

The Global Youth Index 2018



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Saudi Arabia Results and Policy Implications



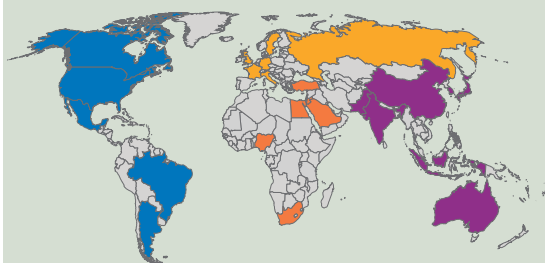
The Global Youth Index



What is the Global Youth Index?

The GYI tackles questions around the key drivers of youth development around the globe

1 STUDIED 70% OF YOUTH POPULATION OF THE WORLD ACROSS 25 COUNTRIES



Argentina
Australia
Brazil
Canada
China
Denmark
Egypt
France
Germany
India
Indonesia
Italy
Japan
Jordan
Mexico
Nigeria
Pakistan
Russia
Saudi Arabia
South Africa
South Korea
Sweden
Turkey
UK
US

2 USING A COMPREHENSIVE METHODOLOGY

Based on:



Quantitative data from secondary sources, including the World Bank, UNESCO, United Nations, OECD, ILO, IMF, ITU, etc.



An original **survey of 25,000 youth aged 18-30** across 25 countries



Qualitative review of government strategies, policies and institutions

3 COVERING FIVE YOUTH-FOCUSED DOMAINS AND 15 TOPIC AREAS

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

- Compulsory education
- Higher education
- Digital skills

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Entrepreneurial skills
- Entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Supporting strategies and institutions

EMPLOYMENT

- Opportunities
- Education-to-work transition
- Job quality

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

- Youth strategies and participation
- Attitudes toward the future
- Exposure to international experiences

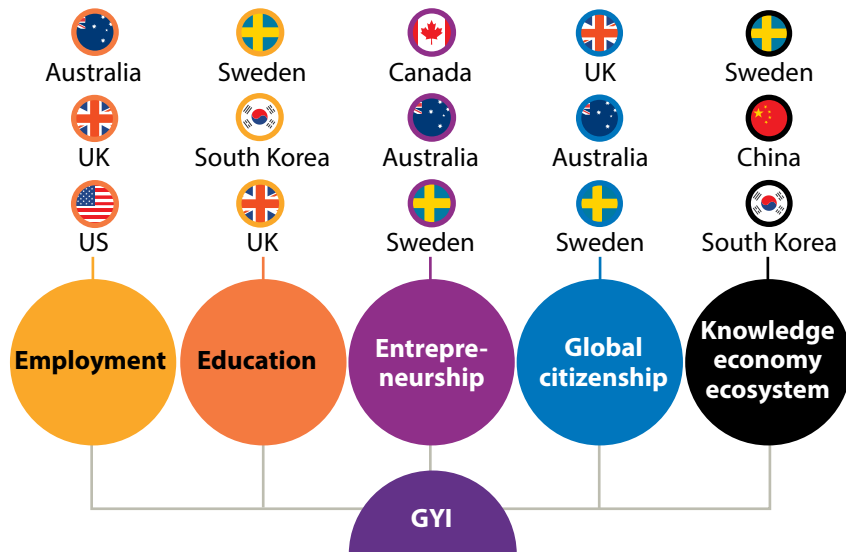
KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY ECOSYSTEM

- Innovation
- Economic growth
- Infrastructure and connectivity

Global key findings

- Youth survey respondents are **broadly optimistic** about education and their economic future.
- Youth perceptions of economic opportunity are **more positive in emerging markets** than in advanced economies.
- Despite this general optimism, the GYI highlights **significant challenges** in supporting youth development, especially in emerging markets.
- Education systems are not yet meeting the need to develop **21st-century skills**, according to the perceptions of survey respondents.

