

GLMC 2026 Ministerial Roundtable in Riyadh agrees on six actions to strengthen global labor markets

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Dhaka: The Ministerial Roundtable of the third Global Labor Market Conference (GLMC) concluded in Riyadh on Monday, January 26, with participating ministers agreeing on six priority actions aimed at strengthening global labor markets and improving workforce resilience, read a press release.

Chaired by Eng. Ahmed bin Sulaiman Al Rajhi, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, the roundtable brought together 40 labor ministers from G20 countries and nations across Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and the Americas. Gilbert F. Houngbo, Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), also took part in the discussions.

In his opening remarks, Minister Al Rajhi highlighted the importance of constructive international dialogue, describing the Ministerial

Roundtable as a key platform for enhancing global cooperation. He noted that the discussions aim to enable practical knowledge-sharing, draw on real-world labor market experiences, and identify areas for collaboration that deliver measurable outcomes.

Discussions focused on aligning employment policies with future workforce needs, identifying key drivers of effective employment programs, and strengthening policy coherence across labor market systems.

At the conclusion of the roundtable, ministers agreed on six priority actions: enhancing skills recognition and portability to support worker mobility across sectors and borders; guiding the responsible use of artificial intelligence in labor market systems through transparent governance and oversight; adapting social protection systems to better support mobility and career transitions; strengthening the use of data and analytics to improve job matching and skills development; advancing workforce planning to anticipate economic disruptions and structural shifts; and improving pathways to first employment and labor market re-entry by expanding access to meaningful career opportunities.

Now convening for the third time in Riyadh, the Ministerial Roundtable has become a central pillar of the Global Labor Market Conference and a leading international platform for evidence-based dialogue on the future of work. GLMC 2026 is supported by strategic partnerships with international organizations, including the ILO, World Bank, OECD, King's Trust International, UN Tourism, UNDP, IOM, and the Mohammed bin Salman Foundation (Misk).

The Global Labor Market Conference is being held on 26–27 January 2026 at the King Abdulaziz International Conference Center (KAICC) under the theme “Future in Progress.” The event brings together labor ministers, international organizations, private sector leaders, academics, policymakers, and experts, featuring more than 200 speakers across over 50 sessions, with attendance exceeding 10,000 participants from Saudi Arabia and around the world.

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