



MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
& EMIRATISATION

# 2017 - 2018 WORKER WELFARE REPORT



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# OUR VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND GOALS

## Our Vision

- A labour market in the UAE that empowers Emiratis and attracts talent from around the world

## Our Mission

- To regulate the labour market, through legislation, policy making, enforcement and partnerships, to promote the participation of UAE nationals in employment and attract and retain international talent

## Our Values

- We will act with professionalism
- We will always respect human dignity
- We will behave with honesty and integrity
- We will seek to earn trust and respect
- We will value innovation and creativity

## Our Strategic Goals

- The empowerment of Emiratis
- The protection of all workers
- The efficiency of the labour market
- The provision of excellent services to all
- The nurturing of a culture of innovation within the Ministry





## FOREWORD BY H.E. THE MINISTER

I am delighted to have the opportunity to introduce the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation's second Worker Welfare Report. This report is published in support of the Ministry's drive to ensure that there is transparency on issues relating to labour practices in the UAE. The vision of the Ministry is a labour market in the UAE that "empowers Emiratis and attracts talent from around the world." In publishing this report, we hope to reinforce that vision, by generating discussion on the role of good governance, the ongoing evolution in relations between employers and employees, and the promotion of the UAE as a well regulated, welcoming and inclusive destination.

As this report establishes, the UAE has taken significant steps forward during the period 2016 – 2017 in strengthening workplace protections for workers. The signing and bringing into force of the Domestic Labour Law, in particular, brings the rights and benefits afforded to domestic employees into line with other workers in the UAE. Domestic workers play a vital role in supporting the economic and social fabric of the UAE, and their integration into the regulatory oversight provided by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation enables us to take action to improve their working and living conditions.

Reform to the domestic labour market has been matched in other sectors, with a series of Ministerial decrees coming into force, with the aim of standardising employment contracts and setting out with greater clarity the rights of workers to terminate contracts and change employers. This is aligned with our goal of an efficient labour market that works for all.

On the international front, the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation continues to work closely with countries of labour origin to improve the protections offered to workers and prospective workers at risk of abuses beyond our borders. In particular, in our role as Permanent Secretary of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, the Ministry is engaged with the Philippines in developing an innovative pilot programme to strengthen government oversight into the recruitment process to enhance ethical recruitment; and with the Philippines and Sri Lanka to trial new approaches to the provision of information to workers, pre-employment, pre-departure and post-arrival. Through the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, the UAE continues to support work to empower workers through up-skilling and skills recognition, and implement technological solutions to strengthen governance standards.

Included in this report is a data table, tracking a series of metrics relating to the work undertaken by the Ministry to ensure that workers are protected and their rights are upheld. The data included covers 2014, 2015 and 2016, with 2017 data being released in next year's report. The release of this data is important in highlighting areas where there is room for improvement; but, I believe, it paints overall a positive picture of the action being undertaken to ensure that the governance of the UAE's labour market is rigorous, consistent and, above all, fair.

As one of the few countries in the world that actively welcomes large-scale labour migration, the UAE provides work to approximately 1 million new residents every year. For the vast majority of new residents, the opportunity to come to the UAE makes a dramatic and positive impact on their lives. We are proud to be a beacon of aspiration for people around the world, and to offer that prospect of a better life to everyone, regardless of education, gender, race or religion. The governance model of temporary labour migration that our Ministry oversees helps to protect the customs and traditions of our Emirati host community, while contributing to a tolerant, multicultural and economically vibrant nation.

H.E. Nasser Thani Al Hamli

Minister of Human Resources and Emiratisation





# DOMESTIC LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY REFORM

The below table lists the relevant regulatory and legislative instruments that have been put into force by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation – with support from the wider Government of the United Arab Emirates – during the period covered under this report. Together they represent a coherent package of reforms, designed to create greater flexibility for both employers and employees, ensure that conditions of work and accommodation are of a high standard, and – of particular note – to establish the domestic labour market as a bone fide labour market segment.

