

Global Immigration alert

June 2026

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United Arab Emirates

UAE updates Emiratization requirements for private health care sector

Executive summary

On 16 June 2026, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) [Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization](#) (MoHRE), in coordination with the Ministry of Health and Prevention, announced amendments to the Emiratization framework for the private health care sector.

Private health care establishments must now allocate their existing mandatory annual 2% Emiratization target equally between specialized health care roles and other skilled positions, as part of broader efforts to strengthen national workforce participation in critical sectors.

Key developments

The updated framework retains the existing requirement for private sector entities, including health care establishments employing 50 or more employees, to achieve a 2% annual increase in Emiratization across skilled roles.

Under the revised rules:

- Employers must achieve 1% of the Emiratization target in the first half of the year and the remaining 1% in the second half.
- The annual Emiratization target must now be split evenly as follows:
 - 50% through hiring UAE nationals in specialized health care professions
 - 50% through hiring UAE nationals in other skilled roles
- The requirement applies specifically to private health care establishments with 50 or more employees.
- Employers are expected to align hiring with approved health care profession classifications issued by the relevant authorities.
- Authorities should encourage employers to leverage the Nafis platform to identify and recruit qualified Emirati talent.

The changes follow a sector-wide review aimed at aligning Emiratization efforts with workforce needs in the health care sector and increasing the participation of UAE nationals in

clinical roles. Compliance with the revised requirements will be assessed beginning in early 2027, with financial contributions applicable in cases of noncompliance with existing regulations.

Impact on employers

Private health care providers operating in the UAE should reassess workforce planning and recruitment strategies to comply with the revised Emiratization framework.

Employers that have primarily met Emiratization targets through non-clinical roles may need to adjust hiring strategies to ensure adequate representation of UAE nationals in specialized health care positions.

Organizations that have already achieved the 1% Emiratization target for the first half of 2026 in general skilled roles will need to prioritize meeting the remaining 1% Emiratization requirement in the health care-specific component during the second half of the year.

With compliance assessments expected to begin in 2027, failure to meet the revised requirements may result in financial penalties, underscoring the need for proactive planning, ongoing monitoring and alignment with regulatory expectations.

Employers are also likely to increase reliance on platforms such as Nafis and collaborate more closely with relevant authorities and stakeholders to source qualified Emirati health care talent.

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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