

Global Youth Index 2024

Saudi Arabia Special Report



Contents

Preface	3
Introduction	4
1 Saudi Arabia’s Performance In GYI 2024	5
2 Education & Skills	6
3 Entrepreneurship & Employment	9
4 Global Citizenship & Leadership	13
Deep Dive: Youth Participation In Saudi Arabia	15
5 Health & Wellbeing	20
6 National Ecosystem	22
7 Readiness For Emerging Trends	24
Concluding Remarks	26
Acknowledgements	26
Appendices	27
A GYI 2024 Overall Saudi Arabia Results	27
B Methodology Note For Deep Dive On Global Citizenship & Leadership	30
References	32

Preface

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a youthful country with a median age of 27.5 years and its youth (between 18 and 35 years of age) comprises 35% of the total population. This demographic structure positions Saudi youth as key players in the nation's Vision 2030 agenda, which focuses on economic diversification and modernization. Youth have been and will be crucial in driving innovation, entrepreneurship, and cultural transformation in the Kingdom.

At the Mohammed bin Salman Foundation "Misk," our vision is to create a dynamic ecosystem that allows young Saudi talents to shape both the future of Saudi Arabia and the world. This vision underpins our work on designing innovative programs and initiatives that directly target Saudi youth, along with youth-centered institutions that help to empower the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, and scientists. By focusing on youth empowerment, we aim to foster individuals who will take on critical roles in developing sustainable solutions to global challenges and driving impactful change.

This report explains the results of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the 2024 Global Youth Index (GYI), a comprehensive tool designed to measure youth development across a range of key domains, providing a complex view of the conditions shaping young people's lives today. Moreover, it highlights the ecosystem of Saudi Arabia in detail, including youth-related initiatives, narratives and experiences with the aid of impactful youth programs. It aims to present an accurate and in-depth picture of diverse Saudi youth constituencies at a pivotal moment in the Kingdom's social, economic, and cultural transition.

Saudi Arabia's aspirational young population has long been recognized and engaged to drive change at all levels. Join us in championing their success and shaping a future defined by innovation, opportunity, and growth for Saudi youth, the Kingdom, and beyond.

Omar Najjar

Deputy Chief Executive Officer - Mohammed bin Salman Foundation "Misk"



Introduction

Saudi Youth Expectations

The 2022 census reveals Saudis under the age of 30 comprise 63%¹ of the population, significantly higher than the global average (42%). The Kingdom faces both the opportunity and responsibility to harness the potential of its young people to drive national development by engaging with them in meaningful ways. We need to think beyond a 'one size fits all' framework; youth comprise different constituencies with different needs, hopes and priorities.² While various entities in the Kingdom engage young people, only the Misk Foundation has an agenda focused purely on youth.

What is the Global Youth Index (GYI)?

Launched by Misk in 2018, the Global Youth Index (GYI) measures the factors that determine youth development around the world. Youth development is understood as the process that prepares a young person to meet the challenges of a potentially complex future and achieve their full potential. This includes (a) being knowledgeable, (b) being healthy, (c) being enabled to participate in society, and (d) having enhanced opportunities through work, access to productive resources, and a conducive environment for youth to thrive in.³

The GYI provides a tool for stakeholders including policy-makers, researchers, educators, and young people themselves to advance youth development. Building on the previous editions, GYI 2024 assesses youth preparedness across 40 countries – representing 86% of world GDP and 76% of world youth – by combining data with assessments of national policies and young people's perceptions. The GYI structures 151 indicators into six equally weighted domains (listed in the column to the right) that each capture a distinct aspect of youth development, and together offer a comprehensive perspective on the challenges and opportunities that young people face today.

For more about the GYI and its methodology, see the Global Youth Index Report 2024.

How to use this GYI 2024 Saudi Arabia Report?

This report provides a deep dive into the issues affecting Saudi youth, using the results of the GYI to ask what lessons can be learnt to improve youth development in the country. The following chapters discuss Saudi Arabia's results overall and in each of the six domains of the GYI, offering insights, context, and case studies to identify opportunities to improve Saudi youth development.

1 Education & Skills →

- i Access to quality education
- ii Education policies

2 Entrepreneurship & Employment →

- i Entrepreneurial ecosystem
- ii Employment

3 Global Citizenship & Leadership →

- i Exposure to key experiences
- ii Youth strategies and participation

4 Health & Wellbeing →

- i Health of country's youth
- ii Health & wellbeing policies

5 National Ecosystem →

- i Innovation capacity
- ii Economic dynamism
- iii Infrastructure & connectivity
- iv Security & governance

6 Readiness For Emerging Trends →

- i Readiness for the green economy
- ii Readiness for the AI-age
- iii Creativity & culture
- iv Community participation

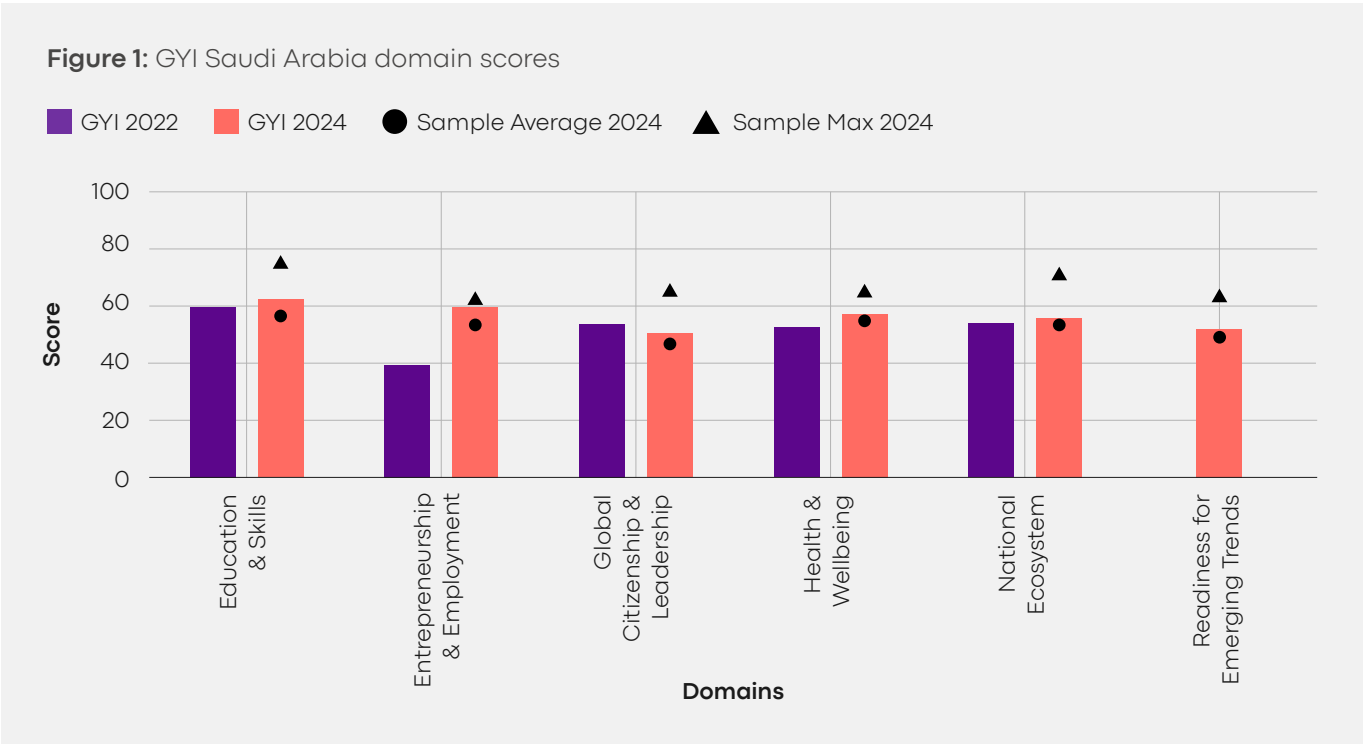
Chapter 1

Saudi Arabia's Performance in GYI 2024

Saudi Arabia performs better in GYI 2024 than the previous edition (2022) – it ranks 14th overall with a score of 56.3, compared to 17th with a score of 52.6.⁴

This improvement under Vision 2030 is visible in areas such as education, skills, and entrepreneurship. As shown in Figure 1, Saudi Arabia's score has increased in four of the five domains covered in both the 2022 and 2024

editions of the GYI.⁵ Scope for improvement remains especially in the Global Citizenship & Leadership and Readiness for Emerging Trends domains.



Five Key Takeaways

-  While the Kingdom is improving on education and skills, other countries are improving more quickly. Saudi Arabia needs to respond by continuing its efforts to strengthen the teaching profession.
-  Saudi Arabia needs to step up its efforts to promote healthy lifestyles and exercise among young people, and break down the social stigma that still surrounds seeking support for mental health issues.
-  Young Saudis are willing to act as ambassadors for the Kingdom, both internationally and domestically. They should be supported by more inclusive programs on global citizenship and leadership.
-  Young Saudis are well positioned to support the Kingdom's ambitions to become a global leader in AI.
-  There is an opportunity to further strengthen young people's readiness to thrive in the green economy.

Chapter 2

Education & Skills

15th
ranking
(62.2)



2.1 GYI Saudi Arabia Domain Results

Saudi Arabia has long history of investing in education, spending SAR 195 billion in 2024. Policies focus on improving kindergarten participation, expanding school spaces and enhancing teacher training, along with

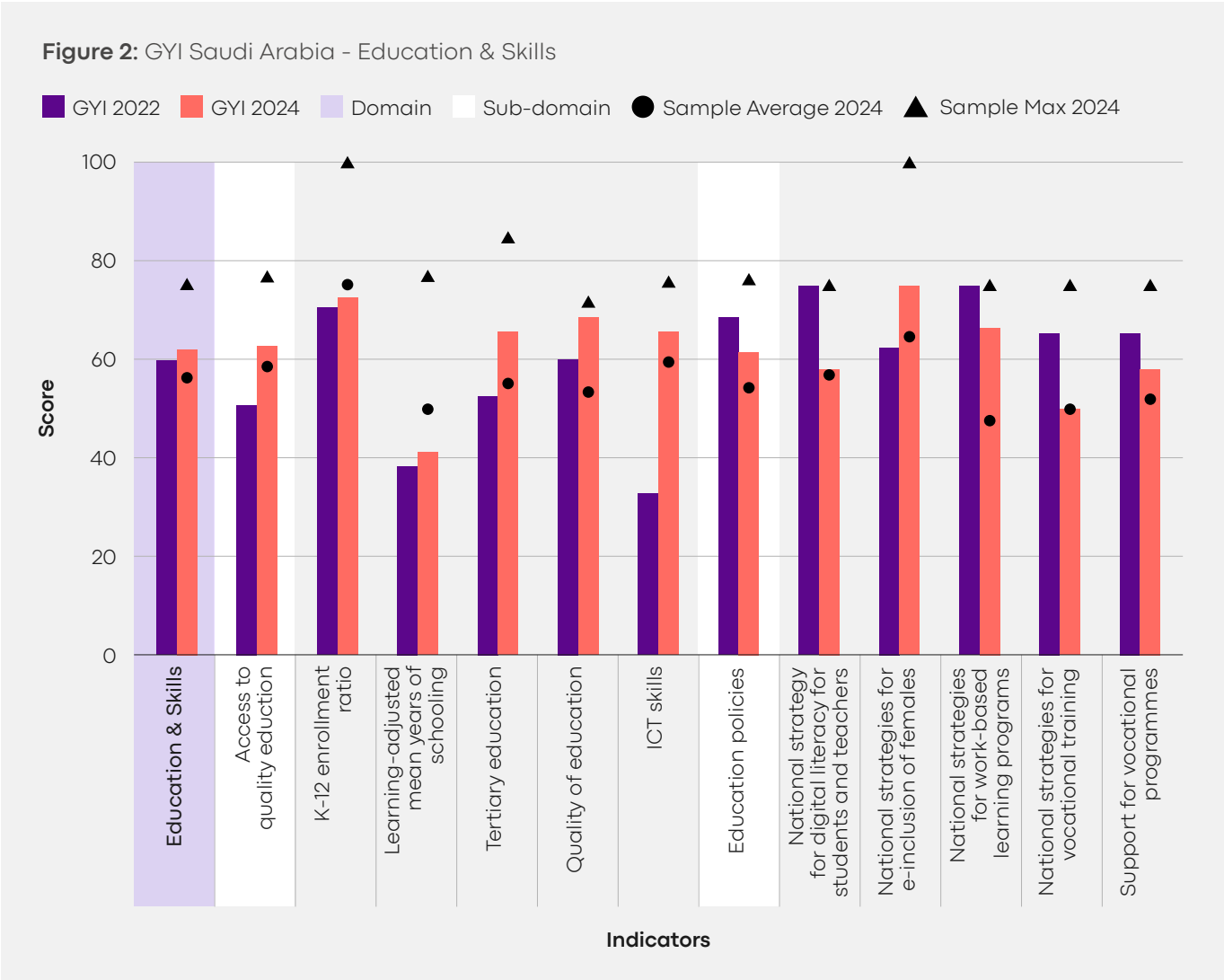
commitments to invest in upgrading schools and align education with the digital strategy of Vision 2030.⁶ While the Kingdom improved its score (62.2) in the Education & Skills domain in GYI 2024, its rank dropped from 10th to 15th.

