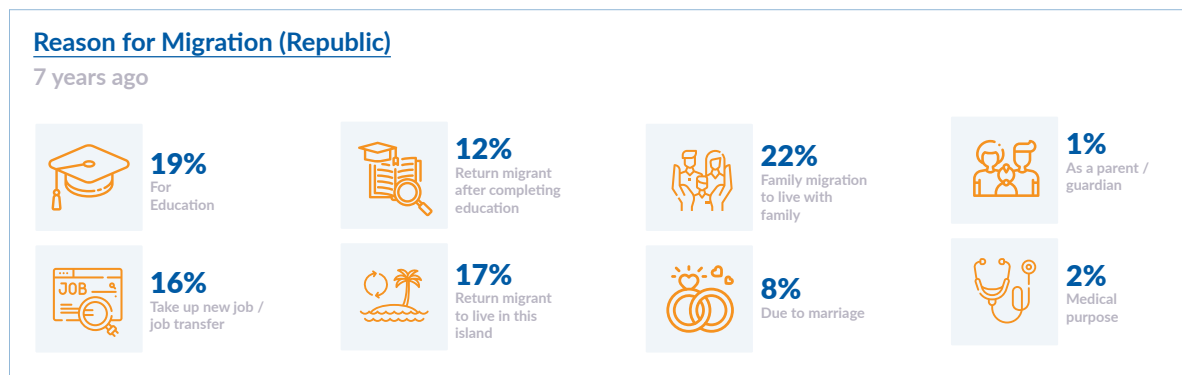


Figure 5 2: Reason for migration by locality, 2022

5.11 Drivers of migration- past and present

Information on the duration spent in current residence allows to reflect on the changes in the flow of migrants by purpose.

Over the past seven years, there has been a notable shift in the reasons that prompted migration among Maldivians. Seven years ago, the primary motivation for migration among Maldivian was family migration (22%), education (19%) and return migration (17%) and take up new jobs (16%). The paradigm has shifted in its shares when it comes to migration in recent years (migration that has taken place less than 1 year ago).



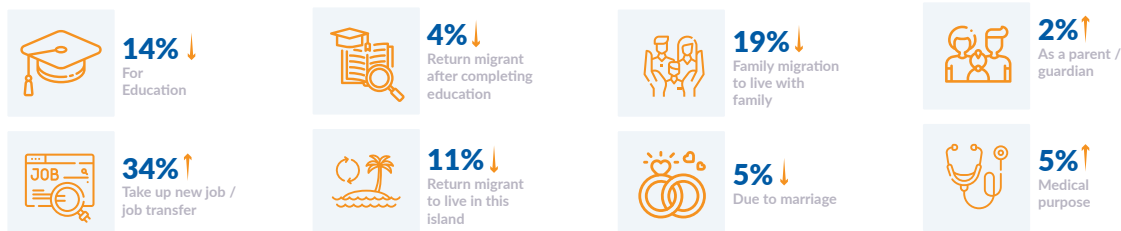
At present, employment stood as the primary driver for migration, with one in every three migrants (34%) relocating for job opportunities. Subsequently, family migration (19%) and education (14%) constitute as the other main factors for recent migration. The proportion of individuals returning after completing their education was minimal now, at 4%, which was a notable decrease from 12% recorded seven years ago.

Reason for migration	Less than 1 year				7 years ago			
	Republic	Maale	Atolls (Admin & non-admin)	Admin Islands	Republic	Maale	Atolls (Admin & non-admin)	Admin Islands
For education	14%	28%	5%	8%	19%	32%	5%	5%
Take up a new job/ job transfer	34%	13%	47%	20%	16%	14%	18%	9%
Return migrant after completing education	4%	5%	3%	4%	12%	13%	12%	13%
Return migrant to live in this island	11%	6%	14%	21%	17%	8%	27%	30%
Family migration to live with family	19%	26%	15%	22%	22%	24%	21%	23%
Due to marriage	5%	3%	6%	10%	8%	3%	14%	15%
As a parent / guardian	2%	4%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Medical purpose	5%	9%	2%	4%	2%	3%	0%	1%

Table 5 6: Reason for migration, now and 7 years ago, 2022

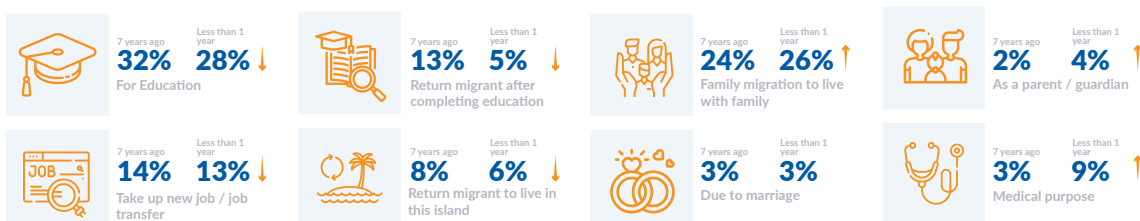
Reason for Migration (Republic)

