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Migration Skill Corridor Report INDIA – GERMANY

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Germany fighting for its share of the Indian global gold mine for labour power

Abstract

In this report we analyse the India-Germany migration skill corridor from a corridor perspective. The corridor developed into an institutionalized, bilaterally governed type, yet shaped by two unequal partners. India represents a 'priority partner' for the German government in terms of skilled mobility, while Germany is for India just one partner of a portfolio of destinations. Both partners manage the corridor to facilitate legal and safe skilled migration. The corridor functions as a 'lighthouse' for other countries — ethically robust, normatively influential, but limited in scale, skills return/development, and inclusivity. While historically dominated by nurse migration, and later high-skilled STEM/IT migration, the corridor diversified in terms of sectors/occupations and migration type — covering various fields, including emerging medium-skilled vocational and technical occupations and increasing student and vocational training migration. Several skill mobility partnerships and recruitment agreements, particularly on subnational level, have recently been signed and implemented. The corridor is shaped by a dual structure of public and private programs: One that is to large parts ethically robust but highly selective at the same time, and another that is more inclusive in terms of volume but often shifts costs and risks onto migrants, with minimal oversight. The result is differential recruitment and inclusion where access to skilled mobility with better jobs, wages, and long-term prospects is unevenly distributed. Major bottlenecks remain: German language acquisition, skills recognition and harmonization, insufficient visa and language infrastructure, lack of oversight of the private sector.

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Introduction

The India-Germany migration skill corridor stands out as one of the most institutionalised bilateral labour migration partnerships between India and a European destination country. Anchored in the 2022 Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement and reinforced by Germany's Skilled Immigration Act and its 2024 Skilled Labour Strategy for India, the corridor reflects Germany's strategic turn toward regulated, balanced and partner-country-specific recruitment in response to acute demographic and labour market pressures.

The corridor operates through a dual structure: state-led programmes establish ethical benchmarks and procedural standards, while private recruitment agencies deliver the volume and speed that public programmes cannot. This parallel dynamic has expanded access but also introduced uneven standards, unequal cost distribution, and limited regulatory oversight.

German language acquisition remains one of the most significant bottlenecks across all sectors and pathways, disproportionately excluding lower-income aspirants. Healthcare, particularly nursing, constitutes the corridor's most stabilised segment, while other vocational occupations face persistent fragmentation and limitations in skills matching and recognition. The high-skilled Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) sector is not discussed in this report, since most of the recruitment happens self-organized through self-placement and employer-driven, with minimal to no role for governing agencies and high migration flow.¹ Integration and retention are increasingly shaped by private or civil onboarding actors rather than formal bilateral mechanisms.

The corridor functions less as a mass mobility channel for skilled workers and more as a bilaterally managed institutional experiment — ethically robust, normatively influential, but limited in scale, skills return/development, and inclusivity.

The report is based on qualitative interviews with various stakeholders, practitioners, policy-makers and experts in India and Germany; the interviews have been carried out between March 2025 and September 2025. In the following, we will provide an integrated analytical perspective that links origin- and destination-perspectives in terms of skilled mobility. Thereby, we go beyond a one-sided, nation-bound viewpoint and try to take interests, perceptions, and contexts of both sides and of the full spectrum of stakeholders comprehensively into account — particularly the consequences and impact of skilled mobility.

The corridor has a long history and changed, formalized and diversified over time: Skilled migration between India and Germany dates back to missionary recruitment with Kerala in the 1960s in healthcare initiated via transnational church networks (later taken over by the state,

¹ The public program ProRecognition facilitates support in high-skilled qualification recognition and career opportunities in Germany.

until recruitment stop in 1973). In the 2000s it was shaped by high skilled migration in the information and telecommunication sector and STEM fields facilitated via the EU Blue Card. Recently, higher education/student migration (diverse fields) and vocational training and professional migration (various fields, including healthcare) increased – also initiated by skills mobility partnerships (SMPS), reflecting an expansion towards medium-skilled migration beyond healthcare or STEM. Compared to other corridors, the Indian-German corridor is not directly linked to a postcolonial past (and related established political, institutional or cultural proximity or overlap). As such, historic path-dependencies and ties are rather weak.

In a nutshell, the migration skill corridor between India and Germany reflects a more co-governed and rather origin-driven logic between two unequal partners: The skilled labor workforce (potential) of India is an ‘asset’ strongly demanded by many economically developed countries. Germany is fighting for its share of the Indian global ‘gold mine’ for labor power with attractive ethical and development-oriented offers and ‘priority treatment’. As India has entered multiple partnerships on skilled labor mobility to provide a diverse portfolio for its large and increasingly mobile training/work population, the corridor with Germany is one among many from the Indian side.² The strong claim and invests for balanced, ethical and development-oriented recruitment highlight the character of a ‘lighthouse corridor’: We see strong efforts towards genuine ethical and institutional recruitment, in particular by state-led actors, and at the same time a limited reach of these pilots/programs, their selectivity of who in the end benefits, and unclear sustainable skills development/return impact. Despite the challenges and limitations, the corridor holds an aspirational function for other countries watching from a distance. On the German side, ethical recruitment is advertised, promised and pursued, but in reality, for both sides numbers matter – particularly for the Indian governments (remittances and labor export).

1) Legal, political, and institutional frameworks and relations

The India-Germany corridor represents comparatively the most institutionalised, state-led skill migration partnerships currently operational between India and a European destination country. Unlike corridors shaped primarily by private recruitment or market-driven student or worker mobility, the corridor is anchored in migration partnerships, bilateral agreements and several sector-specific programmes, reflecting Germany’s proactive turn toward regulated skilled migration governance.

The deepening relationship between India and Germany has recently been underscored by the announcement of a visa-free transit facility for Indian passport holders transiting through

² For India, Germany is, for instance, only one among more than seven EU states that they signed agreements/partnerships with. According to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, India has signed labor-migration related agreements or MoUs with 21 countries from Bahrain over Malaysia to Germany (MEA India 2024), pursuing skilled labour mobility across several corridors.
<https://www.mea.gov.in/Images/CPV/RSe-1999-1-12-12-2024.pdf>

Germany.³ This special measure aims to increase attractiveness of Germany as transit country for Indian nationals. Beyond mobility facilitation, Germany has maintained a long-standing and strategic presence in India through a range of bilateral programmes that support key national priorities, including the Skill India Programme.⁴ Flagship initiatives such as the Indo-German Initiative for Technical Education (IGNITE)⁵ and the Indo-German Programme for Vocational Education and Training (IGVET)⁶ being two such engagements.

Over time, Germany's sustained engagement in India has translated into closer cooperation in addressing mobility and labour market needs. Indians today constitute one of the largest and fastest-growing diaspora groups in Germany, with notable increases in employment across healthcare and STEM sectors. Complementing labour mobility, student migration has emerged as a critical pillar of the corridor. The number of Indian students in Germany has more than doubled in the past five years, and as of 2024, numbered approximately 60,000 students, of them 69 % were male; main fields of study are: Engineering incl. biology-related fields – 60%, social sciences/economics/management 21%, mathematics/natural sciences 18% and others (sports/arts/German studies, etc.,) 6%.⁷

Frameworks, agreements and partnerships

At the core of the corridor lies the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement (MMPA)⁸ between India and Germany, signed in 2022 and operationalised from 2023. The MMPA provides a coordination framework for mobility, covering skilled migration, student and vocational trainee mobility, ethical recruitment, and return cooperation.

This facilitative role is reinforced by Germany's recent domestic legislative reforms, particularly the Skilled Immigration Act (2020) and its 2023 amendments, which expanded eligibility beyond narrowly defined high-skilled categories to include vocationally trained workers, trainees, and jobseekers. The introduction of instruments such as the Opportunity Card ('Chancenkarte')⁹ signals a shift toward a skills- and potential-based migration model, designed to keep Germany competitive in the global labour market. State-level institutions, such as the "Central Office for

³ In January 2026, Germany has announced that Indian passport holders will no longer need a Schengen Airport Transit visa (Type A Schengen visa) when transiting through its international airports, such as Munich or Frankfurt. It applies to Indian citizens travelling to a non-Schengen destination and changing flights in Germany.

⁴ <https://indianembassyberlin.gov.in/PressRelease?id=NDY>

⁵ https://www.giz.de/en/downloads_els/Indo-German%20initiative%20IGNITE%20launched%20to%20develop%2040,000%20skilled%20workforce%20by%202024.pdf

⁶ Indo-German Programme for Vocational Education and Training (IGVET)

⁷ <https://www.daad.in/en/2025/09/22/indian-students-in-germany-at-an-all-time-high/> (accessed 5 June 2026).

⁸ <https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/LegalTreatiesDoc/DE22B3878.pdf> (accessed 16 February 2026)

⁹ The Opportunity Card provides job-seekers with newly-introduced visa opportunities (<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/visa-residence/opportunity-card>, accessed 16 February 2026).

the Accelerated Skilled Worker Procedure” in Lower-Saxony, were introduced to optimize and facilitate international recruiting of skilled professionals for employers and migrants. Germany also adopted a Skilled Labour Strategy for India (2024)¹⁰, explicitly recognising India as a ‘priority partner’. This country-specific focus is driven not only by demographic need but also by Germany’s perception of India as a scalable, high skill quality and reliable partner for regulated labor migration.

