

Migration Trend for Pakistan

June – July 2023

This migration trend includes analytical considerations as well as data generated by the Migrant Resource Centres. It focuses on highlights and important information on trends/patterns and insights regarding the migration and mobility of potential, current or returning migrants within the covered period.

SNAPSHOT

- There has been an **increase in Pakistanis migrating abroad to the Gulf countries and other countries**, both through direct employment and other means.
- There is a variety of countries of interest for outgoing migrants, **including smaller countries such as Andorra and Bosnia and Herzegovina**.
- Enquiries on various aspects of migration continue to flow, especially in light of the recent media attention on the tragedy in Greece, from the risks of migrating through irregular means and **how to spot fraud, both for student migrants and labour migrants**.

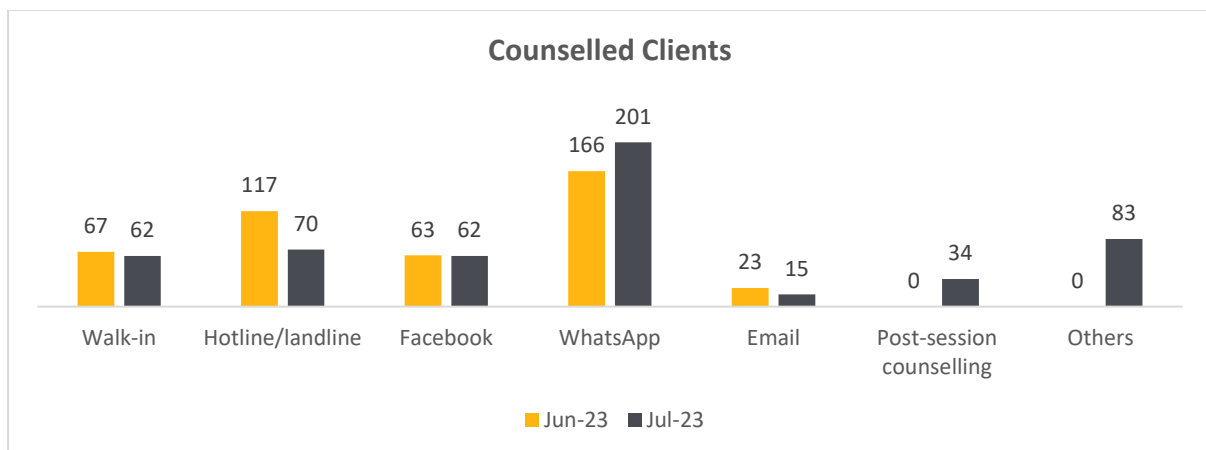
REACH

Through the Migrants Resource Centres, there is a wide and varied reach to potential migrants which are presented into four categories: counselling, outreach, pre-departure briefings and social media.

1. Counselling

The MRCs counselled a total of 436 people in June and 527 people in July, **an increase of 21%**. Of the number counselled, approximately 8 % were females. The most used channel for counselling was WhatsApp (38%), followed by the MRC hotline (19%).

Figure 1: Number of people counselled in June and July 2023



Enquiries: The top three enquiries from counselled clients were related to working abroad in Europe (22%), working abroad in the GCC countries (17%) and studying abroad (15%). Between the months of June and July, there was a **49% increase in enquiries related to studying abroad**.

2. Community/university outreach

The MRCs conducted outreach sessions in communities and universities and vocational training centres, reaching a total of 3,792 people, of which 34 per cent were females. The MRC reached 2,946 people in July alone, **an increase of 250% over June**.

