



Report 2025 - 2026

# The State of Hiring in Saudi Arabia

# How hiring will reshape Saudi Arabia's labor market?

## Introduction

Unsurprisingly, we are witnessing a radical transformation in Saudi Arabia's recruitment landscape. But amid these changes, what does the new evidence reveal?

According to our research, 66.7% of Saudi companies regularly track market indicators before performing workforce planning. However, nearly a third still neglect this process, without gaining the insights that reveal how talent truly moves within the market. Additionally, most of the available data revealing current employment status in the Kingdom are outdated. **So we didn't dwell on this deficit for long and decided to step in with data that's timely, intuitive, and actionable to make the hiring process in Saudi Arabia smarter and more accurate than ever.**

From January 2024 to July 2025, we at Jisr examined labor market data and noticed a steady rise in hiring demand alongside a stable existing workforce. We found that the average number of new hires per month in 2024 was 15,942. In the first half of 2025, it increased by 51.5% to 24,155, with notable spikes such as a 154.5% year-over-year increase in January 2025.

### This led us to ask:

- How do recruitment trends vary across Saudi Arabia's regions, and to what extent?
- Are hiring dynamics affected by company size?
- Which months see the highest peaks?
- And in what ways has the Nationalization Policy transformed the hiring landscape?

We will answer these questions in detail in the pages that follow.

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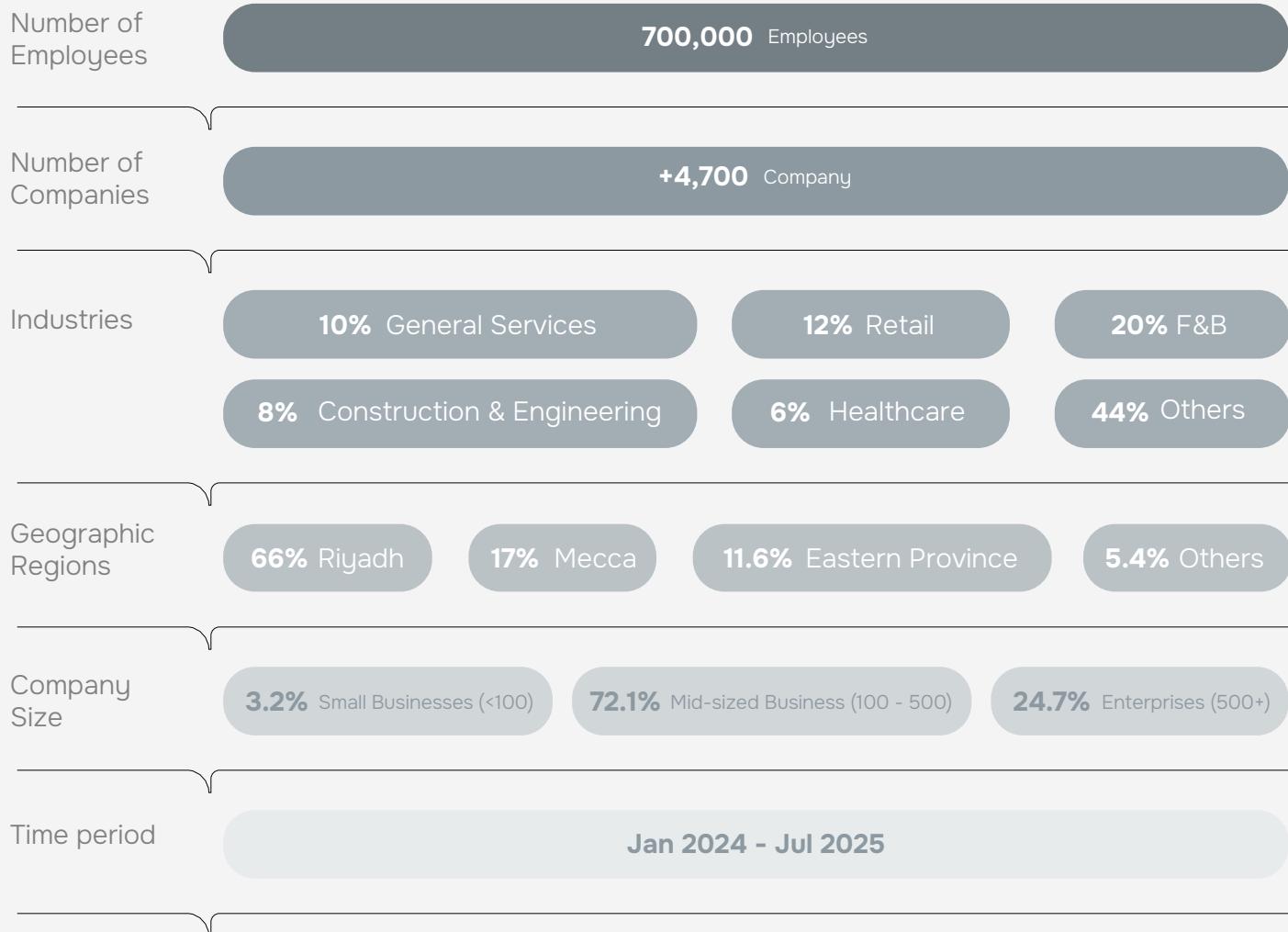
This report offers comprehensive data and in-depth analysis. To maximize its value, it is not necessary to read it from start to finish. It is designed as a practical reference that can be consulted as needed to support a clearer understanding of the job market and more informed decision-making. You can navigate directly to the sections most relevant to your current needs.

