

Google Scholar



Crossref doi

scopus

Impact factor 6.2

Geoscience Journal

ISSN:1000-8527

Indexing:

- » Scopus
- » Google Scholar
- » DOI, Zenodo
- » Open Access



www.geoscience.ac



Registered

Migration and Skills Portability: Strategic Pathways for India's Global Competitiveness and Viksit Bharat 2047

M.Pavanakumari
Assistant Professor
Dept. of Management Studies
Ideal College of Arts and Sciences
Kakinada

Dr M.VIJAY KUMAR (Corresponding Author)
Prof and HOD-MBA
Andhra Loyola Institute of
Engineering and Technology
Vijayawada. AP.

Abstract

In an increasingly interconnected global economy, migration and skills portability have emerged as critical determinants of national and corporate competitiveness. The movement of skilled professionals across borders not only addresses labor market imbalances but also facilitates knowledge transfer, innovation, and productivity growth. However, disparities in qualification recognition, policy fragmentation, and limited alignment between domestic skilling initiatives and international labor market demands pose significant challenges. This paper explores the role of migration and skills portability policies in enhancing global competitiveness, with a focus on frameworks such as mutual recognition agreements, international qualification standards, and cross-border training programs. Drawing on comparative case studies and global policy experiences, the study highlights how governments, industries, and educational institutions can collaborate to create enabling ecosystems that support workforce mobility. The findings emphasize that strategic policies fostering skills portability not only strengthen the employability of migrants but also enhance the resilience of economies in adapting to technological, demographic, and geopolitical shifts. Ultimately, fostering inclusive, portable, and globally recognized skill systems is essential to harness the full potential of human capital for sustainable growth and competitiveness.

Keywords: Migration, Skills portability, Global competitiveness, Viksit Bharat 2047, Workforce mobility, Human Capital Development

Introduction

The 21st century global economy is increasingly shaped by the mobility of talent and the recognition of skills across national borders. Migration and skills portability are no longer peripheral concerns but central drivers of workforce competitiveness, knowledge transfer, and innovation. For India, with a population exceeding 1.4 billion and a workforce where nearly 65% is below the age of 35, the ability to develop and export skilled human capital presents a strategic opportunity. In this context, the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047—transforming India into a developed nation by its centenary of independence—places human capital development, skilling, and global employability at the heart of its growth strategy. India already occupies a pivotal role in global migration. According to the United Nations International Migration Report (2022), India is the world's largest source of international migrants, with more than 18 million Indians living abroad. Simultaneously, India has remained the top recipient of global remittances, receiving \$125 billion in 2023 (World Bank), underscoring the economic significance of skilled migration. These figures highlight not only the scale of India's diaspora but also the potential multiplier effect of ensuring that its workforce possesses globally recognized and portable skills.

Over the past decade, flagship initiatives such as the Skill India Mission and the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) have trained over 1.5 crore youth, while the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes flexibility, vocational integration, and multidisciplinary education to prepare graduates for global careers. However, a critical challenge persists: skills portability. Indian workers often face barriers in international labor markets due to limited recognition of domestic certifications, fragmented policy frameworks, and mismatches between national training systems and global industry requirements.

At the global level, frameworks such as the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), International Labour Organization (ILO) standards, and bilateral Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) provide pathways for skills recognition and fair migration practices. For India, aligning its skilling ecosystem with these international mechanisms is vital to maximize labor mobility, particularly in high-demand regions such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), European Union, and ASEAN. Strengthening migration governance through

robust bilateral agreements, cross-border training programs, and digital credentialing systems will be central to ensuring India's workforce remains competitive.

This paper examines the intersection of migration, skills portability, and global competitiveness within the framework of Viksit Bharat 2047. By analyzing policy imperatives, international best practices, and India's domestic initiatives, it highlights the strategic interventions required to harness migration as a driver of development. Ultimately, enabling skill recognition and safe, productive mobility will not only empower Indian workers but also solidify India's position as a leading global talent hub, thereby accelerating its journey towards becoming a developed and globally competitive nation by 2047.

Literature Review

1. Global Context of Migration and Skills Portability

Migration is a key driver of global development, contributing to both host and origin countries through labor supply, remittances, and knowledge transfer. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM, 2018) emphasizes skills recognition and portability as central to fair migration governance. The ILO also highlights the importance of Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) and global skills partnerships for aligning workforce training with international demand (ILO, 2021).

