

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW MANAGEMENT & HUMANITIES

[ISSN 2581-5369]

Volume 7 | Issue 5

2024

© 2024 *International Journal of Law Management & Humanities*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://www.ijlmh.com/>

Under the aegis of VidhiAagaz – Inking Your Brain (<https://www.vidhiaagaz.com/>)

This article is brought to you for “free” and “open access” by the International Journal of Law Management & Humanities at VidhiAagaz. It has been accepted for inclusion in the International Journal of Law Management & Humanities after due review.

In case of **any suggestions or complaints**, kindly contact Gyan@vidhiaagaz.com.

To submit your Manuscript for Publication in the **International Journal of Law Management & Humanities**, kindly email your Manuscript to submission@ijlmh.com.

The UAE's 2024 Labor Law Amendments: Modernizing Employment Management and Their Global Impact

AYUSH B. GURAV¹

ABSTRACT

This research article examines the comprehensive amendments to the UAE labor laws introduced in 2024, building on the foundational reforms of Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021. These changes were driven by the need for a modern, flexible labor framework that aligns with global standards and responds to the evolving post-pandemic workplace. Key reforms include the transition to fixed-term contracts, the introduction of remote and flexible work models, and expanded leave entitlements such as enhanced maternity and parental leave. Additionally, the amendments strengthen anti-discrimination protections and introduce equal pay for equal work, promoting workplace equality and diversity. The article also delves into significant updates on working hours, overtime, termination rules, redundancy protections, and end-of-service gratuity calculations. Furthermore, it explores the influence of Sharia principles on labor relations, the adoption of these amendments in free zones, and enhanced legal protections for international workers. By analyzing these reforms in the context of both domestic and international labor standards, the article highlights the UAE's commitment to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and competitive labor market that benefits both employers and employees.

Keywords: UAE, Labor Law, Employment, Workers Rights, Sharia Law.

I. INTRODUCTION

The labor laws of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have long played a crucial role in maintaining a balance between employee rights and employer obligations. As the UAE continues to evolve as a global economic hub, its legal frameworks, particularly concerning labor, have undergone significant reforms. This progression is part of a broader strategy to foster a dynamic, competitive, and equitable workforce in line with international standards. The latest amendments to the UAE labor laws in 2024 have been part of a continuous process of modernization, beginning with earlier reforms in 2021. These amendments aim to ensure that the country's labor laws remain relevant in an increasingly flexible and hybrid work

¹ Author is an Advocate at Bar Council of Maharashtra & Goa and LLM Student at MNLU Mumbai, Pune, India.

environment.

In particular, the 2024 amendments to UAE labor law have addressed key issues such as the abolition of unlimited-term contracts, the introduction of flexible and remote work models, and enhanced protections against discrimination. They also bring provisions for extended maternity, parental, and compassionate leave, ensuring a family-friendly work environment. Furthermore, these changes emphasize equal pay for equal work and reinforce the UAE's commitment to gender equality, making the nation a leading example in the Arab world. The changes reflect the UAE's continued efforts to align itself with international labor standards and cater to the needs of its diverse, multicultural workforce.

(A) Overview of UAE Labor Law History

The evolution of labor laws in the UAE has been marked by progressive adaptations to changing economic and social environments. The early labor laws, encapsulated in Federal Law No. 8 of 1980,² focused primarily on traditional full-time employment in a rapidly industrializing economy. Over time, as the UAE shifted towards a service-based economy and embraced globalization, the need for more flexible and employee-centric labor laws became apparent.

The introduction of Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021,³ which replaced the previous labor law, marked the beginning of a major overhaul in labor relations. This law introduced significant changes, such as fixed-term contracts, more comprehensive anti-discrimination policies, and improved leave entitlements. The 2024 amendments further build on this foundation by introducing reforms that reflect the growing importance of work-life balance, flexible work models, and gender equality in the modern workforce.⁴

(B) Importance of the 2024 Amendments⁵

The 2024 amendments were necessitated by several factors, including the ongoing impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic, which reshaped labor markets worldwide. The pandemic underscored the need for flexible work arrangements, increased protections for workers, and more resilient labor laws that can adapt to unforeseen challenges. In a post-pandemic world, it

² Federal Law No. 8 of 1980 Concerning the Regulation of Labour Relations, as amended, Ministry of Human Resources & Emiratisation, United Arab Emirates.

³ Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021 Regulating Labour Relations, Ministry of Human Resources & Emiratisation, United Arab Emirates (effective Feb. 2, 2022).

⁴ Ministry of Hum. Res. & Emiratisation, *UAE Labour Law (English Version)*, <https://mohre.gov.ae/assets/download/4bde9a71/labour-law-en.aspx> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

⁵ UAE Ministry of Human Resources & Emiratisation, *UAE Government Issues Federal Decree-Law Amending Regulation of Employment Relationship Law* (Aug. 13, 2024), <https://www.mohre.gov.ae/en/media-centre/news/13/8/2024/uae-government-issues-federal-decree-law-amending-regulation-of-employment-relationship-law.aspx> (last accessed Oct. 25, 2024).

became crucial for the UAE to adopt laws that support remote work, protect employee welfare, and ensure businesses remain competitive in the global market.

These changes not only help safeguard employee rights but also provide businesses with the flexibility to adapt to new economic realities. Moreover, as the UAE continues to attract international talent, the amendments ensure that labor regulations remain aligned with global standards, making the UAE an attractive destination for both workers and employers.

(C) Key Objectives of the Reform

The primary objectives of the 2024 labor law amendments are threefold. First, they aim to improve flexibility by accommodating various work models, including part-time, remote, and freelance work, which are increasingly common in today's global economy. Second, the reforms enhance employee protections, including comprehensive leave entitlements and anti-discrimination measures, to promote job security and well-being. Lastly, the amendments seek to promote equality by ensuring equal pay for men and women and by prohibiting workplace discrimination on the basis of gender, race, nationality, and disability. Together, these objectives foster a more inclusive and balanced labor market.

II. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND THE 2024 AMENDMENTS

(A) Key Features of UAE Labor Law Pre-2024

Before the significant 2024 amendments, the UAE labor law, as governed by Federal Law No. 8 of 1980, was heavily focused on traditional employment practices, such as full-time work, fixed working hours, and limited flexibility in employment contracts. The law did not account for modern work arrangements like remote work or part-time jobs, which left both employers and employees constrained in adapting to evolving market demands.

The labor law in its earlier form also prescribed basic leave entitlements, including annual and sick leave, with maternity leave provisions being comparatively restrictive by global standards. Employee termination procedures were similarly straightforward but lacked comprehensive protections for redundancies and wrongful dismissals. However, the introduction of Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021 addressed many of these issues, setting the stage for further modernization.

(B) Overview of Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021

The Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021 was a groundbreaking shift in UAE labor law, introducing several key reforms aimed at improving the balance between employee rights and employer obligations. This law was the first major overhaul since 1980 and introduced several

contemporary employment concepts, such as fixed-term contracts, flexible working models, and enhanced protections against discrimination. It also significantly increased maternity leave entitlements and implemented comprehensive rules for part-time and temporary work.⁶

The 2021 law laid the groundwork for further changes by addressing the modern workforce's needs, particularly as businesses increasingly embraced digital transformation and remote work models. However, the 2024 amendments were necessary to refine these initial reforms and address gaps in the law, especially concerning the post-pandemic workforce.

(C) Main Changes in 2024

The 2024 amendments introduced a series of updates that directly impact the contractual, operational, and social dimensions of employment in the UAE. One of the most significant changes is the abolition of unlimited-term contracts, mandating that all employment contracts must now be fixed-term, with a maximum duration of three years. This change provides clarity for both employers and employees, ensuring greater job security and reducing ambiguities around employment terms.

