

QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF WORKERS' REMITTANCES AND LABOUR MIGRATION

QUARTER 3- 2023



ECONOMIC RESEARCH DEPARTMENT
CENTRAL BANK OF SRI LANKA

Highlights

- Workers' remittances increased notably to USD 482.4 million in September 2023 in comparison to USD 359.3 million in September 2022.
- Total workers' remittances in 2023 up to September amounted to USD 4,345.1 million.
- The highest amount of remittances was received from Kuwait followed by UAE and Qatar in the third quarter of 2023.
- Total departures for foreign employment amounted to 224,133 up to September of 2023 recording a monthly average of 24,904.

Developments in Workers' Remittance Inflows

Figure 1: Monthly Movement

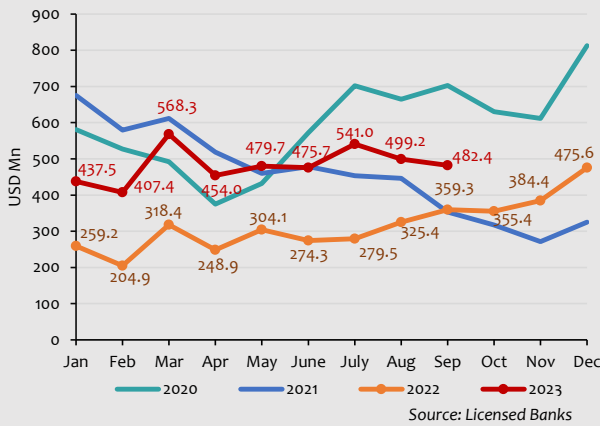
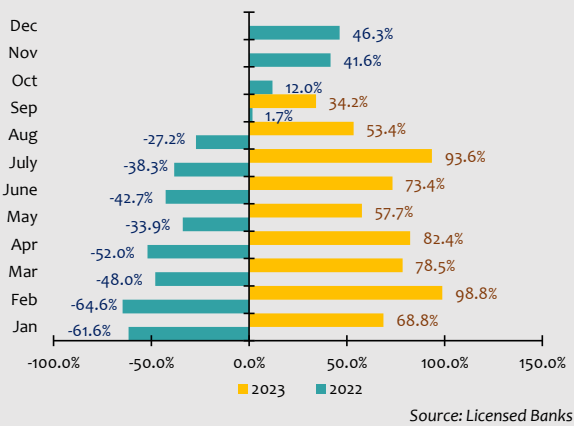
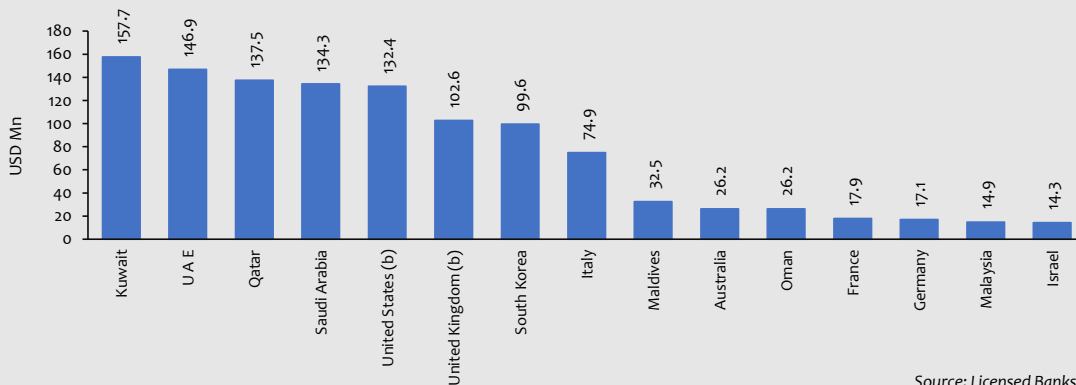


Figure 2: Y-o-Y Growth (%)



Inflow of workers' remittances recorded a monthly average of USD 507 million during the third quarter of 2023, compared to a monthly average of USD 470 million in the second quarter of 2023.

