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# Demography, Migration and Labour Market in Saudi Arabia

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# Demography, Migration and Labour Market in Saudi Arabia

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**Abstract:** Saudi Arabia is a prime destination and source of remittances from workers for many countries in Asia and the Arab world. As of mid-2013, expatriates made up 32 percent of the Kingdom's population, most of them coming from South Asia. They accounted for 56.5 percent of the employed population and 89 percent of the private sector workforce. Since September 2011, and in spite of a spurt in foreign labour recruitment starting in the mid-2000s, a voluntary policy called Nitaqat aims at 'Saudising' the Kingdom's workforce. The most recent data also show the scale of the irregular migration phenomenon in Saudi Arabia: the amnesty campaign which started in April 2013 allowed 4.7 million foreign workers to regularise their status, while an ongoing crackdown on illegals forced one million to leave the Kingdom in 2013 alone, of which (as of November 30, 2013) 547,000 were deported.

**Keywords:** Saudi Arabia; Foreign Population; National Population; Nationals and Foreign Labour; Migration Policy; Statistics; Saudisation; Irregularity; Amnesty; Deportation; Citizenship.

The birthplace of Islam and home to its two holiest shrines, Saudi Arabia has an ideological and political influence over 1.6 billion Muslims, or 23 percent of the world's population.<sup>1</sup> The Kingdom is also the biggest economy in the Arab world, endowed with the world's second largest proven oil reserves. This makes Saudi Arabia a major hub for population movements. The pilgrimages to the holy sites of Mecca and Medina attract millions of Muslim pilgrims from abroad every year (7.2 million in 2012). Also, with an estimated 9.4 million non-national residents in 2012,<sup>2</sup> Saudi Arabia ranked as the second top remittance-sending country that year<sup>3</sup> and was among the top five migrant destination countries worldwide.

Labour immigration to the Kingdom dates to the late 1930s, as oil exploration picked up spurring inflows of foreign experts and labourers from Western countries and poorer neighbouring Arab states. Back then, foreigners shared the labour market with mostly-unskilled Saudi workers; the latter organised politically and some labour strikes were launched in the oil fields throughout the 1950s. After 1973, however, the first oil boom stirred economic diversification and infrastructure-building, resulting in much larger flows of skilled and semi-skilled workers into the Kingdom. These migrants, Arabs as well as Asians, were recruited on short-term contract basis and were not entitled to social and political rights. Moreover, foreign labour flows were used as a means for redistributing oil wealth: in addition to taking on career opportunities in the expanding public sector, Saudi citizens could also get an income from the trade of labour visas.<sup>4</sup> Hence, labour recruitment became disconnected from market needs; pools of clandestine migrants grew, unaccounted for by authorities, and could be tapped for short-term business needs. For these reasons, until the 2000s, available data on Saudi Arabia's population were scattered and scarce on major aspects.<sup>5</sup>

After 1979, political tensions<sup>6</sup> underlined the destabilising power of large foreign communities' settlement in the country. Attempts at controlling the spread of ideologies hostile to oil monarchies (leftist, Arab nationalist, and stemming from Islamist movements), followed by the breaking out of the First Gulf War in August 1990 after the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, sparked increasing mistrust among the Gulf regimes towards Arab workers. This led to their gradual replacement by Asian labourers, deemed less prone to political claims.

Moreover, since 1985, dwindling oil revenues combined with the Saudi population's high demographic growth (around 3.5 percent annually in 1990, down from above 4 percent in the late 1970s) to drastically limit the redistributive capacities of the state. Consequent to Saudi Arabia's application for membership in the WTO, finally achieved in 2005, liberal adjustment policies were also initiated, which further threatened the stability of the rentier social contract. Labour-market planning measures started taking place in that context.<sup>7</sup> Yet, youth unemployment and even poverty became increasingly visible in the early 2000s. In 2013, nationals' unemployment levels stood at 12.2 percent (7.6 percent for the men as against 33.4 percent for women) and at 28.4 percent for the 15-29 age group (men: 17.5 percent and women: 60.3 percent).<sup>8</sup>

Indeed, protests during the 2011 "Arab Spring" focused on unemployment as well as corruption and "discriminatory clientelism."<sup>9</sup> King Abdullah countered the protests by announcing a massive \$130 billion subsidy package to fund new housing programmes, raise the minimum wage of public servants (mostly Saudis), and create more employment opportunities in the government sector. The 'Hafiz' system was enacted which provides a SR2,000 allowance to young Saudi job-seekers. A minimum wage for the private sector (for nationals only) was set at SR3,000 (\$800) to persuade Saudis to venture into the sector. Yet, to address the very pressing need for massive job creation in the private sector for Saudi youths, the government had to regain the upper hand in economic decision-making. It thus engaged in two voluntary sets of labour market reforms:

- The Nitaqat campaign for the Saudisation of the workforce was launched in September 2011. Though the issue of indigenisation of the workforce has been periodically revived since the 1990s,<sup>10</sup> it has been fiercely opposed by the business community, which claims that Saudi workers are costly, hard

to lay off, and unwilling to engage in low-skilled tasks, while lacking the skills, training and, above all, labour productivity demanded by the private sector. Nitaqat combines incentives that encourage firms to hire Saudis and sanctions for non-compliant ones. Based on quotas for Saudi employees in relation to industry and the size of companies, the system classifies them by colour (red, yellow, green and premium). Those falling within the green and premium category are provided certain services, incentives and facilities by the Labour Ministry. Companies falling within the yellow and red zones that do not meet the Saudisation quotas are deprived of services, such as renewing the work permits of their expatriate workers. A fee of SR2,400 (\$640) per redundant expatriate is also imposed. However, whether this programme will lead to replacement of foreign labourers by Saudis or add newly-recruited Saudis to migrant workers by large-scale job creation still remains to be seen.

- A multi-dimensional campaign against workers and residents in irregular situation has been underway since April 3, 2013. Saudi Arabia has attempted to limit the presence of illegal residents even earlier. It tried to control entries from Yemen<sup>11</sup> by resuming the construction of a 1,800 km iron fence along the border with its neighbour. Over the 2000s and 2010s, periods of amnesty alternated with crackdown operations against illegals. However, the current campaign is of a much wider scope and scale. As of November 3, 2013, about five million expatriates in irregular situation have been regularised and one million are said to have left or been deported. Some sources<sup>12</sup> claim that another million deportations is set as a target for the coming months. It remains to be seen how many of those workers may come back yet as legal, state-sanctioned foreign residents.

OUTWARD MIGRATION	INWARD MIGRATION
<p><b>Stock</b></p> <p>Drawing a picture of Saudis residing abroad is a difficult task, as Saudi statistics do not keep a record of expatriate nationals, except for students. Neighbouring countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) do not publish data on foreign residents disaggregated by country of citizenship or country of birth.</p> <p>However, press articles and direct observation point to the settlement of Saudis, mostly highly-skilled professionals, in other GCC states. For example, rising numbers of young Saudi graduates were reported to be seeking employment opportunities in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the late 2000s. Numerous Saudi businesspeople, men and women, also operate from Bahrain or Dubai, where they can escape the Kingdom's slow bureaucratic pace, as well as the social obstacles faced by most female decision-makers in Saudi Arabia. At the end of 2012, 4,255 Saudi workers were registered by social security networks in other GCC countries</p>	<p><b>Stock</b></p> <p>In mid-2013, the number of non-Saudis stood at 9,723,214 persons, or 32.4 percent of the total resident population of 29,994,272.<sup>17</sup> Saudi Arabia's total and Saudi populations are among the fastest growing in the world: they both approximately doubled in the last two decades.</p> <p>* preliminary results of 2010 census.                  ** provisional results.                  Source: Central Department for Statistics and Information (CDSI).</p>

## OUTWARD MIGRATION

(1,792 were under the Saudi General Organization for Social Insurance [GOSI] and 2,463 were under other GCC states' social security coverage).<sup>13</sup>

A few thousand Saudi nationals are also reported to be residing in poorer Arab and Asian countries. In many cases, these are offspring of Saudi fathers and local mothers, as rising costs of marriage in all GCC countries increasingly compel middle-class Saudi men to seek “cheaper” wives abroad.

In the OECD countries, Saudi-born and Saudi nationals are estimated to number around 100,000. Over half of them reside in the US and have been naturalised in their country of residence.

	Born in Saudi Arabia	Saudi nationals
<b>European Union</b>	<b>7,803</b>	<b>2,896</b>
<i>of which France</i>	<i>2,368</i>	<i>1,101</i>
<i>Germany</i>		<i>2,470</i>
<b>Other countries</b>	<b>84,600</b>	<b>394</b>
<i>of which Canada (2006)</i>	<i>11,625</i>	
<i>Australia</i>	<i>13,610</i>	
<i>United States</i>	<i>58,022</i>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>92,403</b>	<b>3,290</b>

Source: receiving OECD countries' national statistics, International Migration Database (<http://stats.oecd.org/>).  
Other countries are: Norway; Switzerland; Japan; Korea.