Year of Issue	Type	Number	Purpose
2016	Ministerial Decree	764	Regulating the implementation of standardised employment contracts and the issuance of matching offer letters
2016	Ministerial Decree	765	Regulating the terms and conditions for the termination of limited and unlimited employment contracts
2016	Ministerial Decree	766	Regulating the transferral of work permits between employers
2016	Ministerial Decree	338	Regulating the formation of a permanent committee to oversee the provision of accommodation
2016	Ministerial Decree	591	Regulating the requirement for employers to provide accommodation to low salaried workers
2016	Ministerial Decree	739	Regulating the penalties for employers for late and non payment of salaries
2016	Ministerial Decree	1094	Regulating the issuance of new work permits to enable workers to transfer between employers
2017	Federal Law	15	Legislating for the granting and protection of employment rights of domestic workers
2017	Ministerial Decree	711	Regulating the requirement for Emirati health and safety officers to be present at high risk work sites
2017	Ministerial Decree	762	Regulating the introduction and licencing of centres providing auxiliary labour services

## ► Labour Relations Between Employer and Worker

Unveiled in late 2015 and brought into force on January 1 2016, Ministerial Decrees 764, 765 and 766 are aimed at reinforcing the contractual relationship between employer and employee, as spelled out in the standard employment contract and in conformity with the provisions of the labour law.

Ministerial Decree 764 requires that UAE-based employers intending to engage overseas workers must provide the prospective worker with an offer letter, in their language, which sets out the terms and conditions of the contract that will be offered to the employee on their arrival in the UAE. The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization will only validate the employment contract once the offer letter, signed by the prospective employee, is provided. No alteration of the terms of the offer letter can be made, unless there is evidence that the changes are to the benefit of the employee. This is intended to ensure that overseas workers are not lured into taking up roles in the UAE on the basis of false pretences.

Ministerial Decree 765 provides clarity on the regulations surrounding the termination of employment contracts by both employees and employers. The Decree stipulates that, under fixed term contracts, either party may terminate the employment relationship, either unilaterally, or by mutual consent, as long as a due process is adhered to. This includes notification of the other party in accordance with the stipulated notice period, which cannot exceed three months; the continued discharge of contractual obligations

throughout the notice period; and indemnification of the other party according to the contract, which cannot exceed three months' wages.

Ministerial Decree 766 establishes the conditions under which a worker can transfer their work permit from one employer to another, outside the scope of the usual process of termination. This includes situations where the employer has failed to undertake their contractual obligations, including in cases where they have failed to pay wages for more than 60 days; in situations where the employer has been inactive for a period of two months, and the worker therefore is unable to perform their work; and where a labour complaint against the employer has been upheld by the labour courts.

## ► Accommodation

In 2016, the Ministry oversaw the implementation of new regulations to ensure that low salaried workers are provided with accommodation, paid for at the employer's expense. Under the Ministerial Decree, employers (with 50 or more employees) are required to provide accommodation to employees whose total monthly earnings, under the Wages Protection System, are less than AED 2000. The decree requires employers paying less than the AED 2000 salary threshold to find appropriate accommodation for employees within one month of the decree coming into force, or to raise the salaries of workers above the minimum threshold. The quality of accommodation must be in line with regulatory standards, applying Ministerial Resolution 212 (2014) for less than 500 workers, and Cabinet Resolution 13 (2009) for more than 500 workers.





## ► Penalties for Late Payment of Salaries

Ministerial Decree 739 stipulates that, as of 1 October 2016, all companies employing 100 or more staff must pay their employees within 10 days of the payment due date, as set out within the contract, and monitored by the Wages Protection System (WPS).

Once the salary is sixteen days overdue, the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization will take action and stop the issuance of new work permits to the responsible company. The ban on the issuance of new work permits will be lifted if the employer makes the salary payment within 29 days of the due date. But if it remains unpaid, then MOHRE will refer the case to the labour courts, who have the power to prevent the employer from registering any new companies, and grade the company at a higher risk level, requiring higher bank guarantees.

If, after 60 days the salary remains outstanding, a fine of AED 5000 per unpaid worker – up to a maximum of AED 50,000 – will be levied on the employer. Furthermore, the employer ban on the issuance of new hiring permits will remain in place for a further 60 days.

