



# Global Immigration alert

December 2024

## Saudi Arabia

### New Temporary Work Visa regulations

#### Executive summary

On 10 November 2024, the Saudi Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (MHRSD) published a new Regulation on Temporary Work Visas (TWVs) and Temporary Work Visas for Hajj and Umrah Services in the [Official Gazette](#). While the official date of implementation of the Regulation is 180 days after its publication (i.e., 10 April 2025), many of its provisions are already being applied in practice.

#### Key developments

The Regulation replaces the Regulation on TWVs and Seasonal Work Visas (i.e., Resolution No. 497 dated 2 July 2015) and cancels all contradictory provisions. The Regulation introduces the following changes for TWVs:

- ▶ **Eligibility criteria:** TWVs will be available to individuals engaged in specific jobs and professions as determined by the MHRSD in coordination with other relevant authorities. Currently, these visas are available only to those engaged in specific work outside of Hajj-related activities. A list of specific activities is yet to be announced by the relevant authorities.
- ▶ **Stay period and extensions:** TWVs will continue to be valid for one year from the date of their issuance. However, the Regulation establishes that holders can stay in Saudi Arabia for up to 90 days from the date of entry (down from six months as per the current regulation) and apply to extend the visa once for up to another 90 days (down from six months as per the current regulation). This reflects the guidance already being adopted by the authorities in practice.

- ▶ **Number of entries:** Under the current regulation, TWVs could be issued as single-entry or multiple-entry visas. However, in practice, they were only being issued as single-entry visas. The Regulation states that the number of entries allowed based on a TWV will be determined at the discretion of the authorities.
- ▶ **Visa cancellation:** TWV holders will be able to request cancellation of their unused visas before their expiry, and a refund of the visa fee might be issued if the MHRSD accepts their request. Otherwise, the MHRSD will cancel unused visas after one year of issuance. As per the current regulation, holders cannot request cancellation of unused visas, and these visas are automatically canceled by the MHRSD after one year.
- ▶ **Documentation requirements:** The Regulation establishes that applicants must submit a copy of the employment contract signed with a Saudi employer and proof of medical insurance. This requirement is not mentioned in the current regulation.

#### Impact on employers

As many of the changes mentioned in the Regulation are already being applied in practice, employers may identify applicable requirements and update their internal policies as required to minimize business disruptions when hiring TWV applicants. Saudi companies that sponsor TWVs and fail to comply with applicable regulations may be subject to penalties for non-compliance.

## 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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