The governance of the India-Germany corridor reflects a multi-level governance structure involving federal, state, and subnational actors on both sides. On the German side, the Federal Employment Agency (BA/ZAV), the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), Goethe-Institute, professional chambers, including the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IHK), local recognition authorities, and sectoral ministries¹¹ play central roles in recruitment, language training, and mobility/integration support. On the Indian side, labor emigration governance is more established and fragmented. While the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), and the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) provide the overarching policy framework, implementation relies heavily on a mix of several public or semi-public intermediaries and licensed private actors. There are also strong subnational institutions, particularly the Non-Resident Keralites Affairs Department (NORKA)¹² in Kerala or the Telangana Overseas Manpower Company (TOMCOM) in Telangana. Kerala has a long history of nursing migration and highest interest to increase (nursing) migration for economic growth, followed by Telangana. Recently, also other less prominent states have shown interest in bilateral cooperation with Germany. Through programmes such as Triple Win, NORKA functions as a trusted intermediary managing high standard recruitment, migration preparation, language training coordination, and migration facilitation for nurses. This subnational engagement is viewed favourably by German public stakeholders, especially in sectors such as healthcare, where reliable and trustworthy partners and reputational and ethical concerns are paramount.

The corridor is shaped by sector-/occupation-specific initiatives: The major programs were initiated by the German Federal Employment Agency and are listed as followed:

- “Triple Win” in nursing since 2021 (Kerala/Telangana)
- “Global Skills Partnership” in nursing since 2024 (Kerala)

¹⁰ <https://www.bmas.de/EN/Services/Publications/a798e-skilled-labour-strategy-india.html>

¹¹ Notably the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS), the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Federal Ministry of Health (BMG), and also the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWE) and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF).

¹² In 1996, the government of Kerala launched the Department of Non-Resident Keralite's Affairs (NORKA) to redress the grievances of non-resident Keralites both in India and abroad and to have a sustainable partnership with them. NORKA is the first department of its kind in India. NORKA ROOTS is a public sector undertaking under the department. It implements the governments’ welfare schemes. In addition, it is licensed by the Protector General of Emigrants (PGE) as a official recruiting agency. <https://norkaroots.org/about-norka> (accessed 05 June 2026).

- “Hand in Hand for International Talents” in industry and trade-occupations since 2020
- “APAL – Training partnerships with Asia and Latin America” in industrial-technical professions or skilled trades since 2024

The German Railways, for instance, also initiated a recruitment project.

Beyond Triple Win in healthcare, pilot initiatives, such as Hand in Hand for International Talents (HiH), illustrate Germany’s attempt to expand state-led recruitment to other vocational occupations (such as electronics, mechatronics/automation technology, metalworking/metal manufacturing, hospitality, catering, or IT) and with a limited number of partner countries (in the case of Hand in Hand for International Talent: India, Philippines, Brazil, Vietnam, as of February 2026). Further skills mobility partnerships (SMPs) were launched, such as the newly piloted Vocational Training Partnerships with Asia and Latin America (APAL) project, wherein selected partner schools in India are supported for students to learn German up to the B1 level and prepare for a regular apprenticeship in industrial-technical professions or skilled trades in Germany.

India was on the WHO “Health workforce support and safeguard list”. This means that the average healthcare workforce density and coverage of essential healthcare services in India is below the WHO minimum. In 2021, India was removed from the WHO list. Since then, stakeholders of multiple countries with healthcare worker shortage worldwide, including governments and private agencies, saw their chance and tried to ‘get their share’ of India’s ‘nursing exporting business’.

2) Implementation: Recruiting

Recruitment between India and Germany is shaped by a hybrid governance structure in which state-led programmes, subnational public intermediaries, and private recruitment agencies coexist. While Germany has sought to position this corridor through G2G (government-to-government) programmes as a benchmark for ethical, development-oriented, and transparent recruitment, implementation on the ground reveals systemic limitations, persistent challenges related to scale, costs, timelines, and mismatched expectations.

The state-led and state-supported recruitment is represented most prominently by the Triple Win programme for nurses. This programme is coordinated by the German Federal Employment Agency (BA/ZAV) in partnership with public and semi-public institutions in India, with NORKA Roots in the state of Kerala and with the Telangana Overseas Manpower Company in the state of Telangana (TOMCOM). Recruitment under this model follows a clear demand-driven logic wherein the German employment authorities aggregate employer demand, initiate recruitment rounds, and determine intake numbers, while Indian partners are responsible for candidate sourcing and screening, with GIZ providing continued support during migration and placement in

Germany, and Goethe Institute through skilling (language). The involvement of the German Federal Employment Agency (BA) with subnational intermediaries is particularly evident in Kerala, where NORKA Roots has emerged as a preferred recruitment partner over central government offices. This reflects not only the large concentration of Kerala nurses in Germany but also the practical challenges associated with centralised recruitment mechanisms.

Hand in Hand for International Talents (HiH) illustrates Germany's attempt to extend state-led recruitment to other vocational occupations. However, unlike in the health sector the demand for international apprentices or vocationally trained professionals is more fragmented and demanding (L4S_IND-DE_prac_05). The fragmentation stems from relatively limited recruitment volumes and experiences in relation to India's large workforce, and also due to the skills matching and qualification recognition challenges in vocational occupations, in contrast to the comparatively more standardized, internationally professionalized and straightforward recruiting and matching processes in the healthcare sector.

Private recruitment agencies, operating both from Germany and India, are also important actors in the corridor and have expanded rapidly following the recent liberalisation of Germany's skilled migration framework and in response to tightening migration regimes in traditional destinations such as the UK, US, or Canada. Private recruiters tend to operate at a larger scale and speed than state-led programmes, particularly in healthcare and selected vocational sectors. While private recruitment has increased volume and responsiveness to employer demand and worker's needs, it has also intensified competition, raised concerns about uneven ethical standards, and complicated efforts to enforce ethical recruitment norms consistently. The ethical issues are especially alarming when looking at the increasing student migration to Germany and the rising reliance of aspiring students on private agents/recruiters for getting placed in German public or private vocational colleges, schools and universities.

According to multiple German stakeholders the private-led infrastructure of skilled labor migration on both corridor sides, and particularly on the Indian side, has turned into a highly dynamic and opaque. Many interviewees complained about the engagement of fraudulent private agencies and (language) training centers – despite the existing Indian recruitment licensing system, which made cooperation complex and risky.

From the employer's perspective, recruitment is driven by acute labour shortages, particularly in healthcare, elderly care, and certain technical occupations. India is widely viewed as an attractive source country due to the large pool of high-quality trained professionals and prior exposure to international labour markets. However, employers consistently emphasised in our data that formal qualifications alone are insufficient. German language proficiency, workplace readiness, highly (employer-/occupation-/country-) specific skills, and long-term retention potential are key factors shaping hiring decisions. Employers often seek “ready-to-work” candidates with minimal post-arrival training or readaptation needs. This has limited the willingness of employers,

especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) during economic downturn, to absorb risks associated with recruitment invests, partial skill matches or delayed integration or 'return invest'. One stakeholder involved in the recruitment coordination of a vocational programme noted:

"There's a lot of hesitation. They [German employer of SMEs] don't know what it's like to hire somebody from abroad. They don't know how to do, what they're not willing to pay for it. I mean, the [state-funded skills mobility partnerships] project is free of charge for candidates, but there is a cost for the companies. (...) There's also, sometimes we take ages to get feedback on an interview. So, then the interview happens and then for three weeks we hear nothing. It's really difficult to understand if the companies say, we originally need people, can you please find somebody to work for us? And we need the business to start as soon as possible. And then they just take time to give us that kind of feedback. German companies are not as agile as we would like them to be." (L4S_IN-DE_prac_01)

How Indian potential migrants view and experience Germany

For Indian migrants, Germany is often perceived as a long-term and stable destination, offering pathways to permanent residence, family reunification/formation, and comparatively strong labour protections and welfare. At the same time, Germany is widely regarded as a high-threshold destination, with German language requirements emerging as the single most significant barrier – besides recognition issues. Germany is rarely the first-choice migration destination; instead, it becomes more attractive – or the last remaining option – when other (less demanding) destinations restrict entry or settlement options or program participation fails/is difficult.

The language barrier is also observed during the recruitment process. Interviews with Indian intermediaries reveal high dropouts after initial information sessions, during documentation and screening, during employer interviews, and most significantly during language training (L4S_IND-DE_prac_04).

Other recruitment challenges include delays in examination schedules, limited access to accredited language centres, and repeated failures in B1 or B2 examinations. A private recruiter working specifically in India-Germany nurse recruitment corridor described the outcome starkly:

"There is a big amount of people here maybe 10,000 people who are stranded. They spend a year and often a lot of money to learn German and didn't pass B2 or even one module. [...]. They cannot go to the US. They cannot go to the UK. After doing all this attempts to go they learn German fairly well, but they are stranded, because they had bad German class teachers." (L4S_IN-DE_prac_04)

Costs, ethics, and risk distribution

A defining feature of recruitment in the India-Germany corridor is the uneven distribution of costs and risks. Under ethical recruitment models such as Triple Win, employers bear the recruitment-related costs, including language training, visa processing, travel, and coordination. It costs an employer approximately €10,000, even before the worker enters employment (L4S_IND-DE_prac_04). The G2G program mandates a period of approximately one year for the entire placement process, including language training and testing, which is often seen as a long period of absence from work and pay for those recruited. While this aligns with Germany's commitment to fair recruitment, it creates a long – and indirectly costly – waiting period for the potential migrant as well as the employer.