## ► The Domestic Labour Law

In June 2017, the UAE's Domestic Labour Law was passed by the Federal National Council and H.H. The President signed it into law. The promulgation of the law represents a moment of significant progress in ensuring that full employment rights and protections are afforded to all workers in the UAE. Key to the law's implementation is the assumption of regulatory oversight over domestic workers by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization.

Domestic workers account for around 750,000 individuals in the UAE's labour force. The law establishes sixteen different categories of domestic worker. To date, the absence of a specific employment law setting out their rights and protections has left many domestic workers vulnerable to unscrupulous employers.

The Domestic Labour Law sets out regulations over four areas of key importance in the protection of domestic employees: Contracts, Rights and Privileges, Prohibitions, and Recruitment Agencies.

### 1) Contracts

The law establishes the principle of informed consent, ensuring that workers are aware of the contract terms prior to departure from their home country. This is in line with the UAE's regulations regarding the standardisation of contracts, to ensure that prospective workers are not enticed into a cycle of debt bondage through the promise of employment terms that subsequently prove, on arrival in the UAE, to be different from those offered. An offer letter, containing the terms and

conditions of employment, must be signed by the prospective worker, prior to departure. On arrival, the employment contract, as endorsed by the Ministry, must contain the same terms and conditions. The new law also sets out the terms under which employer or employee may terminate the employment contract.

## 2) Rights and Privileges

The rights and privileges afforded to domestic employees include minimum daily rest hours, paid annual leave, weekly rest days, and access to dispute resolution.

## 3) Prohibitions

The Domestic Labour Law prohibits the employment of minors under the age of 18 in domestic work, includes anti-discrimination clauses, and reinforces existing laws against sexual harassment, trafficking and exposure to physical harm. The Ministry will be announcing enforcement mechanisms over the course of 2018, outlining action that the government will be able to take to uphold the law's proscriptions.

## 4) Recruitment Agencies

Much stricter regulation of recruitment agencies is key to widening the protections afforded to domestic workers. The Domestic Labour Law restricts the recruitment of overseas domestic workers to UAE-registered agencies, prohibits the payment of commission in exchange for employment, and aims to tackle potential abuse of workers in the care of agencies.

## Tadbeer Centres

Central to the reformation of recruitment practices is the establishment of Tadbeer Centres, requiring all private recruitment agencies involved in the hiring of domestic workers to register under the scheme or lose their licence to operate. Only companies compliant with the strict standards set out by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization will be allowed to operate Tadbeer Centres. Services provided by Tadbeer Centres – due to open in early 2018 – include interviewing workers, training, and visa and ID issuance.







# INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES

The UAE has the largest per-capita foreign-born population in the world, with around 90% of residents born overseas. Despite having a population of only 9 million, the UAE is the world's fifth most popular migrant destination. Cooperation and dialogue at inter-regional and bilateral levels are therefore critical in ensuring the protection of workers throughout the migration cycle.

The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization works closely with countries of labour origin (and other Gulf countries, whose populations reflect similar demographic backgrounds and share similar governance models) to tackle specific challenges facing labour migrants in the Asia-Gulf migration corridors. The primary forum for inter-regional cooperation is the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD). Over the course of 2017, the Ministry has also been at the forefront of engagement in the formation and development of the Global Compact for Migration and Development.

## ► The Abu Dhabi Dialogue

The Abu Dhabi Dialogue was established in 2008 as a forum for cooperation between Asian countries of labour origin and destination.

The ADD consists of 18 Member States; it brings together 11 governments from Asian labour-sending countries, and six Gulf receiving countries – in addition to Malaysia. As a state-led Regional Consultative Process (RCP), the ADD aims to enable the joint development of labour mobility-related programming, implementation and reporting, helping Member States to develop partnerships for adopting best practices. The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization provides the permanent secretariat to the ADD. Civil society, international organisations and the private sector are invited to observe and, in recent years, to contribute to the realisation of some of the programme areas.