In addition, the law introduced remote work and flexible employment models, which allow employees to work from home or outside traditional office environments. This change reflects the global shift towards hybrid work models, which became widespread during the COVID-19 pandemic. The law also provides guidelines for part-time, freelance, and temporary work, giving employees more options for employment while providing legal protections for these less traditional roles.

Furthermore, the anti-discrimination provisions were strengthened, prohibiting discrimination based on race, gender, religion, nationality, or disability. The amendments also introduced equal pay for equal work legislation, ensuring that men and women receive the same compensation for the same roles, in alignment with global best practices.

The 2024 amendments also addressed redundancy, offering greater clarity on redundancy procedures and compensations. This includes protections for employees terminated due to economic downturns or business closures, ensuring fair treatment and adequate compensation for affected workers.⁷

⁶ Ministry of Hum. Res. & Emiratisation, *Laws and Regulations*, <https://www.mohre.gov.ae/en/laws-and-regulations/laws.aspx> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

⁷ Soham Jethani, Pankhuri Malhotra & Hena Ayisha, *Key Updates to the UAE Labour Law: 2024 Amendments Explained* (Sept. 2, 2024), https://techlawpolicy.com/2024/09/key-updates-to-the-uae-labour-law-2024-amendments-explained/#_ftnref3 (last accessed Oct. 25, 2024).

(D) Comparison with International Labor Standards

The 2024 amendments bring UAE labor laws closer to international labor standards, particularly those followed by OECD countries. These include provisions for flexible work, anti-discrimination, and enhanced leave entitlements, which are in line with labor laws in Europe, North America, and other developed regions. The introduction of equal pay and anti-discrimination laws mirrors global labor trends towards more inclusive and equitable work environments. This alignment with international standards ensures that the UAE remains competitive in the global labor market and continues to attract international talent.⁸

III. CONTRACTUAL FLEXIBILITY AND EMPLOYMENT TYPES

(A) Transition to Fixed-Term Contracts

A pivotal reform in the 2024 amendments is the mandatory transition to fixed-term contracts, replacing the previously common practice of unlimited-term contracts. Under the new law, employers must issue fixed-term contracts with a maximum duration of three years, although these can be renewed. This shift is intended to provide more clarity and predictability for both employers and employees, as the terms of employment, including duration and conditions for renewal, are clearly defined.

This change benefits businesses by allowing them to manage workforce requirements more effectively, particularly in industries where project-based work or seasonal demands require flexible hiring practices. For employees, fixed-term contracts offer enhanced security, as the terms of employment are defined for a specific period, reducing the risk of arbitrary dismissals. The law also stipulates that contracts must clearly state the employee's salary, job role, and other conditions of employment, ensuring transparency in the employer-employee relationship.

(B) Remote and Flexible Work Models

The introduction of remote and flexible work models is one of the most significant reforms in the 2024 labor law amendments. This provision allows employees to work from home or any other location outside the traditional office setting, reflecting the global shift towards hybrid work models. Flexible working hours, part-time arrangements, and job-sharing are also recognized under the new law, providing employees with more autonomy over their work

⁸ Yusuf Sidani, ed., *Routledge Handbook on Business and Management in the Middle East* (Taylor & Francis 2024), https://books.google.co.in/books?hl=en&lr=&id=A6ATEQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PT50&dq=UAE+Labor+laws+2024+and+employment&ots=UiFwW5AEg2&sig=AH28339bRHyc5952I5B-kQKfPJI&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=UAE%20Labor%20laws%202024%20and%20employment&f=false (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

schedules.

These flexible work models are particularly beneficial in the post-pandemic era, where businesses have adopted remote work to maintain operations. The law ensures that employees who work remotely or flexibly are still entitled to the same rights and protections as those who work in traditional office environments, including access to leave entitlements, overtime pay, and end-of-service benefits.

(C) New Categories of Employment

The 2024 amendments also introduce or expand provisions for part-time, temporary, and freelance work. These categories of employment provide greater flexibility for both employers and workers, allowing businesses to hire individuals for specific projects or tasks without committing to full-time employment. Part-time workers are entitled to pro-rated benefits, such as leave entitlements and gratuity, based on the number of hours worked. Temporary workers, hired for specific assignments, are also protected under the new law, ensuring that they receive fair compensation and benefits during their employment term.

