



HIRING IN QATAR

A guide to building your dream team



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01

**INVEST QATAR –
YOUR RELIABLE
PARTNER IN GROWTH**

The Investment Promotion Agency Qatar (Invest Qatar) leads the attraction of foreign direct investment into Qatar, with a focus on advancing ambitious investors' goals and accelerating their growth, in line with the nation's economic development and diversification objectives. Through leveraging an integrated ecosystem of business and licensing platforms, we support you throughout your investment journey, from exploration and setup to expansion, in a way that is tailored to your unique goals and ambitions to ensure your long-term success of your Qatar-based Business. Invest Qatar's support covers three main areas:



Provision of general information:

Business environment, regulatory environment and economic drivers.



Provision of market information:

Investment opportunities, sector size and characteristics, identification of potential partners.



Support for foreign direct investors:

Business setup and establishment assistance, organisation of site visits, meetings and introductions, provision of facilitation services and incentives.

Qatar serves as a hub for international expertise across many industry sectors with a rich and diverse workforce. Its educational infrastructure, research and professional training programmes attract the brightest talent from across the world. Before assembling a dream team in Qatar, familiarity with topics such as visas and work permits, contracts, termination and standard working hours is essential.



**Educational
Infrastructure**



Research



**Professional
Training Programmes**

02

OUR PLATFORMS:
KEY LICENSING
PLATFORMS

Invest Qatar works closely with peer organisations, international partners, licensing platforms and key stakeholders to exchange expertise, initiate cooperation and forge partnerships that help investors create their next success story.



2.1 Key Licensing Platforms



Ministry of Commerce and Industry

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) is responsible for overseeing commercial and industrial activities for the State of Qatar, and to manage these activities in accordance with the requirements of national development. The Ministry's mandate includes business development needed to attract investments, as well as support and develop exports.



Qatar Financial Centre

Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) is a leading onshore business and financial centre, providing a world class platform for firms to do business in Qatar and beyond. They offer attractive benefits, including 100 per cent foreign ownership, 100 per cent repatriation of profits, a fair and transparent tax regime and a legal regulatory framework based on English common law.



Qatar Free Zones Authority

The Qatar Free Zones Authority (QFZ) oversees and regulates world-class free zones in Qatar and secures fixed investments within the zones. QFZ offers outstanding opportunities and benefits for businesses seeking to establish operations and expand regionally and globally, providing quality infrastructure, a skilled workforce, 100% foreign ownership, access to investment funds, tax exemptions and partnership opportunities with Qatari entities.



Qatar Science and Technology Park

The Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP) plays a key role in providing companies, looking to expand to the region, the infrastructure, and the tools to develop tech-based, innovative, and entrepreneurial solutions. QSTP welcomes industry leaders and progressive companies to develop and deploy technological solutions in Qatar, focusing on Ed-Tech, artificial intelligence, ICT, sustainable development and Health.



