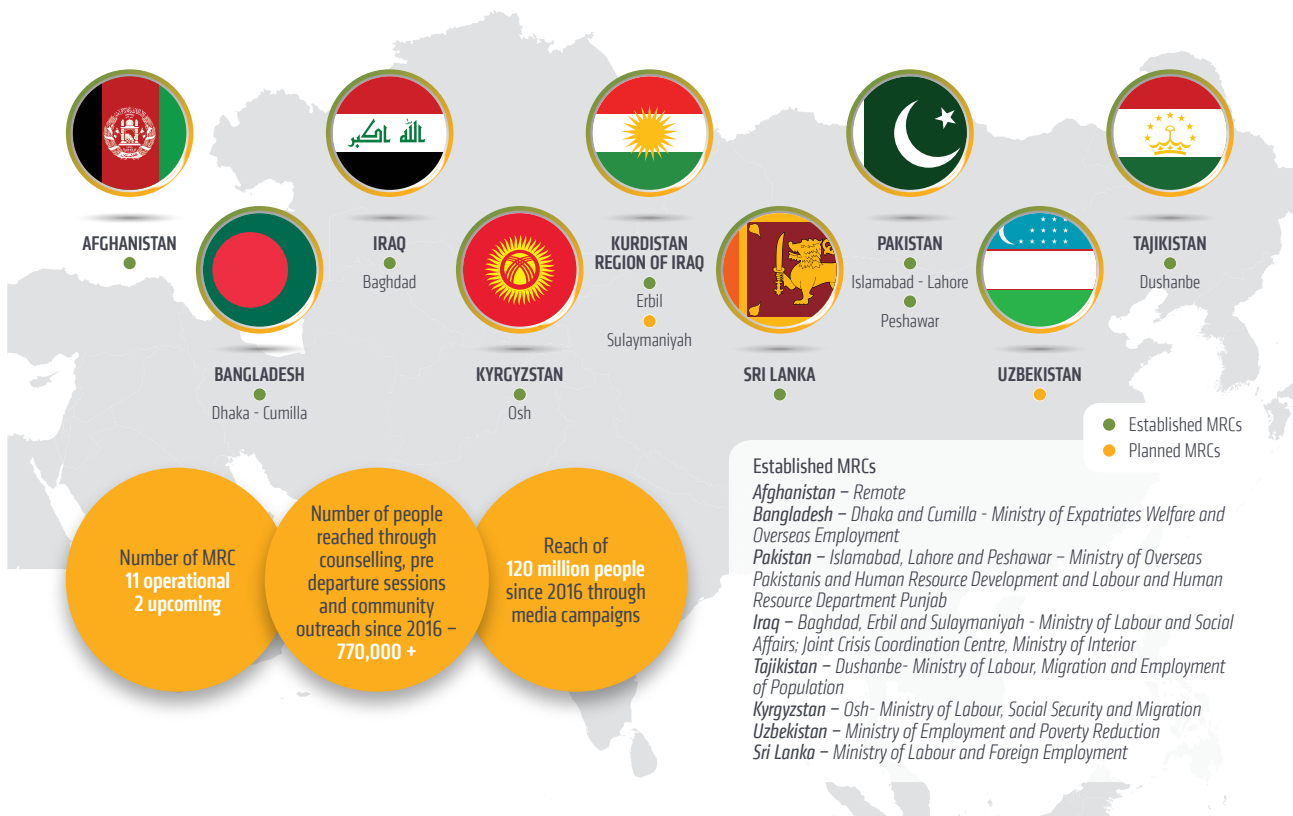


# MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRES In the Silk Routes and Central Asian countries

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Tajikistan

## Where are the MRCs?



### What is an MRC?

MRCs are physical structures located within the premises of partner governments and jointly supervised by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and national governments.

### What is the objective of the MRC?

To promote safe and regular migration, reduce irregular migration through awareness raising, information campaigns, community education and reintegration support and referral.

### Who funds MRCs?

The EU has been the main donor starting in 2016. Since then, several other donors have supported the MRCs including Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Norway, New Zealand, Sweden and Switzerland.

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# MRCs' THREE-PRONGED APPROACH

## 1. OUTREACH: Mass media and community outreach

this includes online and physical outreach ranging from social media campaign, SMS service, rickshaw campaigns and billboard advertisements, and having physical outreach sessions in the community, such as courtyard meetings, pre-departure trainings, and briefings with academic and training institutes, media and local stakeholders.