Figure 3: Workers' Remittance Inflows by Country (Q3 2023) (a)

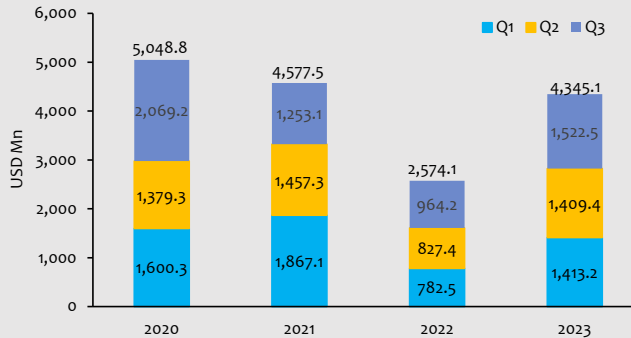


The highest volume of workers' remittances was received from Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.

(a) USD 100.4 million received through other countries and USD 287.2 mn received through some of the Global remittance channels, Apps and other channels are not included in country-wise workers' remittances.

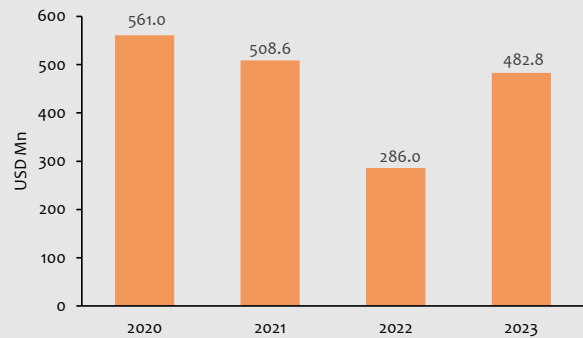
(b) Remittances from the United States and the United Kingdom mainly includes remittances diverted from other source countries through the United States and the United Kingdom, which is a part of the mechanism of cross border forex transactions arrangements.

Figure 4: Cumulative Inward Workers' Remittances January-September (2020 - 2023)



Source: Licensed Banks

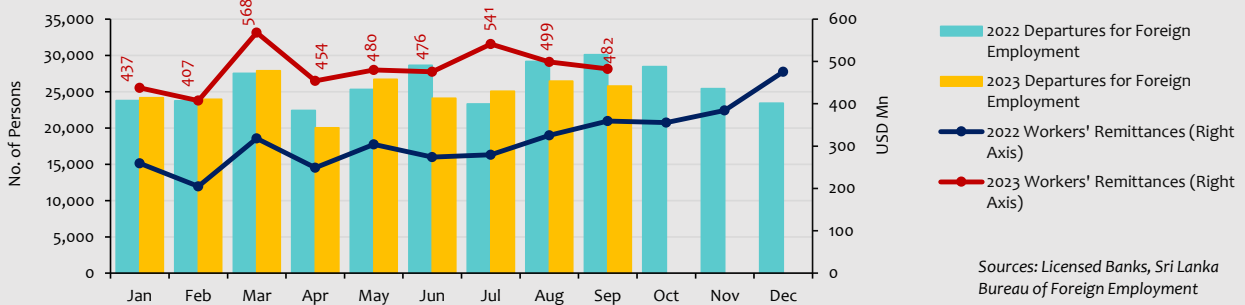
Figure 5: Monthly Average of Workers' Remittances January-September (2020 - 2023)



Source: Licensed Banks

Performance of Workers' Remittances and Departures for Foreign Employment

Figure 6: Workers' Remittances vs Departures for Foreign Employment

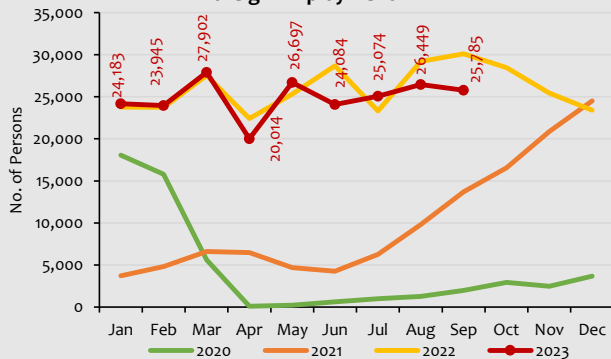


Sources: Licensed Banks, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

Workers' remittances remained broadly stable in recent months, however at elevated levels compared to the corresponding period in the previous year.