Top 3 countries per domain



Global Youth Index 2018: Overall rankings

Overall country rankings and scores (100 = best score)

Rank	Country	Score
1	Sweden	64.2
2	Australia	62.9
3	UK	62.2
4	China	60.6
5	Canada	60.1
6	South Korea	59.9
7	US	59.8
8	Germany	59.2
9	Denmark	58.4
10	France	55.7
11	Japan	54.3
12	Italy	52.1
=13	Russia	49.0
=13	South Africa	49.0
15	Turkey	48.8
16	India	48.5
17	Mexico	47.2
18	Argentina	46.5
19	Brazil	46.2
20	Saudi Arabia	45.8
21	Indonesia	45.7
22	Nigeria	38.4
23	Egypt	38.3
24	Jordan	37.6
25	Pakistan	34.8

GYI Results: Regional snapshots

North America

- **81%** of the youth in the **United States** like to learn new things and see education as a long-term process
- In **Canada**, **51%** of young people surveyed have studied applied mathematics as part of their education

Middle East and North Africa

- In **Saudi Arabia**, **83%** of the youth believe that a good education is necessary to be successful
- In Egypt **34%** of employed youth are **in high-skilled jobs**
- **15%** of higher education students in **Jordan** come from abroad

Europe

- **37%** of higher education graduates in **Germany** completed a degree in a STEM discipline
- In the **United Kingdom**, **18%** of higher education students come from abroad
- In **Denmark**, **81%** of youth surveyed believe that their education has given them the knowledge and skills needed to get a job they want
- In **France**, **77%** of young people surveyed have completed an internship in their field of study

Latin America

- **53%** of young people surveyed in **Argentina** have received some entrepreneurship training
- In **Brazil**, **20%** of adult population have started a new business or are in the process of starting one
- In **Mexico**, **58%** of young people surveyed have studied applied mathematics as part of their education

Sub-Saharan Africa

- **89%** of **Nigeria's** youth believe that they will be better off than their
- **51%** of youth in **South Africa** have donated time to a local organisation

South Asia

- In **India**, **35%** of young people surveyed received specific training in information and communications technology (ICT) in their most recent job
- In **Indonesia**, **52%** of young people surveyed have received some entrepreneurship training.

East Asia Pacific

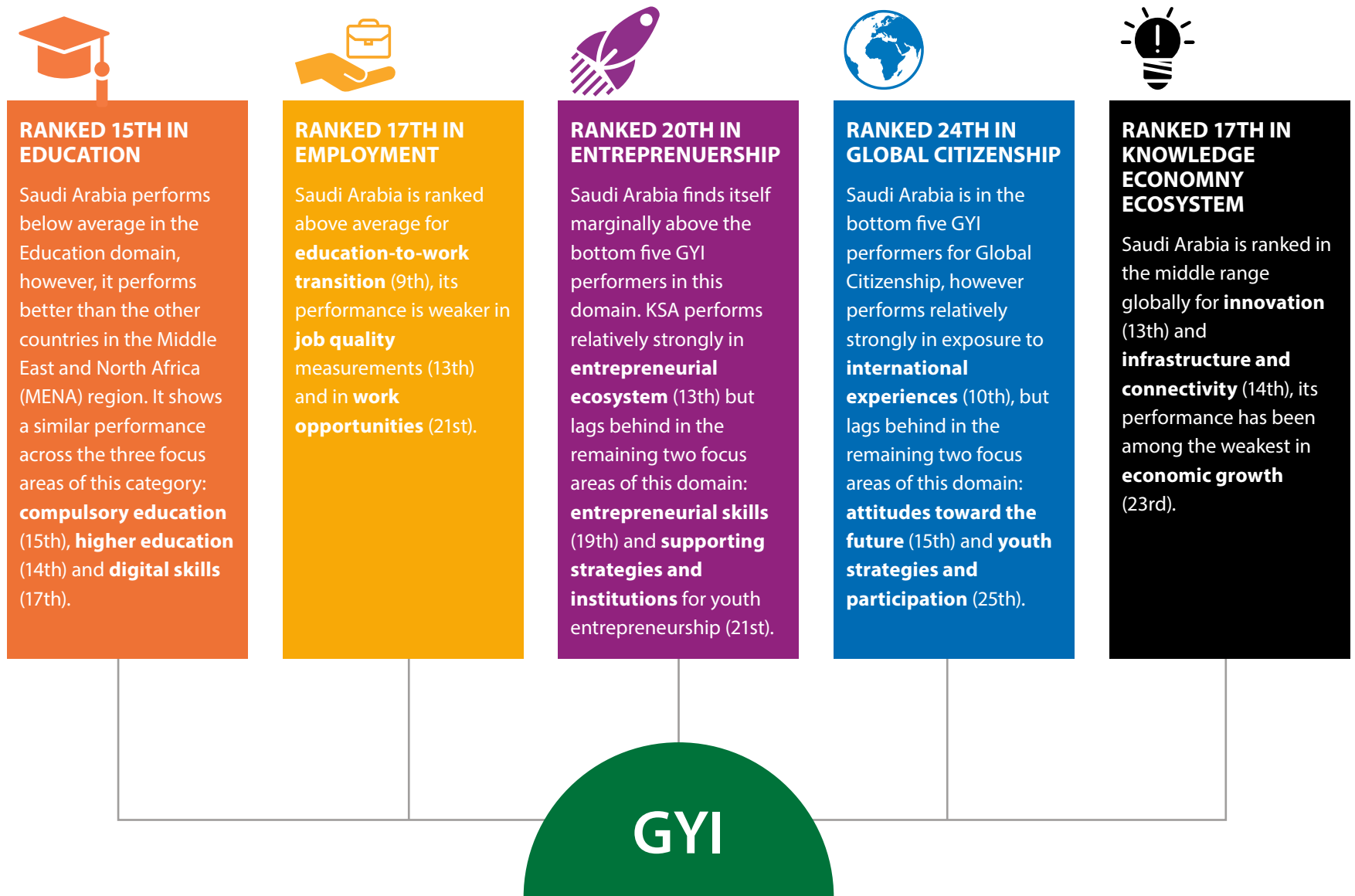
- In **Australia**, youth are expected to spend **20.4** years in education
- **36%** of higher education graduates in **China** completed a degree in a STEM discipline
- Japan has the **strongest results** in the index for educational attainment in reading, maths and science
- **South Korea** spends over **4%** of its GDP on R&D.