Media City Qatar

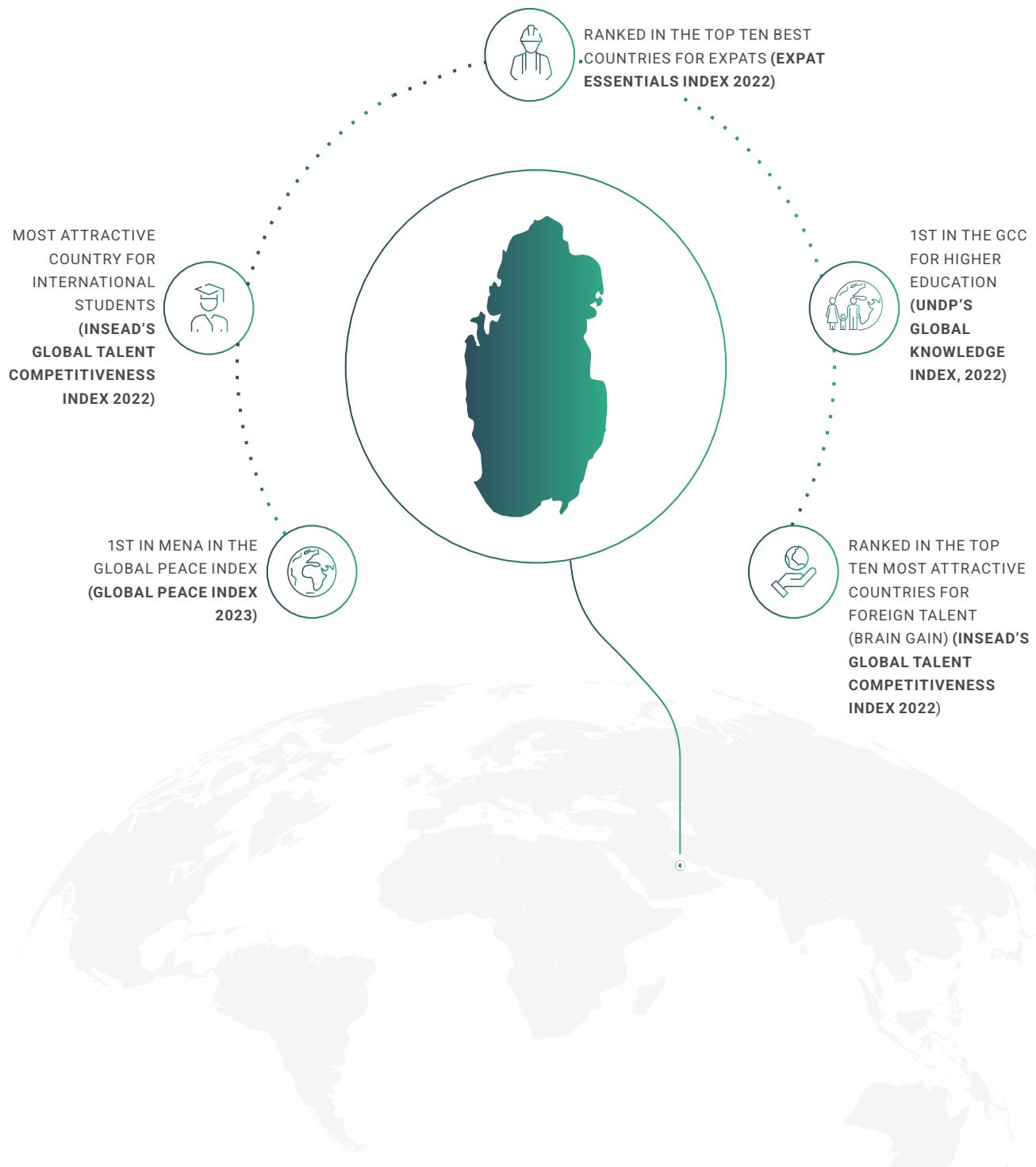
Media City Qatar was established by Amiri Decree No. (13) of 2019. Its goal is to drive the growth and development of the media industry and to become an international hub for businesses, organisations, and entrepreneurs with a focus on traditional and digital media, technology, communications, research and development.



03

QATAR'S ECOSYSTEM

3.1 Overall



3.2 Talent Pool



2.1 million

economically active people
(PSA, Labour Force, as of Q1 2023)



~94.5 %

of the economically active labour force
are expatriate (PSA, Labour Force, as of
Q1 2023)



80 %

of the total labour force are between
20-44 years (PSA, Q1 2023)



80 %

of the labour force work in the
private sector (PSA, 2021)



~12,000
QAR

average monthly wage for total
wage-earning workers (PSA, Q1 2023)



0.1 %

unemployment rate in Qatar

3.3 Education Hub

Qatar's vibrant ecosystem of globally renowned educational institutions, research and training organisations have placed it on a fast track to becoming a knowledge-based economy. There are over 32 higher education institutions in Qatar.¹

Table 1: Public Universities

Public Universities
Ahmed Bin Mohammed Military College
Al Zaeem Mohammed Bin Abdullah Al Attiya Air College with Aix-Marseille University - France
Community College of Qatar
Joaan Bin Jassim Joint Command and Staff College
Mohammed Bin Ghanim Al Ghanim Naval Academy with Piri Reis University
Police College
Qatar Aeronautical Academy
Qatar Finance and Business Academy with Northumbria University
Qatar Leadership Centre
Qatar Olympic Academy with Spain's University of Lleida
Qatar University
Ras Laffan College for Emergence and Safety in collaboration with Central Lancashire University
Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Centre (ROLACC) with Sussex University
University Foundation College
University of Calgary in Qatar
University of Doha for Science and Technology

