

Competitiveness

► NCC's 2nd Quarter 2025 Newsletter by the National Competitiveness Center

► **Three international agreements** to enhance the Kingdom's competitiveness

► **Al-Kassabi launches the Future Skills Initiative** as part of the Saudi-UK Strategic Partnership Council

► **The eighth meeting** of the National Competitiveness Center's Legal Committee



Editorial

The Competitiveness newsletter for the second quarter of 2025 outlines the developments that the Kingdom has witnessed globally. It highlights the key activities and initiatives of the Center, which aims to improve the business environment and enhance the Kingdom's global competitiveness.

This edition of the newsletter covers the proceedings of the roundtable meeting on Saudi-UK sports cooperation in London, along with the launch of the Future Skills Initiative, which aims to exchange qualitative expertise to develop future skills in 13 promising sectors.

Additionally, this newsletter includes details of the agreement the Center signed with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to measure e-commerce and digital commerce; the cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Law of the Republic of Singapore, which aims to exchange expertise, build institutional capacities, and enhance integration in the areas of governance and legislation that support sustainable economic growth; and the agreement with the London Business School to enhance the Kingdom's position as a global model for transformative economic policies.

The newsletter also highlights the organization of multiple workshops, most notably the cooperation with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) to hold an event titled 'The Future of Alternative Dispute Resolution in Light of Digital Transformation and UNCITRAL Texts,' hosted by Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University, and in cooperation with the World Bank Group to organize a regional workshop on the Business Readiness Report methodology (B-Ready), in addition to holding a workshop in cooperation with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that reviewed the most prominent global trends in the areas of capital market development, corporate governance, and sustainability.

The newsletter also covers the eighth meeting of the National Competitiveness Center's Legal Committee, chaired by H.E. Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, Chairman of the NCC's Board of Directors. The meeting was attended by H.E. Mohammad bin Abdulmalik Bin Abdullah Al al-Sheikh, Minister of State and Member of the Council of Ministers. During the session, the Committee reviewed its 27 ongoing initiatives and the progress achieved.

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



By 2030, the Kingdom will be one of the world's most competitive economies, 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.

April 6, 2025

H.E. Al-Mutairi, Vice Minister of Commerce, meets with the World Bank Managing Director of Operations

H.E. Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi, Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the National Competitiveness Center, met with Ms. Anna Bjerde, Managing Director of Operations at the World Bank Group. They reviewed the economic reforms implemented in the Kingdom and their impact on national competitiveness, while also exploring opportunities to strengthen cooperation between the two entities.



April 14, 2025

Al-Kassabi launches the Future Skills Initiative to enhance 13 economic sectors

Alongside the Human Capabilities Initiative, held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Crown Prince, Prime Minister, and Chairman of the Human Capability Development Program Committee (may God protect him), the "Future Skills Initiative" was launched by His Excellency the Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee of the Saudi-UK Strategic Partnership Council, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi. The initiative aims to exchange expertise in developing future skills across 13 promising sectors and was attended by 40 officials from both countries and 100 business sector leaders.



May 12, 2025

The Kingdom and UNCTAD sign an agreement to measure e-commerce and digital trade



The Kingdom, represented by the National Competitiveness Center (NCC), and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), signed an agreement to measure e-commerce and digital commerce. Her Excellency Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi, Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the NCC, emphasized that the Kingdom is making continuous progress in its ambitious vision under the leadership of H.R.H. Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister (may God protect him), thus consolidating its strategic position as a diversified and competitive economy across various economic, social, and cultural fields.

The agreement contributes to strengthening the development of e-commerce and digital commerce policies in the Kingdom through a comprehensive assessment of the current landscape, including data collection, analysis, and dissemination. These efforts will inform the development of guidelines and recommendations aligned with global best practices, reinforcing the Kingdom's leadership in the digital economy. Additionally, it will help quantify e-commerce's economic potential, further boosting the Kingdom's global competitiveness.

May 22, 2025

NCC and UNCITRAL organize the Future of Alternative Dispute Resolution Event



The National Competitiveness Center (NCC), in cooperation with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), organized an event titled 'The Future of Alternative Dispute Resolution in Light of Digital Transformation and UNCITRAL Texts.' The sessions were hosted by Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University, represented by its Higher Judicial Institute.

The event brought together H.E. Professor Ahmed bin Salem Al-Ameri, President of the University; H.E. Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Duhaim, Assistant Minister of Commerce; as well as government representatives, legal experts, and industry leaders.

