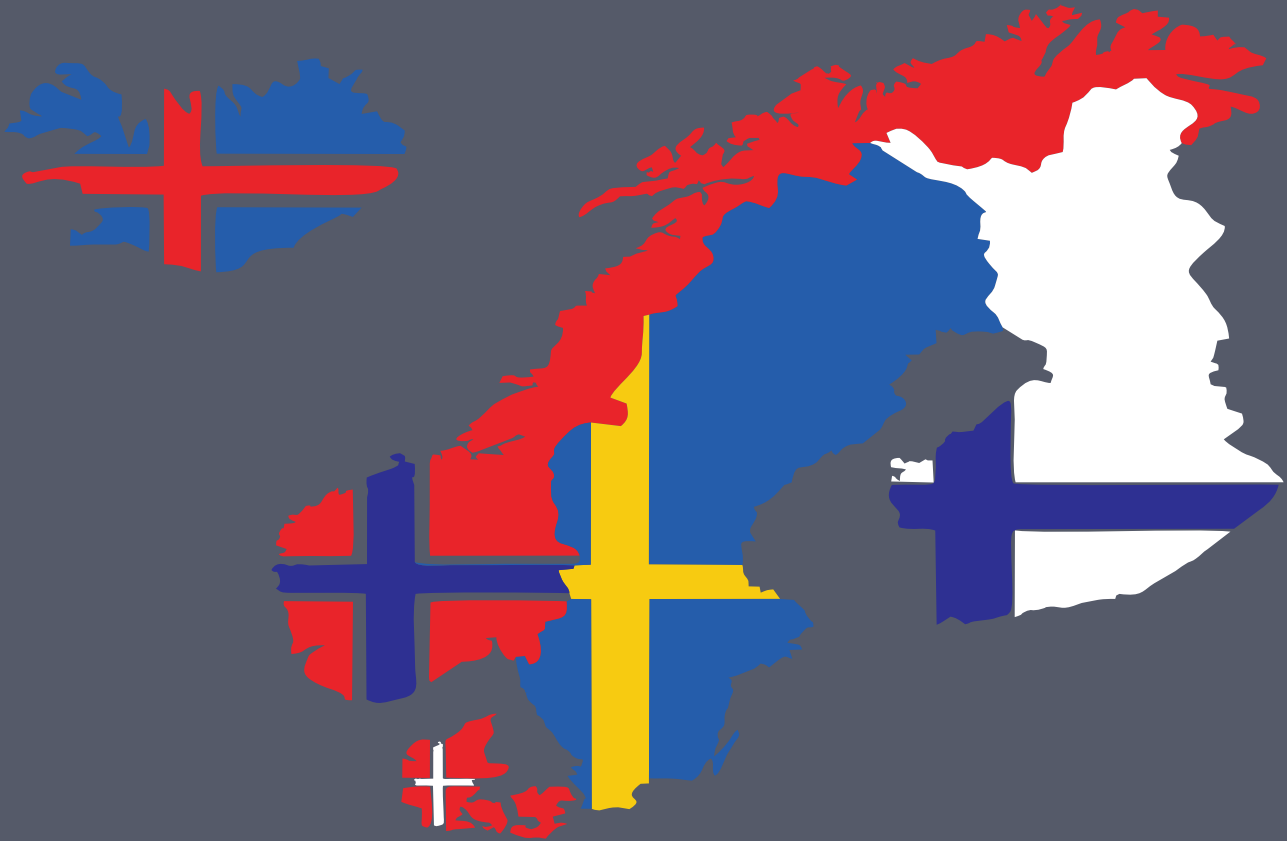




# STRATEGY PAPER



HUMAN RESOURCE REQUIREMENT IN THE NORDIC REGION  
INCLUDING SCANDINAVIA: OPPORTUNITIES FOR PAKISTAN

**Author: Research Associate Hadiqa Mir**

NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD  
INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, RESEARCH & ANALYSIS (ISSRA)



**NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY  
ISLAMABAD**

**STRATEGY PAPER**

---

**HUMAN RESOURCE REQUIREMENT IN THE NORDIC REGION  
INCLUDING SCANDINAVIA: OPPORTUNITIES FOR PAKISTAN**

**Author: Research Associate Hadiqa Mir**

**Assisted by:**

**Intern Fiza Khan & Intern Shehar Bano**



**Institute for Strategic Studies Research and Analysis**

## Contents

THE CONTEXT .....	3
Methodology .....	5
Limitations .....	6
THE STRATEGY .....	9
Vision and Mission .....	9
Plan of Action .....	9
1. Data Compilation / Analysis .....	9
2. Engagement with Nordic countries .....	10
3. Exploration of the Opportunities & Spreading Awareness among the People .....	11
4. Restructuring of HRD infrastructure and Capacity Building of the existing HR .....	11
5. Evaluation .....	13
THE RATIONALE .....	16
CONCLUSION .....	20

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Human resource are an excellent asset for any nation as they contribute to the overall productivity of the nation's economy. It enables the country to capitalise on available resources and opportunities. Therefore, the presence of trained and well-equipped human resource is a blessing for any nation. The provision of employment opportunities increases the levels of national production. It raises remittance, social well-being, income and consumption to ensure the self-esteem of individuals and the nation. If human resource is not effectively managed, it becomes a liability for the country.

In Pakistan, it is challenging to create new jobs in current economic constraints; thus, outsourcing human resource along with internal consumption is a key to resolving the challenges. Many Pakistanis are already supporting the country's economy through foreign remittances. Pakistan depends mainly on four countries for foreign remittances, i.e. Saudi Arabia, UAE, UK and USA. Given the current geopolitical and geostrategic environment, Pakistan must diversify its labour markets. The Nordic Region could be a reliable job market owing to its robust economies and high standard of living. All five Nordic states are among the 20 countries with the highest GDP per capita, showing how economically prosperous the region is.

The key challenges in this regard are weak human resource development and management infrastructure and lack of implementation of existing policies and accessibility. According to UNDP Global Knowledge Index 2022, the overall Technical Education & Vocational Training (TVET) is ranked 101/132 and TVET Quality & qualifications 92/132. Out of 650 conventional qualifications in the country, only 330 were converted into competency-based training, and Pakistan has no uniform and credible HR testing system. Furthermore, there is no structured system of Institute-Industry Linkage in the country.

Secondly, there are existing HR policies in the country that explain the role of various stakeholders. However, the implementation is still a challenge as the system has no described Key performance indicators (KPIs) that can make stakeholders' performance accountable. Finally, as far as accessibility to the Nordic region is concerned, there is no community welfare attaché in the Nordic Region to convey prerequisites of skilled workforce requirements. Visa regimes of the countries in the Nordic Region are tough for non-EU countries like Pakistan. Moreover, the official languages of Nordic countries include Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, Icelandic and Swedish, whereas some communities also speak Faroese, Greenlandic and Sámi. These languages are not very commonly taught in Pakistan; therefore, our human resource face a language barrier.

Therefore, the paper investigates the correlation between the Nordic 'Human Resource Need Assessment' and the 'Pakistani Human Resource Management System'. It also defines the roles and identifies the gaps in the ministries, standing committees, and national institutions.

To capitalise on the opportunities available in the Nordic Region, a five-step strategy has been proposed, the contours of which are as follows: -

**1. Data Compilation / Analysis**

There is a need to assess the available HR potential and market assessment by the available HR to see if our existing HR is aligned with the job market demands and where the missing link is.

**2. Engagement with Nordic countries**

To capitalise on available opportunities, there is a need to engage the Nordic countries through a multi-prong approach involving CWAs, national stakeholders ministries, etc.

**3. Exploration of the Opportunities & Spreading Awareness among the People**

To explore the opportunities in Nordic countries, the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), should develop a customised portal for relevant job alerts in various regions. The portal may also guide visa processing and other related formalities.

**4. Restructuring of HRD infrastructure and Capacity Building of the existing HR**

NAVTTTC should establish a combined research wing to analyse current market trends and develop skill standards and curricula per the international standards and requirements of the job market.

**5. Evaluation**

There should be a supply assessment every five years by HEC and NAVTTTC to enrol the students in innovative fields and train the in-demand labour accordingly. Objectives and output of the policy should be achievable and quantifiable and KPIs should be clearly described to evaluate the performance of various stakeholders.

Capitalising opportunities in the Nordic region in an amicable manner can increase Pakistan's foreign remittances significantly and help reduce unemployment. To capitalise on the opportunities in the Nordic Region, there is a need to create awareness regarding employment chances and synergise various stakeholders' efforts. Furthermore, there is a need to restructure the internal HR management institutions. Therefore, the document is an effort to propose a strategy to utilise the opportunities available by setting objectives and values using various tactics.