However, receiving countries' data do not match with available Saudi records. Indeed, Saudi students abroad alone are reported to number 174,645 for the academic year 2011-2012, from a low of 12,800 in 2002-2003 following the September 11 attacks. They are distributed as follows:

Saudi students, and among them a vast majority of men, thus account for the bulk of Saudis abroad. Their number has grown since the mid-2000s, firstly due to heavy investments in education which quadrupled enrolment in tertiary education since 2000 and secondly, due to several study abroad schemes, such as the King Abdullah Scholarship Programme. This programme aims at encouraging young Saudis to acquire world-class academic training in scientific and related specialities (medicine, engineering, law, accounting, and marketing,

## INWARD MIGRATION

In January 2013, before the beginning of the correction campaign, 6,026,583 non-nationals were economically active, of which 6,003,616 were employed (56.5 percent of the total employed population).<sup>18</sup> Half of the employed Saudis (52.1 percent) were enrolled in the government sector in 2011, down from 69.3 percent in 2009. By contrast, non-nationals were concentrated in the private sector (99 percent of the employed foreign population) in 2011.<sup>19</sup> Foreign labourers made up 89.1 percent of the private sector's manpower that year, above the GCC countries' average of 85 percent.

Like elsewhere in the region, as of 2013 the profile of the foreign population is that of a predominantly male (287 men for 100 women) and little educated population (62.3 percent of employed non-nationals are below secondary level education). Last available figures (2007)<sup>20</sup> also pointed at its demographic distortion: those in working-age groups (15 to 64 years) were over-represented and formed 79 percent of the non-nationals as a whole.

In 2013, the bulk of foreign labourers were working in the construction sector (26.5 percent) and in the retail and wholesale (22.3 percent) and the private households sectors (15 percent). The health and education sectors employ, respectively, 3.6 and 2.6 percent of non-Saudi workers. As regards their occupational distribution, as expected most are confined to the lowest, “blue collar” categories (‘engineering support’ and ‘services’: 59.1 percent). However, non-nationals also constitute 52 percent of the ‘managers’ and ‘specialists’, the two highest categories of occupation.<sup>21</sup>

Saudi authorities conceal data pertaining to the nationality breakdown of foreign residents in official publications, for fear that the numeric domination of some nationalities would encourage socio-political claims. However, the World Bank estimated the top three remittance beneficiaries from Saudi Arabia in 2012 were: India (\$8.4 billion), Egypt (\$5.7 billion), and Pakistan (\$3 billion). It is thus likely that these nationalities are among the most represented in the Kingdom's foreign workforce.

This is confirmed by estimates released in the press by Saudi government officials<sup>22</sup> during the 2013 cam-

## OUTWARD MIGRATION

Stocks of Saudi students abroad (2011-2012)			
	males	females	Total
<b>Arab countries</b>	<b>16,505</b>	<b>7,152</b>	<b>23,657</b>
of which Egypt	6,262	1,416	7,678
Jordan	6,641	1,232	7,873
<b>Asia</b>	<b>4,110</b>	<b>883</b>	<b>4,993</b>
of which China	1,103	151	1,254
Malaysia	1,164	267	1,431
<b>Europe</b>	<b>18,407</b>	<b>7,885</b>	<b>26,292</b>
of which the U.K.	14,843	6,350	21,193
<b>America and Oceania</b>	<b>93,817</b>	<b>25,886</b>	<b>119,703</b>
of which Australia	10,215	2,391	12,606
Canada	13,491	3,977	17,468
United States	66,947	19,176	86,123
<b>Total</b>	<b>132,839</b>	<b>41,806</b>	<b>174,645</b>

Source : Saudi Ministry of Higher Education  
<http://www.mohe.gov.sa/ar/default.aspx>

The table refers to all the students enrolled that year (*muqayydoûn*), from undergraduate to PhD levels

for instance) in overseas universities, so as to upgrade the skill level of future Saudi manpower in line with international standards. The programme started with the US and was later expanded to other countries. This programme and other incentive schemes provide generous financial support to Saudi students, as well as to spouses or family members accompanying them. In 2011-2012, 142,628 students abroad had scholarships and 32,017 were enrolled at their own expense. Expatriate Saudi students constituted 15 percent of all national students that year.

### Flows

Cross-border movements of Saudi nationals are not accounted for in the Kingdom's statistics of entries and exits. However, incoming and exiting foreigners are recorded by country of citizenship. Though probably marked by a degree of inaccuracy and under-registration of events, these records are the only source available to draw broad estimates of the nationality distribution of migrant flows to and from Saudi Arabia.