Less than 1 year



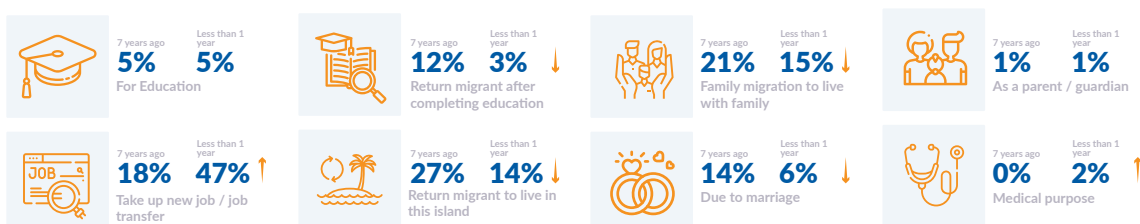
Recent trends in migration towards Maale has shown subtle shifts. Education was the main pull factor to the capital city 7 years ago and it remained the same even today. However, there has been notable changes in migration patterns due to other reasons (such as medical, as parent/ guardian). The growing trend of migration to Maale for medical purposes is a matter of concern and warrant further exploration.

Reason for Migration (Maale)



Over the years, migration for employment has increased dominantly in atolls- both administrative and non-administrative islands. Migration for work was mostly towards non-admin islands which consist of resorts and industrial islands. Few people tend to return back to their islands, as the share has declined from 30% in previous years to 21% indicating a shift in migration patterns and preferences.

Reason for Migration (Atolls - Admin & Non-Admin Islands)



5.12 Gender difference in migration- past and present

While migration in the country is intricately shaped by factors such employment opportunities, education, marriage and pursuit of enhanced living conditions, it might influence migration of men and women differently. A gender perspective on migration serves as a valuable tool for gaining insights into the socio-economic factors that influence internal migration patterns.

Reason for migration	Migrants less than 1 year		Migrants 7 years ago	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
For education	19%	11%	22%	16%
Take up a new job/ job transfer	11%	50%	5%	26%
Return migrant after completing education	5%	3%	13%	12%
Return migrant to live in this island	14%	9%	19%	15%
Family migration to live with family	27%	14%	23%	21%
Due to marriage	9%	3%	11%	5%
As a parent / guardian	4%	1%	2%	0%
Medical purpose	7%	3%	2%	1%

Table 5 7: Reason why men and women migrate, now and 7 years ago, 2022

The migration pattern of men and women differed. Employment becomes the driving factor among men for migration. In the past (7 years ago), one in every five men migrated for employment while at present, more than half of the men migrated for migration (50%).

For women, migration was driven by necessity rather than by choice. Seven years ago, one in every 5 women migrated due to family migration and to live with family. This trend persists today, as 27% of the women migrated for the same cause. At present, the share of women migrating for education was more compared to men. Noticeable increase has been seen in the share of women migrating for employment over time. On the other hand, women migrating for health reasons has increased and should not be ignored.

5.13 Migrants in the past one year- change in demographics

A total of 16, 673 people was considered as recent migrants (whose duration in usual residence is less than one year) and examining their population dynamics sheds lights in the recent trends in migration. The surge in the 10-14 age group was primarily attributed by migration for education. Rest of the spike was characterized by migration of individuals within working age group. More men within working age group migrated compared to women

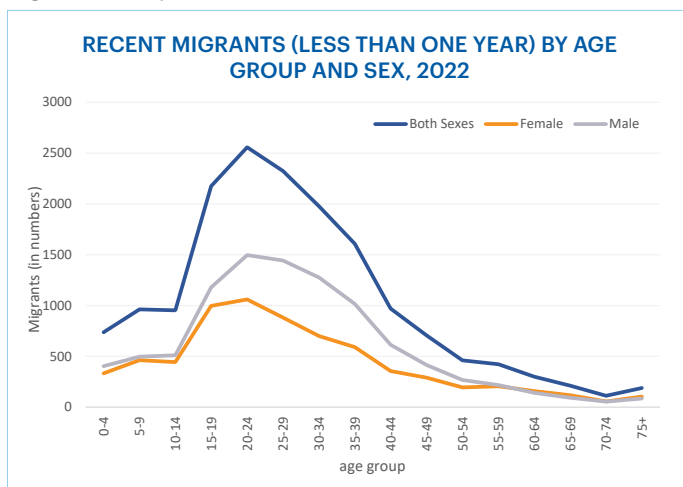


Figure 5 3: Recent migrants (less than one year) by age group and sex, 2022

Distribution of recent migrants between Maale and admin islands by gender showed that more women migrate towards Maale compared to the flow of migrants towards admin islands. The age band of 15-19 years recorded the highest flow of migrants towards Maale. In contrast, boys tend to migrate more towards Maale while men migrated mostly towards admin islands.