These changes reflect a broader trend towards more diverse and flexible employment options, which benefit both employers seeking short-term talent and workers looking for more adaptable career opportunities.

IV. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION, EQUAL PAY, AND WORKPLACE EQUALITY

(A) Anti-Discrimination Protections

The 2024 amendments significantly strengthen anti-discrimination protections in the workplace. Discrimination based on race, gender, religion, nationality, or disability is explicitly prohibited, and employers found guilty of discriminatory practices may face severe penalties. This provision ensures that all employees, regardless of their background, are entitled to equal opportunities in recruitment, promotion, and other areas of employment.

The law also introduces specific protections for pregnant employees, prohibiting employers from terminating an employee based on pregnancy or maternity leave. These changes aim to create a more inclusive work environment, where employees are judged solely on their professional capabilities rather than personal characteristics.

(B) Equal Pay for Equal Work

Another major reform in the 2024 amendments is the provision for equal pay for equal work, particularly in relation to gender. The law mandates that men and women performing the same job roles must be paid the same salary, aligning the UAE's labor law with international standards

on gender equality. This move reinforces the UAE's commitment to achieving gender parity in the workplace and provides women with greater financial security and equal opportunities for career advancement.

The introduction of equal pay provisions is a critical step toward eliminating gender-based wage gaps, which have historically been a significant issue in many industries. By ensuring equal compensation, the law promotes fairness and equity across the labor market.

(C) Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

The new labor laws are part of a broader strategy to promote diversity and inclusion in the UAE workforce. These initiatives encourage businesses to adopt inclusive hiring practices, ensuring that employees from diverse backgrounds have equal opportunities to succeed. The law also supports initiatives aimed at improving workplace accessibility for individuals with disabilities, ensuring that they can fully participate in the labor market without facing discriminatory barriers.

By promoting diversity and inclusion, the UAE labor law aligns with global trends towards creating more equitable and inclusive workplaces. These initiatives not only improve employee morale and productivity but also help businesses tap into a wider pool of talent, driving innovation and growth.

V. WORKER RIGHTS: WORKING HOURS, LEAVE, AND TERMINATION

(A) Working Hours and Overtime Provisions

Under the 2024 amendments, working hours remain set at eight hours per day or 48 hours per week. However, for certain sectors or during specific periods, such as the holy month of Ramadan, working hours may be reduced. The law also mandates that employees receive a break after five consecutive hours of work.

In terms of overtime, employees can be asked to work up to two additional hours per day, but they must be compensated for this overtime at 25% above their normal hourly rate. Overtime worked between 10 PM and 4 AM must be compensated at 50% above the normal rate. These provisions ensure that employees are fairly compensated for their time and efforts, even if they are required to work beyond their normal working hours.

(B) Expanded Leave Entitlements

The 2024 labor law amendments provide more comprehensive and expanded leave entitlements. Key changes include:

- **Maternity Leave:** Female employees are now entitled to 60 days of maternity leave, with the first 45 days being fully paid and the remaining 15 days half-paid. This is a significant improvement from previous provisions and reflects the UAE's commitment to supporting working mothers.
- **Parental Leave:** Both male and female employees are entitled to five days of parental leave, which can be taken within the first six months of the child's birth. This provision makes the UAE the first Arab country to introduce paid parental leave for the private sector.
- **Compassionate Leave:** Employees can now take up to five days of compassionate leave in the event of the death of a spouse and three days for the death of a close family member, such as a parent or sibling.

These updated leave entitlements ensure that employees have the necessary time to rest, recover, and take care of personal responsibilities, promoting a healthier work-life balance.⁹

(C) Termination and Redundancy Rules

The 2024 amendments bring much-needed clarity to the rules surrounding termination and redundancy. Under the new law, employees can only be terminated for a legitimate reason, such as poor performance or misconduct, and the required notice period must be clearly stated in the employment contract.

