Competitiveness

The National Competitiveness Center 3rd Quarter 2025

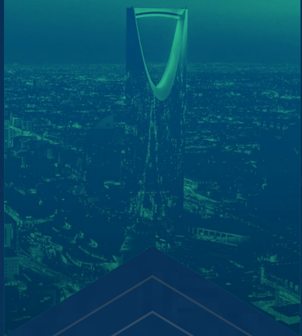
National Competitiveness Center organizes Saudi-Norwegian Business Forum in Norway's capital, Oslo

Saudi Arabia participates in the annual UNCITRAL session in Vienna

London Hosts the Flagship Summit of

GREAT FUTURES
معاً لمستقبل عـــظيم

Quarterly Brief



The NCC newsletter for Q3 of 2025 outlines the developments the Kingdom has witnessed globally. It highlights the National Competitiveness Center's key activities and initiatives aiming to enhance Saudi Arabia's global competitiveness and improve the business environment.

The current edition of the newsletter, published by the National Competitiveness Center, covers the conclusion of the flagship summit of the GREAT FUTURES initiative, organized by the NCC in London, held in conjunction with the fifth meeting of the Economic and Social Committee under the Saudi-UK Strategic Partnership Council.

The publication also sheds light on the NCC's official visit to Oslo, which sought to boost bilateral trade across promising sectors and deepen economic cooperation between the two friendly countries, alongside organizing the Saudi-Norwegian Business Forum.

Additionally, this edition highlights the participation of the Saudi delegation in the 58th session of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), held in Vienna from July 7 to 23, 2025.

What is Competitiveness?

It is a state's ability to make the best use of all of its resources, policies, and institutions to improve the adequacy and quality of services provided to individuals and businesses, thereby contributing to long-term development and placing it in a leading competitive position.

Our Vision

By 2030, the Kingdom will be one of the world's most competitive economies, driven by our focus on investment, entrepreneurship, innovation, and productivity.

Our Mission

is to improve the Kingdom's competitiveness and align government entities' strategies around a unified vision by developing the legislative and procedural environment.

September 3, 2025

London hosts flagship summit of GREAT FUTURES initiative

London hosted the flagship summit of the GREAT FUTURES initiative, coinciding with the fifth meeting of the Economic and Social Pillar of the Saudi-British Strategic Partnership Council. The Council is chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (may God protect him), and the Rt.Hon. Sir Keir Starmer, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

The summit was opened by H.E. Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, Saudi Minister of Commerce and Chair of the Economic and Social Committee. In his address, which was attended by a record-breaking Saudi trade delegation, H.E. Al-Kassabi emphasized that Vision 2030, launched by HRH the Crown Prince has been transformative for the Saudi economy. The delegation included 195 business leaders, 33 government officials, over 320 representatives of leading British companies, and around 30 UK government officials.

The summit's activities resulted in 38 agreements and announcements, valued at over 20 billion Saudi riyals. The program also featured five workshops on enhancing Saudi-British cooperation in key sectors, alongside success stories from companies in both countries. An accompanying exhibition along with both musical and folk performances reflected the rich heritage of both nations.

Main Economic Achievements of the Saudi-UK Strategic Partnership Council

13 Promising Sectors	80 Initiatives	25 Agreements	35 Ministerial Participations	09 Events
50 Workshops	30 Billion GBP Trade Volume by 2030	65 British Companies with Regional HQs in Riyadh	09 UK Schools in Saudi Arabia	7.5K+ Saudi Students Trained in Tourism-Related Fields

September 22, 2025

National Competitiveness Center organizes Saudi-Norwegian Business Forum in Norway's capital, Oslo

The National Competitiveness Center, in cooperation with the Saudi Embassy in Oslo, held a reception to celebrate Saudi Arabia's 95th National Day. The event was attended by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques' Ambassador, Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Sharif; H.E. the Minister of Commerce, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi; Norway's Minister of Trade and Industry, Ms. Cecilie Merseth; and numerous other ambassadors and members of the diplomatic corps.

In his address, H.E. Al-Kassabi, who also serves as Chairman of the NCC's Board of Directors, affirmed that Saudi Vision 2030—launched by His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Crown Prince and Prime Minister (may God protect him)—has driven an unprecedented economic transformation. He noted that the Kingdom has implemented more than 900 legislative and regulatory reforms and launched some of the world's most ambitious projects to build a competitive economy. These efforts have helped the Kingdom achieve a GDP exceeding $1.3 trillion USD, making it the largest economy in the Middle East and the 17th largest globally.