1. Ministry of Education and Higher Education, "Higher Education in Qatar," MoEHE, accessed September 2023. مؤسسات التعليم العالي.pdf (edu.gov.qa)

Table 2: Private Universities

Private Universities
AFG College with the University of Aberdeen
Al Rayyan International University College previously (Stenden -Qatar University)
City University College with Ulster University
The Doha Institute for Graduate Studies
Global Studies Institute with the Arkansas State University, the University of South Carolina, and the State University of New York Adirondack
Lusail University
MIE-SPPU Higher Education Institute in partnership with Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU)
Oryx Universal College with Liverpool John Moores University
University Foundation College

Table 3: Qatar Foundation Universities

Qatar Foundation Universities
Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar
Georgetown University in Qatar
Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU)
HEC Paris in Qatar
Education Development Institute
Northwestern University in Qatar
Texas A&M University in Qatar
Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar
Weill Cornell Medicine in Qatar

Table 4: Training Institutes

Training Institutes
Digital Centre of Excellence (The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology and Microsoft)
Enertech Qatar Safety Training Centre
Excellence Training Centre
Qatar Leadership Centre
Qatar Olympic Academy with Spain's University of Lleida
Qatar Skills Training Centre
Qatar Finance and Business Academy



3.4 Recruiting Talent

In line with the Qatar National Vision 2030 goal for human development³, Qatar boasts a rich talent pool from the above-mentioned globally recognised institutions, public universities and training centres. Moreover, Qatar is also home to one of the largest expatriate workforces – attracting international talent worldwide.

The country provides several facilities for recruitment in both high-skilled and low-skilled jobs. These include various globally recognised job sites services and agencies allowing employers to recruit talent at the national, regional and international levels.

Mentioned below are a few key direct and indirect recruitment services:

A. Direct Hire

Table 5: Government Recruitment Services

Services	Brief Description	Link
Kawader National Recruitment Portal	Launched by the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor, and Social Affairs (MoADLSA) to facilitate the recruitment of Qatari citizens in either public or private sector	Kawader

Table 6: International and Regional Job Portals

Services	Brief Description	Link
Bayt.com	A job site in the Middle East and North Africa, connecting job seekers with employers looking to hire	Regional
Glassdoor	A global job site with 54mn unique visitors monthly and personalised salary estimates based on each job seeker's work experience	International
Gulf Talent	A job site for professionals in the Middle East	Regional
Indeed	A job site providing free access to search for jobs, post resumes, and research companies	International
LinkedIn	The world's largest professional network with more than 830 million users in over 200 countries and territories worldwide	International
Management Solutions International	A multinational recruitment company, working with prominent government / semi-government, multinational companies as well as SMEs	Regional
Vistas Global	A multifaceted company that provides managed solutions and services in human capital and recruitment	International

3. Government Communications Office, "Qatar National Vision 2030," 2016.

B. Indirect Hire:

Outsourcing is also an alternative to hiring an individual permanently in Qatar. Outsource companies provide various services including mass recruitment and project based recruitment, immigration support, in-country payroll, management, security and logistical support. Before hiring through an outsourcing company:

- 1.** Ensure that the Labor laws and entry laws highlighted by the Ministry of Labor and Ministry of Interior are followed when hiring through an outsourcing company.
- 2.** Ensure that the outsourcing company is recognised by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry or the governing body of the company.
- 3.** Study the reviews of the outsourcing company to check their credibility and performance.
- 4.** Ensure the expertise and skills required for employment are among the manpower solutions that the outsourcing company offers.
- 5.** Contact Invest Qatar for further information about key licensing platforms and hiring regulations in Qatar.

Under QFC, an authorised firm may enter into an outsourcing arrangement only if the firm's governing body has approved the firm's outsourcing policy and the arrangement is permitted by the policy.



04

HIRING PRACTICES AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

In order to reside and work in the State of Qatar, employees are required to acquire a Resident Permit (RP). Under reformed labour laws, the process of securing these permits has become more streamlined and is governed by the Ministry of Labor (MoL)⁴ alongside the Ministry of Interior (MoI). For employment in the QFC, an exclusive QFC Employment regulations body overlooks legislation related to employment, to which the State Labour Law does not apply.⁵ The QFC employment standards are in line with international best practices and the International Labour Organisation (ILO)'s framework.

