



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Intramuros, Manila



WAPES Asia-Pacific Regional Conference 2025

The Future of Work: Inclusive Public Employment Services Adapting to Demographic Realities in the Asia- Pacific

06-07 November 2025
Manila, Philippines

CONCEPT NOTE & PROGRAM

(12 August, version)

Please note that the event will be in English.
This event could be partially recorded.

The Future of Work: Inclusive Public Employment Services Adapting to Demographic Realities in the Asia-Pacific”

The Asia Pacific region stands at the forefront of fast ageing in global demographic trends, with some countries experiencing a rapid shift from young to aged societies. Simultaneously, the advancement of technology, migration, and globalization are dramatically reshaping workforces. On the other hand, in some countries with a young population, youth unemployment is a significant challenge. The Asia-Pacific region is home to more than half of the world’s youth, and over 200 million young people are not in school or face difficulties transitioning from school to work. In these complex situations, Public Employment Services (PES) in respective countries have been taking steps to respond to these enormous challenges, addressing skill matching, boosting productivity, and career development etc., among other initiatives. Furthermore, these demographic challenges require a transformation of the PES. The conference aims to delve into these complexities coming from demographic difficulties, offering insights and sharing good practices to tackle various challenges via **the four themed Panel Discussions** outlined below:

1. Pivotal Role of Public Employment Services to boost older workers’ employability in an Aging Society

In the Asia Pacific region, not only existing aging countries but also emerging aging countries, public employment services (PES) have increasingly focused on supporting older workers in the context of an accelerating aging population and a shrinking working-age population. The need to leverage their experiences and skills has increased in all sectors, therefore, PES is strongly expected to lead significant initiatives to improve employment management systems, offer training and re-skilling opportunities, provide grants for continuous employment, and address transitions from work to retirement. This discussion will share each country’s strategies and ongoing measures to foster employment opportunities for older workers and enable them to make active contributions to the economy as long as possible in an aging society.

2. Technology in PES to support youth in a smooth transition from school to work

In the Asia-Pacific region, where more than half of the world’s youth reside, the unemployment rate among those aged 15-24 is estimated to have reached 15% in 2022, slightly above the global average, according to ILOSTAT. In this situation, PES plays a key role in enabling them to return to the labour market with better employment conditions or in facilitating the smooth transition of students from school to productive employment opportunities. Additionally, as an efficient and effective approach, leveraging technology is expected to have a significant impact on addressing these challenges, particularly since young people are more familiar with digital tools for learning, obtaining information, and finding employment opportunities. This discussion will focus on each country’s initiatives to promote the use of technology in career guidance for young people.

3. The influences on overseas workers’ policies to secure the labour force in a shrinking working-age population and skill shortages due to demographic changes

Many countries in the Asia-Pacific region have been facing rapid population ageing. Lowering birth rates and longer life expectancy create new economic and social

pressures associated with a shrinking working-age population and skill shortages. The need for the labour force has been increasing across all sectors, which causes heightened competition among countries to secure workers. To tackle these challenges, more countries, both sending and accepting, are reviewing their policies on overseas workers more or less. This discussion will highlight each country's current approach to managing overseas workers and the role of PES in reflecting their respective policies.

4. The effective utilization of the digital platform at PESO to address the demographic challenges

Providing effective and efficient service delivery to both job seekers and employers through digital platforms in operations at the Public Employment Service Office (PESO) is a key topic globally, particularly in light of various demographic challenges. Regardless of the development level of countries, it is explicit that the common interest among policymakers and practitioners who are involved in PES in the Asia-Pacific Region is 'Digital transformation in PES and its impacts on daily activities at PESO, such as job matching, career development support for job seekers, and handling a range of application documents from employers. In this discussion, participants are expected to actively share each country's digitalization progress in PES and the practical use of digital tools, including AI at PESO, along with good practices and challenges for the following discussion.

Through these panel discussions, the conference aims to catalyse collaborative efforts among policymakers, employers, and specialists to foster inclusive improvement, putting PES at the heart of the network.

II. OBJECTIVES

In light of the evolving dynamics of global labor markets and the increasing importance of employment and development agendas, this WAPES-Asia-Pacific Regional Conference 2025 (WAPES-APRC) seeks to provide a strategic platform for dialogue, collaboration, and action among public employment services and key stakeholders. The following objectives guide the overall direction and outcomes of the conference:

1. Encourage delegates to contribute by sharing good practices and experiences in order to raise the bottom of public employment service quality in the entire Asia-Pacific Region;
2. Give ideas and suggestions to enable public employment services to be more effective and valuable for users and overcome challenges caused by demographic changes, through presentations of practical experiences; and
3. Foster innovative cooperation and mutual learning within the WAPES network among existing WAPES members and potential members.

