



Shape the future  
with confidence

# Global Immigration alert

May 2026

The better the question. The better the answer.  
The better the world works.

## Saudi Arabia

### Saudi Arabia intensifies labor compliance inspections

#### Executive summary

On 13 May 2026, Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (MHRSD) [announced](#) the results of its compliance and inspection activities for the first quarter of 2026, highlighting intensified monitoring and enforcement across private sector establishments.

#### Background

In line with the objectives of "Vision 2030" to support and empower national talent, and ensure the effectiveness of Saudization decisions, the MHRSD continues to implement large-scale inspections and digital monitoring to ensure compliance with labor laws and employment practices.

#### Key developments

Key developments include the following:

- The MHRSD conducted more than 250,000 inspection visits during Q1 26, resulting in the detection of over 168,000 labor violations.
- More than 230,000 warnings and correction notices were issued to establishments to encourage proactive compliance and remediation.
- Approximately 132,000 inspection visits focused on monitoring Saudization compliance, reinforcing continued monitoring on workforce localization.
- The MHRSD reviewed over 91,000 suspected cases of noncompliant employment arrangements, identifying more than 13,500 violations related to fictitious employment practices (i.e., sham Saudization), with enforcement actions including removal of these cases from the Saudization program, the cancellation of 7,200 visas and service suspensions.

#### Impact on employers

Employers operating in Saudi Arabia should expect continued and increased enforcement activity, particularly in relation to Saudization compliance and workforce practices. To mitigate risk, organizations should:

- Undertake a thorough review of workforce data across internal records and government portals to ensure employee occupations align with Saudization obligations and make necessary updates to maintain compliance.
- Implement periodic internal compliance reviews to identify and address potential gaps at an early stage.
- Review Saudization strategy, ensuring a focus on genuine hiring and the retention of Saudi nationals, given this remains a high-priority enforcement area.

#### Key steps

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

EY | Building a better working world

EY is building a better working world by creating new value for clients, people, society and the planet, while building trust in capital markets.

Enabled by data, AI and advanced technology, EY teams help clients shape the future with confidence and develop answers for the most pressing issues of today and tomorrow.

EY teams work across a full spectrum of services in assurance, consulting, tax, strategy and transactions. Fueled by sector insights, a globally connected, multi-disciplinary network and diverse ecosystem partners, EY teams can provide services in more than 150 countries and territories.

**All in to shape the future with confidence.**

EY refers to the global organization, and may refer to one or more, of the member firms of Ernst & Young Global Limited, each of which is a separate legal entity. Ernst & Young Global Limited, a UK company limited by guarantee, does not provide services to clients. Information about how EY collects and uses personal data and a description of the rights individuals have under data protection legislation are available via [ey.com/privacy](https://ey.com/privacy). EY member firms do not practice law where prohibited by local laws. For more information about our organization, please visit [ey.com](https://ey.com).

© 2026 EYGM Limited.  
All Rights Reserved.

SCORE 111781-26-GBL

2101-3682263  
ED None

This material has been prepared for general informational purposes only and is not intended to be relied upon as accounting, tax, legal or other professional advice. Please refer to your advisors for specific advice.

**[ey.com](https://ey.com)**

**Xavier Brun**  
Partner, People Advisory Services Tax, MENA Immigration  
Tel: +973 3365 1121  
Email: [xavier.brun@bh.ey.com](mailto:xavier.brun@bh.ey.com)

**Emma Barnett**  
Senior Manager, People Advisory Services Tax, Saudi Immigration  
Tel: +971 565018751  
Email: [emma.barnett@ae.ey.com](mailto:emma.barnett@ae.ey.com)

**Ben Willis**  
Partner, EY Global Immigration Competency Leader  
Tel: +44 20 7951 9589  
Email: [ben.willis@uk.ey.com](mailto:ben.willis@uk.ey.com)