## HUMAN RESOURCE REQUIREMENT IN THE NORDIC REGION INCLUDING SCANDINAVIA: OPPORTUNITIES FOR PAKISTAN

---

### THE CONTEXT

*“Human resource are like natural resources; they are often buried deep. You must look for them; they are not just lying on the surface. You must create the circumstances where they show themselves”.*

**Ken Robinson**

Human resource are an excellent asset for any nation as they contribute to the overall productivity of the nation's economy. It enables the nation to capitalise on available resources and opportunities. Therefore, the presence of trained and well-equipped human resource is a blessing for any nation. The effective utilisation of human resource by providing them with dynamic employment opportunities leads to sustainable development and growth in every field and contributes to sustainable economic and human development. The provision of employment opportunities increases the levels of national production. It raises remittance, social well-being, income and consumption to ensure the self-esteem of individuals and the nation. In this regard, Pakistan is fortunate to possess highly qualified, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled human resource. If this potential is utilised correctly, it can bring enormous economic and social benefits to the nation.<sup>1</sup>

Significant threats to Pakistan's economic security are the declining standard of living, rising inflation, and the youth unemployment rate. Successive governments have always aimed to promote higher education and increase literacy. In contrast, the strategy to train human resource and technical training has always been a missing link. IMF World's Economic Outlook Report 2019" foresees a sharp increase in the unemployment rate in Pakistan that indicates the discrepancy between the demand and supply and mismanagement of HR.<sup>2</sup>

If human resource is not effectively managed, it becomes a liability for the country. The governments have two alternatives: finding foreign markets to pay for skilled human resource or creating more domestic jobs. Both options should be applied simultaneously according to the situation of the respective country to chalk out a comprehensive plan of action to channel and utilise human resource. **In Pakistan, it is challenging to create new jobs in current economic constraints; thus, outsourcing human resource along with internal consumption is a key to resolving the**

---

<sup>1</sup> Lire Ersado, Koen Geven, Amer Hasan, *Pakistan's Human Capital Opportunity*, World Bank Blogs; May 08, 2023 <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/endpovertyinsouthasia/pakistans-human-capital-opportunity>

<sup>2</sup> Rep. *World Economic Outlook Report 2019*. New York: International Monetary Fund, 2019.

challenges. Therefore, there is a need to look into new opportunities abroad and develop a practical plan for utilising human resource to boost the economy.

Many Pakistanis are already supporting the country's economy through foreign remittances. However, the uncertain global geopolitical and geostrategic environment and decreasing opportunities in the existing job market hint towards diversification of job avenues. The list below provides an overview of foreign remittances in Pakistan.

Country	July	June <sup>a</sup>	July	July				
	2023	2023	2022	Amount			YoY growth (percent)	
				FY24	FY23	FY22	FY24	FY23
<b>Cash</b>	<b>2,026.8</b>	<b>2,187.1</b>	<b>2,510.9</b>	<b>2,026.8</b>	<b>2,510.9</b>	<b>2,736.1</b>	<b>(19.3)</b>	<b>(8.2)</b>
1. USA	238.1	273.0	248.3	238.1	248.3	277.2	(4.1)	(10.4)
2. U.K.	305.7	343.4	408.6	305.7	408.6	397.9	(25.2)	2.7
3. Saudi Arabia	486.7	516.1	577.1	486.7	577.1	659.9	(15.7)	(12.5)
4. UAE	315.1	324.8	455.9	315.1	455.9	547.7	(30.9)	(16.8)
Dubai	244.1	246.9	349.0	244.1	349.0	428.3	(30.1)	(18.5)
Abu Dhabi	67.2	74.0	101.8	67.2	101.8	111.6	(34.0)	(8.8)
Sharjah	2.6	2.4	3.6	2.6	3.6	6.6	(28.6)	(45.6)
Other	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.2	1.6	1.3	(24.8)	28.1
5. Other GCC Countries	228.3	272.0	280.6	228.3	280.6	300.3	(18.6)	(6.6)
Bahrain	32.0	37.4	41.0	32.0	41.0	41.7	(21.9)	(1.7)
Kuwait	56.7	70.5	72.1	56.7	72.1	78.9	(21.4)	(8.6)
Qatar	67.2	76.9	76.7	67.2	76.7	80.8	(12.4)	(5.1)
Oman	72.5	87.2	90.8	72.5	90.8	99.0	(20.2)	(8.3)
6. EU Countries	283.6	279.2	294.2	283.6	294.2	301.1	(3.6)	(2.3)
Germany	44.4	45.3	43.6	44.4	43.6	44.1	1.8	(1.2)
France	38.3	39.5	39.1	38.3	39.1	43.1	(2.1)	(9.2)
Netherland	4.6	4.9	5.0	4.6	5.0	5.5	(8.5)	(9.0)
Spain	49.6	46.7	49.7	49.6	49.7	45.6	(0.3)	9.0
Italy	84.0	79.9	80.4	84.0	80.4	75.1	4.6	7.0
Greece	30.8	29.8	33.3	30.8	33.3	31.7	(7.4)	4.9
Sweden	6.4	6.9	7.1	6.4	7.1	6.8	(10.4)	4.7
Denmark	6.2	7.0	6.3	6.2	6.3	7.2	(1.0)	(13.5)
Ireland	9.3	9.5	11.7	9.3	11.7	14.3	(20.6)	(17.8)
Belgium	9.9	9.7	18.0	9.9	18.0	27.6	(44.8)	(34.8)
7. Malaysia*	7.2	6.8	11.4	7.2	11.4	11.9	(36.4)	(4.1)
8. Norway	10.5	9.9	13.3	10.5	13.3	10.8	(20.8)	23.2
9. Switzerland	3.5	4.6	2.9	3.5	2.9	4.4	22.0	(34.1)
10. Australia	43.7	46.4	58.7	43.7	58.7	53.7	(25.6)	9.2
11. Canada	36.9	42.8	54.0	36.9	54.0	59.4	(31.6)	(9.1)
12. Japan	3.8	4.7	7.5	3.8	7.5	7.3	(49.0)	2.8
13. South Africa*	13.5	11.7	27.9	13.5	27.9	29.3	(51.7)	(4.9)
14. South Korea*	9.2	9.2	8.4	9.2	8.4	7.9	9.5	6.1
15. Other Countries #	41.0	42.5	62.2	41.0	62.2	67.2	(34.2)	(7.3)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,026.8</b>	<b>2,187.1</b>	<b>2,510.9</b>	<b>2,026.8</b>	<b>2,510.9</b>	<b>2,736.1</b>	<b>(19.3)</b>	<b>(8.2)</b>

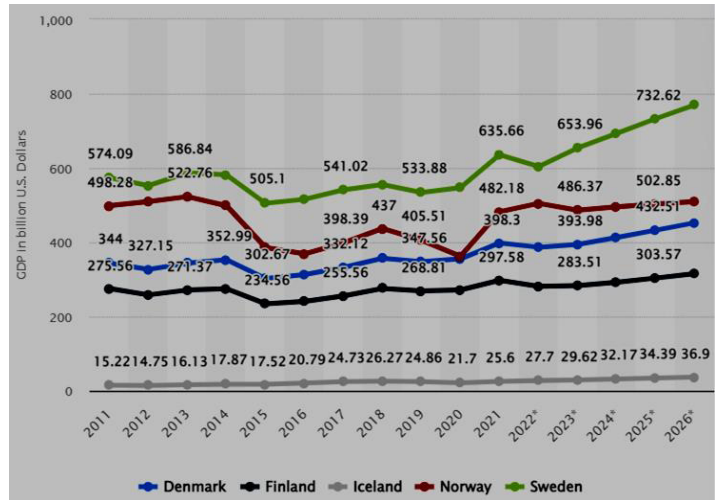
(Million US Dollars)

The list shows that Pakistan depends mainly on four countries for foreign remittances: Saudi Arabia, UAE, UK, and USA. At the same time, the share of Nordic and other countries is tiny.

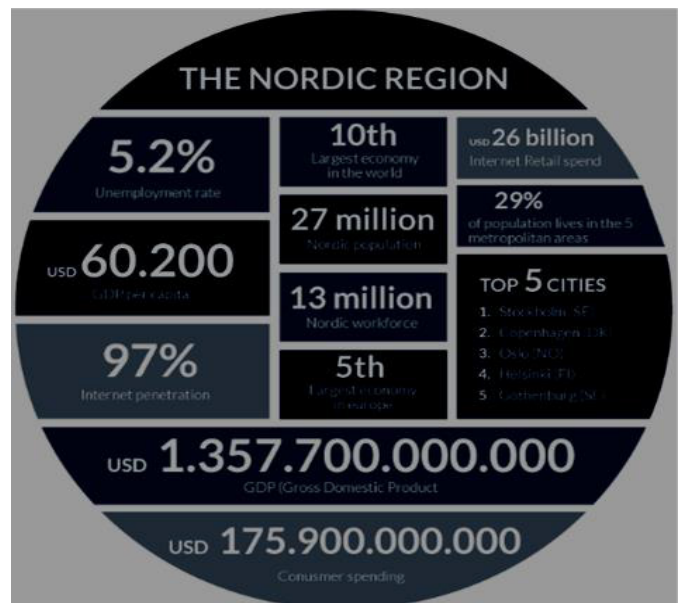
<sup>3</sup> State Bank Of Pakistan Core Statistics Department Country-Wise Workers' Remittances, <https://www.sbp.org.pk/ecodata/homeremit.pdf> accessed on 28 August 2023.



<sup>4</sup>The Nordic Region, including the Nordic region, could be a reliable job market owing to its robust economies and high standard of living. All five Nordic states are among the 20 countries with the highest GDP per capita, showing how economically prosperous the region is. The researchers predict a further increase in the GDP of the Nordic countries in the coming years.<sup>5</sup>



In this regard, the strategy paper focuses on Pakistan's underexploited human resource market in the Nordic region while finding the opportunities and HR requirements for a better future for individuals from Pakistan. The paper, therefore, investigates the correlation between the Nordic 'Human Resource Need Assessment' and the 'Pakistani Human Resource Management System'. It also defines the roles and identifies the gaps in the ministries, standing committees and national institutions.



## Methodology

Qualitative and quantitative data have been used to make deductions and draw conclusions. Primary and secondary sources have been consulted to ensure data reliability, and firsthand interviews were conducted with the practitioners and academicians. Semi-structured interviews and Focus Group Discussions were also conducted to discuss various aspects of HR needs in the Nordic Region.

<sup>4</sup> Official Data, Nordic Embassy, Accessed on May 2023.