III. TARGET PARTICIPANTS

- **WAPES member countries in the Asia-Pacific region**
- Invited non-members from ASEAN (PES contacts)
- Experts from Ministries concerned with employment facilitation and PES agencies
- Decision makers in labour market institutions
- Representatives of international organisations dealing with labour and employment
- Academe
- Stakeholders from industries, local authorities, and NPOs

IV. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- **Working Language:** English
- **Day1 (AM):** WAPES Asia Pacific Regional Meeting (WAPES members only)
Day1 (PM)-2 (AM)
 - ◇ **Panel Discussions:**
 - Panel 1:** Pivotal Role of Public Employment Services to boost older workers' employability in an Aging Society
 - Panel 2:** Technology in PES to support youth in a smooth transition from school to work
 - Panel 3:** The influences on overseas workers' policies to secure the labour force in a shrinking working-age population and skill shortages due to demographic changes
 - Panel 4:** The effective utilization of the digital platform at PESO to address the demographic challenges
 - ◇ **Special Featured Topics:**
 Japan-WAPES Joint Project on PESO five-point agenda
- **Program (TBD)**

Time	Subject
Day 0: 05 November 2025 (Wednesday)	
	Arrival of Delegates
Day 1: 06 November 2025 (Thursday)	
10:00 a.m - 11:30 a.m	WAPES Asia Pacific Regional Meeting (members only)
11:30 a.m - 12:30 p.m	Lunch (APRM members only)
12:30 p.m - 1:00 p.m	Registration
1:00 p.m - 1:30 p.m	<u>Opening Ceremony</u> Preliminaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prayer/Interfaith (Doxology) ● National Anthem ● Bagong Pilipinas Hymn ● Acknowledgement of Attendees <u>Welcome Remarks (WAPES)</u> <u>Message of Support</u> Ms. Kaori Nakamura-Osaka <i>Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific</i> International Labour Organization; or Director Khalid Hassan International Labour Organization Ms. Luningning Y. Vergara PESOMAP National President
1:30 p.m - 1:50 p.m	<u>Keynote Address</u> Secretary Bienvenido E. Laguesma Department of Labor and Employment; or His Excellency Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr.
1:50 p.m - 2:10 p.m	Photo Session, Coffee and Tea Break
2:10 p.m - 2:20 p.m	<u>Program Overview</u> Undersecretary Carmela I. Torres Department of Labor and Employment
2:20 p.m - 3:50 p.m	<u>Panel Discussion I: Pivotal Role of Public Employment Services to boost older workers' employability in an Aging Society</u> Moderator: Speakers: 3 persons Open Forum

Time	Subject
3:50 p.m - 4:00 p.m	Coffee Break
4:00 p.m - 4:30 p.m	<p><u>Special Featured Topic: WAPES-Japan Joint Project 2025-2025</u> Moderator: Ms. Minako Takasaki, Project Coordinator, WAPES Speakers: Ms. Sheila Merl Q. Lantaca, Senior Labor and Employment Officer Bureau of Local Employment Ms. Sheryl U. Joaquin, Supervising Labor and Employment Officer DOLE Regional Office IX Mr. Erel E. Lim, Labor and Employment Officer III DOLE Regional Office VI 1Japan Representative</p> <p>Open Forum</p>
4:30 p.m - 5:45 p.m	<p>Panel Discussion II: Technology in PES to support youth in a smooth transition from school to work Moderator: Speakers: 3 persons</p> <p>Open Forum</p>
5:45 p.m - 6:00 p.m	Synthesis (DOLE Official)
6:00 p.m - 7:00 p.m	Break /Preparation for the Welcome Dinner
7:00 p.m - 9:00 p.m	Welcome Dinner/Networking and End of Day 1
Day 2: 07 November 2025 (Friday)	
8:00 a.m - 8:30 a.m	Registration
8:30 a.m - 9:00 a.m	Recap of Day 1
9:00 a.m - 10:30 a.m	<p>Panel Discussion III: The influences on overseas workers' policies to secure the labour force in a shrinking working-age population and skill shortages due to demographic changes Moderator: Speakers: 3 persons (Sending Countries) 2 persons Philippine Representatives, Department of Migrant Workers</p> <p>Open Forum</p>
10:30 a.m - 10:45 a.m	Coffee and Tea Break
10:45 a.m - 12:15 p.m	<p>Panel Discussion IV: The effective utilization of the digital platform at PESO to address the demographic challenges Moderator: Speakers: 3 persons</p> <p>Open Forum</p>
12:15 p.m - 12:30 p.m	Closing Remarks (WAPES)
12:30 p.m - 1:30 p.m	Lunch
1:30 p.m - 2:00 p.m	Assembly for Study Tour Registration
2:00 p.m - 6:00 p.m	Study Tour
6:00 p.m - 7:00 p.m	Dinner
08 November 2025 (Saturday)	
	Departure of Participants