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campaigns targeting illegals in the Kingdom. Indian nationals dominate with their estimated number reaching 2.8 million, of which 1.6 million are workers.<sup>23</sup>

Estimates of non-national populations in Saudi Arabia, selected nationalities (figures up till November 3, 2013)		
Country of citizenship	lower est.	upper est.
1 India	2,000,000	2,800,000
2 Pakistan	1,500,000	
3 Bangladesh	1,500,000	
4 Indonesia	1,500,000	
5 Egypt	1,000,000	2,000,000
6 Syria	1,000,000	
7 Sudan	500,000	900,000
8 Yemen	800,000	1,000,000
9 Philippines	670,000	
10 Sri Lanka	550,000	
11 Afghanistan	500,000	
12 Nepal	500,000	
13 Palestine (holders of travel documents)	500,000	1,000,000
14 Burma	250,000	600,000
15 Jordan (workers only)	250,000	300,000
16 Lebanon (2009)	160,000	
17 Ethiopia	>150,000	700,000
18 Somalia-Eritrea		?

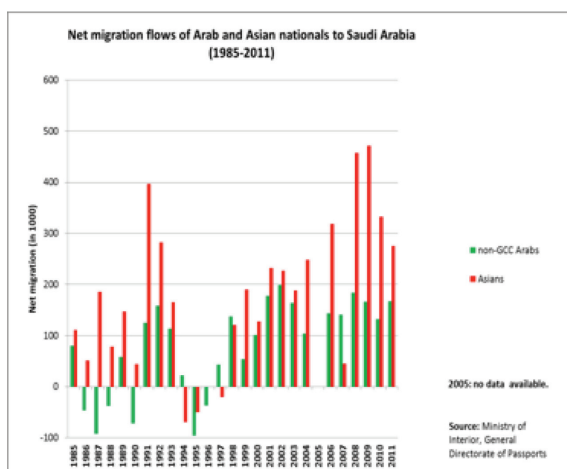
Source: Saudi press, unless stated otherwise.

The figures quoted reflect most recent rough estimates released in press conferences and interviews by Saudi government officials and sending countries' diplomatic missions. They reflect the stocks of non-nationals before the completion of the regularisation and crackdowns campaigns targeting foreigners in irregular situation.

As compared to the official figure of 9.7 million non-nationals in mid-2013 – if accurate – such data would demonstrate the scale of the illegal migration phenomenon in the Kingdom. As a matter of fact, in December 2012 (i.e., before the start of regularisation campaigns) Saudi authorities were claiming that up to 5 million immigrants were residing and working illegally in the country,<sup>24</sup> among whom were foreign pilgrims having overstayed their Haj and Umrah visas as well as those who had entered illegally, especially through Yemen.

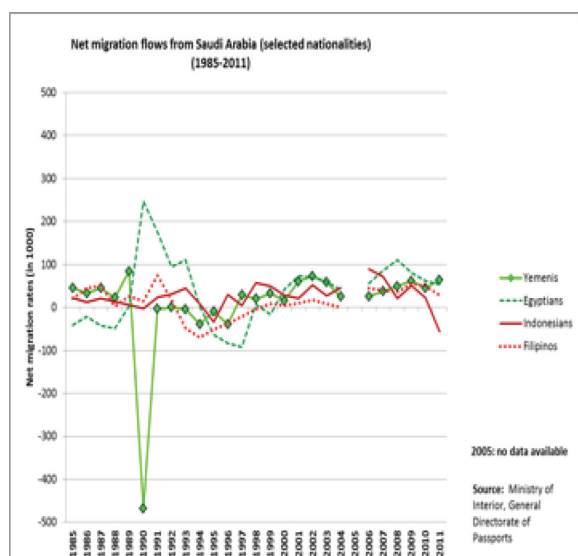
Cutting across irregular and regular migrants' issues lies another question crucial to Saudi Arabia's demographic future: that of the second- and even third- generation expats born in the Kingdom to foreign and to Saudi mothers. They are considered foreigners even if they have spent all their life in Saudi Arabia and foster no ties with their country of citizenship (if any, in the case of Palestinians, for instance). While there is no data to precisely evaluate their number, estimates range from 1 to 2 million. The figure of 30,000 third-generation Saudi-born Indians living in the Kingdom was also circulated in the press in 2013.<sup>25</sup>

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The shift in recruitment policies towards favouring Asian labourers over Arabs in the late 1980s appears clearly on the graph and so does the post-Gulf War I deep economic downturn, which led to a general reverse of migration flows. Since the late 1990s the Arabs' net migration flows to the Kingdom seem first to have stalled, before increasing after 2005. The outbreak of the 2007–2008 world financial crisis did not seem to spur a massive exodus back to sending countries as was feared.