<https://nordic-embassy.com/nordic-market/>

<sup>5</sup> Gross domestic product (GDP) at current prices in the Nordic countries from 2011 to 2027, by country, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1274423/gdp-current-prices-nordic-countries/>

Moreover, visits to the Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training (MOFEPT) and Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MOPHRD), the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) were also conducted to interview the Parliamentary Secretary MOFEPT, Additional Secretary MOPHRD and Deputy Director HEC. Furthermore, the digital interview was conducted at the NAVTTTC (annexe A).<sup>6</sup> An online survey was also conducted to gauge the awareness among the masses regarding the opportunities in the Nordic region. The survey's key findings are attached in Annex B. Government reports and letters were reviewed to add to the project's primary data bank. For secondary sources, interviews, newspaper and journal articles and local and foreign online sources were consulted.

### **Limitations**

The study is conducted as a research project. During the study, there were research limitations. First and foremost, we could not get the required data from the Nordic Embassies regarding the exact requirements of HR despite utmost efforts due to systematic constraints and the unavailability of the required data.<sup>7</sup> However, as a researcher, I have tried to fill the gaps through secondary data and expert interviews. Secondly, national data and statistics regarding certain aspects were unavailable or needed to be updated.

---

<sup>6</sup> Attached as Annex A

<sup>7</sup> Questionnaire is attached as Annex B

## Key Findings

Key Findings of the study are as follows:-

1. Pakistan depends mainly on four countries for foreign remittances: Saudi Arabia, UAE, UK, and USA. Given the current geopolitical environment, Pakistan must diversify its labour markets.<sup>8</sup>
2. All five Nordic states are among the top 20 countries with the highest GDP per capita.<sup>9</sup> The economic experts predict that the Nordic nations' GDP will continue to rise in the upcoming years. However, the Nordic region is an underexplored HR market for Pakistan since its proportion of remittances is small in Pakistan's overall foreign remittances.<sup>10</sup>
3. According to data from the Bureau of Emigrants and Overseas Employment (BE&OE), 12 million skilled and unskilled people travelled to different nations worldwide during the previous four years; however, only 578 registered for the Nordic region. As a result, 0.0048% of immigrants choose to settle in the Nordic region.<sup>11</sup>
4. The Nordic Region is an under-tapped human resource market. There are many opportunities in the region; however, the people in Pakistan need to be made aware of them.
5. The job market of the Nordic region is fiercely competitive as it offers good remittances and exposure. Therefore, human resource from all over the world try to explore the market for benefits; hence, the best human resource are available to these countries on demand. We must train human resource to meet international standards and capitalise on the potential presented.
6. According to the UNDP Global Knowledge Index 2022, Technical Education and Vocational Training (TVET) is ranked **101/132** and TVET Quality & qualifications **92/132**.<sup>12</sup>
7. There is a need to have more international accreditation & certification. Unfortunately, out of 650 conventional qualifications in the country, only 330 were converted into competency-based training (CBT), and Pakistan has no uniform and credible testing system.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> State Bank Of Pakistan Core Statistics Department Country-Wise Workers' Remittances, <https://www.sbp.org.pk/ecodata/homeremit.pdf> accessed on 28 August 2023.

<sup>9</sup> Gross domestic product (GDP) at current prices in the Nordic countries from 2011 to 2027, by country, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1274423/gdp-current-prices-nordic-countries/>

<sup>10</sup> State Bank Of Pakistan Core Statistics Department Country-Wise Workers' Remittances, <https://www.sbp.org.pk/ecodata/homeremit.pdf> accessed on 28 August 2023.

<sup>11</sup> Interview – Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development

<sup>12</sup> Official Statistics of National Vocational & Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC)

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

8. There are existing HR policies in the country that explain the role of various stakeholders. However, the implementation is still a challenge. Furthermore, the system has no described Key performance indicators (KPIs) that can make stakeholders' performance accountable.
9. There is a need for a coordination framework between MOPHRD and HEC, and NAVTTC results in lopsided workforce production.
10. Enrollment in universities and vocational centres is processed randomly without any prior need and supply assessment or according to earlier set patterns in Pakistan, producing excess HR in specific fields.
11. The Pakistani diaspora is very small in the region, and people do not have access to job opportunities as they do in the Middle East, the USA, and other European countries.
12. Unfortunately, the lack of research culture in the HR sector is the main reason we are deprived of diversifying our HR markets and exploring available opportunities.
13. Although many private sector companies are working on exporting HR abroad, there needs to be more coordination between the public and private sectors to work on the training and supply of HRD to the Nordic region.
14. There is no structured system of Institute-Industry Linkage in the country.
15. There is no community welfare attaché (CWAs) in the Nordic Region to convey prerequisites of skilled workforce requirement in the Nordic region.<sup>14</sup>
16. Visa regimes of the countries in the Nordic Region are tough for non-EU countries like Pakistan.
17. The official languages of Nordic countries include Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, Icelandic and Swedish, whereas some communities also speak Faroese, Greenlandic and Sámi. These languages are not very commonly taught in Pakistan; therefore, our human resource face a language barrier.

---

<sup>14</sup> Interview – Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development

## **THE STRATEGY**

The proposed strategy in the context of HR requirements in the Nordic region vis-à-vis way forward for Pakistan to capitalise the opportunities is as follows:-

### **Vision and Mission**

Efficient capitalisation of the opportunities in the Nordic Region can increase Pakistan's foreign remittances that can stabilise the country's crippling economy and diversify the labour market of Pakistan.

### **Plan of Action**

To capitalise on the opportunities available in the Nordic Region, the five-step strategy should be adopted, the contours of which are as follows: -

#### **1. Data Compilation / Analysis**

There is no data on HR requirements in the Nordic Region vis-à-vis Pakistan's compatibility with it. However, the official websites of Sweden, Denmark and Norway indicate the areas where there is labour shortage. Furthermore, during the research, it was noticed that there is no centralised assessment mechanism available to gauge the local HR in Pakistan. Therefore, step one needs to assess the available HR potential and market assessment by the available HR to see if our existing HR is aligned with the job market demands and where the missing link is.

#### **Implementation Measures**

- a) MOPHRD needs to urgently assess how much excess human resource are currently available and whether they are efficient enough to meet the workforce demand abroad, particularly in the Nordic region.
- b) MOPHRD should liaise with NAVTTC and HEC for future recruitments/admissions to meet the country's HR requirements and per the job market abroad.
- c) Public-private cooperation should be encouraged to train professionals according to the demand in the Nordic Region. The HR export system should be partially outsourced to the private sector. In this regard, private companies and agents can be certified to find opportunities in the Nordic and facilitate training according to necessity. To enable the private sector, the government can provide them with the existing infrastructure to train the workforce in collaboration with NAVTTC.

- d) To ease the procedure and encourage the private sector, a one-window operation should be introduced to solve the problems. MOPHRD can provide that one-window solution by establishing a unique desk for the r Nordic region.

## 2. Engagement with Nordic countries

There is minimum interaction between the Nordic countries and Pakistan, so people need to be made aware of the opportunities available in the region. Furthermore, the Pakistani diaspora in these countries is very small; hence, there is no significant visibility of the Pakistani diaspora there. The Nordic countries must use a multi-prong approach to capitalise on available opportunities.

### Implementation Measures

- a. Considering the opportunities available, deploying Community Welfare Attachés (CWA) in the Nordic region is necessary.
- b. MOPHRD should collaborate with MoFA to negotiate visa regimes with Nordic Governments.
- c. Building connections and relationships with companies and organisations in Nordic countries can benefit Pakistani professionals looking to access the Nordic job market. Networking can be done through online platforms like LinkedIn, as well as through professional associations and events.
- d. As the Nordic region has a vast industrial potential, we should also set up Industrial Parks or Technology Parks in collaboration with Nordic countries in Pakistan. In this way, the government of Pakistan can offer cheap HR to Nordic companies and provide twofold benefits. On the one hand, our human resource will be accommodated in the system. Secondly, it will promote the industry in our country. In the long term, we can demand technology transfer from the Nordic countries.
- e. MoFA can also encourage the Pakistani diaspora, which wishes to set up their enterprises or ventures in Pakistan. These parks must have all the infrastructure facilities developed and made available to the investors, cutting down the long process of seeking approval and NOCs from various parts of the government. We must follow the examples of China and India, where ethnic Chinese from Southeast Asia and non-resident Indians have brought investments and technology transfers to these countries. Two-thirds of foreign capital between 1979-97 came from ethnic Chinese, and most of the enterprises were set up by them.

### **3. Exploration of the Opportunities & Spreading Awareness among the People**

To explore the opportunities in Nordic countries, there is a need to synergise the efforts of various channels by adopting standard operating processes (SOPs). To investigate whether the people in our country are aware of opportunities in Nordic countries, we conducted an online survey during the research. The survey's findings proved the stated hypothesis that people needed to be made aware of the opportunities available in the Nordic countries. Details of the study are attached in Annex A.

#### **Implementation Measures**

- a. Initially, to engage the Nordic states, Pakistan can offer them a virtual workforce.
- b. Arranging job fairs in universities in collaboration with Nordic institutions to create awareness of opportunities in the Nordic region every six months.
- c. Introduce counselling at the time of admission and passing out of educational institutions coupled with providing various choices for post-graduate engagements, capacity building, networking, market-based job search and self-employment.
- d. MOPHRD, in collaboration with HEC and NAVTTC, should develop a customised portal for relevant job alerts in various regions. The portal may also guide visa processing and other related formalities.
- e. Building a solid online presence through social media and professional networking platforms like LinkedIn can benefit Pakistani professionals looking to access the Nordic job market. This can help them to showcase their skills and experience to potential employers and to connect with other professionals working in the field.

