Competitiveness

NCC's 4th Quarter 2024 Newsletter by the National Competitiveness Center.

Saudi-World Bank Knowledge Hub for Global Competitiveness



WORLD BANK GROUP | المركز الوطني للتنافسية NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS CENTER TAYSEER | تيسير

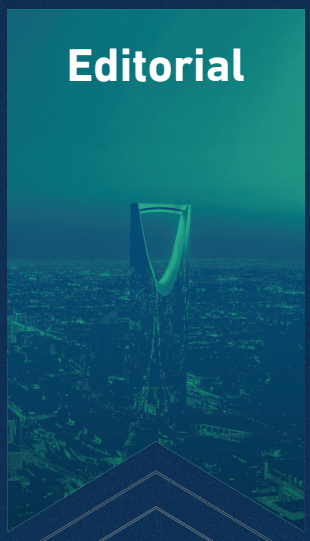
Leveraging Saudi Arabia's Experience in Implementing Economic Reforms,

National Competitiveness Center and World Bank Group Establish Global Knowledge Hub

Minister of Commerce Explores Saudi-South African Trade Partnership Enhancement

National Competitiveness Center, Ministry of Education Sign Cooperation Agreement

Editorial



The Competitiveness newsletter for the fourth quarter of 2024 outlines the developments that the Kingdom has witnessed. It highlights the key activities and initiatives of the center designed to improve the business environment and enhance the Kingdom's global competitiveness.

This edition reports on the signing of an agreement with the World Bank Group to establish a global knowledge hub, aimed at expanding international collaboration. The agreement was signed by the National Competitiveness Center on behalf of Saudi Arabia.

The newsletter also features the official visit of H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, to South Africa to promote trade ties in various priority economic sectors, elevate the economic partnership, and take part in the Saudi-South African Business Forum.

Furthermore, the newsletter highlights events conducted by the Center during the fourth quarter to enhance the competitiveness of the Kingdom's economic and developmental environment, including the seventh meeting of the Legal Committee.

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

is for the Kingdom to be one of the top ten most competitive countries by 2030, 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.

An overview of the Kingdom's accomplishments, projects, and collaborations during 2024



We affirm the government's dedication to advancing the country and ensuring the well-being of citizens. We attribute the nation's achievements first to Allah and then to the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, along with the hard work of the Kingdom's citizens.

His Royal Highness,
Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
Crown Prince, Prime Minister and Chairman of the Council of Economic and Development Affairs
On the approval of the budget for the fiscal year 2025

Accomplishments

- Successful bid for the FIFA World Cup 2034
- Saudi Arabia's non-oil activities accounted for 50% of GDP in 2023
- A marked rise in proven reserves of oil, gas, and condensate
- Launching the National Red Sea Sustainability Strategy
- The National Competitiveness Center and the World Bank Group to establish global knowledge hub

Projects

سنحالة aquarabia ALAT قطار الرياض riyadh metro

Global Indicators

- **16th globally** in the latest World Competitiveness Yearbook — IMD Real learning Real impact
- **1st globally** in the Global AI Index by Tortoise Media — Tortoise
- **3rd globally** in AI Policy Observatory, OECD — OECD
- **2nd** among G20 countries in UN's Telecommunication Infrastructure Index — Rio Capital of the G20 Brazil 2024
- **3rd globally** in the growth rate of international tourist arrivals, UN — UN Tourism

October 14, 2024

Minister of Commerce Explores Saudi-South African Trade Partnership Enhancement

H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, participated in the Saudi-South African Business Forum, organized by the National Competitiveness Center in collaboration with the Federation of Saudi Chambers and the South African Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Competition. The forum was held on the sidelines of a working visit to South Africa by a Saudi delegation comprised of members from both the public and private sectors, to improve trade ties in priority economic sectors and increase economic partnership.



October 20, 2024

NCC Legal Committee Holds its Seventh Meeting

The Legal Committee at the Laws and Regulations Support Unit of the National Competitiveness Center held its seventh meeting at the Center's headquarters.

The meeting was chaired by H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, with the participation of H.E. the Minister of Education, Mr. Yousef bin Abdullah Al-Benyan, and attended by deputy directors of legal departments from 32 government entities.

During the meeting, the committee assessed the 25 initiatives on which it worked and the respective outcomes, as well as signing a cooperation agreement between the Ministry of Education and the National Competitiveness Center to enhance the two parties' common goals.



November 09, 2024

NCC Participates in Biban24 Forum



The National Competitiveness Center showcased its efforts exerted to improve and develop the Kingdom's business environment during its participation in Biban24 Forum, organized by Monsha'at in Riyadh Front Exhibition and Conference Center in November.