Saudi Arabia

Key findings



Saudi Arabia is ranked 20th in global youth index 2018

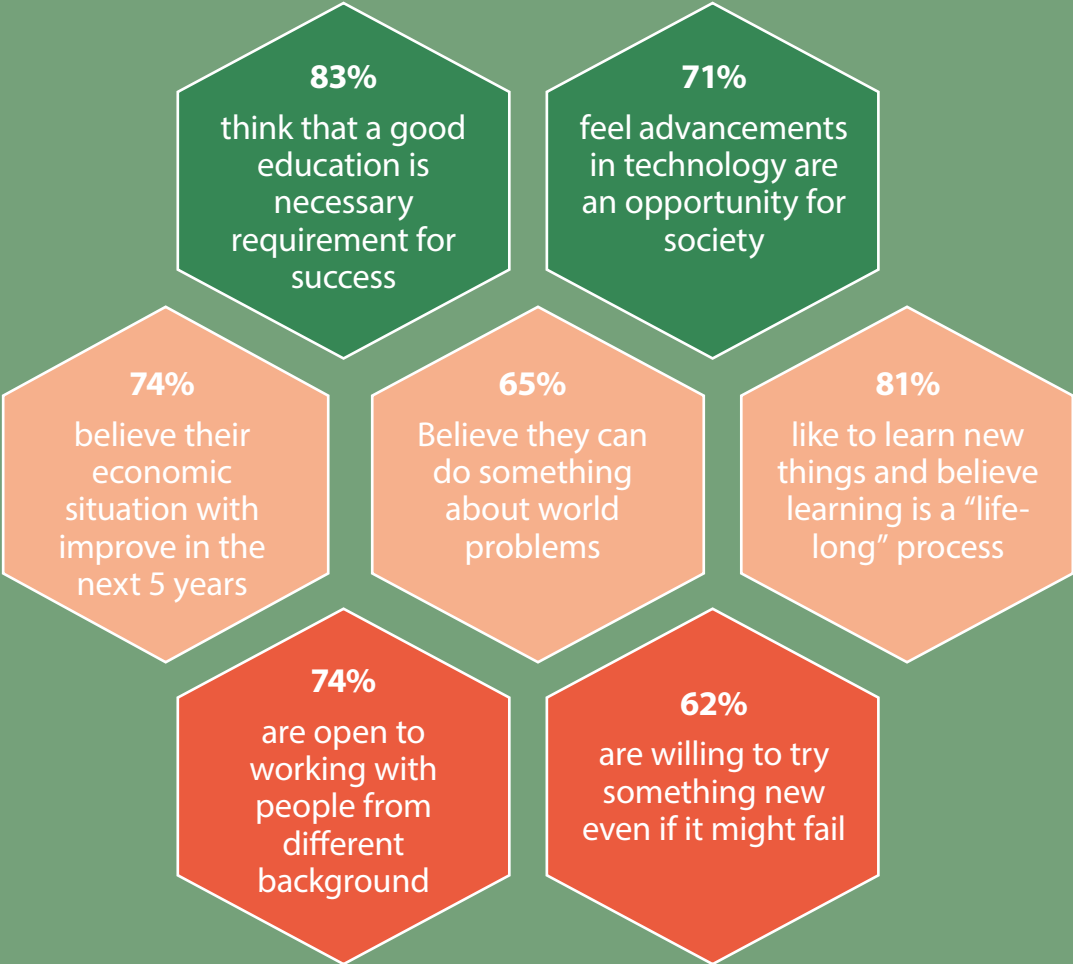


Attitudes of Saudi Youth

- Higher share of agreement than other GYI countries
- Average share of agreement with other GYI countries
- Lower share of agreement than other GYI countries

GYI surveyed 1,000 Saudis aged 18-30

Saudi Arabia's Youth are ranked 15th out of 25 GYI countries on their overall attitude towards the future





Education and skills – Key findings

71% of Saudi youth believe their education gave them the skills needed to get the job they want

SUMMARY

- Saudi Arabia has **made remarkable progress in expanding access to education**, in particular for women
- KSA's has **ambitious policies to instil digital skills** in compulsory education and expand the enrolment of tertiary students in STEM disciplines
- There is currently **a discrepancy between measurements of access and those of quality**, and similarly between those of policy design and the impact of these policies.

Saudi Arabia performs below average in the Education domain, where it is **ranked 15th**. However, it performs better than the other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region examined. It shows a similar performance across the three focus areas of this category: **compulsory education (15th)**, **higher education (14th)** and **digital skills (17th)**.

Indicators	Saudi Arabia	GYI MENA countries average	High-income GYI countries average*
Expected years of schooling # of years <small>Source: UNESCO</small>	16.1	14.2	16.9
Higher education enrollment ratio, female % <small>Source: UNESCO</small>	66.7	57.0	85.1
Quality of universities Score 0-100 <small>Source: QS World University Rankings</small>	45.0	18.9	71.2
STEM education enrollment % <small>Source: UNESCO</small>	23.2	20.3	23.2

*Average of 13 GYI countries classified as high-income economies by the World Bank based on their Gross National Income (GNI) per capita: Argentina, Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Sweden, the UK and the US.



Education and skills – Recommendations



Incorporate 21st-century skills into compulsory education. Developing a broad range of competencies is critical for young people’s ability to face the challenges of a fast-changing world, such as rapid technological advancements, globalization and demographic. 21st century competencies - such as collaboration and information skills, critical and creative thinking, civic literacy and global awareness – should to be **comprehensively incorporated in the education system from an early stage.**