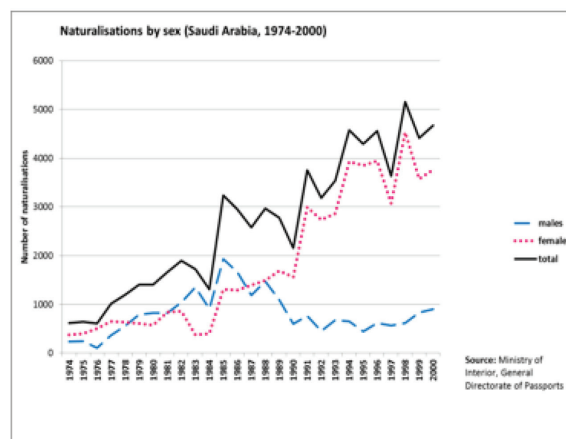
Political events also greatly affected population movements across the Kingdom's borders.



## INWARD MIGRATION

### Flows

In the context of Saudisation and irregular residency correction campaigns, many advocate a massive naturalisation of Saudi-born aliens and children of Saudi mothers. Beyond considerations of social justice, such a move would effectively help the private sector reach its Saudisation quotas.



Naturalisations have indeed been performed in the past. Available data, however, show that it benefitted small numbers.<sup>26</sup>

Naturalised aliens were most often Arabs (80 percent and more), with a vast majority among them being Yemenis, Egyptians and Syrians. Moreover, after the late 1980s, naturalisations were increasingly confined to females. This suggests that most beneficiaries were spouses of Saudi men.

Indeed, so far the right of blood (*jus sanguinis*) and marital ties still exclusively prevails, over birth on Saudi territory (*jus soli*). Most recent amendments to residency rules are, again, circumscribed to the sponsorship issue and only concern Saudi citizens' foreign family members. In early 2013, Saudi women married to non-nationals earned the right to sponsor their children for residency, as well as for work in the private sector; they can also sponsor their foreign husband for the latter. In addition, since September 2013 non-Saudi mothers of Saudi children are allowed permanent residence in Saudi Arabia without sponsor, with access to education and health services.



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In the aftermath of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, some 800,000 Yemenis (of whom, a half had been living in Saudi Arabia for twenty years and more, and up to 20 percent was born there) fled the Kingdom in a mass exodus. Newly unified Yemen was accused to have sided with the pro-Iraqi camp, as tensions were already mounting between the two countries over border disputes and other issues.

In that context, Saudi authorities decided to enforce policy reforms passed before the war. These stripped Yemenis from privileges they had enjoyed so far, unlike any other foreign nationals: the right to set up companies in Saudi Arabia with no Saudi majority ownership and the right to work without obligation to obtain work permits and local sponsors (Van Hear, 1998: 86-93). Moreover, some Yemenis lost the Saudi passports they had earned before and hence fell into the ranks of the Bidun (stateless population) of Saudi Arabia.<sup>14</sup>

In stark contrast to the Yemenis, the graph points to the sizeable inflow of Egyptians during the period 1990-1993. As a matter of fact, Egypt was part of the allied coalition against the Iraqi regime during Gulf War I.

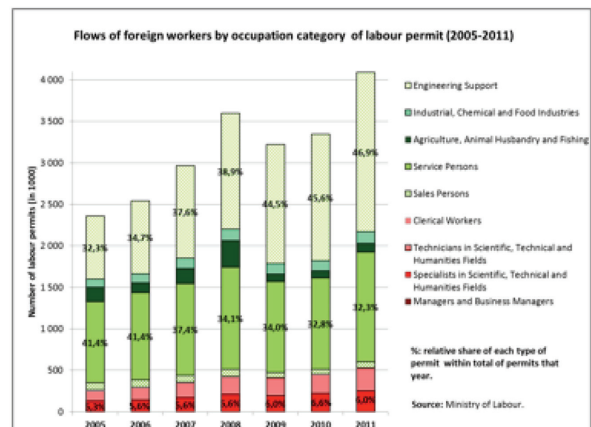
Diplomatic crises also entailed shifts in migration flows. As international concern was growing over wide-scale mistreatment of Asian domestic workers in Saudi Arabia, the execution of an Indonesian woman spurred a diplomatic crisis between the two countries; Indonesia banned workers from going to the Kingdom in August 2011. That same year, claims from the Philippines demanding better guarantees and protection for Filipina domestic employees similarly disrupted diplomatic relations between the two countries. The chart actually emphasizes the partial reversal of the Indonesians and Filipinos' rate of migration to Saudi Arabia after 2010.

However, the most massive population displacement across Saudi borders in the country's history may well result from the ongoing (as of December 2013) major operation against all undocumented and irregular workers and residents, supervised by the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Interior. The campaign targets foreign-

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In 2004, the Government amended the Naturalisation Law to permit some long-term residents (10 years of continuous residency) to apply for citizenship, with priority given to those with degrees in certain scientific fields. No data exists so far to assess how many highly-skilled professionals subsequently used this option to settle in Saudi Arabia.