For the first time, the law also recognizes redundancy as a valid reason for termination. Employers may lay off employees due to economic downturns, insolvency, or other business-related challenges. However, employees who are made redundant are entitled to severance pay, which is calculated based on their length of service. Additionally, the new law has scaled back the arbitrary dismissal compensation¹⁰ that was previously available under the old law, limiting compensation to specific instances of unfair termination.

VI. GRATUITY AND END-OF-SERVICE BENEFITS

(A) Gratuity Calculations Under New Laws

The 2024 amendments bring changes to the calculation of end-of-service gratuity, particularly for employees on fixed-term contracts. Under the new law, gratuity is calculated based on the

⁹ Mona Elsayed, *The United Arab Emirates' Labour Market: An Overview*, London Sch. of Econ. (2024), <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/id/eprint/124359> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

¹⁰ The reform reduces the situations where employees can claim compensation for unfair dismissal, limiting it to clear cases of legal violations like discrimination or unjustified dismissal. It gives employers more flexibility to terminate employees for legitimate business reasons, without facing large compensation claims, while still protecting employees from truly unfair terminations.

employee's basic salary and the length of service. Employees who have worked for one to five years are entitled to 21 days of salary for each year of service, while those who have worked for more than five years are entitled to 30 days of salary for each additional year of service.

However, the total gratuity cannot exceed two years' salary, ensuring that the end-of-service benefits remain fair and sustainable for employers. These changes provide greater clarity on how gratuity is calculated and ensure that employees are fairly compensated for their years of service.

(B) Impact on Employee Welfare and Employer Obligations

The updated gratuity provisions are designed to improve employee welfare by ensuring that workers receive fair compensation when their employment ends, whether due to resignation, termination, or retirement. For employers, the new rules provide greater certainty and allow for more accurate financial planning, as they can now anticipate the potential costs associated with end-of-service benefits.

By aligning gratuity calculations with international best practices, the UAE labor law ensures that employees receive the financial support they need after leaving a job, while also balancing the financial obligations placed on employers.

VII. SHARIA LAW AND ITS INFLUENCE ON LABOR RELATIONS

(A) Role of Sharia in Labor Law

Sharia principles continue to influence certain aspects of labor relations in the UAE, particularly in areas related to family and employment law. For example, the concept of severance pay is rooted in Islamic traditions, which emphasize fairness and mutual respect between employers and employees. Similarly, maternity leave provisions are influenced by Islamic teachings, which place a high value on family welfare and the protection of mothers and children.

These Sharia-based principles ensure that the UAE's labor laws remain culturally relevant while also aligning with the nation's broader economic goals.

(B) Compatibility of New Laws with Islamic Principles

The 2024 amendments are largely compatible with Islamic principles, as they uphold the values of fairness, equity, and mutual respect. For example, the expanded maternity leave and compassionate leave provisions reflect Islamic teachings on the importance of family support during times of need. Additionally, the anti-discrimination and equal pay provisions align with the Islamic principle of treating all individuals with respect and fairness, regardless of their background.

By ensuring that the new labor laws are compatible with Sharia principles, the UAE can continue to attract a diverse workforce while respecting the cultural and religious values that form the foundation of its legal system.¹¹

VIII. FREE ZONES AND SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

(A) Labor Regulations in Free Zones

The UAE's free zones, such as the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and the Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), operate under a separate set of labor laws, which are often more flexible than those applicable to mainland UAE. These zones offer businesses greater autonomy in setting employment contracts, including the ability to negotiate salaries, benefits, and termination conditions.

However, free zone employees are still protected by UAE labor laws concerning basic worker rights, such as anti-discrimination provisions, leave entitlements, and gratuity. These regulations ensure that workers in free zones are not deprived of fundamental protections, even if they operate under a different legal framework.