Develop youth’s digital literacy. As digitization continues to gather pace, expanding Saudi youth’s awareness of internet privacy and safety is an important part of developing comprehensive digital competencies for the future. Awareness-raising efforts should include both **direct campaigns to increase public understanding of cybercrime risks** and a **greater focus in the education system on assessing the credibility of sources** (to reduce the impact of disinformation and fake news online).



Incentivize high-quality research in higher education. Access to first-rate higher education is important not only for young people’s ability to develop technical skills and compete in the labor market, but also for the long-term productivity and competitiveness of the country. Increased **financial incentives for researchers published in international academic journals** and adoption of **tenure systems based on research performance** are some of the tools used successfully by countries around the world to incentivize high-quality research in higher education.



Employment – Key findings

69% of Saudi youth think they will be better off than their parents

SUMMARY

- Like their counterparts in other countries, Saudi **youth display optimism in the future** economic performance of their country. However the unemployment is pressing.
- The government has developed a policy framework for **increasing access to internships and work experience**.
- While many youth believe they are **adequately prepared for their current job**, there is room for improvement when it comes to providing the necessary training for continuous development.

Saudi Arabia performs below average and is **ranked 17th** in Employment but performs better than the other MENA countries examined in the GYI. While it is ranked above average for **education-to-work transition (9th)**, its performance is weaker in job quality measurements (13th) and in **work opportunities (21st)**.

Indicators

	Saudi Arabia	GYI MENA countries average	High-income GYI countries average
Youth not in education, employment, or training (NEET) % Source: ILO	 16.1	 24.2	 11.6
Ratio of female to male NEET rate Ratio Source: ILO	 3.9	 2.8	 1.4
Employment in high-skill occupations % Source: ILO	 25.4	 28.1	 38.3



Employment – Recommendations



Improve vocational education to ease education-to-work transition. Addressing youth unemployment is complex and requires a multifaceted approach, but one important aspect is a **high-quality vocational education** developed in coordination and cooperation with businesses and other stakeholders. **Establishing permanent platforms for collaboration** on design and improvement of vocational education is important for ensuring that the system responds to the needs of all relevant stakeholders.