2. India's Migration Footprint and Economic Significance

India has the largest diaspora in the world, with 18 million international migrants recorded in 2020 (United Nations, 2022). It is also the top remittance recipient, receiving USD 125 billion in 2023, accounting for nearly 15% of global remittances (World Bank, 2023). These flows underscore the critical role of overseas employment in India's economy and the importance of ensuring skills portability to sustain and enhance migration outcomes.

3. Skill India Mission and PMKVY

Launched in 2015, the Skill India Mission aims to train over 400 million youth by 2022, with the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) as its flagship program. As of 2023, 1.64 crore youth had been trained (Government of India, 2023). However, employment outcomes remain limited: official data shows that less than 15% of beneficiaries secured jobs (Economic Times,

2024). Further, certification rates under PMKVY hover at 47%, raising concerns about training quality and employability (Parliamentary Standing Committee Report, 2023).

4. International Migration Policies and Recognition Mechanisms

Globally, Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) in regions like the EU and ASEAN have shown success in facilitating cross-border labor mobility. India has begun negotiating bilateral labor mobility agreements with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and some OECD countries, but coverage remains limited. Literature emphasizes the need for digital credentialing systems, interoperable qualification frameworks, and pre-departure training linked to overseas employment (ILO, 2021).

5. Policy Gaps and Challenges

Despite large-scale training efforts, skill mismatches and low employability rates persist. Weak placement outcomes in PMKVY and limited recognition of Indian certifications abroad constrain global competitiveness. Furthermore, gaps in data transparency—such as the discontinuation of placement tracking under PMKVY 4.0—make it difficult to assess impact (Careers360, 2024).

6. Opportunities for Viksit Bharat 2047

The literature suggests several opportunities aligned with Viksit Bharat 2047:

Leveraging digital credentialing (e.g., Academic Bank of Credits, DigiLocker) to strengthen international recognition. Building Global Skill Partnerships with destination countries for co-financed training. Expanding MRAs in priority sectors such as healthcare, construction, and digital services. Aligning Skill India and NEP 2020 reforms with international frameworks to convert India's demographic dividend into a global talent advantage.

Objectives

1. To analyze the role of migration and skills portability in enhancing global competitiveness with specific reference to India's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.
2. To examine international migration policies and their implications for skilled labor mobility, opportunities, and challenges in a globalized labor market.

3. To evaluate India's skill development initiatives such as Skill India Mission and other sectoral policies, highlighting their effectiveness in preparing the workforce for international mobility.
4. To identify policy gaps and opportunities for aligning India's skill development and education reforms with global standards for labor migration and skills recognition.
5. To explore bilateral and multilateral frameworks that facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications and enhance international employability of Indian workers.
6. To propose strategic policy recommendations for creating a robust ecosystem that supports skills portability, safe migration, and equitable participation in the global workforce.

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining secondary data analysis with a qualitative policy review to examine India's skill development initiatives, migration policies, and their alignment with global standards in the context of *Viksit Bharat 2047*.

1. Data Sources

- Government Reports & Dashboards: Official data was collected from the *National Education Policy 2020* (Government of India, 2020), *Skill India Mission Dashboard* (MSDE, 2023), and the *Parliamentary Standing Committee Report on PMKVY Outcomes* (2023).
- International Databases: Global migration and labour market trends were examined using the *International Labour Organization (ILO, 2021)*, *United Nations International Migration Report (2022)*, and *World Bank Remittances Data (2023)*.
- Media Sources: Current labour market challenges and scheme effectiveness were supplemented through credible journalistic reports such as *The Economic Times (2024)*, providing contextual evidence on employment outcomes.

Scope and Limitations

- The study primarily relies on **secondary data**, which may reflect time lags and reporting gaps.

- Employment outcome statistics, such as those from PMKVY, vary across sources and require cautious interpretation.
- The analysis focuses on **policy-level initiatives and recognition frameworks**, not on individual migrant experiences.

The role of migration and skills portability in enhancing global competitiveness with specific reference to India's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047

This concept focuses on understanding how the movement of skilled workers across borders and the recognition of their competencies contribute to national and global competitiveness. Migration, when supported by skills portability, enables countries like India to leverage their demographic dividend by placing skilled labor in international markets where demand exists.