Actually, if one observes the flows of foreign workers joining the Saudi labour market since the mid-2000s, there are no clear signs of a significant upgrading of the workforce's qualifications. Workers in skilled and highly-skilled categories (ranging from clerical workers to managers) make up 11 to 12.8 percent of all labour permit holders over the period.



By contrast, however, absolute figures show that the number of labour permits granted more than doubled between 2005 and 2011. During the six years, almost 2.5 million jobs were created, to the benefit of foreign labourers.

This upward trend continued in 2012: until that year, the Labour Ministry also gave a green light to rising numbers of work visas<sup>27</sup> in all sectors, including the government sector.

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ers with no residency or work permits, those working for an employer other than their sponsor, and those operating in a trade other than that described on their iqama (residency permit).

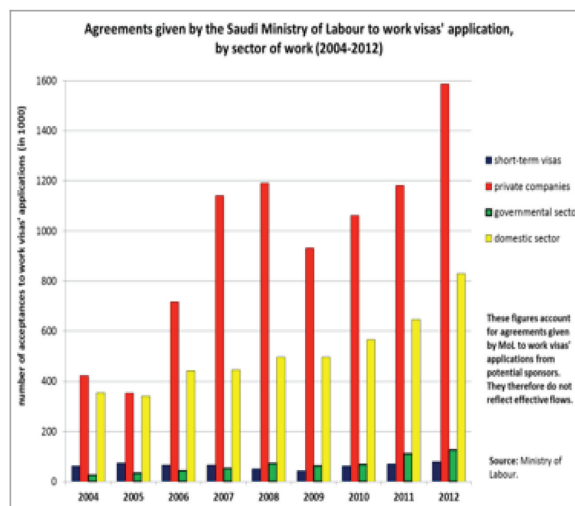
From April 3 to November 3, 2013, the amnesty allowed an estimated 4.7 million foreign workers to correct their status. It also led to the final exit of about one million more. Some were deported (among them at least 200,000 Yemenis); others were either unwilling or unable to sort out their situation, or were made redundant under newly-defined quotas for non-nationals' participation in different sectors. In addition, an unknown number of irregular migrants remain stranded without valid personal documents and are thus prevented from either starting the correction procedure or leaving the country. The scale of the campaign largely overwhelmed the capacities of diplomatic missions and pointed at sending countries' limited efficiency for serving their nationals abroad.

Since the expiry of the amnesty period on November 4, large-scale systematic raids on labour sites by the Ministry of Labour as well as massive rounding up operations by the police in areas inhabited by foreigners are being conducted. As of mid-December 2013, the Interior Ministry stated that 208,000 more deportations had taken place since the amnesty period expired (137,500 for November 2013 alone), largely up from already high figures of monthly deportations for the two previous years.<sup>15</sup>

Stateless persons (Biduns and Palestinians, for instance) as well as citizens from some war-torn countries (Syrians, Burmese) are exempted from deportation.

All nationalities are not affected in an even manner: Fewer Indian workers, for example, left the Kingdom during these events (140,000) as compared to 300,000 Egyptians and 200,000 Yemenis. The number of Ethiopian deportees had reached 140,000 since the beginning of the crackdown, with 35,000 more being expected by local authorities, according to IOM.<sup>16</sup>

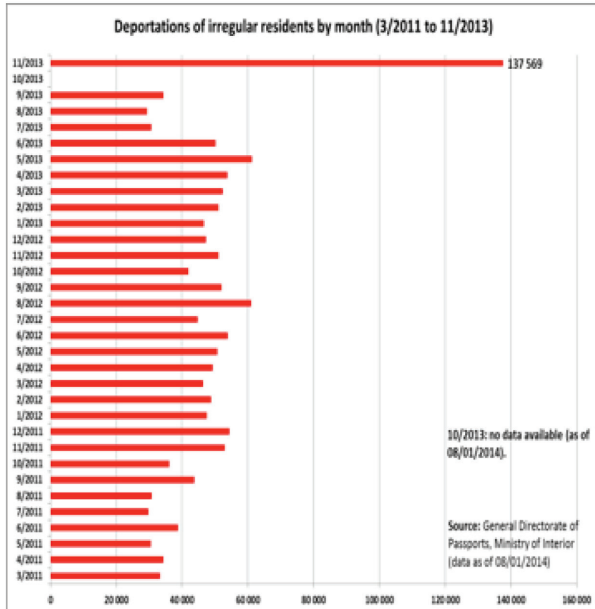
## INWARD MIGRATION



Such patterns of workers' inflows seem to be in opposition to measures taken to combat nationals' unemployment. However, this can be explained, first, by the enhancement of the private sector's share in the economy and the need to attract more FDI after Saudi Arabia became a member of WTO in 2005: the process gave an impetus to easing the entry and activities of foreign investors and workers. Second, relying on the upsurge in oil prices, the Kingdom undertook massive infrastructural projects in the mid-2000s, which further expanded following the "Arab Spring." Housing projects, for instance, require the hiring of vast numbers of foreign workers, as unemployed Saudis do not yet venture in significant numbers into that sector.

