المركز السعودي للتنافسية والأعمال
SAUDI COMPETITIVENESS & BUSINESS CENTER
TAYSEER | تيسير

Competitiveness & Business

Quarterly update from the **Saudi Competitiveness & Business Center** - 1st Quarter 2026



Launch of the Knowledge Hub Office

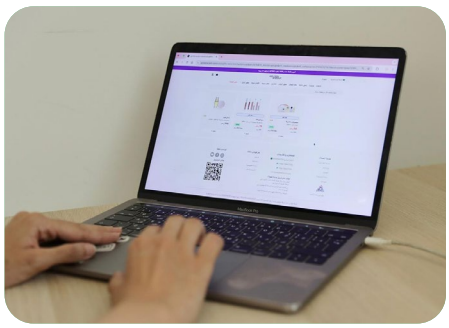
GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE HUB
SAUDI ARABIA - WBG



SCBC has provided 18M services
since its inception



Inauguration of SCBC 20th Branch in Makkah



41K
Verified Online Stores

Quarterly Brief

The Saudi Competitiveness & Business Center's Newsletter for Q1 2026 outlines the developments the Kingdom has witnessed globally. It highlights the SCBC 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 SCBC, covers Cabinet decision No. 662, which mandates the merger of the National Competitiveness Center and the Saudi Business Center under a single entity, naming the Saudi Competitiveness & Business Center, and highlights its impact on enhancing the business environment in the Kingdom. The newsletter addresses the inauguration of the Knowledge Hub office, which came as the Center nears the milestone of delivering 1,000 economic & developmental reforms.

Saudi Competitiveness & Business Center

An independent government entity established in 2026 under Cabinet Decision No. 662, mandating the merging of the National Competitiveness Center and the Saudi Business Center into a single center. It is reported to the Council of Economic and Development Affairs and enjoys full legal independence.

SCBC Objective

To strengthen and advance the Kingdom's competitiveness, elevate its position in global indices & related reports, streamline the processes of starting and conducting business, and provide integrated services to the private sector.

to advance and improve the competitive environment, in collaboration with 65 government partners.

The issue further notes that, since March 2020, SCBC has delivered 18 million services through its 20 branches and the Business Platform, benefiting more than 4 million investors. It also indicates that the number of verified online stores has reached nearly 41,000, while requests for issuing a QR-Code have approached 40,000.

Furthermore, the newsletter reports that 31 government entities launched 60 projects on the Public Consultation Platform "Istitlaa" during Q1 of 2026, with a total of approximately 4,435 feedback submissions & comments received on the published projects.

Key Responsibilities

1. Review laws, regulations and decisions affecting competitiveness and the business environment.
2. Track and analyze indicators and reports related to the Kingdom's competitiveness.
3. Identify challenges and obstacles facing the public and private sectors to support improvements in competitiveness and the business environment.
4. Gather public insights and feedback on competitiveness and the business environment via multiple channels.



18M Services

has been delivered by the Saudi Competitiveness & Business Center since March 2020, benefiting more than 4 million investors, in collaboration with 65 government partners offering over 6,000 services to the private sector.

Through

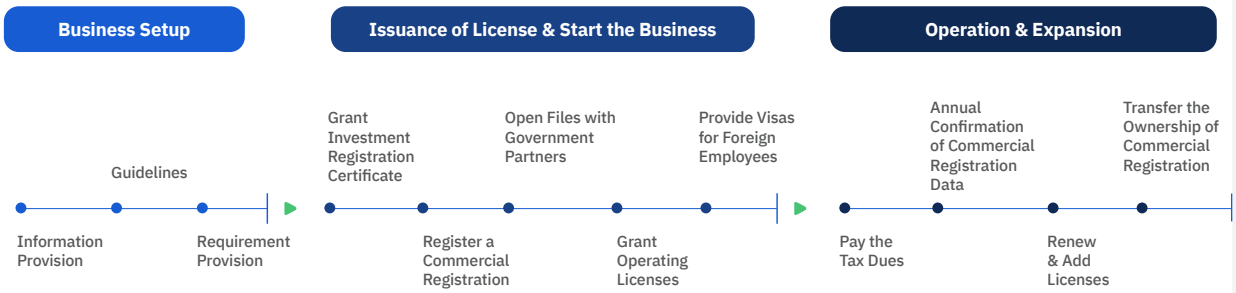
20
Branches

15
Saudi Cities

Business Platform
Business.sa



Core Serivces



Establishment of Company Under Investment Registration Certificate
24 Hours

Establishment of a Corporate Entity and Opening Files with Government Partners
6 mins