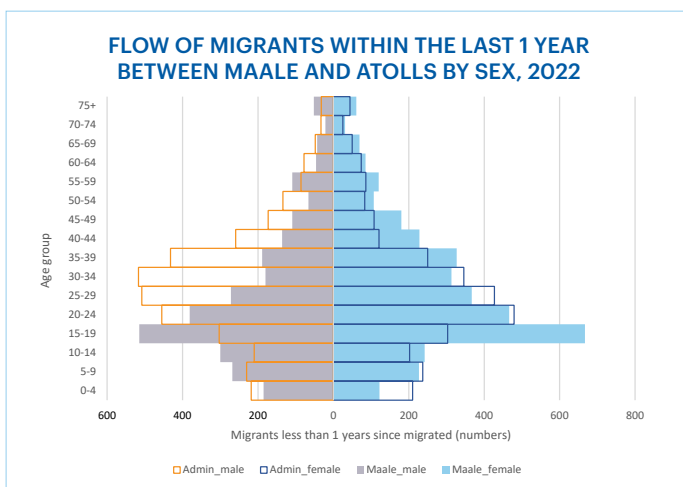


Figure 5 4: Flow of migrants within the last 1 year between Maale and Atolls by sex, 2022

5.14 Migrants in Maale by place of previous residence

Out of the total migrants, close to half of the migrants (48%) resided in Maale. As Maale has become the host for many migrants coming from Atolls, this section examines the locality of the migrants by their place of previous residence.

One in five migrants in Maale (21%) used to live abroad before moving to Maale. This was followed by people moving from populous Atolls such as from GDh (7%), HA (7%) and Addu City (7%) to Maale. Migration to Maale from Central Atolls was less compared to the flow of migrants from the North and Southern Atolls in the country.

Census also captured the reason for migration towards Maale. This is depicted below for most populous Atolls as to why they are losing their population and why people prefer to move to the capital city.

Overall, people from different atoll migrated to Maale to pursue education. This was followed by a substantial number of people moving due to family members relocating to Maale, emphasizing the familial aspect of migration. A significant proportion of the people also moved to Maale for employment.