In contrast, private recruitment pathways often shift costs directly or indirectly onto migrants, particularly through fees for language or preparatory training, documentation, or placement. Interviewees from Kerala reported cases of private agents charging substantial advance fees and discouraging candidates from applying through government channels to Germany. These private channels offer speed and scale, - while promising protection and success. This competitive public-private-dynamic undermines trust and complicates regulatory oversight, especially given India's comparatively weak de facto regulation of private recruitment for non-ECR destinations.

“They are giving a lot of negative publicity [to the Triple Win programme]. They are saying that it is lengthy. On the other and, private people can provide quicker channels of travel to Germany. They are saying that they can take you in three months. But in reality, they can't. If they do, after reaching Germany, most of these nurses fall into some kind of trouble and even have to come back.” (L4S_IND-DE_prac_04)

Within private recruitment channels, cost structures also differ by migrant category. While skilled workers (such as nurses) are placed at almost no cost to the migrant, in line with the *employer-pays principle*, trainee apprentices are often required to pay for preparatory courses, language training, and placement services. Yet, we also observe (counter) trends towards increasing 'personal contribution' independent of migration type – despite ethical claims and orientation due to economic downturn and hesitation. The employer is often reluctant to bear additional expenses, given the substantial investments required for adaptation/adjustment training. From the (aspiring) migrant perspective, the expected earning potential and long-term personal and professional career development prospects nonetheless render high upfront costs and skills investments acceptable.

3) Implementation: Skilling

While Germany's recruitment increasingly relies on India as a source country for (high- and medium-) skilled labour, this corridor is heavily dependent on pre-departure training, particularly German language acquisition, and in the case of vocational jobs, also professional and vocational bridging or adaptation training. Interview evidence consistently points to skilling, rather than

recruitment or visa policy, as a strong bottleneck shaping scale, access, selectivity, and dropout rates along the corridor.

Language training

German language proficiency is the most important requirement for mobility to Germany across almost all migration pathways, including healthcare, vocational training, and student migration. Most programmes require candidates to reach B1 or B2 levels prior to departure, with further language acquisition continuing post-arrival. In practice, language training and certification has emerged as a de facto selection mechanism, structuring who can realistically access Germany-bound migration channels.

Goethe-Institute plays a central role in setting language standards and conducting examinations in India. Interviewees repeatedly highlighted that teaching capacity has not kept pace with rapidly growing demand, resulting in long waiting periods for examinations and significant regional inequalities in access (L4S_IND-DE_prac_04). Also, in the case of vocational professions, people with mostly low economic backing who need to simultaneously work, face the challenge to find the time and money for high-quality language training (L4S_IN-DE_prac_01). Language tests taking place on-site at Goethe Institutes (but not online) require travelling costs and pose another challenge, particularly for candidates from remote areas.

Alongside Goethe-Institute, other recognised certification bodies such as telc and the Austrian German Language Diploma (ÖSD) and private language centres have expanded their presence. While this diversification has increased nominal capacity, it has also introduced wide variation in teaching approaches, quality, and outcomes, particularly among private providers. Interviews suggest that the rapidly expanding private language training market in India is highly fragmented. While some schools maintain close alignment with Goethe standards, many others offer cheaper and faster courses with limited depth and quality. This is reflected in significantly lower pass rates in standardised exams among candidates trained outside the Goethe ecosystem, reinforcing concerns about quality assurance and access.

“We travelled around a lot and found out that many German teachers are not so top here. (...) Also in Kerala, there are thousands of nurses who studied for one year German and who don't pass the B2 test. Only 15% of language students from private language schools passed the B2 test. Only 15%. So, it's very low. And only 50% from the Goethe-Institutes. I also think for Goethe, one would expect at least 80% of their own students they bring through there. And it's a big frustration.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_04)

Several stakeholders pointed to the proliferation of fast-track language courses, where candidates are prepared for B1 examinations within two to three months through full-time, boarding-school-like arrangements. While these courses appeal to candidates who are eager to shorten migration timelines, stakeholders raised concerns about superficial learning and long-term integration

challenges. It was also noted that in many cases the costs of language training are borne overwhelmingly by migrants themselves, even before having a recruitment offer, except in official recruitment programmes such as Triple Win and Hand-in-Hand, wherein employers finance most language preparation. For more informal private or self-organized pathways, candidates often spend several thousand Euros on language courses, examinations, and preparatory training, making skilling a major financial barrier to (fair) skilled mobility.

Vocational training alignment

Beyond language, professional skilling plays a differentiated role across sectors/occupations. In healthcare, India's existing nursing education system provides relatively strong skills that in most parts match the German standards. In contrast, vocational and technical occupations encounter more complex demands in skills matching and recognition, largely because Indian training curricula often diverge from German or European-regulated occupational, technical and security standards. This is, for instance, the case for the German dual vocational training system that requires strong practical and theoretical training. Importantly, the limited standardisation of vocational programmes in India is also rooted in their weak social valuation in contrast to academic training. Vocational pathways are rarely viewed as aspirational and are frequently perceived as inferior by the broader Indian middle class, for whom English-medium education and university degrees are seen as the primary routes to social status and upward mobility. This stands in sharp contrast to Germany, where vocational education enjoys societal legitimacy (although also contested) and is institutionally embedded as a respected and stable career pathway – particularly for migrants recruited in shortage sectors/occupations. The following quote explains a view widely shared in Indian society:

“In India, there's a strong tendency towards academisation. So, people rather do bachelor or rather send their son or daughter to do a bachelor than sending them to a vocational education just because of how the education is perceived, how vocational is something that they look down, how something academic is something to thrive towards”. (L4S_IND-DE_prac_01)

From the Indian government's perspective, migration agreements with Germany are also viewed as opportunities to reform domestic vocational training systems (L4S_IND-DE_prac_05). Policy-makers frequently cite the Technical Intern Training Programme (TITP) with Japan as a reference model, which closely combines overseas practical training with skills transfer. However, such models are difficult to replicate in the German context as it still prioritises employment-ready migrants on the ground – although political initiatives towards lifelong learning and continuous training have been promoted recently –, and German employers, having invested heavily in training, are generally reluctant to support circular or temporary training arrangements (L4S_IND-DE_prac_02). Indian companies also approach German training providers for upskilling their Indian workforce to meet the German standards, provide skills and technology transfer and

innovation – also in benefit for the Indian labor and education market and skills development and not necessarily related to skilled mobility or migration-related intention.

4) Implementation: Recognition

While recruitment and skilling determine access to mobility, it is the recognition process that ultimately shapes occupational status, earnings, and long-term settlement prospects. Recognition procedures vary by occupation/sector, region, and recruitment pathway, creating differentiated experiences and outcomes for migrants and employers alike.

In the healthcare sector

Recognition and licensing procedures for healthcare professionals are generally regarded as more standardized. Indian nursing qualifications are widely accepted as meeting international standards, including those applied in Germany. As a result, the recognition challenge in healthcare is less about formal qualification equivalence and more about language proficiency. Basic care is part of the regular tasks of nurses in Germany and usually requires adaptation measures for international nurses. Actors highlight in our interviews on the India-side of implementation that nurses recruited through ethical recruitment pathways such as Triple Win undergo a closely accompanied and sequenced recognition process, combining language and adaptation training, workplace integration, and professional registration:

“‘Anerkennung’ [Recognition] is the registration process there, so there is training for that. They go to Germany through Triple Win only after passing the B1 exam. Normally, if they go through private employers, they have to pass B2 level. When going through Triple Win, they go with B1, then write the B2 exam and pass at the destination. The hospital's duty and language training happens simultaneously almost every day. During this period, they receive payment.” (L4S_IND-DE_prac_04)

Recognition here is embedded within employment and training rather than functioning as a purely pre-departure administrative process. Those persons who are recruited are typically employed initially as assistant nurses, receive a (lower) salary during the adaptation phase, and progress to full registration (and equal payment as national nurses) upon completion of required language and recognition evaluation and training. However, recognition outcomes are not uniform across Germany. Due to Germany's federal structure, recognition requirements and evaluations vary by state authorities – including opaque structures and high individual or organizational leeway.¹³ As further explained in the same interview:

“They have to pass the B2 and then they have to pass the ‘Anerkennung’ [recognition] exam. Recruits from Triple Win go to 10 to 15 states in Germany. Some states don't have

¹³ More on the recognition (*Anerkennung*) processes can be found here: <https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/index.php> (last accessed 05 June 2026)

this exam. In some states, based on their qualification and experience, if employer feels that their nursing skills are matching, they will be allowed to register. Their recognition will not be a problem. But otherwise, to become a registered nurse, one has to pass the recognition exam.” (L4S_IND-DE_prac_04)

Questions of recognition are in Germany under debate. The German parliament passed a corresponding law to accelerate the recognition procedures for foreign healthcare professional qualifications on 26 March 2026. The new regulations are scheduled to come into force on 1 November 2026 (BMG 2026). Notably for this corridor, the law applies to doctors, dentists, pharmacists and midwives, and does not extend to nursing, the occupation that accounts for the largest share of Indian health worker mobility to Germany.

