

Global Immigration alert

June 2025

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia suspends issuance of work visa quotas for use by nationals of certain countries

Executive summary

Saudi Arabia has temporarily suspended the issuance of block visa quotas, and the processing of block visa applications that have been submitted but not yet adjudicated, for use by nationals of 15 countries. This has been confirmed by the government portal [Qiwa](#), which indicates that block visas are not available for nationals of these countries. Access to this information is limited to users who are logged into the government portal.

Background

A block visa is a quota issued by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development that allows companies to sponsor foreign nationals for long-term work authorization in Saudi Arabia. This recent measure follows the April 2025 [suspension](#) of both temporary work visa quotas and short-term visas, such as business, tourism and family visit visas for nationals of several countries. These changes are part of broader efforts by the Saudi authorities to ensure safety, efficiency and control over workforce and visitor volumes during the Hajj season.

Key developments

The suspension of block visa quotas is effective immediately and is expected to remain in place through the Hajj season, which runs from 4 June to 9 June 2025. Services are likely to resume by late June or mid-July 2025, although this timeline may be subject to change. This suspension impacts nationals of the following countries: Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sudan, Tunisia, Türkiye and Yemen. Changes to the list of impacted countries may occur without prior notice.

Impact on employers

Employers may face delays in onboarding employees from impacted countries. The impact of this measure on applications for individuals for whom block visas have already been issued is not clear; however, processing delays are likely. To mitigate business disruptions, employers may proceed with submissions where possible, as the extent of delays may vary depending on the procedures of each Saudi embassy or consular post. If the suspension on block visa issuance is lifted by late June or mid-July, the overall impact on onboarding timelines may be limited, given that the typical lead time to obtain a Saudi work visa is approximately 13 weeks.

Employers may inform their employees and advisers to continue preparing supporting documents (e.g., legalizing/verifying educational certificates) to avoid additional delays once the suspension is lifted. Additionally, they may review the planned start dates for impacted employees and adjust timelines as needed to account for potential delays in the work visa process.

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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