



Saudi unemployment increases to 15.4% in Q2/2020

Saudi unemployment rate increased to 15.4% in the second quarter of 2020, 3.1 pp higher than in same period of the previous year. The total unemployment rate for Saudis and Non-Saudis increased to 9.0%, 3.4 pp higher than in Q2/2019. These results of the Labor Force Survey are largely impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Saudi economy. The total Labor Force Participation rate was 59.4% in Q2/2020.

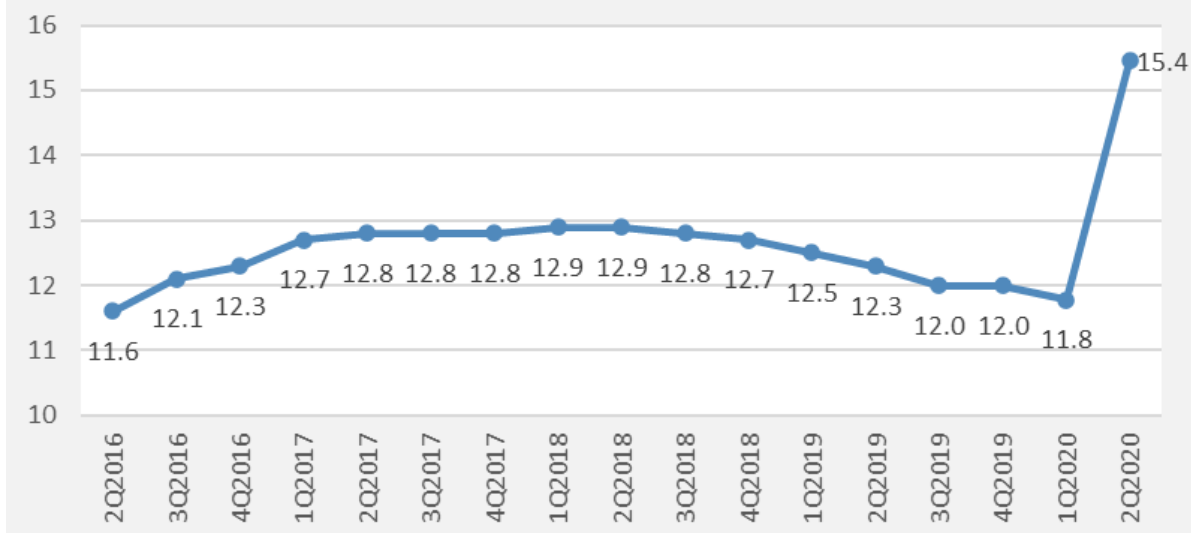
Saudi unemployment rate increases to 15.4%, Saudi Labor Force Participation rate increases to 48.8%

Compared to the Q1 2020 for the Saudi labor force in Q2 2020 showed the following development:

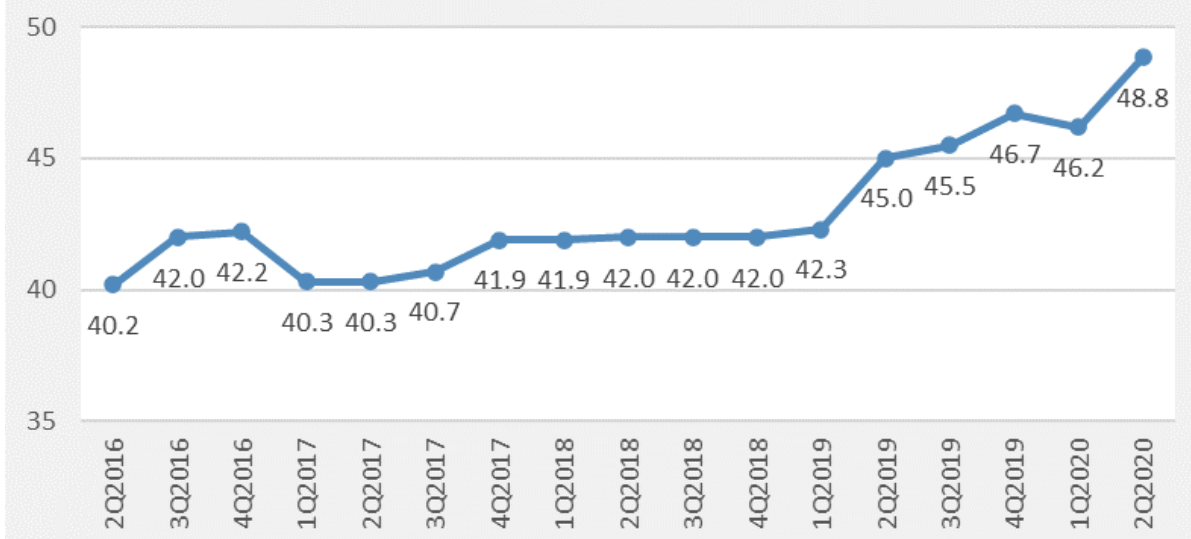
- The Saudis unemployment rate increased from 11.8% in Q1 2020 to 15.4% in Q2 2020.
- Saudi male unemployment rate amounted to 8.1%, increasing by 2.5 pp compared to Q1 2020. The Saudi female unemployment rate amounted to 31.4%, increasing by 3.2 pp compared to Q1 2020.
- Among Saudis unemployed 63.1% belonged to the age group of 20-29 years.
- More half of the Saudis unemployed (56.6%) had a bachelor's degree, and 24.6% out of Saudis unemployed holding a degree, had majors in humanities.
- 71.1% of unemployed Saudi males and 94.0% of unemployed Saudi females have never worked before.
- The labor force participation rate for Saudis reached a level of 48.8% in Q2 2020, mainly reflecting an increase in the Saudi female labor force participation from 25.9% Q1/2020 to 31.4% in Q2/2020.
- The Saudi males labor force participation rate amounted to 65.6% in Q2 2020, a decrease by -0.1 pp compared to the last quarter



