

POPULATION, LABOUR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT

The global human population reached 8.0 billion in mid-November 2022 by adding 1 billion people since 2010 and 2 billion since 1998¹. Rapid population growth makes it more difficult for lower-middle-income countries to afford the increase in public expenditures on a per capita basis that is needed to eradicate poverty, end hunger, malnutrition, and ensure universal access to health care, education and other essential services.

The global outlook for labour markets deteriorated significantly during 2022. Emerging geopolitical tensions, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, uneven recovery from the pandemic and ongoing bottlenecks in supply chains have created the conditions for a stagflationary episode. The global job gap stood at 473 million people in 2022. The global jobs gap is a new measure of the unmet need for employment in the world. It consists of the 205 million unemployed – corresponding to an unemployment rate of 5.8 per cent – and 268 million people who have an unmet need for employment but are out-side the labour force because they do not satisfy the criteria to be considered unemployed. This jobs gap is particularly large for women in developing countries.²

Pakistan is the 5th most populous country in the world. According to the National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS), the estimated population of Pakistan is 229.22 million in 2022 of which 84.69 million reside in urban areas, whereas 144.53 million live in rural areas and the population density is 287.93 per Km². Pakistan's rapidly growing population means ever-

increasing demands for food, schools, health facilities, jobs and infrastructure, and it put pressure on the government for providing these services at an equal pace. The government is trying to overcome the issue of high population growth and fertility rate through different programs like media campaigns, the establishment of Family Welfare Centers (FWCs), Reproductive Health Services Centers (RHSCs), and Mobile Services Units. The detail of population indicators is given below:

Table 12.1: Population Indicators (Million)

Indicators	Population Census 2017	2022
Population	207.68	229.22
Rural Population	132.01	144.53
Urban Population	75.67	84.69
Male Population	106.31	117.11
Female Population	101.34	112.1
Population Density/sq.km	260.88	287.93

Source: PBS, NIPS

The Population and Housing Census is a vital national exercise linked with the provision of data for key policy making matters regarding development programmes, political representation and resource allocation which has far-reaching impact.

After the independence of Pakistan in 1947, the first census took place in 1951. Since 1951, there have been only 6 nationwide censuses (1951, 1961, 1972, 1981, 1998 and 2017).

¹ <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/population>

² World Employment & Social Outlook (Trends 2023)

Box-I: 7th Population & Housing Census

Council of Common Interests in its 45th Meeting (April, 2021) approved the final results of the 6th Population and Housing Census 2017 and also directed that “The process of next Census should start as early as possible according to international best practices by using the latest technology.”

Accordingly, the Census Advisory Committee (CAC) of renowned demographers & experts was constituted to devise recommendations for the adoption of International best practices by using the latest technology for the conduct of 7th Population and Housing Census.

CCI in its 49th meeting in January, 2022 approved the recommendations of Census Advisory Committee, along with constitution of Census Monitoring Committee to oversee the census activities to ensure an expeditious and credible census operation for the 7th Population and Housing Census.

2. One of the main recommendations of CAC approved by CCI in its 49th meeting was “Stakeholders must be involved from start to end.” For this purpose, PBS conducted four rounds of engagement with provincial administrations, civil society, and academia to inform them about the core objective of the census, the digital system, and about the transparency of data collection and their access to GIS-enabled monitoring of census progress. The provincial government’s representatives remained on board continuously from census planning to field operation.

3. PBS engaged stakeholders/consulting agencies including NADRA, NTC and SUPARCO for the successful conduct of the 1st ever digital census. The major milestones achieved for the conduct of the digital census are given below;

- 495 Census Support Centers (CSCs) were established at Census District level with PBS staff and NADRA technical support staff.
- 121,000 enumerators and supervisors were trained for the census field operation.
- Pilot census was conducted to assess the preparedness of digital system.
- Establishment of a 24/7 call center, UAN 080057544 for complaint management and quality assurance through CATI, and SMS gateway (9727) for complaints and mass messaging.
- Acquisition of 126,000 tablets and their hardening and dispatch to Census Support Centers.
- Development of ERP system (Census software system) comprising of 16 modules.
- Acquisition of the latest imagery of Pakistan from SUPARCO.
- The accesses to the real time monitoring dashboards were provided to Chief Secretaries and 495 ACs/DCs to ensure transparency, credibility and broader involvement of stakeholders.