Analyze the role of migration and skills portability in enhancing global competitiveness, with specific reference to India's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

A. India as the Top Global Recipient of Remittances

Remittance inflows are massive and growing:

In FY 2024–25, India received a record \$135.46 billion in remittances—marking a 14% increase over the previous fiscal year (The Economic Times). Reflecting a consistent upward trend, inflows rose from approximately \$70 billion in 2014 to \$140 billion in 2024 (DD India). The World Bank also reported \$120 billion in remittances in 2023, helping India stay far ahead of the next-largest recipient, Mexico (66 billion) (India Today, Policy Circle).

B. Sustaining Global Competitiveness via Skilled Migration

India's migration is quantitatively significant:

In 2024, approximately 18.5 million Indians were registered as international migrants, up from just 6.6 million in 1990—a nearly threefold increase (DD India). The share of India's remittances in global flows has also climbed—from around 11% in 2001 to 14% in 2024 (DD India).

Shift in the source of remittances: Advanced economies (USA, UK, Singapore, Canada, Australia) now contribute over 50% of India's remittances—surpassing contributions from the Gulf for the first time (Insights IAS).

C. Macro-Economic Impacts & Alignment with Viksit Bharat 2047

Remittances constitute a substantial and stable external financing source:

As of 2023, remittances accounted for 3.2–3.4% of India's GDP, up from 2.8% in 2000—and surpassing FDI inflows as a percentage of GDP (1.9%) (The Hindu Business Line, mint).

D. Bolstering India's global competitiveness:

The steady rise in remittances underscores how Indian workers are securing higher-paying, globally competitive roles and sending earnings back home—enhancing macroeconomic stability and human capital flows. Projections suggest remittances may reach \$160 billion by 2029, thanks to India's demographic dividends and growing global demand for its skilled workforce (The Hindu Business Line, DD India).

International migration policies and their implications for skilled labor mobility, opportunities, and challenges in a globalized labor market

Main Focus on analyzing how international migration policies shape the movement of skilled workers, and how such policies impact India's position in the global labor market. While India has a large and growing pool of skilled human resources, the ability of these workers to contribute to and benefit from global opportunities depends heavily on the frameworks and regulations established by destination countries.

1. Policy Diversity Across Countries

Countries like the USA, Canada, UK, and Australia adopt immigration policies that are increasingly skill-based, prioritizing workers in STEM, healthcare, and high-demand sectors. Gulf countries, on the other hand, rely heavily on migrant labor, but often restrict permanent settlement, skill recognition, and labor rights. The European Union operates systems like the Blue Card Directive, which creates pathways for highly skilled workers from non-EU countries, though implementation varies.

2. Global Skill Shortages and Demand

According to the OECD (2023), more than 40% of employers worldwide face difficulties in recruiting skilled talent, particularly in **healthcare, IT, and engineering**. Aging populations in advanced economies are expected to create 95 million skill gaps by 2030, especially in health and social care (World Economic Forum, 2023).

This demand presents significant opportunities for India, with its young workforce, to position itself as a leading global talent supplier.

3. Barriers to Skilled Mobility

Qualification recognition gaps: Degrees and certifications obtained in India are not always accepted abroad without additional exams or re-licensing (e.g., medical professionals).

Visa restrictions: Lengthy and costly visa procedures in advanced economies hinder smooth labor mobility.

Brain drain vs. brain gain: While skilled migration benefits individuals and global markets, it can also deprive India of talent in critical domestic sectors.

4. Policy Trends Affecting India

Tightening of visa regimes in the US (H-1B caps) and UK (post-Brexit immigration rules) affect Indian IT professionals. Liberal pathways in Canada and Australia are drawing more Indian skilled workers due to point-based immigration systems that favor education and work experience. Bilateral and multilateral agreements—such as India’s labor mobility partnerships with Japan, Germany, and Gulf countries—are evolving as strategic instruments to address these challenges.

5. Implications for Global Competitiveness

Countries with open, skills-focused migration policies benefit from India’s workforce, while India strengthens its geopolitical and economic linkages through talent exports. For India to achieve the goals of Viksit Bharat 2047, it must engage in policy diplomacy that secures better mobility rights, safe migration channels, and mutual recognition of skills.

India’s skill development initiatives such as Skill India Mission and other sectoral policies, highlighting their effectiveness in preparing the workforce for international mobility.

1)Scale of training under PMKVY / Skill India: since launch in 2015 the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) has trained/oriented ~1.48 crore (14.8 million) candidates as of June 30, 2024.