Table 1: GYI 2024 Education & Skills: Top 15

Domain Ranking					
1	 Australia	75.5	9	 Italy	68.3
2	 Germany	71.2	10	 South Korea	68.2
3	 Sweden	71.0	11	 United States	66.9
4	 Spain	70.6	12	 China	63.4
5	 France	69.6	13	 Türkiye	63.1
6	 Denmark	69.5	14	 United Arab Emirates (UAE)	63.0
=7	 Canada	69.4	15	 Saudi Arabia	62.2
=7	 United Kingdom	69.4			

The Kingdom does especially well on ICT skills (ranking 6th), and work-based learning (2nd).





2.2 Insights: Education & Skills

Vision 2030 aims to equip young nationals with the skills to contribute to the Kingdom’s transition to a knowledge-based economy. Technological innovation is rapidly changing the types of skills required,⁷ which calls for a comprehensive workforce strategy.⁸ The Kingdom’s approach to education, from pre-kindergarten to

university, aims to empower Saudi youth to be globally competitive. This is yielding results: Saudi students won awards at the International Invention Show 2024 and International Science and Tech Competitions 2024, for example, and were selected for the prestigious Rhodes Trust Scholarships for 2025.



Success Stories

Case Study: The Saudi Logistics Academy

The Saudi Logistics Academy, established in 2021, trains young Saudis to develop their skills in the logistics sector,⁹ which is increasingly important to the national economy.¹⁰ Three regional branches have been established, with more to follow. New jobs in logistics are expected to jump from 16,500 in 2024 to 36,000 by 2030.

36,000

new jobs in logistics are expected by 2030, up from 16,500 in 2024.

Lessons Learned and Moving Forward

Continuous and lifelong learning are vital for young Saudis to stay up to date with evolving trends and remain relevant, employable, and resilient in a rapidly changing Kingdom.¹¹ Innovative approaches are needed to transcend divisions between academic, technical,

and vocational education. Decision-makers need to listen to young people's ideas about education and skills development. For example, Saudi Extracurriculars for Students is a nonprofit organization that connects Saudi youth activities such as community service, internships, music, art and culture.

Insights: Education Policies

Vision 2030 refers to the benefits of digital transformation and the need for digital inclusion, with a focus on vulnerable groups.¹² Saudi Arabia's Digital Learning Strategy focuses on integrating technology into the education system at all levels through blended and personalized learning, and the use of digital resources and platforms to enhance outcomes and teacher training.¹³ The King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Project for General Education Development aims to integrate ICT skills in

school curricula, while the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology's Digital Skill Framework incorporates 102 skills. The Curriculum Development Program and Human Capability Development Program both seek to integrate technology into education and develop teachers' competencies. However, there is a need for more focus on the youth specifically and their skills, such as knowledge of emerging technologies.



Success Stories

Case Study: Saudi Electronic University

Established in 2011, the Saudi Electronic University¹⁴ was the first wholly electronic tertiary education institution in the Arab world, offering bachelor and graduate programs adapted to the needs of the labor market. In a blended learning approach, 25% of course time is meant for face-to-face classroom learning, with 75% online.¹⁵ Headquartered in Riyadh, the university has 15 regional offices across Saudi Arabia, enabling it to reach young Saudis beyond the main cities.



الجامعة السعودية الإلكترونية
SAUDI ELECTRONIC UNIVERSITY
2011-1432

Lessons Learned and Moving Forward

An OECD report highlights that the Kingdom has achieved universal enrolment, i.e., all children of the age group of six to fourteen years should be enrolled in the school register, at primary and lower secondary levels, but many school leavers lack basic competences. Strengthening the teaching profession is one way to address this issue,

and the OECD report highlights the potential of initiatives introduced by Saudi Arabia, including new standards, a post-graduate program, and reconfiguring the role of teacher supervisors.¹⁶ Additional priorities include further broadening inclusion in education policies to address issues related to disability and provincial versus urban contexts, and expanding work-based learning and qualifications outside the vocational system.

Chapter 3

Entrepreneurship & Employment

8th
ranking
(59.7)



3.1 GYI Saudi Arabia Domain Results

Saudi Arabia ranks eighth in the Entrepreneurship & Employment domain. Its improvement in score, from 39.4

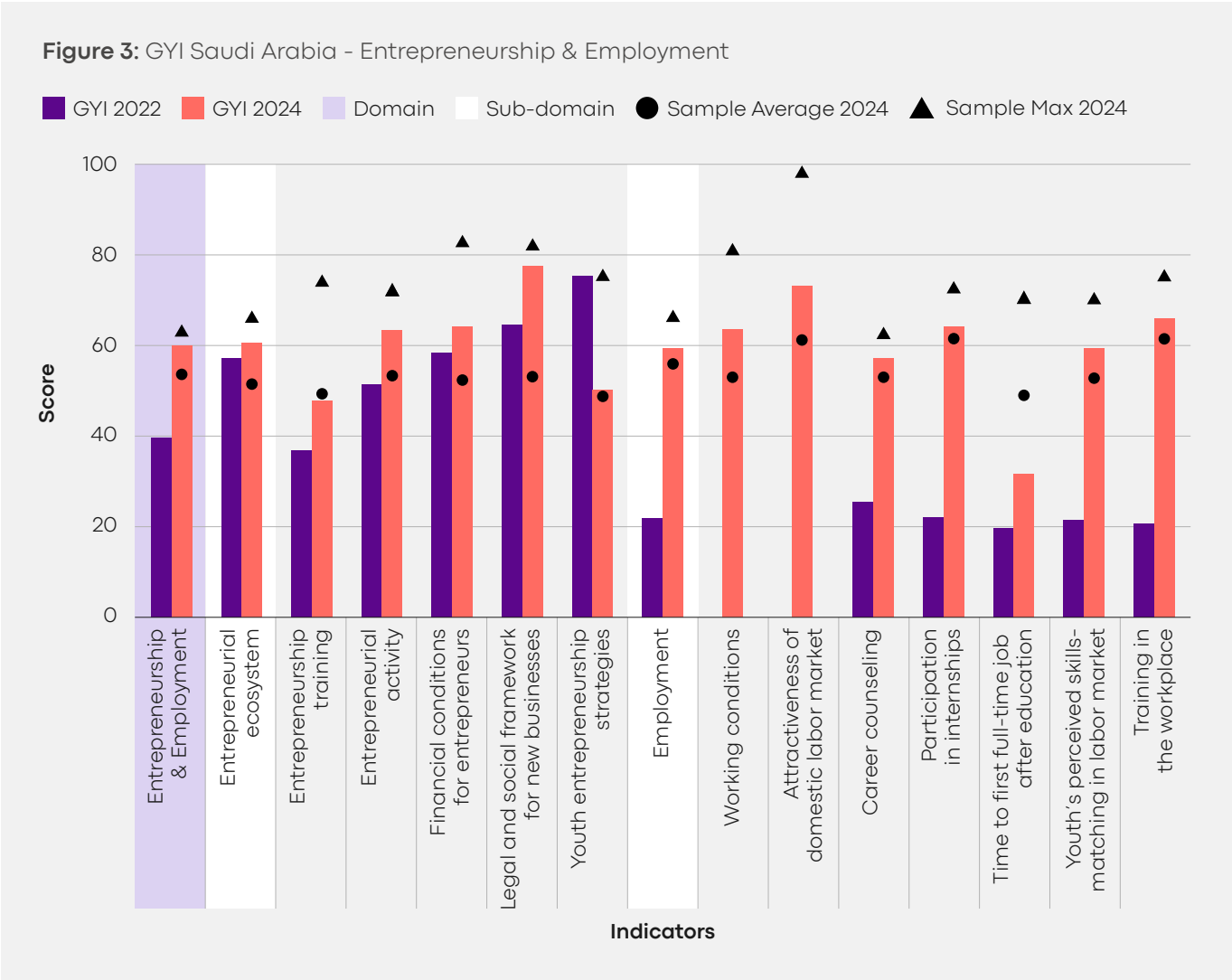
in GYI 2022 to 59.7 in GYI 2024, was the highest of any country in this domain.

Table 2: GYI 2024 Entrepreneurship & Employment: Top 10

Domain Ranking					
1	 United Arab Emirates	62.8	7	 China	60.2
2	 United States	62.5	8	 Saudi Arabia	59.7
3	 Sweden	62.0	9	 Denmark	59.3
4	 Australia	61.8	10	 Indonesia	58.3
5	 Canada	61.6	10	 France	58.3
6	 United Kingdom	61.3			

Saudi Arabia's advance was especially strong in the Employment sub-domain.





3.2 Insights: Saudi Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2023/2024 Report stresses the importance of entrepreneurial education,¹⁷ an area in which the Saudi government has invested heavily. GEM’s 2023 Saudi Entrepreneurial Activity Review highlights that Saudi Arabia has high awareness of entrepreneurship and a supportive environment¹⁸ with

numerous incentives, grants and funding opportunities for young entrepreneurs.¹⁹ In particular, Saudi Arabia’s wide-ranging institutional reforms to promote women’s engagement have succeeded in changing cultural norms: women now lead 45% of SMEs in the Kingdom and make up 40% of digital entrepreneurs.²⁰



Entrepreneurial Support

Monsha'at, the Small and Medium Enterprises General Authority, provides various programs to support entrepreneurs at different stages.²¹ Monsha'at's University Start Up Program and Entrepreneurship Clubs Activation Program help university students who have started companies,²² as does the Entrepreneurial Institute at King

Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals.²³ Monsha'at events, such as Biban and the CEOs Forum, target young entrepreneurs.²⁴ Wa'ed Ventures, backed by Aramco, supports Saudi entrepreneurs with resources, strategic partnerships, and market intelligence.²⁵ Nefafat, the Social Development Bank's entrepreneurial finance program, also facilitates access to financing for young Saudi entrepreneurs.²⁶



Success Stories Case Study: Tamara

Tamara is the region's leading fintech platform for shopping, payments and banking, and the Kingdom's first fintech unicorn.²⁷ Abdulmajeed Alsukhan, CEO and Co-Founder of Tamara, says the government is empowering tech startups because it knows it cannot expect major innovations from incumbent companies. He points out that Saudi Arabia has seen a tremendous growth of venture capital funds and startups in the last few years and hopes that Tamara can inspire young nationals to develop their own successful, innovative businesses.²⁸



Lessons Learned and Moving Forward

First-time entrepreneurs need to surround themselves with knowledgeable people who can help them develop their ideas and skills.²⁹ The GEM report highlights that over 19% of 18 to 24-year-olds in Saudi Arabia are engaged in entrepreneurship, and 95% consider entrepreneurship

to be a good career choice.³⁰ GYI 2024 shows that Saudi Arabia has improved its entrepreneurial training, but Saudi entrepreneurs can still be held back by not knowing where to go for information and advice. Increasing awareness of programs and access to mentors is key to unlocking the potential of Saudi youth.

Insights: Saudi Employment

As shown in Table 3, unemployment among Saudi youth fell to 7.1% in Q2 2024, nearly reaching the Vision 2030 target of 7% and significantly outperforming the global average (13.6%)³¹ and developed countries such as Spain (33%) and Italy (29%). These figures back up the progress

made in GYI 2024, highlighting the effectiveness of Saudi Arabia's initiatives on employment and skills development for youth. Getting more young Saudis into jobs will help to increase long-term GDP.³²

Table 3: Employment figures and targets

	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	Vision 2030 Target
Overall Saudi unemployment rate	7.6%	7.1%	7%
Female labor force participation	35.8%	35.4%	30%
Overall employment to population ratio for Saudi nationals	42.4%	47.2%	N/A



Success Stories

Case Study: Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development - Flexible Work, Remote Work, and Freelancing Programs

Positive developments in the Saudi labor market reflect three new initiatives of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development. First, the Flexible Work Program enables workers and private sector employers to engage in flexible contracts, with wages based on an hourly rate, in response to urgent and seasonal needs. Second, the Remote Work program aims to help women and individuals with

disabilities in particular to find job opportunities in fields such as translation, programming, customer service, telephone sales, and data entry.³³ Third, the Freelancing Program provides self-employed individuals with an official certificate that can be used to access social insurance benefits, open a bank account, and use digital payment channels.

Lessons Learned and Moving Forward

Employment remains a top priority for the government, with Vision 2030 including a variety of labor market reforms and programs such as those offered by Hadaf, under the umbrella of the Human Resources Development Fund, providing guidance, training and empowerment services to develop the Saudi workforce.³⁴ For a long

time, Saudi employment was concentrated in the public sector, but labor market dynamics are changing: more Saudis now work in the private sector than in the public sector, and the share of private sector employment is expected to increase further.³⁵ Government policies are supporting Saudi industries to adopt cutting-edge technologies to remain competitive in the evolving global employment landscape.³⁶

Chapter 4

Global Citizenship & Leadership

14th
ranking
(50.4)

4.1 GYI Saudi Arabia Domain Results

Saudi Arabia exhibits uneven progress in the Global Citizenship & Leadership domain, with especially strong performance in indicators such as policies promoting,

studying abroad, skills for 2030, and national youth policies. Most importantly, discussions related to these critical areas are ongoing and increasingly involve Saudi youth.