Saudis Unemployment rate in %



Saudis Labour Force Participation rate in %



Source: estimated data from LFS - General Authority for Statistics (GASTAT)



Unemployment rate %					
Quarters	Total	Saudi			Non Saudi
		All	Male	Female	
2Q2016	5.6	11.6	5.4	33.7	0.6
3Q2016	5.7	12.1	5.7	34.5	0.8
4Q2016	5.6	12.3	5.9	34.5	0.5
1Q2017	5.8	12.7	7.2	33.0	0.7
2Q2017	6.0	12.8	7.4	33.1	0.9
3Q2017	5.8	12.8	7.4	32.7	0.5
4Q2017	6.0	12.8	7.5	31.0	0.7
1Q2018	6.1	12.9	7.6	30.9	0.9
2Q2018	6.0	12.9	7.6	31.1	0.7
3Q2018	6.0	12.8	7.5	30.9	0.9
4Q2018	6.0	12.7	6.6	32.5	1.0
1Q2019	5.7	12.5	6.6	31.7	0.6
2Q2019	5.6	12.3	6.0	31.1	0.3
3Q2019	5.5	12.0	5.8	30.8	0.3
4Q2019	5.7	12.0	4.9	30.8	0.4
1Q2020	5.7	11.8	5.6	28.2	0.5
2Q2020	9.0	15.4	8.1	31.4	3.1

Source: estimated data from LFS - General Authority for Statistics (GASTAT)

Labor Force Participation rate %					
Quarters	Total	Saudi			Non Saudi
		All	Male	Female	
2Q2016	54.9	40.2	63.2	17.7	79.4
3Q2016	55.3	42.0	64.6	19.0	73.1
4Q2016	56.5	42.2	64.6	19.3	76.2
1Q2017	55.1	40.3	61.9	17.4	75.6
2Q2017	54.2	40.3	62.1	17.4	73.4
3Q2017	54.8	40.7	62.6	17.8	74.2
4Q2017	55.6	41.9	63.4	19.4	74.2
1Q2018	55.5	41.9	63.5	19.5	73.9
2Q2018	56.2	42.0	63.5	19.6	75.5
3Q2018	56.4	42.0	63.5	19.7	75.7
4Q2018	55.9	42.0	63.0	20.2	74.5
1Q2019	56.4	42.3	63.3	20.5	75.3
2Q2019	57.9	45.0	66.0	23.2	75.2
3Q2019	58.4	45.5	67.0	23.2	75.6
4Q2019	58.8	46.7	66.6	26.0	75.2
1Q2020	58.2	46.2	65.8	25.9	74.5
2Q2020	59.4	48.8	65.6	31.4	73.9

Source: estimated data from LFS - General Authority for Statistics (GASTAT)



Methodology

Labor market statistics are based on two main sources:

First Source: Labor Force Survey, (General Authority for Statistics)

The Labor Force Survey is a sample household survey that is carried out by GASTAT by telephone to households. The enumeration areas have been updated in 2020 and provide estimates of the population inside and outside the labor force. The Labor Force Survey serves the most important indicators of the labor market, such as the unemployment rate and the labor force participation rate.

- **Unemployment rate:** ratio of unemployed people to the labor force at working-age population (15+ years)
- **Labor Force Participation rate:** ratio of the labor force (employed and unemployed) to the working-age population (15 +).

- **Unemployed:** Individuals (15 years and above) who were:

1 without a job in the week preceding the interview.

2 Seriously looking for work during the four weeks preceding the interview (and have followed at least one method to look for a job). This category also includes those who did not search for work because they were waiting to start an already agreed job or because they want to set up their own business.

3 People who are available to work and start a job in the week preceding the interview or the next two weeks.

During 2020, GASTAT is conducting a comprehensive review of the Labor Force Survey to improve the quality of this important source of data for labor market statistics

Second Source: Administrative data, (GOSI, MHRSD, NIC)

Administrative data recorded and updated by government agencies related to the labor market, as these agencies are major sources of data of employees.

Links: [All Tables](#) , [Methodology](#)