Developments in Labour Migration

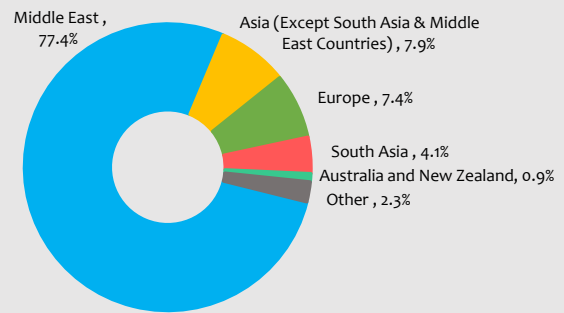
Figure 7: Monthly Movement of Departures for Foreign Employment



Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

The total departures for foreign employment in the third quarter of 2023 declined when compared to the third quarter of 2022.

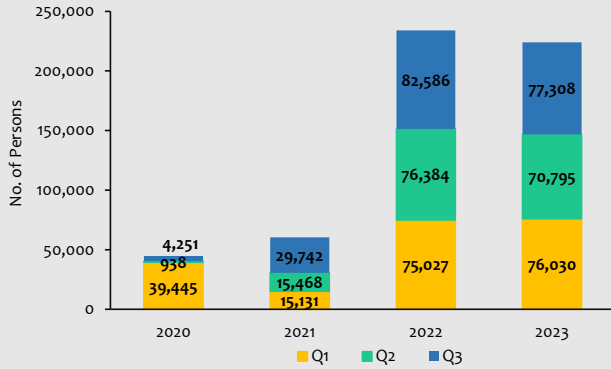
Figure 8: Departures by Region of Destination (January-September 2023)



Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

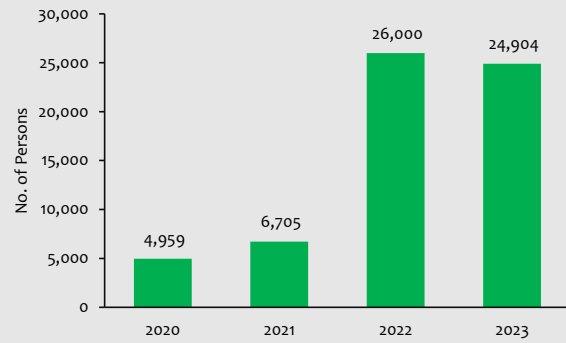
Majority of departures of migrant workers from January to September of 2023 were to the Middle Eastern region (77.4%).

Figure 9: Trends in Quarterly Departures January-September (2020 - 2023)



Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

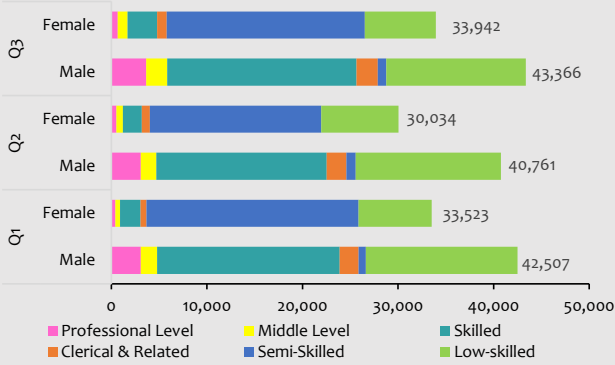
Figure 10: Monthly Average of Departures January-September (2020 - 2023)



Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

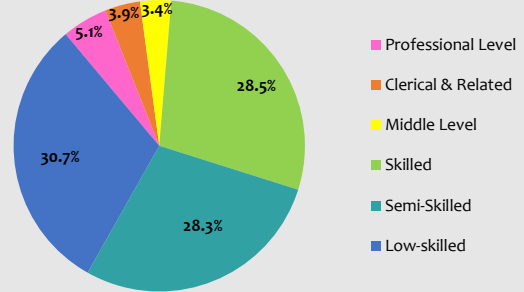
Departures for Foreign Employment by Manpower Level: January-September 2023

Figure 11: No. of Departures by Gender and Employment Category (January-September 2023)



Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

Figure 12: Composition of Total Departures for Foreign Employment by Manpower Level (January-September 2023)