4.2 Insights: Global Citizenship & Leadership

Global Citizenship

Economically, environmentally, socially and politically, humans are linked as never before. The forces of modern information, communications, and transportation technologies are helping people become global citizens, seeing themselves as part of an emerging world community and their actions as helping to define this community's values and practices.³⁷

Leadership Development

Saudi Arabia's National Strategy for Youth, launched in January 2024 under Vision 2030, aims to help young nationals shape their personal development in line with local and global priorities.³⁸ It incorporates issues related to global citizenship, leadership development, and civic engagement.³⁹

Saudi Arabia has a long history of sending its students overseas. The most well-known program is the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Scholarship, formerly King Abdullah Scholarship, which enables over 130,000 young Saudis to study in leading international universities.⁴⁰ Academic disciplines are selected based on the needs of the governmental and private sector organizations that fund these students. Other opportunities for studying abroad include exchange programs with top universities, primarily in the USA, run by King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals.⁴¹ Saudi Aramco also has programs that sponsor overseas study for young Saudis.⁴²

Leadership Programs

Examples of leadership programs include Hadaf Academy for Leadership, which aims to develop future national leaders in the private sector in line with the human capital development goals of Vision 2030.⁴³ The Saudi Young Leaders Exchange Program, a three-week experience in the USA, involved 282 young Saudi leaders from 2014 to 2023.⁴⁴ Since 2010, the King Abdullah University for Science and Technology Saudi Leadership Program has enhanced the capacity of leaders across all sectors to drive change, build networks, and pursue personal growth through interactive learning sessions.⁴⁵ The Ministry of Economy and Planning's National Capability Development Initiative includes four programs that aim to empower Saudi youth, develop their capabilities, activate their role, and prepare the next generation of leading economists.⁴⁶

Misk Global Citizenship & Leadership Initiatives

Did you know that the Misk Foundation offers the Kingdom's premier leadership programs? These include Ignited voices, 10x Saudi Leaders and Misk Fellowship, all of which help new leaders develop mindsets and skills to multiply their impacts.



Success Stories

Case Study: Salam for Cultural Communication Youth Leadership Program

In its seventh edition in 2024, Salam's intensive three-month Youth Leadership Program develops young Saudis' personal skill sets, empowering them to represent the Kingdom internationally and positively influence global forums. Entry to the program is highly competitive and attracts applicants from both public and private sectors, including entrepreneurs and recent graduates. Every year, 70 young Saudis are chosen to participate, with equal numbers of women and men.⁴⁷



Lessons Learned and Moving Forward

Saudi Arabia's digital natives are changing the outdated perceptions at times associated with the region. The integration of Saudi youth across various sectors represents a best-practice model that can be adopted

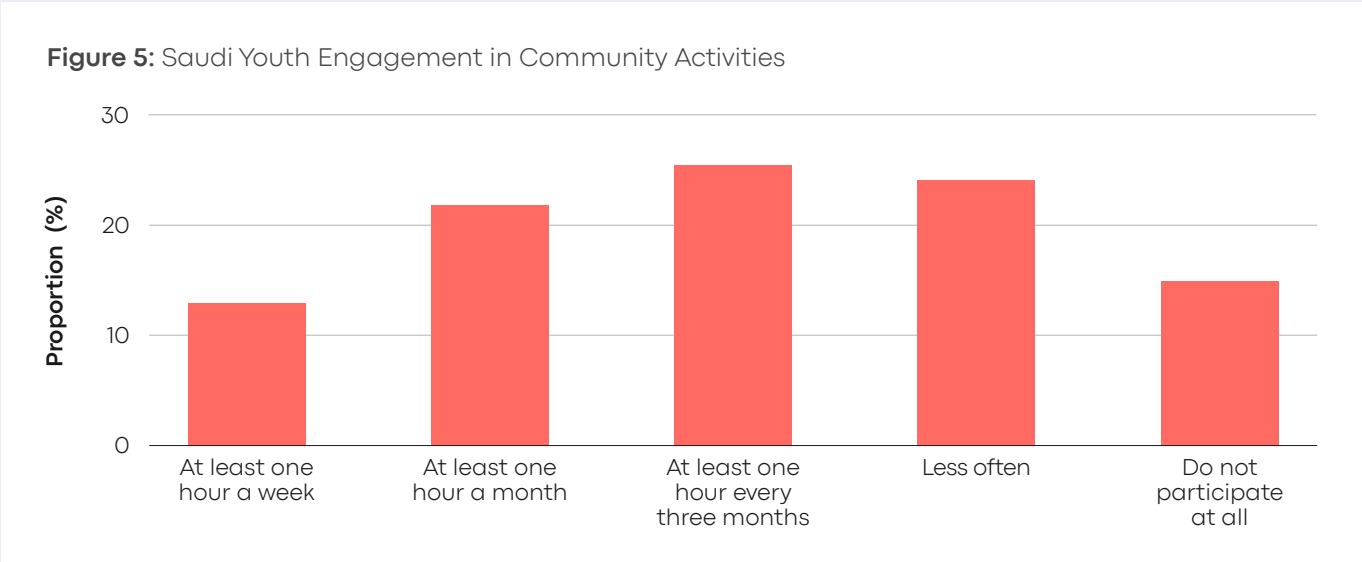
by other countries with large youth populations. Many young Saudis are able and willing to act as impactful ambassadors for the Kingdom, both overseas and domestically. While programs are abundant, there is a need to make them more inclusive to those from different regions and academic backgrounds.

Deep Dive: Youth Participation in Saudi Arabia

To better understand the drivers behind the Saudi Arabia GYI 2024 results, the Global Youth Survey was expanded for Saudi youth to explore how Saudi youth engage in their communities and decision-making.

Active citizenship, as defined in this context, extends beyond fulfilling civil duties; it reflects a deep sense of societal responsibility, leveraging knowledge and skills to contribute to public prosperity. The survey captured insights from 1,779 Saudi nationals aged 18 to 30 (see Appendix B for methodology).

The findings reveal strong community involvement among Saudi youth, with 59% having participated in or attended activities aimed at addressing local challenges over the past year. Notably, as shown in Figure 5, 13% of respondents reported spending at least one hour a week participating on community-focused activities such as projects, local charities, non-profit organizations, religious organizations, or voluntary groups.



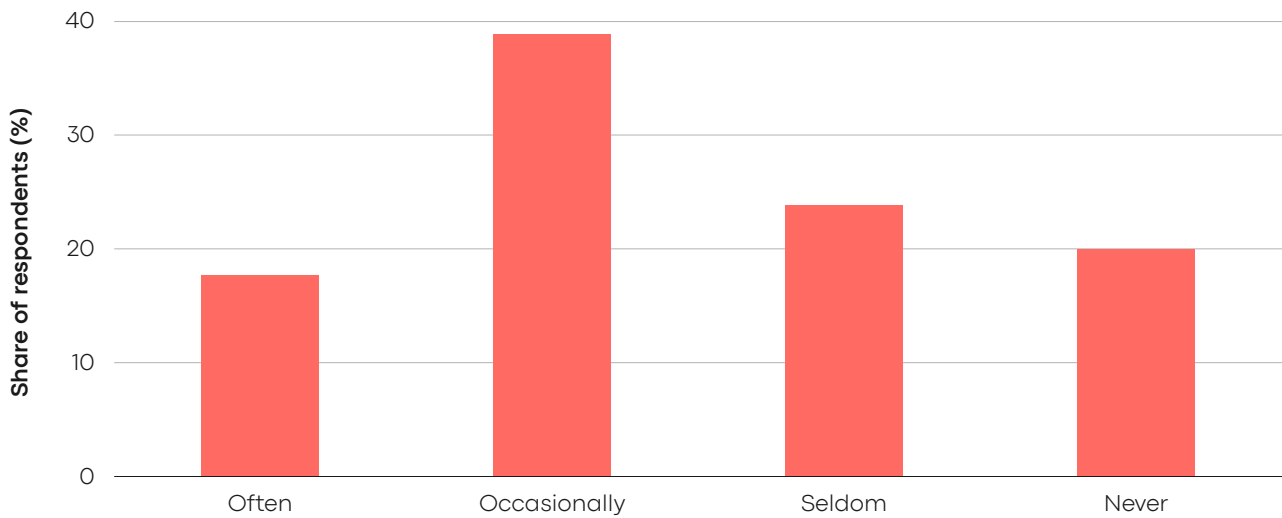
Participants engaged in community activities were asked about their involvement in decision-making related to youth issues. As shown in Figure 6, 18% of respondents reported frequent participation in decision-making, 39% engaged occasionally, and 43% rarely took part, indicating a significant portion of youth with limited involvement.

Unsurprisingly, the highest level of engagement was from Riyadh, where 62% of respondents participated occasionally or often. This is likely due to greater opportunities for youth participation in the capital, where many organizations have their headquarters. It is also not surprising that youth participation in decision-making from provinces such as Al Jouf and the Northern Borders were particularly low as these areas have smaller populations in contrast to the main urban centers like Riyadh, Jeddah-Makkah and the Dammam-Khobar-Dhahran conurbation in the Eastern Province.

This highlights the impact of population density in the Kingdom, where greater opportunities for Saudi youth are concentrated in urban areas. However, the fact that ‘occasionally’ was the most common response across the Kingdom suggests that the urban-rural divide may not be as pronounced as often assumed.

Interestingly, the predominance of ‘occasionally’ responses was consistent across age, gender and self-assessed income levels, suggesting that opportunities for engagement are perceived as similarly accessible to all young people throughout the Kingdom. It is worth noting, however, that varying understandings and perceptions of what decision-making entails (among different youth groups) may affect youth perceptions of accessibility to these opportunities.

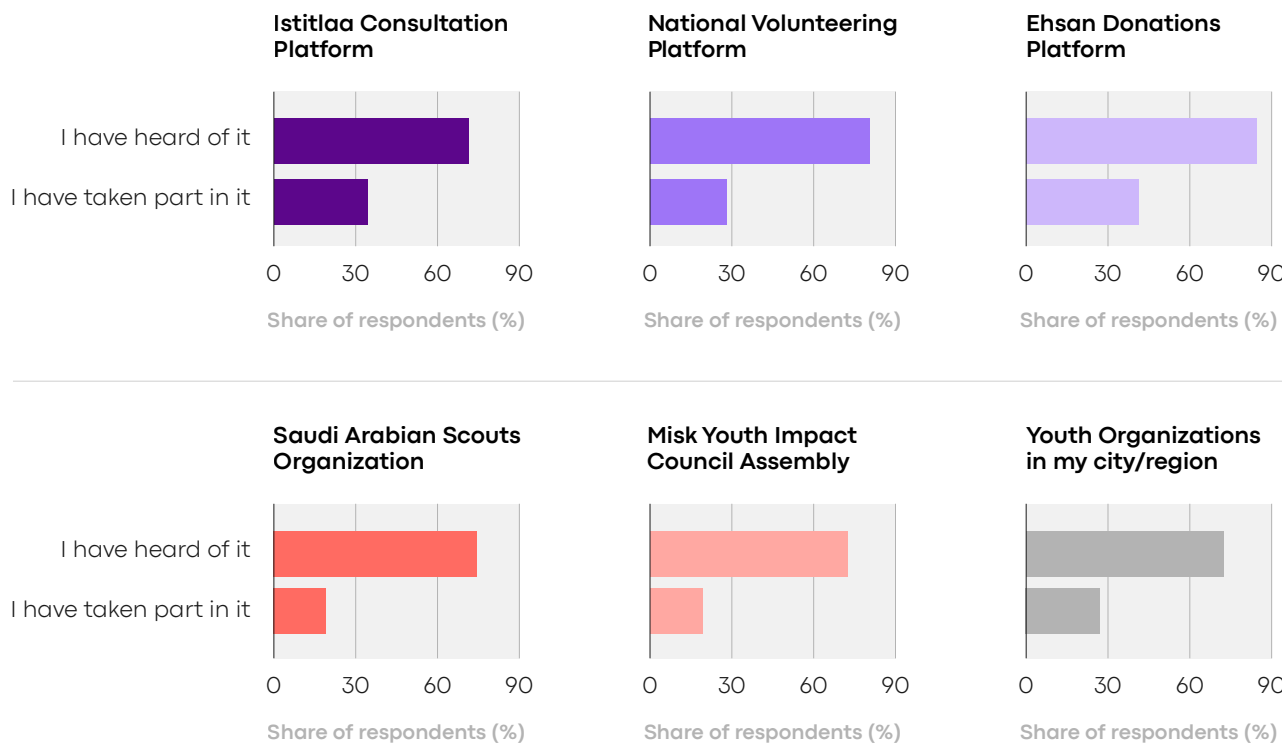
Figure 6: Saudi Youth Participation in Decision-Making on Youth-Related Issues in the Past Year



Survey participants were asked specifically about five platforms – Istitlaa Consultation Platform, National Volunteering Platform, Ehsan Donations Platform, Saudi Arabian Scouts Organization, and Misk Youth Impact Council Assembly – along with other youth platforms in their city or region. As shown in Figure 7, these platforms are well recognized, with between 71% and 84% of young Saudis having heard of each of these institutions, and between 19% and 41% having taken part in the institutions’ activities. The Ehsan Donations Platform scored highest

on both counts, followed by the National Volunteering Platform for recognition (80%) and the Istitlaa Consultation Platform for participation (34%). Again, the highest scores were from the Riyadh and Makkah (including Jeddah) regions, where more youth-related entities are based, with a large disparity between these two locations and the rest of the Kingdom. These were followed by the Eastern Province, Asir and Qassim, again reflecting Saudi population density.