Figure 2: Number of people reached via community outreach in June and July 2023

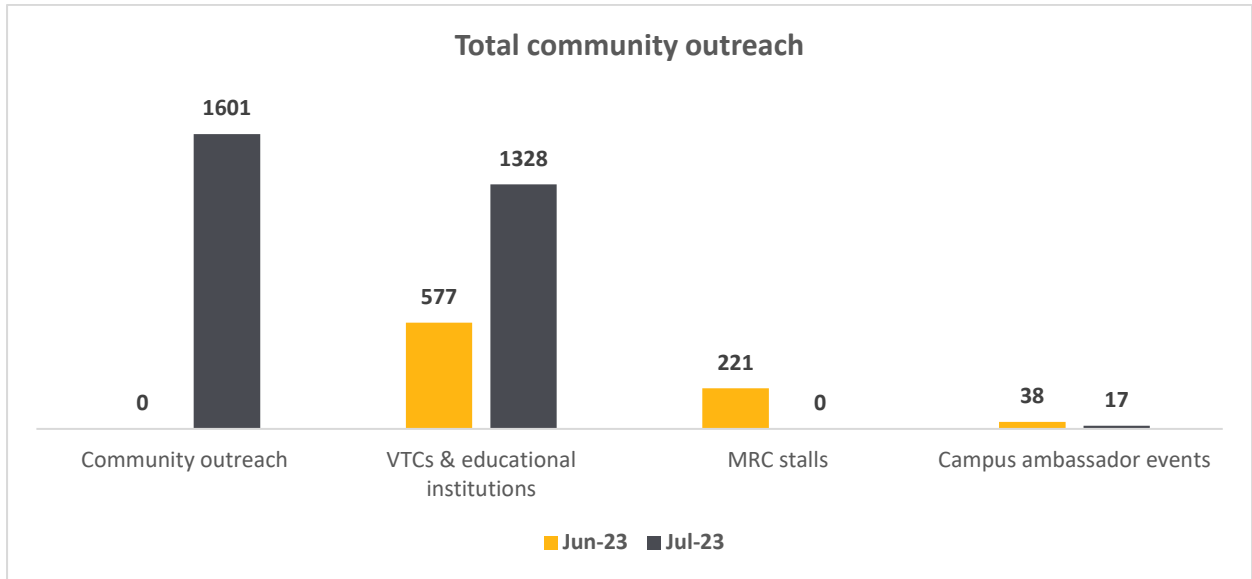
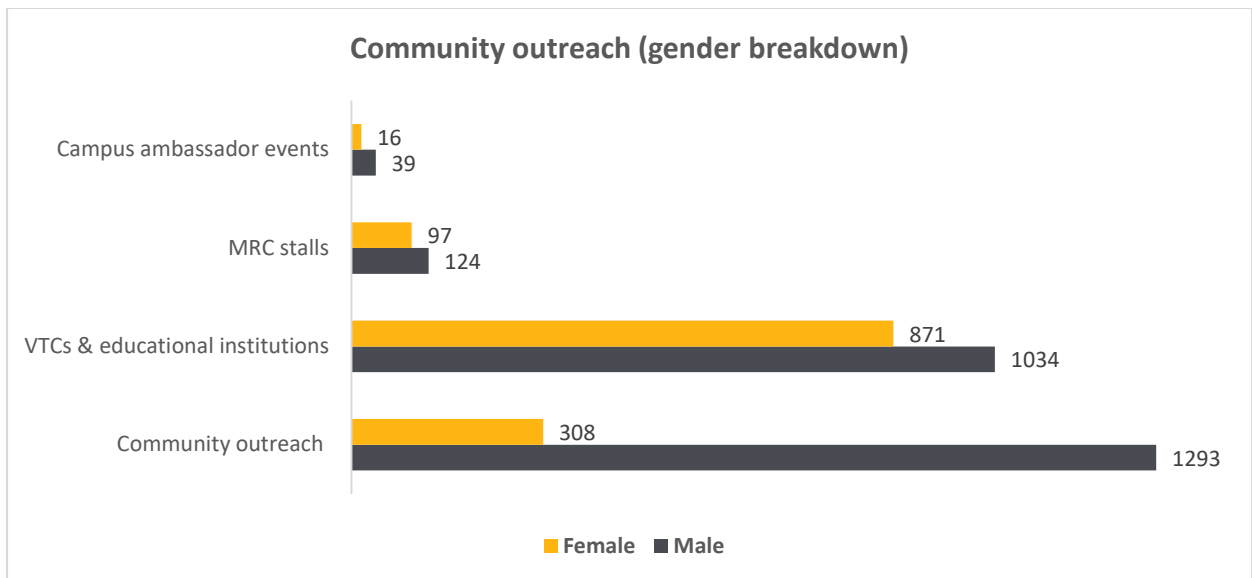


