

Competitiveness

► NCC's 1st Quarter 2024 Newsletter by the National Competitiveness Center.

► **1186 Regulatory Projects Proposed** by 94 Government Entities

► **Al-Kassabi Chairs Preparatory Work** for Saudi-British Strategic Partnership Council Meetings

► **NCC Legal Committee Holds** its Sixth Meeting with Participation of Minister of Finance

Editorial

The Competitiveness newsletter for the first quarter of 2024 spotlights the Kingdom's international developments, along with the most prominent activities and initiatives conducted by the National Competitiveness Center. As a driving force behind these endeavors, the NCC seeks to advance the business environment and elevate the Kingdom's competitiveness to new heights on the global stage.

This edition covers the Istitlea platform's accomplishments in the first three years since its launch. Likewise, it covers H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi's visit to the UK to follow up on preparations for the Saudi-British Strategic Partnership Council's sessions on economic and social issues.

Furthermore, the newsletter reviews the 6th meeting of the National Competitiveness Center's Legal Committee, which was presided over by H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, and attended by H.E. the Minister of Finance, alongside H.E. the Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi's meeting with H.E. the Director-General of the World Trade Organization to review the impact of the Kingdom's economic reforms on boosting the attractiveness of the business environment.

What is Competitiveness?

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

Our Vision



is for the Kingdom to be one of the top ten most competitive countries by 2030, driven by our focus on investment, entrepreneurship, innovation, and productivity.

Our Mission



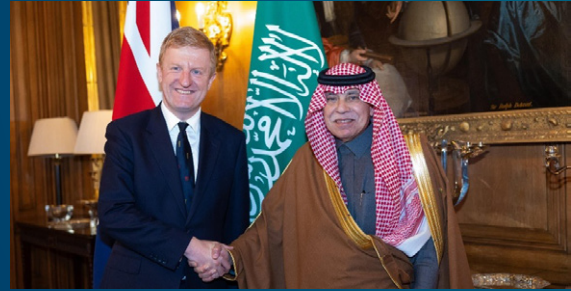
is to improve the Kingdom's competitiveness and align government entities' strategies around a unified vision by developing the legislative and procedural environment.

February 07, 2024

Al-Kassabi Visits UK to Chair Preparatory Work for Saudi-British Strategic Partnership Council Meetings

H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi chaired the preparatory work for the meetings of the Economic and Social Pillar of the Saudi-British Strategic Partnership Council. The meeting took place in London with the participation of a high-level Saudi delegation, consisting of 19 officials from 10 government entities.

During the visit, Al-Kassabi, accompanied by HRH Prince Khalid bin Bandar bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz,



Saudi ambassador to the United Kingdom, held a series of bilateral discussions with British officials. These discussions focused on enhancing economic partnerships in priority sectors for both countries. Efforts were also exerted to activate previously agreed-upon initiatives and discuss joint executive work plans for the current year.

Likewise, British companies were encouraged to expand their operations in Saudi Arabia and benefit from promising opportunities created by Vision 2030.

February 21, 2024

NCC Legal Committee Holds its Sixth Meeting

The Legal Committee at the Laws and Regulations Support Unit of the National Competitiveness Center held its 6th meeting at the Center's headquarters.

The meeting was chaired by H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi with the participation of H.E. the Minister of Finance, Mr. Mohammed Al-Jadaan. During the meeting, attendees reviewed the Istitlaa platform's accomplishments in the first three years since its launch, along with the Guide to Evaluation of the Effects of Legislature published on the platform. Additionally, the level of advancement in the Legal Committee's initiatives related to legislature was assessed.