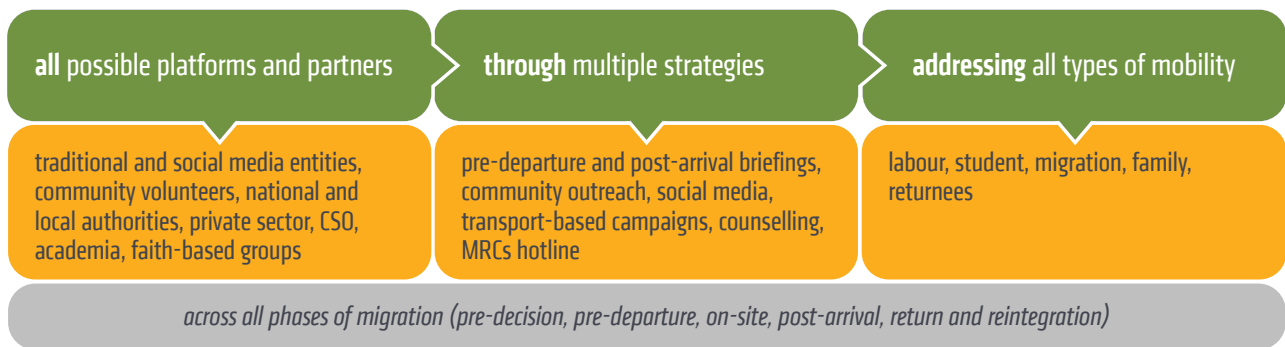
## 2. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT: Counselling and referral

this includes walk-in and online group or individual counselling sessions. MRCs provide intending, outgoing, and returning migrants with information and counselling via dedicated hotlines, social media, WhatsApp and email on possibilities for safe, legal, and orderly migration, on the risks and consequences of irregular migration, as well as on access to programmes and services that help protect their rights and promote their welfare and interests.

## 3. PARTNERSHIP: Capacity building and stakeholders' engagement

this includes activities to build capacities of and with MRC partners (such as national and local governments, CSOs, media, private sector, faith-based groups, youth, and community volunteers) based on their needs. By strengthening their capacities on migration, the aim is to improve service provision and case response and enhance advocacy efforts.

## MRCs UTILISE.....



# MRCs' THEMATIC COVERAGE

## Legal pathways



Group counselling by MRC Tajikistan at the Pre-departure centre of Migration Service

MRCs offer a wide range of services to migrants seeking regular and legal migration pathways. These services often include providing information and guidance on legal migration options, assisting with visa applications, offering legal advice and support, facilitating language and cultural orientation programs, and referring migrants to other support services

MRCs provide a potential for and act as platforms for matching skills with jobs or higher academic opportunities. For example, MRC Afghanistan works closely with stakeholders to provide Afghans with reliable information on diverse educational and employment opportunities. MRCs engage with recruitment agents and the private sector (employers) on several areas such as skills and contract verification, employer-specific pre-departure orientation session, and conduct job fairs.

such as housing, employment, healthcare, and education. By offering comprehensive support and resources, MRCs help migrants navigate the complexities of the migration process, ensure compliance with immigration laws and regulations, and facilitate their successful integration into their new communities.

## Labour migration

Overseas employment, protection mechanisms, work and living conditions abroad, rights and obligations – in Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Tajikistan, the MRC counsellors provide pre-departure orientation sessions to outgoing migrants in collaboration with government entities. The primary objectives of pre-departure orientation sessions are to provide the outgoing migrant with essential information, guidance, and support before migrating. In Iraq, MRC provides post-arrival orientation sessions for foreign workers from Asia and Africa to Iraq.

## Irregular migration

MRCs raise awareness on the risks of irregular migration, fraudulent recruitment, and the dangers of using the services of smugglers as well as the risks related to trafficking in persons. For example, MRC Tajikistan works closely with the UNODC project on raising awareness on smuggling and TIP through the development and dissemination of IEC materials to Tajik migrants.

## Return and reintegration

In Iraq and Bangladesh, MRCs have partnered with private sector for job referrals, recognition of prior learning and skills development for returnees. In Iraq, MRCs have expanded their work to support returnees in accessing immediate as well as sustainable services for their reintegration and reaching out to private sectors for (re)employment, access to finance, skills development, and livelihood and entrepreneurship. In Pakistan, the MRC has an active role at airport reception desks and provides immediate psychosocial support to returnees.