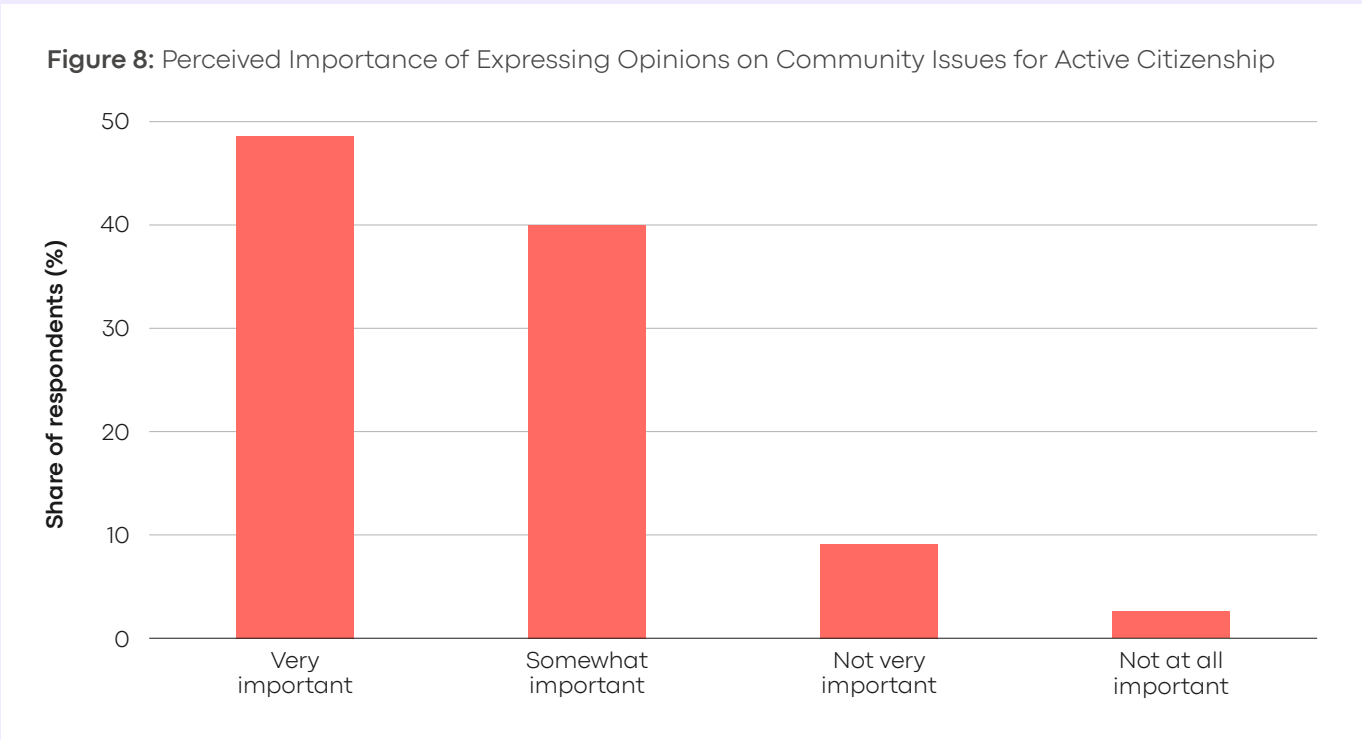
Figure 7: Young People’s Awareness and Participation in Selected Youth Platforms





The survey results confirm that large majorities of Saudi youth want to voice their opinions and have their voices heard. When asked whether active citizenship involves expressing an opinion on community issues, 89% said

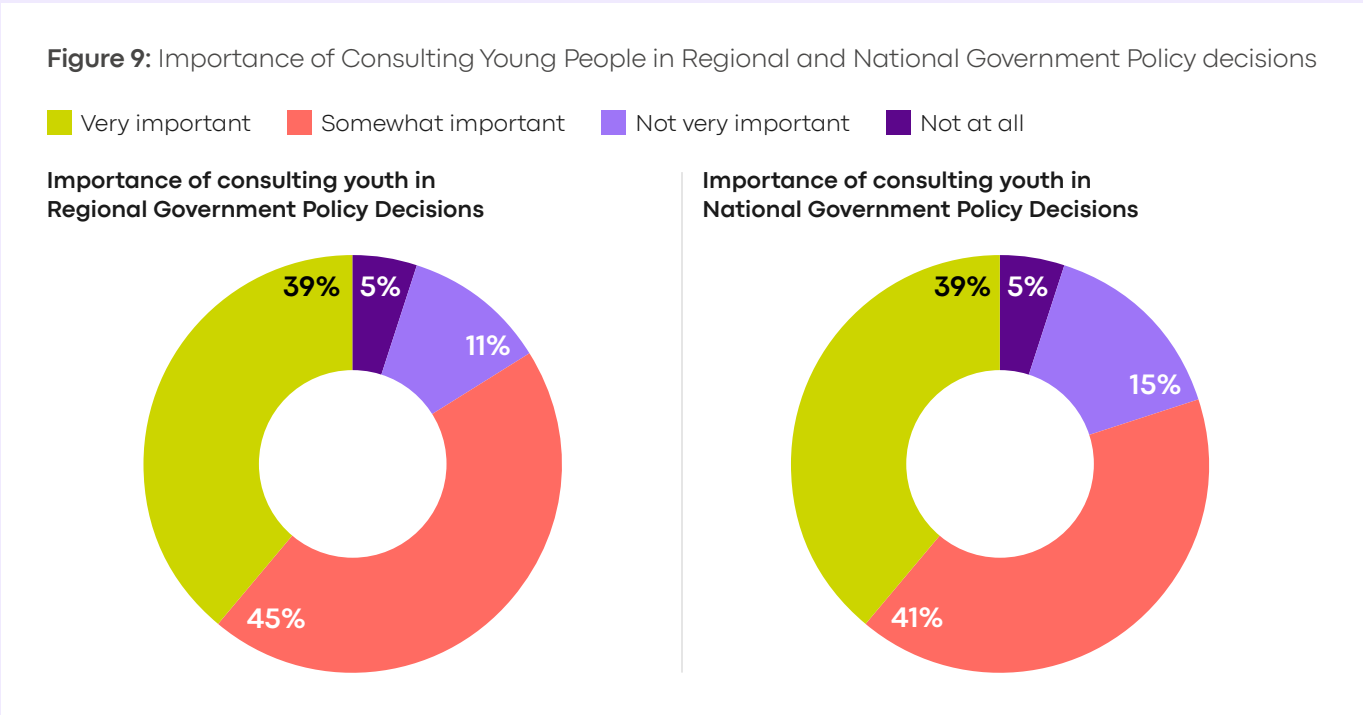
this was either ‘very important’ or ‘somewhat important’ as shown in Figure 8. This indicates an understanding of community issues that youth consider crucial to their everyday lives, and that they feel their input could improve.



Similarly, youth believe their input is both necessary and desirable when it comes to being consulted about decisions related to policies that affect them. 85% of respondents said consulting them is either ‘very important’ or ‘somewhat important’ at regional level and 80% at national level as shown in Figure 9. Responses were similar across regions. The question here is whether individuals from diverse youth communities know how, where or who to talk to regarding the issues they consider important.

It is interesting to compare this finding with the GYI question regarding perceptions of representation

by decision-makers. When asked whether decision-makers in their community consider young people’s opinions when making decisions that affect the future, 57% of Saudi youth agreed, while only 17% disagreed. This indicates a generally positive perception of representation among youth, suggesting that young people feel like their voices are acknowledged in the decision-making process. However, the strong desire for consultation highlights the importance of ensuring that youth not only feel represented but also have clear pathways to engage with decision-makers.

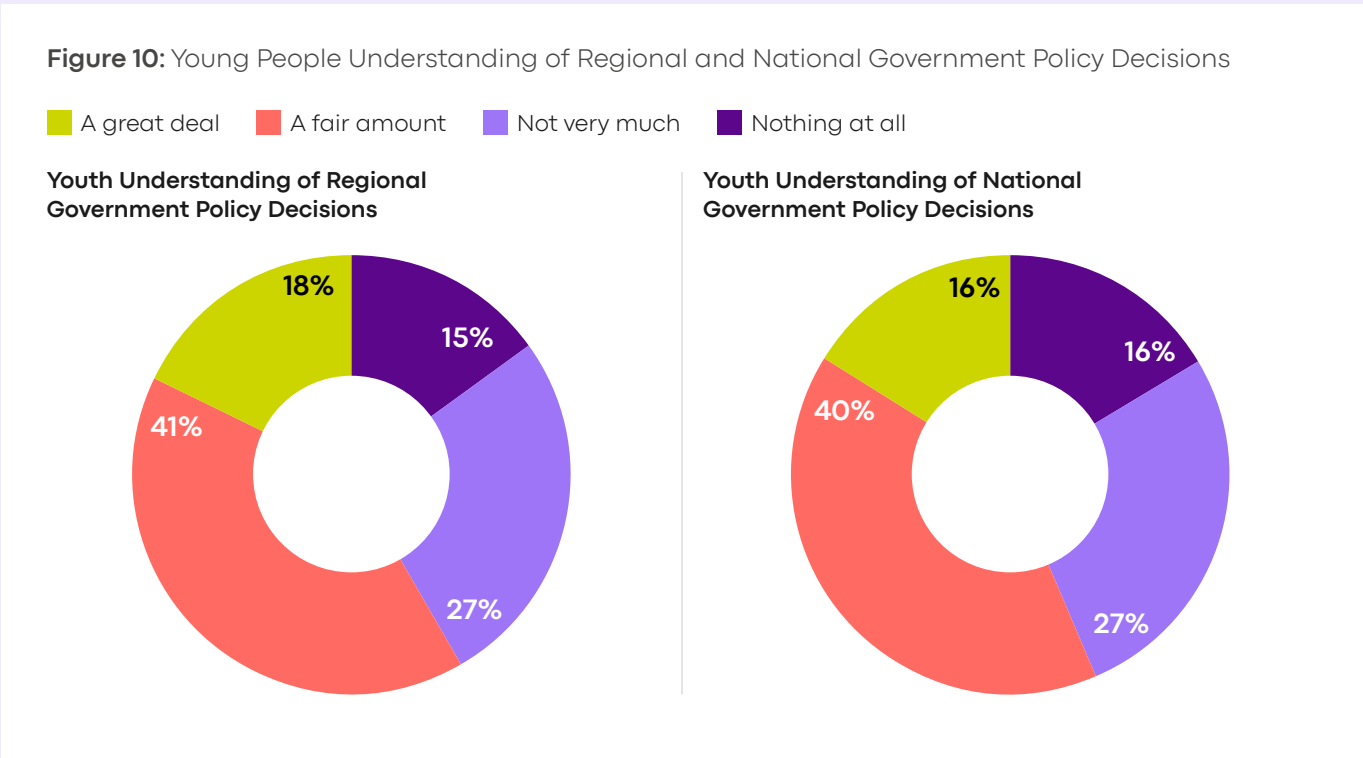


When asked about their understanding of government policy-making at a regional and national level, the most common response – 41% and 40% respectively – was ‘a fair amount’ as shown in Figure 10. For regional policy-making, this proportion was consistent across regions, while those in the main cities were most likely to indicate familiarity with national policy-making processes.