Over the 2016 – 2017 period covered by this report, the Abu Dhabi Dialogue convened three times: a Senior Officials Meeting, assembled in Dubai in May 2016; the Fourth Ministerial Consultation, held in Colombo in January 2017, and a Special Workshop, held in Dubai in July 2017. The ADD is currently focused on four specific tracks relating to temporary labour migration:

- Alternative Models of Labour Recruitment
- Certification and Mutual Recognition of Skills
- Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programmes
- Technology in the Governance of Labour Mobility

## Alternative Models of Labour Recruitment

The employee-pays recruitment model is one that is endemic to Asia-Gulf migration corridors in the private sector, driven by high demand for overseas work, and abetted by recruiters looking to drive down costs. Unlike in the domestic work sector, recruiters of manual and semi-skilled labour in countries of origin charge workers upfront fees in return for the promise of employment. The consequence is that many migrant workers enter into cycles of indebtedness that reduces the benefits of undertaking overseas work and increasing dependency on their employer.

To tackle this issue, the governments of the UAE and the Philippines, under the auspices of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, have begun a pilot project, aimed at strengthening joint government oversight over the recruitment process, with the goal of introducing zero fee recruitment and reducing the risk of migrant workers bearing the costs of their own recruitment.

Under the pilot project, the recruitment process begins with the issuance of a letter of demand being submitted by the employer to the UAE government, who vet the terms and conditions, and then share it with the government of the Philippines, who undertake their own vetting, and post it on a website that is accessible only to accredited recruitment agencies. The process is ensure that there is no modification to the terms and conditions of the offer, and minimises the risk of migrants paying fees by creating formal pathways to overseas employment.

## Certification and Mutual Recognition of Skills

Skills development and certification across the migration cycle is one of the keys to improving labour mobility, both across and within borders, and can improve migrant earning potential and productivity.

The United Arab Emirates, in partnership with other ADD Member States, is currently developing a programme aimed at cooperation to jointly certify and recognise skills, issuing skills passports to migrants that are recognised in multiple jurisdictions. The aim is to foster a system in which a skills passport becomes one of the first steps in the migration cycle for pre-employment migrants.

However, one of the key learnings from the 2016 – 2017 period has been that, unless the right are incentives are in place, the value proposition of skilling is not necessarily evident to employers or employees. These incentives may include differentiated work permit fees, sector level quotas, and improved confidence in occupational standards; alongside lower barriers to entry for training centres and minimised taxation on training and certification businesses.

## Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programmes

Orientation and information programmes for workers are a tool of both protection and empowerment. The UAE, through the ADD, has been cooperating on a Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programme (CIOP) since 2014.



The objective is to ensure that workers are aware of their rights and responsibilities, and are prepared for the changes that they will encounter, from pre-employment, through pre-departure and post-arrival, to pre- and post-return.

The current ADD initiative pairs countries with one another to develop detailed CIOP modules for each migration corridor. The UAE is working with the government of the Philippines – with a focus on domestic workers and the hospitality sector – and with the government of Sri Lanka, also focused on the hospitality sector. The aim is to administer a coordinated system of information and orientation provision for workers in these areas, which is culturally and employment specific.