Important new regulations are:

- **Direct knowledge test** will become the standard procedure for the recognition of **doctors, dentists, and pharmacists** who acquired their professional qualifications in a third country. Document-based equivalence assessment will then only be an option.
- Particularly for the medical field, it is clarified that the knowledge test is a **professional licensing examination**: The knowledge test should not focus on any deficiencies, but **rather establish the same standards for everyone**.
- Federal states will have the option of assessing **language skills** of applicants from third countries even before they receive their professional qualification.
- **Midwives** from third countries will have a **choice**: They can waive the document-based equivalence assessment and directly complete a knowledge test or an adaptation course.
- **Electronic transmission** (e.g., data exchange between authorities) and **electronic form** (e.g., waiving the requirement for approval) should be permissible as alternatives to written transmission and form.
- States will be enabled to clarify and review existing procedures for granting a license to practice a profession.
- In exceptional cases, doctors and dentists may be granted a license to practice medicine indefinitely.

For nursing, change has come through a separate legislative track. The Pflegefachassistentengesetz, adopted in October 2025 and taking effect largely from January 2027, replaces 27 differing state-level nursing assistant qualifications with a single federal training and introduces a uniform recognition route for foreign qualifications based on a knowledge test or adaptation course rather than a full equivalence assessment¹⁴. For fully qualified nurses, third-country applicants can already waive the equivalence assessment and proceed directly to a knowledge test or adaptation course under the Pflegeberufegesetz.

¹⁴ <https://www.bmbfsfj.bund.de/bmbfsfj/ministerium/gesetze/gesetz-ueber-die-einfuehrung-einer-bundeseinheitlichen-pflegefachassistenten-ausbildung-und-zur-aenderung-weiterer-gesetze-242496>

In other vocational or technical occupations

In contrast to healthcare, recognition in vocational and technical occupations is far more fragmented and remains limited in scale. Recognition in these pathways is typically pursued through project-based and employer-linked initiatives, such as the Hand-in-Hand programme. Here, recognition is tightly integrated with employer-specific demand and mediated by professional bodies.

“In the case of vocational programs such as Hand in Hand we also have FOSA¹⁵ as a cooperation partner in our project. We have a colleague there who is our contact person and she has also supported us intensively in curricula research in order to identify which degrees are potentially recognisable at all. Of course, this is not all that makes up a recognition procedure, but it is a very big milestone.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_05)

The structured approach significantly reduces the risk of outright non-recognition and skills waste/underutilization. As the interviewee further notes, there are very few problems in the project in terms of people simply not being eligible for recognition or their qualifications not matching requirements. However, partial equivalence remains a recurring outcome, requiring adaptation measures that can be difficult to implement in practice (L4S_IN-DE_prac_05).

Recognition procedures conducted by IHK FOSA take an average of four months, which is considered lengthy but manageable within structured projects, as recognition can run in parallel with language training:

“Such a recognition procedure at the FOSA Chamber of Industry and Commerce takes an average of four months. Of course, that's a long time. For many of the actors in our project, however, this is not such a big problem, because the people are only learning German anyway. This means that during the time they are in the third country anyway, sitting in their language courses, the recognition procedure runs in the background.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_05)

Unlike for 17 countries and selected professional qualifications, for qualifications acquired in India, there is not yet a framework for an equivalence assessment in accordance with the German Professional Qualifications Assessment Act (BQFG) that can be applied for at IHK FOSA (<https://www.ihk-fosa.de/en/laender>). Thus, the equivalence assessment remains an entirely individual procedure – often costly, lengthy, opaque, bureaucratic, and to a large degree incomprehensible to both migrants and employers.

¹⁵ IHK FOSA is the recognition body for foreign qualifications comparable to industry and commerce professions (for 250 reference professions). As a nationwide competence center of 76 chambers of industry and commerce in Germany, it carries out the recognition procedure based upon the Professional Qualifications Assessment Act (BQFG). Link: <https://www.ihk-fosa.de/> (last accessed: 05.06.2026).

Expectation gaps

While German government representatives officially prioritise strategic, quality-controlled placement, employers and recruiters and Indian government representatives – but also German government representatives behind closed doors – often frame migration in terms of scale and volume, leading to misunderstandings around recruitment and recognition timelines and procedural rigidity.

A Germany-side stakeholder captured this tension as the following:

“The Indian recruiters call me they want to serve thousands of Indians all at the same time you know [...] There is also an expectation gap on that side. Of course it must be very, very difficult for people in India to understand that on the one hand Germany is desperately seeking skilled labour, but on the other hand they seem to be very reluctant and there is this whole bureaucratic process which every single person has to undergo, especially regarding the recognition process of the qualifications.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_02)

5) Implementation: Matching

Fieldwork evidence highlights that mismatches, rather than shortages often constitute a major barrier to successful placement, particularly outside the healthcare sector. Although the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement (MMPA) does not specify operational measures for improving matching, recent policy initiatives indicate growing recognition of this issue. Germany’s Skilled Labour Strategy for India¹⁶, launched in October 2024, explicitly foregrounds improved matching of Indian skilled workers with German companies. The strategy emphasises expanded German language training (including online provision), stronger partnerships with Indian higher education and vocational institutions, and enhanced information outreach on regular migration channels. At the implementation level, matching remains largely employer-/demand-driven, with German companies playing a decisive role in defining skills requirements and selection or testing criteria. Intermediaries, whether public, semi-public, or private, primarily facilitate the process by evaluating/classifying, pre-screening candidates, coordinating interviews, and aligning qualification expectations. But final hiring decisions rest with employers.

Sectoral variation in matching outcomes

Matching is comparatively straightforward in healthcare, particularly nursing, where job tasks, professional hierarchies, and work routines are relatively standardised across settings – reflecting healthcare professionals as essential part of a global skilled workforce besides jobs like teaching, architecture, or engineering. As a result, recruiters and employers are able to assess suitability

¹⁶ <https://www.bmas.de/EN/Services/Publications/a798e-skilled-labour-strategy-india.html> (last accessed 05 June 2026)

with greater confidence and clarity, and skills acquired in India are more easily transferred to the German labor market context.

In contrast, matching in vocational and technical occupations is significantly more complex. Employers require highly specific skills and experiences, and even minor deviations or gaps can render a candidate unsuitable. This level of professional or occupational specificity makes the matching demanding and significantly narrows the pool of candidates who can be matched successfully. The high employer/occupation-specificity of skills makes skills matching dependent on similar labor market and education and training systems developments. Post-colonial legacies may pose a structural advantage here, but do not apply to the India-Germany corridor context.

A practitioner of recruiting program in non-traditional vocational occupations explained:

“The professions that we are looking at do require a very specific match. For example, if you have an electrician that has experience in, say, working in a manufacturer for pharma products, you can't take that electrician and put him or her into solar panels, because the experience just wouldn't match. [...] It's much easier for professionals like nurses.”
(L4S_IN-DE_prac_02)

Selection processes and employer expectations

Responsibility for matching is asymmetrically distributed along the corridor. While Indian intermediaries invest heavily in candidate preparation through language and preparatory training, documentation, and orientation, ultimate control over selection and contracting lies with German intermediaries and employers. Employment or apprenticeship contracts are typically issued only after recognition prospects and language levels are deemed satisfactory, further extending timelines. Intermediaries (as noted in the Hand-in-Hand project) often curate (and sustain) a pool of candidates aligned to anticipated varying employer demand, but interviews reveal that not all prepared or waiting candidates are ultimately placed. As one interviewee noted:

“It's part of our challenges. It means we have a pool where we won't place everyone. There are candidates that we might be preparing for Germany, for whom we can't find a company.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_02)

Additionally, German companies are frequently described as risk-averse, seeking candidates who meet highly specific technical, linguistic, and experiential requirements before making an offer. Partial matches are often rejected, even despite labour shortages:

“German companies always have really, really, really high expectations. [...] There are companies that say, okay, this person would be 90% match, but I need a 100% match. And unless it's 100%, I wouldn't be hiring this person.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_02)

German migration and recognition frameworks require candidates to hold at least a state-recognised qualification, typically of two years' duration, before practical work experiences can be formally assessed even for technical and vocational jobs. As one interviewee explained:

“They still need to have a base qualification that is at least two years and from a state recognized institute. [...] It's not that we have somebody who is completely unskilled and learn everything on the job and then can go to Germany.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_02)

This requirement excludes a substantial segment of India's informal and semi-formal workforce, even where practical skills are strong – and would be practically provable –, reinforcing the selective nature of the recruitment along the India-Germany corridor. The importance of skills training and recognition harmonization and joint efforts along these lines were pointed out, for instance, in the following interview:

“The vocational courses provided have been structured for [Indian] domestic purposes. There is a need to revamp these courses to fit international standards. When looking at the Philippines, they have a stronger recognition process due to their programs fitting the international standards. In India's case when we have countries such as Germany looking for recruits, they are very specific about training the recruits in their way. Which means mostly there is an overlap and the person undergoes additional training. This is because the industry standards and requirements of India and Germany are very different.” (L4S_IND-DE_prac_05)

Despite these systemic challenges, the corridor exhibits emerging efforts toward skills development and recognition harmonisation. In healthcare, initiatives such as the GIZ-led Global Skills Partnerships (GSP) project, funded by Germany's Federal Ministry of Health (BMG), aim to strengthen skills alignment by developing and implementing joint nursing curricula between German and Indian institutions. The objective is to enable facilitated and accelerated recognition and smoother matching by ensuring that training outcomes are mutually intelligible and deployable (Ullmann & Schwenken, 2026). But as observed in the earlier sections, matching and recognition is a much more complex challenge when it comes to vocational jobs beyond healthcare. Pioneer programs in demanded vocational occupations, such as metalworking, skilled trades, or electrical engineering, however, may be a first step.

