



Pakistan Business Guide

Karachi 8th August 2012

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Arrival:

Visa: Nationals from most of the European countries including Switzerland require a visa for travelling to Pakistan. Missions abroad are authorized to grant up to five years validity visa (multiple entry, three months duration for each stay) within 24 hours to businessmen on production of any of the following documents:

- Recommendation letter from Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CC&I) of the respective country of the foreigner.
- Invitation letter from Business organization duly recommended by the concerned Trade Organization/Association in Pakistan
- Recommendatory letter by Honorary Investment Counselor of BOI/Commercial Attach posted at Missions abroad.

Visa On Arrival (**VOA**) for **30 days validity and stay** can also be given to the businessmen from most of the European countries including Switzerland upon production of any of the above mentioned documents.

Visa fee is charged on reciprocal basis. The exact amount may be verified from the Pakistan Mission.

Documentation for visa: Visa application form, valid passport, 2-4 photographs, a letter from the applicant's employer/company and proof of adequate money for stay in Pakistan are the basic required documents. Additional documents may be demanded if necessary. Further information can be obtained from:

Embassy of Pakistan

Bernastrasse 47
CH-3005 Bern
Tel.: +41 31 350 1790-91-92,
Fax: +41 31 350 1799
E-mail: parepberne@bluewin.ch

Since the visa procedure could be changed at any time, travelers are advised to check well in advance with the Embassy of Pakistan at above given address. Pakistan's general policy on visa can be viewed at the following link: <http://www.mofa.gov.pk/>

Visit restrictions: For visit to some restricted areas, permission is needed. For further information in this regard, please contact:

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation

PTDC Head office, 22-A ,
Saeed Plaza, Blue Area, Jinnah Avenue,
Islamabad - 44000 Pakistan
Tel.:+92-51-9203772
Fax:+92-51-9207427
Email: info@tourism.gov.pk

Departure:

Immigration authorities demand three copies of the front pages of the passport and Pakistani visa at the time of departure.

Export of antiques is not allowed. All unaccompanied baggage needs an export permit. Airport tax @ Pakistani Rupees 500 to 1000 and Federal Excise Duty (FED) @ Pakistani Rupees 4000 to 6000 is levied depending upon the level of travel class. The aforementioned tax and duty is included in the price of all the tickets issued within Pakistan. According to the current exchange rate, 1US\$ is equal to Pak Rs. 86/- approximately.

LANGUAGES USED FOR BUSINESS:

'Urdu' is the national language and English is the official language of Pakistan. Correspondence and business meetings are generally carried out in English.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:

Religious holidays are celebrated according to the lunar month. Therefore the religious holidays occur on different dates each year.

Following is the list of religious and other gazetted holidays:

Religious holidays (according to Islamic calendar):

- 01 Moharram, The First day of the Muslim new year
- 9-10 Moharram, Mourning by Shia community
- 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal, Prophet Muhammad's birthday
- 01 Ramadan, Beginning of the month of fasting
- 29/30 Ramadan, Jummah-tul-Wida, Last Friday of Ramadan
- 01 Shawal Eid-ul-Fitr, end of Ramadan
- 10 Zilhaj Eid-ul-Azha, celebrated by sacrificing animals, pilgrimage to Mecca

Gazetted holidays:

- 05 February, Kashmir Day
- 23 March, Pakistan National Day
- 01 May, Labour Day
- 01 July, Bank Holiday for banks only, start of the new fiscal year
- 14 August, Independence Day
- 06 September, Defence of Pakistan Day
- 09 November, Iqbal Day
- 25 December, Christmas and Jinnah's birthday
- 26 December, Day after Christmas (for Christians only)
- 31 December, Bank holiday, for banks only

HEALTH AND INOCULATION:

Yellow Fever vaccination certificate is required for travelers arriving from endemic zone. Passengers from European countries do not require such certification. Vaccination against cholera, hepatitis, typhoid and polio is recommended. Malaria risk exists in Pakistan throughout the year in areas below 2000 meters. All foreigners coming to stay in Pakistan for over one year require HIV AIDS-free certificate.

Time zone:

UTC/GMT +5 hours

Electricity supply:

220/240V, 50 Hz (Round - two or three-pin plugs/sockets are used).