The event, part of the 2025 UNCITRAL Days in the Arab States, aims to raise awareness of the need to unify and modernize international and commercial laws, addressing legal barriers to global trade and investment. It reviewed the key developments in agreements, model laws, and legislative guides across critical areas of international commercial law, such as arbitration, e-commerce, insolvency, securities, procurement, and transportation. It also aims to raise awareness among the public and private sectors, as well as academics, of the importance of a unified international commercial law and its benefits in facilitating cross-border commercial transactions.

May 25, 2025

Cooperation Agreement with the Ministry of Law of Singapore to Enhance the Legal and Regulatory Environment

The National Competitiveness Center has signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Ministry of Law of the Republic of Singapore. The agreement aims to exchange expertise, build institutional capacity, and enhance integration in the areas of governance and legislation that support sustainable economic growth.

The agreement was signed by H.E. Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the NCC, on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Mr. Edwin Tong SC, Minister of Law, on behalf of the Republic of Singapore.

Al-Kassabi emphasized that this memorandum represents a qualitative milestone in the Kingdom's efforts to enhance its investment attractiveness

and improve its ranking in global competitiveness indicators. He explained that cooperation with Singapore is based on its pioneering experience in the fields of law, arbitration, governance, digital economy, education, and the integration of public and regulatory policies, making it an ideal partner for the Kingdom in its institutional reform process.

The memorandum covers multiple areas of cooperation, most notably: exchanging studies, research, and programs related to the competitiveness of economic, development, and social sectors; developing digital legal and legislative systems; enhancing cooperation in the areas of arbitration and commercial dispute settlement; supporting institutional capabilities; and exchanging expertise in regulatory and legislative aspects.



Objectives



01 Exchange expertise



02 Build institutional capacity



03 Enhance integration in the areas of governance and legislation that support sustainable economic growth

Areas of Cooperation

01

Exchanging studies, research, and programs related to the competitiveness of economic, development, and social sectors

02

Developing digital, legal, and legislative systems

03

Enhancing cooperation in the areas of arbitration and commercial dispute settlement

04

Supporting institutional capabilities; exchanging expertise in regulatory and legislative aspects

May 25, 2025

Al-Kassabi and Al al-Sheikh participate in the eighth meeting of the Legal Committee



Chaired by H.E. Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, the Legal Committee of the National Competitiveness Center convened its eighth meeting with the participation of H.E. Mr. Mohammed bin Abdulmalik Al al-Sheikh, Minister of State and Member of the Council of Ministers. The Committee includes representatives from 32 government agencies, including senior officials and legal experts.

The Committee reviewed the 27 initiatives currently underway and the resulting work, including a Study on the Governance of Legislative Delegation, 6 guiding manuals to support the work of legal departments in government agencies, in addition to the 'Guide to Legislative Terminology' initiative, which aims to create reference guides for legislative terminology in both Arabic and English. This will contribute to improving the quality of

legislative outputs and enhancing the stability of the legislative environment in the Kingdom.

The participants were briefed on the Committee's efforts aimed at spreading knowledge and empowering competencies to support the competitiveness of the legislative environment. The outcomes of 5 sessions and workshops held by the committee were reviewed, including 'Experience of the Judicial Legislation Preparation Committee in studying its Assigned Projects' and 'The Future of Alternative Dispute Resolution Means in Light of Digital Transformation and UNCITRAL Texts.'

The agenda included a number of proposals and recommendations related to the challenges of competitiveness of the legislative environment in the Kingdom, and directions were given to study them and proceed with any required follow-up.

May 27, 2025

NCC and OECD organize a workshop on capital market development



The National Competitiveness Center, in cooperation with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), organized a workshop reviewing the most prominent global trends in capital market development, corporate governance, and sustainability.

The workshop was held at the Center's headquarters in Riyadh, with the participation of seven government agencies: the Ministry of Commerce and

Energy; the Ministry of Economy and Planning; the Capital Market Authority; the Saudi Organization for Certified Public Accountants; the Public Investment Fund; and the Saudi Tadawul Group. Participants also included representatives from multiple companies in various sectors including finance, investment, insurance, law, consulting, and internal auditing. A representative from the National Center for Family Businesses also participated.

May 27, 2025

A Saudi-UK Roundtable in London Addresses Sports Cooperation



In his speech at the Saudi-UK Sport Cooperation Roundtable in London, H.E. Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, Minister of Commerce and Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee in the Saudi-UK Strategic Partnership Council, reaffirmed how the vision of H.R.H. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud (may God protect him) has transformed Saudi Arabia's economy and created promising opportunities across vital sectors.