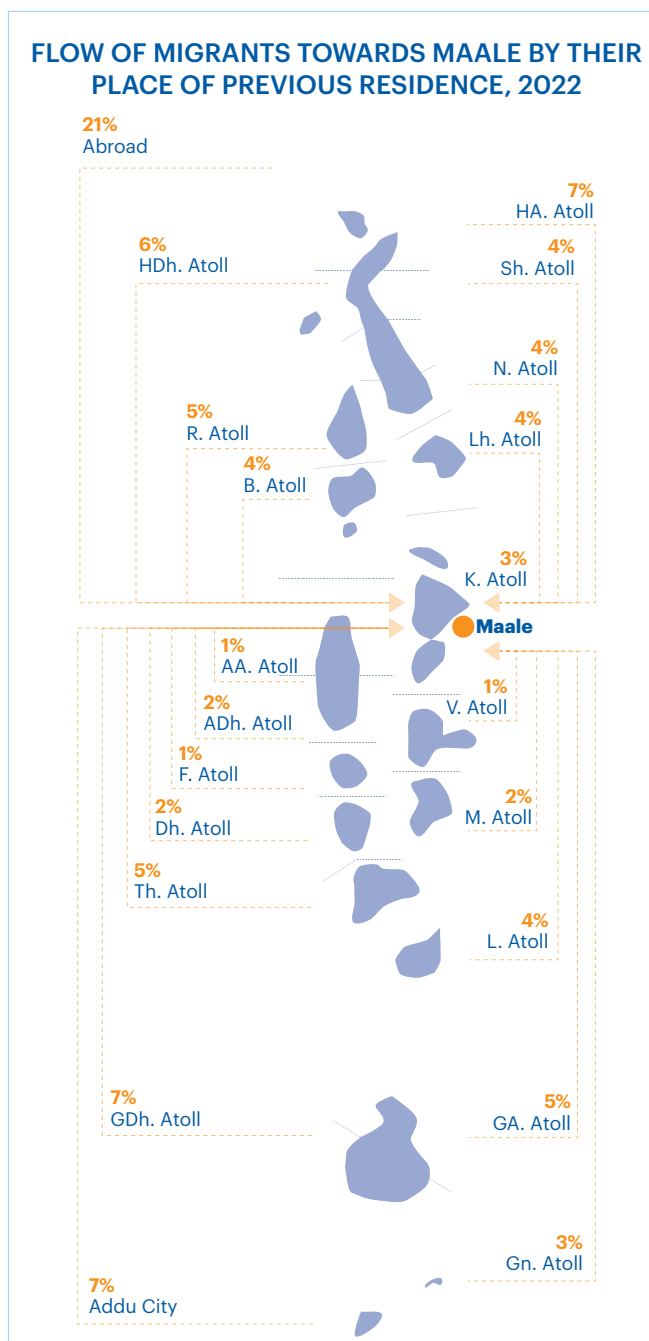


Figure 5 5: Flow of migrants towards Maale by their place of previous residence, 2022

Atoll	For Education	Take up a new job/ job transfer/ seeking job	"Family migration to live with family"	Due to marriage	As a parent / guardian	Medical purpose
HA	49%	16%	20%	3%	3%	4%
HDh	45%	18%	21%	4%	3%	4%
R	49%	18%	19%	4%	2%	4%
Th	43%	17%	21%	4%	2%	3%
GA	53%	14%	18%	3%	3%	4%
GDh	50%	13%	21%	3%	2%	5%
S	43%	18%	23%	4%	2%	4%

Table 5 8: Reason for migration towards Maale from key atolls, 2022

Census data also provide valuable information to analyse the evolving trend of migration towards Maale over the years. A specific focus on migrants to Maale whose duration of stay was less than one year is imperative to gain insight into the underlying factors prompting migration to capital city.

Education still remained as the main reason for recent migration towards Maale. This was followed by migration resulting due to family relocating to Maale. Over years, the number of people moving to Maale to seek better medical treatment has increased significantly. The same can be observed for those migrating to Maale as parent. This term is often associated with parents moving as guardian while their children attend school or as a guardian for the medical of a family member.

Atoll	For Education	Take up a new job/ job transfer/ seeking job	Family migration to live with family	Due to marriage	As a parent / guardian	Medical purpose
HA	34%	12%	30%	1%	8%	8%
HDh	39%	15%	20%	4%	5%	10%
R	36%	14%	27%	3%	2%	11%
Th	26%	18%	29%	4%	4%	9%
GA	29%	14%	27%	3%	3%	14%
GDh	32%	11%	26%	3%	4%	14%
S	23%	17%	33%	4%	4%	9%

Table 5 9: Reason for recent migration towards Maale (within the past 1 year) from key Atolls, 2022

These findings carry significant implications for the effectiveness of current policies. Despite government investments in these atolls to provide higher education, the notable influx of migrants seeking education underscores the need for a targeted response. Addressing this trend is crucial to align policy measures and understand the evolving demand for tertiary education among the younger generation.

Likewise, the increase in migration for medical purpose comes out as a concern, necessitating a thorough review of the implementation of the public health to ensure accessibility and quality health care services is made available across the country.

5.15 Migration to cities

The burgeoning urbanisation has prompted a deeper exploration into the motives behind migration to the cities.

Kulhudhuffushi, as the northernmost city in the country, has witnessed significant shifts in migration patterns over the past seven years. Kulhudhuffushi saw an increase in migration for education and can be attributed the establishment of tertiary education in the city. Concurrently, there was a considerable rise in the migration of parent as guardians, which, previously non-existent at 0% has experienced a significant increase, reaching 7%.

The rise in job-related migration to Kulhudhuffushi was relatively modest. Additionally, Kulhudhuffushi saw a decrease in the number of individuals returning to the city after completing their education, and this might be due to a growing preference to pursue studies within the city.

Migration driven by the desire to live with family has consistently been the primary driver for relocating to Fuvahmulah city, both in the past and present. Fuvahmulah saw a drastic increase in those migrating to the city for employment (from 8% to 19% over the 7 years). Return migrants retained their status as a key contributor to the migration dynamics of the city, past and present.

Addu city, the most Southern atoll in the country exhibited a comparable migration trend as Fuvahmulah. The primary drivers of migration to the city remained as family migration and people moving to live with family. Employment opportunities saw an increase in migration, with the proportion of those migrating for work increasing from 9% to 13% over the years.