Broadcast television system:

PAL B

METHODS OF PAYMENT:

Currency: Basic unit of currency is Rupee which divides into 100 paises. Currency notes of 5000, 1000, 500, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5 Rupees are in use. Coins of 1, 2, and 5 are in circulation. On May 21st 2011, State Bank of Pakistan had issued Rs 20 coin in commemoration of 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China.

Exchange rate: Pakistan observes floating exchange rate system. The current exchange rate is CHF 1 = Rupees 97 (As on August 8th 2012).

Import/export of currencies/restrictions: Travelers to Pakistan can bring (import) with them without limit any foreign currency notes or coins. Import/Export of foreign currency notes and coins by post is illegal and liable for confiscation, besides any legal action that may be taken against the sender. There are no restrictions on the import of foreign exchange instruments either personally or by post.

Export of currency notes of the Government of Pakistan and the State Bank of Pakistan exceeding Rs 500 and Rs 3000 in value to India and countries other than India respectively (per person at any one time) is prohibited.

With regards to the export of foreign exchange/currency from Pakistan, the State Bank of Pakistan has granted the following general permission to:

1. Authorized Dealers to send out of Pakistan, cheques, drafts or bills of exchange which have been acquired by them in the normal course of their business and within the terms of their authorization.
2. Any person maintaining an account expressed in a foreign currency, and held under any permission, general or otherwise, granted by the State Bank of Pakistan to take or send out of Pakistan, cheques or drafts drawn on such account.
3. Any person, other than a person to whom foreign exchange is issued for travelling purposes only, to send out of Pakistan foreign exchange issued to him by an Authorized Dealer.
4. Any person to take out of Pakistan foreign exchange issued to him by an Authorized Dealer in Pakistan and endorsed on his passport.
5. Any person not ordinarily resident in Pakistan, to take out of Pakistan the unspent amount of foreign currency brought by him into Pakistan, provided the period of his continuous stay in Pakistan does not exceed three months, and
6. Any person to take out of Pakistan US\$ 10,000/- or equivalent thereof in other foreign currencies.

Credit cards/travellers' cheques: Credit cards such as American Express, MasterCard and Visa etc. are widely accepted in major cities. Travelers' cheques are generally accepted at most of the banks, 4 and 5 star hotels and major shops.

ATMs: The ATM (Maestro & Cirrus) facility is available at major banks in larger cities only. Use of ATMs during business hours inside a bank, supermarket, or large commercial building is advised.

TRANSPORTATION:

By Air: Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad are the main gateways to Pakistan by air. Six other international airports are in Peshawar, Quetta, Faisalabad, Sialkot, Multan and Gwadar. In total, there are 134 airfields in Pakistan.

About 20 airlines fly to Pakistan from over 40 countries, direct or via Middle East. There is no direct flight from Switzerland to Pakistan. However, Swiss International Air Lines offers daily and convenient connections from Zurich to Karachi/Lahore/Islamabad/Peshawar via Dubai. The connection between the aforementioned cities of Pakistan and Dubai is provided through Pakistan International Airline (PIA) or Emirates. No European carrier operates to any cities of Pakistan. Middle Eastern carriers Emirates, Etihad, Qatar, Oman & Turkish Airlines operate daily to Karachi as well a few of them at least 3 times a week to Islamabad / Lahore / Peshawar. Pakistan International Airline (PIA) has direct flights from the main Mediterranean and European cities as well as New York, Toronto in North America and Canada.

PIA and Airblue have regular daily domestic flight connections between Karachi and Islamabad / Lahore / Peshawar / Quetta / Sialkot / Faisalabad and Multan. Shaheen Air International has also daily flights to Islamabad and Lahore but once a week to Peshawar.

Facilities at airports include duty free shops, restaurants, post offices, banks, ATMs, currency Exchange offices and shops. Radio and yellow cabs are available at all airports.

Karachi International Airport is located Northeast of Karachi. Taxi takes about 25-30 minutes to the city centre and charges approximately US\$7.00. Public bus charges approximately US\$0.25 per passenger and it takes around one hour.

Islamabad International Airport is located east of Islamabad. Taxi takes about 20-30 minutes and charges approximately US\$7.00.

Lahore Airport is located east of the city. Taxi takes about US\$8.00 to the main hotels for a 30-45 minute drive.