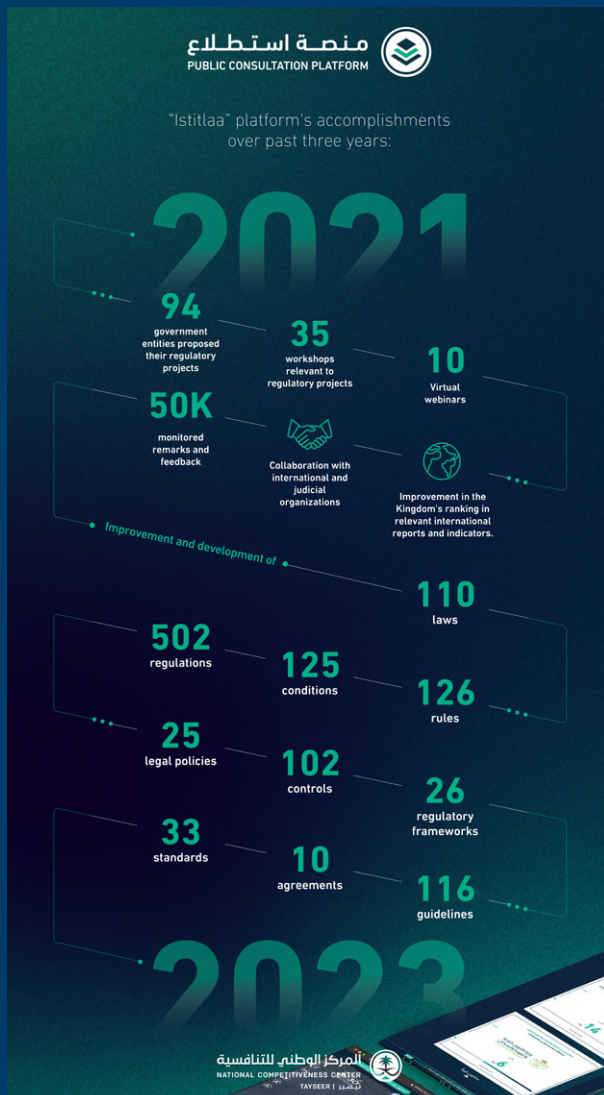
February 14, 2024

Al-Kassabi, University of California Explore Joint Cooperation



H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi met with representatives of the AMENA Center for Entrepreneurship and Development at the University of California, in Berkeley, California, U.S., to explore cooperation

avenues that would further boost the Kingdom's competitiveness. They also discussed establishing an innovative economics laboratory, in collaboration with Silicon Valley, to support digital trade and foster business growth in new areas.



February 19, 2024

1186 Regulatory Projects Proposed by 94 Government Entities

The Istitlaa platform, a unified electronic platform affiliated with the National Competitiveness Center, solicits feedback from the public, government entities, and the private sector on laws related to the economic and developmental environment. It also facilitates feedback collection on regulations issued by government entities before their approval.

Istitlaa has demonstrated its achievements in the past three years in enhancing the legislative and procedural environment that underpins the Kingdom's economic transformation towards greater global competitiveness. These accomplishments include the collection and transference of feedback, opinions, and comments on approximately 1186 regulatory projects pertaining to economic and developmental matters before their approval. These efforts aim to enhance the Kingdom's business environment and overall competitiveness.

NCC Launches a New Bundle of Economic Reforms



33

Government
entities

66

New
recommendations

30

Reports and
indexes

At the beginning of 2024, following a comprehensive analysis of leading indices, specialized reports, and benchmarking the Kingdom's performance against global peers, the National Competitiveness Center identified key areas for improvement across various sectors within Saudi Arabia's competitive landscape. Insights were gathered to initiate a series of economic reforms, resulting from monitoring and analyzing over 30 reports and indicators produced by reputable international organizations. These reforms, including the issuance of over 66 new recommendations, are currently under review with 33 government entities.

The NCC's recommendations address several critical areas including:

Export, energy and the environment, human capital, the labor market, women's economic participation, research and development, financial markets, transportation and logistics, technical infrastructure and cybersecurity, and economic, commercial, and tourism openness.

February 29, 2024

Minister of Commerce Meets with WEF President

H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, met with the president of the World Economic Forum, Børge Brende, at the NCC's headquarters. During the meeting, both parties focused on fostering bilateral collaborations and discussed issues of common interest.



January 09, 2024

Vice Minister of Commerce Explores Bilateral Cooperation with Friendly Countries' Ministers



H.E. the Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi met, at the NCC headquarters, with Their Excellencies: Swedish State Secretary to the Minister for Energy, Business, and Industry, Ms. Sara Modig; Finland's Minister of Economic Affairs, Mr. Wille Rydman; and Singapore's Minister-

in-charge of Muslim Affairs, Minister for Social and Family Development, and Minister of Health, Mr. Masagos Zulkifli.

During the sessions, they discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation and reviewing the Kingdom's progress as a result of recent economic and development reforms.

February 29, 2024

CEO of NCC Meets with WEF Managing Director

H.E. the Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi, met with the WEF Managing Director, Saadia Zahidi.

During the meeting, Al-Mutairi discussed the most significant economic reforms achieved and their impact on the Kingdom's competitiveness.