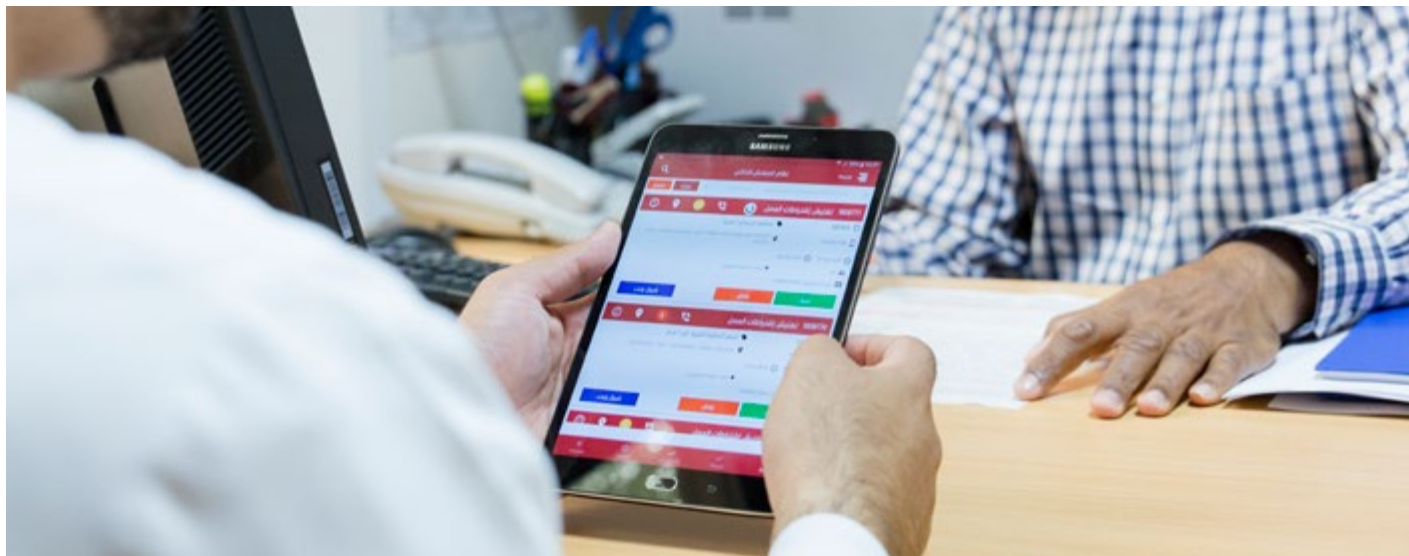
## Technology in the Governance of Labour Mobility

Technology offers the prospect of creating effective solutions to labour migration challenges, including

strengthening oversight over the recruitment process, lowering the cost of recruitment, creating platforms for worker orientation, and facilitating information flow between authorities.

However, Member States of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue face a number of barriers to building a fully integrated, inter-regional digital labour platform, allowing governments to manage the migration cycle. These include calibrating regulatory standards, maintaining data sovereignty, and cost sharing.

Therefore, the UAE, in partnership with the Philippines, has identified the Recruitment pilot project as an opportunity to create a shared platform that facilitates the project, but with the possibility of scaling it up to enable a much broader set of functions, and which can be expanded to encompass the needs of other Member States.



## ► The Global Compact for Migration

In the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted in September 2016, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided to develop the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The process to develop the compact began in April 2017. The UAE has been active throughout the process and remains fully committed to the adoption of the compact in December 2018.

At the Stocktaking Meeting, held in Puerto Vallarta, in December 2017, the UAE proposed six specific commitments, for adoption within the Global Compact:

- Implementation of recruitment practices that are compliant with international standards, including reducing to zero recruitment fees paid by workers
- Access for all migrant workers to information on their rights and obligations prior to departure and post arrival, through the provision of comprehensive information programs
- Ensuring safe and decent work conditions for all migrant workers, and specifically for domestic workers, who should enjoy the same labor protection standards as other professions, as well as gender sensitive policy-making
- Creation of skills ecosystems to encourage skill acquisition, skill certification and upskilling of workers prior to departure, during employment and upon return
- Increase the availability of financing for people hit by natural disasters in order to deter non-voluntary migration, through instruments such as forecast-based financing and disaster risk insurance
- Reduce to 3% the transaction costs of migrant remittances