Reason for migration	Kuludhuffushi		Fuvahmulah City		Addu City	
	less than 1 year	7 yrs ago	less than 1 year	7 yrs ago	less than 1 year	7 yrs ago
For education	34%	15%	4%	1%	8%	4%
Take up a new job/ job transfer	14%	11%	19%	8%	13%	9%
Return migrant after completing education	2%	18%	5%	14%	4%	6%
Return migrant to live in this island	12%	28%	22%	32%	21%	39%
Family migration to live with family	13%	10%	30%	34%	26%	28%
Due to marriage	9%	16%	7%	8%	12%	12%
As a parent / guardian	7%	0%	2%	3%	2%	0%

Table 5 10: Reason why people migrate to cities now and 7 years ago, 2022

5.16 Age at migration

The age at the initiation of migration refers to the age at which Maldivians tend to commence their migration for various reasons⁵. This has been derived based on the duration they have been residing in their place of usual residence. By deducting this duration from the individual's current age, we can ascertain the age at which the person initially migrated to their usual residence.

The average age for migration across the country is 24 years. Migration towards Maale starts at a young age of 22 years compared to migration towards Atolls at 25 years.

On average, migration for education starts at a young age of 15 years. Employment brought migrants in their youth (24 years) to Maale' while migration for employment towards Admin islands was at the average age of 30 years. Those migrating for marriage was young and in the prime age of marriage.

An alarming trend was observed in migration for medical purposes, which starts at an adult age of 39 years towards Maale. This implies that the population already experience a co-morbid condition at an adult age and requires continuous treatment even at this age.

Reason for migration	Average age at last migration			
	Republic	Maale	Admin islands	Non-Admin islands
For education	15	15	15	18
Take up a new job/ job transfer	27	24	30	29
Return migrant after completing education	24	26	22	
Return migrant to live in this island	29	28	29	
Family migration to live with family	20	23	16	
Due to marriage	26	25	27	
As a parent / guardian	36	36	35	
Medical purpose	40	39	43	
Received a flat	37	38	36	
Loss of job / closure of workplace	34	32	34	
Due to COVID	28	27	29	
Total	24	22	25	

Table 5 11: Average age at the start of migration by reason and locality, 2022

5 Those who have migrated more than once, age at their most recent migration is considered.

Distinct gender differences were observed in terms of migration for various reasons. Men migrated earlier than women. Childhood migration for education was more common among boys and they move to their usual residence as early as 14 years, while girls migrate 2 years later than this.

Similarly, women returned earlier after completing their studies at the age of 23 years while men returned at the age of 24 years.

Differences were observed in the age of migration for marriage, as women on average migrate for marriage at the age of 25 years while men migrate at the age of 30 years.

Men migrate for medical purpose at an early adult age of 39 years while women migrate for medical on average at the age of 41 years.

Reason for migration	Average age at migration		
	Both sexes	Female	Male
For education	15	16	14
Take up a new job/ job transfer	27	25	27
Return migrant after completing education	24	23	24
Return migrant to live in this island	29	29	30
Family migration to live with family	20	22	17
Due to marriage	26	25	30
As a parent / guardian	36	36	37
Medical purpose	40	41	39
Received a flat	37	36	39
Loss of job / closure of workplace	34	31	35
Due to COVID	28	29	26
Total	24	23	24

Table 5 12: Average age at the start of migration by reason for migration and sex, 2022

5.17 Movement within Maale wards (not due to migration)

Maale' being the central hub of the country, attracts people from across the country. While Maale consistently received migrants annually, there is also frequent movement that occurs within the wards of Maale.

In a notable step, census incorporated a question for the first time to capture the movement within Maale, one year prior to the census. This question was included specially to measure the population's movement towards Hulhumaale, considering the government's allocation of numerous social housing flats given in this ward. Although this does not fall within the realm of migration as defined, it is also important to glance at the frequency of the movement within the capital city.

When it comes to four wards of Maale, 97% was residing in the same place one year prior to census, indicating, only a few people moved to 4 wards of Maale. Among people residing in Villimaale, 93% did not move their residence while 3% of them resided in an island one year ago and 3% lived in Maale before moving to Villimaale.

Hulhumale recorded highest internal movement within city. Only 63% of the population lived in Hulhumale even one year before. And about 25% of them (one in every 4 person) used to live in the 4 wards of Maale before moving to Hulhumale. This implied that the additional settlers in Hulhumale mostly came from the 4 wards of Maale (25%) while at the same time 4% of them came from other islands. Overall, Hulhumale gained more people and movement was more frequent in Hulhumale compared to 4 wards of Maale and Villingili.

Reason for migration	Place residing in Sept 2021						
	Other island	Abroad	Maale (4 wards)	Vilimaale	Hulhule	Hulhumaale	Total
Maale (4 wards)	2%	0%	97%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Vilimaale	3%	0%	3%	93%	0%	1%	100%
Hulhumaale	4%	1%	25%	2%	0%	68%	100%

Table 5 13: Movement within wards of Maale, 2022

6

FOREIGN MIGRANTS

Maldives has been receiving foreign migrants over the years and attracts a diverse range of international migrants seeking employment and economic opportunities. It is thus important to look at the population dynamics of foreign migrants in the country, their distribution and other intricates related to their migration.