- Measured placement outcomes: recent government/press reporting indicates a low placement conversion — of the ~1.6 crore trained since 2015 only about 24.3 lakh (~2.43 million) were placed (i.e., <15% placement rate), raising concerns about the training→employment link.
- Global mobility context — India as a large migrant source & remittance recipient: India has become a leading source of migrants to OECD countries (large increases in 2021–22) and remains the top recipient of remittances (World Bank estimate ~\$129B in 2024), which underscores strong outward mobility of Indian workers (including skilled workers).
- National labour / employability studies: India-focused employment analyses (including ILO-supported India Employment Report 2024) highlight persistent youth employment challenges and skills mismatches despite large skilling programs.

2)India's main skilling architecture does (strengths for international mobility)

1. Mass scale & outreach (critical mass). Programs such as PMKVY, Jan Shikshan Sansthan, ITIs, NAPS and others deliver training at large scale — a precondition for any upward shift in international mobility capacity. (PMKVY numbers above).
2. Competency/learning-outcome focus via NSQF. The National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) standardizes outcomes across formal, non-formal and informal learning, enabling clearer articulation of what a certified trainee knows/can do — valuable for making credentials transparent to overseas employers/credential evaluators.
3. Sector-focused institutions and Sector Skill Councils (SSCs). Industry-linked SSCs and occupational standards target sectors with internationally transferable skills (IT, healthcare, hospitality, construction, maritime). Where these align to global job requirements, mobility is easier.

4. Apprenticeships & ITIs. Apprenticeship promotion (NAPS) and long-term craftsman training provide work-experience components — a strong signal to foreign employers when quality is maintained.
5. Digital certification & MIS. Digital certification systems and the Skill India portal improve traceability of credentials which helps verification for overseas employers/visa processes.

3) Main weaknesses / constraints that reduce effectiveness for international mobility

1. Weak placement & demand linkage. Training scale is high but **placement rates are low** (<15% per gov/press figures for PMKVY), which indicates poor alignment with real job demand, limited job search support, or low-quality placements — all of which reduce graduates' readiness for competitive international markets.
2. Quality and assessment gaps. Large programs face heterogeneity in training provider quality, inconsistent assessment rigor, and limited long-term tracking of outcomes — undermining credibility of credentials abroad. (ILO / India employment analyses flag these issues).
3. International recognition of credentials is limited. NSQF is nationally coherent but not yet fully mapped to many foreign qualification frameworks or widely recognized credential systems (EQF, US/Canadian provincial systems, EU frameworks). Absence of formal bilateral recognition agreements makes overseas employers/credential evaluators cautious.
4. Language & soft skills shortfalls. Many overseas roles (especially in OECD countries) require high English proficiency, workplace communication, and cultural adaptation training — areas often weak in short skilling courses.
5. Sectoral mismatch for high-skilled migration. While India supplies many high-skilled migrants (IT/healthcare), much of government skilling under PMKVY targets short-term vocational roles that may not match the “high-skilled” categories driving large OECD immigration (e.g., advanced IT, regulated health professions). OECD/IMF analyses show India accounted for a large share of high-skilled migrants to OECD in recent years — these are typically shaped by higher-education and professional streams more than short vocational training.

4)Policy gaps (why current reforms don't fully support international labor mobility & recognition)

1. Outcome / placement shortfall (training \neq jobs): Large training volumes are not translating into stable employment outcomes — weak labour market alignment reduces graduates' competitiveness for overseas jobs that often require proven work-experience and employer references. (PMKVY placement figures above).
2. Limited international recognition of credentials: NSQF is nationally coherent, but there is no systematic, government-led mapping/recognition of NSQF credentials to widely used international frameworks (EQF, Australian Qualifications Framework, Canadian provincial frameworks) or to regulated professions (nursing, allied health, engineering). This slows credential acceptance by foreign regulators and employers.
3. Heterogeneous training quality & weak QA across providers: Large numbers of private and public training providers, variable trainer quality, inconsistent assessments and insufficient third-party audits reduce trust in the credential — especially by overseas actors who favour standardised, audited qualifications. (Signalled in national evaluations and implied by low placement conversion.)
4. Insufficient employer engagement and placement pipelines abroad: Limited structured partnerships with foreign employers, recruitment agencies, or host-country training institutions means few direct placement pathways or apprenticeships tied to overseas hiring.
5. Low emphasis on language, professional communication and cross-cultural competencies: Many migration destinations require minimum language or professional licensure standards; short vocational courses often lack robust language/soft skills or preparation for credential/licensure exams used abroad.
6. Data & tracking gaps on international outcomes: MIS systems track training and some domestic placements, but no systematic national tracer system tracks how many trainees obtain foreign employment, the sectors, earnings, retention or remittance impact — making it hard to evaluate migration outcomes of public skilling.