4. The Digital Census of Pakistan consists of some unique features such as self enumeration through a web Portal which has been implemented first time in the region. Even at world level, so far, only a handful of countries have attempted and succeeded in providing this opportunity to their citizens, which in itself is a great achievement and success for Pakistan. Approximately, 2,600,000 individuals’ data have been submitted through the Self enumeration Portal.

5. The Self enumeration Portal was launched from 20th February to 10th March 2023. The listing process was carried out from 1st March to 10th March, 2023. The field enumeration was commenced from 12th March, 2023 with initial completion date of 4th April, 2023 but the field operation was extended four times pursuant to the CMC decision and on the request of provincial governments till 30th April, 2023. The census field operation has further been extended due to under-enumeration in some districts for two weeks till 15th May, 2023.

Source: PBS

Pakistan has a large labour force that stands among the top 10 largest labour forces in the world. According to Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2020-21 employed Labour force increased to

67.25 million in 2020-21 as compared to 64.03 million in 2018-19. The unemployment rate slightly decreased from 6.9 percent in 2018-19 to 6.3 percent in 2020-21. This shows that 4.51

million people from the labour force could not get job during the same period. The working age population between the age of (15-24) and (25-34) is 41.77 million and 31.28 million respectively. Moreover, LFS for 2021-22 did not

take place due to the engagement of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics with the 7th Population & Housing Census. Latest labour force indicators are presented in Table 12.2

Table 12.2: Labour force and Employment Indicators				(Million)
Indicators	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	
Labour Force	65.5	68.75	71.76	
Employed Labour Force	61.71	64.03	67.25	
Unemployed	3.79	4.71	4.51	
Unemployment rate (%)	5.8	6.9	6.3	

Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

Pakistan is a country with young population thus, there is a need to create enough employment opportunities to absorb the growing labour force, especially the educated youth. The government is cognizant to create an enabling environment for businesses and industries to enhance the employability of youth.

Initiatives for Employment Generation

Around two-third of the country’s population consists of young people who need to be empowered through education and skills so that they can contribute to the socio-economic development of the country. Pakistan will cater the youth bulge till 2050 and it is essential to utilize their abilities so that they can perform for the country’s economic growth. The government has taken following initiatives to enhance the skill development and employment opportunities:

- i. National Innovation Award:** The National Innovation Award is an opportunity for young entrepreneurs to present their innovative ideas related to 8 thematic areas with a specific focus on Eco-Innovation. The teams and ideas selected through regional and national competitions will be engaged with the private sector and startup industry. The selected teams and ideas will also get scholarships and training. This competition will help in promoting startup culture and generating sustainable and green jobs.
- ii. Prime Minister's Ba-Ikhtiyar Naujawan Internship Program** worth Rs 4828.05 million is Pakistan’s largest internship program aimed at the economic

empowerment of youth. This internship will help in addressing the critical entry barriers to the market and enhance employability. Under the program, 40,000 youth will be offered paid internships of Rs 25000/- per month for a period of 6 months.

- iii. Prime Minister Youth Business & Agriculture Loan Scheme:** This scheme will promote entrepreneurship among youth by providing business loans on simple terms and with less mark-up through 15 Commercial, Islamic and SME banks. This program offers a special 25 percent quota reserved for women. Micro-financing through small business loans will promote a norm of job creation rather than job seeking among the country's youth bulge. The addition of agricultural loans will help the rural youth in bringing innovation to farming. Under this programme the government has disbursed Rs 6,965 million till March, 2023 to 15,502 beneficiaries for business and for the first time for agriculture purposes.
- iv. Establishment of Excellence Hubs in the Field of Renewable Energy:** This project envisages the establishment of state-of-the-art excellence hubs in the field of Renewable Energy in Government Colleges of Technology in Lahore, Taxila, Peshawar and Swat. After completion, the youth will be trained in “Photovoltaic (PV) Installer, PV solar technician and other renewable energy related trades.
- v. Improving Workforce Readiness in Punjab Project (IWRPP):** The estimated

cost of \$ 110.00 million including \$100.00 million loan from the Asian Development Bank. The major scope of the project involves; establishment of a center of excellences in 20 TVET institutes of Punjab, training programs in priority and forward looking skills areas with a focus on entrepreneurship and work based training, improved TVET Sector Institutional framework through Punjab Skills Development Authority (PSDA) & Punjab Skills Testing Agency (PSTA) for TVET policy research and TVET Management Information System & Labor Market Information System.