Addressing an audience of over 130 public and private sector leaders, H.E. Al-Kassabi highlighted the strong foundation for cooperation, noting that Norwegian companies are already successfully established in the Kingdom. He emphasized the shared desire to deepen collaboration in key sectors, including logistics, shipping, fisheries, advanced manufacturing, tourism, digitalization, healthcare, education, and creative industries. Underscoring this dynamic partnership, he revealed that bilateral trade surged by 360% between 2020 and 2024, reaching $828 million USD.

July 7, 2025

Saudi Arabia participates in the annual UNCITRAL session in Vienna

The Kingdom participated in the 58th annual session of the UNCITRAL, held in Vienna, and was represented by an official delegation from the following entities: the National Competitiveness Center; the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice, Commerce, Investment;Transport and Logistics Services; the Board of Grievances; and the Bankruptcy Commission.

During the session, UNCITRAL adopted several draft legislative laws, most notably the International Convention on Negotiable Transport Documents, the Proposed Set of Tools for Preventing and Mitigating International Investment Disputes, and the Set of Tools on Asset Tracing and Recovery in Insolvency Proceedings.

September 29, 2025

H.E. Al-Mutairi reviews progress on the Knowledge Hub partnership with the World Bank Group delegation

Her Excellency Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi, Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the National Competitiveness Center, welcomed Mr. Axel van Trotsenburg, Senior Managing Director of the World Bank Group, and his accompanying delegation to a meeting at the NCC. The discussions focused on the latest developments in the bilateral partnership concerning the Knowledge Hub.

The meeting reviewed key economic and developmental reforms, as well as promising opportunities across vital sectors. The Kingdom has implemented over 900 reforms across nine main areas and has issued or updated 1,200 regulations and bylaws. These efforts have strengthened the legal framework and helped position Saudi Arabia’s business environment as a leading global destination for businesses and investors.

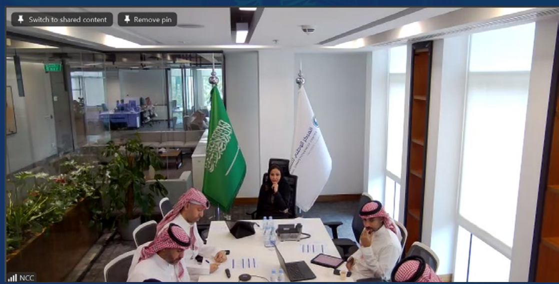
Mr. van Trotsenburg commended the Kingdom’s reform agenda and its progress in improving the business environment. He noted that Saudi Arabia’s performance in global competitiveness indicators serves as an exemplary model from which other countries can learn.

Following the meeting, the delegation visited the Saudi Business Center to observe business startup and licensing procedures. The Senior Managing Director highlighted that SBC represents an effective model for streamlining processes and expressed the WBG's interest in hosting a delegation to showcase its operational model to representatives from Europe and the Americas. He recognized SBC's potential to enhance the international standards for issuing commercial registrations and licenses.

In Q3 2025, the National Competitiveness Center, in collaboration with relevant authorities, conducted three workshops aimed at identifying challenges facing both public and private sectors, along with exploring ways to boost the growth of targeted economic activities.

July 13, 2025

Identifying and Addressing Challenges in the Agriculture & Food Sector



July 23, 2025

Identifying and Addressing Challenges in the Entrepreneurship Sector
(Entrepreneurship & Future Initiatives)

August 14, 2025

Identifying and Addressing Challenges in the Entrepreneurship Sector

NCC collaborates with relevant government entities to strengthen and streamline the business environment by implementing legislative & procedural reforms, advancing the Kingdom's economic transformation, and boosting its global competitiveness.

Q3 2025 - Key Reforms Implemented:

01.

The Ministry of Economy and Planning has launched an interactive platform that provides key economic and social data on Saudi Arabia to international organizations, the private sector, and the general public.

02.

The Ministry of Tourism has launched an online service to approve tourism activities and programs. This new system facilitates the licensing process for recurring tourist trips through coordination among relevant government entities in the entertainment, sports, and cultural sectors.

03.

To facilitate private sector participation in NUPCO tenders for medical devices and supplies, the requirement for device evaluation reports from reference hospitals has been eliminated. A registration certificate from the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA) is now sufficient.

04.

The technical requirements for operating gyms and fitness centers in hotels have been aligned and standardized between the Ministry of Sports and the Ministry of Tourism. These unified requirements are now published on the Nafes platform.

05.

The Ministry of Municipalities and Housing, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, is developing a regulatory framework to organize and oversee commercial rest areas.