7. Regulatory & migration safeguards missing for safe mobility: Pre-departure advice, verified employer contracts, legal/rights orientation and grievance mechanisms are not uniformly integrated with most mass skilling schemes, raising risk of exploitation when migration pathways are developed without safeguards.

5) Practical opportunities / reforms (what to do)

Below are high-impact, implementable reforms — each paired with measurable KPIs.

A. Map NSQF to international frameworks & negotiate recognition agreements

- Action: Create a time-bound program to map priority NSQF occupational standards to EQF / major destination frameworks and start bilateral recognition dialogues (e.g., with UK, Canada, GCC states, EU member(s) for specific occupations).
- Why: Reduces employer/regulator uncertainty and speeds credential acceptance.
- KPI: KPI of NSQF qualifications mapped; # of bilateral recognition MOUs signed; % increase in foreign employer acceptance in tracer surveys.

B. Create “international-alignment” training streams for targeted sectors

- Action: Within PMKVY/NAPS/ITIs create dedicated pathways for sectors with known demand abroad (IT certifications, nursing/allied health with clinical equivalence modules, hospitality, maritime, construction trades for GCC), co-designed with destination-country employers or professional bodies. Provide additional clinical/apprenticeship hours or supervised foreign-standard practicum.
- KPI: placement rate into verified overseas jobs; pass rates on destination licensure/certification exams.

C. Strengthen quality assurance & verifiable digital credentials

- Action: Tighten accreditation, mandate independent third-party assessments, publish provider performance dashboards. Issue verifiable digital credentials (machine-readable certificates / credential wallets) to speed background checks and verification by foreign employers.

- KPI: % of credentials issued as verifiable digital badges; reduction in credential verification time.

D. Integrate language & professional orientation as mandatory modules for mobility streams

- Action: Include CEFR-aligned language training (target B1/B2 or destination-minimum), work-readiness, and cultural orientation modules with measurable proficiency targets; partner with recognized language test providers for certification.
- KPI: % of trainees achieving CEFR thresholds or equivalent test scores; employer satisfaction on communication.

E. Build bilateral employer partnerships & pre-departure placement guarantees

- Action: Use MOUs with selected overseas employers/recruiters that co-design curricula and provide verified job offers contingent on certification. Combine these with legal pre-departure briefings and placement contracts vetted by government bodies.
- KPI: # of verified MOUs; % of trainees with vetted pre-departure job contracts; incidents of disputes per 1,000 placed.

F. Establish tracer studies & longitudinal outcome tracking (domestic + international)

- Action: Link PMKVY/NSDC MIS to a national tracer study program (6/12/24 months) and include module to capture overseas employment, sector, employer type, earnings and remittance flows. Make anonymized microdata available for research.
- KPI: % of cohorts successfully traced at 6/12 months; # of trainees reporting overseas employment.

G. Support credential bridging, re-skilling and exam preparation for regulated professions

- Action: For health, engineering and technical regulated jobs, fund bridging courses and supervised internship slots that meet host-country registration requirements.
- KPI: pass rates on host-country registration exams; time-to-licensure.

H. Implement pre-departure protections and a verified recruiter registry

- Action: Regulate / license recruitment agents, maintain a government verified recruiter registry, provide insured placement guarantees and a helpline for migrant trainees.
- KPI: % of recruiters on registry; resolved complaints rate and time to resolution.

Bilateral & multilateral frameworks that enable mutual recognition — with data and India's status

1) Multilateral accreditation/recognition Accords (profession / program-level)

These Accords are *sectoral* — they recognise the substantial equivalence of accredited programmes (useful for engineers, technologists, computing graduates, etc.).

- Washington Accord (engineering degrees) — *purpose*: mutual recognition of outcomes from accredited undergraduate engineering programs (facilitates graduate mobility and professional recognition).

India status: National Board of Accreditation (NBA) is a permanent signatory (NBA accepted as signatory 13 June 2014).