# Methodology

# Data sources and methodology

In preparing this report, we brought together information from several trusted sources:

## 1. Primary data



The main dataset came from Jisr's portal and was accessed in line with all privacy and data-protection rules. We relied on it as the backbone of our analysis because it reflects a broad cross-section of Saudi Arabia's labor market.

## 2. Supplementary insights

To support our main findings, we surveyed more than 50 HR practitioners working in Saudi Arabia and asked them about their employment trends and recruitment practices. Having collected their responses, we

organized, cleaned, and standardized them to remove inconsistencies or errors, then processed them through advanced AI-based analytics for accuracy validation and duplicate removal.

# Hiring Stability

## Hiring Stability:

How is Saudi Arabia's hiring and employment landscape evolving?

# 154.5%

A dramatic 154.5% surge in new hires between January 2024 and January 2025.

**≈ 15,942 hires per month**

The average monthly hiring volume in 2024 (January–December).

# 37.4%

The year-on-year increase in July 2025 compared to July 2024.

**≈ 24,155 hires per month**

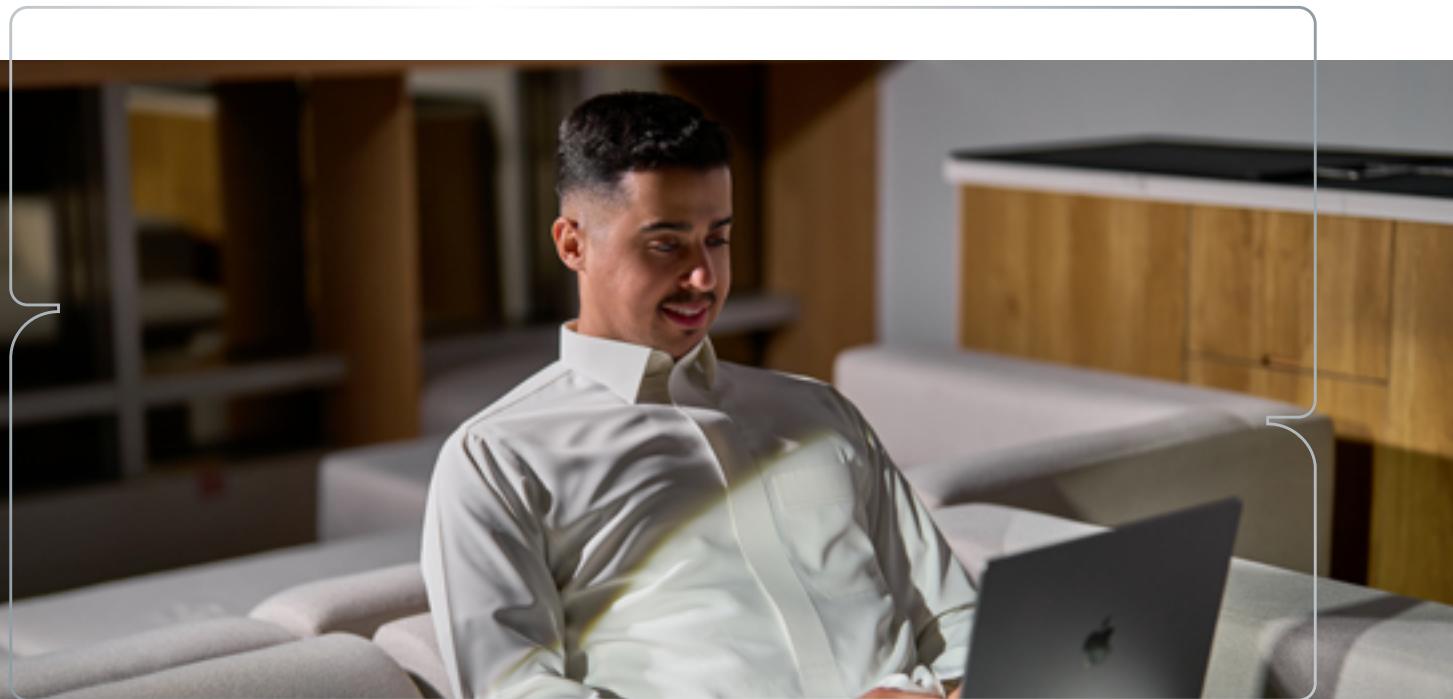
The average monthly hiring volume in 2025 (January–July).