Issuance of Licenses for the Entertainment, Sports, and Media Sectors
5 mins

Issuance of licenses for the entertainment, sports, and media sectors
4 mins

Trade Names Reservation
2 mins

Private Sector Services

During Q1 2026



Business Platform in Numbers

Total Licenses Issued

Education Sector	Media Sector	Sports Sector	Tourism Sector
1277	442	105	57

26,690 New Companies

41,840 New Establishments

608 Verified Online Stores

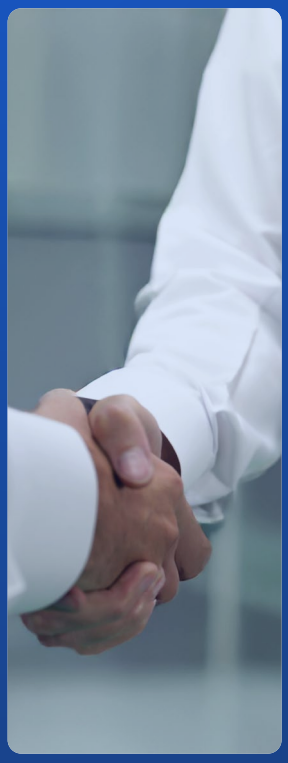
The Business Platform has enabled investors to complete the procedures for starting their business by providing all related services through a one-stop shop, in collaboration with the relevant government partners.



SCBC Services

Services Currently Offered

via the Business Platform



وزارة التجارة
Ministry of Commerce

Liquidation of an Operating Company – Resolution to Appoint a Liquidator

A service enables investors to submit a liquidation request for a company.



وزارة التجارة
Ministry of Commerce

Liquidation of a Non-Operating Company

A service enables investors to submit a liquidation request for a company that has not yet commenced its business.



وزارة التجارة
Ministry of Commerce

Cancellation of the Company's Main Commercial Registration Based on a Court Judgment

A service allowing the cancellation of the company's main commercial registration based on a court judgment.

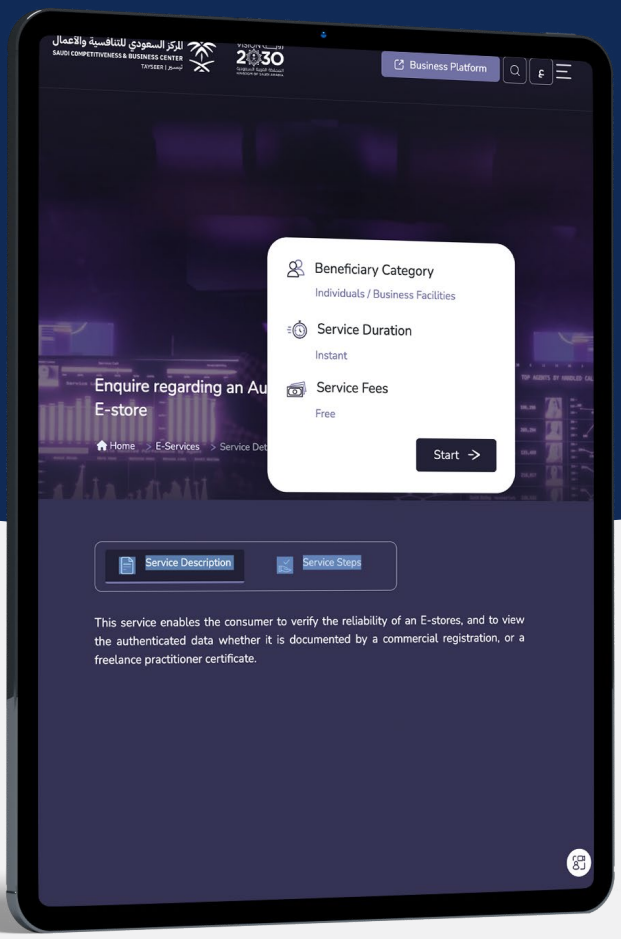


هيئة الزكاة والضريبة والجمارك
Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority

Registration of New Importer or Exporter

A service enabling businesses to commence import and export operations.