### **4. Restructuring of HRD infrastructure and Capacity Building of the existing HR**

The existing HR infrastructure of Pakistan is different from international practices. Therefore, internal HR restructuring is the key to achieving set objectives. Other countries' HR-related departments of the governments keep records of the available human resource in demand domestically and potentially exportable to other nations to generate foreign exchange. In contrast, there is no framework in place in Pakistan to systematically train, direct, and export the available human resource around the world. There is less departmental synergy because each department operates independently.

HEC produces graduates using traditional methods without considering demand and supply. As a result, there are some professions where we have more graduates than needed, yet we need to

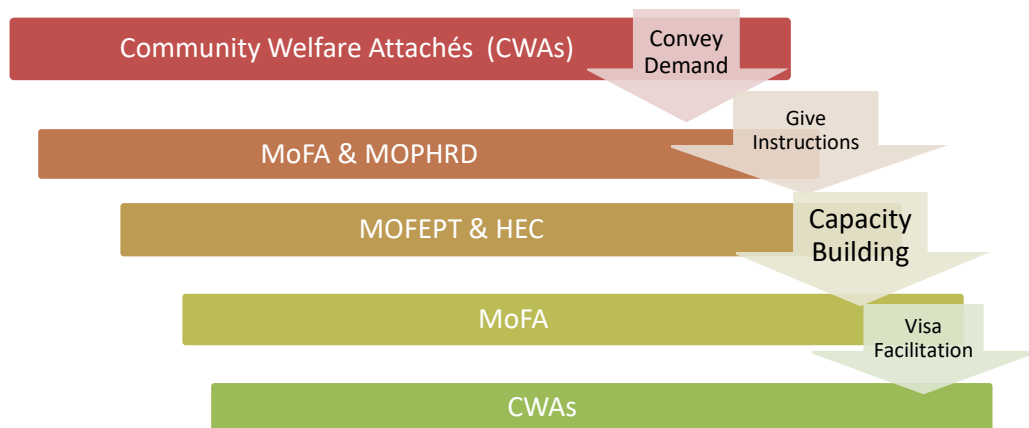
catch up in new fields. Additionally, this practice wastes a significant amount of resources in areas that could be more beneficial.

Similarly, the MoFA and the NAVTTC have their data basis. However, the databases need to be synchronised with each other. In this context, after setting the SOP and knowing the demands of the Nordic region, the HR capacity building should be done accordingly. In this regard, the following are the proposed steps:-

### Implementation Measures

- a. MOPHRD and NAVTTC should establish a combined research wing to analyse current market trends and develop skill standards and curricula per the international standards and requirements of the job market.
- b. MOPHRD should compile detailed HR data at the national level. The data should include the following credentials:-
  - ✓ The HR is exported to other countries.
  - ✓ The excess trained HR available within fields.
  - ✓ The HR requirements in various countries, along with the numbers.
- c. MOPHRD should pass guidelines to MOFEPT to train HR according to the requirements abroad.
- d. The existing official letters describing various stakeholders' duties and cooperation instructions should be put in the proper policy framework.

The proposed process is as follows.





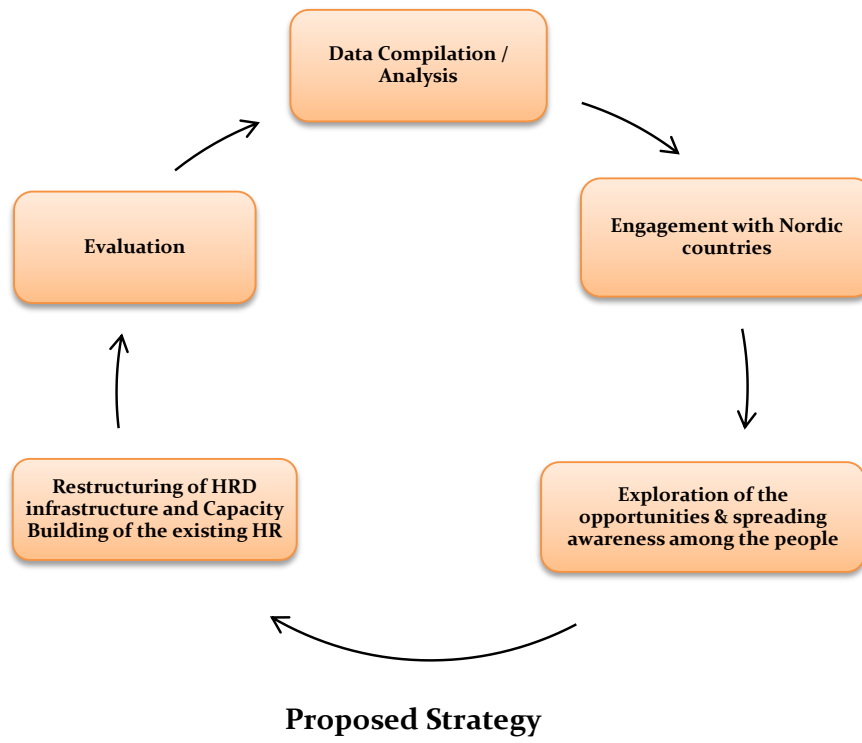
- e. Knowing one of the Nordic languages, such as Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, or Finnish, can benefit Pakistani professionals looking to access the Nordic job market. Fluent in one of these languages can give professionals an edge over other candidates who speak only English; therefore, leading language universities like NUML should be asked to offer properly certified language courses.
- f. Awareness and familiarisation with immigration laws and regulations of the host country and having the necessary documents and qualifications will help Pakistani professionals comply with the rules and increase their chances of employment.
- g. Understanding the culture and values of Nordic countries can be beneficial for Pakistani professionals looking to access the Nordic job market. This can help them better understand the expectations of employers and colleagues and work more effectively in a Nordic environment.

## **5. Evaluation**

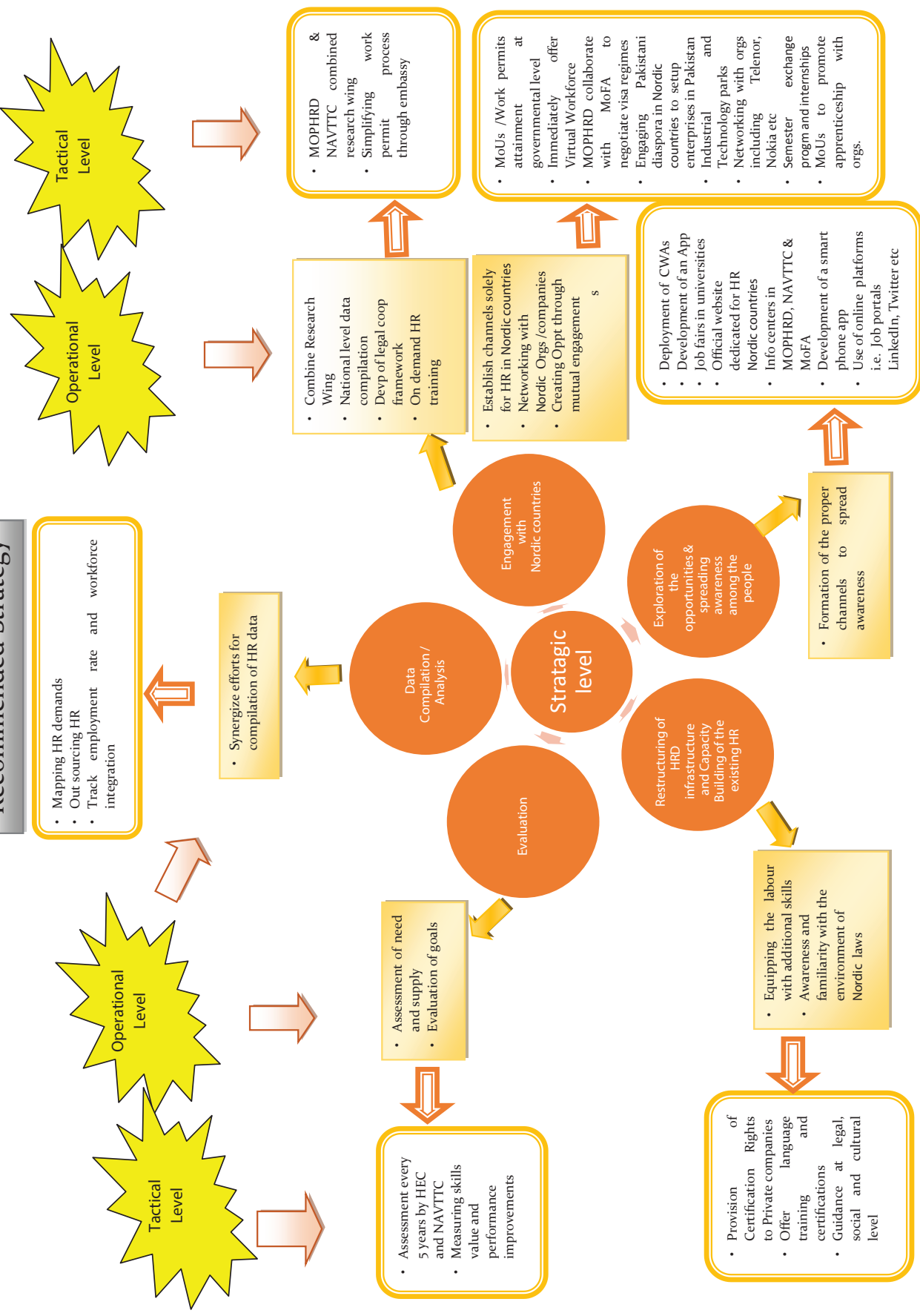
The yearly evaluation of the outcomes will facilitate the achievement of the ends and the assessment of the effectiveness of the methods.