# 2017–2018: WORKER WELFARE DATA

Focus Area	Key Indicator	2014 Target	2014 Achieved	2015 Target	2015 Achieved	2016 Target	2016 Achieved
Labour Disputes	Percentage of labour disputes settled prior to court referral	76%	78.61%	80%	80.75%	82%	81.68%
Focus Area	Key Indicator	2014 Target	2014 Achieved	2015 Target	2015 Achieved	2016 Target	2016 Achieved
Wage Protections	Percentage of workers not protected under WPS	88.50%	90.80%	91.50%	91.89%	92.50%	92.22%
	Complaints on non-payment of salary received under WPS		2081		2192		1917
	Complaints under WPS dealt with within specified time		1891		1576		1720
	Percentage of complaints under WPS dealt with within specified time	79.98%	90.87%	85.02%	71.90%	91.00%	89.72%
Focus Area	Key Indicator	2014 Target	2014 Achieved	2015 Target	2015 Achieved	2016 Target	2016 Achieved
Labour Compliance	Number of Level 1 Risk establishments (lowest risk of non compliance)						11197
	Number of Inspections of Level 1 Risk establishments						6446
	Percentage of Level 1 Risk establishments inspected					50%	57.57%
	Number of Level 2 Risk establishments						14779
	Number of Inspections of Level 2 Risk establishments						8705
	Percentage of Level 2 Risk establishments inspected					50%	58.90%
	Number of Level 3 Risk establishments						11979
	Number of Inspections of Level 3 Risk establishments						6316
	Percentage of Level 3 Risk establishments inspected					75%	52.73%
	Number of Level 4 Risk establishments						13958
	Number of Inspections of Level 4 Risk establishments						9319
	Percentage of Level 4 Risk establishments inspected					79.43%	66.76%
	Number of Level 5 Risk establishments (highest risk of non compliance)						26403
	Number of Inspections of Level 5 Risk establishments						22733
	Percentage of Level 5 Risk establishments inspected					90%	86.10%
Focus Area	Key Indicator	2014 Target	2014 Achieved	2015 Target	2015 Achieved	2016 Target	2016 Achieved
Accommodation	Number of worker accommodation sites inspected	5200	5769	5720	7565	6291	7796
	Accommodation inspections target achieved		111%		132%		124%
Focus Area	Key Indicator	2014 Target	2014 Achieved	2015 Target	2015 Achieved	2016 Target	2016 Achieved
Labour Market Efficiency	Ranking, World Bank World Competitiveness Report		8		11		11

# 2017–2018: WORKER WELFARE KEY TAKE AWAYS

## ► Dispute Resolution

Enabling access to justice remains a high priority for the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization in protecting and promoting the welfare of workers in the UAE. Moreover, ensuring that disputes between employers and employees are dealt with in a swift and timely manner is critical.

Since 2014, percentage of disputes dealt with within the mandated timeframe has risen year-on-year, from 78.61% in 2014 to 81.68% in 2016, very close to the target of 82%. This rise can be attributed to the introduction, in 2015, of a fast track settlement process, as well as the hiring of additional Ministry staff with legal training and experience in resolving conflict. Labour complaints can now be made by telephone, improving anonymity for workers worried about the repercussions of registering an issue.

Workers who make a complaint through the Ministry's dispute system can expect the Ministry to contact their employer within three days of a complaint being logged, with a follow up workplace inspection triggered after five days.

In instances where the Ministry is unable to resolve a dispute, it will be referred to the labour courts. All workers have the right to have their dispute heard without payment of fees, at all levels of complaint settlement, from Ministry resolution through to the Court of Cassation.

## ► Wage Protections

Protecting workers from the non-payment of salaries is an area where the Ministry of Human Resources has made significant progress. The introduction of the Wages Protection System (WPS) in 2009 has been recognised as a significant move forward, with the system been having subsequently adopted by other countries.

The WPS is managed in cooperation with the UAE Central Bank, and monitors the payment of workers in the private sector. It requires employers to deposit salaries directly into the personal accounts of workers, and enables monitoring of non-compliant businesses.

The percentage of workers protected under the WPS has risen year-on-year since 2014, up from 88.5% in 2014 to 92.2% in 2016. However, under Ministerial Decree 739 (2017), all businesses with one employee or more are now required to register under the WPS, or face fines and the potential loss of their licence to operate. The percentage of workers protected under the WPS is therefore likely to rise in next year's report.

2016 saw a fall in the percentage of complaints about the non-payment of wages dealt with outside the mandatory timeframe, due to internal readjustments, but this has been remedied through the hiring of additional resources and the 2016 data shows a return to within one percentage point of the 91% target. Overall, the low number of registered complaints, in proportion to the percentage of registered workers underlines the continued efficacy of the WPS.