Summary of the Kingdom’s performance in international reports & indices evaluated by the NCC for Q3 2025

To advance Saudi Vision 2030's global competitiveness goals, the National Competitiveness Center tracks the Kingdom's performance across 31 key international reports.

The National Competitiveness Center is responsible for monitoring and analyzing global competitiveness indices and reports, benchmarking the Kingdom's performance against leading countries. The NCC also works to identify key specialized reports across various sectors and refer them to the relevant government entities with tailored recommendations for implementation.
The significance of these global reports lies in their ability to track and analyze a country's competitive performance within a strategic framework. They reflect ongoing development and improvement efforts, thereby contributing directly to the enhancement of national indicators and the elevation of the Kingdom's global competitiveness and stature.

Reports reflecting the Kingdom's improved performance

World Talent Ranking

IMD Business School

In 2025, the Kingdom climbed one position, securing 31st place globally among 69 countries.

Moved up 3 positions (from 33rd to 30th) in the Readiness factor

This factor's ranking assesses a country’s talent readiness to meet the demands of businesses and the labor market, considering variables such as the availability of skilled workers, quality of education, international experience of senior executives, and alignment of educational outcomes with business requirements to maintain competitiveness.

Global Innovation Index

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

In 2025, the Kingdom climbed one position, securing 46th place globally among 139 countries.

The Kingdom’s ranking improved across these 4 key areas

Institutions
increased 9 positions (from 35th to 26th)

Infrastructure
increased 13 positions (from 49th to 36th)

Business Development
increased 27 positions (from 79th to 52nd)

Creative Outputs
increased 10 positions (from 67th to 57th)

Key studies & research published by international organizations

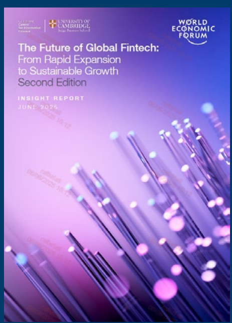
within Q3 2025 on developments in productivity, inclusivity, sustainability, and adaptability

World Investment Report 2025

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development "UNCTAD"

Published: June 2025

Report Scope:
The World Investment Report tracks global and regional investment trends and monitors developments in investment policies at the national and international levels. It also explores investment related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and emerging trends in sustainable finance, while providing analysis on global value chains and the activities of multinational enterprises. The current edition specifically highlights global investment in the digital economy, recognizing it as a key driver of growth and transformation.



The Future of Global Fintech 2025

World Economic Forum

Published: June 2025

Report Scope:
The Future of Global Fintech Report provides insights and comparative analysis on fintech market performance indices. It tracks the evolution of regulatory and supervisory frameworks and their impact on the sector's growth. Furthermore, the report delves into the role of AI in fintech, examining its integration across business models and its effects on company performance, customer experience, and operational efficiency. It also addresses the potential risks associated with adopting AI technologies within the industry.

Top 10 Emerging Technologies of 2025 Flagship Report

World Economic Forum

Published: June 2025

Report Scope:
This annual report provides an overview of the year's most promising emerging technologies, spanning fields from materials science to healthcare. The latest edition outlines key priorities for the coming period, such as advancing health and sustainability, fostering technological integration, and driving continuous innovation. It emphasizes the need for societal and infrastructural readiness to scale these technologies and realize their full impact. The featured technologies were selected based on criteria including novelty, maturity, and potential to deliver significant societal benefits while enhancing global resilience.

SME Digitalisation for Competitiveness

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Published: April 2025

Report Scope:
The report examines the digitalization of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in ten OECD countries and provides insights into trends, opportunities, and challenges related to SME digitalization by considering their level of digital maturity and adoption of emerging technologies.

Istitlaa: The Public Consultation Platform

The National Competitiveness Center's public consultation platform, Istitlaa, allows the public and private sectors, as well as government entities, to express their opinions and provide feedback on laws and regulatory projects related to economic and developmental affairs before they are approved. This contributes to the improvement of the business environment and the Kingdom's competitiveness.

Istitlaa, the public consultation platform, in the 3rd quarter of 2025

207 Proposed projects

11807 Feedback & Insights Shared

53 Participating Government Entities

Key Sectors

- Municipal Services, Planning, & Urban Development
- Environment, Agriculture, Water, Living Resources
- Transportation & Communication

Key Proposed Projects

- Executive Regulations of the Precious Metals and Gemstones Law
- Executive Regulation of the Idle Land Fees Law
- Executive Regulations of the Law on Real Estate Ownership by Non-Saudis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