# 51.5%

Monthly hiring in 2025 expanded, up 51.5% compared to the year before.

Jisr's findings showed significant growth in the number of monthly new hires across the entire period we studied. Compared with January 2024, hiring in January 2025 rose 154.5%. It also climbed another 37.4% in July 2025. Although that midsummer gain was smaller than January's leap, it still indicates that the Kingdom's hiring momentum carried on well beyond the New-Year spike.

We also found that 2024 averaged 15,942 new hires per month, while 2025 was already ahead at 24,155, based on data from January to July. This reflects a 51.5% increase in the monthly average.

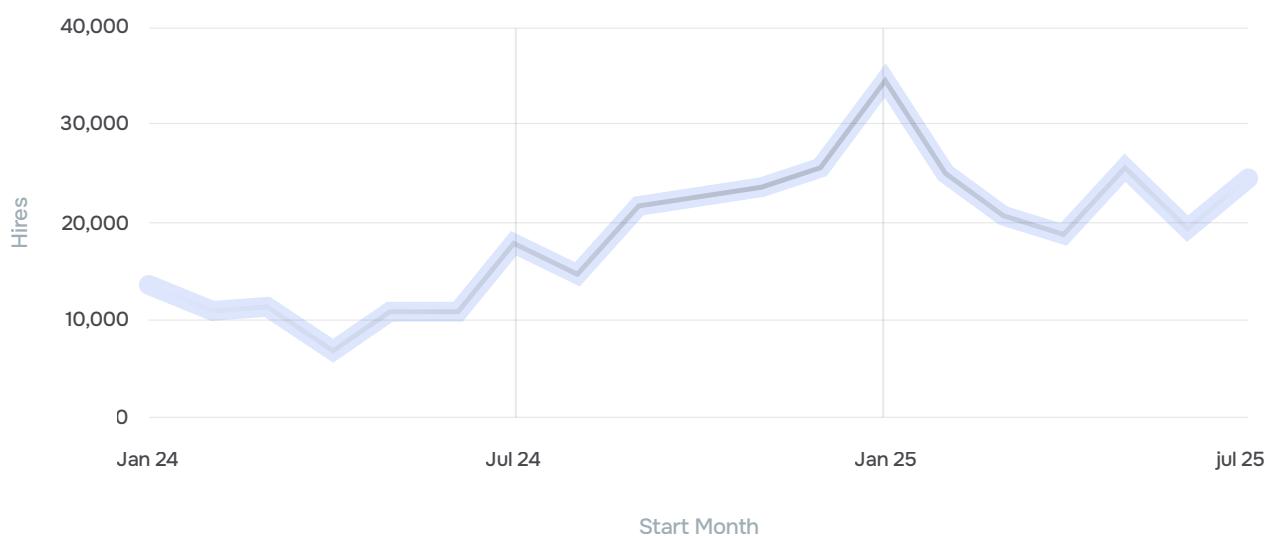


## Is hiring affected by seasons?

Yes. There is a clear seasonal fluctuation in new-hire numbers in Saudi Arabia, with a surge in hiring followed by a brief decline.

For instance, in the first few months of 2024, new-hire counts hovered between 10,000 and 13,000 a month. Then came April 2024, when hiring declined dramatically, dipping to 6,792 (the lowest point across the entire period we reviewed).

### Hires vs. Start Month



### Hiring Spikes

From mid-2024, the number of new hires increased gradually. In July, it reached 17,853 and continued its momentum until it climbed to 21,882 in September and then 25,829 in December. Notably, January 2025 recorded the highest number of new hires in the entire period of the study, reaching 34,682.

#### December 2024

marked the hiring peak of 2024, with **25,829** new hires.

#### January 2025

is considered the hiring peak of 2025 so far, with nearly **34,682** new hires.

**April was the lowest month in both years.**

### Hiring Declines

After the significant flow in January 2025, the recruitment rate began to drop gradually: in February it was 25,246, in March it was 20,836, and then it fell to 18,859 in April.

Note that April was the lowest month in both 2024 (6,792 new hires, which is lower than March of the same year by **40%**) and 2025 (18,859, which is lower than March by

**9.5%**). This decline can be explained by the timing, as April 2024 coincided with the last days of the holy month of Ramadan and the Eid al-Fitr holidays. Meanwhile, April 2025 came directly after Ramadan, and its first days were during the Eid holidays. These findings confirm the fluctuating hiring patterns in the Kingdom due to national and religious occasions and holidays.