Research indicates that youth are invested in Vision 2030, which necessitates an understanding of government policies at both regional and national levels. However, over 40% of respondents across all locations indicated

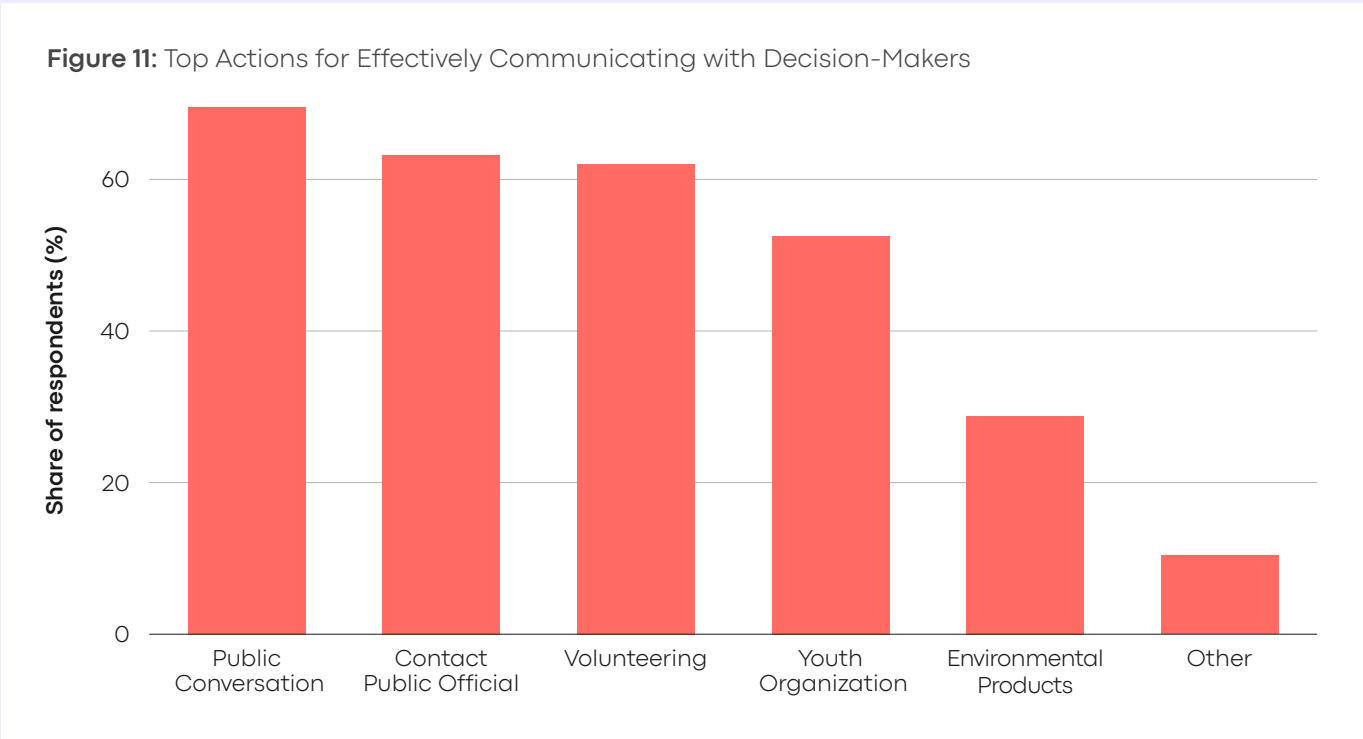
limited or no understanding of government policy-making at either level. This knowledge gap poses a challenge to meaningful youth participation in governance and decision-making in the future.

Interestingly, despite significant differences in population density and regional opportunities, such as between Riyadh and Jizan, participants’ responses showed remarkable similarity. This points to an emerging consensus among Saudi youth on issues affecting their lives, driven by a blend of local and national discussions within social groups and on social media platforms like Snapchat and TikTok.



In the final additional survey question, young Saudi participants were asked to identify the most effective actions to get their voice out to decision-makers. As shown in Figure 11, the most popular responses were taking part in a public conversation, contacting a public

official, and volunteering for a non-profit organization or initiative. Technology has made all these options easier, with volunteering opportunities being shared via social media and public officials frequently being contactable on X or WhatsApp.



Taken together, these findings point to the importance of ensuring that youth know how to communicate with decision-makers effectively, and that initiatives to engage youth in decision-making – such as the Misk Youth Impact

Council Assembly – ensure they include the broadest range of Saudi youth, including individuals from all regions across the Kingdom and from diverse educational, socioeconomic, and employment backgrounds.

Key Insights

- 1 Broad Consensus on Youth Consultation.**
- 2 Structural Gaps in Participation:** The data suggests potential structural gaps or inconsistent opportunities for Saudi youth to transition from occasional to sustained participation in decision-making processes. Population density appears to impact availability of opportunities.
- 3 Urban-Centric Opportunities and Awareness:** A combination of greater youth opportunities, as well as more awareness of these is centered in the main cities, especially Riyadh. However, youth sentiment regarding their desire to be consulted is similar across the Kingdom.
- 4 Importance of Regional and Local Issues:** Regional/local and community issues matter for many Saudi youth.

Recommendations

- 1** More initiatives like the Misk Youth Assembly should be conducted with a wider range of Saudi youth across the Kingdom including individuals from diverse educational, socioeconomic, and employment backgrounds. These could be held on a regular basis, e.g., annually to map youth perceptions and narratives.
- 2** Programs and initiatives related to understanding and awareness of how youth can participate in decision making should be expanded to include a broader segment of Saudi youth.
- 3** Saudi youth need to know how to communicate with decision makers effectively. This requires providing them with knowledge and the means to communicate.

Chapter 5

Health & Wellbeing

16th
ranking
(57.4)



5.1 GYI Saudi Arabia Domain Results

Saudi Arabia advanced in all indicators in the Health & Wellbeing domain except the promotion of physical and mental wellbeing. The 28.3 increase in “other risky

behaviors beyond substance abuse”, in particular driving while using a mobile phone, should be of concern.⁴⁸



5.2 Insights: Health & Wellbeing

The World Health Organization defines health as a state of physical, mental and social wellbeing, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. By implication, mental health is more than just the absence of mental disorders or disabilities.⁴⁹ Health services in Saudi Arabia are provided by the Ministry of Health’s hospitals and primary healthcare centers, which account for 62% of inpatient care, other governmental institutions (20%) and the private sector (17%).⁵⁰ Organizations such as Saudi Arabian Wellness Association also support health goals.⁵¹

Many young Saudis have an unhealthy lifestyle, with high consumption of fast food and soft drinks alongside lack of physical exercise leading to problems such as obesity, diabetes, early risk of cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, and rapid fatigue.⁵² Tobacco is used by 28.4% of Saudi males and 2.1% of females.⁵³ Deaths from traffic accidents have halved since 2016,⁵⁴ though the use of mobile phones while driving remains a serious problem; in 2021, nearly four in five Saudi drivers admitted to researchers that they use their phone while driving.⁵⁵

Promotion of Physical Wellbeing

Physical education is part of the Saudi National Curriculum Framework,⁵⁶ highlighting that youth sports are critical for health and wellbeing. The Mahd Sports Academy has been set up to train young sportspeople for Saudi national teams.⁵⁷ In the last decade, the Kingdom has witnessed the growth of gyms and sports clubs for both men and women. Female graduates have access to career opportunities in fitness and health centers, sports marketing, sports media, and sports facility management, though women's participation in sporting activities remains relatively low.⁵⁸

Promotion of Mental Wellbeing

A 2023 study found that over 40% of Saudi youth had had a mental health condition at some point in their life, but under 15% of them had received treatment.⁵⁹ Despite awareness campaigns on the importance of early detection of mental illnesses,⁶⁰ mental health issues are still considered contentious among some Saudi constituencies. Studies find that barriers to seeking mental health services include stigma, lack of awareness,

concerns about confidentiality, limited availability of services, and negative attitudes toward professional help.⁶¹ According to a 2023 report by the King Khalid Foundation, specialized care centers for mental disabilities are not available in some regions of the Kingdom.⁶² Saudi Arabia's low score in GYI 2024 for the promotion of mental well-being points to the need for increased government-funded access to mental health care.

Protection of Youth with Physical and Mental Disabilities

The most recent survey of people with disabilities in Saudi Arabia, in 2017, indicates that 700,000 Saudis aged 15 to 59 years have at least one disability.⁶³ A UNESCO assessment highlights the existence of disability inclusion in Saudi special needs curricula.⁶⁴ Saudi law also requires employers who employ 25 or more workers to ensure that at least 4% of their total workforce is comprised of professionally qualified individuals with disabilities, when the nature of their business allows.⁶⁵



Success Stories

Case Study: Abdulrahman Al Qurashi

The athlete Abdulrahman Al Qurashi won a bronze medal in the men's 100 meters at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games, and a gold medal at the 2024 games in Paris. Abdulrahman said that his journey would not have happened without the support of his family, coaches, and staff, as well as backing from the Saudi government.⁶⁶



Lessons Learned and Moving Forward

Barriers to physical activity among young Saudis – including time constraints, lack of facilities and resources, low self-efficacy, and lack of social support – need to be further understood.⁶⁷ While mental health problems are common among young people, mental health still receives only limited attention in the Arab region.⁶⁸ Both physical and mental health can be improved through

educational initiatives and awareness programs. Public and private sector entities, health care providers, educational institutions, the non-profit sector, and research centers should collaborate to formulate programs that can support healthy behaviors in young Saudis. Establishing a national policy to encourage active living could lessen the burden on the healthcare system by reducing the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, hypertension and Type 2 diabetes.

Chapter 6

National Ecosystem

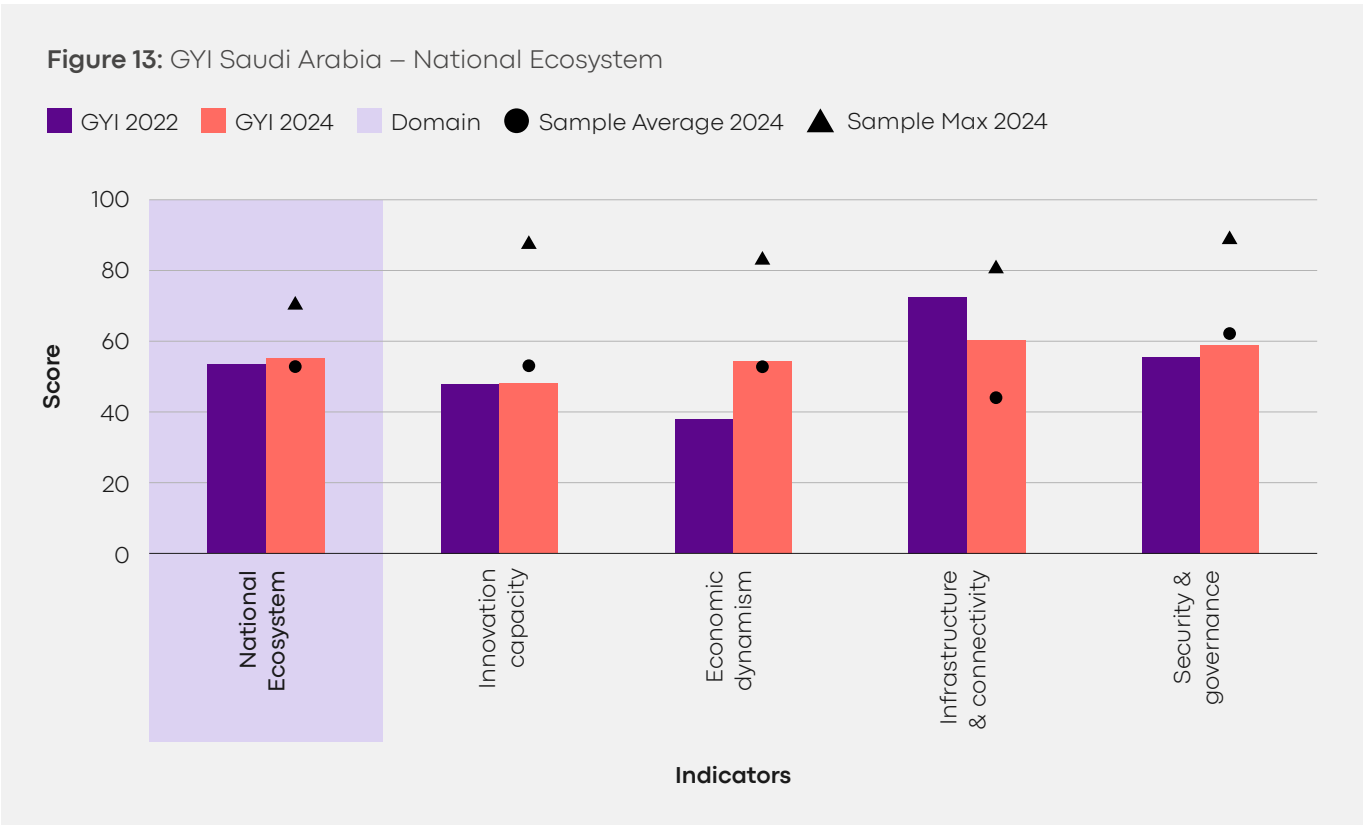
18th
ranking
(55.9)



6.1 GYI Saudi Arabia Domain Results

Saudi Arabia shows improvements in some aspects of the National Ecosystem domain, in particular economic dynamism. The Kingdom is ranked among the top 10 developed countries globally for its robust digital

framework,⁶⁹ although the drop in the GYI score in this area from 2022 to 2024 shows that there is further room for improvement.



6.2 Insights: National Ecosystem

A vibrant ecosystem for youth development requires stakeholders from different sectors to work towards a shared goal, with partnerships among various government structures and levels, youth groups, civil society organizations, educational institutions, and businesses. Saudi Arabia recognizes that a collaborative and interconnected youth ecosystem must emphasize shared resources and expertise, policy coherence, and long-term sustainability.⁷⁰ In January 2024, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development launched the Youth Development Strategy to empower the personal development of Saudi youth in line with the national aspirations of Vision 2030. This strategy, in partnership with more than 30 governmental and private entities,

covers areas such as regulations, capacity building, and participation in decision-making processes.⁷¹

The Ministry provides various forms of social protection for youth, including support for job seekers, financial aid for people with disabilities, and housing support.⁷² The Social Development Bank's Financial Awareness and Savings Program⁷³ also provides forms of financial assistance for youth, including business loans and 'Marriage Financing' to encourage marriage among young people whose monthly income is less than 12,500 riyals.⁷⁴ Another example is Zood Savings Product, which helps clients to save a monthly amount to cover their future needs.⁷⁵



Success Stories

Case Study: Misk Youth Impact Council Assembly

Youth Impact Council Assembly is a platform for Saudi youth and partners to shape Saudi youth policy recommendations. It develops tools to facilitate youth interaction, and organizes a yearly gathering for youth sector actors such as nonprofit organizations to collectively formulate youth-led policy recommendations. A continuous year-round engagement cycle promotes sustained collaboration

to ensure ongoing youth involvement.⁷⁶ The December 2023 Youth Assembly centered on the issues of national identity, active citizenship, youth hubs, youth inclusivity, and capacity development. Young Saudis from across the Kingdom applied to participate in a two-day activation, at which participants were divided into groups to develop recommendations on particular issues.