## Humanitarian admissions, resettlement, complementary pathways

MRCs collaborate with government agencies, international organizations, and NGOs to help vulnerable individuals seeking protection and assistance. They provide support in accessing scholarships, employment opportunities, and community sponsorship programs to help migrants establish themselves in new countries. MRC Afghanistan partners with EUAA to develop information materials on humanitarian admission and resettlement schemes for at-risk Afghans. Training sessions are also held with stakeholders to learn about resettlement processes and complementary pathways.

## Migration intelligence and trends

Recognising the significance of the data and knowledge received regularly by the MRCs, a general “meta” document “Migration trends/intelligence” highlighting various analytical considerations, as well as data generated by the MRCs in the performance of their regular functions and conduct of activities is developed. The data are taken from MRCs’ social media campaigns, community outreach, counselling (in compliance with GDPR) and other activities. Migration trends focus on highlights and important information mainly focusing on trends/patterns and insights regarding the migration and mobility of potential, current or returning migrants within a given period. These trends can provide regular and timely updates to various stakeholders such as donors, government partners and EU Member States, and at the same time, give an interim early warning or support evidence-based decision making on the migration patterns, plans, and insights from migrants, as provided to or observed by the MRCs.

# MRC SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES





# MRC HIGHLIGHTS FROM EACH COUNTRY:

## AFGHANISTAN

From 2018 to August 2021, the MRC Afghanistan had physical presence in Kabul. However, following the collapse of the former Afghan Republic, the virtual MRC Afghanistan was established in November 2021. European Union Agency for Asylum's Expert Platform for Safe and Legal Pathways for Afghans has acknowledged MRC Afghanistan as a valued partner to develop reporting and coordination mechanisms among the European Union Member States and other countries on their resettlement and humanitarian admission pledges in 2023 and 2024 for Afghans, and to disseminate accurate and timely information about those pledges to Afghan while simultaneously countering the smuggling networks' online campaign of misinformation.

MRC Afghanistan activities data	June 2023 to May 2024	Male	Female
Online counselled clients (number of people counselled)	19,583	17,037	2,546
Total reach through Facebook	9,934,397	8,642,925	1,291,472
Total engagement Facebook	1,220,791	1,062,088	158,703
Total Facebook live reach	464,082	403,751	60,331
Total Facebook live engagement	22,545	19,614	2,931
Total Instagram reach	42,932	37,351	5,581
Total Instagram engagement	6,133	5,336	797
Number of Facebook posts	734		
Number of Instagram posts	332		

In 2023, at the Global Refugees Forum (GRF), MRC Afghanistan submitted a pledge in the realm of providing services and information to potential migrants and refugees. MRC Afghanistan's pledge could be tracked with pledge number GRF- 08659 on the [UNHCR's website](#) dedicated for the pledges, which is made for a duration of three years.

In close partnership with the Ministry for Inclusion, Social Security, and Migration of Spain (MISSM), MRC Afghanistan promotes complementary pathways for educational opportunities and employment, and sustainable ways of adjustment to the new setting for Afghan female students in Spain.

**FIND YOUR DREAM JOB IN EUROPE. RECEIVE ADVICE. UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL.**

Join our digital soft-skill career Bootcamp: You'll get CV & LinkedIn advice and a Coaching Chat with one of our volunteer career coaches.

[-> Apply, it's free.](#)

Referral Code: **MRC AFG**

**👤** I now have a much better CV & LinkedIn. I was more respected in the interviews and quickly found a job in Berlin. Thanks Imagine!

— Mahmoud, software engineer

**👤** I've just been hired into a new job working remotely for a startup in Spain - can't thank you enough, especially my coach!

— Abeke, backend developer

Powered by 950+ Tech Companies such as:

MRC Afghanistan has established a referral mechanism with Talent Beyond Boundaries' Asia programme, Imagine Foundation in Germany, Nexus 3.0 in Portugal, and Yaran Foundation in Spain to regularly refer qualified Afghans, in particular Afghan women to Yaran, Nexus, and Imagine foundation. While Talent Beyond Boundaries' focus is on employment, the Imagine Foundation's scope of work includes both educational opportunities and employment of Afghan women in the Tech industry in Germany.

Dedicated flyer and referral code of the Imagine Foundation for MRC Afghanistan's clients seeking educational or employment opportunities.