## Survey Results on Hiring Growth and Job-Trend Increase in Saudi Arabia

### Percentage of employees receiving raises in different sectors

**80%** of companies expect to increase hiring next year

**72.5%** of HR executives saw an increase in the number of job applications received by their organizations in the past year.

**72.5%** of companies regularly make internal reports on hiring trends.

**66.7%** of companies regularly check labor-market data before budgeting their hiring needs.

**64.7%** of companies have an overall budget every year that is specifically allocated only for hiring and retaining talent.

**66.7%** of companies utilize digital channels primarily to hire new employees.

**94.1%** of HR professionals all agreed that digitalization has accelerated the hiring process at their companies.

**11.8%** of companies indicated that January and March are peak-hire months at the start of the year (some of them explained this by the relationship between recruitment activity, year budgets, and new project initiation).

# 78.4%

of Saudi Arabian HR practitioners indicated seasonality in hiring volumes within their organizations over the year, especially during Ramadan, official holidays, and national events (~26%); at the beginning and end of the calendar year (~18%); during university graduation periods (~16%); and in summer months to cover resignations or the end of seasonal contracts (~14%), with limited effect from Hajj and Umrah seasons (~6%). These findings are consistent with the earlier data that showed the Kingdom's employment levels are largely influenced by religious holidays, national holidays, companies' annual workforce plans, and the arrival of new graduates in the labor market.

# The Demand

## The demand

What are the highest hiring regions in Saudi Arabia?



Riyadh tops the list

with a 75% increase in new hires between January 2024 and July 2025.

**118%**

During the same period, Mecca recorded 118% growth.

**156%**

The Eastern Province achieved the highest growth rate by reaching 156%.

**92%**

Al-Qassim followed with a 92% increase.

**35%**

Medina showed a more modest growth of 35%.

## How stable are recruitment trends across different regions?

### Riyadh

Unsurprisingly, Riyadh is the most stable hiring region in Saudi Arabia. It managed to increase the number of new hires from 9,206 in January 2025 to 16,128 in July 2025, a **75.2%** rise that highlights steady and sustained growth throughout the period.

And based on annual averages, Riyadh hired 10,044 new employees per month in 2024. This number almost increased by half (**53.6%**) to reach 15,424 during the review period in 2025.

**10,044**

New employees per month in 2024.



**15,424**

Employees during the review period in 2025.

### Mecca

Mecca is experiencing accelerated growth in hiring activity. In January 2024, it recorded only 1,856 new hires. This number surged by **118.1%** in less than two years, reaching 4,049 in July 2025.

Based on averages, the monthly average in 2024 was 2,558, which increased to 4,051 in 2025 (a **58.3%** increase).

**2,558**

New employees per month in 2024.



**4,051**

Employees during the review period in 2025.

### Eastern Province

Eastern Province achieved the highest growth in this list. In January 2024, the new hires were 1,163 and then jumped to 2,977 in July 2025 (**156% growth**).

Regarding annual averages, the number of new hires was 1,854 per month in 2024. It increased by **40.3%** to reach 2,601 in 2025.

**1,854**

New employees per month in 2024.



**2,601**

Employees during the review period in 2025.

### Al-Qassim Province

In contrast to the significant recruitment increases in other provinces across the kingdom, Al-Qassim followed a more fluctuating pathway. The number of new hires dropped from 658 at the beginning of 2024 to 438 in July 2025 (a **33.4%** negative change).

However, the big picture is different, as the monthly average increased by **92%**, from 374 new hires in 2024 to 718 in 2025. These differences can be explained by occasional hiring patterns in Al-Qassim. In other words, it seems the decline is due to periodic fluctuations rather than a weakness in workplace demand.

**374**

New employees per month in 2024.



**718**

Employees during the review period in 2025.

### Medina Province

Even though it's notably slower than other provinces, Medina shows a balanced pathway. In January 2024, the number of new hires was 315. It then increased by **48.9%** to reach 469 in July 2025.

Based on averages, Medina scored 410 new hires per month in 2024. This monthly average improved by **34.6%**, reaching 551 in 2025.

**410**

New employees per month in 2024.



**551**

Employees during the review period in 2025.

## Survey responses confirm the previous results.

72% of respondents agreed that hiring stability varies across regions in Saudi Arabia. They mentioned Riyadh as the top region, followed by Jeddah and the Eastern Province. Some of them also referred to other cities such as Mecca, Taif, and Medina, though less frequently.

Additionally, a few respondents pointed out that there is a certain degree of stability in border areas, explaining it by the limited hiring alternatives available to employees. On the other hand, 28% of respondents believed there is no correlation between stability and region. Rather, they suggested that these differences are more closely linked to industries and specific job types.