Skill Development

To materialize the commitments made under Pakistan Vision -2025 and SDGs, following major interventions and special initiatives have been taken at federal level. Further, a 25 percent quota is specified for women under following schemes.

- i. Introducing Matric-TECH Pathways for Integrating Technical & Vocational Education & Training & Formal Education at an estimated cost of Rs 315.00 million
- ii. “Establishment of Polytechnic Institute for Boys at Skardu” at an estimated cost of Rs 601.90 million
- iii. “Prime Minister’s Hunarmand Skill for ALL Program” at an estimated cost of Rs 9880.00 million.

Following major physical progress/ achievement have been made through above- mentioned interventions;

- i. Successfully piloted Matric-TECH project in 15 formal education schools (7 ICT, 4 AJK and 4 GB). Under this project, 27 TVET instructors were hired and 08 TVET qualifications have been developed. Students are being trained in following trades / disciplines: Hi-Tech and conventional technologies (Data Coding, Web and Graphic designing & Video Production, Garments Manufacturing, Industrial Electrician, Plumber, Hospitality and Beauty Services. These courses are

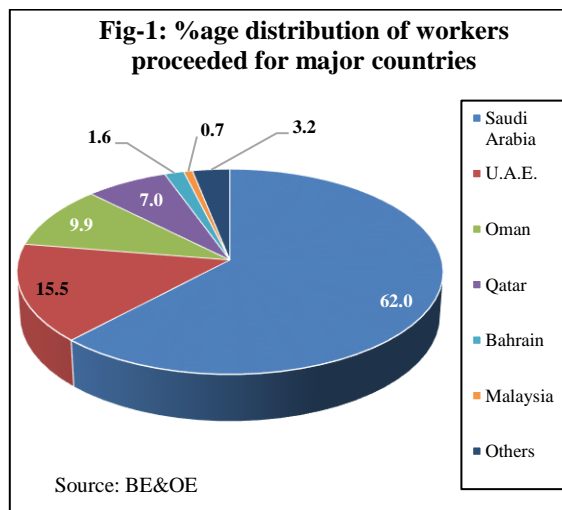
launched as an alternative third stream of career-education at secondary level in 9th & 10th standard.

- ii. Completed 70 percent construction/civil work of “Polytechnic Institute for Boys at Skardu” The institute will be operational in next year.
- iii. Trained 128,866 youth (75,268 in High-Tech/Digital IT and 53,598 in Conventional trades) as certified skilled professionals under “Skill for All” Program out of which 71 percent are employed. Almost 13000 trained and certified youth have secured overseas employment. Moreover, 141 Transgender have also been trained.
- iv. NAVTTC initiated TAKAMOL - NAVTTC Skill Verification Program (SVP) for joint certification and testing “Skills Verification Program” (SVP), which is being carried out for Pakistani skilled youth who are intended to get employment opportunities in Saudi Arabia. In this regard, over 57,989 people have been trained in the 23 skill trades, as per the demand of Saudi Arabia. In addition, Takamol- NAVTTC Online Automated Web Portal has been operationalized; the qualifications for these trades have been developed; Test Assessment centers are operational;2500 youth tested/certified and got employment in Saudi Arabia.
- v. Established 05 Sector Specific Centers of Excellence with the collaboration of EU/GIZ (01 in each province).
- vi. Formally certified 46,275 Youth under RPL.
- vii. Completed 2100 Apprenticeship training in 70 Industries and Enterprises.
- viii. Established and operationalized NEXT skilled workforce & Job portal i.e.jobs.gov.pk, with data of 458,071 skilled youth with 681,538 Jobs posted from 1071 employers.
- ix. Upgraded/equipped 500 technical and vocational training institutes with the latest IT gadgets/facilities and established 50 smart labs through latest training equipment provided under in CPEC framework.