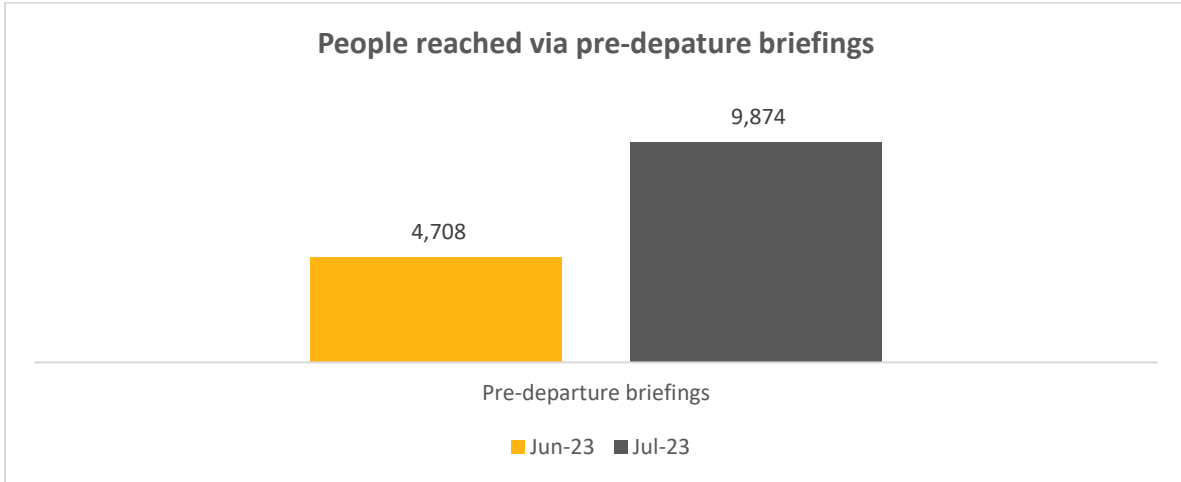
Figure 3: Number of people reached via community outreach in June and July 2023 (gender breakdown)



3. Pre-departure briefings

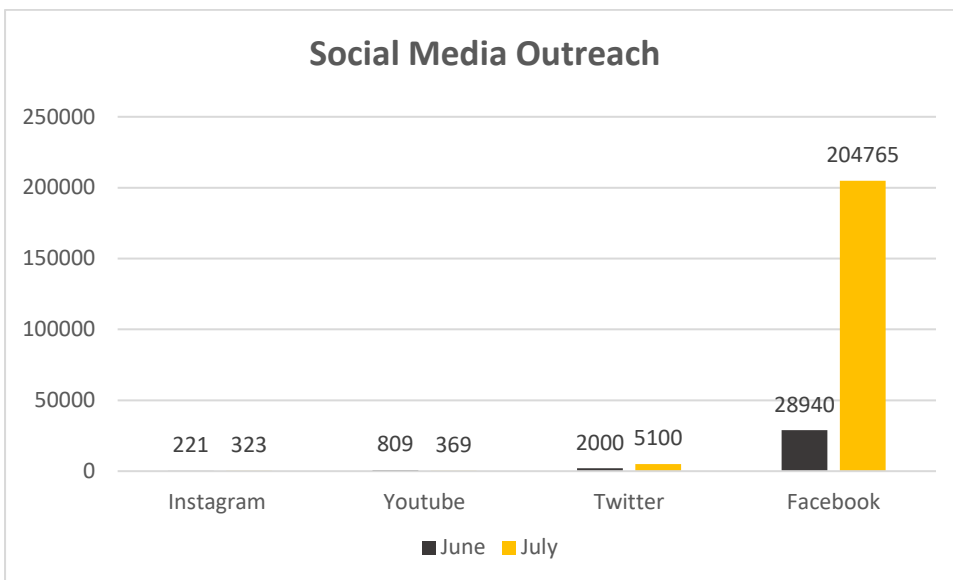
The MRCs conducted 70 pre-departure briefings, reaching a total of 14,582 people in June and July. In July alone, the MRC provided pre-departure briefings to 9,874 people, **an increase of 110% over June**.

Figure 4: Number of people reached via pre-departure briefings in June and July 2023



4. Social Media: The MRCs- Islamabad and Lahore reached 3,030 people in June and 5,792 people in July via the media of Instagram, YouTube and Twitter, an increase of 91.15 per cent between months. The number of people **reached via Facebook increased 6 times between June and July** from 28,940 in June to 204,765 in July.

Figure 5: Number of people reached via social media in June and July 2023 (Instagram, YouTube, Twitter and Facebook)



ENQUIRIES AND EMERGING TRENDS

1. General comments

- In June and July, enquiries and questions in general were impacted by the tragic incident off the coast of Greece in which migrants and refugees from Pakistan lost their lives at sea. The



MRCs in Pakistan were invited by international media representatives to share their work regarding safe and regular migration, with a specific focus on European Countries.

- General questions which arose in outreach sessions were impacted by the tragic event and involved enquiries on fraudulent recruitment, and questions pertaining to labour laws and rights. In addition, a series of questions on remittances were raised. Finally, questions related to social protection in the context of work abroad were raised.