November 22, 2024

Al-Mutairi Chaired the Kingdom's Delegation in London to Enhance KSA-UK Partnership



H.E. the Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi, held several meetings with government officials and leaders from the business sector during a working visit to the United Kingdom.

The visit aimed to strengthen economic ties between the two friendly countries while also expanding trade exchange and economic partnership in various promising sectors.

December 03, 2024

NCC and World Bank Group Establish Global Knowledge Hub

The National Competitiveness Center, on behalf of the Kingdom, signed a strategic agreement with the World Bank Group to establish a global Knowledge Hub as part of a leading initiative to boost international cooperation and promote sustainable development through the exchange of knowledge and expertise. The Hub will benefit from the Kingdom's experience in implementing economic reforms and the World Bank's expertise, as well as assisting member countries in achieving their infrastructural objectives.



December 15, 2024

Digital Government Forum 2024 Honors the Private Sector Feedback Platform

The National Competitiveness Center's Private Sector Feedback Platform received recognition at the Digital Government Forum 2024. The platform was named one of five finalists for the best E-Participation Initiative, having successfully engaged all segments of society in providing feedback and ideas to improve government services.



December 20, 2024

Minister of Commerce Participates in Emerging Trends in Digital Trade Law Workshop in Vienna

H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, led a Saudi delegation of 32 officials from 20 government entities to participate in the high-level workshop titled "Emerging Trends in Digital Trade Law," co-organized by NCC in collaboration with UNCITRAL in Vienna, to enhance commercial legislature in the Kingdom.



Public and Private Sector Meetings

October 09, 2024

Commerce Minister Meets with Oman's Minister of Economy



H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, alongside the Omani Minister of Economy, Dr. Said Al-Saqri, explored enhancing the trade and economic partnership between the two friendly countries.

Likewise, the two Ministers highlighted several key economic topics that the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries are actively pursuing to boost their intra-regional and external trade.

November 06, 2024

Al-Mutairi Explores Latest Competitiveness Developments with Foreign Delegations

H.E. Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi, the Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the National Competitiveness Center, met separately with the Harvard Kennedy School Women's Leadership Board delegation and with Asia House business leaders. During these meetings, discussions focused on advancing women's economic empowerment and the Kingdom's key economic reforms aligned with Saudi Vision 2030.





November 27, 2024

Al-Mutairi Meets with Australian Ambassador for Gender Equality

H.E. the Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi, met with the Australian Ambassador for Gender Equality, Ms. Stephanie Campbell.

The meeting featured a detailed discussion of reforms pertinent to enhancing women's participation in the Kingdom's economic development.



Virtual Workshops

The National Competitiveness Center conducted three virtual workshops to identify challenges faced by key sectors, including export, conformity assessment, human resources, recruitment, entertainment, galleries, conferences, and advertising.

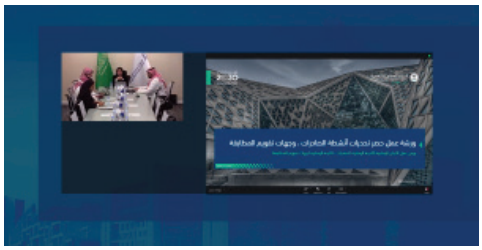
These workshops were part of the NCC's collaboration with the Federation of Saudi Chambers, which strives to further strengthen communication within the business sector. They also explored avenues for growth within these sectors.

November 26, 2024

Identify the Challenges Faced by Investors in Export Sector and Conformity Assessment Bodies

Topics covered:

- Identify the challenges faced by investors in the export sector and conformity assessment bodies
- Monitor investors' proposals to enhance growth for economic activities

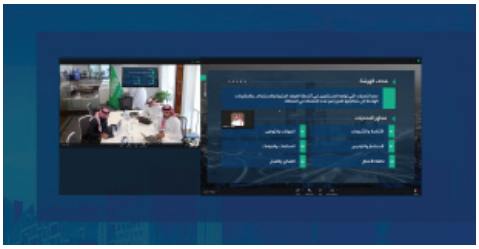


December 09, 2024

Identify the Challenges of Human Resources and Recruitment Companies

Topics covered:

- Identify challenges and obstacles
- Enhance the sector's growth

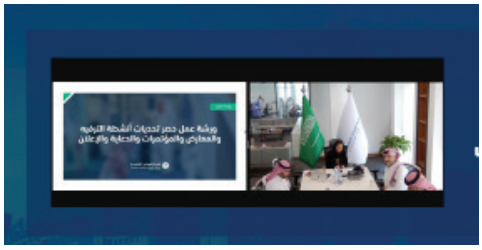


December 26, 2024

Identify the Challenges of Entertainment, Galleries, Conferences, and Advertising Activities

Topics covered:

- Identify the challenges of entertainment, galleries, conferences, and advertising activities
- Proposals developed to address challenges; enhance the expansion of entertainment, exhibitions, conferences, advertising, and activities in the Kingdom



The Center works with relevant government entities to enhance and improve the business environment by implementing legislative and procedural reforms in support of the Kingdom's economic transformation towards greater global competitiveness.