6.1 Foreign migrants by nationality

Census showed that a total of 515,132 people live in the country. This includes 382,639 Maldivians and 132,493 foreigners. Approximately 26% of the population was foreigners. Or for every 4 Maldivians, there was one foreigner in the country.

This marked a significant increase in the number of foreigners living in the Maldives from 2014, which recorded 63,637 foreigners as living in the country⁶.

Close to 40% of the foreign population lived in Maale and the remaining population was distributed across the atolls, including non-administrative islands.

More than half of the foreign population consist of Bangladeshi's. One in every 4 foreigners in the country was from India. About 9% of the foreigners was from Sri Lanka.

Nationality	In numbers			In %		
	Republic	Maale	Atolls (Admin & non-admin)	Republic	Maale	Atolls (Admin & non-admin)
All Nationality	132,493	52,799	79,694	100%	100%	100%
India	32,971	11,421	21,550	25%	22%	27%
Sri Lanka	11,338	4,048	7,290	9%	8%	9%
Bangladesh	74,815	33,380	41,435	56%	63%	52%
Phillippines	1,723	639	1,084	1%	1%	1%
Indonesia	2,301	320	1,981	2%	1%	2%
Nepal	4,222	1,580	2,642	3%	3%	3%
Others	5,123	1,411	3,712	4%	3%	5%

Table 6 1: Foreign population in Maldives by nationality, 2022

6.2 Foreigners by gender and age

About 89% of the foreign workers in the country was men (117,432 men) which gives a sex ratio of about 780 men for every 100 women.

Foreign workforce in the country was within the working age group and foreign men outnumbered Maldivian in the prime age of working. Foreigners exceeded Maldivians from the age group 25-29 years to 35-39 years. In the age band of 25-29 years, 10,000 more foreigners were in the country than Maldivians. In the age band of 30-34 years, foreign men surpassed Maldivian men by 7000 workers.

A significant proportion of foreign male continued to work in the country in their late 40's and fifties, while only a few foreign women worked in the country beyond 45 years.

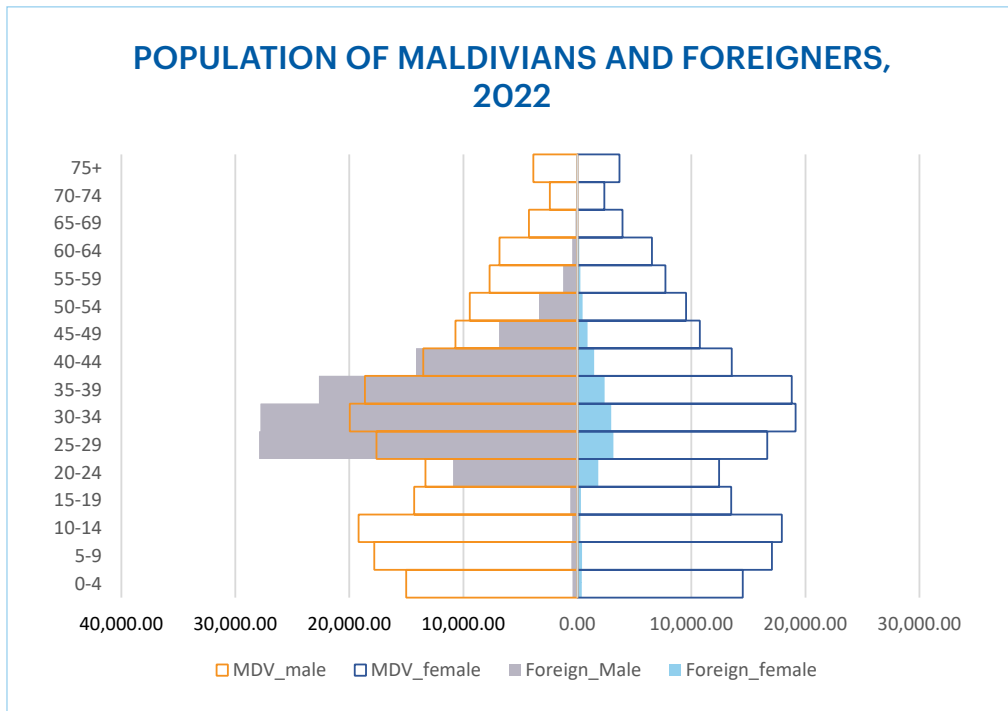


Figure 6 1: Population of Maldivians and foreigners, 2022

6.3 Distribution of foreign population across atolls

Foreign population is unevenly distributed across the countries. More foreign workers tend to reside in Atolls (including admin and non-admin islands) where more economic activities were carried out. The highest number of foreign workers was found in K. Atoll, where many of the tourist resorts are located and infrastructure projects are being carried out. This was followed by foreigners working in B Atoll and ADh Atoll.