(B) Adoption of 2024 Amendments in Free Zones

Many free zones have begun adopting the 2024 amendments, particularly in areas related to remote work, leave entitlements, and anti-discrimination policies. This alignment ensures that businesses operating in free zones remain competitive while providing employees with the same level of protection as those in mainland UAE. For example, the adoption of equal pay provisions and expanded leave entitlements in free zones helps create a more inclusive and attractive work environment, making it easier for businesses to attract top talent.

The continued adoption of these amendments across free zones will likely enhance the overall competitiveness of the UAE as a global business hub.¹²

IX. PROTECTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL WORKERS

(A) Visa and Residency Reforms

The UAE has introduced several visa and residency reforms aimed at attracting and protecting international workers. New visa categories, such as the Golden Visa and Green Visa, provide long-term residency options for skilled workers, investors, and entrepreneurs. These visas offer

¹¹ Vic Benuyenah, *The Contemporary Context of the UAE Labor Market: An HRM Outlook*, in *Routledge Handbook on Business and Management in the Middle East* 11 (Yusuf Sidani ed., 1st ed. 2024), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003044604> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

¹² Bayzat Blog: UAE Labour Law Overview, *Bayzat Blog*, <https://www.bayzat.com/blog/uae-labour-law/> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

greater stability for international workers and their families, making the UAE an attractive destination for global talent.

The reforms also include provisions that allow employees to change jobs without losing their residency status, giving workers more freedom to pursue better employment opportunities while still being protected by the country's labor laws.

(B) Legal Support and Dispute Resolution

The UAE has strengthened its dispute resolution mechanisms to provide better protection for international workers. Free legal aid, dedicated labor courts, and specialized dispute resolution centers have been established to handle employment-related issues. These resources ensure that international workers have access to fair and efficient legal processes, regardless of their nationality or residency status.

By improving access to legal support, the UAE ensures that all workers, including expatriates, are protected under the law and have a clear avenue for resolving workplace disputes.¹³

X. PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE

The UAE labor law imposes stringent penalties for employers who fail to comply with updated regulations, especially following the 2024 amendments. These penalties are designed to enforce adherence to the law and safeguard employee rights, covering areas such as wage payment, contract management, working conditions, and anti-discrimination practices.

(A) Failure to Pay Wages or Delayed Payment

Failure to pay wages on time, as mandated by the Wage Protection System (WPS), can lead to fines ranging from AED 1,000 to AED 10,000 per employee, with a maximum cap of AED 50,000 for companies with multiple violations. Repeated offenses may result in further penalties, including business suspension, denial of new work permits, and, in severe cases, legal prosecution for negligence.¹⁴

(B) Breach of Contractual Obligations

Employers are required to comply with contractual obligations regarding fixed-term contracts, overtime pay, and working conditions. Violations in these areas can result in fines between AED 5,000 and AED 20,000 per instance, especially if employers breach contract terms related

¹³ United Nations Dep't of Econ. & Soc. Affairs, *International Migration 2020-23* (2020), https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa_pd_2020_international_migration_highlights.pdf (last accessed Oct. 25, 2024).

¹⁴ Ministry of Human Resources & Emiratization (MOHRE), UAE Labor Law, <https://www.mohre.gov.ae/en/laws-legislation/labour-law.aspx> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

to working hours or leave entitlements.¹⁵

(C) Violation of Anti-Discrimination Laws

The 2024 amendments introduced stricter rules on anti-discrimination, prohibiting workplace discrimination based on gender, race, nationality, religion, or disability. Employers found violating these provisions may face fines ranging from AED 5,000 to AED 1,000,000, depending on the severity and frequency of the offense. In serious cases, business closure and legal action may follow. Employees subjected to discrimination have the right to file complaints, which can lead to compensation claims against the employer.¹⁶

(D) Non-Compliance with Maternity, Parental, and Compassionate Leave Entitlements

Non-compliance with extended leave entitlements, such as 60-day maternity leave, 5-day parental leave, and up to 5 days of compassionate leave, can result in fines ranging from AED 10,000 to AED 50,000. Employers who unlawfully deny these entitlements may face complaints and be required to compensate employees for lost wages or benefits.¹⁷