E-commerce Authentication



A digital certificate that enhances the credibility of e-commerce transactions

and allows access to verified data on the Business Platform

41,020 Online stores have been issued authentication certificates since the launch of the service

Start issuing your online store authentication certificate via

Business Platform
business.sa

Unified QR-Code

345
certificates &
licenses issued by

36
government
partners



In one electronic document that enhances the credibility of data and supports ongoing updates

569,273

enterprises have issued their QR-Code since the launch of the service

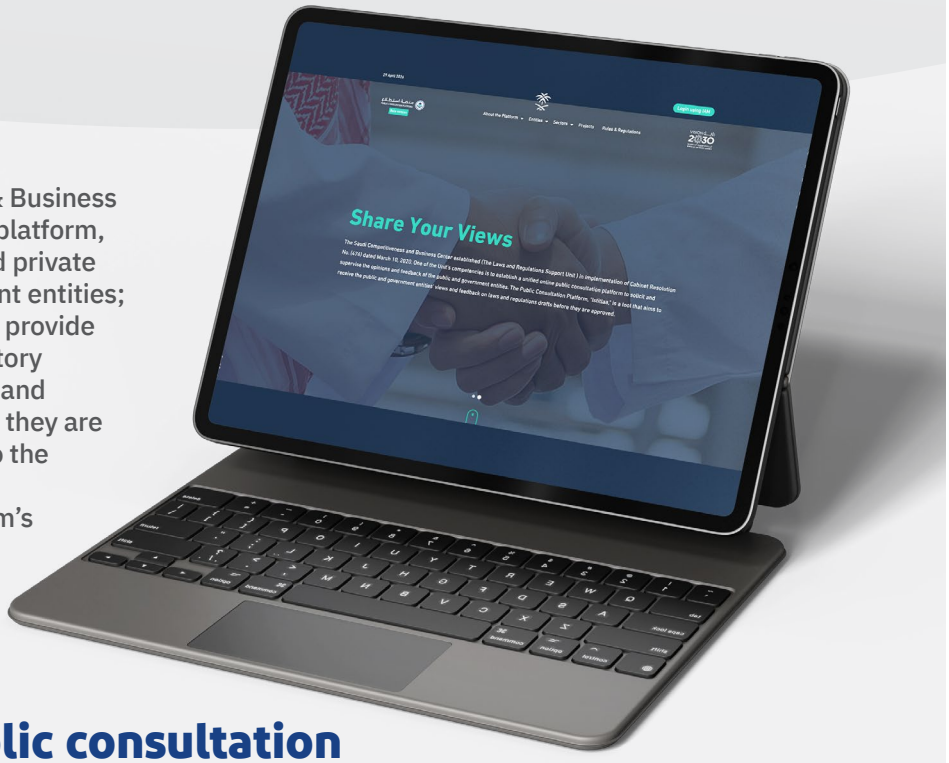
Start issuing your enterprise's QR-Code immediately via

Business Platform
business.sa

منصة استطلاع
PUBLIC CONSULTATION PLATFORM

Istitlaa: The Public Consultation Platform

The Saudi Competitiveness & Business 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 1st quarter of 2026

60
Proposed Projects

4435
Stakeholder Feedback on the Proposed Projects

31
Government Partners

Most Prominent Sectors

01. Transportation and Communications
02. Municipal Services, Planning, and Urban Development
03. Finance and Control

Key Proposed Projects

01. Re export Regulations
02. Amendment of Travel & Tourism Service Regulation
03. Executive Regulation of Financial Control

Business Environment Reforms

delivered in collaboration with relevant partners during Q1



This reform facilitates the provision of air cargo services by a group of companies, including freight brokerage, bonded cargo handling, and express cargo services, at the cargo villages of King Khalid International Airport and King Fahd International Airport.

Impact of the Reform:
Enhancing air traffic activity and improving service quality, in addition to boosting economic activity and creating new job opportunities.



This reform involves selecting judicial provisions related to the private sector, including commercial & administrative provisions, and publishing them in both Arabic and English on the legal portal affiliated with the Ministry of Justice.

Impact of the Reform:
Enhancing the predictability of judicial provisions, strengthening transparency, and increasing awareness of the principles underlying judgments in similar cases.



Issuance of municipal requirements for private educational facilities.

Impact of the Reform:
Enhancing investor compliance in the sector through the governance of the establishment and operation of private educational facilities, and the regulation of safety standards and urban planning requirements.



The Ministry of Commerce conducted awareness campaigns on key business regulations, including the Companies Law, Commercial Registration Law, and Trade Names Law.

Impact of the Reform:
Enhancing compliance and reducing violations.



Launch of three new maritime routes for medium-sized Feeder Vessels.

Impact of the Reform:
Enhancing Saudi maritime exports and facilitating exporters' access to global markets.

Business Environment Reforms

delivered in collaboration with relevant partners during Q1



Financing solutions and incentives developed with Riyad Bank and the Saudi Industrial Development Fund to support logistics-sector SMEs in investing in logistics projects.