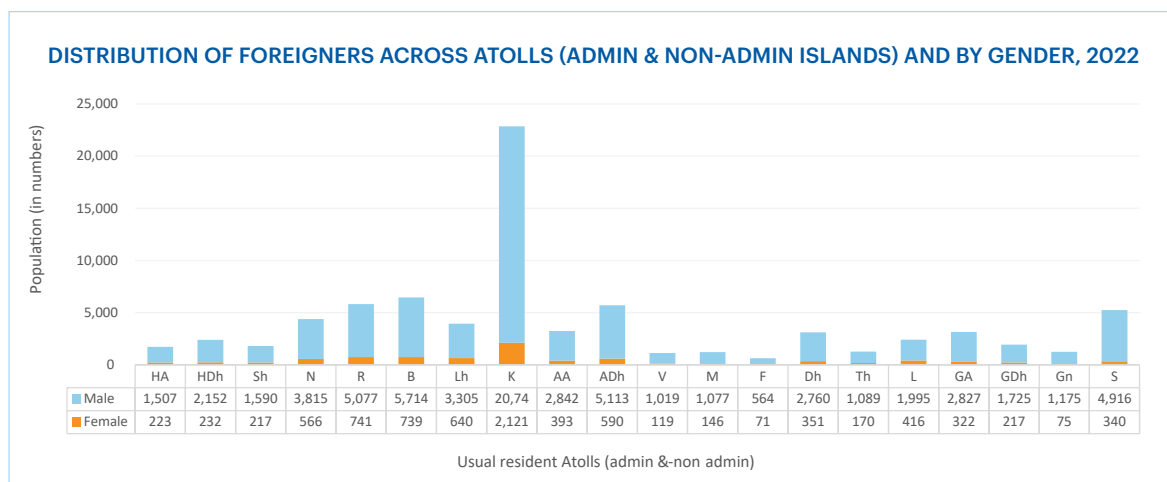


Figure 6 2: Distribution of foreigners across Atolls (admin & non-admin islands) and by gender, 2022

The distribution of the foreign population across admin and non-admin gives a better understanding of foreign population in administrative islands.

In many atolls, the share of foreigners working in non-administrative islands was higher than admin islands. In central atolls, which is centric to tourism, a higher number of foreigners resided in non-admin islands compared to admin islands. The share of foreigners was more in admin islands in atolls which had minimum economic activities outside admin islands such as Addu City, HDh Atoll, and Thaa Atoll.

SHARE OF FOREIGN POPULATION ACROSS ADMIN AND NON-ADMIN ISLANDS WITHIN ATOLLS, 2022

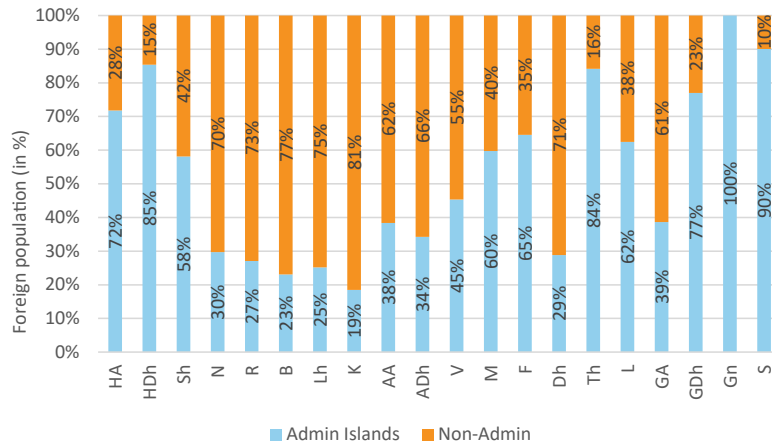


Figure 6 3: Share of foreign population across admin and non-admin islands within Atolls, 2022

6.4 Foreigners living in admin islands

The distribution of foreign population across admin islands varied as well (refer to Annex 1). V. Thinadhoo recorded the highest share of foreigners. In V. Thinadhoo more foreigners resided in the island than Maldivians. Maldivians accounted to one fourth of the population.

Among the top ten islands with highest share of foreign population, most of the island communities are known for local tourism with expanding guest house business. In such communities, foreigners accounted to more than one third of the usual resident population.

