

Global Immigration alert

January 2026

Saudi Arabia

Increase in Saudization rates for roles in the engineering and procurement sectors

Executive summary

On 4 January 2026, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (MHRSD) [announced](#) an increase in Saudization (localization) rates for roles in the engineering and procurement sectors.

Background

Saudization, also known as Nitaqat, is a policy by the MHRSD that mandates companies to employ Saudi nationals based on specific quotas, with the aim to create job opportunities for them in the private sector.

Key developments

The MHRSD announcement introduced the following changes:

- **Engineering sector:** The Saudization rate for roles in this sector increased to 30% (up from 25%). Employees earning a minimum monthly wage of SAR 8,000 will be considered for Saudization purposes (i.e., individuals who earn at least SAR 8,000 per month are included in the quota calculation). This requirement applies to jobs in both the private and non-profit sectors and is mandatory for companies that employ five or more workers, according to the approved professional definitions and titles. These definitions refer to the job titles listed in the Saudi Unified Classification of Professions, which determines which engineering roles fall under Saudization. The revised rate applies to 46 job roles, including architectural engineer, power generation engineer, industrial engineer, electronics engineer and marine engineer. Professional accreditation from the Saudi Council of Engineers remains a mandatory requirement. Impacted employers have a six-month grace period that began on 4 January 2026 to ensure readiness and compliance.

- **Procurement sector:** The Saudization rate for roles in this sector increased to 70% (up from 50%). This requirement applies to private sector companies that employ three or more workers, as defined by the Saudi Unified Classification of Professions. The revised rate applies to 12 job roles, including procurement manager, procurement representative, contracts manager, procurement specialist, warehouse keeper and logistics services manager. Impacted employers have a six-month grace period that began on 4 January 2026 to ensure compliance.

Impact on employers

Employers may review their workforce and talent management strategies to ensure compliance with the new regulations, which may involve recruiting and retaining more Saudi nationals.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.



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