



LABOUR MIGRATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Factsheet (Department of Employment and Labour)



Department of
Employment and Labour



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Department:
Employment and Labour
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

A NATION
THAT WORKS FOR ALL





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Factsheet (Department of Employment and Labour) What is Migration?

Migration is when people move from one place to another to:

- Find jobs
- Escape conflict
- Adapt to climate change

South Africa hosts millions of migrants, making it a key destination in Africa

Why Labour Migration Matters?

Labour migration helps:

- Grow the economy
- Fill skills shortages
- Support industries like mining and agriculture

But it must be managed fairly and legally

The National Labour Migration Policy (NLMP)

Goal:

Balance:

- Jobs for South Africans
- Skills needed by employers
- Protection of migrant workers
- Regional cooperation

4 Key Pillars:

1. Governance & management
2. Data & monitoring
3. Migration into SA
4. Migration from SA

New Law: Employment Services Amendment Bill (ESAB)

This law will:

- Regulate hiring of foreign workers
- Set limits (quotas) where needed
- Promote employment of South Africans
- Support skills transfer

Employer Responsibilities

Employers MUST:

- Hire only legal workers
- First look for South African candidates
- Keep proper employee records
- Transfer skills to locals

This ensures fairness and job opportunities for citizens.

Rights of Workers

ALL workers are protected, including migrants:

- Equal treatment under labour laws
- Safe working conditions
- Right to claim benefits

Working without the correct visa is illegal.





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Inspections & Enforcement

Government checks workplaces through:

- Surprise inspections
- Joint operations with SAPS & Home Affairs
- Strict penalties for illegal hiring

Employers breaking the law may face:

- Fines
- Arrests
- Business closure

High-Risk Sectors

Inspections focus on:

- Restaurants & hospitality
- Construction
- Farming
- Transport & logistics

Finding Workers (ESSA System)

Use ESSA (Employment Services of South Africa):

www.labour.gov.za

- Free service
- Matches employers with job seekers
- Helps hire local talent first

Working Together

- Home Affairs
- Police
- Labour inspectors
- International organisations (ILO, IOM)

Key Message

Legal, fair employment benefits everyone

Protect jobs for South Africans

Respect rights of all workers

For More Information

Visit your nearest Labour Centre

www.labour.gov.za