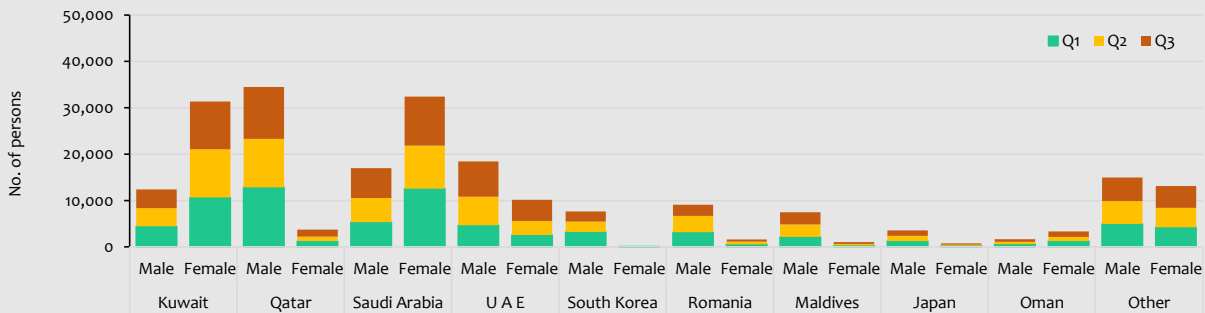
Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

Female departures for foreign employment are highly concentrated on semi-skilled category, while male departures are concentrated on skilled category.

Nearly 59% of departures for foreign employment is concentrated in the semi-skilled and low-skilled categories.

Trend of Gender-wise Departures by Country: January-September 2023

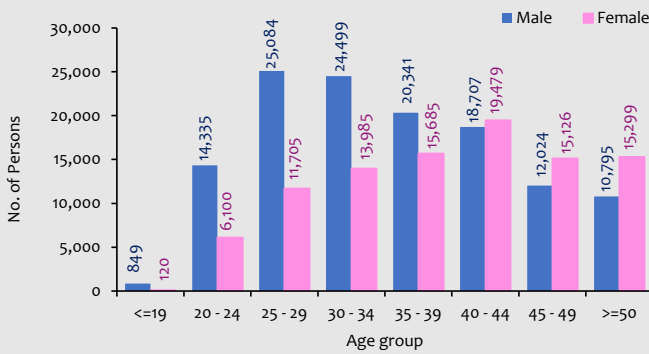
Figure 13: Gender-wise Quarterly Departures by Country (January-September 2023)



Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

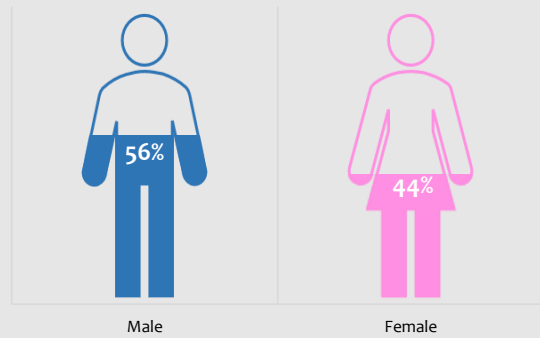
Total Departures for Foreign Employment by Age Group and Gender: January-September 2023

Figure 14: Total Departures for Employment by Age



Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

Figure 15: Total Departures for Employment by Gender

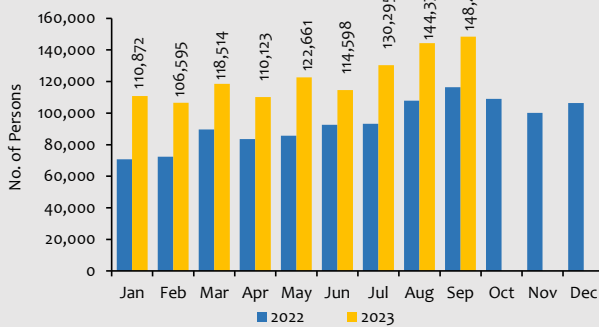


Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

Highest percentage of male migrant workers (20%) are in the age group of 25-29 years whereas most of the female workers (20%) are in the age group of 40-44 years.

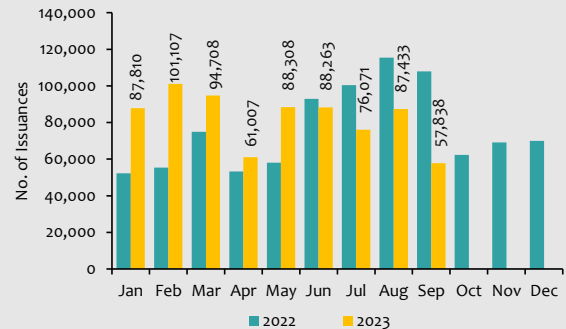
Total Departures (including departures for foreign employment) and Passport Issuances

Figure 16: Total Departures by Sri Lankans (Monthly)