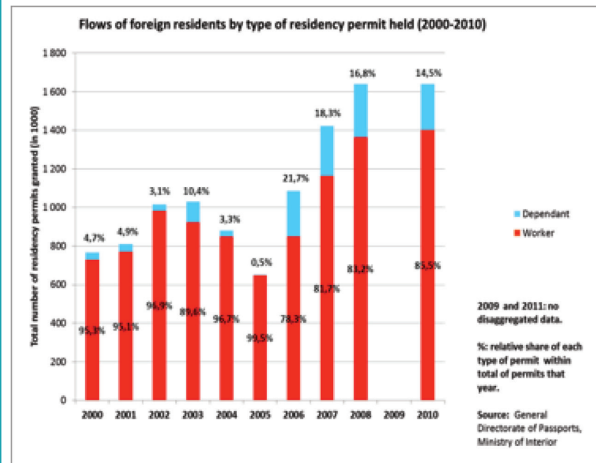
Expectedly, the number of residency permits granted by the Saudi Interior Ministry also went up, nearly doubling in ten years, from 765,903 in 2000 to 1,411,688 in 2011. After 2005, the share of 'dependents' increased notably among permit holders as a whole. Knowing that in Saudi Arabia, only managerial-level professionals can apply for a permanent family visa, this confirms that highly-skilled non-Saudis also benefited from the hike in labour import after 2005.

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Saudi Arabia being the first source of remittances for many Arab and Asian countries, such deportations may have significant economic consequences on their fragile economies. For example, the forced exit of Yemenis, expected to reach about 400,000 according to IOM, may deprive local families of most of the 2 billion yearly income in remittances, thus sharply deepening poverty levels in that politically unstable and economically-ravaged country.

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Regarding future flows of foreign labourers to the Kingdom, it remains to be seen which way the current raids against illegals will restructure the Saudi labour market. As mentioned earlier, not many Indian workers, for example, left the Kingdom during the correction campaign, in comparison to other nationalities. Moreover, on November 10, in the midst of the crackdowns, an agreement was inked between the governments of India and Saudi Arabia, which aimed at “streamlining the recruitment process” and “curtailing the role of middlemen”<sup>28</sup> to protect Indians workers on their way to the Kingdom.

Therefore, one important outcome of the Saudi crackdown may be the instatement of the Saudi government as the major actor in the migration process. Moreover, the deportation campaigns may not reduce the number of foreign workers, as much as it may change the nationality and skills profile of future flows of foreigners to the Kingdom.

