

Global Immigration alert

April 2025

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia increases Saudization rates for roles in healthcare and tourism

Executive summary

On 21 April 2025, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (MHRSD), in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, [announced](#) the localization of 41 professions in the tourism sector to create more job opportunities for citizens across the country. Additionally, as per an [October 2024 announcement](#), the MHRSD and the Ministry of Health initiated the first phase of Saudization rate increases for four healthcare professions, effective 17 April 2025.

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.

Tourism sector

The authorities announced that Saudization rate increases will be implemented in three phases. The following table outlines the implementation dates and corresponding Saudization rates for various roles in the tourism sector:

Implementation date	Saudization rate	Targeted roles
22 April 2026	100%	Central operator, hotel receptionist, receptionist, inquiries clerk
22 April 2026	70%	Tour guide, hotel audit manager, branch manager, public services inspector, hotel inspector, hotel audit specialist, tourism guidance specialist, public relations specialist, purchasing

		specialist, health club host, tourism specialist, sales specialist
22 April 2026	50%	Tourism development specialist, tour organizer, ticket seller, hospitality specialist, marketing specialist, travel ticket clerk, cleaning and housekeeping supervisor, restaurant host, event coordinator, sales representative, purchasing representative, travel agent
3 January 2027	30%	Chef
2 January 2028	50%	Hotel operations manager, sales manager, planning and development manager, restaurant manager, operations manager, project management director, food and beverage services manager, purchasing manager, commercial manager, travel agency manager, hotel manager, marketing manager

Healthcare sector

As announced previously, the first phase of Saudization rate increases took effect on 17 April 2025 for the following roles:

- Radiology: 65%
- Medical laboratory: 70%
- Therapeutic nutrition: 80%
- Physiotherapy: 80%



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The minimum monthly salary for these positions is SAR 7,000 for bachelor's degree holders and SAR 5,000 for diploma holders, with employees earning below these amounts not counting toward the Saudization rate. This phase applies to all hospitals and health facilities in major cities, while the second phase will begin on 17 October 2025, applying to all other health facilities in the country.

Impact on employers

Employers may review their workforce composition and adjust their talent management strategies to comply with the new regulations, which may involve recruiting and retaining more Saudi nationals in the affected roles.

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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