

# Arab Nationals in Saudi Arabia

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The Saudi Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (MHRSD) started publishing data on workers in the private and public sectors, disaggregated by worker's country of citizenship in 2020. The General Authority for Statistics (GASat) also released partial results of the last census conducted in 2022. These sources offer a glimpse of the numbers and characteristics of Arab nationals, the second-largest group of foreign residents in the country after Asians.

### Saudi Arabia: Employed and total Arab populations, by country of citizenship and sector of employment (2022)

	Employed Arabs/ <i>Foreign nat.</i>				Total Arabs/ <i>Foreign nat.</i>	
	Gov. Sector	% <i>fem.</i>	Private sector	Total employed	Number	% <i>fem.</i>
Yemen	583	13.9	840,881	841,464	1,803,469	26.0
Egypt	11,408	32.8	837,134	848,542	1,471,382	19.7
Sudan	8,562	47.2	354,988	363,550	819,575	17.8
Syria	1,708	13.9	140,953	142,661	449,314	42.2
Jordan	1,495	20.2	66,072	67,567	204,249	N.A.
Palestine	100	24.0	32,970	33,070	129,869	N.A.
Lebanon	45	22.2	30,245	30,290	52,779	N.A.
Morocco	74	33.8	18,028	18,102	48,796	N.A.
Tunisia	1,516	38.7	12,311	13,827	24,818	N.A.
Other nat.	280	N.A.	4,517	4,797	N.A.	N.A.
<b>Total Arab nationals</b>	<b>25,771</b>	<b>35.4</b>	<b>2,338,123</b>	<b>2,363,894</b>	N.A.	N.A.
<b>Total foreign nationals</b>	<b>43,180</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>7,744,139</b>	<b>7,787,319</b>	<b>13,382,962</b>	<b>23.5</b>

Sources: MHRSD, and GASat (census 2022). For details, see: <https://gulfmigration.grc.net/glmm-database/demographic-and-economic-module/?search=1&cmct=Saudi+Arabia>

Arab nationals made up almost a third of all foreign workers, but a half of those employed in the government sector. This may be due to their fluency in the Arabic language and to the contribution of certain nationalities (Egyptians, Jordanians, Palestinians) to the development of the Saudi governmental apparatus (education and health sectors, administration) since the 1950s. Sixty-five percent of Arab public sector employees held a university degree in 2022, as compared to 22.5 percent among Asian employees. Women among them were a minority (35 percent on average), except for Sudanese workers. Yet, the bulk of Arab migrants worked in the private sector (Table).

Sponsoring family dependents is only permitted to expatriates in managerial positions in Saudi Arabia. The share of workers among Arab nationals was below the average characterizing total foreign populations (Figure), and much lower than among nationals also found in low skilled positions, such as Indians (75 percent workers) or Bangladeshis (83 percent). The significant share of family members among residents thus confirms the generally skilled profile of most Arab nationals.

### Share of workers among Arab nationals in Saudi Arabia, by country of citizenship (2022)