Why it matters: Graduates of NBA-accredited programs in India are recognised as meeting academic requirements of other signatory countries.

Source: IEA Washington Accord & NBA pages.

- Sydney Accord (engineering technologists) and Dublin Accord (engineering technicians) — also IEA accords covering technologist/technician tracks; useful where Indian programmes meet those accreditation standards.
Signatories: multiple (IEA lists).

Source: IEA accords pages.

- Seoul Accord (computing & IT degrees) — *purpose*: mutual recognition of tertiary computing/IT qualifications among signatory accreditation agencies.
India status: India is not currently a full signatory of the Seoul Accord (Seoul Accord signatories include ACS, ABET, CIPS, BCS, HKIE, JABEE, etc.).
Signatories (approx.): ~8–12 full signatories (see Seoul Accord signatory list).
Implication: Indian computing/IT degrees are not covered by Seoul-Accord mutual

recognition unless accredited under a Seoul-Accord signatory regime.
Source: Seoul Accord signatories.

2) Government-to-government mechanisms & MOUs (broad recognition / cooperation)

These can cover higher education, VET, and skill qualifications across whole sectors — crucial for two-way mobility.

- Australia — India: Mechanism for Mutual Recognition of Qualifications (signed 2 March 2023).
Scope: school, VET and higher education qualifications; aims to facilitate two-way student & professional mobility and recognition of credentials for study and employment.
Why it matters: first comprehensive mechanism of its kind between India and a major destination country; explicitly covers skill qualifications.
Source: Australian Dept of Education pages & India PIB press release.
- India — United Kingdom: MoU on Mutual Recognition of Academic Qualifications (signed 21 July 2022).
Scope: mutual recognition for many higher-education qualifications (excludes regulated professional degrees such as medicine, nursing, engineering — handled separately).
Why it matters: creates a formal route for credential recognition and credit transfer between India & UK institutions.
Source: India–UK MoU (education.gov.in PDF).
- Other bilateral mobility/migration MOUs & partnerships: India's Ministry of External Affairs lists multiple MoUs/agreements on labour/migration or migration & mobility partnerships (examples include Germany, Portugal, Mauritius, UK, Austria — see MEA annex). These MOUs vary in scope (employment, recruitment protocols, labour protections).
Why it matters: bilateral labour MoUs can standardize recruitment, protect migrants, and sometimes include recognition pathways.
Source: MEA list of MoUs (Annexure).

Findings

1. Skill Development Policies have improved domestic employability but face gaps in global alignment
 - Initiatives like Skill India Mission, PMKVY, and Sector Skill Councils have trained over 1.37 crore youth (2015–2022).
 - However, certifications are largely nationally focused, with limited international portability, constraining India's ability to tap global labour markets.
2. Engineering qualifications enjoy global recognition, but other sectors lag
 - India's permanent membership in the Washington Accord (2014) ensures international recognition of accredited engineering degrees in 25 signatory countries.
 - In contrast, IT, healthcare, and vocational trades lack such global accords, reducing their international employability despite high demand abroad.
3. Bilateral and multilateral frameworks are emerging but remain selective
 - Agreements with Australia (2023) and the UK (2022) on mutual recognition of qualifications mark significant steps forward.
 - Yet, India is not a signatory to the UNESCO Global Convention on Qualifications Recognition, which limits universal portability.
4. Labour migration MOUs are expanding but focus more on worker protection than skill recognition
 - India has signed migration partnerships with countries like Germany, Portugal, and Mauritius, but many do not integrate structured skill portability or mutual qualification pathways.
 - As a result, Indian workers often accept lower-skilled jobs abroad despite possessing higher-level skills.
5. Policy misalignment between education and migration needs persists

- The National Education Policy (2020) emphasizes flexibility, multidisciplinary learning, and global competitiveness.
 - However, integration with migration policies and international qualification standards is limited, leading to a mismatch between education reforms and overseas labour market requirements.
6. Demographic dividend is underutilized for global competitiveness
- With a median age of 28 years and over 12 million Indians working abroad, India has the potential to become a global skill hub.
 - But limited global portability of skills and qualifications reduces the scale at which India can convert its demographic advantage into global economic influence.
7. Viksit Bharat 2047 vision requires stronger international alignment
- To position India as a leader in the global workforce by 2047, policies must focus on:
 - Expanding MRAs for healthcare, IT, and vocational trades.
 - Joining international conventions on qualification recognition.
 - Embedding global skill standards in domestic training and certification.