## Endnotes

1. Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life, *The Future of the Global Muslim Population, Projections for 2010–2030* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2011).
2. Central Department for Statistics and Information (CDSI)'s estimate for mid-2012.
3. With an estimated outward flow of \$27.6 billion, according to the World Bank.
4. Saudis are allowed to sponsor a certain number of work visas with the intention that they employ the foreigners they sponsor. In some cases, the Saudi national sponsors the foreigner but leaves him/her responsible for finding employment and charges fees in return for the sponsorship.
5. To date, Saudi Arabia has conducted five censuses – in 1962; 1974; 1992; 2004 and 2010. The first Saudi census (1962) is usually not used, as it did not cover the whole resident population. The 1974 census was the first comprehensive one in Saudi history. However, its rate of coverage and accuracy of data are considered weak. In 1992, census population figures, along with ensuing estimates of Saudi population and rates of demographic growth for the following years, were probably inflated (see O. Winckler, "The Surprising Results of the Saudi Arabian 2004 Demographic Census," *IJMES*, no. 40, 2008, pp. 12–15). Between 2004 and 2010 censuses, Saudi population figures seem consistent with natural increase figures. As for non-national population, because it should not be acknowledged to be too high and a part of it is illegal, it may be underestimated in official counts. It is also to be noted that the 2010 (last census) final results have not been released yet.
6. The Iranian Revolution and the seizure of the Grand Mosque in Mecca by Islamist extremists.
7. Since October 2002, all visas and work permit applications have to be approved by the Ministry of Labour. The Saudi statistical apparatus was also developed to meet new needs in terms of production and dissemination of periodic statistical data.
8. This is tempered by the fact that Saudi women have a low rate of activity: 15.2 percent only, and 30.9 percent for the most active age group, that of 30–34 years. All rates are calculated for age group 15 to 64 years, in order to allow for international comparison. Activity rates are the ratio of persons in the labour force (employed+unemployed) to the total population for the given age groups.
9. The demographic growth having decreased the state's redistributive capacities, the difference is now between the well-connected, part of clientele networks, and the others, leading to "discriminatory clientelism." See S. Hertog, "Segmented Clientelism: the Political Economy of Saudi Economic Reform Efforts," in *Saudi Arabia in the Balance*, eds. P. Aarts and G. Nonneman (London: Hurst and Co, 2006, p. 120).
10. Enacted in 1994, Resolution 50 was compelling firms to increase the number of Saudi employees by 5 percent a year, so that in 2001 most private sector firms would have 25 percent Saudi workers. The Seventh Five-Year Plan (2000–2004) sets a target of 51 percent maximum of immigrants in the private sector and Saudis were to constitute at least 30 percent of the manpower in companies of more than 20 employees. Throughout the 2000s, foreign workers were phased out of several employment sectors. See also "2009 Saudi Employment Strategy," <http://portal.mol.gov.sa/en/AboutMinistry/Pages/Strategy.aspx>.
11. Migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa, mostly Ethiopians, Somalis and Eritreans, cross the Red Sea to Yemen, in order to reach Saudi Arabia. Saudis also fear drug and weapons trafficking, as well as massive economic migration from Yemen, where political chaos has deepened since the collapse of Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime.
12. <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6b49c0fa-5d9d-11e3-b3e8-00144feabdc0.html>.
13. GOSI. *Statistical Report 1433*, p. 164, <http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/264344/1-472-gcc-citizens-covered-by-qatar-social-security-network>.
14. Saudi Arabia does not allow dual nationality. Becoming Saudi implies renouncing one's first citizenship.
15. <http://gulfmigration.eu/population-by-nationality-saudi-non-saudi-census-1970-2010-2/>.
16. [http://www.gulfinthemedial.com/gulflm/detail.php?id=677464&news\\_type=Top&lang=en](http://www.gulfinthemedial.com/gulflm/detail.php?id=677464&news_type=Top&lang=en).
17. Mid-year population estimates by nationality (nationals/non-nationals) since 1974 are computed by the Central Department for Statistics and Information (CDSI) but published only in Saudi Arabia Monetary Authority (SAMA)'s Statistical Yearbooks. The time-series show that after each census CDSI has readjusted past figures for Saudi and non-Saudi popu-

lations, intercensal data, as well as data for census years. Therefore, mid-year estimates differ significantly from available census figures.

18. Population aged 15 and more. *Labour Force Survey 2013* (Round 1), CDSI, January 2013, <http://gulfmigration.eu/employed-population-by-citizenship-saudi-non-saudi-1999-2012/>
19. Respectively, Ministry of Civil Service and Ministry of Labour; see SAMA *Annual Report*, no. 48 (2013). In Saudi Arabia, statistics do not separate the domestic sector from the private sector.
20. <http://gulfmigration.eu/national-and-non-national-populations-by-aggregated-age-groups-in-gcc-countries-national-statistics-2005-2013/>.
21. <http://gulfmigration.eu/employed-population-aged-15-and-over-by-nationality-saudi-non-saudi-sex-and-main-occupation-group-2013/>.
22. For source of each of the figures quoted in the table, please see: <http://gulfmigration.eu/estimates-of-non-nationals-by-country-of-citizenship-saudi-arabia-november-3-2013/>.
23. [http://www.gulfintimedia.com/gulflm/detail.php?id=677035&news\\_type=Top&lang=en#](http://www.gulfintimedia.com/gulflm/detail.php?id=677035&news_type=Top&lang=en#).
24. <http://www.arabnews.com/saudi-arabia/shoura-tackle-problem-5-million-illegals-kingdom>.
25. <http://www.arabnews.com/news/485266>; <http://www.arabnews.com/saudi-born-arab-expats-stuck-between-rock-and-hard-place> quoted a figure of “over 2 million” Saudi-born foreign residents, stemming from CDSI.
26. They never accounted for more than 0.03 percent of the rates of population increase over the years. No data on naturalisations is published after 1420H (1999-2000AD).
27. The labour visa allows the worker to enter Saudi Arabia. It is issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after acceptance of the worker’s application file by the Ministry of Labour, upon request from his/her prospective sponsor. The work visas are more than the actual workers present in the country, as some eventually do not complete the procedure, or are rejected at a later stage (entry visa; residency procedures etc.).
28. <http://www.arabnews.com/news/475186>.

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