Impact of the Reform:
Driving investment and expansion in logistics sector projects.



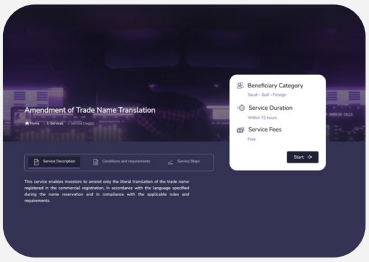
Extending financing products offered by development funds and banks to cooperative societies under the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development.

Impact of the Reform:
Enhancing the financial sustainability of cooperative societies and facilitating the implementation of their projects.

لوجستي LOGISTI

Launching the exceptional load permits service via the Logisti platform.

Impact of the Reform:
Streamlining procedures, accelerating service delivery, and improving the beneficiary experience.



Empowering investors to edit the translation of the trade name before company formation and CR registration.

Impact of the Reform:
Shortening the processing time for procedures.



Providing instant issuance of tour operator licenses.

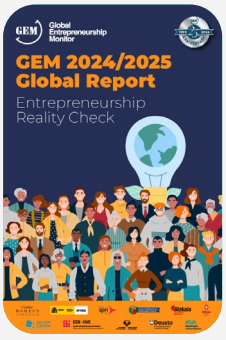
pact of the Reform:
Accelerating procedures and improving the investor experience in the sector.

International reports and indicators

Q1 SCBC monitoring

To fulfill Saudi Vision 2030's objectives of increasing global competitiveness of Saudi Arabia, the Saudi Competitiveness & Business Center monitors, studies, and analyzes the Kingdom's performance in 31 international reports on competitiveness.

Global Entrepreneurship Monitor "GEM"
by Babson College and the London Business School:



The Kingdom recorded an improvement in its overall score compared to the previous year, ranking third out of 53 countries.

- The report highlighted the Kingdom's global leadership in entrepreneurial financing and supportive government policies, in addition to rising awareness of AI applications and an increase in the proportion of adults initiating entrepreneurial ventures.

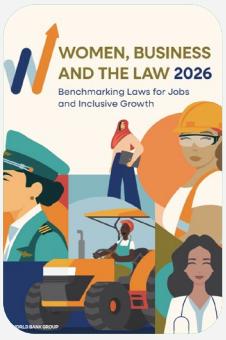
Index of Economic Freedom
by the Heritage Foundation:



The Kingdom jumped 3 places in 2026. 59th among 184 countries.

- 6th among 14 countries in the Middle East and North Africa.
- The Kingdom improved its performance in 7 out of 12 sub-pillars.

Women, Business and the Law Report 2026
by the World Bank Group:



Saudi Arabia has improved in the Women, Business and the Law report 2026 issued by the World Bank Group, achieving the highest global increase in the Supportive Frameworks and making further gains in the Legal Frameworks. The summary of results is as follows (out of 100):

- The Kingdom's score in the Legal Frameworks increased from 50.0 in 2024 to 56.23 in 2026.
- The Kingdom's score in the Supportive Frameworks increased from 36.7 in 2024 to 71.95 in 2026.

World Happiness Report
by UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network:



The Kingdom recorded a 10-place improvement in the 2026 edition, moving from 32nd to 22nd among 147 countries.

- The Kingdom's score rose from 6.600 to 6.817, with 10 indicating high satisfaction and well-being, and zero indicating low levels.

SCBC monitors and analyzes studies and research from international organizations on economic developments and, in light of these insights, proposes economic & developmental reforms to enhance the Kingdom's competitiveness and business environment.

Global Risks Report 2026
Release Date:
January 2026

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM



Scope of Publication:
The Global Risks Report reviews the most influential risks over the next ten years, in light of rapid technological change, global warming, interstate conflict, and economic instability. The report analyzes the most anticipated risks over the next two to ten years.

Report Objective:
The report enhances understanding of global risks and their implications for the Kingdom's competitiveness, enabling proactive decision-making to strengthen economic readiness.

Youth Pulse 2026: Insights From the Next Generation for a Changing World
Release Date:
January 2026

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM



Scope of Publication:
The report aims to understand how youth people perceive the economic, technological, social, environmental, and political transformations that affect their lives and future, while highlighting the threats and opportunities they see in a rapidly changing world, as well as how they interact with these changes and respond to their challenges.

Report Objective:
The report enhances understanding of youth trends and aspirations and their implications, in order to develop policies and initiatives that respond to the needs of the next generation and strengthen the economy's readiness for economic transformations.