Provide programs for work experience during education. Gaining work experience while studying has a significant effect on future employability. In most countries, internships - both paid, unpaid or for course credit, are offered by some organizations and companies. Several countries covered in the GYI **require students in particular education programs to complete internships** and offer employers **subsidies to develop traineeship programs.**



Incentivize participation in lifelong learning programs as a necessary part of skills development. Reforms to improve curricula and teaching in schools, vocational colleges and universities take years to produce tangible effects on unemployment rates. Moreover, rapid technological change means that there is a need to update skills frequently. Globally, a growing number of governments are offering **access to online courses** that are shorter than traditional degree programs and focus on **teaching specific skills**, particularly technology competencies.



Entrepreneurship – Key findings

66% of Saudi youth think they will be better off than their parents

SUMMARY

- Saudi Arabia has **moderately high levels of early-stage entrepreneurship**, including female entrepreneurship
- **Entrepreneurial ambitions are common** among Saudi Arabia's youth
- Saudi banks are not currently perceived as a **sufficient source of support for entrepreneurship** in the Kingdom
- The country lacks a **comprehensive youth entrepreneurship policy** and supporting youth entrepreneurship networks

Saudi Arabia faces significant challenges in youth entrepreneurship and finds itself just above the bottom five GYI performers (**20th**). The country performs relatively strongly in **entrepreneurial ecosystem (13th)** but lags behind in the remaining two focus areas: **entrepreneurial skills (19th)** and **supporting strategies and institutions for youth entrepreneurship (21st)**.

Indicators	Saudi Arabia	GYI MENA countries average	High-income GYI countries average
Early-stage entrepreneurial activity % <small>Source: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor</small>	11.5	12.3	8.8
New business activity # of new registrations per 1,000 people <small>Source: World Bank</small>	0.4	0.6	4.7
Depth of capital market Score 0-100 <small>Source: International Center for Financial Research (CIIF)</small>	69.7	63.0	80.4
Time to start business # of days <small>Source: World Bank</small>	17.8	12.8	7.9



Entrepreneurship – Recommendations



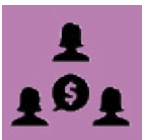
Develop and implement a comprehensive youth entrepreneurship policy. A comprehensive national strategy should identify priority challenges and outline plans and tools to address them in a **holistic and coordinated way across all relevant stakeholders**. Priority areas of focus for Saudi Arabia may include revisions to the regulatory environment, skills development and training, technology transfer, access to finance, and the development of networks.



Develop entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education is key to ensuring that young people develop the **competencies and skills** they need to pursue entrepreneurship and to establish the foundation for fostering a **culture of entrepreneurship**. There are many concerted efforts under way to integrate entrepreneurship education in curricula and promote entrepreneurial training and skills development outside of formal education.



Develop a youth entrepreneurship network. Policymakers can provide essential support to dedicated youth entrepreneurship networks in the form of **funding, linkages** between networks and local governments and **education systems**, and linkages to **international institutions and organizations**.



Develop angel networks. Start-ups in the MENA region generally **lack the advice and funding** needed to progress to more established companies. These barriers are **particularly detrimental for young people** without an existing professional network. One way to address this information and financing gap is to support angel networks, of experienced individual investors who provide finance to start-ups and help to guide and monitor them as they grow.



Global Citizenship – Key findings

72% of Saudi youth feel it is important to learn about different cultures

SUMMARY

- KSA is relatively successful in promoting **student exchanges** but lags behind in foreign-language proficiency and young people’s openness to multiculturalism.
- Young people in Saudi Arabia are moderately **optimistic about their ability to deal with emerging challenges** but pay less attention to global issues.
- The country lacks a **comprehensive youth development policy** establishing a coordinated holistic approach to youth development.

Saudi Arabia faces significant challenges in the development of a sense of global citizenship among young people, where it **ranks 24th** in this domain. The country performs relatively strongly in exposure to **international experiences (10th)**, but lags in the remaining two focus areas: **attitudes toward the future (15th)** and **youth strategies and participation (25th)**.