(E) Failure to Comply with Termination and Redundancy Procedures

The 2024 amendments provide clearer guidelines for termination and redundancy. Employers who fail to follow proper procedures, such as wrongful termination or improper redundancy, can face fines of up to AED 50,000. Additionally, employees wrongfully terminated may be entitled to compensation, including severance pay, for arbitrary dismissal.¹⁸

(F) Violation of Gratuity Payment Rules

Employers are required to accurately calculate and pay end-of-service gratuity according to the new rules. Failure to do so, or incorrect calculations, can lead to fines of up to AED 20,000. Employees can seek legal redress for non-payment or miscalculation, and employers may face further legal penalties.¹⁹

¹⁵ Al Tamimi & Co., 10 Things You Should Know About the New UAE Labour Law, <https://www.tamimi.com/law-update-articles/10-things-you-should-know-about-the-new-uae-labour-law/> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

¹⁶ Gulf News, UAE's New Labour Law Takes Effect: What You Need to Know, <https://gulfnews.com/uae/government/uaes-new-labour-law-takes-effect-what-you-need-to-know-1.1643704694102> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

¹⁷ Bayzat Blog, UAE Labour Law Overview, <https://www.bayzat.com/blog/uae-labour-law/> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

¹⁸ Khaleej Times, UAE Labour Law Changes, <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/legal/uae-labour-law-changes> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

¹⁹ Hadeef & Partners, UAE Labour Law Reform, <https://www.hadeefpartners.com/News/507/UAE-Labour-Law-Reform> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

(G) Failure to Provide Legal and Workplace Protections for International Workers

The 2024 amendments also require compliance with protections for international workers, including proper residency and visa arrangements. Non-compliance, such as hiring workers without valid visas or failing to uphold their rights, can result in fines of up to AED 50,000, along with possible business suspensions. Employers may also be held responsible if international employees face deportation due to employer negligence.²⁰

Penalties for non-compliance with UAE labor law are significant, reflecting the UAE's commitment to maintaining a fair, transparent, and competitive labor market.²¹ Employers must ensure adherence to all regulations to avoid financial penalties, legal actions, and business disruptions.

XI. CONCLUSION

The 2024 amendments to the UAE labor law represent a significant advancement in modernizing the country's labor market, ensuring that it remains competitive in the global economy. These reforms introduced flexible employment models, strengthened protections against discrimination, expanded leave entitlements, and clarified termination and redundancy rules. By aligning with international labor standards, the UAE has positioned itself as a leader in the region, fostering both business flexibility and robust worker rights.

These changes not only enhance employee welfare but also equip businesses with the tools needed to adapt in a rapidly evolving economic landscape. The introduction of fixed-term contracts, flexible work models, and extended leave entitlements ensures that the UAE labor market can cater to the diverse needs of its workforce. These reforms also reinforce protections for vulnerable groups, with a focus on anti-discrimination measures, equal pay, and improved maternity and parental benefits, promoting a more inclusive and equitable working environment.

Looking ahead, the long-term effects of these reforms are expected to benefit both employees and employers. As businesses continue to embrace new ways of working, such as remote and hybrid models, the updated labor laws will provide the necessary framework to support these shifts. This regulatory flexibility is essential for fostering innovation while ensuring fair

²⁰ The National, Guide to UAE's New Labour Law, <https://www.thenationalnews.com/uae/2022/02/02/guide-to-uaes-new-labour-law/> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

²¹ Khaleej Times, *UAE: Company fined Dh 10 million for fake employment of 113 citizens* (July 29, 2024), <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/uae/uae-company-fined-dh10-million-for-fake-employment-of-113-citizens>.
Khaleej Times, *894 UAE companies fined up to Dh 100,000 over fake Emiratisation posts* (Nov. 29, 2024), <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/uae/894-uae-companies-fined-up-to-dh100000-over-fake-emiratisation-posts>.

treatment of workers. Additionally, the continued emphasis on worker protections and equality will help cultivate a labor market that attracts top international talent, boosting the UAE's reputation as a global business hub.