February 05, 2024

Al-Mutairi Meets with Director General of WTO

H.E. the Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi, met with the WTO's Director-General, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

During the meeting, Her Excellency showcased Saudi Arabia's competitiveness models and the impact of economic reforms achieved by the Kingdom in boosting the attractiveness of the business environment.



Istitlaa: the Public Consultation Platform

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

Istitlaa, the public consultation platform, in the 1st quarter of 2024 included:



78

Proposed projects



1102

Feedback entries



33

Government entities

Most prominent sectors:

- Health Sector.
- Financial and Control Sector.
- Environment, Agriculture, Water and Living Resources Sector.

Most prominent amendments:

- Criminalizing irregular practices that negatively affect the labor market.
- Regulatory amendments for dispute resolution prior to filing before the courts.
- Executive regulation of child protection laws.
- Amendments to executive regulation of government tenders and procurement.
- Executive regulations on the Law of Sale and leasing of real estate projects on maps.

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

To fulfill Saudi Vision 2030's objectives of increasing global competitiveness, the National Competitiveness Center monitors the Kingdom's performance in prestigious international reports on competitiveness, benchmarks it with the performance of leading countries, examines and analyzes the most significant indices and specialized reports in a variety of areas relating to competitiveness, refers them to the appropriate government entities, and proposes recommendations to be implemented.

The Future of Growth Report 2024



The World Economic Forum released a new Future of Growth report in January 2024, covering 107 countries and highlighting the most impactful factors that affect countries' growth both directly and indirectly. This report creates a novel methodology for gauging growth in participating economies, considering not only quantity, but also the type and quality of growth, all while striking a balance among competing priorities.

1. The new report does not include a country rating or individual country's results. Rather, it provides results for countries based on the four main factors and their sub-factors.
2. The report consists of 4 main pillars, 20 sub-factors, and 84 sub-indicators, which are distributed as follows:
 - The four main factors are: innovativeness, inclusiveness, sustainability, and resilience (adaptability).
 - The sub-factors address: the ecosystem, including talent, resources, finance, technology, and institutions.
3. The following points illustrate the Kingdom's leading rankings in sub-indicators:
 - The Kingdom achieved a score of 100 in mobile network coverage.
 - The Kingdom scored 99.5 in the cybersecurity index.
 - The Kingdom achieved 92.3 in ICT cost as a percentage of average per capita income.
 - The Kingdom earned 89.9 in food supplies concentration as a percentage of the highest trading partner out of the total trading partners.
 - The Kingdom achieved a score of 80.4 in policy vision and stability.
 - The Kingdom scored 70.7 in availability of talent for green and energy transition.

Improvement of the Kingdom's rating in the UN's World Happiness Report – Sustainable Development Solutions Network:



Saudi Arabia jumped 2 places in the UN's World Happiness Report – Sustainable Development Solutions Network, from 30th in 2023 to 28th in 2024, out of 143 countries included in the report.

The following points describe the Kingdom's performance across a number of the index's main factors:

- The Kingdom moved up one place in the "Social Support" index, from 44th to 43rd.
- The Kingdom improved by one place in the "Freedom to Make Life Choices" index, from 23rd to 22nd.
- The Kingdom leapt 13 places in the "Generosity" index, from 64th to 51st.

NCC, WEF Co-Hold a Series of Workshops on Trade in Services



The National Competitiveness Center, in collaboration with the World Economic Forum, organized a series of workshops on Trade in Services, aiming to reduce barriers and promote policies and regulations that will enhance the Kingdom's services trade.

The Center's first workshop in the series, attended by representatives from 16 government entities, delved into the critical role of trade in services, economic diversification, and the transformative impact of developing regulatory legislation. These discussions centered around the Kingdom's competitiveness and increasing regional and global economic inclusion.

The remaining workshops, which included a number of private sector representatives, alongside those from relevant government

agencies, focused on strategies and practices that are expected to increase the Kingdom's competitiveness by lowering the cost of trade in regulatory and procedural services in a variety of different economic sectors. Most notable among these were the financial sector, insurance, communications and information technology, transportation and logistics, and tourism.

As part of the agreement signed with the World Economic Forum at the forum's headquarters in Geneva, the Center is organizing workshops related to trade in services to increase the Kingdom's competitiveness in international markets by leveraging the World Economic Forum's international expertise in streamlining and developing the services trade.

March 07, 2024

NCC, OECD Co-organize Symposium Titled "Corporate Governance Policy Alignment"

As part of its partnership with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, The National Competitiveness Center organized a symposium titled "Corporate Governance Policy Alignment" in the presence of H.E. the Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi.