Lessons Learned and Moving Forward

Initiatives such as Misk's Youth Impact Council Assembly show that young Saudis are more than willing to share their insights on important issues. Building and consolidating a conducive national environment for

youth development is key to facilitate effective youth input into the Kingdom's transformation. Young Saudis see their personal development as intrinsically linked to national development under the umbrella of Vision 2030, aligned to the aspirations of HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salam.



Chapter 7

Readiness For Emerging Trends

13th
ranking
(52.0)

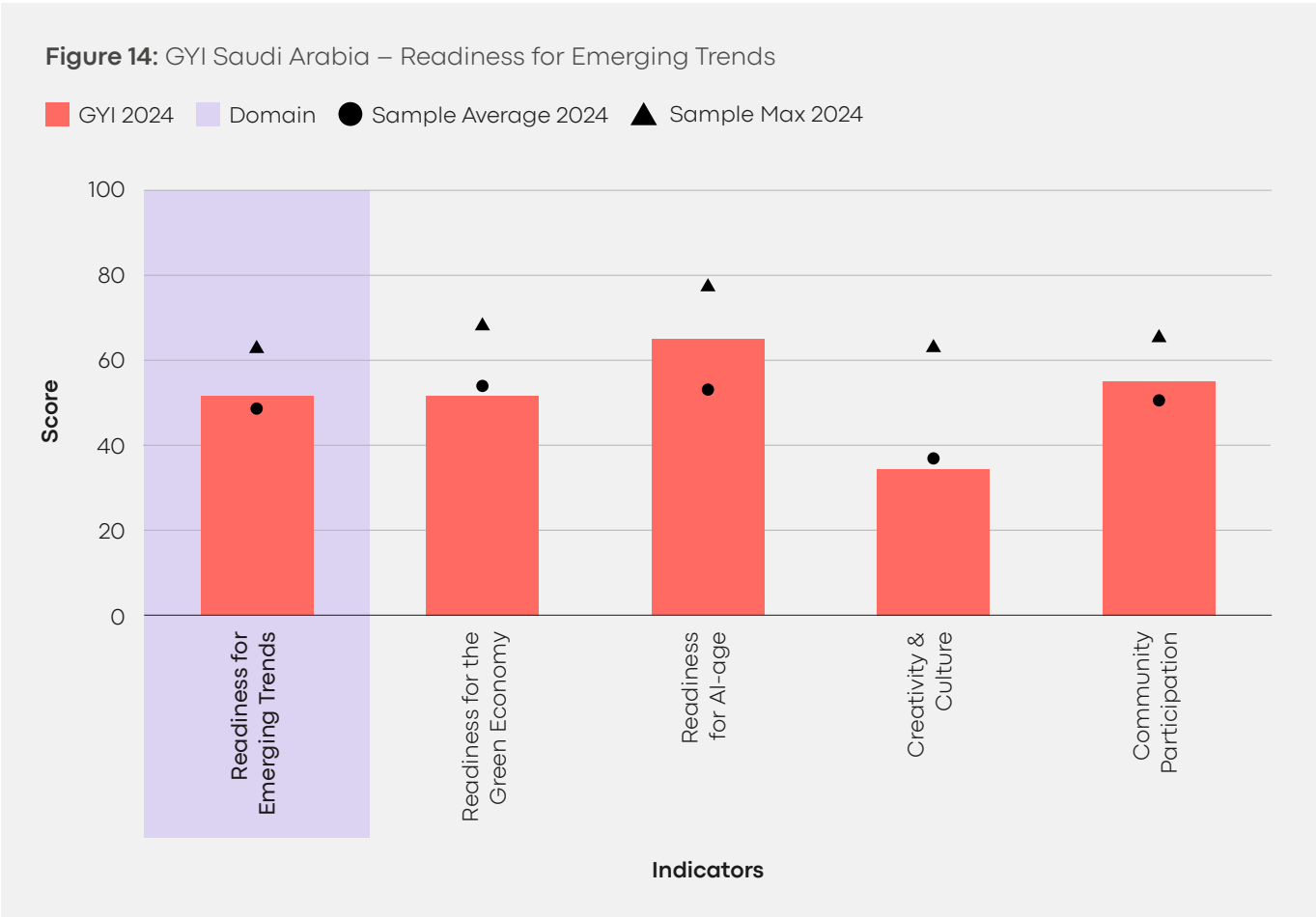
“ We are living in a time of scientific innovation, unprecedented technology, and unlimited growth prospects. These new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things, if used optimally, can spare the world many disadvantages and can bring enormous benefits to the world. ”

HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud,
Crown Prince, Prime Minister, and Chairman of SDAIA’s Board of Directors

7.1 GYI Saudi Arabia Domain Results

Saudi Arabia ranks in the top half of countries for three of the four components of the Readiness for Emerging Trends domain, which is new to the GYI in 2024. Readiness

for the Green Economy is the exception. The high score on Readiness for the AI Age is extremely promising.



7.2 Insights: Readiness For Emerging Trends

Data and AI are critical to achieving many of the goals of Vision 2030.⁷⁷ AI could add nearly \$20 trillion to the global economy by 2030, and Saudi Arabia has the ambition of becoming a global AI hub.⁷⁸ At the forefront of this emerging sector is the Saudi Data and Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA)'s National Strategy for Data and Artificial intelligence,⁷⁹ which aims to unify national efforts through research projects and developing capabilities for innovation.⁸⁰

In 2022, for example, the SDAIA established a Joint Research Center for Artificial Intelligence with King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals. It provides infrastructure to support and train young Saudi talent to use AI across sectors such as energy, industry, education, and health.⁸¹ By creating young leaders capable of creativity and change, it aims to achieve a competitive advantage for the Saudi economy.⁸² Readiness for the future requires youth-specific training that integrates with employment trends. For example, SDAIA's Information Technology Institute trains government employees in automated security, administrative and technical systems.⁸³ SDAIA's national academy is developing programs in partnership with academic bodies and analyzing the labor market to anticipate and meet skills requirements.⁸⁴ Its scholarship program aims to contribute to positioning Saudi Arabia among the leading countries in AI.⁸⁵

Readiness for the Green Economy is the primary responsibility of the Saudi Green Initiative, launched in 2021 by HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Its work is guided by three targets: emissions reduction, in support of Saudi Arabia's ambition to reach net zero emissions by 2060; afforestation; and land and sea protection.⁸⁶

Saudi Arabia sees the cultural sector as a key driver of development, and is committed to preserving its history, identity, and heritage.⁸⁷ Cultural activities including fashion, film, visual arts, literature, publishing, and translation are predicted to account for 3% of the Kingdom's GDP by 2030.⁸⁸ As Saudi Arabia advances under Vision 2030, it faces a delicate balancing act of modernizing while preserving cherished sociocultural traditions. Both young and old Saudis are navigating this transition, shaping an intergenerational future that honors the past while embracing the opportunities of the present.⁸⁹

The Saudi government has developed a range of initiatives to empower youth through education, training, employment, and social protection, to foster their inclusion in public life and prepare them for leadership roles.⁹⁰ The Kingdom also increasingly hosts events that engage young people, such as LEAP, the world's largest tech event;⁹¹ GAIN, the Global AI Summit;⁹² and the 24FinTech exhibition,⁹³ which attracted many Saudis in their late teens or early twenties.



Success Stories

Case Study: The National Olympiad for Programming and Artificial Intelligence

SDAIA and King Abdulaziz and His Companions Foundation for Giftedness and Creativity (Mawhiba) established the National Olympiad for Programming and Artificial Intelligence⁹⁴ to encourage school students to develop computational thinking skills. In April 2024, 298 students competed in the final stage after qualifying from 260,000 students from across the Kingdom. Winning students will represent the Kingdom at regional and international events.⁹⁵



Lessons Learned and Moving Forward

Young Saudis have demonstrated their willingness to engage, and the onus now is on educators and institutions to provide them with the necessary access

to knowledge, learning, training, mentorships, and experiences. Engaging young female and male Saudis and all walks of life is critical to realize the goals of Vision 2030 and the transformations that lie beyond.

Concluding Remarks

This report, and the Saudi GYI 2024 results, demonstrate the existence of a clear desire to develop and nurture young Saudi talent to meet the growing demands of the national economy. While the capacity of the Kingdom's burgeoning youthful population is expanding rapidly, fully realizing their potential will require long-term commitment to 2030 and beyond with the active participation of a diverse range of stakeholders from across the public, private, education, non-profit and commercial sectors. In particular, this report points to the importance of:

- Taking into account the future expectations of Saudi youth from all walks of life and educational backgrounds, whether optimistic or pessimistic.
- Giving consideration to establishing a dedicated Ministry of Youth and National Youth Policy to build on the existing National Youth Development Strategy.

- Ensuring that Saudi youth acquire the tools to remain relevant and globally competitive in the age of AI, which will transform many of the themes discussed in this report.
- Taking steps to increase rates of youth input and participation in regional and national youth policy development.
- Developing educational initiatives, awareness programs, and policies to support the mental health of Saudi youth and discourage risky behaviors.

Saudi youth are ambitious, well-educated and aspirational. In all their diversity, they constitute major stakeholders in national development. They wish to retain and celebrate the core identity narratives that constitute the basis of Saudi Arabia's history, culture, social norms and heritage, while also being personally invested in driving forward Saudi Vision 2030's ideas and programs, creating a more prosperous future that reflects a contemporary 21st century Kingdom.

Acknowledgements

This report represents a collaborative effort that would not have been possible without the dedication and contributions of numerous individuals.

Our appreciation goes to the experts who contributed their valuable time and expertise to participate in the focus groups:

Majed AlDubaikel, Chief Executive Officer, Youth Community

Abdullah AlGhamdi, Youth Development Consultant, Saudi Arabia Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development

Ahmed Alowfi, Cultural policy expert, Saudi Arabia Ministry of Culture

Mohammad AlSaied, Policy Design and Advocacy Program, King Khalid Foundation

Saleem Alsharari, Assistant Vice President and Saudi Youth 20 Head Delegate to G20-2023, Saudi Arabia Public Investment Fund

The report was commissioned by the [Misk Foundation](#) and undertaken by [Horizon Group](#). From the MiSK Foundation, the report was overseen by Mashael AlZoghaibi, Razan Alyamani, and Yasmin Ward. We would also like to extend our thanks to Albatool Alyahya, Mohammed Almutawaa, Dimah Al Sheik, Mohammad Alzaid, Muath Bin Nujayfan, Amr Mandourah, Omar Najjar, and Leen S. AlHajjar from the MiSK Foundation, who provided valuable inputs. The Horizon Group project team consisted of Mark C. Thompson (lead author), Margareta Drzeniek, Judit Kozenkow, Ilaria Marchese, Disha Sharma, and Santiago Manotas Arroyave. Design by [Studio Miko](#). The Studio Miko team consisted of Laurence Denmark, Oliver Turner and Will Liley.



Appendix A GYI 2024 Results

Saudi Arabia

Overall score

56.3/100

Country ranking

14

Saudi Arabia has moved up two places in the rankings since 2022. The country showcases a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem, supported by financial conditions that drive youth engagement in business ventures. Readiness for Emerging Trends stands out through provisions for integrating AI, while Community Participation also reflects progress, with policies encouraging engagement in problem-solving and local initiatives. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia's performance in National Ecosystems highlights areas for progress, particularly in innovation capacity and economic dynamism, which would support stronger youth development and a more resilient future.

Top Three Priorities for Young People*

Peace and security

34%



Unemployment

30%

Mental health

28%



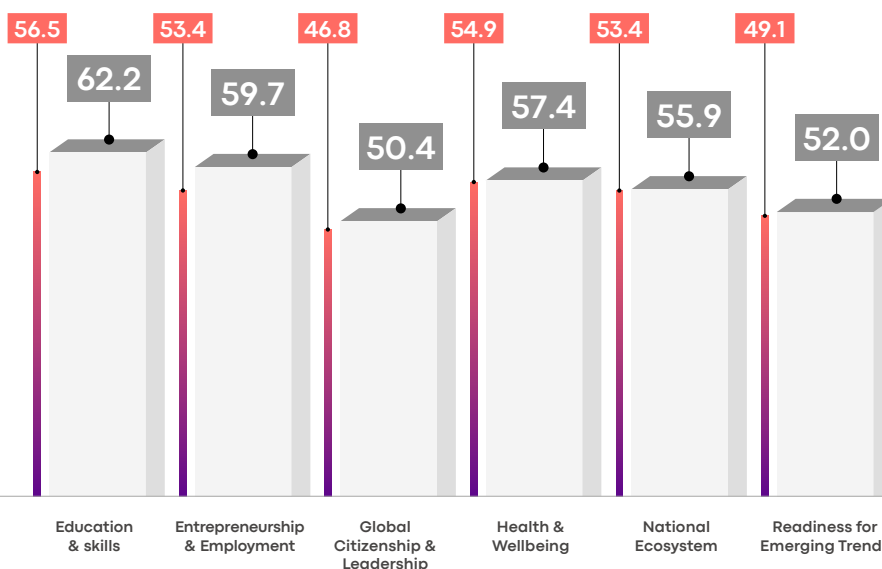
*Percentage of youth survey respondents who selected the issue when answering:
"Which three of the following 13 global issues are most important to you?"