Speaking before 130 public and private sector leaders from both countries, including H.R.H. Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki bin Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Saudi Minister of Sports, and Sir Chris Bryant, UK Minister of State for Creative Industries, Arts and Tourism, Al-Kassabi emphasized the distinctive nature of Saudi-UK partnership. Noting that the UK is the world's second-largest services exporter, he also discussed opportunities for bilateral cooperation in establishing a global integration framework spanning sports, tourism, culture, arts, and

technology—fields that have become universal languages not requiring translation.

The roundtable, organized by the National Competitiveness Center in cooperation with the UK Department for Business and Trade, focused on introducing companies to the promising opportunities offered by the Kingdom's hosting of international sporting events, such as the 2034 FIFA World Cup. It also addressed opportunities for cooperation in areas supporting the sports sector, such as technology, infrastructure, construction, facility operations, and planning and execution of major events.

H.E. Al-Kassabi arrived in London on a working visit, accompanied by a Saudi delegation comprising officials from 9 government agencies and 35 leaders from the business sector and major national companies. The visit aims to build economic partnerships in the sports sector between the two countries, strengthen relations across various priority sectors, and raise the level of commercial partnerships.

May 29, 2025

NCC and London Business School sign agreement to enhance the Kingdom's position as a global model for transformative economic policies

The National Competitiveness Center (NCC) and London Business School (LBS) have signed an agreement to develop academic content and case studies on Saudi Arabia's economic and developmental reforms. These materials will be incorporated into LBS's executive education programs, reinforcing the Kingdom's global role as a model for transformative economic policies.



June 16, 2025

NCC and the World Bank Group Organize a Regional Workshop on the Business Readiness Report Methodology



The National Competitiveness Center and the World Bank Group organized a regional workshop on the Business Readiness (B-Ready) report methodology. The workshop aims to provide comprehensive information on the report's framework and methodology.

H.E. Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi, Vice Minister of Commerce and CEO of the National Competitiveness Center, addressed at the workshop, which was attended by 100 participants from Saudi and Gulf government agencies involved in the report, about the Kingdom's partnership, represented by the National Competitiveness Center and the World Bank Group, which led to the launch of a pioneering initiative to enhance international cooperation, advance sustainable development in member states, and help them achieve their

development goals.

This was achieved by establishing a global knowledge hub that contributes to the exchange of expertise and insights based on the Kingdom's experience in implementing economic reforms and the expertise of the World Bank.

This workshop, organized by the National Competitiveness Center, marked the first Knowledge Hub activity under the World Bank Group-Saudi Arabia partnership, coinciding with celebrating 50 years of collaboration. The event also served to launch the new B-Ready report, which evaluates business and investment climates across 180 global economies. Notably, while GCC countries are scheduled for inclusion in the 2026 report, the Kingdom of Bahrain will be featured in this year's edition.

June 18, 2025

China's JD Logistics Launches its Operations Center in Riyadh



Chinese company JD Logistics has launched its operations in the Kingdom after obtaining the necessary licenses from the Saudi Business Center.

The company chose Riyadh as its operations center due to the Kingdom's attractive business environment, along with the efforts of the E-Commerce Council and relevant government agencies during periodic meetings held with the company.

H.E. Dr. Eiman Al-Mutairi, Vice Minister of Commerce and Supervisor General of the E-Commerce Council, participated in the launch ceremony alongside officials from the Ministry of Commerce and Investment, the Ministry of

Transport, the Saudi Authority for Industrial Cities and Technology Zones (MODON), the E-Commerce Council, the Chinese Embassy in Riyadh, and representatives from major Saudi and Chinese companies.

It is worth noting that many international companies are flocking to the Kingdom to conduct business, amid growing interest in the promising opportunities available under Vision 2030, which prioritizes the development of the e-commerce system and its role in the Saudi economy. This is particularly true given that the Kingdom is among the top 10 fastest-growing countries in this field.

The National Competitiveness Center held 10 workshops in cooperation with relevant authorities. The workshops aimed to identify the challenges facing investors and explore ways to enhance the growth of the economic activities covered.

April 8, 2025

Identifying the Challenges of Construction and Contracting Activities
(Engineering Offices, Security and Safety Systems, and Elevators)



April 24, 2025

Identifying and Addressing Challenges in Construction and Contracting
(Cement, Ceramics, Brick, and Gypsum)



April 29, 2025

Reviewing Economic Reforms and Impact on the Competitive Environment



May 5 - 6, 2025

Discussion Session on Raising Awareness of Financing Options Available to SMEs and Related Government Initiatives