The symposium, attended by 100 experts and specialists from government entities, was focused on discussing international best practices of corporate governance and enhancing the Kingdom's competitiveness.

Symposium

Corporate Governance Policy Alignment

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE WEBINAR

The symposium covered the following:

- 01** Corporate governance principles for G20 and OECD member countries.
- 02** The most notable international corporate governance practices in 49 countries benchmarked with the Kingdom.
- 03** The most recent developments in sustainability practices in global markets

NCC.GOV.SA
@NCC_KSA

المركز الوطني للتنافسية
NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS CENTER
التنافس | التنافسية | التميز

January 10, 2024

Al-Kassabi: Cabinet's Resolution on Governance of Translation and Publication of Regulatory Documents Improves Competitiveness of Kingdom's Business Environment



H.E. the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the National Competitiveness Center, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, confirmed that the nation's wise leadership is eager to strengthen the legislative environment in order to contribute to the achievement of the Vision 2030 program's goals for sustainable development.

His Excellency highlighted the importance of Council of Ministers Resolution No. 483 dated 20/6/1445 (Hijri), which mandates the translation of draft laws, regulations, and approved statutory documents. This resolution promotes the Kingdom's competitiveness by providing both local and foreign businesses with electronic access to all relevant regulatory documents related to business activities in Arabic and English.

Moreover, it enables stakeholders to review draft laws, regulations, and other documents proposed for consultation via the Istitlaa platform, allowing them to provide feedback, comments, and opinions. This collaborative process contributes to improving the legislative environment and further strengthens the Kingdom's competitiveness.

One key aspect of the resolution is the requirement to translate regulations and other documents issued by the Council of Ministers into English within 120 days of issuance. Government entities must also translate regulatory documents into English within 60 days and publish them along with previously approved documents on their websites and on the National Center for Documents and Archives website in both languages.

Issuance of the Council of Ministers Resolution No (483), dated 20/06/1445 H on governance and translation of statutory documents.



The resolution will contribute to

- Enhancing the legislative environment.
- Improving the business environment.

Highlights of the resolution:



- Translation of laws, regulations, and other related documents enacted by the Council of Ministers into Arabic within (120) days of their issuance.



- Translation of statutory documents into English by government entities within (60) days.



- Government entities make their statutory documents available on their websites as well as on the National Center for Documents and Archives website in Arabic and English.

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

Notable reforms implemented during the 1st quarter of 2024:



- Publishing service guidelines and launching the temporary billboard permit service via the Baladi platform and application.



- Encouraging the Kingdom's commercial attachés and embassies to market date fruit products and their derivatives, along with organizing their own exhibitions to support importers and investors in the date industry.



- Encouraging collaboration between development funds and the National Privatization Center to boost the private sector's involvement in privatization projects.



- Developing and launching the National Data Index to assess government agencies' data management practices and compliance with national standards, promoting a data-driven economy and maximizing benefits for the Kingdom.



- The Council of Ministers has granted approval for the Ministry of Education to follow the Regulations of Disposition of Municipal Real Estate when dealing with real estate titles in its possession.



- Adopting criteria for selecting leaders in private and foreign public education schools.

The most prominent studies and research issued by international organizations within the first quarter of 2024 on developments in productivity, inclusivity, sustainability, and adaptability:

The Future of Global Fintech

The study discusses the start of the Global Future of Financial Technology research program, conducted in collaboration with the Cambridge Center for Alternative Finance to collect data on global market trends and prepare regional conclusions for the industry. The findings concentrate on six key areas: the ecosystem of financial technology businesses; market performance; market growth determinants; companies' perceptions of the regulatory environment; customer involvement; financial technology initiatives; and economic and societal benefits.



Top 10 Emerging Technologies

This report covers the newest and most advanced technologies projected to benefit society within the next three to five years. It broadens its scope by detailing the top ten technologies, as well as the associated hazards and risks to examine how each technology affects people, the environment, and industries. The report offers impactful information to assist in guiding the decisions of corporate leaders and policymakers about emerging technologies.



Global Risks Report 2024

This report analyzes potential risks in the areas of technological transformation, global warming, international conflicts, and economic instability. It also analyzes the projected risks over the next two years and the next ten years.



Eid Mubarak

2024 - 1445



Happy Eid, and many years of success for an ambitious
people and an advanced competitive nation

المركز الوطني للتنافسية
NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS CENTER
تيسير | TAYSEER

