

Saudi Arabia: Amnesty of 2013 (April 3 to November 3): Number of work status corrections by type and sector (final results)

Regularisation operation/ document/ Worker's final status	Private sector	Public sector	Domestic sector	All sectors
Change of profession	2,417,273	322	6,184	2,423,779
Transfer of services	2,512,041	2	103,237	2,615,280
Recruitment visas granted	570,242	26,691	338,508	935,441
Labour permits granted	3,890,916			3,890,916
Workers registered as runaway	1,034,265	538	51,790	1,086,593
Final exits	437,314	17,069	259,141	713,524

Sources: Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Interior

* These figures indicate the number of administrative operations performed, not of persons concerned (one worker may have changed profession and also transferred sponsorship, for instance).

1. Definition

Ahead of a crackdown on irregular workers/ sojourners, an amnesty period was decided, starting April 3rd, 2013 and expired on November 3rd, 2013. The amnesty was meant to allow workers to sort out their administrative situation

(renew expired documents; register their current employer as their sponsor; register changes in profession and in activity sector, etc.), or leave without paying a penalty

Foreigners who came for Haj, Umrah or visit before 3/7/2008 and stayed on irregularly since then could also rectify their status at the passport department.

The regularization campaign was decided within the process of undertaking a massive program of saudization of the work force, called 'Nitaqat'.

Nitaqat ("ranges" or "zones") was formally launched by the Saudi Ministry of Labour in September 2011 (Ministerial Resolution n°4040, dated 12/10/1432 H.). The regulation establishes minimum shares reserved for Saudi citizens in a

company's labor force, depending on the size and on the activity sector of the business.

The companies with less than 10 employees are exempt from the program, but still need to employ at least one Saudi citizen.

Based on their level of compliance to Saudization quotas, the program classifies the private firms into four categories: Premium, Green, Yellow and Red. Premium and Green categories include the companies with highest

Saudization rates, while Yellow and Red include the ones with low rates. Color/ category of company is henceforth bound to the company's ability to secure or renew its employees' work permits, as well as registering any new branch of activity with the Labor ministry. Nitaqat Nitaqat' is ongoing and new measures are being added to the program's tasks.

Workers classified as "runaway" are persons who 1- absconded from their workplace but are still in the country; or 2- left on a "leave-and-return" visa but did not return.

2. Institution which provides data

Ministry of Labour

3. Data availability

The figures are published in the Ministry of Labour's 2013 Statistical Yearbook, pp. 84-86 (in Arabic).

<http://portal.mol.gov.sa/ar/Statistics/Documents/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A8%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%202013.pdf>

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