## BANGLADESH

In Bangladesh, in 2022-2023, the MRCs focused on collaborating with the public and private sector, conducting workshops with faith-based groups, migrants and airport migrants' desks and private sector on safe migration and sustainable reintegration.

Currently, the MRCs in Dhaka and Cumilla are temporarily closed due to end of project. The District Employment and Manpower Office in Dhaka continues the MRC outreach to select areas and social media campaigns.

MRC Bangladesh' activities in data	02.2020-04.2023
Counselling services provided to the walk-in-clients and online clients	28,421
Pre-departure orientation sessions	283,062
Roving announcement /Miking	447,000
Community outreach	80,246
Capacity building of government/non-government stakeholders	3,182
Referral services	8,411
Media reach	30 Mio +

## IRAQ

MRCs in Iraq take a comprehensive approach to empower migrants by raising awareness about migration processes, protecting migrants' rights, and preventing irregular migration. They help migrants adapt and adjust into their destination countries by providing realistic information and connecting them with government services. MRCs offer referral and psychosocial services tailored to migrants' needs, including connecting them to available services for reintegration and skills development. Additionally, MRCs engage in capacity building for stakeholders involved in migration, return, and reintegration efforts.

MRC Iraq's activities in data	04.2023 -05.2024
Counselling services provided to the walk-in-clients and online clients	10,076
Community outreach and awareness raising sessions / with community partners and Orientation on safe and informed migration in educational institutions and VTCs	4,727
Number of returnees provided with counselling/referrals and skill development trainings	330
Number of migrant workers attending post arrival orientation sessions	161
Social and Mass Media reach	2.67 Million



Visit of Ambassador of Finland to the MRC Baghdad



MRC counsellor delivering PAOS to female migrant workers in Iraq

The MRC counsellors provided individual counselling referral and awareness sessions for returnees to facilitate sustainable reintegration to 330 returnees (out to whom 126 were referred from MoMD, whereas the rest were referred as a result of MRC outreach activities and from previous returnee groups). Out of these total, 30 returnees were referred by MRC to the Business incubation Department of MOLSA, 31 returnees showed interest and took part in the psychosocial support and CV preparation session, 18 returnees received their loans and an additional 14 completed their process of acquiring the loans.

To extend its outreach network across provinces, the MRC initiated **capacity-building efforts for Labour Department officials in five governorates: Basra, Thi Qar, Najaf, Karbala, and Diwaniyah**. The objective behind these initiatives was to equip the officials of Labour Departments with relevant knowledge and skills on a range of migration matters. Such capacity building enables individuals to access migration information and services directly through MoLSA staff – specifically addressing the need of potential, intending, and returning migrants in detailed information and counseling on migration-related matters.

## KYRGYZSTAN

In collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Social Security, and Migration of the Kyrgyz Republic, the MRC in Osh employs a comprehensive strategy across its services and initiatives. This strategy encompasses three main pillars: community engagement, personalized support, and fostering partnerships.

In March 2024, MRC Kyrgyzstan was officially opened in the city of Osh. With the participation of Dr. Michael Spindelegger, Director General of ICMPD, Gulnara Marishovna Baatyrova, Minister of Labour, Social Security and Migration of the Kyrgyz Republic, and Talantbek Kurbanalievich, Deputy Plenipotentiary Representative of the President in Osh oblast.

On the occasion of the MRC inauguration in Osh, **the DG engaged with students from Osh State University**. The session elucidated ICMPD's role and its significant contributions to fostering safe, regulated, and orderly migration through intergovernmental dialogues. Hundreds of attendees expressed enthusiasm and eagerness to inquire, posing questions in both English and German. Queries ranged from opportunities available to youth in European nations to the potential hazards associated with irregular migration.

As part of community outreach activities in the Jalal-Abad and Batken regions, the MRC and the Centre for Employment of Citizens Abroad conducted meetings with district state administrations, municipalities, universities, officials from the district and city departments of the Ministry of Labour, Social Security, and Migration of the Kyrgyz Republic, representatives of rural authorities, social workers, youth, and district police officers. The discussions focused on safe and regular labour migration and the risks of illegal migration. Participants actively asked questions, highlighting the lack of such information and the importance of these meetings.



*Outreach sessions in Batken, Kyrgyzstan*



## PAKISTAN

MRCs in Pakistan are actively addressing migration issues through awareness-raising, capacity-building, and advocacy efforts. They use mass media campaigns on popular platforms like rickshaws, SMS, and social media to reach communities in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Documentaries are used to educate the public on regular and irregular migration, showcasing success stories and challenges. Collaboration with universities and technical institutes aims to deepen understanding of migration issues.