AI and Talent in 2030
Release Date:
January 2026

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM



Scope of Publication:
The report examines the future of jobs in the new economy up to 2030 by developing four possible scenarios based on two key dimensions: the pace of advancement in AI technologies and the level of workforce readiness. It provides insights into the expected impacts on the labor market, productivity, economic growth, inequality, and business strategies.

Report Objective:
The report aims to enhance understanding of future labor market shifts and the impact of emerging technologies on jobs and skills, while supporting the development of policies and initiatives that strengthen national talent readiness and align with the demands of the new economy.

Top trends redefining global trade in 2026
Release Date:
January 2026

UN trade & development



Scope of Publication:
Global trade in 2026 enters a period of increasing pressure driven by slowing growth, geopolitical fragmentation, accelerating digital and green transitions, and tighter national regulations. Together, these factors are reshaping trade flows, investment decisions, and global value chains, with risks and opportunities becoming more concentrated in developing economies.

Report Objective:
The report aims to identify key trends in global trade to support the development of trade policies that strengthen national economic resilience.

Who wins when trade policies shift?
Release Date:
February 2026

UN trade & development



Scope of Publication:
Changes in trade policy can shift the balance of power in global markets. When governments adjust tariffs, preferences, or other trade costs, they alter prices and competitive conditions, giving some exporters advantages while disadvantaging others, and thereby reshaping trade flows and sourcing decisions.

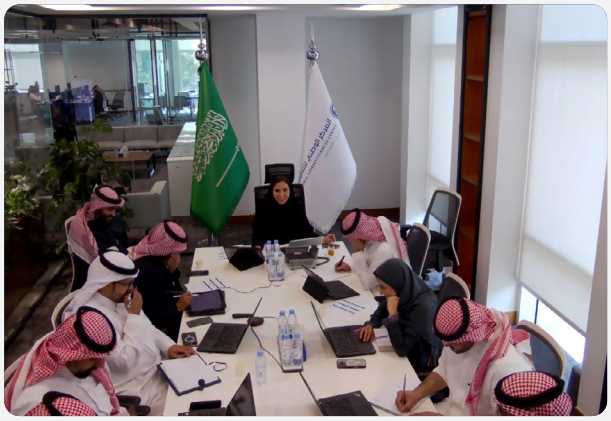
Report Objective:
The report supports a better understanding of the impact of global trade policies in order to develop policies that enhance the resilience of the national economy and mitigate risks arising from global changes.

9 Workshops

with domestic and international private sectors

During the first quarter of this year, the Saudi Competitiveness & Business Center organized nine workshops in collaboration with several international organizations and relevant partners.

Most notably



Reviewing and Discussing the Logistics Challenges Facing Private Sector Companies

Objective:
Coordinating with relevant government partners to identify solutions to address logistical challenges and streamline customs procedures for supply chains across land, sea, and air entry points.



UNCITRAL Cross-Border Insolvency framework

Objective:
Strengthening knowledge of the UNCITRAL Model Law, thereby supporting judges in applying laws & provisions and enhancing investment attractiveness.



Trade Facilitation in Saudi Arabia

Objective:
- Enhance Saudi Arabia's global competitiveness.
- Map the challenges facing both the public and private sectors.

In the first quarter of 2026, the Saudi Competitiveness & Business Center carried out several activities, the most prominent of which included:



The Legal Committee at the National Competitiveness Center convened its 9th meeting, which was chaired by Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the Board of the Center, and attended by His Excellency Mr. Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Abdulkarim, Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers. During the meeting, the committee reviewed its 27 initiatives and their resulting outcomes.



As part of the partnership between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - represented by the Saudi Competitiveness & Business Center- and the World Bank Group, the Knowledge Hub office has been launched in Riyadh. The opening was officiated by H.E. Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the Board of the Saudi Competitiveness & Business Center. He noted that the beginning of the Knowledge Hub's work to promote reform culture among beneficiary countries coincides with the SCBC approaching the implementation of 1,000 economic & development reforms delivered in collaboration with 65 government partners to enhance Saudi Arabia's competitive business environment.



H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the Board, Majid Al-Kassabi, inaugurated the Center's shared branch with the Makkah Chamber. The ceremony was attended by the Chairman of the Board of the Federation of Saudi Chambers and the Makkah Chamber, Abdullah bin Saleh Kamel, along with chamber presidents and several businesswomen and businessmen from the region.


المركز السعودي للتنافسية والأعمال
SAUDI COMPETITIVENESS & BUSINESS CENTER
TAYSEER | تيسير
Business.sa 199080 @SCBC @SCBCsa