Qatar promotes **Fair Recruitment Practices**, primarily through engagement with the private sector, under the MoADLSA and the ILO cooperation programme. Fair recruitment practices significantly reduced recruitment fees and related costs, and the debt incurred by workers, facilitated informed decision-making around migration and addressed contract deception, and led to an effective grievance mechanism reducing the risks of disputes.

4. Ministry Of Labour, "Services E-Services & E-Forms," mol.gov.qa, 2022.

5. Qatar Financial Centre (QFC), "Operating with QFC," www.qfc.qa, accessed May 23, 2022.

4.1 Labour Laws on Working Hours and Leaves⁶

Qatar's Labor Law No 14 of 2004 as amended constitutes a comprehensive framework of rules and regulations that outline the legal rights, responsibilities, and limitations of employees, employers, and workers' committees. It is imperative that all related parties fully comply with the provisions set forth in this law. Under these regulations, the maximum regular working hours shall be forty-eight hours per week, equivalent to eight hours per day for all months of the year except for the month of Ramadan when it shall be thirty-six hours per week, equivalent to six hours per day. Article 79 of the labor law states that a worker who has been in the service of the employer for a full continuous year shall be entitled to annual leave with the pay not less than three weeks for a worker whose service is less than five years, and four weeks for a worker whose service period is five years or more.

The worker shall be entitled annually to leave with full pay for public holidays as follows:

1. Three working days on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr.
2. Three working days on the occasion of Eid al-Adha.
3. One working day on the occasion of Qatar's National Day (18th December).
4. Three working days to be determined by the employer.

If the working conditions require the worker to be on duty on any of these leaves, the provisions of Article 74 of the labor law on overtime shall apply in respect thereof.

Workers also have right to another one-day paid leave on the occasion of the National Sports Day held annually on the second Tuesday of February (Emiri Decree No. 80/2011).

Under the QFC:

- Annual and other leaves: Employees who have completed one year of employment are entitled to an annual paid leave of a minimum of 20 working days each year, and public holidays mentioned above.
- Sick leave: 60 days of paid sick leave.
- Maternity leave: Female employees who have completed one year of employment are entitled to paid maternity leave for 14 weeks. For employment periods less than a full year, female workers are entitled to unpaid maternity leave for the same period.

6. Qatar Law No. 14/2004 on the Promulgation of the Labour Law as amended. Qatar Emiri Decree No. 80/2011, on the National Sports Day

4.2 Qatar Financial Centre's Employment Standards Office (ESO)⁷

The QFC Employment Regulations are administered by the Employment Standards Office established in 2015 under Article 6 of the QFC Employment Regulations, which plays a crucial role in the QFC labour market and deals with all aspects of employment, including prevention and resolution of workplace conflict and labour disputes. ESO's mission is to create and maintain a healthy, fair, and balanced work environment for higher productivity through adequate and tailored labour-oriented reforms and the implementation of services in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030, in particular the human development pillar.

For further information, visit the ESO office.

4.2 Salaries

A properly documented payroll process is imperative for all companies operating in Qatar, following the implementation of the The Wage Protection System (WPS), which is an electronic salary transfer system developed by the Qatar Central Bank and the Ministry of Labour to ensure timely and full payment of wages through a database. The system allows companies and institutions to pay employees' wages via banks and financial institutions approved and authorised by the Central Bank.⁸

Qatar's Law No.17 of 2020 introduced the non-discriminatory minimum wage applying to all workers, of all nationalities, in all sectors, including domestic workers. In addition to the minimum monthly basic wage of 1,000 Qatari riyals QAR (275 USD), the legislation stipulates that employers must pay allowances of at least QAR 300 and QAR 500 for food and housing respectively if they do not provide workers with these directly⁹. The ILO stated that this reform is expected to benefit more than 400,000 workers, or 20 percent of the private sector¹⁰.