MRC Pakistan's activities in data	04.2023–05.2024
Counselling services provided to the walk-in-clients and online clients	7,668
Orientation sessions on safe and informed migration in educational institutions/private TVET institutes	29,937
Pre-departure orientation sessions	99,081
Community outreach and awareness raising sessions with community partners/ volunteer groups	16,807
Dissemination of MRC content through poster pasting, volunteer groups, in the community during community mobilisation by partner, and at POE offices	144,320
MRC stalls (job fairs, universities)	3,468



EU Delegation visit to Gujrat



MoU signing between MRC Pakistan and UCP



Plaque opening by Philipp Oliver Gross joined as Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Delegation of the EU to Pakistan

In March 2024, MRC Pakistan organised a field visit for a senior DG HOME delegation in Pakistan. The field visit was organised in Gujrat as per the request of the Delegation. The visit witnessed a series of activities that included a community session followed by a stakeholder meeting and concluded with a meeting with a group of Overseas Employment Promoters.

ICMPD has inaugurated a new MRC in Peshawar, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, Pakistan. This marks the third MRC established by ICMPD in the country, adding to existing Centres in Islamabad and Lahore. The Peshawar MRC is a collaborative initiative with the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment of the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development of Pakistan.

MRC Pakistan formalised a partnership with the University of Central Punjab through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This agreement establishes a framework for enhanced collaboration, particularly in conducting awareness-raising sessions on safe and informed migration for UCP students. Currently, MRCs have MOUs with more than 40 academic and training institutes in Pakistan.

## SRI LANKA

The MRC in Sri Lanka is implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment and the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment. Launched in April 2024, it is located at the SLBFE office in Batticaloa and will prioritise outreach in Eastern Provinces, including Ampara, Trincomalee and Batticaloa, which are major sources of migrants, including those being victimised of trafficking of human beings and smuggling. It will closely work with key CSOs in the Eastern Provinces in its campaign as well as with SLBFE on pre-migration and pre-departure orientation and training, counselling, and case response and referrals.



MRC Strategic Planning workshop in Colombo



MRC Sri Lanka outreach

## TAJKISTAN

The MRC in Dushanbe closely works with the existing structures of the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of Population (MoLMEP). The MRC's main aim is to provide migrants with reliable and accessible information on safe, orderly, and regular migration. It works closely with the Migration Service and the Centre for consultation and preparation of labour migrants before departure under MoLMEP, to strengthen the pre-departure information and briefings with a special focus on diversification of migration flows.

MRC Tajikistan activities in data	02.2024-05.2024
Development of thematic brochures	9
Counselling services provided to the walk-in and online clients	200
Provision of information materials to ministerial structures	700
Social media engagement and reach	3,726
Capacity building sessions for government/non-government stakeholders	5
Events with stakeholders	10

In November 2023, MRC in Tajikistan reopened in the premises of Migration Service in Dushanbe. The MRC in Dushanbe works closely with individuals interested in migration and provides accurate and timely information to potential migrants to enable them to make informed decision on their migration plan. The MRC is fully engaged in the provision of counselling and pre-departure preparations with potential migrants on a plethora of themes such as seasonal work in the UK, new amendments in the law of Russia on migration, response to the recent terrorist attack in Moscow, Private Employment Agencies – actives ones and the ones in black list, preparation for recruitment to South Korea through Employment Permit System (EPS), extremism and terrorism, human trafficking, benefits of organised recruitment overseas, etc.



Outreach session in Khujand with the staff of MoLMEP



Special counselling for women in the MRC Tajikistan

## UZBEKISTAN

The concept note on the MRC set-up is submitted to MEPR.

### For more information

[www.migrantresources.org](http://www.migrantresources.org)  
[www.mrcafghanistan.af](http://www.mrcafghanistan.af)

[www.mrc-bangladesh.org](http://www.mrc-bangladesh.org)  
[www.mrciraq.iq](http://www.mrciraq.iq)

[www.mrc.org.pk](http://www.mrc.org.pk)  
[www.mrc-tajikistan.org](http://www.mrc-tajikistan.org)

[www.budapestprocess.org](http://www.budapestprocess.org)  
[www.pragueprocess.eu](http://www.pragueprocess.eu)

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