Source: Department of Immigration and Emigration

Figure 17: Passport Issuances (Monthly)



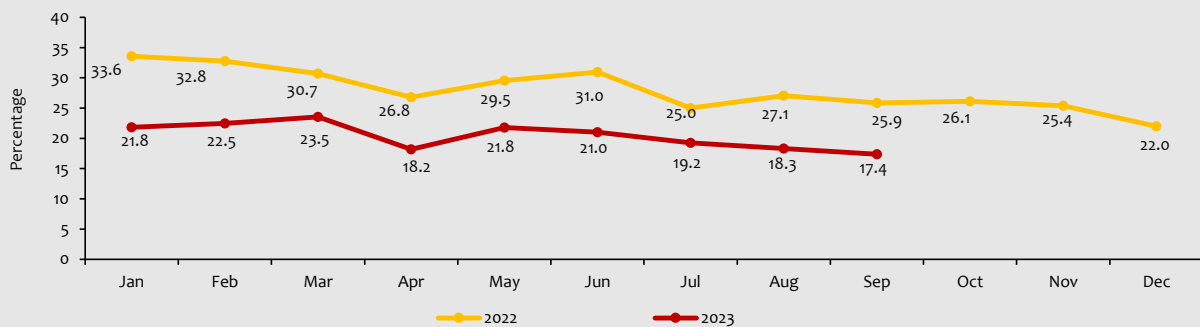
Source: Department of Immigration and Emigration

Total monthly departures were high throughout the first three quarters of 2023.

Although departures for foreign employment are higher, passport issuances showed some decline compared to 2022 in the third quarter of 2023.

Departures for Foreign Employment Vs Total Departures by Sri Lankans

Figure 18: Migrant Workers as a percentage of Total Departures by Sri Lankans

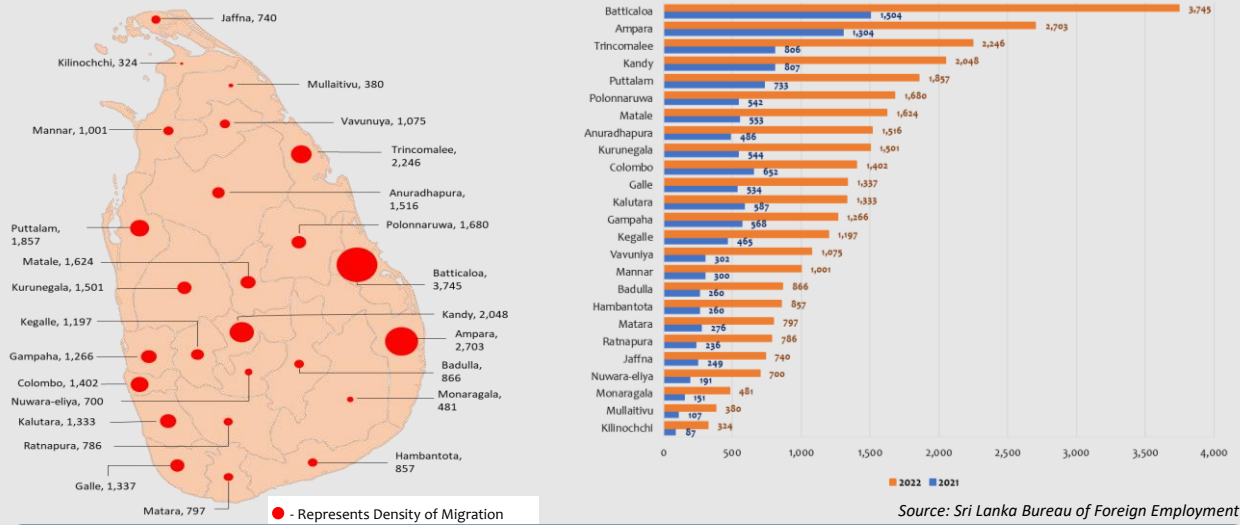


Migrant workers as a percentage of total departures of Sri Lankans were relatively low in the first nine months of 2023, compared to corresponding period of 2022.

Note: Total departures include all Sri Lankan departures

Density of Migrant Worker Departures

Figure 19 : Departures for Foreign Employment per 100,000 Population by District



The highest percentage of migration in comparison to the population of each district was reported from Batticaloa in 2021 and 2022.

Global Comparison

Figure 20: Inflow of Workers' Remittances in South Asian Countries - 2021 & 2022