According to the PSA, the average monthly wage for the total number of workers amounted to nearly QAR 12,000. A brief overview of the salaries of various professions in Qatar is shown below:

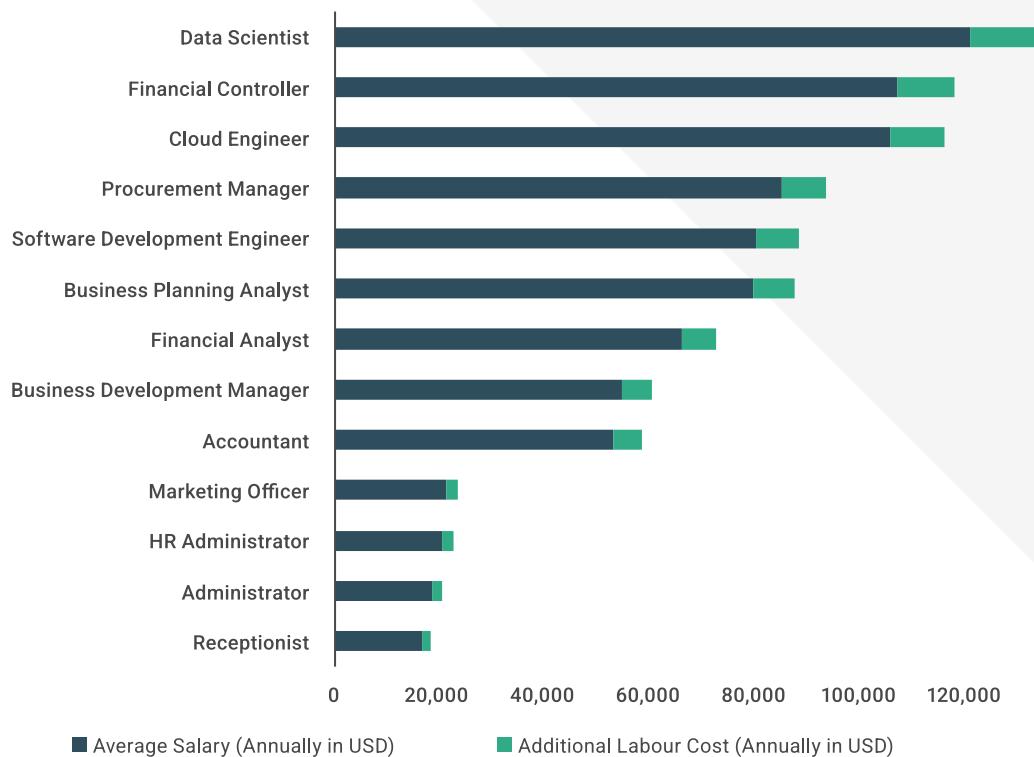
7. Qatar Financial Centre (QFC), "Employment Standards Office," www.qfc.qa, accessed May 23, 2022.

8. Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour & Social Affairs, "An Explanatory Leaflet on WPS," www.adlsa.govqa, 2019.

9. Hukoomi E-Government Services, "MADLSA Announces Starting the Implementation of Minimum Wages as of 20 March," <https://hukoomi.gov.qa>, March 21, 2021.

10. International Labour Organization (ILO), "Qatar's New Minimum Wage Enters into Force," www.ilo.org, March 19, 2021.

Graph 1: Average Labour Cost in Qatar (Annually in USD)



Source: fDi Benchmark (2022, accessed September 2023)

4.3 Health Insurance

The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) has recently announced that health insurance will be mandatory for all non-Qatari nationals, and visitors in Qatar must have private health insurance for the duration of their stay to receive basic medical services¹¹. Employers must enroll their non-Qatari employees and their family members in the mandatory health insurance scheme through contracts concluded with insurance companies registered with [the MOPH](#).

Under QFC laws, employers are required to obtain and maintain insurance cover for health and disability - providing periodic payments in respect of lost income due to an illness or injury.

4.4 Visas and Work Permits

Under the Qatari Labour Law, employers are encouraged to give preference to Qatari nationals during hiring. Non-Qatari workers can be employed only after obtaining a work permit as per the rules and procedures prescribed by the [MoL](#).

The MoL set up Visa Centres to provide seamless and efficient service for residency procedures on its behalf in six countries. These countries include India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Philippines and Nepal. Individuals must complete a biometric enrolment, medical examinations, and sign work contracts in their home countries through the [Qatar Visa Centres \(QVCs\)](#) before coming to Qatar¹².