### **Implementation Measures**

- a. There should be a need and supply assessment every five years by HEC and NAVTTC to enrol the students in innovative fields and train the in-demand labour accordingly.
- b. Short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals may be set and evaluated yearly through a detailed report in tangible terms.
- c. Objectives and output of the policy should be achievable and quantifiable.
- d. KPIs should be clearly described to evaluate the performance of various stakeholders.
- e. The stakeholders not meeting the KPIs should be held accountable by the MOPHRD.



# Recommended Strategy



## THE RATIONALE

Nordic countries are known for their strong economies, high standard of living, and high employment rates (Iceland 75%, Sweden 72%, Finland 70%, Norway 69% and Denmark 65%). Regarding opportunities for Pakistan, there may be many relevant areas where the country's skilled workforce could be in demand. However, it's important to note that the job market in Nordic is highly competitive, and the requirements for obtaining a work permit and finding a job are pretty strict. The country profile regarding job opportunities in Nordic countries is attached as annexe B.

Pakistan could have an advantage in IT and technology, with a large pool of talented brains in various fields like engineering and software development, and many companies in Nordic look for skilled professionals in these fields and multiple domains. Pakistan also has a strong textile and manufacturing industry, which could be of interest to companies in the Nordic looking to outsource production or import goods.

Pakistan's HR infrastructure shows the most fragmented HRD policies, as HRD in Pakistan is not adequately addressed by both the public and private sectors. Since its inception, the HRD has been the federal government's sole responsibility and has been unsuccessful in implementing policies. However, **after the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional amendment, HRD is dealt with by both federal and provincial governments.**

As far as key stakeholders are concerned, MOFEPT and MOPHRD are critical stakeholders along with MoFA. **MOFEPT maintains the data of trained, skilled workers, whereas MOPHRD trains HR and maintains the data of outgoing emigrants registered in all categories. NAVTTC, working under the MOFEPT, is tasked with overseeing** professional/vocational training. Four thousand five hundred institutes under NAVTTC are training human resource in Pakistan.

According to Schedule II of the Rules of Business, 1973, the MOPHRD's designated business establishes and coordinates national job promotion and development policies for prospective international employees. Furthermore, creating short- and long-term programmes to enhance human capital and advance employment overseas also comes under the ministry's mandate.

The National Industrial Relations Commission (NIRC), the Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment (BE&OE), and the Directorate of Workers Education (DWE) are the three attached departments that make up Pakistan's current HR Development and Allocation Infrastructure. There are also four autonomous bodies: the Overseas Pakistan Foundation (OPF), The Overseas Employment

Corporation (OEC), the Employees' Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI), and the Workers Welfare Fund (WWF). These autonomous bodies and departments are working under the MOPHRD.<sup>15</sup>

NAVTTTC provides vocational training to Pakistan's youth to ensure maximum employment, further education, and employment/self-employment, leading to socio-economic prosperity and improved HDI among the youth of Pakistan. It provides policy direction, support, and an enabling environment for the public and private sectors to implement skills development training to enhance their social and economic profiles. It must formulate national policies, strategies, regulations, and a national qualification framework and design and implement skill training programmes to bridge the demand-supply gap. Furthermore, it is mandated for accreditation, certification, skills standards and curricula, and a performance evaluation system.

MOPHRD is a crucial partner of NAVTTTC. NAVTTTC frequently acquires local and overseas jobs and skill requirements from the Ministry of Overseas and incorporates them in its skill interventions. Moreover, the Prime Minister's office has constituted the 'Manpower Export Coordination Committee'. It comprises MOPHRD and MOFEPT and is chaired by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Overseas. The Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Division is the committee's secretariat and is primarily responsible for developing country-specific strategies to enhance workforce export.<sup>16</sup> The committee is assigned the following tasks:

*"The committee shall evaluate and consider emerging technical manpower needs in different countries and recommend such training to NAVTTTC. Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Division shall function as the Committee's secretariat."*

The Prime Minister's office also directed the Ministry of Overseas that

*"(2) Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and HRD (M/o OP&HRD) to develop a country-specific strategy to enhance workforce export, services of experts may be procured, if required.*

*(3) Country-specific skill sets and certification requirements are to be shared with NAVTTTC to map available skills and certifications and propose an alternate strategy for skills certification that are not offered in public and private institutions of Pakistan."<sup>17</sup>*

The Manpower Export Coordination Committee, housed in the MOPHRD, held its meeting under SAPM Overseas and issued directions to CWAs.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.ophrd.gov.pk/>

<sup>16</sup> Letter No 141/SPM/2022 date 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022

<sup>17</sup> Letter P M.O.F.NO.1 (4) -FDI/M&I-1/73 dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2021.

*“All CWAs will submit written reports highlighting country-specific skills in demand, training, syllabus and certification requirements and issues faced by Pakistani migrant workers and recommend their solutions / way forward to enhance Pakistani manpower Export.”<sup>18</sup>*

Available HR vis-à-vis job market assessment is a key to effective HR management. In this regard, NAVTTC has an in-house system of National Skills Information System and Labour Management system by which research and market analysis for the local and international job markets is carried out. All the training programmes in high-tech futuristic and conventional technologies are executed in the light of this job demand analysis. Future job demands are catered to by the local industry, concerned technical and vocational education and training (TVET) stakeholders, commercial welfare attaches, and overseas embassies. NAVTTC has devised a specific component of high-tech skill training, considering the global future skill trajectory.<sup>19</sup> However, there is no particular focus on the Nordic region because of a lack of awareness regarding the opportunities available. There is no commercial welfare attaché despite having the potential to become a vital HR market.

The absence of the CWA highlights that no one can convey the Nordic HR market demand to NAVTTC. Therefore, MOPHRD may appoint a commercial welfare attaché there. There are 24 CWAs in 16 different countries for the welfare and protection of Overseas Pakistani workers working under the control of MOPHRD. They have a role in the registration of foreign employers. Whenever overseas employment promoters (OEPs) bring a foreign job demand, they refer the employee to CWAs abroad for employer verification. CWAs also study the labour markets of the respective countries of destinations and share the quarterly report with the Ministry of OP&HRD/BEOE for onward sharing with relevant stakeholders to prepare the workforce accordingly. Moreover, a labour market research cell will be established in the Ministry of OP&HRD in consultation with the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) to study the labour markets of CODs, especially in European countries. However, saying all this, there is no market assessment available regarding Nordic yet; hence, we need to evaluate urgently to analyse where we currently stand.

Furthermore, NAVTTC, by its legal mandate, has the responsibility to develop curricula in line with the country-wise demand, train youth, along with the specific skills standards for labour-importing countries for Pakistani skilled workers, and provide language training, as provided by

---

<sup>18</sup> Letter No 3 (7)/2022 -Emig-iii dated 08-03-2022.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Ms Zaib Jaffar, Parliamentary Secretary for Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training & Questionnaire reply from NAVTTC.

MOPHRD. NAVTTC does not have a presence abroad, so to acquire authentic data on the workforce and skills required abroad, NAVTTC relies on the information provided by the MOPHRD. NAVTTC is mandated to undertake country-specific or trade-specific training programmes and provide language Training, as conveyed by MOPHRD. It is the role of MOPHRD to find opportunities, skills in demand in the international job market and curriculum/accreditation required abroad, country-wise. The Ministry and Ambassadors, with the assistance of CAWs, carry out mapping of all countries that have the potential for overseas job employment for skilled Pakistani workers.

The private sector can be crucial in collaborating with the public sector to carry out country-specific projects. Both the ministries and NAVTTC can facilitate the private sector in the whole process. The involvement of the private sector in the process can bring in more resources and innovativeness in the training process, hence bringing about a cooperative environment. The ministries can only facilitate them by reducing the procedural pressure and time duration.

The Bureau of Emigrants and Overseas Employment (BE&OE) reports that Pakistan exported 832,339 workers in 2022, the second-largest number ever recorded, with 946,571 being the most in 2015. In addition, 12 Million skilled and unskilled individuals travelled to various countries worldwide during the last four years. However, only 578 of them were registered for the Nordic region. Hence, 0.0048% of all immigrants opt to go to the Nordic region as their final destination. Most immigrants comprised engineers, computer programmers, managers, cooks, and general labourers.<sup>20</sup>

There is a small Pakistani diaspora in the Nordic region, with most Pakistanis living and working in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland. According to the statistics, the number of Pakistanis in each country varies.

- **In Denmark**, the Pakistani community is well-established and growing in recent years. According to the Danish government, approximately 21,000 Pakistanis lived in Denmark in 2020.
- **In Sweden**, the Pakistani community has grown in recent years. According to the Swedish government, approximately 70,000 Pakistanis lived in Sweden in 2020.
- **In Norway**, the Pakistani community is relatively small but has grown recently. According to the Norwegian government, there were approximately 10,000 Pakistanis living in Norway in 2020.

---

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Deputy Director Ministry of Human Resource Development and Overseas Pakistanis, 14 February, 2022.

- **In Finland**, the Pakistani community is also relatively small. According to the Finnish government, approximately 4,347 Pakistanis lived in Finland in 2020.
- **Iceland**, the Pakistani community is tiny. According to the EU, approximately 94 Pakistanis lived in Iceland in 2020.

