



Global Immigration alert

February 2025

Saudi Arabia

Expansion of scope of the Saudi Qualification Verification Program

Executive summary

On 28 January 2025, the Saudi Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (MHRSD) [announced](#) the full expansion of the Professional Verification service under the Professional Accreditation program. The program now applies to all industries and a broader range of countries.

Background

Under the mandatory Professional Accreditation program, foreign professionals must get their educational qualifications verified before entering Saudi Arabia for work. The aim is to ensure that foreign workers hold genuine academic qualifications, and possess the necessary practical experience and skills required by the Saudi labor market. Individuals can complete the verification process via the automated Professional Verification service, which they can access through a unified platform operated by the MHRSD. According to [media reports](#), the first phase of implementation of the Professional Verification service was completed in July 2024 and covered 128 countries, with the target being to cover 160 countries eventually.

Key developments

The scope of the Professional Accreditation program has now been expanded to [1,007 professions](#) encompassing all industries, moving beyond its previous focus on sectors such as aviation, construction, health care, media and tourism. Additionally, the MHRSD's recent announcement confirms that the target of 160 countries has been met. All foreign professionals who are nationals of the 160 impacted countries must now obtain a Professional Accreditation Certificate via the Professional

Verification service as validation of their qualifications for their designated occupations.

Impact on employers

The expansion of the Professional Verification service has resulted in extended timelines for the visa application process for foreign workers, adding approximately 15 to 25 working days to the overall timeline, depending on various factors (e.g., available contacts at the foreign educational entity, its responsiveness). Preparing all necessary additional documentation in advance, including the Professional Accreditation Certificate, will help avoid delays in the visa application process. Employers that are newly subject to the verification requirement will also face increased costs (i.e., a government fee of USD 93) and administrative procedures, as they will be required to adapt their onboarding processes to accommodate these changes. Employers may plan for potential delays in their recruitment processes to ensure a smooth onboarding experience.

Key steps

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



Shape the future
with confidence

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. EY member firms do not practice law where prohibited by local laws. For more information about our organization, please visit ey.com.

Ernst & Young LLP is a client-serving member firm of Ernst & Young Global Limited operating in the US.

© 2025 Ernst & Young LLP.
All Rights Reserved.

EYG no. 001515-25Gbl

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

Xavier Brun

Partner - People Advisory Services Tax, MENA Immigration
Tel: +973 3365 1121
Email: xavier.brun@bh.ey.com

Emma Barnett

Manager - People Advisory Services Tax, Saudi Immigration
Tel: +971 565018751
Email: emma.barnett@ae.ey.com

Ben Willis

Partner - People Advisory Services, EMEIA Immigration Leader
Tel: +44 20 7951 9589
Email: ben.willis@uk.ey.com

Seema Farazi

Partner - People Advisory Services, EMEIA Immigration Leader
Tel: +44 20 7951 7122
Email: seema.farazi@uk.ey.com