Peshawar Airport is located west of the city. Taxi charges about US\$4.00 in about 15-20 minutes to the city.

The payment to the public transport/taxi is made in equivalent amount in the local currency. The public transport is overcrowded and dangerous. Therefore it should be avoided. Yellow cabs are also not recommended because of sub-standard service. 'Rent a car' companies, though expensive, provide better and secure service. However, the rates should be always negotiated in advance. Complimentary pick/drop service of the hotels is the best available means of transport to the hotels.

By Bus: A large portion of travel between cities in Pakistan is carried out by bus. Travelling between some major cities (Karachi-Lahore-Quetta and Peshawar) by bus may take more than 24 hours, and is usually advised against, because of highway robbery, known locally as 'dacoitry'. With that exception, however, travel by bus is often the cheapest and most convenient alternative.

By Train: Pakistan has an extensive network of railways which provides an important mode of transportation to the farthest corners of the country. Where travelling about more than 500 km is needed, travel by train (in air-conditioned sleeper, or 1st class sleeper) is advisable, since it is safer than travel by road. It is important to mention that trains in Pakistan are rarely punctual and delay of minimum 2 – 3 hours is normal. Train timings in Pakistan are revised twice a year for summer and winter seasons.

Hotels:

Pakistan offers a wide range of accommodation. Modern, well-equipped chain hotels operate in all major cities of the country. The detail is as under:

- Karachi: Avari Towers, Pearl Continental, Sheraton, Marriott, Ramda Plaza, Regent Plaza, Carlton.
- Lahore: Avari, Pearl Continental, Holiday Inn.
- Islamabad: Marriott, Serena, Holiday Inn, Pearl Continental (Rawalpindi)
- Peshawar: Pearl Continental, Green Hotel, Grand Hotel.

Communication:

To call from Switzerland 0092 + city code + telephone number

To call Switzerland 0041 + city code + telephone number

Card phone booths are installed at all airport lounges and main business centres in all cities and towns. Public telephone, telex and fax facilities are available at the Customers' Service Centres or at private general stores and shops, identified by a sign displaying 'PCO' (Public Call Office). Internet kiosks are installed at all airports, some gas stations and in major shopping centres. There are no restrictions on use of communication facilities.

Business hours	Monday to Thursday and Saturday	Friday
Offices:	0900-1700 hours	0900-1200/1230 hours
Banks:	0900-1700 hours	0900-1230 hours
Government offices:	0800-1500 hours	0800-1200 hours
Shops:	0900-2200 hours	0900-1230 hours

Addresses and opening hours of Embassies and Consulates:

Embassy of Switzerland

Street No. 6, Diplomatic Enclave,

G.P.O. Box No. 1073

Islamabad

Tel.: (+92) 51-22 79 291/92

Fax: (+92) 51-22 79 286

E-mail: isl.vertretung@eda.admin.ch

Visiting hours:

Monday to Friday 0900 hours to 1200 hours

Visa: Monday to Thursday 1000 hours to 1300 hours

Consulate General of Switzerland

98-Block – V, Clifton,

Karachi - 75600

Tel.: (+92) 21-358 73 987/990

Fax: (+92) 21-358 74 104

E-mail: kar.vertretung@eda.admin.ch

Visiting hours:

Monday to Friday 0830 hours to 1630 hours (upon appointment only)

TIPS FOR INITIATING BUSINESS CONTACTS:

Swiss or other foreign companies interested in finding potential partners can register their request in the matchmaking database maintained by the Board of Investment (BOI) <http://investinpakistan.pk> . If the partner being sought is not already listed on the BOI database, the BOI can help to provide a list of Pakistani companies by searching other data sources. The interested companies can send their requests to the Executive Director General, Board of Investment at: edg@pakboi.gov.pk

The Swiss representations and the Swiss Business Council in Pakistan can also possibly assist by providing available information about a Pakistani company with the courtesy of different trade and commercial organizations in Pakistan or through a direct contact with the company.