Many Pakistani immigrants in Nordic countries have settled in urban areas, such as Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Oslo, and have established themselves in various fields such as IT, healthcare, education, and other sectors. It's worth noting that the numbers and the demographics of the Pakistani diaspora in Nordics are subject to change and might be affected by the current global situation.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Pakistan has a large pool of highly educated and skilled professionals who can contribute to the workforce in Nordic countries. However, due to deficiencies in our HR infrastructure and language barriers, accessing the Nordic job market has been challenging for Pakistani professionals. A recommended course of action for Pakistani professionals looking to access the Nordic job market should focus on improving HR structure, international networking, improving language skills, adapting to the culture, building a solid online presence, showcasing relevant skills and experience, and complying with immigration laws and regulations. Additionally, seeking professional help from recruitment agencies, career counsellors, or other experts from the private sector in the field can also be beneficial in navigating the job market and increasing the chances of finding a suitable job in Nordic countries. It is important to note that the job market is dynamic, and it is advisable to stay updated with the job market trends and be prepared for a long-term effort to find the right opportunity in the Nordic Countries.



### Interview transcript - Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development

1. **How do the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development define skilled labour?**

**Reply:** A skilled worker has exceptional skills, training, and knowledge that they can apply to their work. BE&OE has defined some categories that fall under the five occupations, i.e., highly qualified, highly skilled, skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled. The detail is enclosed as **Annex-A**.

2. **What is the exact number of youngsters/youth bulges that fall under the skilled labour category, and how do you define a young citizen?**

**Reply:** The Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training may be consulted as they maintain the data of trained skilled workers. However, BE&OE only holds data on outgoing emigrants registered in all categories. The occupation-wise details of emigrants can be seen on BE&OE's official website [www.beoe.gov.pk/reports-and-statistic](http://www.beoe.gov.pk/reports-and-statistic)).

3. **Which are the top 10 fields with the most skilled labour, and what will be the trajectory in the next 10-15 years?**

**Reply:** As per the Bureau's record, the top ten categories of skilled labour who have proceeded abroad are Drivers, Carpenters, Technicians, Electricians, Steel fixers, Mechanics, Painters, Plumbers, Welders and Clerks/Typists. However, considering the upcoming mega projects related to construction sectors, especially in GCC countries, the demand for Plumbers, Electricians, mechanics, painters, welders, and Steel fixers may increase.

4. **What plans do you have to accommodate the additional workforce? Are you planning to send them abroad or create employment opportunities within the country? For abroad. Have you targeted regions/countries?**

**Reply:** The mandate of BE&OE is to control & regulate the emigration process according to the Emigration Ordinance, 1979, and the Rules made thereunder. The emigration trends show that more than 96% of the Pakistani workforce is headed towards GCC countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and the UAE. However, BE&OE targeted some non-traditional countries, i.e. Japan, Germany, Canada, Denmark, Austria, Poland, Romania, UK, France, etc., where diplomatic efforts are underway to get the maximum share of jobs for the Pakistani workforce.

5. **Do you have separate branches, wings or desks dealing with different regions of the world, or do you work without any segregations?**

**Reply:** There are 24 Community Welfare Attaches (CWAs) in 16 different countries for the welfare and protection of Overseas Pakistani workers working under the control of the Ministry of OP&HRD. They have a role in registering foreign employers. Whenever overseas employment

promoters (OEPs) bring a foreign job demand, they refer the employee to CWAs abroad for employer verification.

6. **Do you have any available data on Pakistani diaspora in the Nordic region or countries, i.e. Denmark, Norway, and Sweden? Data like the number of people in these countries, the nature of the job they are doing, and feedback from host countries?**

**Reply:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan, may be approached in this connection. However, BE&OE only maintains data on outgoing emigrants registered with BE&OE before their departure on work visas. BE&OE does not preserve the data on the number of persons living abroad. Moreover, during the last four years, 578 emigrants have registered for overseas employment in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden as engineers, computer programmers, managers, cooks, general workers, etc.

7. **What tangible steps have you taken to promote the Pakistani diaspora in that region? How are you collaborating with the host countries to create new avenues for our skilled labour? What hurdles are you facing, and what are the apprehensions of the host countries?**

**Reply:** BE&OE has taken various steps to promote the Pakistani workforce in potential European countries, including the Nordic region, i.e., Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. A bilateral agreement with Denmark on workforce export is in the pipeline. Moreover, Pakistan Mission Abroad shares in-demand trades/potential sectors where a workforce is required in these countries. However, there are lots of cases of illegal migration/human smuggling in European countries, and the primary goal is to reduce illegal migration and human smuggling by signing bilateral agreements with these countries.

8. **What tangible steps has the state taken to facilitate the workforce in the Nordic region?**

**Reply:** A very meagre share of the Pakistani workforce is in the Nordic region. Only 578 emigrants were registered for these countries during the last four years. However, BE&OE did not receive any complaint from Pakistani emigrants from this region regarding violations of their foreign service agreement by their respective employers. Further, Pakistan's mission abroad can be approached in case of issues faced by Pakistani emigrants in the Nordic region.

9. **What is our workforce's acceptance level there, and do our educational and vocational standards meet their requirements and standards?**

**Reply:** There are no unified criteria for hiring migrant workers in Europe, including countries in the Nordic region. All countries have individual policies for the accreditation of skilled workers and separate requirements for specific jobs. So, it is essential to enter into bilateral agreements with each country separately, study their labour market, and meet their requirements.

10. **Are you doing some research or market analysis to gauge the future requirements of the region, and how are you planning about it? If yes, then what do you think will be the future trajectory?**

**Reply:** CWAs posted abroad are tasked with studying the labour markets of the respective countries' destinations and sharing the quarterly report with the Ministry of OP&HRD/BEOE for onward sharing with relevant stakeholders to prepare the workforce accordingly. Moreover, a labour market research cell will be established in the Ministry of OP&HRD in consultation with the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) to study the labour markets of CODs, especially in European Countries.

**11. How will you compare the pre-COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 human resource requirements in the Nordic region region?**

**Reply:** There was a global downturn and business closures worldwide during Covid-19. Lockdowns and shutdowns have considerably influenced the GDP of these countries as well. The tourism sector of these countries is severely affected, as some countries in this region have imposed restrictions on COVID-19. However, demand in the health sector has increased after the pandemic.

**12. What is your collaboration mechanism with technical institutions like TEVTA?**

**Reply:** The Ministry of OP&HRD shares the in-demand trades based on CWA reports received from CWAs with NAVTTC to prepare the workforce for overseas markets accordingly. Further, to improve coordination between the departments, the Honorable Prime Minister of Pakistan has constituted a Manpower Export Coordination Committee to synergise the efforts to export trained workforce abroad.

**13. What are the three significant challenges of HR employment abroad?**

**Reply:** Lack of access to information, Lack of skills, Fear of exploitation of female intending emigrants, Strict Visa policies of EU countries.

**14. What measures/actions are in progress to streamline the demand and supply of the chain of human resource abroad?**

**Reply:** BE&OE has taken different measures to streamline the export of workforce from Pakistan. Some recent measures are as follows:

- BE&OE has suggested bilateral labour agreements with potential countries where the Pakistani workforce may be sent for overseas employment through safe, orderly and regular channels, i.e. Germany, Romania, Portugal, Denmark, Italy, Belgium & UK. The draft labour mobility agreement with these countries has been sent to the relevant authorities in the countries mentioned above through diplomatic channels by the M/o OP&HRD. Further, BE&OE has been pursuing the matter of signing Bilateral Agreements/MoUs on labour migration/manpower export. As a result, an MoU with Azerbaijan has recently been signed due to efforts by the Ministry of OP&HRD.
- BE&OE has also devised a strategy to export IT professionals to Japan.

- Qatar is one of the preferred destinations for the Pakistani workforce. In the calendar year 2022, more than 57000 workers proceeded to Qatar through BE&OE. Keeping in view the requirement for Pakistani workers in Qatar, BE&OE has suggested a Pakistani Mission/CWA in Qatar to streamline and sensitise Qatar employers to hiring Pakistani professionals in the fields of Engineering, IT and medicine to enhance the share of the Pakistani workforce in the Qatar labour market.
- Recently, Saudi authorities in Pakistan launched the Skill Verification Program (SVP) to skill test Pakistani workers in 05 trades per the Saudi labour market standards. Saudi Arabia launched this program under an agreement signed between the Government of Pakistan and the Government of KSA to open the door of opportunities for the skilled Pakistani workforce to work on mega projects of KSA, i.e., the Neom City project, Jeddah Rehabilitation project, an extension of Holy Mosques etc. initiated under Saudi Vision 2030.
- An MoU on workforce export with Malaysia was signed in 2003. BE&OE/MOPHRD has also taken the Ministry of Human Resource Malaysia on board through the High Commission of Pakistan Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to revise the existing labour agreement signed in 2003 between the Government of Pakistan and the Government of Malaysia so that workforce export from Pakistan to Malaysia may be enhanced. The Pakistani workforce may benefit from decent work.
- There are efforts underway to develop an understanding between Pakistan and the EU to send Pakistani workforce to different member states of the EU at all skill levels. In this connection, a high-level meeting between Secretary OP&HRD and the EU Commissioner for Home Affairs was held on 14th November 2022 in Islamabad, Pakistan, to discuss the impediments to the lawful export of workforce to EU countries. EU is also ready to launch a dialogue on migration and mobility with Pakistan, which will open legal avenues for the Pakistani workforce to work in EU member states.