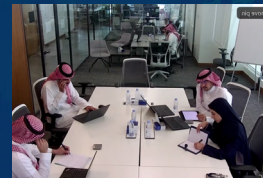
May 8, 2025

International Best Practices for Corporate Income Tax Incentives



May 11, 2025

Identifying and Addressing the Challenges of Tourism and Hospitality Activities
(Tourism Services, Tourism Hospitality, Medical Tourism, Hospitality, Pilgrims' and Umrah Performers' Accommodations)



May 19, 2025

Identifying the Challenges of Souvenir and Handicraft Activities



May 22, 2025

Identifying and Addressing Challenges Facing Consulting and Service Activities
(Consulting, Legal, Privatization, and Investment)



June 19, 2025

Identifying and Addressing Challenges Facing Automotive Activities and Services
(Car Dealerships, Car Rentals, Gas Stations, Lubricants and Base Oils, Insurance and Brokers)



June 29, 2025

Identifying and Addressing Challenges Facing Third Sector Activities
(Non-profit Companies, Services for People with Disabilities, Social Responsibility)



Key studies and research published by international organizations within the second quarter of 2025 on developments in productivity, inclusivity, sustainability, and resilience:



Artificial Intelligence for Efficiency, Sustainability and Inclusivity in TradeTech

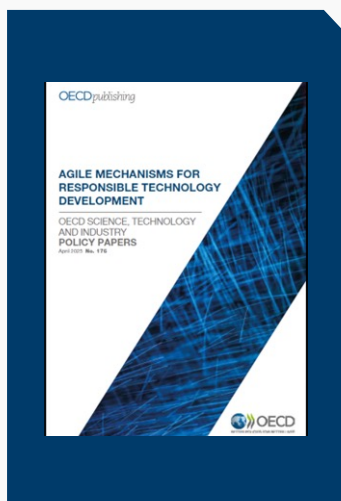
World Economic Forum
(WEF)

Release Date:
January 2025

Scope of Publication:

The report explores the most significant areas of dynamic change driven by AI in trade, examining concrete examples in supply chains, logistics, trade finance, and customs. It also assesses how AI adoption can contribute to building a more efficient, sustainable, and inclusive trade system.

These technologies can help open new markets, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), enable efficient automation, enhance the resilience and security of global trade, and promote sustainability by supporting circular economy models.



Agile Mechanisms for Responsible Technology Development

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Release Date:
April 2025

Scope of Publication:

The report presents a model that links the innovation process and policy. Resilient governance seeks to integrate adaptation, responsiveness, and flexibility into traditional governance approaches to support technology for responsible innovation.

The report reviews the types of mechanisms useful in promoting resilient governance and some examples, which will contribute to providing insights into how resilient governance mechanisms can be used at different stages of policy and technology development.

The report's findings emphasize that governance and technology evolve together, and that enhancing their interaction is essential to achieving responsible innovation.



Shaping Tomorrow: Responsible Innovation for a Brighter Future

World Economic Forum
(WEF)

Release Date:
April 2025

Scope of Publication:

The report presents a framework for responsible innovation to guide decision-makers in adapting to emerging technologies and innovations, ensuring that investments support sustainable solutions. It also highlights several case studies and models that illustrate how organizations have successfully implemented responsible innovation principles, enabling business growth and improving the social and environmental impacts of their activities.

The principles adopted in the report contribute to the development of reliable innovations that provide sustainable solutions across a wide range of sectors by enhancing economic, environmental, and social benefits and reducing unintended negative outcomes and impacts.

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

Key reforms implemented during the 2nd quarter of 2025:

01.

41 licenses related to starting a business in the healthcare sector are now available through the unified business platform of the Saudi Center for Economic Affairs.

02.

Amending Article Two of the Private Civilian Security Guard Regulations for International and Private Schools, so that guard hours are limited to working hours only, thus contributing to reducing costs for education sector investors.

03.

Availability of issuing both initial and operational licenses for educational establishments on the Saudi Center for Economic Business platform.

04.

The General Authority for Media Regulation is working to publish statistical data on the advertising sector in the Kingdom, such as the size of the advertising market, consumer behavior, the target audience for advertising, the average spending on advertising per user, etc., so that investors in this sector can benefit from them.



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.



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Istitlaa, the public consultation platform, in the 2nd quarter of 2025

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72

Proposed projects



9441

Feedback entries



27

Government entities

> > > > >

Most prominent sectors

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Transportation and Communications

Municipal Services, Planning, and Urban Development

Health

> > > > >

Most prominent amendments

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Amendments to the Health Professions Practice System

Real Estate Units Sorting and Ownership System and Common Areas Management

Amendments to the Executive Regulations of the Personal Data Protection System

المركز الوطني للتنافسية

NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS CENTER

تيسير | TAYSEER



Eid
Mubarak