Atoll	Island	Share of foreign population
V	Thinadhoo	73%
B	Kamadhoo	37%
K	Thulusdhoo	34%
Adh	Mandhoo	32%
B	Fulhadhoo	32%
Adh	Dhigurah	30%
M	Raimandhoo	29%
K	Maafushi	29%
S	Feydhoo	28%
K	Himmafushi	28%

Table 6 2: 10 Islands with highest share of foreign population, 2022

6.5 Foreigners by duration in Maldives

Census also captured the duration of stay in Maldives for foreigners. Majority of foreigners tend to reside in the country for 3-4 years. Foreign population living in the country for more than 4 reduces and showed sign of returning back to home countries.

Table also showed the duration of stay in Maldives by different nationalities. As Bangladeshi's were in majority, they tend to stayed for longer, for 3-4 years and showed a gradual decline in the years stayed beyond that. Indians tend to stay in the country for 1-2 years and showed a steep decline after 3 years of stay in the country. This pattern was similar among Sri Lankans, Filipinos, Indonesians. Nepalese tend to stay in the country for less than one year and slowly moves to other countries or returns home.

Duration in Maldives	Foreigners by Nationality (number)							
	Total	India	Sri Lanka	Bangladesh	Phillippines	Indonesia	Nepal	Others
0	25,783	12,909	2,508	6,504	301	806	1,270	1,485
1-2	24,438	9,139	2,765	8,337	442	801	1,112	1,842
3-4	27,677	3,351	2,108	19,812	366	327	805	908
5-6	20,231	2,191	1,189	15,660	236	146	412	397
7-8	12,799	1,235	688	10,280	139	89	181	187
9-10	7,133	1,053	561	5,147	94	46	122	110
10+	14,432	3,093	1,519	9,075	145	86	320	194
Total	132,493	32,971	11,338	74,815	1,723	2,301	4,222	5,123

Duration in Maldives	Foreigners by Nationality (%)							
	Total	India	Sri Lanka	Bangladesh	Phillippines	Indonesia	Nepal	Others
0	19%	39%	22%	9%	17%	35%	30%	29%
1-2	18%	28%	24%	11%	26%	35%	26%	36%
3-4	21%	10%	19%	26%	21%	14%	19%	18%
5-6	15%	7%	10%	21%	14%	6%	10%	8%
7-8	10%	4%	6%	14%	8%	4%	4%	4%
9-10	5%	3%	5%	7%	5%	2%	3%	2%
10+	11%	9%	13%	12%	8%	4%	8%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 6 3: Foreigners by duration of stay in Maldives, 2022

7 CONCLUSION

Human mobility and migration are centric to population and changing population dynamics. Census results showed that population concentration towards Maale continues to increase with Maale recording an intercensal annual population growth of 3.9%. Among the Atolls, K. Atoll had the highest gain in the usual resident population while GDh. Atoll show the lowest gain in their population overtime. Out of the 186 islands, B. Fehendhoo saw the highest growth in usual resident population while GA. Kolamaafushi showed the lowest growth in the resident population. Between 2014 and 2022, there has been growth of cities, with Kulhudhuffushi City recording the highest growth among cities. Within the wards of Maale, the most remarkable demographic shift was observed in Hulhumaale, where the population experienced a substantial growth. Hulhumaale recorded the highest annual growth rate at 17%.

A glance at resident Maldivian population by their place of registration provided such needed insight for policy relevance. The results revealed that while more than 50% of the population that is registered in each atoll also lived within the atoll and a significant proportion also lived in Maale. Two in every 5 people registered in GA and GDh atoll was living in Maale.

Among usual residents of Maale, more than half of the residents were registered elsewhere. Among those living in Maale, majority was from most populous atolls such as Addu City, GDh and HA atoll.

Migration within the country also played a key role in changing population dynamics. Close to half of the Maldivian population was migrants. More than half of the population in Maale were migrants with female predominant as migrants towards Maale. Major migration stream in the Maldives is from the atolls to Maale.

There are several demographic, economic and social consequences of migration. Till date, most the migration towards capital city, Maale was primarily for education while on the other hand, migration towards admin islands was mainly as return migrants. At the same time, migration due to other causes has increased towards Maale, with increase in migration for medical.

Foreigners accounted to 26% of the resident population in Maldives. Close to 40% of the foreigners lived in Maale. More than half of the foreign population consist of Bangladeshi nationality. Foreign workforce in the country was within the working age group and in certain age bands, foreigners outnumbered Maldivians. This was observed within the age band of 25-29 & 35-39 years. Majority of the foreigners tend to reside in the country for 3-4 years and showed sign of returning back after 4 years.

Overall, population mobility forms the crust of any development plan and we hope census provide much needed information to triangulate the linkages between population movement and spatial development.

8

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