### Ranking of Saudi Regions by Total Number of New Hires

(January 2024–July 2025, i.e., 19 months)

Riyadh (far ahead of all other regions)

**228,498** new hires

Mecca

**59,052** new hires

Eastern Province

**40,451** new hires

Al-Qassim

**9,520** new hires

Medina

**8,776** new hires

This ranking shows that Riyadh alone accounted for more than half of all new hires across the Kingdom. Mecca and the Eastern Province followed at a noticeable distance, while Al-Qassim and Medina came at the lower end of the list.

### Ranking of Regions by Monthly Average

Riyadh

**12,026** new hires

Mecca

**3,108** new hires

Eastern Province

**2,129** new hires

Al-Qassim

**501** new hires

Medina

**462** new hires

This distribution clearly shows that Riyadh captured the largest share of the recruitment market, with an average more than 4 times higher than Mecca (the second-ranked region) and over 25 times higher than Medina, which ranked fifth.

## Ranking of Regions by Relative Hiring Growth

Eastern Province Topped the list with

**156%** growth rate

Mecca Achieved

**118.1%** growth

Riyadh Recorded

**75.2%** increase

Medina Grew

**48.9%** only

Al-Qassim Relative decline

**33.4%**

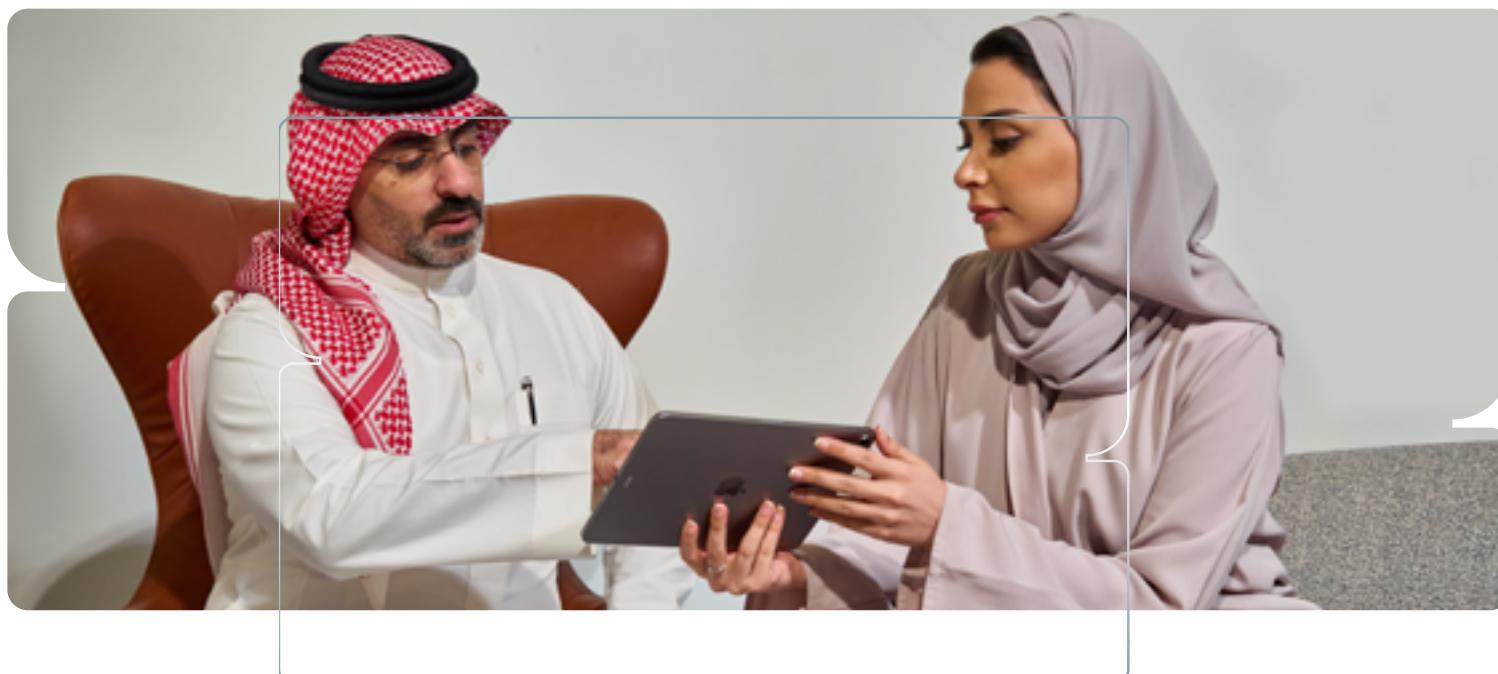
in July 2025 compared to the beginning of the period, despite an improvement in its annual average (a prominent seasonal hiring pattern).