6) **Implementation: Migration and mobility**

The Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement (MMPA) provides the overarching framework for facilitating regular migration, recognition, and return cooperation between India and Germany. More recently, Germany's Skilled Labour Strategy for India established a separate sub-working group on labour migration, decoupling labour mobility from return policy discussions and signalling a more pragmatic but engaged approach to long-term skills mobility partnerships.

Importantly, the priority partnership strategy explicitly acknowledges the central role of the private sector in facilitating migration, a recognition largely absent from earlier bilateral instruments, and identifies its regulation as an area for future cooperation. Interview evidence suggests that this acknowledgement reflects an empirical reality as private actors have been rapidly expanding within the corridor and have become indispensable in navigating complex mobility processes at scale and distance.

Government-to-government (G2G) programmes such as Triple Win and Hand-in-Hand provide highly structured and ethically grounded/engaged mobility pathways. These programmes typically involve coordinated support for recruitment, documentation, visa applications, pre-departure training and orientation, and post-arrival integration/onboarding, with costs largely borne by employers or the German government. However, their long timelines and limited intake volumes have constrained attractiveness and scalability. Migration through G2G pathways often takes 12–18 months, reflecting the cumulative duration of strong public coordination, language training, recognition procedures, and visa processing. While these timelines ensure high compliance and protection, they also create opportunity costs for both employers facing labour shortages and migrants seeking faster mobility.

In contrast, private channels have gained prominence by offering faster, more customised and client-friendly mobility solutions – often with appealing, participation and transparency oriented digital tools, including the gamification of mobility decisions to reduce dropout and demotivation over time. Employers are drawn to these channels for their ability to respond quickly to demand, while migrants are attracted by promises of shorter timelines and likewise comprehensive settlement support. One private recruiter specialising in healthcare migration described the extent to which mobility facilitation has expanded beyond mere placement:

“We have, meanwhile, national onboarding capabilities in Germany available. We have with the largest real estate company in Germany, a contract that we get affordable living space on demand to their normal terms. [...] Our special focus is really taking care.”
(L4S_IN-DE_prac_04)

Further, private actors increasingly position themselves as mobility and integration managers, coordinating housing, family reunification/formation, childcare, social events and networking, and even spousal employment (L4S_IN-DE_prac_04). Such services go well beyond the mandates of public recruitment programmes and directly address the migrant’s priorities related to wellbeing, settlement and personal life. At the same time, these arrangements often involve high costs, either borne by employers or indirectly shifted to migrants through service fees, raising questions about access and participation equity and regulatory oversight.

Visa processing and mobility infrastructure

Visa processing constitutes another major bottleneck within the corridor. German visas in India are processed through VFS Global¹⁷, the authorised service provider for the German Embassy. VFS centres are unevenly located and concentrated in 17 urban centres such as Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, and Kolkata. For migrants from smaller towns and remote areas, this spatial concentration increases travel costs and logistical burdens (similar to the insufficient coverage of official German language training and examination centres across India). With rising migration flows to European destinations, the existing visa infrastructure is struggling to keep pace. Long waiting periods for appointments and approvals frequently extend timelines, compounding delays already generated by language training and recognition processes.

The German Skilled Immigration Act has aimed at significantly accelerating and optimizing the migration-related bureaucratic processes and expanding migration-related infrastructures, including foreign representations, authorities and support structures. In the India-Germany corridor, state investments were made, for instance, to better manage high numbers of visa applications. Yet, several stakeholders have complained about the insufficient personnel resources in German foreign representations.

Long-term mobility

Questions of permanent residency and family reunification/formation play a central role in shaping mobility decisions. For many migrants, Germany turned into an increasingly attractive destination because of the liberalized long-term settlement regulations for skilled workers. Professional recognition is a prerequisite for family reunification/formation, making the sequencing of language exams, recognition, and visa status critical. Private recruiters explicitly leverage settlement aspirations by offering integrated mobility packages that anticipate family migration and secondary employment (L4S_IND-DE_prac_04). While such services enhance migrant satisfaction and retention, they deepen the corridor's reliance on the private sector.

7) Implementation: Integration, retention, circulation, return

For migrants arriving through government-to-government (G2G) programmes, integration support is relatively structured during the initial phase. Programmes such as Triple Win provide coordinated and substantial on-boarding counselling that includes accommodation, continued language training, workplace orientation, and assistance with recognition and administrative registration. As highlighted by an India-side implementation actor, integration is closely linked to the recognition process and unfolds alongside employment:

“GIZ will arrange for it. They will pay for the accommodation and rent, which will be later deducted from the recruit's salary. Once they are recruited by NORKA [Kerala's state-run recruitment agency], everything is free until they reach the destination country. They only have to pay for the translation of their certificates through IGCC [Indo-German Chamber

¹⁷ <https://visa.vfsglobal.com/ind/en/deu>

of Commerce]. Now that is also changing to make sure no money is paid by the recruit by working out a reimbursement.” (L4S_IND-DE_prac_04)

This model allows migrants, particularly nurses, to integrate gradually into the workplace while continuing language acquisition and professional adaptation. However, such structured support is timely confined to the initial employment phase and depends heavily on employer engagement and regional practices within Germany’s federal system.

Beyond G2G pathways, private recruitment and civil or private on-boarding/welcoming agencies have emerged as central actors in shaping integration and retention outcomes. Welcoming Centres, regional points of contact, advisory services, and information centres for companies as well as for international migrant workers have been established across Germany.

Data evidence suggests that private recruiters increasingly position integration support as a strategic tool to improve retention and reduce dropout or onward migration risk. A private recruiter specialising in healthcare migration described this ‘caring approach’:

“When a nurse comes and we know her husband and the child comes a year later, first thing is we register her for a kindergarten slot. We make sure that the apartment is furnished... We make sure that the husband gets a proper place and a job when he comes.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_04)

Such practices directly address key determinants of retention (housing security, family stability, and social integration), areas where public integration systems are often overstretched.

Language proficiency remains an important factor not only for workplace performance but also for social and cultural integration. Even migrants who meet formal language requirements frequently struggle with dialects, workplace communication, and everyday interactions, particularly in smaller towns and rural areas. Interview evidence also points to growing awareness of anti-migrant sentiment and racism in Germany (see also NaDiRa 2026). These social and political dimensions of integration influence migrants’ sense of belonging and long-term settlement decisions, even when employment conditions are stable or attractive. An Indian intermediary interviewed noted that:

“Anti-migrant sentiments are growing. Many Malayalees don’t realise this. We conduct sessions to make them aware... One person’s misconduct can affect the reputation of the entire batch.” (L4S_IND-DE_prac_04)

Retention and limited circularity

Retention is a growing concern for German employers, particularly given the high costs associated with recruitment, language and adaptation training, and recognition. Once migrants obtain full recognition and stable residence status, workplace change and intra-Germany mobility becomes

possible, allowing trainees and workers to switch employers or regions. While this enhances migrant agency, it also weakens employer motivation to internationally recruit and lowers incentives to invest into further training after arrival.

From a skills circulation and development perspective, our data suggest that circular migration is not a dominant aspiration among Indian migrants in Germany. According to survey evidence from the German Employment Agency's research institute (IAB), a majority of Indian migrants intend to stay permanently, and 37% have already acquired German citizenship (Adunts et al. 2024: 10). The preference for long-term settlement is reinforced by access to family reunification/formation, social security, and stable employment, making return or circular mobility less attractive.

Return migration occupies a marginal position within the India-Germany corridor. The return of persons required to leave Germany is regulated under the MMPA, but India is not a major country of origin for asylum-related returns, and suetreturn numbers have declined over time. Also, reintegration support for skilled professionals in India is extremely limited. Apart from voluntary return assistance schemes funded by Germany, such as REAG/GARP, there are virtually no structured reintegration measures provided by the Indian state. Returnees often face reintegration without institutional support, despite having acquired demanded skills and experiences abroad or may contribute to local skills transfer and invests.

8) The role of technologies

Technological developments play a supportive but non-transformative role in shaping the India-Germany migration skill corridor. Rather than replacing migration through automation or remote work, digital tools primarily function to facilitate recruitment, screening, skilling, recognition, and mobility coordination across geographical distance. Interview evidence suggests that technology has shaped *how* migration is organised and governed, while leaving underlying structural dependencies on physical mobility largely intact.

Digitalisation of skilling and language training

Technology has become central to initial outreach and candidate sourcing. Online job portals, digital advertisements, social media, and project websites are now primary entry points through which Indian candidates first engage with Germany-oriented migration pathways. A German-side project coordinator described how digital structures recruitment funnels:

“We work in Hand in hand with a lot of online advertisements. So, we have kind of mock advertisements on Indian job portals. And through that, most of the applications we catch. We also have a website on the IGCC [Indo-German Chamber of Commerce] where people can inform themselves.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_01)

Stakeholders also noted that high digital visibility does not necessarily translate into suitable candidates, as online information events often attract large numbers of applicants with limited

alignment to programme requirements. Technology thus expands reach but simultaneously requires systematic filtering, reinforcing selectivity rather than broadening access.

