

The Middle East and Africa (MEA) are extremely diverse regions with much to offer growth-minded organizations. This area has plenty of workers, including skilled and trained employees, as well as natural resources. Africa is growing in wealth, and the Middle East has been attractive for some time due to the affluent customers in that region.

Companies can expand into this region of the world without having to set up a subsidiary or local company presence. As your MEA Professional Employment Organization (PEO) we become your employer of record in any country that you would like to expand to and provide the infrastructure to manage international staff via our *Global Expansion Platform™*.

[Request a Proposal](#)

Expanding Into the Middle East and Africa

The Middle East, consisting of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), have become important trade partners and world economic powers. A rapidly growing population of over 300 million also makes these regions attractive for businesses.

Africa is also a diverse region with many talented employees and a large potential market. Forecasters estimate spending by African consumers will hit US \$2.2 trillion by 2030. In addition, the continent has substantial resources.

Hiring in the Middle East and Africa is easier today than ever before. Virtual workplaces allow companies to hire in these regions without opening new offices. With our platform, you can start hiring in a new country and enter an untapped market in a matter of days. Globalization Partners manages the administrative burden and through a service agreement they work and report to you just like your current employees

Middle East and Africa Employment Law and Compliance

Middle East and Africa employment laws vary widely. For example, Algeria accepts both written and oral employment contracts. In Burkina Faso, probationary periods cannot extend past three months, and terminations must include reasons for the decision in writing. On the other hand, Egypt's employment contracts must be written in Arabic and triplicate.

Hiring and Work Permits in the Middle East and Africa

What you need to hire someone locally varies by country and can even vary inside countries. Most United Arab Emirates non-residents who wish to work in the UAE, for instance, need a labor card, work permit, and an e-visa or an employment entry permit. With these documents, workers can get an Emirates ID card and residence visa, which are required by local workers. Employees must have an employment contract with a local UAE employer to get these documents. Requirements for permits vary depending on whether the employer is located in a Free Zone, where regulations are less strict.

Compensation and Payroll in the Middle East and Africa

Minimum wages in this region differ widely, as do costs of living. In 2018, Egypt's minimum wage was \$174 USD and \$277 USD in South Africa. In countries such as Saudi Arabia, there is no minimum wage in the private sector.

Most countries in this part of the world require withholdings and deductions for payroll. Starting in 2015, Burkina Faso instituted universal healthcare. Employees in that country must pay 5.5% of their salary for social security while employers must make contributions of 16%. Employers and organization are also subject to payroll taxes of 3%.

Middle East and Africa and GDPR

Starting in late May 2018, the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) impacted how companies handle the private data of European Union customers. While the GDPR does not directly impact the Middle East and Africa, GDPR compliance is still important in any business located in this region but doing business with European customers.

Data Privacy in Middle East and Africa

Data privacy is still a concern in the Middle East and Africa. In 2019, the UAE launched new privacy laws based on the GDPR to supplement their existing UAE National Cybersecurity Strategy. In addition, Bahrain has its own Personal Data Protection Law.

How Global PEOs Help Businesses Expand Into the Middle East and Africa

One way to expand into the Middle East and Africa is to open a subsidiary or office in that region. This is often impractical due to the strict laws and the costs involved, especially if you

want to start operations small. A better option is to work with a MEA global PEO such as Globalization Partners.

Globalization Partners is your MEA employer of record. We handle payroll and labor laws so you can hire the talent you want, where you want. We are the employer of record for your worker, and you can enjoy their work and skills without having to investigate every nuance of international labor law. We handle the details so you can focus on growing your business across borders.

Talk to a Middle East and African PEO Expert

If you'd like to expand into the Middle East and Africa easily and quickly, speak with a global expansion expert today. Globalization Partners will ensure you are compliant, disperse payroll accurately, and adhere to local tax law.