Overseas Employment

More than 12.4 million Pakistanis have proceeded abroad for employment in over 50 countries through official procedures as of December 2022. More than 96 percent of Pakistani registered workers for overseas employment are in Gulf Cooperation Council countries especially Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. They are contributing to the development of Pakistan’s economy by sending remittances, which is the major source of foreign exchange after exports. Due to the normalization of post COVID-19 pandemic and ease in visa restrictions, an increasing trend was observed in terms of emigrants registered during 2022 including GCC countries.

According to the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment (BE&OE) in 2022 more than 62 percent (514,725) of Pakistanis workers moved to Saudi Arabia followed by UAE (15.5 percent) for earning their livelihood. Oman provided jobs to 82,380 (9.9 percent) and Qatar accommodated 57,984 (7.0 percent) Pakistani workers of different occupations. The Bahrain and Malaysia welcomed 13652 (1.6 percent) workers, and 6175 (0.7 percent) workers, respectively.



The massive development projects in various GCC countries under Vision 2030 created various opportunities for Pakistanis, which are likely to continue in the next few years.

During 2022, BE&OE registered 829,549 workers for overseas employment. Overall increasing trend was observed in terms of emigrants registered in 2022 as compared to 2021. Province-wise distribution of workers registered during 2018-2022 is reflected in Table 12.3.

Table 12.3: Province Wise Pakistani Workers Registered for Overseas Employment During the period (2018-2022)

Year	Federal	Punjab	Sindh	Khyber Pakhtun-Khwa	Baloc-histan	Azad Kashmir	N/Areas	Tribal Area	Total
2018	2471	185,902	41,551	88,361	2,930	33,028	2,760	25,436	382,439
2019	4295	312,439	57,171	186,176	5,103	30,151	2,554	27,314	625,203
2020	1814	118,818	16,950	68,299	1,869	7,685	244	9026	224,705
2021	2275	156,877	21121	76213	2470	10671	989	16032	286,648
2022	6535	458,241	59,067	224,889	8,013	29,496	1,156	42,152	829,549

Source: BE&OE

It is evident from Table 12.3 that during 2022, workers who proceeded abroad were highest from Punjab (458, 241), followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (224,88) and Sindh (59,067).

The Ministry of OP&HRD / BE&OE has taken the following steps to boost the manpower export and to ensure safe, orderly and regular emigration;

- MoOP&HRD has signed bilateral agreements/MoUs with destination countries. In this regard, a bilateral Agreement/MoU on Manpower Export was signed with Azerbaijan in 2022. BE&OE is actively pursuing the matter of signing the Bilateral MoUs on Manpower Export with other potential countries too.
- MoOP&HRD / BE&OE is actively working

to explore job opportunities for Pakistani workers in non-traditional countries. In this regard, a comprehensive diversification strategy has been developed for top five priority countries i.e. Saudi Arabia, UAE, Malaysia, Qatar & Oman along with other five potential/non-traditional countries such as Kuwait, South Korea, Japan, Germany and China to promote the export of manpower to these countries.

- Collection of registration fee, welfare fund & insurance premium on a single deposit slip and provide emigrants one window facility. The desks are operational at all Protectorate Offices.
- BE&OE created linkages between OEC and NAVTTC for matching of available jobs at BE&OE official website and data of the trained job seekers maintained by NAVTTC.
- Awareness campaigns to guide intending emigrants through print, electronic and social media, radio, website, Facebook page, Twitter, and short messages mobile cellular companies.
- Campaign against illegal Overseas Job Advertisements in close coordination with newspapers, FIA, PTA and other relevant departments. Moreover, in order to tighten enforcement and zero tolerance policy with respect to emigrants' complaints, licenses of Overseas Employment Promoter are suspended if found victim of breaking/violating the Emigration Ordinance/Rules 1979. In this regard, 04 OEP licenses were suspended during the period of July to December 2022.
- To increase the manpower export from Pakistan, 112 new licenses were issued to the Overseas Employment Promoters (OEPs) during the period July 2022 to December 2022. Total 2243 valid license holder OEPs are currently operational.
- BE&OE established a proper mechanism for redressal of complaints received through email, website, Facebook page, CWAs or Protectorate of Emigrants etc.
- Bureau ensured payment of an amount of Rs 312.55 million as death/disability compensation during the period July 2022 to

December 2022.