Key reforms implemented during the 4th quarter of 2024:

01.

Establish logistics centers in Riyadh and Jeddah containing warehouses and dark stores.

02.

Improve and digitize security inspection procedures for transit shipments on the Washaj platform, reform legislative procedures, develop risk assessment mechanisms, and adopt cutting-edge security inspection technologies.

03.

Create a mechanism for exchanging imported vehicles' data to the Kingdom in order to estimate the volume of demand for spare parts and provide them to consumers by agents.

04.

Prepare and publish a guideline to recover value-added tax for the non-profit sector and endowments.

05.

Issuance of the Kingdom's e-learning regulations and unifying entities that accredit training programs, developmental enrichment courses, and blended education programs, respectively by the National eLearning Center and the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation.

06.

Streamline procedures for investors and those who wish to deliver e-learning and training programs by eliminating the entity license costs for various sectors.

07.

Empower investors in the education sector and those who wish to deliver e-learning and training by reducing the financial fees of the program license by approximately 65% of its basic cost.

A summary of the Kingdom's performance in international reports and indicators evaluated by the National Competitiveness Center for the fourth quarter of 2024:

To fulfill Saudi Vision 2030's objectives of increasing global competitiveness, the National Competitiveness Center monitors the Kingdom's performance in 31 prestigious international reports on competitiveness through:

Monitoring and analyzing global competitiveness indicators and reports, comparing the Kingdom's performance with leading countries. Additionally, it identifies key indicators and specialized reports across various fields, forwarding them to the relevant government entities, and proposing suitable recommendations for their implementation. The significance of these global reports lies in their role in assessing and analyzing the country's competitive performance within the framework of its strategy, reflecting the development and improvement efforts made to enhance the country's indicators. This contributes to raising its competitiveness and strengthening its global position.

Reports indicating improvement in the Kingdom's performance:

Digital Competitiveness Ranking by IMD:

IMD

The Kingdom leapt 3 places and ranked 27th globally out of 67 countries

9th among G20 countries

19th among Europe, the Middle East, and Africa countries included in the report, totaling 43 countries

10th out of 30 countries with a population over 20 million

The Kingdom's ranking improved in two main indicators, the knowledge indicator and future readiness indicator, while declining in the technology indicator as follows:

1. Knowledge indicator: The Kingdom jumped 8 places, from 35 to 27.
This indicator analyzes countries' talent, education, training, and scientific focus.

2.Future Readiness indicator: The Kingdom advanced 2 places, from 30 to 28.
This indicator evaluates adaptable behaviors, business adaptability, and IT integration.

3.Technology indicator: The Kingdom dropped ten ranks, from 17 to 27.
This indicator evaluates the regulatory, capital, and technological frameworks.

Several sub-indices have improved as a result of scientific and technological advancement in the Kingdom, including:

- **Talents** ranking improved as the Kingdom advanced to 18th globally, up from 19th last year.
- **Training and Education** ranking improved as the Kingdom advanced to 28th globally, up from 30th last year.
- **Scientific Focus** ranking improved as the Kingdom advanced to 46th globally, up from 55th last year.
- **Regulatory Framework** ranking improved as the Kingdom advanced to 12th globally, up from 14th last year.
- **Adaptive Attitudes** ranking improved as the Kingdom advanced to 20th globally, up from 32nd last year.

Digital Competitiveness Ranking by IMD:

IMD

The Kingdom has also advanced globally in a variety of sub-indicators covered under primary and sub-factors, such as:

Knowledge factor:

- **4th** globally in international highly-skilled workforce
- **8th** globally in international expertise

Technology factor:

- **1st** globally in number of Internet users
- **2nd** in technology development and application
- **2nd** globally in venture capital
- **2nd** globally in financing technical development
- **4th** globally in banking and financial services

Future Readiness factor:

- **1st** globally in cybersecurity
- **4th** globally in public-private partnerships
- **4th** globally in smartphone ownership
- **4th** globally in e-participation
- **6th** globally in e-government

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 4th quarter of 2024 included

104
Proposed projects

1260
Feedback entries

31
Government entities

Most prominent sector

- Financial and Control Sector
- Labor and Social Care Sector
- Trade, Economy, and Investment Sector
- Science and Education Sector
- Municipal Services, Planning; and Urban Development Sector

Most prominent amendment

- Amendment of General Authority for Endowments Law
- Amendment of University Law
- Implementing Regulations of Investment Law
- Amendment of Implementing Regulations of Labor Law
- Rules for Using Municipal Real Estate without Charge

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