#### **SKILL CATEGORIZATION**

Sr. No.	Skill Level	Categories
1.	Highly Qualified	Accountant Comp/Analyst Doctor Engineer Pharmacist
2.	Highly Skilled	Manager Nurse Teacher
3.	Skilled	Carpenter Clerk/Typist Designer Driver Electrician Foreman/Supervisor Goldsmith Mechanic Painter Plumber Secr/Stenographer

		Steel Fixer Storekeeper Surveyor Technician Welder
4.	Semi-Skilled	Artist Blacksmith Cable Jointer Cook Dexter Draftsman Fitter Mason Operator Photographer Rigger Salesman Tailor Waiter/Bearer
5.	Unskilled	Agricultural Labourer

### **Digital Interview – National Vocational and Technical Training Commission**

#### **1. What is the mandate of NAVTTC, and on which basis do you train vocational labour?**

The Vision, Mission and Mandate of NAVTTC are:

**Vision:** Skills for Employability, Skills for All

**Mission:** To provide policy direction, support, and an enabling environment for the public and private sectors to implement skills development training to enhance social and economic profiles.

**Mandate:**

- National Policies, Strategies, and Regulation
- National Qualification Framework (NQF)
- Design & Implement Skill Training Programs to bridge the demand-supply gap
- Accreditation, Certification, Skill Standards & Curricula
- Performance Evaluation System
- TVET Development through Public-Private Partnership
- Labor Market Information System

NAVTTC provides vocational training to the youth of Pakistan to ensure maximum employment, further education, and employment/self-employment, leading to socio-economic prosperity and improved HDI of the youth of Pakistan.

#### **2. How much labour have you trained in the last five years, and how many have been sent abroad?**

NAVTTC has trained more than 200,000 youth with technical hands-on skills in the last five years, and more than 15,000 have moved abroad for employment.

#### **3. Is the Nordic region under your focus? What are your plans for the Nordic region?**

NAVTTC acquires the job skill requirements from all countries, including Nordic region countries, through Commercial Welfare Attaches and prepares a skilled workforce based on those requirements. Moreover, all overseas jobs are uploaded on NAVTTC's National Employment Exchange Portal daily, encouraging skilled graduates to apply for overseas jobs.

#### **4. How much of your workforce have you sent to the Nordic region?**

The Ministry of Overseas can provide data on skilled workers sent to the Nordic region. NAVTTC is responsible for producing a skilled workforce for the local and international job market.

**5. What is our workforce's acceptance level there, and do our educational and vocational standards meet their requirements and standards?**

NAVTTTC develops skill standards and curricula based on the international job market standards and requirements. An internationally acceptable system of DACUM and Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBT&A) based on the patterns of Germany is adopted to develop skill standards, curricula, and Teaching Learning Materials that are globally acceptable.

**6. Are you conducting research or market analysis to gauge the region's future requirements, and how are you planning to do so? If yes, what do you think will be the future trajectory?**

NAVTTTC has an in-house system of National Skills Information System (NSIS) and Labor Management system by which research and market analysis for the local and international job markets is carried out. All the training programs in high-tech futuristic and conventional technologies are executed in the light of this job demand analysis. These future job demands cater to local industry, concerned TVET stakeholders; commercial welfare attaches and overseas embassies. NAVTTTC has devised a specific component of high-tech skill training keeping in view the global future skill trajectory, and 75,000 Pakistani skilled workforce has recently been prepared in cutting edge, futuristic technologies like Cyber Security, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Advanced Electronics, Mechatronics, PLC/SCADA etc.

**7. What is your collaboration mechanism with the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development?**

The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development are critical stakeholders of NAVTTTC. NAVTTTC frequently acquires local and overseas jobs and skill requirements from the Ministry of Overseas and incorporates them in its skill interventions. Moreover, the Prime Minister's office has constituted the "Manpower Export Coordination Committee". It comprises the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development and Federal Education & Professional Training, and SAPM Overseas chairs it. The Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development Division functions as the committee's secretariat and is primarily responsible for developing a country-specific strategy to enhance workforce export. (Ref. Letter No 141/SPM/2022 date 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022). The Committee is assigned the following tasks:

"The Committee shall evaluate and consider emerging technical manpower needs in different countries and recommend such training to NAVTTTC. Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development Division shall function as secretariat of the Committee".

The Prime Minister's office also directed the Ministry of Overseas via letter P M.O.F.NO. 1(4)-FDI/M&I-1/73 dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2021, that:

"(2) Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and HRD (M/o OP&HRD) to develop country-specific strategy to enhance manpower export; services of experts may be procured, if required.

(3) Country-specific skill set and certification requirements to be shared with NAVTTC for mapping available skills and certification and to propose an

Alternate strategy for skill certification not offered in Pakistan's public and private institutions”.

The “Manpower Export Coordination Committee housed in the Ministry Of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development held its meeting under SAPM Overseas and issued the directions to Community Welfare Attaches (CWAs) vide letter NO 3(7)/2022-Emig-iii dated 08-03-2022 that:

“All CWAs will submit written reports highlighting country-specific skills in demand, training, syllabus and certification requirements and issues faced by Pakistani migrant workers and recommended their solutions/way forward to enhance Pakistani manpower Export.”.

**8. What measures/actions are in progress to streamline human resource' demand and supply chain abroad? (The Answer has to be in tangible terms).**

NAVTTC is acquiring the skills required for human resource abroad through the Ministry of Overseas and Human Resource Development. For instance, in compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training/NAVTTC “to identify ways and means of practical cooperation with the Saudi side in efforts to upgrade skills/qualifications of the Pakistani workforce”, an agreement between Takamol KSA and NAVTTC has been signed; over 57,989 people have been trained in the 23 skill trades, whose demand has been conveyed by Takamol Saudi Arabia KSA: Takamol-NAVTTC Web Portal has been operationalised; the Qualifications for these trades have been developed; Test Assessment centres are identified; pilot project for Skills Verification Programme (SVP) by NAVTTC is already in progress in partnership with Takamol. In addition, as directed, NAVTTC is keen to sign an MOU with the Technical Vocational & Technical Training Corporation (TVTC) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The MoU drafted by TVTC received from Parep Mission Riyadh has been forwarded to the Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training for seeking the endorsement of the Ministry of Law & Justice, EAD and MOFA. NAVTTC supports the contents and scope of the MoU. Counterparts will sign the MoU after the Ministry approves it. The same kind of interventions are in-pipe for other countries as well. NAVTTC has also made an interactive web portal, and Takamol Saudia Arabia KSA approved it for the joint Skills Verification Programme (SVP). OEC/OEPS/Candidates may apply using this online system: <http://takamol.navttc.gov.pk/sign-in>.

Candidate may choose any trade, location, and date of test. NAVTTC will share a Guidance Manual for applying to Takamol as a PDF File. NAVTTC can arrange a particular skill verification test at any location upon the request of OEC.

**9. How are you collaborating with the host countries to create new avenues for our skilled labour?**

NAVTTC, by its legal mandate, has the responsibility to develop curricula in line with the country-wise demand, train youth, along with specific skills standards for labour-importing countries for Pakistani



skilled workers, and provide language training, as provided by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development. NAVTTC is committed to undertaking country-specific / trade-specific training programmes and providing language training, as conveyed by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development. The International Accreditation of 10 TVET Institutes has been made through TUV Rheinland and APACC. NAVTTC has already developed and enforced the most modern National Vocational Qualifications Framework (NVQF), which is at par with global best practices. As per their assigned mandate and role, the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development is primarily responsible for identifying job opportunities, skills in demand in the international job market and curriculum/accreditation required abroad, country-wise. The Ministry and the Ambassadors, with the assistance of the CWAs, attaches overseas, are required to map all countries that have the potential for overseas job employment for skilled Pakistani workers. This mapping must include:

- i. Skills/Trades are in demand in each country.
- ii. Collect curriculum for these trades, which apply to each country.
- iii. Language Course requirements
- iv. Number of people to be trained and tested annually, trade demand-wise.
- v. Accreditation requirements are in each country (if any).
- vi. International accreditation is acceptable to each country. (if any)

Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development, as per Rules of Business 1973, through the BE&OE, OEC, Promoters and CWAs, are required to carry out mapping of all countries having potential of overseas jobs employment for Pakistanis skilled workers, and provide the following country wise specific information regarding workforce requirement; Skills/Trades in demand in that country, occupational standards applicable, skills sets, testing and language requirements, and exact numbers to be trained and tested. Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training/NAVTTC is fully geared up to carry out the skills training, as per the demand conveyed by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development, who are required to provide this actionable information, as already decided by the Prime Minister's office vide letter P M.O.F.NO. 1(4)- FDI/M&1-1/73 dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2021.

**10. Do you have any research mechanism to know the trends in the world (Vocational/ technical training) and skilled HR?**

NAVTTC, by its legal mandate, has the responsibility to develop curricula in line with the country-wise demand, train youth, along with specific skills standards for labour-importing countries for Pakistani skilled workers, and provide language training, as provided by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development. NAVTTC does not have a presence abroad, so to acquire authentic data on the workforce and skills required abroad, NAVTTC relies on the information provided by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistan and Human Resource Development. NAVTTC is committed to undertaking country-specific / trade-specific training programmes and providing language training, as conveyed by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development. Per their assigned

mandate and role, the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development is primarily responsible for identifying job opportunities, skills in demand in the international job market and curriculum/accreditation required abroad, country-wise. The Ministry and the Ambassadors, with the assistance of the CWAs, attaches overseas, are required to map all countries that have the potential for overseas job employment for skilled Pakistani workers.

**KEY FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY**

1. What do you know about the Nordic region?

<b>Knowledge about the Nordic region</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No Knowledge	57%
Moderate Knowledge	43%

2. What is your perception of employment in the Nordic region?

<b>Perception about Employment in the Nordic region</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Positive	15%
Neutral	28%
Had no idea	57%

3. Given the chance to go to the United States, Europe, the Nordic region, and the Middle East, which country will you choose for employment? Justify your answer.