Recommendations

1. Align Domestic Skill Standards with Global Frameworks
 - Map Indian skill qualifications against international frameworks like the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework.
 - Embed global occupational standards into Skill India Mission and Sector Skill Councils training modules to ensure portability.
2. Expand Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) and Bilateral Frameworks

- Negotiate MRAs in priority sectors (healthcare, IT, construction, hospitality) with destination countries in the Gulf, EU, UK, Australia, and Canada.
 - Use successful models like the Australia–India Qualification Recognition Mechanism (2023) as templates for other agreements.
3. Join Global Conventions on Qualifications Recognition
- Accede to the UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (2019) to enhance universal acceptance of Indian degrees.
 - This would provide Indian graduates access to smoother recognition processes in over 38 signatory countries.
4. Strengthen Pre-Departure Orientation and Upskilling Programs
- Institutionalize Pre-Departure Orientation Training (PDOT) to include cross-cultural skills, language training, and country-specific labour standards.
 - Create fast-track upskilling centers in India aligned with foreign regulatory requirements, especially in nursing, elderly care, and IT.
5. Promote Digital Verification of Skills and Certificates
- Expand use of DigiLocker and blockchain-based credentials to ensure authenticity and easy cross-border verification of qualifications.
 - Partner with destination country regulators to integrate Indian certification databases with their recognition systems.
6. Strengthen Labour Mobility Diplomacy
- Establish a dedicated Skill Mobility Cell under MEA–MSDE to coordinate MRAs, negotiate labour agreements, and monitor outcomes.
 - Use India’s G20 and BRICS platforms to push for multilateral frameworks on skill recognition and fair recruitment practices.
7. Promote Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) for Global Skill Development

- Collaborate with multinational employers to co-design training programs that meet international standards.
- Provide incentives for industries to set up international skill centers in India that certify workers for global employability.

Conclusion

India stands at a critical juncture where its demographic dividend, robust skilling ecosystem, and expanding global partnerships can be strategically leveraged to position the nation as a global hub for skilled manpower. Initiatives such as the Skill India Mission, the National Education Policy 2020, and international accords like the Washington Accord have created a strong foundation for aligning Indian qualifications with global standards. However, significant gaps remain in the recognition of vocational, IT, and healthcare qualifications, limiting the full realization of India's migration potential. As the world witnesses a growing demand for skilled workers—particularly in advanced economies facing aging populations and skill shortages—India's ability to provide a future-ready workforce will directly influence its global competitiveness. By expanding mutual recognition agreements, joining multilateral conventions, embedding international standards in domestic training, and promoting labour mobility diplomacy, India can transform its workforce into a globally recognized brand.

In the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, skill portability and migration policies are not just tools for overseas employment, but vital levers for strengthening India's economic resilience, enhancing foreign exchange earnings, and asserting leadership in the global knowledge economy. A forward-looking, internationally aligned skilling framework will ensure that India not only meets domestic development goals but also emerges as a trusted provider of talent to the world, shaping the country's path toward inclusive and sustainable global competitiveness.

References

1. Government of India. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. Ministry of Education. https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf

2. Government of India. (2023). *Skill India Mission Dashboard*. Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship. <https://dashboard.skillindia.gov.in/>
3. International Labour Organization. (2021). *Skills and migration: Building partnerships for portability*. ILO. https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_791474/lang--en/index.htm
4. Observer Research Foundation. (2021). *NEP 2020 and vocational education: Opportunities and structural challenges*. ORF. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/nep-2020-and-vocational-education/>
5. Parliament of India. (2023). *Review of PMKVY outcomes: Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour, Textiles and Skill Development*. Lok Sabha Secretariat. <https://loksabhadocs.nic.in/>
6. Social Policy Research Foundation (SPRF). (2022). *Vocational education in NEP 2020: Opportunities and challenges*. SPRF India. <https://sprf.in/vocational-education-in-nep-2020-opportunities-and-challenges/>
7. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2022). *International migration report 2022*. UN DESA. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migration-2022>
8. World Bank. (2023). *Migration and remittances data*. World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues/brief/migration-remittances-data>
9. The Economic Times. (2024, February 7). *Only 15% of PMKVY beneficiaries land jobs, government data shows*. The Economic Times. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/only-15-of-pmkvy-beneficiaries-land-jobs-government-data-shows/articleshow/107489979.cms>
10. https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/diaspora-remittances-hit-new-record-at-135-46-bn-in-fy25/articleshow/122144367.cms?utm_source=chatgpt.com "Diaspora remittances hit new record at \$135.46 bn in FY25"
11. https://ddindia.co.in/2025/07/skilled-workforce-drives-indias-rise-as-the-worlds-leading-remittance-recipient/?utm_source=chatgpt.com "Skilled Workforce Drives India's Rise as the World's Leading Remittance Recipient - DD India"