During the study period, the Eastern Province and Mecca stood out as the strongest growth regions, while Riyadh balanced both scale and steady expansion. Other regions, such as Medina, maintained a modest but consistent increase, whereas Al-Qassim emerged as an isolated case marked by its cyclical hiring fluctuations.

### Do smaller regions appear less attractive to employees in Saudi Arabia?

Yes. Survey results showed that 73.5% of HR respondents view smaller regions in the Kingdom as less attractive for talent acquisition. This finding is further confirmed by the monthly hiring averages across regions. As seen in the previous data, Riyadh topped the list with around 12,000 new hires per month; that's four times more than its nearest competitor, Mecca, which came second with just over 3,100. The Eastern Province ranked third with 2,100, which is 32% lower than Mecca's figure.

Smaller regions reveal the gap even more sharply. Al-Qassim did not exceed 500 new hires per month, a modest number compared to Medina, which came last with an average of 460 (about 8% lower than Al-Qassim).



# Hiring Growth

# Hiring Growth

## How is manpower changing in Saudi Arabia?

Company Category	Number of Employees (January 2024)	Number of Employees (July 2024)	Growth Rate	Average Monthly Hires
Large Enterprises (500+ employees)	34,692	93,223	169%	6,084
Small and Medium-sized Businesses (21-500 employees)	99,632	212,970	114%	12,444
Micro Enterprises (1-20 employees)	6,238	9,057	45%	440

There was a remarkable surge in manpower from January 2024 to July 2025, as the total number of employees increased by 124% in almost 19 months (from 140,562 to 315,250 employees in the study sample). This reflects an exceptionally fast hiring pace across Saudi Arabia.

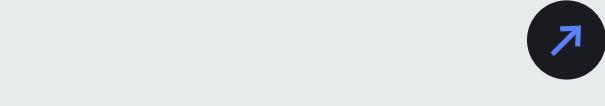


However, when we look at company sizes, distinct growth patterns emerge:

## Enterprises (500+ employees)

The number of employees in enterprises increased from 34,692 in January 2024 to 93,223 employees in July 2025 (a **169%** increase, accompanied by monthly hiring averages reaching 6,084).

This shows high demand despite the smaller number of employees compared to small and medium enterprises (SMBs). Nevertheless, this quick growth suggests potential to close the gap, making them direct competitors to SMBs if growth remains the same in the coming years.



Number of employees

# 93,223

Increased from January 2024 to July 2025

## Small and Medium Enterprises (SMBs) (21–500 employees)

Small and medium enterprises started from a larger manpower base, increasing by **114%** from 99,632 to 212,970 during the same period. The relative growth is lower than that of large enterprises, but SMBs are still the dominant group in terms of employee numbers. They hired 12,444 new employees per month (the main source of new hires in Saudi Arabia).

## Micro Enterprises (1–20 employees)

Micro enterprises also increased their hiring, reaching 9,057 by the end of July 2025 compared to 6,238 in January 2024, a **45%** increase, with 440 new hires on average per month.

These figures highlight important information: Small and medium enterprises hold the largest share based on total hiring numbers and monthly averages, while large enterprises lead the Saudi Arabian workforce in terms of the highest relative growth.



## What are the new hire rates across Saudi companies?

10%

represents the average monthly rate of new hires in large enterprises between January 2024 and July 2025.

8.3%

is the average monthly rate of new hires recorded by small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) during the same period.

5.9%

marks the average monthly rate of new hires in micro-sized companies during the same period.

### Large enterprises

They showed the highest volatility in hiring rates, ranging from a mere 4% in April 2024 to a peak of 20% in January 2025. This result may reflect occasional recruitment spurts to meet their needs as they expand.

### Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMBs)

SMBs experienced a steadier trend with hiring rates ranging between 6% and 12%, which reflects their vital role as steady job creators.

### Micro-Sized Businesses

They showed the highest volatility in hiring rates, ranging from a mere 4% in April 2024 to a peak of 20% in January 2025. This result may reflect occasional recruitment spurts to meet their needs as they expand.

To what extent do Saudi Arabia's companies rely on their existing workforce versus new hires?

# A Market Overview

From January 2024 to July 2025, the average percentage of existing hires reached **91.37%**.

This means that 9 out of 10 employees persisted in their jobs in any given month within our study sample. Diving into more detail, the percentage of existing hires ranged from **86%** to **96%**, indicating strong stability in the Kingdom's workforce.

Does companies' reliance on their existing workforce vary by organization size?

## Micro Enterprises

The average percentage of existing employees reached approximately **94.16%** during the study period.

Every month maintained a rate of at least **90%**, and in roughly **78.9%** of the observed period, the rate surpassed **94%**.