<b>Preferred country for employment US, Europe, Middle East, Nordic region</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
US	43%
Europe	43%
Middle East	14%
Nordic region	0

## COUNTRIES' PROFILE

### SWEDEN

As per the 2023 index, Sweden is the 10th freest economy in the world and is ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of 44 European countries in Europe with a score of 77.5. Its economy is a small, open market, competitive and thriving. Although it is a part of the EU and benefits from it, it remains outside the Eurozone. The economy is unrestrained in market capitalism and has extensive welfare benefits. The current GDP is -0.5 per cent, quite sudden, at 2.6 per cent in 2022.<sup>21</sup> The unemployment rate currently is 7.7 per cent and is expected to increase to 8.2 per cent in 2024, per the European forecast for Sweden.<sup>22</sup>

**Job Vacancy Rate:** According to the latest reports of December 2022, the job vacancy rate in Sweden was recorded as 2.60 per cent compared to 3.60 per cent in June 2022.

**Sectors with the most Opportunities:** Sectors with skill shortages in Sweden are as follows: Barman, Doctor (different specialities), Driver (Bus, Truck, Streetcar, Cab), Engineer (different directions), Woodcutter, Nurse, Butcher, Nanny, Hairdresser, Baker, Cook, Programmer, Plumber, Social worker, Dentist, Builder (different directions), Packer, Teacher, Pharmacist<sup>23</sup>.

### DENMARK

Denmark ranks 9<sup>th</sup> among the freest economies in the 2023 Index, with an economic freedom score of 77.6. It received 0.4 fewer points than the 2022<sup>24</sup>. Yet it is still 6th among the 44 nations in the European region, and its total rating is still significantly higher than in the global and regional countries. Denmark enjoys high business freedom because its economy is open to international trade and investment. The current real GDP of Denmark is 1.5, which is relatively low compared to 3.2 and 4.7 in 2021 and 2022, respectively<sup>25</sup>.

Denmark has a mixed economy with a robust welfare system, high economic freedom, and a large public sector<sup>26</sup>. Key sectors of the Danish economy include trade and transport, manufacturing, services, information technology, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy, and agriculture. Denmark is

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.imf.org/en/Countries/SWE>

<sup>22</sup> [https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-surveillance-eu-economies/sweden/economic-forecast-sweden\\_en](https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-surveillance-eu-economies/sweden/economic-forecast-sweden_en)

<sup>23</sup> <https://wagecentre.com/work/work-in-europe/shortage-occupations-in-sweden>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.heritage.org/index/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2022/06/15/Denmark-2022-Article-IV-Consultation-Press-Release-Staff-Report-and-Statement-by-the-519638>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.heritage.org/index/country/denmark>

known for its strong focus on renewable energy sources, particularly wind power. Danish companies such as Vestas and Ørsted are global leaders in the wind energy industry<sup>27</sup>. The overall unemployment rate as of March 2023 is just 2.3 per cent, significantly lower than 2.7 per cent in 2022.<sup>28</sup>

According to statistics, Denmark's trade and transport sectors are among the thriving sectors, contributing 22.87 per cent of GDP to the overall economy and one of the highest demands in the job market. Second in line is the public administration, health and education sector, comprising 20.94 per cent. They are the manufacturing and dwelling sectors, with 13.76 and 7.64 per cent simultaneous contributions to GDP.

**Job vacancy rate:** According to statistics, Denmark's overall job vacancy rate was 2.9 in the last quarter of 2022, a significant decrease from 3.7 and 3.4 in the first two quarters of 2022<sup>29</sup>.

**Sectors with the most Opportunities:** The Danish labour market is facing a skill shortage, including Engineering, Information and communications technology, Life Science, Business and Finance, Medical and Healthcare Services, Service and Hospitality, Industrial Manufacturing, Transport and Logistics and Construction<sup>30</sup>.

## NORWAY

Norway is one of the most prosperous countries in the world. After World War II, Norway joined NATO in 1949, which paved the way for the country to be a part of a proper European environment. A total of 20 per cent of Norway's economy relies on oil and gas production and other vital sectors, including hydropower, fisheries, forests, and mineral production. According to IMF, the country faced a severe economic crisis in 2020, and its GDP fell back to -1.3; however, the country bounced back heavily in post-Covid time, and the current real GDP growth is now 2.1, which is relatively higher than pre-Covid time, i.e. 1.1. Overall, the economy of Norway is in better shape, and as per reports, it is expected to grow further by 2024 to 2.8. Norway's economic freedom score is 76.9, making it the 12th freest economy in the world in 2023 and ranked 9th out of 44 European countries. Significant contributors to

---

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1129547/share-of-gross-domestic-product-gdp-at-current-prices-in-denmark-by-sector/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://tradingeconomics.com/denmark/unemployment-rate>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik/emner/erhvervsliv/erhvervslivets-struktur/ledige-stillinger>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.workindenmark.dk/working-in-denmark/sectors-with-high-demand>

Norway's economy are the following sectors, which also Provide employment opportunities in Norway: fishing, hydropower, mining, petroleum and gas, paper products, shipping, and tourism.

**Job Vacancy Rate:** The current unemployment rate in Norway is 4.4 per cent. The job vacancy rate stood at 4.1 in the 1st quarter of 2023 and changed by 0.4 per cent every quarter.

**Sectors with the most Opportunities:** The following are the major sectors with the shortage include Energy, Oil & Gas & Renewable Energy, including Hydropower, Shipping & Shipbuilding, Fishing, Food Processing, Timber, Mining & Metals, Textiles Service Industries, Tourism, Agriculture, IT experts, IT Developers, Programmers, & Project Managers, Biotechnology professionals, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Lawyers, Judges, Hotel & Restaurant professionals, Teachers/Professors and HealthCare experts.

## FINLAND

Finland has a growing economy with a concentration on technology and innovation and a highly educated and talented workforce. In Finland, several important industries are anticipated to create more jobs in the upcoming years. Finland is home to many established tech companies and tech startups, including Supercell, Nokia, and Rovio. According to Statistics Finland, the service industry had the most jobs in the third quarter of 2021, followed by the industrial and construction sectors. More skilled individuals will likely be required in the ICT sector as demand for technology-related goods and services rises, and there is a high need for experts in fields like software development, data analytics, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence (AI). More than 3,000 jobs are available in this sector in Finland, which needs more qualified workers. A growing number of jobs are anticipated in Finland's healthcare sector due to the country's ageing population and growing demand for healthcare services. Finland plans to hire around 30,000 nurses by 2030 to meet demand and fill more than 11,000 other positions in the healthcare industry in Finland.

**Job vacancy rate:** In the third quarter of 2021, Finland had a 4.4% job vacancy rate, according to Statistics Finland. In other words, there were 4.4 Vacancies for every 100 employees in the Finnish labour market.

**Sectors with the most Opportunities:** According to Statistics Finland, the jobs with the most opportunities in Finland during the third quarter of 2021 were in elementary occupations, including sales and marketing, hospitality, accounting, finance, and engineering.

## ICELAND

The economy of Iceland is small, yet it is one of the high-income European economies. It is a mixture of free trade and government intervention. It is part of several free trade agreements, including the European Union free trade agreement. The 2008-2010 economic collapse weakened the economy; however, the tourism and fishing industry flourished at the time, thus helping to rebound the economy. The country also applied to join the EU but withdrew in 2015. However, it is a member of the Schengen agreement, which means that the country's borders are open to Europe, thus allowing several economic sectors to flourish, primarily businesses, services, and industries. As per IMF reports, the current GDP of Iceland is 2.3 per cent, which is relatively low compared to the 2022 GDP, which was 6.4 per cent. The country was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in a GDP decline of -7.7 per cent, approximately equal to the 2008-2010 financial crises<sup>31</sup>. The following sectors are significant contributors to Iceland's economy and provide employment opportunities in Iceland.

**Job vacancy rate:** According to a recent Gallup survey conducted among Iceland's largest companies, 53 per cent of respondents reported worker shortages by construction companies, while 78 per cent reported being understaffed.<sup>32</sup> Compared to 2022, the job vacancy rate decreased from 5.4 per cent to 3.3 per cent in 2023(first quarter)<sup>33</sup>.

**Sectors with the most opportunities:** The highest demand for employment, as per 2021-2022 statistics, was in hotel and restaurant businesses, whereas overall, the highest percentage of vacancies was observed in the industries of transport, storage, hospitality, industrial sector, innovation and technology, agriculture, services sector, forest, tourism, and fishing sector<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> IMF. Available at: [https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/NGDP\\_RPCH@WEO/ISL?zoom=ISL&highlight=ISL](https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/NGDP_RPCH@WEO/ISL?zoom=ISL&highlight=ISL) (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

<sup>32</sup> *Discernible tension in the labour market* (no date) *Discernible tension in the labour market* • Íslandsbanki. Available at: <https://www.islandsbanki.is/en/news/discernible-tension-in-the-labour-market#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20recent%20Gallup,which%20say%20they%20are%20understaffed.> (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

<sup>33</sup> *Vacant jobs in the construction industry decreased between years* (no date) *Statistics Iceland*. Available at: <https://www.statice.is/publications/news-archive/labour-market/job-vacancies-1st-quarter-2023/#:~:text=In%20total%207%2C550%20jobs%20were,see%20confidence%20intervals%20in%20table.> (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

<sup>34</sup> *Labour market information: Iceland* (no date) *EURES*. Available at: [https://eures.ec.europa.eu/living-and-working/labour-market-information/labour-market-information-iceland\\_en](https://eures.ec.europa.eu/living-and-working/labour-market-information/labour-market-information-iceland_en) (Accessed: 17 May 2023).