Swiss Business Council has been launched since May 5, 2008 in Karachi, by renowned Swiss multinational companies operating in Pakistan to develop, facilitate and monitor the trade and business relationship between Pakistan and Switzerland. Its primary intent is to bridge business to business relations between both countries, whilst encouraging links and cooperation in political, economic, cultural and educational fields. Following are the contact details of Swiss Business Council:

10, Sasi Town, Abdullah Haroon Road,

Karachi, Pakistan

Tel: +92 21- 356 56 444

Fax +92 21- 361 40 649

Email: info@swissbusinesscouncil.com.pk Web: www.swissbusinesscouncil.com.pk

For import/export regulations and other commercial laws, restrictions and provisions please refer to the module I 4 'Legal Provisions'.

BUSINESS PRACTICES:

Meetings: The Pakistani businesspersons have the tendency of making elaborate presentation of their establishment and business performance. It is advisable to verify the facts and figures with the export performance report issued by the bank or the annual audit report prepared by a certified chartered accountant.

A comprehensive presentation of your company with concrete proposals is encouraged. In your presentations, you should demonstrate your understanding for the political and economic situation in Pakistan.

Pakistanis will be eager to reach the conclusion in the first meeting. After having agreed on the financial aspect of the deal, they will appear to be readily willing to accommodate the subsequent conditions. Written agreement with precise details is always recommended. Follow-up interaction is essential.

FORMS OF ADDRESS, NAMES AND TITLES:

Forms of address: A person without a title is addressed as Mr., Mrs. or Miss.

Names: Pakistanis do not follow a uniform pattern of names. Generally the people have only two names, but many use their tribe or clan name as first or the last name in addition. 'Khan', 'Malik', 'Chaudhry', 'Bhatti', 'Qureshi', 'Afridi', 'Khattak' and 'Bangash' are common examples of the tribe or clan names.

Typical name for a man: 'Muhammad' is commonly used as part of the name but not as the first name, e.g. 'Muhammad Javed', 'Malik Muhammad Javed' or 'Muhammad Javed Khan'.

His friends, in all the cases, call him: Javed

Official form of address: Mr. Javed

Written form of address: Complete name

Typical name for a woman: Generally, the ladies have two names. The last name denotes the father's name for single ladies and the husband's name for the married, e.g. 'Hina Javed'. Her friends call her: Hina.

Official form of address: Miss/Mrs. Hina or Miss/Mrs. Javed

Written form of address: Miss/Mrs. Hina Javed

Majority of Christians in Pakistan follow the western name order.

DOs AND DON'Ts:

Meetings and greeting: A handshake at first contact in the day and while departing is a common practice. Ladies in Pakistan generally do not shake hands. Only a slight informal bow to show respect and courtesy to the ladies is always encouraged. Introduction is brief. Only the name and corporate title is sufficient for the introduction.

Business cards: Exchange of business cards is done in an informal manner. When you receive a card, make a deliberate glance at it before putting it in your pocket.

Dress: Casual dress is not recommended. Men should wear lounge suit in business situations and parties. Women should dress conservatively. They are suggested not to wear a skirt or a low neck and sleeveless shirt.

Body language: When Pakistanis nod, it means that they are listening and understanding. You should also nod to show that you are listening and understanding the other side.

Note:

- A smile, interpreted in the right context, is always appreciated.
- Never sit with your ankle crossed over your knee.
- Avoid touching others with your feet.
- Do not show affection in public, especially with the ladies, such as hugging.

Gifts: Exchange of gifts is carried out at the end of the series of meetings in a globally practiced style and manner. Corporate shields and insignias are recommended gift items. These items should not be wrapped. Alcohol bottles should never be presented as gifts.

Meals/Business meals: Pakistanis are traditionally hospitable. They will invariably invite you for meals and dinners. You will always be treated as guests. Alcohol is not served in hotels or restaurants, it might be served at home parties. Please be noted that during the month of Ramadan (month of fasting for Muslims), restaurants don not serve meals from dawn to dusk (except those based in five star hotels, airports, railway stations and hospitals). Furthermore, eating, drinking and smoking in public places is prohibited.

Advertising restrictions: Advertisement contents should not be prejudicial to the Islamic teachings. Alcoholic products and the products with pork ingredients cannot be advertised. Sex is also a sensitive issue in Pakistan.

Special features of the market: Pakistani businesses are quite price sensitive and add pressure on the foreign vendor's profit margin.

Kickbacks, commissions, under and over invoicing, and under the table deals in Government and private transactions are part of corrupt business practices in Pakistan.

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