## ► Labour Compliance & Inspections

The introduction of new metrics means that consistent data on the inspections system is available only for 2016. Under the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization's Smart Inspection System, businesses are graded against a risk profile, which includes a range of dynamic factors relating to regulatory compliance. The Smart Inspection System grades for business range from Level 1 (lowest risk of non compliance) to Level 5 (highest risk of non compliance). The system enables labour inspectors to proactively target businesses with a history of labour malpractice.

Over 2016, the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization inspected 86.1% of all businesses at the highest risk level (22,733 businesses out of a total 26,403), close to the 90% target. In addition, inspectors visited 9319 out of a total of 13,958 businesses at the second highest risk level.

## ► Accommodation

The provision of decent housing is vital in ensuring that workers are able to enjoy a dignified life while working in the UAE. As outlined above, new regulations came into force in 2016 requiring

that workers earning less than AED 2000 are provided with free accommodation by their employer. Accommodation must be compliant with Ministerial Resolution 212 (2014) for less than 500 workers, and Cabinet Resolution 13 (2009) for more than 500 workers. Details of these regulations can be found online.

The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization undertakes regular inspections of worker accommodation to ensure that it is compliant with the outlined regulations. In the event of major failures to provide workers with decent accommodation, the Ministry is able to suspend business licences of call companies before the Public Prosecutor. Where minor infractions are detected, the Ministry typically orders employers to rectify the failings and makes another inspection within two week.

Over the period 2014 – 2016, inspections of accommodation were well above target, with 5769 inspections in 2014, 7565 in 2015 and 7796 in 2016.









# APPENDIX 1: KEY PROVISIONS OF THE DOMESTIC LABOUR LAW

## ► Regulation of Contracts

- 1) A copy of the job offer must be presented by the recruitment agency to the employee, prior to the employee's departure from their country of origin.
- 2) Terms of employment will be governed by a standard contract, adopted by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation, setting out the terms and conditions of employment.
- 3) Either employer or domestic employee may terminate the contract if the other party fails to meet their obligations. Either employer or employee may instigate a no fault termination, subject to compensation as outlined in the Domestic Labour Law.

## ► Rights and Privileges of Domestic Employees

- 1) Wages, as set out in the standard contract, must be paid within ten days, from the day they are due.
- 2) Employees are entitled to one day's paid rest per week.
- 3) Employees are entitled to twelve hours rest per day, including eight hours consecutive rest.
- 4) Employees are entitled to thirty days paid vacation per year.
- 5) Employees are entitled to medical insurance provided by the employer.
- 6) Employees are entitled to up to thirty days medical leave per year.
- 7) Employees are entitled to a round trip ticket home every two years.
- 8) Employees are entitled to decent accommodation.
- 9) Decent meals must be provided to employees at the employer's expense.
- 10) Attire, if required by the employers, must be provided at the employer's expense.
- 11) Employees are entitled to keep possession of their personal identification papers.
- 12) Any legal suit by the employee is exempt from court fees and must be dealt with expeditiously.







## ► Legal Prohibitions

The following are legally prohibited under the Domestic Labour Law:

- 1) The employment of anyone under the age of 18 for domestic work.
- 2) Discrimination against domestic workers, on the basis of race, colour, gender, religion, political opinion.
- 3) The sexual harassment of domestic workers, whether verbal or physical.
- 4) Forced labour or any other practice that may amount to trafficking of persons, in accordance with the national law and ratified international conventions.
- 5) The exposure of domestic workers to physical harm.
- 6) The assignment of tasks that are not covered under the contract.

## ► The Regulation of Recruitment Agencies

- 1) Only UAE-registered natural or legal persons – in good standing – may engage in recruiting domestic workers into the UAE.
- 2) An agency may not, on its own or through a third party, solicit or accept from any worker, whether prior to or after employment, any form of commission in exchange for employment.
- 3) In the event of early termination, the agency must act to repatriate the worker at the agency's expense and either offer the employer an acceptable substitute worker, or return to the employer the agency's fee.
- 4) The agency must at all times treat the worker decently and refrain from exposing the worker to any form of violence.



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