2. Geographical focus of enquiries: countries of interest

Outgoing migrants usually enquire on work opportunities in the Gulf region. However, other countries of interest emerge and can lead to new trends, whether short or long term. The countries of focus in the past two months are listed below:

- Middle East (common destinations): Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.
- European destinations (less common destinations than the Middle East): Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, and the UK
 - Germany, Greece and Italy are common destinations for outgoing migrants. There has been an increase in numbers of registered migrants to Italy. In 2022 alone, 350 migrants travelled to Italy whereas in 2023, the number from January-July is 898 (Source: <https://beoe.gov.pk/reports-and-statistics>).
 - UK: an increase in migrants intending to go to the UK has been noted in June and July, specifically for low and mid-skilled employment by arranging their work permits through friends or relatives, as well as through online platforms.
- Non-European destination (less common destinations): Angola, Azerbaijan, Canada, China, Japan, Libya, Malaysia, Tajikistan, USA, Uzbekistan
 - Malaysia: in the last 6 months, a total of 14,636 people have travelled to Malaysia in comparison to the 6175 people who travelled there in 2022 (Source: <https://beoe.gov.pk/reports-and-statistics>). This increase of 137% is worth noting. Migrants from Pakistan can apply online for a Malaysian visit visa, stating employment as a purpose which eases the process (Source: https://www.kln.gov.my/web/pak_islamabad/requirement_foreigner)
 - Libya: It has been observed that Pakistanis are travelling through regular channels on visit visas from Pakistan to Libya directly or through the Gulf countries or Egypt. Their arrival to Libya is through regular means and is followed by an onwards trip to Europe through irregular means.

3. Work opportunities abroad: a point of interest for potential outgoing migrants

Some main areas to be highlighted below include:

- The increase in Direct Employment (Direct employment is when an intending migrant is hired for a position abroad directly by the employer without the intervention or facilitation of a recruitment agency or middlemen, and registers for it through the Pakistani authorities): there is an increase of cases of direct employment to specific destinations such as: Albania, Andorra, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan.
- The countries listed in online job announcements: Job announcements on accredited platforms provide insights into where there are labour needs and which countries intending migrants may apply for jobs to. Job announcements for Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina and Uzbekistan were noted.

- The variation between High skilled vs Low skilled migration destinations: In some cases, there is a clear separation in types of employment for different countries. While Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan attract low skilled migrants, high skilled migrants are usually employed in Australia, Canada, Germany, Oman, Qatar, UK and the USA.
- Gender and the increase in female migration: Men are in majority the ones reaching out to MRCs; however, there is an increase of requests from female potential outgoing migrants. The majority of female emigrants - were travelling on dependent visas and obtaining protector registration under the job seeker visa category. However, some female migrants were going through direct employment to UK on caretaker visas.
- The specific Afghan queries: cover various aspects such as the police registration process and study opportunities for Afghans in Pakistan.

4. Studies abroad and scholarships: another substantial topic of enquiries

Enquiries related to studying abroad involve a variety of topics including:

- specific opportunities related to a topic of study (medical field, scientific field such as engineering, etc.).
- possibility to find internships and work following studies and the long term prospects for students after having studied abroad.
- opportunities to support oneself through part-time work during studies in order to pay for living expenses or university fees.
- opportunities and eligibility conditions for scholarships.

ZOOM IN

Two testimonials highlight how trustworthy information is needed not only for completing the steps toward regular labour migration, but also to avoid the risks of migrating through irregular means.

Story of an MRC client who needed assistance in the pre-requirements for his work visa to the UK:

An MRC client who intended to go to UK on work visa visited the Protectorate of Emigrants office to get the necessary protector stamp. In doing so, he was lured by agents outside the Protectorate Office into paying money for said stamp. Confused by the agents' claims, he saw the MRC helpline number in the Protectorate Office and contacted the MRC. The MRC counsellor guided the client step-by-step in the procedure for the protector stamp, which included a police clearance certificate and medical certificate from designated labs. The client completed all requirements within two days and successfully obtained his protector registration.

Story of an MRC client who wanted to migrate to Europe through irregular means:

A father and his son came to the MRC for a counselling session, as the son wanted to migrate to Europe irregularly and was asking his family for funds for his agent. While the father was reticent, the MRC counsellor was able to highlight the risks of migrating through irregular means and the agents' modus operandi and lies. In addition, the counsellor was able to share some of the work options abroad taking into consideration the young man's certificate in welding.