Indicators	Saudi Arabia	GYI MENA countries average	High-income GYI countries average
Share of higher-education students coming from abroad % <small>Source: UNESCO</small>	4.9	5.7	7.2
Believe climate change is quite or extremely important % <small>Source: GYI survey of 1,000 youth aged 18-30 per country</small>	65.7	71.4	74.8
Believe they will be better off than their parents % <small>Source: Global Youth Index Survey</small>	68.9	71.5	62.2
Donated their time to a local organization % <small>Source: Global Youth Index Survey</small>	20.9	20.3	26.9



Global Citizenship – Recommendations



Develop comprehensive and holistic youth policies. Experiences in several GYI countries show that a **holistic and coordinated approach to youth development** is a key aspect of successful youth policies.



Foster global citizenship education. Given the cross border nature of many of the challenges facing today's youth (such as environmental issues, migration or extremism), there is a growing need to **promote global citizenship education** to enable youth to be **positive agents of change** in their own lives and local communities, as well as in broader regional and global communities.



Consider the viability of youth councils. Youth councils are typically set up by government agencies to canvass youth opinion or provide a **youth perspective on policy issues**, which may range from sectoral policies such as youth health issues or youth in sport to more global policy issues. In Saudi Arabia, youth councils could work with municipal councils to help **increase youth's interest in both domestic and global issues** and to build an attachment between them and their local community.



Promote service learning. To increase rates of volunteering, schools and universities can try to **integrate service learning into their curricula and teaching**. Service learning is a way to combine volunteering and community service with traditional classroom instruction. It has two components: first, students must provide a **service for people in the wider community** and second, the service should be **linked to specific curriculum goals** in school.



Knowledge Economy Ecosystem – Key findings

69% of Saudi youth think that the country's economic situation will improve in the next 5 years

SUMMARY

- Saudi Arabia has a **moderately knowledge-intensive** economy, but its future competitiveness is being undermined by relatively low investment in R&D.
- The country also performs better than its regional peers in the quality of its digital and transport infrastructure, but lags behind world leaders.
- The country has experienced a significant **decline in labor productivity**, undermining the competitiveness and wage prospects of young people.

Saudi Arabia performs below GYI average (**ranked 17th**) in the Knowledge economy ecosystem domain, although it outperforms its regional peers in innovation and infrastructure and connectivity. However, while it is ranked in the middle range globally **for innovation (13th)** and **infrastructure and connectivity (14th)**, its performance has been among the weakest in **economic growth (23rd)**.

Indicators	Saudi Arabia	GYI MENA countries average	High-income GYI countries average
Research and development (R&D) expenditure % of GDP <small>Source: UNESCO</small>	0.8	0.7	2.3
Labor force productivity growth (5-years aggregate) % <small>Source: ILO</small>	-11.7	2.4	1.7
ICT access index Score 0-10 (10 = best access) <small>Source: ITU</small>	6.7	5.9	8.0
Risk related to quality of country's transport infrastructure Score 0-100 (100 = higher risk) <small>Source: EIU</small>	35.0	40.3	17.8



Knowledge Economy Ecosystem – Recommendations



Invest in advanced R&D, especially in productivity-enhancing technologies. Today's **frontier technologies**, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and robotics, have the potential to fundamentally change the structure of today's labor markets and entire economies. Being at the forefront of development and application of these technologies can provide a **crucial productivity boost** and make the domestic economy competitive on the global stage.



Establish R&D centers dedicated to these technologies. In order to convert R&D funding into practical applications, governments are setting up dedicated research institutions to explore AI opportunities and challenges. These institutions may work in **partnership with the public and private sectors**, support **cross-country partnerships** and help to **develop AI talent**.



Develop Saudi Arabia's digital infrastructure. High-quality digital infrastructure, such as broadband, WiFi, mobile and satellite networks as well as data centers, is a key driver of digital connectivity and the development of a competitive and productive economy. Targeted investment strategies should focus on **narrowing existing digital divide** and **carried out cooperatively** by the central government, local governments and private operators.



Conclusion

Saudi Arabia's large youth population is a source of significant economic advantage for the country, when enabled and empowered to reach their full potential.

Education remains foundational to achieving this; the Kingdom needs to build on its recent investments in schools and universities, taking further steps to enhance the quality of what is on offer, as well as its relevance to 21st-century skills. On the top of that, the country should focus on building digital literacy, incentivizing entrepreneurship and fostering young people's active participation in local and global community.

The GYI and the various case studies included in this report will assist in identifying the best policy options to prepare Saudi youth for their future.