In the future, it is likely that the UAE will build on these reforms, introducing further measures that continue to align its labor laws with global best practices. This commitment to evolving labor policies will ensure that the UAE remains a premier destination for international talent, supporting its economic growth and competitiveness in an increasingly interconnected world.

XII. REFERENCES

1. Bayzat Blog: UAE Labour Law Overview, *Bayzat Blog*, <https://www.bayzat.com/blog/uae-labour-law/> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).
2. Mona Elsayed, *The United Arab Emirates' Labour Market: An Overview*, London Sch. of Econ. (2024), <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/id/eprint/124359> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).
3. Al Tamimi & Co., 10 Things You Should Know About the New UAE Labour Law, <https://www.tamimi.com/law-update-articles/10-things-you-should-know-about-the-new-uae-labour-law/> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).
4. Vic Benuyenah, *The Contemporary Context of the UAE Labor Market: An HRM Outlook*, in *Routledge Handbook on Business and Management in the Middle East* 11 (Yusuf Sidani ed., 1st ed. 2024), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003044604> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).
5. Legal Advice Middle East, Overview of New UAE Labor Law & Recent Amendments (2024), https://legaladviceme.com/legal-blog/309/overview-new-uae-labor-law-recent-amendments-2024?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwjsi4BhB5EiwAFAL0YNyQapnpH0muTVk91RVP8W4NH2KgW8IloTV7MRXNsQ4nMq1SfLTN5BoCbqcQAvD_BwE (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).
6. Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MOHRE), UAE Labor Law, <https://www.mohre.gov.ae/en/laws-legislation/labour-law.aspx> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).
7. Truein Blog, Key Changes in UAE Labour Law, https://truein.com/gcc/blogs/uae-labor-laws/#Changes_in_the_New_Labour_Law_of_UAE (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).
8. Khaleej Times, UAE Labour Law Changes, <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/legal/uae-labour-law-changes> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).
9. Gulf News, UAE's New Labour Law Takes Effect: What You Need to Know, <https://gulfnews.com/uae/government/uaes-new-labour-law-takes-effect-what-you-need-to-know-1.1643704694102> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).
10. Hadeef & Partners, UAE Labour Law Reform, <https://www.hadeefpartners.com/News/507/UAE-Labour-Law-Reform> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).

11. Yusuf Sidani, ed., *Routledge Handbook on Business and Management in the Middle East* (Taylor & Francis 2024), https://books.google.co.in/books?hl=en&lr=&id=A6ATEQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PT50&dq=UAE+Labor+laws+2024+and+employment&ots=UiFwW5AEg2&sig=AH28339bRHxC5952I5B-kQKfPJI&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=UAE%20Labor%20laws%202024%20and%20employment&f=false (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).
12. The National, Guide to UAE's New Labour Law, <https://www.thenationalnews.com/uae/2022/02/02/guide-to-uaes-new-labour-law/> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024).
13. Soham Jethani, Pankhuri Malhotra & Hena Ayisha, *Key Updates to the UAE Labour Law: 2024 Amendments Explained* (Sept. 2, 2024), https://techlawpolicy.com/2024/09/key-updates-to-the-uae-labour-law-2024-amendments-explained/#_ftnref3 (last accessed Oct. 25, 2024).
14. UAE Ministry of Human Resources & Emiratisation, *UAE Government Issues Federal Decree-Law Amending Regulation of Employment Relationship Law* (Aug. 13, 2024), <https://www.mohre.gov.ae/en/media-centre/news/13/8/2024/uae-government-issues-federal-decree-law-amending-regulation-of-employment-relationship-law.aspx> (last accessed Oct. 25, 2024).
15. United Nations Dep't of Econ. & Soc. Affairs, *International Migration 2020 23* (2020), https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undes_a_pd_2020_international_migration_highlights.pdf (last accessed Oct. 25, 2024).