- BE&OE started registration of foreign employers on its website so that the intending emigrants may be hired either directly or through OEPs by registered Employers depending upon their requirements.
- National Emigration and Welfare Policy for overseas Pakistanis has been developed and is in the final stages of approval.

Women Empowerment

Pakistan has affirmed its commitment to Sustainable Development Goals. The SDG-5, is associated with gender empowerment and equality as the major goal, especially due to the cross cutting nature of gender inclusivity, vital for each goal. Numerous initiatives have been launched and laws have been introduced to ensure gender empowerment and equality over the years. However, the elimination of gender-based violence and discrimination in the country requires concerted efforts.

Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives has launched Citizen's Guide to Prevent Gender Based Violence (GBV) under Gender Unit to mark the International Women's Day. A gender unit is established in the Ministry so that development projects can be considered and reviewed from the gender perspective as well. The government reserved 50 percent scholarships programs for women. Similarly, the government is also starting an Innovation Fund program, through which women entrepreneurs will be encouraged and provided funds to run their businesses so that they can become role models for other women. Reaching the targets of SDG5 will not only lead to achieving gender equality, but it will also affect SDG 1 (no poverty) and SDG 2 (zero hunger). In the long-term, it will also help achieve SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) and even SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).

Impact of Floods on Gender

The 2022 floods affected 1.6 million women of reproductive age, with nearly 130,000 pregnant women need urgent health services having limited or no access to basic health services. The

floods also created educational and socioeconomic vulnerabilities for the public especially school going girls and employed females

Vulnerable groups such as women, children, and persons with disabilities have been affected by the floods. Women in particular have suffered notable losses to their livelihoods owing to their association with agriculture and livestock sector, creating a negative impact on their economic empowerment and wellbeing.

The floods have increased women’s vulnerability in terms of gender-based violence (GBV) due to aggravated household tensions, harassment, and abuse related to displacement and lack of secure infrastructure. Rates of early and forced marriages often increase in the wake of crises and economic security. The United Nations Population Fund estimates that 640,000 adolescent girls during the current crisis are vulnerable and at increased risk of coercions,

GBV, and child marriage.

Global Gender Gap Report 2022

According to Global Gender Gap Report 2022, Pakistan ranked 145 out of 146 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum (WEF). Pakistan has an index score of 0.564 which makes Pakistan’s ranking better than Afghanistan in South Asia. The dimensions used by WEF include economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment, and health and survival. Pakistan ranked 143rd in health and survival, 145th in economic participation and opportunity, 135th in educational attainment, and 95th in political empowerment indices.

Pakistan’s rankings improved in all categories as compared to 2021. Pakistan registered significant improvement across three sub-indices, with the highest positive variation in Economic Participation and Opportunity.

Table 12.4: Global Gender Gap Index Indicators

Indicators/Index	2021		2022	
	Ranking	Score	Ranking	Score
Global Gender Gap Index	153	0.556	145	0.564
Economic Participation and Opportunity	152	0.316	145	0.331
Educational Attainment	144	0.811	135	0.825
Health and Survival	153	0.944	143	0.944
Political Empowerment	98	0.154	95	0.156

Source: World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report 2021 and 2022

In terms of head of state, Pakistan’s ranking is relatively better and is at 31st place, however overall Pakistan stands at 95th position in the **Political Empowerment Index**. This is mainly because women’s representation in parliament and ministerial positions is very low. Although no country has yet achieved full gender parity, the top 10 economies have closed at least 80 percent of their gender gaps.

Initiatives taken by the Government in FY2023

A gender unit was established in the MoPD&SPI so that development projects can be considered and reviewed with the gender perspective as well. Ministry of Human Rights has complemented the human rights agenda through development projects. These projects have been

developed to strengthen the institutional capacity of MoHR as well as to bring greater awareness on human rights to promote and protect the rights of women particularly for inclusive education, training and rehabilitation services. The details of the ongoing projects are as follows:

- The National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up (NMRF) has been instituted in MoHR. It is an institutional arrangement that enables countries to measure and evaluate progress towards the achievement of the SDGs.
- It serves as a platform for dialogue among stakeholders on SDG targets and indicators, and provides guidance on how to collect, report, and use data to inform decision-

making.