Visible impact of technology is in the domain of language training, where online and hybrid learning formats have expanded rapidly in response to growing demand for German language certification. As reflected in policy documents such as Germany's Skilled Labour Strategy for India, online courses are increasingly promoted as a way to scale up language training capacity, also in India. Digital tools allow language learning to occur asynchrony and alongside employment or vocational training, particularly in vocational pathways where candidates cannot afford to leave work. In practice, however, fieldwork evidence indicates that digitalisation has not eliminated bottlenecks, particularly with respect to quality assurance and exam access: Private and public actors alike rely on digital platforms to deliver preparatory content, but skills certification remains tied to formal examinations conducted by recognised bodies on-site. As one implementation actor noted in the context of recognition procedures running alongside language training:

“Such a recognition procedure at the IHK FOSA at the chamber of industry and commerce takes an average of four months. [...] During the time they are in the third country anyway, sitting in their language courses, the recognition procedure runs in the background.”
(L4S_IN-DE_prac_05)

Technology in recruitment and matching

Digital tools have also transformed recruitment and matching processes, particularly through online interviews, digital document screening, and remote coordination between Indian intermediaries and German employers. These tools have increased efficiency, user-/client-friendliness and reduced transaction costs, making it easier for employers to assess candidates across borders and for candidates to remain motivated, informed and actively participating.

Technology plays a more targeted role in matching candidates with employers, particularly through digital profiling and online interviews. Once candidates pass initial screening rounds, profiles are uploaded onto employer-facing platforms, allowing German companies to assess candidates remotely before issuing interview invitations:

“Once they are approved, their profile gets published on the website of the DIHK [German Chamber of Commerce and Industry] and German companies can see it and can base around the profile and decide whether they want to invite them for an interview.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_01)

Recognition processes have also benefited from digitalisation, especially through remote credential evaluation and online coordination with professional bodies such as IHK FOSA. Digital submission of documents and online communication with recognition authorities have improved transparency and predictability for employers, intermediaries and migrants. However, interviews

emphasise that formal recognition decisions remain institutionally bounded and difficult or contested to automat. Partial equivalences and adaptation requirements, common outcomes in vocational recognition, still require human assessment and employer involvement. Technology, in this sense, supports administrative efficiency but does not (fully) replace regulatory discretion or professional judgement.

Across interviews, there is little evidence that automation or remote work is perceived as a substitute for migration in the sectors central to the corridor. In healthcare, physical presence and affective work remain indispensable. In vocational or technical occupations, on-site work experiences and integration into German workplaces remain essential. Technology, therefore, functions as a complement to migration, not an alternative.

9) Partnership/Program monitoring evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of partnerships and programmes within the India-Germany migration skill corridor remains largely decentralised, actor-/programme-specific, and outcome-oriented, rather than embedded within a unified bilateral evaluation framework. While the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement (MMPA) provides an overarching bilateral political structure, it does not establish binding indicators or timelines for assessing the performance of individual programmes or agreements.

At the programme level, German public institutions, such as BA/ZAV, GIZ, or IHK play the primary role in monitoring implementation. Monitoring typically focuses on process indicators (e.g. number of candidates reached, recruited, or participated; language levels achieved, recognition outcomes; dropout rates) and immediate outputs, rather than longer-term outcomes such as retention, career progression, or reintegration or circulation. From the interviews on the Indian side, it was evident that there was no long-term follow-up from the public or private-led programs about the well-being or employment status once the recruits were placed in Germany. Indian public institutions, including NSDC International (National Skill Development Corporation) and subnational actors like NORKA Roots, are primarily involved in operational reporting rather than independent and comprehensive program or corridor evaluation. Their monitoring functions focus on candidate mobilisation, compliance with ethical recruitment standards, reporting misconduct/fraud, and coordination with German partners. Formal joint evaluations between Indian and German institutions remain limited and untransparent.

Interview evidence suggests that short-term and destination-oriented indicators dominate evaluation practices of recruitment agreements and skills mobility partnerships. For many German actors, success is initially measured by whether a programme successfully places candidates without major dropouts or legal complications. Smooth program realization becomes a success itself. One German implementation actor explained how recognition and matching outcomes are treated as key milestones:

“We have very few problems in the project in terms of saying, okay, the people are simply not eligible for recognition or their qualifications do not match our requirements. [...] This is still very important to the companies.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_05)

A recurring theme across the corridor is the treatment of programmes such as Triple Win and Hand in Hand for International Talents as high standard demonstration pilots rather than scalable solutions. Stakeholders emphasized their role in testing new corridors, jointly finding solutions to occurring barriers. While these programmes are frequently cited as good practice models for ethical recruitment and structured pathways for skilled migration and recognition, interviewees acknowledged that their replication by the private sector has been limited so far.

“The goal of the Hand-in-hand project was never to bring like hundreds or thousands of people to Germany. We are below the target. But the idea of the project is to understand where the Skilled Migration Act is working well and where it has some holes or some blockages or bottlenecks. We also had a few candidates from the last phase that we supported with the German classes. We were not able to place them, but they managed to place themselves and they still reached Germany. From our project perspective, it's of course a failure because they dropped out, but from the skilled migrant perspective, it's a win.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_01)

From the German government perspective, success officially lies less in volume and more in risk minimisation and reputational assurance. From the Indian government perspective, however, limited scale raises questions about whether such programmes meaningfully address labour market pressures or migration aspirations. The limited nature and symbolic function of building a positive destination reputation of such programmes was particularly evident when gauging the perception of these programmes from private players:

“The Triple Win agreement, first of all, it's a very good project. And for us, and also for the general public, it means awareness. So, it's caused a lot of awareness, and that's a good thing. [...] Their triple win has only three states in India.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_04)

Divergent notions of success across the corridor

Across the corridor, actors apply distinct and sometimes incompatible success metrics. German public actors prioritise compliance, legal certainty, and ethical recruitment, while German employers prioritise speed, skills level and fit, and retention. Indian intermediaries, on the other hand, often assess success through candidate placement numbers and continuity of demand, whereas migrants evaluate programmes based on timelines, migration and integration support, settlement and professional and personal development prospects, and family reunification/formation outcomes.

State-led partnerships and skilling programmes in the India-Germany corridor can be characterised as institutionally effective, bilaterally governed and expanding but quantitatively limited. They succeed in establishing trust, demonstrating ethical recruitment models, and refining coordination across recruitment, skilling, and recognition. However, they fall short in addressing scale, speed, skills development/circulation, and inclusivity, dimensions that many Indian labor market and education actors and also German employers consider central to success. Public skills mobility partnerships are most often deemed a success by German public institutions (also due to the high state investments) and risk-averse employers (benefitting from structured programs and support), while being viewed as insufficient or slow by private recruiters. Migrants usually regard state programs as attractive opportunity for safe and legal migration and appreciate the extensive migration and integration support, but complaint about long timelines and matching insecurity despite high personal invests. Return and reintegration outcomes are rarely integrated into evaluation frameworks, further narrowing the scope of assessment. An exception are Global Skills Partnerships (GSPs) that actively address skills development/investment at the origin and skills circulation through program alumnis.

10) Consequences and effects

One of the most salient effects of the corridor is the unequal distribution of costs and gains. German employers benefit from access to (usually already) skilled labour in shortage occupations, often with reduced long-term training costs once migrants are fully recognised. For the German state, regulated skilled migration helps mitigate demographic pressures and economic transformations while maintaining control over entry, recognition, and settlement.

For Indian migrants, the benefits are more differentiated. Those who successfully navigate state-led or structured recruitment pathways gain access to relatively secure employment/training, social protection, personal and professional development opportunities, and long-term settlement prospects. However, these benefits are contingent on meeting high entry thresholds, particularly in investments in language proficiency and formal qualifications. The financial and temporal costs of migration preparation, including language training, certification, and foregone income, are borne primarily by migrants themselves, except in limited public-led ethical recruitment schemes. From the Indian state's perspective, while outward mobility relieves some domestic labour pressures and generates remittances, it also raises concerns about selective outflows of demanded skilled labor (potential), destination-specific education and training systems (conflicting with national education and training curriculum) – particularly given existing workforce shortages within India's public health system.

Public programmes such as Triple Win are widely recognised for adhering to international standards of fair recruitment¹⁸, including the 'Employer pays principle'. However, interview

¹⁸ Such as "IRIS: Ethical Recruitment", which is IOM's flagship initiative to promote ethical recruitment of migrant workers. It has been created by IOM and a coalition of partners from government, civil society and the private sector.

evidence reveals that ethical recruitment is often accompanied by high selectivity, favouring candidates with stronger educational backgrounds, language skills and work/training motivation. A private recruiter contrasted this explicitly:

“They [Triple Win nursing] pick the stronger ones. They look at their English-speaking capabilities, look at their school grades and their nursing school grades. They pick up a certain elite.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_04)

This indirect ‘elite selection’ – facilitated through seemingly ethical and development-oriented programs – has important consequences. While it ensures smoother integration and higher retention, it also narrows access to migration opportunities for less suitable/qualified groups and reinforces social stratification within the nursing profession and labor markets in India. In contrast, we observed cases where private recruiters that saw a field advantage and strategically positioned themselves as providing opportunities to candidates who ‘fall outside’ these elite criteria:

“We want to provide a chance to the obviously less qualified... So obviously the weaker candidates or the less motivated candidates. We discuss with them to take them more into the areas of elderly care.” (L4S_IN-DE_prac_04)

This bifurcation produces a dual migration channel: One that is to large parts ethically robust but highly selective at the same time, and another that is more inclusive in volume terms but often shifts costs and risks onto migrants, with minimal oversight. The consequence is not simply ethical versus unethical recruitment, but rather differentiated recruitment and inclusion, where access to skilled mobility with better jobs, wages, and long-term prospects is unevenly distributed.