Performance of Saudi Arabia by index domains

Global Youth Index 2024

Sample average (0–100)

100



Full data profile

EDUCATION & SKILLS	Rank 0-40	Score 0-100	Direction	Within full sample
	15	62.2	▲	
Access to Quality Education	18	62.8	▲	
K-12 enrollment ratio	25	72.6	▲	
Pre-primary enrollment ratio	38	17.7	▼	
Primary school enrollment ratio	8	100.0	▲	
Secondary school enrollment ratio	9	100.0	▲	
Learning-adjusted mean years of schooling	26	41.3	▲	
Tertiary education	18	65.8	▲	
Total tertiary enrollment	16	68.2	▲	
Female tertiary enrollment	18	68.5	▲	
STEM graduation rate	11	60.8	▲	
Quality of education	3	68.7	▲	
Quality of secondary education	5	67.1	▲	
Quality of tertiary education	1	81.2	▲	
Creative and critical thinking in teaching	11	57.8	—	
ICT skills	6	65.6	▲	
Business software proficiency	29	68.5	▲	
Programming	6	55.2	▲	
Advanced online communications	11	63.5	▲	
Digital skills of adult population	3	75.4	▲	
Education Policies	14	61.7	▼	
National strategy for digital literacy for students and teachers	24	58.3	▼	
Strategy includes digital skills in teacher training	19	75.0	—	
Strategy includes youth digital literacy targets	15	75.0	—	
Regular progress monitoring of these targets	28	25.0	▼	
National strategies for e-inclusion of females	16	75.0	▲	
National strategies for work-based learning programs	6	66.7	▼	
Strategy to encourage work-based learning	10	75.0	—	
Incentives for internships	14	50.0	▼	
Digital platform for internships	4	75.0	—	
National strategies for vocational training	21	50.0	▼	
High-quality apprenticeship systems, covering a wide range of professional domains	11	75.0	—	
Work-based learning systematically integrated into all vocational programmes	25	50.0	▼	
Vocational teaching workforce including industry practitioners	27	25.0	▼	
Support for vocational programmes	13	58.3	▼	
Vocational programmes developed in partnership between government, employers and trade unions	17	75.0	—	
Availability of strong data on vocational programmes	17	50.0	—	
Consistent funding of vocational programmes	19	50.0	▼	

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & EMPLOYMENT (E&E)	Rank 0-40	Score 0-100	Direction	Within full sample
	8	59.7	▲	
Entrepreneurial Ecosystem	5	60.4	▲	
Entrepreneurship training	22	47.5	▲	
Training on how to start a business	8	48.9	▲	
Startup incubators	30	36.9	—	
Post school entrepreneurial education and training	8	56.8	▲	
Entrepreneurial activity	10	63.1	▲	
Entrepreneurial intentions	6	68.9	▲	
New business density	27	38.6	▲	
Female early-stage entrepreneurial activity	8	81.7	▲	
Financial conditions for entrepreneurs	11	63.9	▲	
Venture capital investment	22	48.1	▼	
Depth of capital market	14	76.4	▲	
Taxes and bureaucracy	3	67.2	▲	
Legal and social framework for new businesses	2	77.3	▲	
Supporting social norms and institutions for entrepreneurship	2	80.0	▲	
Governmental support	1	74.7	▲	

Direction: ▲ Increase ▼ Decrease — No change

E&E CONTINUED	Rank 0-40	Score 0-100	Direction	Within full sample
Youth entrepreneurship strategies	20	50.0	▼	
Strategy includes a gender component	30	25.0	▼	
Strategy includes youth entrepreneurship targets	12	75.0	—	
Regular progress monitoring of these targets	28	25.0	▼	
Government financial support for networks	12	75.0	—	
Employment	12	59.1	▲	
Employment conditions	10	63.2	—	
Employees average monthly earnings	2	79.6	—	
Fair wages & decent working hours	15	80.0	—	
Wage equality between women and men	32	29.9	—	
Attractiveness of domestic labor market	14	73.0	—	
Career counseling	9	57.1	▲	
Share of population with career counselling	10	57.0	▲	
Usefulness of career counselling	5	68.8	▲	
Counselling on networking and negotiating	18	45.6	▲	
Participation in internships	15	64.0	▲	
Completed an internship	18	56.7	▲	
Usefulness of internship	12	71.2	▲	
Time to first full-time job after education	36	31.3	▲	
Youth's perceived skills-matching in labor market	5	59.1	▲	
Preparation for job	5	66.1	▲	
Job wanted	7	52.0	▲	
Training in the workplace	11	65.8	▲	
Additional training in most recent job	14	58.4	▲	
Usefulness of training	10	73.1	▲	

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP & LEADERSHIP	Rank 0-40	Score 0-100	Direction	Within full sample
	14	50.4	▼	
Exposure to Key Experiences	16	50.5	▼	
Global citizenship in education	11	37.1	▼	
Education on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	9	31.8	▼	
Trust in global cooperation	15	42.5	▼	
Leadership experiences	3	50.7	▼	
Leadership in civic activities	5	43.3	▼	
Room for leadership at work	3	58.0	▲	
Policies promoting studying abroad	13	66.8	▲	
Part of multilateral international program for student exchanges	15	75.0	▲	
Financial support for students to access this program	14	75.0	▲	
Mobility of tertiary-education students	16	50.3	▲	
Assets for a globalised world	30	49.3	▲	
English proficiency	36	36.0	▼	
Foreign language proficiency	10	65.7	▲	
Henley Passport Index	22	46.2	▲	
Trade activity	22	48.8	▼	
Youth Strategies & Participation	12	50.2	▼	
National youth policies	3	75.0	▲	
Strategy includes global citizenship, leadership and civic engagement	3	75.0	—	
Strategy includes youth development targets	3	75.0	—	
Regular progress monitoring of these targets	5	75.0	—	
Skills for 2030	15	60.0	▲	
Leadership	3	64.5	▲	
Creative and critical thinking	25	59.1	▲	
Collaborative problem solving	33	56.2	▼	
Global Leaders	14	50.0	—	
WEF Global Leaders	13	50.0	▼	
Time Next Generation Leaders	20	50.0	—	
Ecosystem for political participation	36	15.8	▲	
Average age of parliamentarians	34	nan	—	
Share of parliamentarians under 30	37	0.0	▼	

Full data profile

HEALTH & WELLBEING	Rank 0-40	Score 0-100		Within full sample
	16	57.4	▲	
Health of Country's Youth	26	55.0	▲	
Life expectancy at birth	23	45.4	▲	
Physical fitness	40	31.9	▲	
Prevalence of obesity, 10-19 years old	38	17.1	▲	
Prevalence of underweight, 10-19 years old	29	47.8	▼	
Prevalence of risk from low physical activity, 15-39 years old	40	0.0	▼	
Physical exercise	24	62.5	▲	
State of mental health	13	60.1	▲	
Suicide rates, age-standardised	14	67.6	▲	
Prevalence of depressive disorders, 15-39 years old	20	52.6	▼	
Social status of mental health	14	59.4	▲	
Social acceptance of mental health	17	50.5	▲	
Social importance of mental health	17	55.5	▲	
Access to mental health advice	13	72.3	▲	
Substance abuse	13	71.7	▲	
Prevalence of smoking in youth	33	37.7	▼	
Alcohol consumption	1	100.0	▲	
Drug abuse prevalence, 15-39 years old	15	77.4	▲	
Other risky behaviors beyond substance abuse	22	61.3	▲	
Road traffic fatal injury	34	37.8	▲	
Adolescent fertility	16	84.8	▲	
Health & Wellbeing policies	14	59.7	▲	
Health & wellbeing education	4	68.0	▲	
Mental health education	11	55.2	▲	
Physical health education	11	80.0	▲	
Family planning education	5	47.6	▲	
Healthy eating education	12	89.2	▲	
Promotion of physical wellbeing	17	52.9	▼	
Medical doctors	14	50.1	▲	
Hospital beds	22	39.4	▼	
Promotion of youth sports	12	75.0	—	
Gender balance in youth sports	19	50.0	▼	
Promotion of healthy diets	29	50.0	▼	
Promotion of mental wellbeing	15	58.3	▼	
Government-funded access to mental health counsel	31	25.0	▼	
Policy and plan for early detection of mental illnesses	11	75.0	—	
Policy on protection of youths with physical and mental disabilities	13	75.0	—	

Direction: ▲ Increase ▼ Decrease — No change

NATIONAL ECOSYSTEM	Rank 0-40	Score 0-100		Within full sample
	18	55.9	▲	
Innovation Capacity	26	48.5	▲	
Economic Complexity Index	15	62.4	▼	
Research and development (R&D) expenditure per GDP	15	58.4	▲	
Receipts for use of IP	36	nan	—	
Patent applications	20	49.1	—	
Trademark applications	31	35.7	▼	
Industrial designs	32	33.2	▼	
Economic Dynamism	19	55.1	▲	
GDP per capita growth	23	42.7	▲	
Labor force productivity growth	29	40.5	▲	
Labour force participation rate	22	52.1	—	
Youth unemployment rate	35	nan	—	
Social Mobility	2	77.3	▲	
Infrastructure & Connectivity	9	60.5	▼	
Paved Road Density	35	4.6	—	
Gender digital divide	7	62.6	▼	
International bandwidth	2	100.0	—	
Mobile broadband subscriptions	8	70.1	▲	
Quality of trade and transportation-related infrastructure	16	65.0	▲	
Security & Governance	20	59.4	▲	
Rule of law	15	55.8	—	
Transparency	14	52.0	▼	
Regulatory Quality	15	58.4	▼	
Institutional resilience	34	46.9	▼	
Internal conflict impact	25	93.5	▲	
External relations	28	50.0	▲	

READINESS FOR EMERGING TRENDS	Rank 0-40	Score 0-100		Within full sample
	13	52.0	—	
Readiness for the Green Economy	23	52.2	—	
Environmental performance	27	42.6	—	
Commitment to carbon neutrality	30	45.0	—	
Talent for green and energy transition	2	70.7	—	
Climate change awareness	31	62.0	—	
Top universities for climate action	23	56.6	—	
Climate change knowledge	30	36.2	—	
Readiness for AI-age	10	65.5	—	
Cybersecurity	2	99.5	—	
ICT graduates	1	96.0	—	
H-Index AI	15	35.6	—	
AI National Strategies	5	75.0	—	
Capacity to use AI	19	69.5	—	
Developers on github per million population between 15-64	22	17.6	—	
Creativity & Culture	19	34.7	—	
Number of libraries per million population	17	35.7	—	
Number of museums per million population	28	1.6	—	
Number of UNESCO heritage sites per million population	21	18.5	—	
Number of Intangible Cultural Heritage	14	32.7	—	
Cultural participation	9	45.0	—	
National strategy on creativity and culture for young people	12	75.0	—	
Community Participation	11	55.6	—	
Helped a stranger	9	67.0	—	
Feeling of representation by decision-makers	7	63.6	—	
Frequency of community engagement	11	48.0	▼	
Community problem-solving	10	40.5	—	
Social Relations	40	4.4	—	
Laws, policies, and schemes related to volunteering	3	100.0	—	
Online communities	16	65.5	—	

Appendix B

Methodology Note for Deep Dive on Global Citizenship & Leadership

Methodology for the additional questions development

1 Questions content

The additional questions explore how Saudi youth participate in decision-making by looking into youth attitudes, behaviors and knowledge. To this end, a benchmarking exercise and desk review were conducted, analyzing over 15 global reports and initiatives from 2018 onward related to youth development, as well as global youth-focused survey instruments published since 2012 that address themes such as civic participation, voice, attitudes, and behaviors. The five most relevant surveys that informed the additional GYI questions are:

- European Parliament's Flash Eurobarometer Youth Survey (2021)
- USAID's Youth Civic Engagement Survey (2021)
- Injaz Al Arab's RYSE Survey (2020)
- University of Nebraska's Youth Voice Scale (2018)
- UNICEF's National Youth Survey (2014)

2 Questions formulation

The survey formulation followed best practices from David de Vaus's Surveys in Social Research⁹⁶ and the Pew Research Center guidelines⁹⁷ to ensure clarity, simplicity, and appropriateness of language. Aligned with the Global Youth Survey, all the additional questions were all multiple-choice. Most questions followed a four-point Likert scale, which is both easy to lay out and to answer (de Vaus), while also allowing for the exploration of separate variables. The survey questions were optional but there was a high retention rate from the Global Youth Survey respondents given the limited number of additional questions.