- The NMRF also ensures that governments have the capacity to monitor and assess progress and identify gaps in implementation.
- The mechanism is a multi-stakeholder platform to facilitate dialogue and exchange of information between government, civil society, private sector, academia and other stakeholders on gender equality and women empowerment.
- The Human Rights Information Management System (HRIMS) is a comprehensive platform developed by MoHR to collect, store and analyze data related to human rights. It provides users with an integrated view of the human rights landscape, enabling them to quickly identify, analyze, and respond to human rights issues. HRIMS also supports the implementation of the SDGs and promote gender equality and women's empowerment.
- HRIMS can be used to track and monitor the progress of goals related to gender equality and women's empowerment. This data can be used to identify specific areas where change is needed and to measure the impact of initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.
- HRIMS can also be used to identify and address gaps in access to services for women and girls. Data collected through HRIMS can be used to assess the availability, quality, and affordability of health and education services for women and girls, as well as to identify and address any barriers to access.
- Finally, HRIMS can be used to support the collection and analysis of data on the economic and social participation of women and girls. This data can be used to inform the development of gender-sensitive economic and social policies and programs that promote gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The Shanghai Cooperation Organization's (SCO) Women Forum provides an

opportunity to discuss the most pressing issues of ensuring gender equality to promote the interaction of SCO countries in the development and implementation of effective measures in the field of gender equality, empowering women, stimulating their role in the implementation of SDGs.

- Planning Commission, Federal Investigation Agency and HEC organized awareness seminars on "Empowering women to fight against Cyber Bullying and Harassment" from 25th Nov- 10th Dec 2022 at different universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The main purpose of these seminars was to establish connection and trust between the state and the youth and raise awareness against cyber laws, cyber harassment and interventions that can be taken to counter it.
- Participation in the first International Congress of Influential Women and Commemoration of Women's Week and Mothers' Day from 20th January 2023 in Tehran, Iran. The purpose of this conference was to work together and exchange experiences in the field of intellectual and cultural foundations of the countries regarding women.

Major Measures Regarding Population

Federal Task Force on Population: Federal Task Force on Population exercises its jurisdiction for family planning and population. The forum re-affirmed its commitment to right based family planning where parents are sole decision makers regarding size of their family. Also, the narrative of balance (Tawazun) is adopted by the Federal Task Force, in consultation with all four provinces and AJK as well as GB, to sensitize the masses regarding resources and consumption.

Population Thematic Session for Turnaround Pakistan Conference: The Turnaround Pakistan Conference was organized on 28th June 2022 to discuss the key structural issues of reforming the population sector with a very wide range of stakeholders like political parties, federal and provincial governments, academia and independent think tanks etc.

PSDP Allocation on Population Programmes:

Ministry of National Health Services Regulations & Coordination is pursuing “Implementation of National Action Plan (NAP) on Population (2021-26)” amounting Rs 1998.820 million. An amount of Rs 217.500 million was utilized for programmed activities of the project in 2021-22. The allocation for the said project during 2022-23 is Rs 250 million for current activities. The NAP spells out the actions required to implement each of the CCI recommendation with timelines, budget, and output /impact indicators as evidence of the implementation.

Outlook/Conclusion

Rapid population growth has become a global issue with serious effects on developing countries in terms of depletion of natural resources and heavy pressure on civic facilities. Pakistan is also one of those countries where available resources are under acute pressure due to increased demand as a result of an ever-increasing population. The government is committed to provide a conducive and enabling environment to the country’s youth so that they can be empowered and perform for the country’s socio-economic growth. The labor force of

Pakistan is increasing at a rapid pace and the government is getting the maximum benefit of increased labor force by equipping them with technical and educational skills and making them more productive. The outcome of these efforts can be seen in terms of increased employment both at the national and international level. To further reap the benefit for young population, the government has launched different programmes under the umbrella of “Prime Minister's Youth Development Programme” for improving employment opportunities for youth. These programmes are expected to promote the norm of job creation rather than job seeking in youth and also will increase the chances of better employment opportunities not only in the domestic market but also in the international market.

Over the medium term it is expected that employment opportunities will increase in line with higher GDP growth and improvement in global economic environment particularly in the countries with which Pakistan is integrated economically. Furthermore, the realization to have a rationalized family size in line with the available resources will also help to limit the population growth in the coming years.