Micro enterprises showed the highest score in the employees' existing hire rate. This data can be interpreted based on their limited hiring alternatives.

## Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMBs)

The average percentage of existing employees stood somewhere in the region of **91.74%** during the study period.

In most months (**84.2%**), the rate remained at or above **90%**, but it reached **94%** or higher in only **26.3%** of the months (roughly a quarter of the total period).

SMBs demonstrate balanced stability, as they regularly hire to meet their needs while keeping most of their existing employees in their positions.

## Large Enterprises

The average percentage of existing employees stabilized at around **90%** during the study period.

Approximately **63.2%** of the months recorded a rate of 90% or higher, while only **21.1%** of the months reached **94%** or above (a high rate occurred in roughly two out of every ten months).

Compared to other company sizes, large enterprises show the most fluctuating ratios, as the rate dropped to 80% in January 2025 and then rose to 94% in June of the same year. These figures can be explained by expansion strategies related to major projects, seasonal contracts, or mass hiring programs, which reshape the workforce structure within short periods.

## Survey Findings on the Stability of the Saudi Labor Market

Have resignation rates increased in your company over the past two years?

**62.7%**

of companies reported no increase in resignations over the past two years.

Do you believe competition for talent has intensified compared to last year?

**76.5%**

of respondents stated that competition for talent has increased compared to the previous year, whereas 23.5% noticed no major change.

Is your industry better at retaining employees compared to others?

**56.9%**

of companies believe that their industry is more capable of retaining employees, while 43.1% disagree (i.e., roughly 6 out of 10 Saudi Arabian companies consider themselves relatively stronger in employee retention).

Have you noticed an improvement in the quality of job applicants over the past two years?

**76.5%**

of companies observed an improvement in candidate quality during the past two years, compared to 23.5% who did not (in other words, 3 out of every 4 companies in Saudi Arabia have noticed better-quality applicants).

Have you found it increasingly difficult to fill technical or specialized roles?

**62.7%**

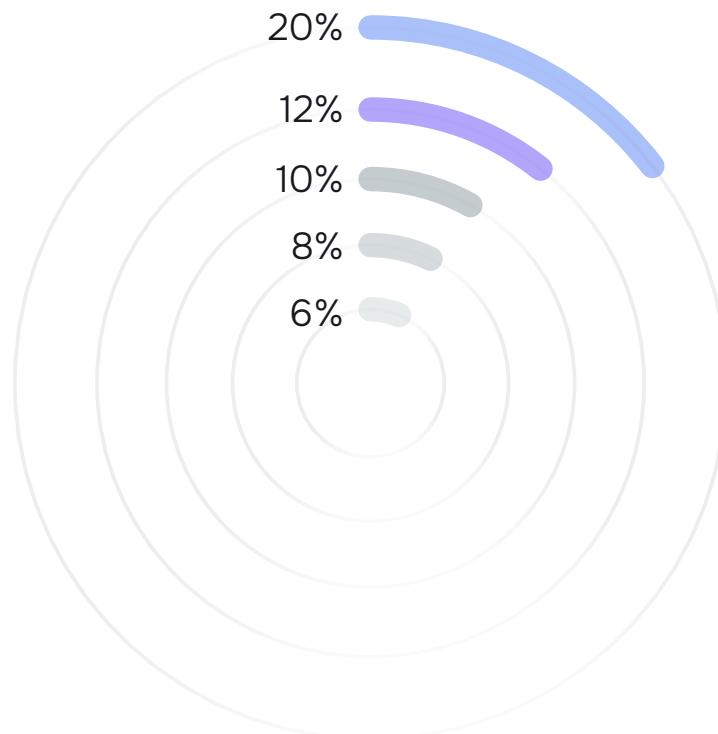
The majority (62.7%) of respondents have experienced growing difficulty in filling technical or specialized positions.

# Employment Trends by Sector and Workforce Nationality

# Which five sectors led the hiring activity in the Saudi labor market?

(January 2024 to July 2025)

- Food & Beverage: ranked first with 71,120 new hires
- Retail, Wholesale & Distribution: accounting for over 41,500 hires
- General Services: around 37,247 hires
- Construction & Building: nearly 28,777 hires
- Healthcare & Medical Services: generating about 20,141 hires



## Mid-Level Hiring Sectors

Other sectors also showed significant hiring activity, though at varying levels:

Industrial Products & Services	19,840 hires	6%
Contracting	19,734 hires	5%
Consulting	14,344 hires	4%
Technology	13,822 hires	4%
Consumer Products and Services	11,512 hires	3%
Education	8,361 hires	2%
Travel, Hospitality and Services	8,011 hires	2%
Media, Marketing & Advertising	7,703 hires	2%
Logistics & Supply Chain	7,241 hires	2%
Real Estate	6,425 hires	2%