12. https://www.indiatoday.in/business/story/india-received-120-billion-in-remittances-in-2023-most-from-us-world-bank-2558738-2024-06-27?utm_source=chatgpt.com "India received \$120 billion in remittances in 2023, most from US: World Bank - India Today"
13. https://www.policycircle.org/economy/india-remittances-in-2024/?utm_source=chatgpt.com "Remittances in 2024: India stays ahead of the curve in a changing world | Policy Circle"
14. https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/nri/invest/remittances-to-india-expected-to-grow-by-3-7-in-2024-to-reach-124-bn-economic-survey/articleshow/111924442.cms?utm_source=chatgpt.com "India's Remittances: Remittances to India expected to grow by 3.7% in 2024, to reach \$124 bn: Economic Survey - The Economic Times"
15. https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/remittances-to-india-may-grow-3-7-in-2024-to-124-bn-economic-survey-124072200558_1.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com "Remittances to India may grow 3.7% in 2024 to \$124 bn: Economic Survey | Economy & Policy News - Business Standard"
16. https://www.insightsonindia.com/2025/04/05/rbis-remittances-survey-2025/?utm_source=chatgpt.com "RBI Remittances Survey 2023-24: Why Advanced Economies Now Lead India's Remittance Inflows"
17. https://www.livemint.com/economy/india-remittances-migrants-economy-working-age-population-us-uk-singapore-canada-australia-gulf-skilled-indians-11743920532468.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com "Brain gain: Skilled Indians are fuelling India's remittance surge"
18. https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/remittances-to-india-could-rise-to-160-bn-by-2029-from-115-bn-in-2023/article68460207.ece?utm_source=chatgpt.com "RBI: Remittances to rise as India world's leading labour supply - The Hindu BusinessLine"
19. https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/mandaviya-outlines-five-pronged-strategy-to-help-india-become-a-viksit-bharat-in-2047/articleshow/121520105.cms?utm_source=chatgpt.com "Mandaviya outlines five-pronged strategy to help India become a Viksit Bharat in 2047"

20. **PIB — PMKVY statistics (PMKVY trained/oriented 1.48 crore by 30 June 2024).**
Press Information Bureau: *Under PMKVY ... since 2015 till 30.6.2024, 1.48 crore candidates have been trained/oriented.* [Press Information Bureau](https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2034984)
<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2034984>
21. **Economic Times / government reporting — PMKVY placement shortfall (≈24.3 lakh placed; <15% placement in recent reporting).** [The Economic Times+1](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jobs/government-jobs/only-15-of-pm-kaushal-vikas-yojana-beneficiaries-land-jobs-govt-data-shows/articleshow/123115984.cms)
<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jobs/government-jobs/only-15-of-pm-kaushal-vikas-yojana-beneficiaries-land-jobs-govt-data-shows/articleshow/123115984.cms>
22. **NSQF official description / Notification (framework and levels).** MHRD / NSQF notification & NIELIT overview. [Education Ministry of India+1](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NSQF%20NOTIFICATION.pdf)
[https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NSQF%20NOTIFICATION.p](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NSQF%20NOTIFICATION.pdf)
[df](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NSQF%20NOTIFICATION.pdf)
<https://www.nielit.gov.in/content/nsqf>
23. **OECD — International Migration Outlook 2023 / 2024 (migration trends to OECD countries, record permanent migration in 2023).** [OECD+1](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023/10/international-migration-outlook-2023_0faed233.html)
https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023/10/international-migration-outlook-2023_0faed233.html
https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2024/11/international-migration-outlook-2024_c6f3e803.html
24. **World Bank blog / remittances 2024 — India top recipient (~\$129B in 2024).** [World BankBlogs](https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/peoplemove/in-2024--remittance-flows-to-low--and-middle-income-countries-ar)
<https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/peoplemove/in-2024--remittance-flows-to-low--and-middle-income-countries-ar>