Further, the scale of public-initiated programmes such as Triple Win remains limited. Only around 670 nurses have been recruited over three years, all from Kerala. While the German Federal Employment Agency (BA) has positioned Triple Win as a trail pioneer for fair recruitment, it is difficult to empirically demonstrate that emerging private agencies have likewise adopted these standards as a result. Instead, interview evidence suggests that market competition (between private and public actors as well as among the private sector) has intensified, with private actors shaping norms around speed, volume, and customised/client-oriented mobility packages rather than ethical benchmarks and skills development/circulation concerns. To scale up skilled migration in an ethical manner the infrastructure, particularly in terms of visa, language and preparatory training, needs to be ready, German investments into the local skills development must be transparent and significant, and the German economy needs to shift the mindset from ‘fast employability’ towards ‘onward training’ of international workers.

German employers and institutions retain gatekeeping power through recognition regimes, language requirements, and visa procedures. Visa hierarchies privilege regulated labour

migration over other forms of mobility, while Germany's federal structure introduces additional layers of variation. At the same time, inter-regional and inter-national competition shapes corridor dynamics. India is positioned as one of several potential source countries, reducing its bargaining power despite high demand for labour. Migrants, in turn, compare Germany with alternative destinations such as the UK, Canada, or Australia, weighing language difficulty, settlement prospects, and perceived discrimination. Colonial legacies play a subtler role, influencing language hierarchies (English versus German), credential recognition norms, and perceptions of 'quality' training.

The India-Germany corridor has produced qualified skilled migration flow successes and persistent contradictions. It has demonstrated that fair and regulated recruitment of professional workers and trainees is possible, particularly in healthcare, but at the cost of limited scale, elite selection, and open questions in terms of skills development and brain drain. The private sector has expanded access and speed but often externalises costs and risks. From a migration skill corridor perspective, the corridor's long-term effectiveness will depend on whether ethical standards can be mainstreamed beyond public-led pilots, whether recognition and matching can be broadened without diluting quality, and whether origin-country interests, particularly around regional skill sustainability, are more fully integrated into policy design, practice and monitoring.

11) Summary of key points

Recent developments along the India-Germany corridor reveal a migration system shaped less by spontaneous labour flows and more by carefully managed institutional experimentation. Rather than expanding rapidly in scale, the corridor has evolved through close partnership, various public-led programmes, sector-specific initiatives, and incremental regulatory adjustments aimed at aligning labour demand with controlled mobility pathways. This has produced a corridor that prioritises process integrity, skills validation, and risk management, even as it continues to face persistent challenges related to volume, speed, skills development/return, and inclusivity.

Across the corridor, the health sector, particularly nursing, has emerged as the most stabilised segment, benefitting from relatively standardised training systems and clearer recognition pathways. In contrast, vocational and technical occupations remain characterised by fragmented recruitment and matching processes, driven by highly specific employer demands and limited transferability of Indian vocational qualifications to the German dual system. Across sectors, German language acquisition emerges as the single most significant bottleneck shaping access, selectivity, and dropout rates.

Within the corridor, government-to-government (G2G) programmes function primarily as pilot initiatives and normative benchmarks, rather than scalable recruitment mechanisms. Their value lies less in numerical impact and more in demonstrating how ethical and development-oriented recruitment, structured recognition, and coordinated skilling can be operationalised across borders. By testing institutional arrangements and setting procedural standards, these

programmes serve as a reference model for the private sector, raising awareness of regulated migration pathways without an explicit mandate or capacity to expand at scale.

Governance within the corridor is marked by a multi-level and multi-stakeholder configuration, where national and subnational public institutions, employers, intermediaries, and private recruitment agencies each play distinct but overlapping roles. Subnational actors on the Indian side, most notably in Kerala (NORKA) and Telangana (TOMCOM), have assumed outsized importance in maintaining ethical recruitment channels, while private agencies increasingly fill gaps left by slower and bureaucratic public programmes. This dual mobility structure has improved adaptiveness and responsiveness but has also introduced uneven standards, ethical challenges, unequal access, and cost distributions.

Extended language training periods and waiting times, often exceeding one year, require candidates to absorb high financial and opportunity costs. This disproportionately excludes lower-income/class aspirants, who are more likely to rely on faster – but less regulated – private recruitment channels and who are, thus, more exposed to exploitation, fraud, and insecurity.

Matching and recognition processes further reinforce selectivity within the corridor. While structured projects enable smoother transitions for a limited number of ‘high potentials’, partial recognition and prolonged adaptation phases remain common, particularly outside the health sector. Integration and retention are shaped primarily by employer practices and private or civil onboarding arrangements rather than by formal bilateral mechanisms, while skills development, return and circular migration remain marginal considerations, as most Indian migrants view Germany as a long-term destination and the Indian government prioritises remittances as major economic development strategy.

12) Good practices

Ethical recruitment through structured public programs: Programmes such as Triple Win exemplify how ethical recruitment standards, including the ‘Employer pays principle’, transparent selection, and protection against exploitation, can be operationalised across borders. By embedding recruitment within a coordinated mutual framework involving public employment agencies, subnational intermediaries, and employers, the program reduces risks for migrants while enhancing trust among destination-country actors. Although strongly limited in scale, such public skills mobility partnership programmes function as a benchmark, shaping expectations around fair recruitment and demonstrating viable alternatives to purely market-driven models.

Integrated skilling and recognition pathways: Another good practice can be the systemic integration of language training, recognition, and employment rather than treating these features as sequential or isolated processes. In the programs Triple Win and Hand-in-Hand, recognition procedures run parallel to language acquisition, enabling candidates to progress toward full professional status while already embedded in employment or training contexts. This approach

reduces uncertainty for employers, shortens effective migration timelines, and improves retention outcomes. It can be seen as an example wherein recognition is seen as a managed transition phase. It needs to be noted, however, that there are cases also within public programmes where employers do not put in enough efforts to support recognition, but try to benefit from the wage differential of international professionals being employed as assistant.

Subnational intermediation and trust-based governance: The prominent role of subnational institutions represents another good practice. Such institutions bridge governance gaps between national policy frameworks and local implementation realities. Their familiarity with migrant and diaspora communities, combined with institutional credibility on the German side, enhances compliance with ethical standards and reduces reputational risk. This subnational engagement demonstrates how decentralised governance can be optimized, especially in contexts where centralised recruitment systems face capacity constraints.

Sector-/occupation-specific programs for strategic workforce planning: The India-Germany corridor is increasingly shaped by recruitment in specific sectors/occupations. Investments into atypical sectors or occupations for skilled migration are particularly noteworthy as they open new migration opportunities for a large, medium-skilled population cohort which had no formal/structured channel of mobility yet. Hand in Hand for International Talents extends state-led recruitment into vocational and technical fields such as electronics, mechatronics and automation, metalworking, hospitality, catering, and IT, while the APAL pilot targets vocational trainees and supports in industrial-technical professions or skilled trades.

13) Recommendations for practitioners and policy

- A central policy lesson emerging from the India-Germany corridor is the structural importance of the private sector in initiating, shaping and sustaining contemporary migration flows. Despite the strong presence of state-led programmes, private actors account for a substantial share of actual mobility, particularly due to their ability to operate at scale and speed to specific labour demand and supply. Effective regulation of private recruitment agencies should therefore be elevated as top priority within the Joint Working Group under the MMPA. While initiatives such as the German quality seal 'Fair Recruitment Healthcare Germany' have set exemplary benchmarks, these standards are not directly transferable to Indian recruitment markets nor applicable across sectors.
- Rather than relying solely on G2G schemes and agreements, awareness-building among prospective migrants should be strengthened. Targeted information campaigns, implemented through trusted institutions, can help migrants identify transparent and ethical recruitment programs and avoid exploitative fee structures. Such efforts are particularly important given the limited enforcement capacity of public regulatory bodies and the continued reluctance of both states to substantially and de facto tighten controls over private recruitment agencies within the corridor.

- An increased focus on subnational institutions that adhere to ethical standards and operate closer to migrant communities. Expanding such partnerships could enable the gradual diffusion of fair recruitment norms at the regional level, even in the absence of comprehensive national reforms. Even relatively small initiatives highlighted in interviews with subnational institutions underscore the importance of disseminating information on new pathways and programmes, such as the Opportunity Card in local and state languages. Such targeted communication significantly broadens awareness and access, an outcome that is difficult to achieve through nationally-/centrally driven campaigns and dissemination efforts alone (L4S_IN_prac_06).
- Another emerging policy concern, largely absent from formal corridor frameworks, is student migration. Indian students increasingly rely on private agents and private universities or colleges, often paying substantial fees, only to discover that some degrees lack recognition or any real labour market value in Germany. This calls for stronger bilateral transparency mechanisms, including publicly accessible information on recognised institutions, accredited programmes, and post-study labour market pathways. Student and vocational training migration need to be further linked to debates and regulations on skilled labor as they constitute the most significant and increasingly attractive alternative to the persistent skills recognition issue.
- Improved skilled mobility data collection and sharing are also essential. Current statistics provide limited insight into onward mobility of Indian nationals within the EU, obscuring patterns of retention, secondary migration, and skills utilisation. Enhanced data cooperation between India, Germany, and EU institutions would support evidence-based policy-making, corridor evaluation and skills development predictions.
- Finally, addressing affordability/financial barriers to mobility programs is critical. Extended language training and long waiting periods in G2G pathways disproportionately exclude lower-income/class migrants, pushing them toward riskier private channels. Introducing low-interest education or migration-preparation loans, coupled with fee caps and stronger oversight of private recruiters, would help reconcile ethical recruitment principles with accessibility and scale.