The work permit remains valid during the residence period of the worker. Work permits are issued for a minimum of one year and a maximum of five years unless exceptionally approved by the MoL. An e-service for the issuance and renewal of work permits for workers is offered by the MoL¹³.

11. Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), "Press Release on Promulgation of Law No. (22) of 2021 Regulating Health Care Services in the Country," www.moph.gov.qa, 2021.

12. Qatar Visa Center, "Visa Center (QVC)," www.qatarvisacenters.com, accessed May 23, 2022.

13. Article 18-37, Labour Law, Qatar Legal Portal.

Figure 1: Government E-service for the issuance of work permits for workers¹⁴



Other documents include:

- ▀ A letter of approval from the Supreme Council of Health for medical professions.
- ▀ A letter of approval from the Engineers Admission Committee for Engineers.
- ▀ A letter of approval from the Regulatory Authority for Charitable Activities for professions in Charitable Institutions.
- ▀ A letter of approval from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) for professions in schools.
- ▀ A special needs card for people with special needs.
- ▀ Police Clearance Certificate or a letter of Good Standing.

14. Qatar Labour Act No. 3 of 1962 - Chapter 3 End of Service Compensation.

15. International Labour Organization (ILO), "Qatar's New Minimum Wage Enters into Force" March 19, 2021.

4.5 Taxes

In the State of Qatar, employees benefit fully from their wages as there is no tax on personal income. Whereas, companies are subject to a corporate income tax levied at a flat rate of 10%.

4.6 Termination

The amendments made to the Labour Law No.14 of 2004 in 2020 (Article 49¹⁶) state that a contract, whether it's for a definite or indefinite duration, can be terminated by either the employer or the employee once the probationary period has been successfully completed. It's important to note that there is no requirement for the party serving notice after probation to provide a specific reason for the termination. However, during the probationary period, only the employer can give notice for poor performance, while an employee can use it to change employment or return to their home country.

The notice period should be a minimum of one month if the employee's service with the same employer is less than two years, and two months for employees who have worked for the same employer for more than two years, unless the employment contract specifies a longer notice period.

Moreover, the new labour law reforms also stipulate that non-Qatari nationals no longer require a "No-Objection Certificate" or NOC to transfer to a new employer or an exit permit to leave the country. These reforms have altogether dismantled the kafala or sponsorship system. As a result, Qatar has become a more attractive destination for global talent and investment.¹⁷

At the QFC, employees are subject to a probation period of maximum of 6 months and a termination period ranging from 2 weeks to 3 months based on the period of employment. The ESO at the QFC along with the ILO, the MoADLSA are collaborating to bring world-class best practices to Qatar in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.



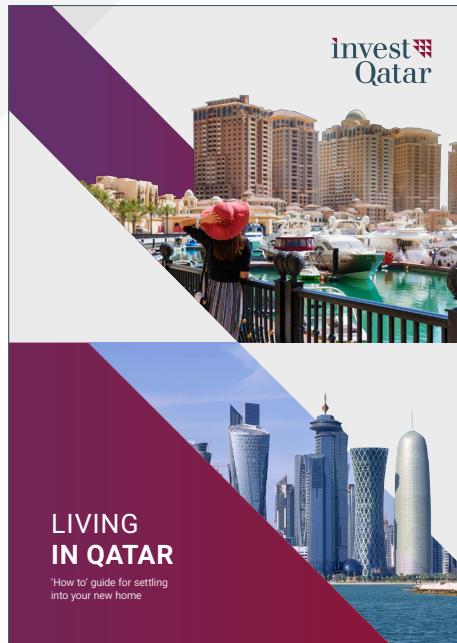
16. Article 49, Labour Law No. 14 of 2004 as amended, Qatar Legal Portal.

17. International Labour Organization (ILO), "Qatar's New Minimum Wage Enters into Force" March 19, 2021.

Other helpful Invest Qatar guides



 **Setting Up Your Business in Qatar**



 **Living in Qatar**

Start your investment journey with us!

Thank you for taking the time to consider Qatar for your next investment.



Contact us

Our investor relations team is ready to support you through the investment process to ensure your long-term success in Qatar.

invest.qa/contact-us

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