## Smaller but High-Impact Sectors

While smaller in size, these sectors contributed valuable specialized roles:

Finance		5,131 hires	1%
Automotive		4,407 hires	1%
Consumer and Industrial Products		4,218 hires	1%
Public Transportation		3,264 hires	1%
Fitness, GYM, and Sports		3,262 hires	1%
Architecture, Designing and Planning		3,135 hires	1%
Investment Management		3,017 hires	1%
Telecommunications		2,449 hires	1%
Oil & Gas		7,241 hires	1%

### Niche and Specialized Sectors (<1% Each)

These include semi-government entities, social welfare, NGOs, insurance, mining, defense, chemicals, ports and shipping, power, jewelry, veterinary clinics, and life sciences, among others.

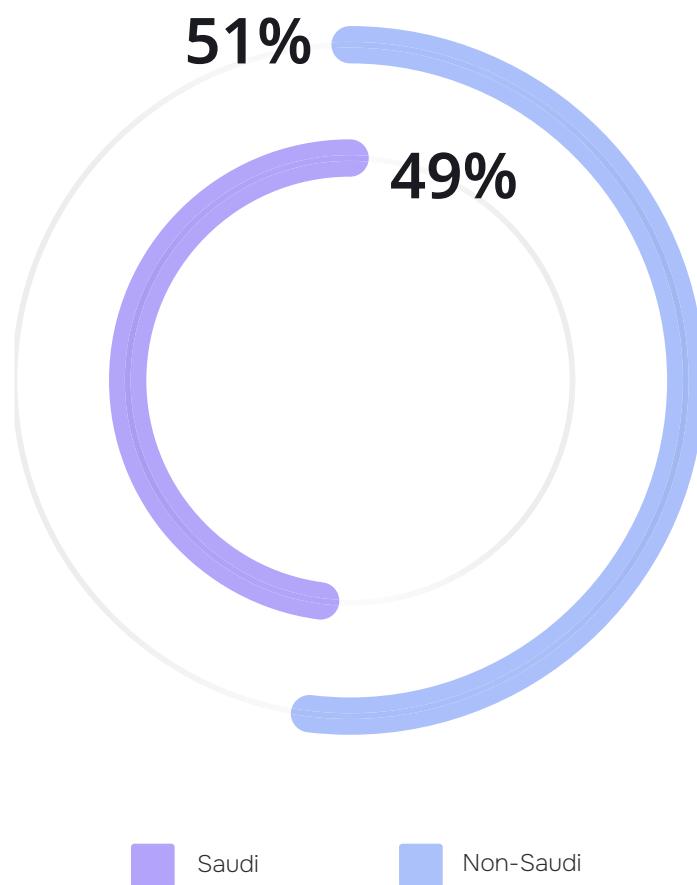
#### How did experts perceive growth prospects of Saudi market sectors?

80.4% of survey respondents expect hiring volumes in their companies to grow across various sectors.

- All respondents from banking, financial services, manufacturing, heavy industries, oil, gas, and energy confirmed 100% expansion plans.
- Meanwhile, 85.7% of companies in the IT and telecommunications sector expressed intentions to increase hiring, reflecting the sustained demand for digital and technological talent.

## What are the top 15 nationalities hired in Saudi Arabia?

Saudi Arabia's labor market is remarkably diverse, as it attracts talent from across the Arab and Asian regions. Saudis lead the hiring landscape, making up nearly one-third of all new appointments, followed by a broad mix of other nationalities:



## Where Is Saudization Headed in the Kingdom's Job Market?

**51%**

of companies now rely more heavily on national talent.

**45.1%**

of surveyed HR practitioners reported a decline in the number of foreign employees compared to local hires over the past two years.

**60%**

of HR professionals expect the share of expatriate workers to shrink further in the coming years.

As mentioned above, Saudis topped the list of new hires during the study period, accounting for 31% of the total workforce in the Kingdom (111,484 employees).

While foreign manpower remains prominent in certain sectors such as construction and healthcare, there is a clear trend toward reducing reliance on expatriates and strengthening the participation of Saudi national talent. Survey results support this transformation, as nearly 61% of respondents stated that the nationalization policy had a positive impact on their organizations. Most also confirmed that Saudization efforts have accelerated over the past 3 years.

Furthermore, 45.1% reported a decline in the number of foreign workers over the past 2 years compared to nationals, and almost 60% of HR professionals expect the

expatriate workforce to shrink further in the coming years. They also emphasized that future hiring of expatriates will focus mainly on attracting top talent and highly specialized professionals.

On the other hand, 49% of respondents acknowledged that their companies still rely significantly on foreign labor, and a few highlighted challenges in implementing nationalization policies, particularly in niche or highly specialized roles.



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