Data and Sources

This corridor report is based upon interviews conducted in 2025. For the migration skill corridor India-Germany, 36 interviews were conducted by the Link4Skills India-Germany team. These interviews include at the policy level decision-makers, politicians, executives or employees of administrations, ministries, institutions or agencies at various governmental levels and practitioners and stakeholders at the implementation level, including public or private employment/recruitment agencies, language or professional training centers, implementing

institutions and organizations, professional chambers, trade unions, welfare and civil society organizations, migrant communities and returnee associations, and employers/companies. This data has been complemented with documents, statistics and studies.

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List of interviews

Germany

No.	Data name	Organization or institution	Actor group	Place	Number of interviewed persons
01	L4S_DE_prac_01	Language school	Practitioner	Osnabrück	1
02	L4S_DE_prac_02	Hospital	Practitioner	Lingen	2
03	L4S_DE_prac_03	Hospital	Practitioner	Osnabrück	1
04	L4S_DE_prac_04	German Competence Centre for International Skilled Workers in the Health and Nursing Professions (DKF)	Practitioner	Berlin / Online	1
05	L4S_DE_prac_05	Network IQ – Integration through Qualification	Practitioner	Osnabrück	1
06	L4S_DE_prac_06	Local public employment agency (BA)	Practitioner	Online	1
07	L4S_DE_prac_07	Vocational school	Practitioner	Osnabrück	1
08	L4S_DE_prac_08	Vocational school	Practitioner	Osnabrück	1
09	L4S_DE_prac_09	German Confederation of Skilled Crafts (ZDH)	Practitioner	Berlin / Online	1
10	L4S_DE_prac_10	Welcome Center	Practitioner	Online	2
11	L4S_DE_pol_11	Federal Employment Agency (BA)	Policy-maker	Nürnberg / Online	2
12	L4S_DE_prac_12	Federal Employment Agency (BA), regional office Lower-Saxony	Practitioner	Online	1
13	L4S_DE_pol_13	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	Policy-maker	Berlin / Online	1

14	L4S_DE_prac_14	High-tech training and education network	Practitioner	Berlin / Online	1
15	L4S_DE_pol_15	Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS)	Policy-maker	Berlin / Online	1
16	L4S_DE_prac_16	Private recruiting agency	Practitioner	Online	1
17	L4S_DE_pol_17	Federal Ministry of Health (BMG)	Policy-maker	Berlin / Osnabrück	2
18	L4S_DE_prac_18	Hospital	Practitioner	Online	1
19	L4S_DE_prac_19	German international cooperation and development organization (GIZ)	Practitioner	Online	1

India

N o.	Data name	Organization or institution	Actor group	Place	Number of interviewed persons
01	L4S_IN_prac_01	Governmental industrial training institute	Practitioner	Kerala	1
02	L4S_IN_prac_02	Jeyamata industrial training institute	Practitioner	Kerala	1
03	L4S_IN_exp_02	Marian engineering college	Expert	Kerala	1
04	L4S_IN_prac_03	Barton Hill governmental college	Practitioner	Kerala	1
05	L4S_IN_prac_06	NORKA (Non-Residents Kerala Association)	Practitioner	Kerala	1
06	L4S_IN_prac_07	Kerala Academy of Skill Excellence	Practitioner	Kerala	1
07	L4S_IN_prac_08	International Labor Organization (ILO)	Practitioner	Delhi	1
08	L4S_IN_prac_10	Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)	Practitioner	Kerala	1

India-Germany

No.	Data name	Organization or institution	Actor group	Place	Number of interviewed persons
01	L4S_IN-DE_prac_01	Indo-German Chamber of Commerce (AHK)	Practitioner	Mumbai / Online	1
02	L4S_IN-DE_prac_02	Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)	Practitioner	Online	1
03	L4S_IN-DE_prac_03	Goethe-Institut (Language school)	Practitioner	Osnabrück	7

04	L4S_IN-DE_prac_04	Private recruiting agency in healthcare	Practitioner	Online	2
05	L4S_IN-DE_prac_05	Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK)	Practitioner	Online	1
06	L4S_IND-DE_prac_04	NORKA recruitment	Practitioner	Kerala	1
07	L4S_IND-DE_prac_05	National Skill Development Center (NSDC) International	Practitioner	Delhi	1
08	L4S_IN-DE_prac_12	Norka Language Center	Practitioner	Kerala	1
09	L4S_IN-DE_prac_09	German international cooperation and development organization (GIZ)	Practitioner	Delhi	1

Key information

Emerging vs. established corridor?	Indian perspective: Emerging but strategically prioritized (especially post-2020; Germany seen as structured, ethical alternative to UK/GCC). German perspective: Remerging, rapidly institutionalizing, increasing in scale and highly strategic; India designated as ‘priority partner’ with country-specific Skilled Labor Strategy and one of the 13 focus countries under Germany’s Skilled Labour Strategy (2024). India as top nationality among labor migrants and foreign students in Germany.
How relevant are formal state-led skill partnerships/agreements ?	A multitude of national, federal and ministerial state-led partnerships and agreements have been signed recently. The Mobility and Migration Partnership (MMP) reflects the formal grounding and a strong top-down approach to (re-)initiate the relationship. Bilateral agreements are seemingly an important door opener and gesture for private actors on both sides to invest in skill mobility cooperations. G2G-agreements are often also required by the Indian side before German state actors can initiate agreements with private partners (important prerequisite). Several sector/occupation-specific programs (such as Triple Win and Hand in Hand for International Talents) have been initiated.

Who is dominant - private vs. public actors?	Both public and private are relevant within the corridor. There is a boom of German and Indian private actors active on the ground in India to establish (fair) recruitment partnerships. There are sectoral differences: Health sector: Public and private actors; Since 2021, India is no longer on the WHO list for recruiting in the healthcare sector. Since then, a “run” to the Indian healthcare market is observable – also from various other global or regional destination countries. STEM sector: Self-organized and led by employers and private actors. Vocational trades: Least established, small numbers, growing G2G involvement.
Degree of dynamism within the corridor (intensive dynamics, ups-downs, static, etc.)?	Highly dynamic, not much regulated or difficult to regulate due to many public and private actors on both sides; highly booming and expanding field – also high number of actors from other global or regional destination countries; but with operational bottlenecks.
What general perceptions do involved actors have about (to-be/skilled) migration (positive, negative, etc.)? Is it a politically or publicly controversial topic or accepted?	India views skilled migration to Germany positively. Germany is perceived as an ethical and regulated destination with high standards but strict language requirements. Growing far-right discourse creates contextual tension; the ministerial level emphasizes ‘export’ of (to-be) skilled migrants as important economic and developmental factor; on the public side: highly normalized and increasingly accepted as social mobility strategy. For Germany skilled migration is increasingly accepted as an economic necessity, and India is viewed as long-term, reliable and trustful partner for a source of skilled labour in key sectors. India stands for high-quality and desired migrants, high expectations of inflow of various migration types (higher education, vocational training, specialists, and from various sectors/occupations); Industrious/professionalization, but also cultural and integration issues have been mentioned as barriers by German actors.
What is the major skilled migration type (study, vocational or language training, non-formal skilled, job search, etc.)? Any trends?	The corridor is increasingly diversified in terms of sector and migration type. This structure gives prospect for corridor flexibility and sustainability. Health sector: Highly structured (Triple Win and üprivate players). STEM sector: Employer-driven, intra-corporate transfer (ICT), Blue Card/self-placement, self-organized. Vocational training migration (electricians, technical trades): Emerging. Study migration : Increasingly important.

	In addition, adaptation/adjustment measures migration, job search migration, and family reunification/formation migration are relevant.
Where does <u>skilling</u> mainly <u>take place</u> (origin or destination, both)?	Mainly in India, but increasing number of higher education and vocational training migrants (yet, still small in number). Mixed Model- Major skilling (language and base professional qualification) at origin, but recognition and on the job skilling happens in the destination. In case of college or university degree, recognition is less of an issue, but for healthcare and other sectors recognition plays a role as barrier.
What <u>skill</u> <u>sectors/occupations</u> primarily shape the corridor? Any new(er)/emerging occupations (e.g. digital health, green tech)?	Highly diversified/heterogenous: STEM/IT (established), healthcare (nursing and elderly care, especially since 2021 after removal from WHO list - established), as well as initiatives in vocational training, industry, commerce, skills trades, including green tech (emerging).
What <u>skill level</u> shapes the corridor (high, medium, low)?	Since the 2000s, the number of high-skilled migrants were highest. Recently, medium-skilled (vocational trained) migration is increasing.
How do dynamics in one corridor affect other corridors (e.g. competition for talents; diaspora networks reinforcing secondary migration)?	Reduced UK intake and visa norms, leading to a shift to Germany (Healthcare and, in case of students as well). The WHO-listing in the healthcare sector has global and regional impact on the corridor activities. There is a global and regional “run” and competition on Indian healthcare workers. Diaspora networks influence the migration flow. Germany highly invested into the partnership with India, yet, it also established partnerships with a multitude of other states worldwide – but also in the South Asian region. India is seen as priority partner due to its size and worker/education quality, but other countries/partnerships are simultaneously pursued.