3 Internal and external review

The additional survey questions underwent rigorous internal and external review processes:

Internal review: Conducted under the leadership of Misk Foundation, the internal review involved collaboration with the managers of all programs in the Community

Engagement track, as well as the leadership within the track itself. The following team members were involved in the survey question review:

- Eng. Omar Alnajjar, Misk CPO
- Ms. Dimah Alsheikh, Misk Director, Community Engagement
- Ms. Rana Haddad, Misk Advisor
- Ms. Monirah Almusallem, Misk Program Manager, YIA
- Mr. Rakan K Alhawas, Misk Program Manager, Youth Voices
- Ms. Albatool A Alyahya, Misk CE programs
- Ms. Nada S Alwaheed, Misk CE programs
- Ms. Anfal K Aljammaz, Misk CE programs

External review: An external review of the questionnaire was also conducted. The three external reviewers were:

- Dr. Saleh AlShumrani (Advisor)
- Dr. Afnan Koshak (CEO, Atharonna)
- Mr. Othman Almoamar (Advisor)

The additional questions

- 1 I took part in decision-making processes related to issues that concern young people over the past 12 months.

- a. Never
- b. Seldom
- c. Occasionally
- d. Often

- 2 How much do you understand about how policies are decided by regional and national government? How are policies are decided by regional government? (Region means the area where you live such as Riyadh region, Makkah region.)

- a. Nothing at all
- b. Not very much
- c. A fair amount
- d. A great deal

How much do you understand about how policies are decided by national government?

- a. Nothing at all
- b. Not very much
- c. A fair amount
- d. A great deal

- 3 In your opinion, how important is it to consult young people when making decisions related to:

Regional policies (region means the area where you live such as Riyadh region, Makkah region)?

- e. Not at all important
- f. Not very important
- g. Somewhat important
- h. Very important

National policies:

- a. Not at all important
- b. Not very important
- c. Somewhat important
- d. Very important

- 4 Here are some of the ways youth can participate in society and activate their civic engagement in Saudi Arabia. Select all that apply and whether you have heard or taken part in any of the following methods:

- i. Istitlaa Consultation Platform
 - ii. National Volunteering Platform
 - iii. Ehsan Donations Platform
 - iv. Saudi Arabian Scouts Organization
 - v. Misk Youth Impact Council Assembly
 - vi. Youth Organizations in my city/region
- a. I have heard of it
 - b. I have taken part in it
 - c. I have not heard of it

- 5 To be an active citizen, how important is it for a person to express his/her opinion on community issues?

- a. Not at all important
- b. Not very important
- c. Somewhat important
- d. Very important

- 6 In your opinion, what are the most effective actions to get your voice out to decision-makers? Select the top 3 most effective responses:

- a. Volunteering for a non-profit organization or initiative
- b. Joining a youth organization
- c. Taking part in a public conversation (online or offline)
- d. Contacting a public official about a community issue
- e. Buying certain products for environmental reasons
- f. None of the above
- g. Other

Survey administration

The additional questions for Saudi nationals were administered as part of the Global Youth Survey. These questions were only visible to Saudi nationals living in Saudi Arabia who have gone to school and studied in the country. These questions constituted the last section of the survey. All questions were available in both English and Arabic, and participation in this section was optional.

The Global Youth Survey was conducted entirely online between June and August 2024. It gathered the opinions of 41,272 youth aged 18–30 across 40 countries featured in the Global Youth Index 2024. The full survey, including the additional questions for Saudi nationals, took about 15 minutes to complete. During the survey fielding, a variety of internal checks were implemented to ensure survey quality. In addition, a pilot phase with around 4,000 responses ensured the tool's effectiveness. All responses were analysed for consistency. Rigorous data analysis disaggregated responses by age, gender, and geography, enabling nuanced insights into youth priorities, challenges, and resilience, fostering a comprehensive understanding of global youth dynamics. Additional information on the Global Youth Survey Methodology is available in the Global Youth Index 2024 Methodology Appendix.

References

1. <https://portal.saudicensus.sa/portal/public/1/15/100647?type=TABLE>
2. Mark C. Thompson & Neil Quilliam, Saudi Youth: Policies and Processes, Springer, 2024.
3. Index Limitations: The index captures the average performance, which might only show a partial picture due to data limitations across 40 countries.
4. Global Youth Index 2024 and 2022. Index results are based on secondary data, a survey of over 41,000 youth, and policy assessments.
5. Category 6 Readiness for Emerging Trends is introduced into GYI 2024 for the first time.
6. <https://assets.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/sa/pdf/2023/saudi-arabia-budget-report-2024.pdf>
7. www.weforum.org/publications/the-future-of-jobs-report-2018/
8. <https://kfcris.com/en/view/post/207>
9. <https://sla.edu.sa/>; www.fananews.com/language/en/saudi-logistics-academy-offers-15-scholarships-in-singapore-to-develop-female-leaders-in-logistics-sector/
10. www.arabnews.com/node/1903881/corporate-news
11. www.linkedin.com/pulse/leveraging-education-technology-empower-saudi-arabias-muhammed
12. www.my.gov.sa/wps/portal/snp/careaboutyou/digitalinclusion/?lang=en
13. www.vision2030.gov.sa/media/kljd5wha/2021-2025-human-capability-development-program-delivery-plan-en.pdf
14. <https://seu.edu.sa/en/home/>
15. <https://educationstudies.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/BESA-Journal-EF-7-3-5-Alshathri.pdf>
16. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/education-at-a-glance-2022_3197152b-en.html
17. <https://gemconsortium.org/report/global-entrepreneurship-monitor-gem-20232024-global-report-25-years-and-growing>
18. <https://gemconsortium.org/economy-profiles/saudi-arabia-2/policy>
19. www.entrepreneur.com/science-technology/why-saudi-arabia-is-the-goldmine-for-global-entrepreneurs/457842
20. www.linkedin.com/pulse/growth-women-entrepreneurs-saudi-arabia-innovisionksa
21. www.monshaat.gov.sa/en
22. www.monshaat.gov.sa/ar/UniSA
23. <https://ei.kfupm.edu.sa/>
24. www.monshaat.gov.sa/en/node/85029; www.monshaat.gov.sa/en/node/137287
25. www.waed.net/en/philosophy
26. www.sdb.gov.sa/ar/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AF/%D8%AA%D9%85%D9%88%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AF/
27. <https://tamara.co/en-SA/about>
28. www.wired.com/sponsored/story/fintech-tamara-accelerates-the-buy-now-pay-later-revolution/
29. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/5-keys-moving-from-entrepreneur-thinking-action-martin-zwilling/>
30. <https://www.gemconsortium.org/news/ten-notable-numbers-from-the-gem-kingdom-of-saudi-arabia-national-report>
31. <https://www.ilo.org/publications/flagship-reports/world-employment-and-social-outlook-trends-2023>
32. www.linkedin.com/in/sohaibshahid/recent-activity/all/
33. www.hrsd.gov.sa/en/media-center/news/290720242
34. www.hrdf.org.sa/en/programs/facilities/training/hadaf-leadership-program/
35. www.linkedin.com/in/sohaibshahid/recent-activity/all/
36. www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2024/09/20/2949585/0/en/Saudi-Arabia-Industry-4-0-Research-Report-2024-Competition-Forecast-Opportunities-2029F.html
37. <https://www.theglobalcitizensinitiative.org/what-it-means-to-be-a-global-citizen-2/>

38. www.arabnews.com/node/2450981/saudi-arabia
39. www.argaam.com/en/article/articledetail/id/1701186
40. www.my.gov.sa/wps/portal/snp/aboutksa/nationalDevelopmentPlans/download/The%20Custodian%20of%20The%20Two%20Holy%20Mosques%20Scholarship%20Program/
41. <https://oic.kfupm.edu.sa/ShowStatic.aspx?ContentID=1>
42. www.aramco.com/en/careers/for-saudi-applicants/student-opportunities/college-degree-program; www.aramco.com/en/careers/for-saudi-applicants/student-opportunities/college-continuation-program
43. www.my.gov.sa/wps/portal/snp/careaboutyou/youth/; www.hrdf.org.sa/en/programs/facilities/training/hadaf-leadership-program/
44. <https://legacyintl.org/saudi-young-leaders-exchange/>
45. <https://leap.kaust.edu.sa/kaust-saudi-leadership-program.html>
46. www.zawya.com/en/economy/gcc/saudi-ministry-launches-three-programmes-for-national-youth-ewirlelp
47. <https://salam4cc.org/en/training-programs/youth-leadership-program/>
48. www.moh.gov.sa/en/Ministry/Information-and-services/Pages/Young.aspx
49. www.who.int/data/gho/data/major-themes/health-and-well-being
50. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6074349/>
51. www.imarcgroup.com/saudi-arabia-health-wellness-market
52. www.moh.gov.sa/en/Ministry/Information-and-services/Pages/Young.aspx
53. <https://globalactiontoendsmoking.org/research/tobacco-around-the-world/saudi-arabia/>
54. www.spa.gov.sa/en/N2148919
55. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349603635_Use_of_mobile_phone_while_driving_in_Saudi_Arabia
56. <https://moe.gov.sa/en/education/generaleducation/Pages/SchoolHealth.aspx>
57. <https://mahdacademy.sa/en>
58. www.pnu.edu.sa/en/Faculties/Education/DepartmentofPhysicalEducationSciences/Pages/Department-of-Physical-Education-Sciences.aspx
59. <https://thewaveclinic.com/blog/saudi-arabia-new-generation-of-mental-health-crisis/>
60. www.moh.gov.sa/en/Ministry/Information-and-services/Pages/Young.aspx
61. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11178508/>
62. https://kkf.org.sa/media/khklnt/care_report_05_en-1.pdf
63. https://kkf.org.sa/media/khklnt/care_report_05_en-1.pdf
64. <https://education-profiles.org/northern-africa-and-western-asia/saudi-arabia/~inclusion>
65. <https://disabilityin.org/country/saudi-arabia/>
66. https://saudigazette.com.sa/article/645343/Sports/Saudi-athlete-Abdulrahman-Al-Qurashi-wins-gold-in-100m-T53-at-Paris-2024-Paralympic-Games#google_vignette
67. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6257875/#:~:text=The%20high%20prevalence%20of%20inactivity,opportunities%20to%20engage%20in%20PA.>
68. <https://thewaveclinic.com/blog/saudi-arabia-new-generation-of-mental-health-crisis/>
69. <https://www.my.gov.sa/wps/portal/snp/careaboutyou/digitalinclusion/?lang=en>
70. <https://youthdemocracycohort.com/lesson-1-youth-ecosystems/#:~:text=In%20an%20ideal%20scenario%2C%20the,%2C%20and%20long%2Dterm%20sustainability>
71. www.hrsd.gov.sa/en/media-center/news/290120245
72. <https://www.hrsd.gov.sa/en/social-protection>
73. <https://www.sdb.gov.sa/en/individuals/support-and-awareness-programmes/financial-awareness-and-savings/>
74. www.sdb.gov.sa/en-us/our-products/personal/social-loans/products/marriage-loan
75. www.sdb.gov.sa/en-us/our-products/personal/saving-program
76. <https://hub.misk.org.sa/events/community/youth-impact-assembly-2023/>
77. <https://sdaia.gov.sa/en/SDAIA/SdaiaStrategies/Pages/sdaiaAnd2030Vision.aspx>

78. www.arabianbusiness.com/industries/banking-finance/saudi-arabias-pif-pivots-to-domestic-focus-eyes-ai-revolution-says-al-rumayyan
79. <https://ai.sa/>
80. <https://sdaia.gov.sa/en/SDAIA/SdaiaStrategies/Pages/sdaiaAnd2030Vision.aspx>
81. <https://sdaia.gov.sa/en/Research/Pages/ResearchAndDevelopment.aspx>
82. <https://sdaia.gov.sa/en/SDAIA/eParticipation/Pages/YoungEmpowerment.aspx>
83. <https://sdaia.gov.sa/en/Sectors/BuildingCapacity/IT-Institute/Pages/default.aspx>
84. <https://sdaia.gov.sa/en/Sectors/BuildingCapacity/academy/Pages/AboutSdaiaAcademy.aspx>
85. <https://sdaia.gov.sa/en/Sectors/BuildingCapacity/Pages/ScholarshipProgram.aspx>
86. www.vision2030.gov.sa/en/explore/projects/saudi-green-initiative
87. www.breakingtravelnews.com/news/article/culture-is-saudi-arabias-new-commodity-and-creativity-its-new-currency/
88. <https://hbr.org/sponsored/2024/08/the-vibrant-culture-of-saudi-arabia-today>
89. <https://sauditimes.org/narratives/viewpoints/old-meets-new-in-saudi-arabias-cultural-evolution/>
90. www.my.gov.sa/wps/portal/snp/careaboutyou/youth/
91. <https://onegiantleap.com/agenda>
92. <https://globalaisummit.org/en/default.aspx>
93. <https://24fintech.com/24-fintech-2024>
94. www.spa.gov.sa/w1850549
95. www.spa.gov.sa/w1850549
96. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2013-43042-000>
97. <https://www.pewresearch.org/our-methods/u-s-surveys/writing-survey-questions/>



Misk مسك
مؤسسة محمد بن سلمان
Mohammed Bin Salman
Foundation

