

## ifa ECP Monitor At a Glance

# Saudi Arabia

## PRÉCIS

Saudi Arabia's "Vision 2030", introduced in 2016, reinterprets the country's role in ECP and sees a stronger investment in arts and culture. New programs and institutions created in the context of the Vision 2030 join the country's strongly education-focused ECP strategy, which already includes several schools abroad and large scholarship programs. However, Saudi Arabia has also encountered distrust abroad, particularly because of the country's human rights record and recent scandals attributed to its Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the country's de facto leader.

## Outstanding Fact:

Saudi Arabia's ECP is perhaps best known for its expansive scholarship programs, which – in different forms – go back to the 1920s!

### KEY INDICATORS 2019

Population	Rank/number	41 <sup>st</sup> / 34.4 million
GDP	Rank/number	18 <sup>th</sup> / €1.5 trillion
GDP per capita	Rank/number	41 <sup>st</sup> / €43,877.11
Cultural Economy	As share of GDP	-
Education economy	As share of GDP	7.8%
R&D economy	As share of GDP	0.815%
Media economy	As share of GDP	-
Geopolitical position	Hard power	17 <sup>th</sup>
	World trade rank	23 <sup>rd</sup>
	Soft power	-
	Diplomacy rank	30 <sup>th</sup>

### OVERVIEW OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY 2019

Number of countries present	34
Number of institutions abroad	31
FTE staff	-
Freelance and local staff	-
Financial scale	> €3.5 billion
Government support	> €3.5 billion
Comparative ECP ranking	medium

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**Main Objectives**

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- Enhance Saudi human resources to make the knowledge economy internationally competitive.
  - Let Saudi artists benefit from global exchange.
  - Expand and diversify tourism in Saudi Arabia.
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**Policy Context**

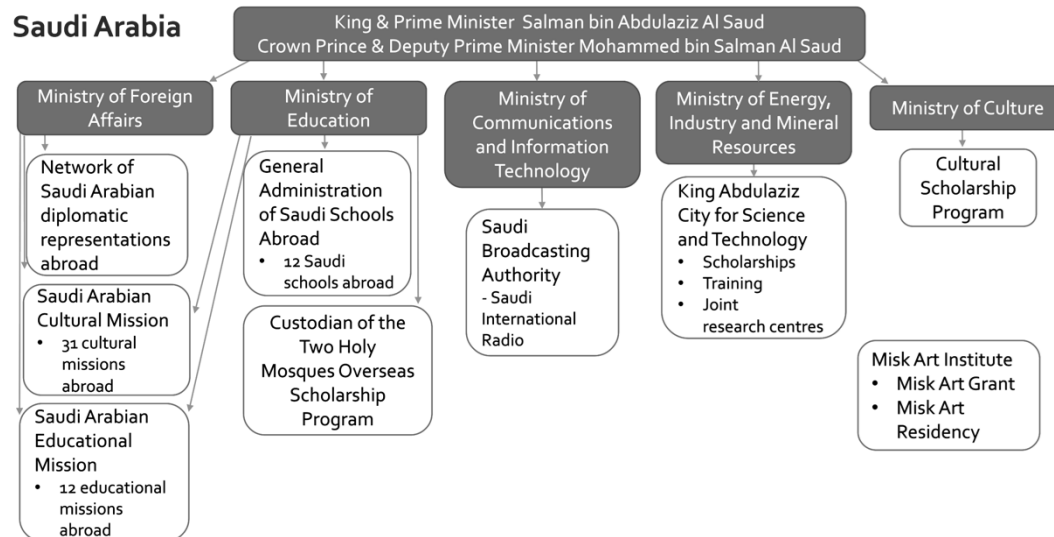
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- New “Vision 2030” reforms in nearly all areas of governance.
  - Policies aim at economic diversification.
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**Regional Focus**

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- Sub.-S. Africa: 1
  - Asia: 7
  - Europe: 9
  - Middle-East/NA: 10
  - North America: 2
  - South America: 0
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**INSITUTIONAL MAP**

Saudi Arabia’s ECP is organized through a variety of government bodies: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs oversees the kingdom’s diplomatic relations and thereby also oversees the “cultural missions” and “educational missions” in coordination with the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education further oversees Saudi Arabia’s network of secondary schools abroad as well as Saudi Arabia’s expansive “Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Overseas Scholarship Program”. In addition, the Ministry of Culture has now introduced the Cultural Scholarship Program and the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology awards scientific scholarships for its researchers. The Misk Art Institute now joins their ranks as a body in charge of international cultural diplomacy through arts programs.

## FIELDS OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY

	2019	2015	Comment
<b>Culture and the Arts</b>			
Number of cooperation agreements	-	-	
Number of countries present	31	-	
Number of institutes	31	-	Refers to Saudi Arabian Cultural Missions abroad.
Staff	-	-	
Artists in exchange programs	3	-	Refers to the artists supported to travel to the Bienalsur, not an exchange program.
Budget € million	-	-	
Government support (€ million)	-	-	
<b>Language</b>			
Number of countries courses offered	> 11	-	
Number of language teachers	297	-	Refers to the number of teachers sent abroad through the Saudi Educational Missions Abroad.
Government financial support € million	-	-	
<b>Education – Primary &amp; Secondary</b>			
Number of countries present	12	17	
Number of schools	12	20	
Number of students	4558	-	
Number of staff / teachers	-	-	
Government financial support € million	-	-	
<b>Education – Tertiary</b>			
Number of universities / colleges	Domestic: 43 Abroad: 0	-	Saudi Arabia has now introduced the permission for foreign branch campuses.
Number of international students	Inbound: 73,216 Outbound: 77,406		
Number of government scholarships	~49,055*	-	*In 2018, the KSA government reported more than 196,221 since 2015.
Government financial support € million	3.5 billion	-	Allocation for the "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Overseas Scholarship Program".

	2019	2015	Comment
<b>Science and Research</b>			
Institutes abroad	The KACST <sup>1</sup> offers financial support to 14 joint research centers, all of which are located in the United States or in the United Kingdom.		
Number of projects	14	-	Refers to joint research projects above.
Government financial support € million	-	-	
<b>Media</b>			
Weekly television audience in million	36	-	Refers to Al Arabiya.
Number of channels	1	1	
Weekly radio audience in million	-	-	
Total weekly TV and radio audience for all services and languages in million	> 36	-	
Number of languages broadcast	10	-	Refers to Saudi International Radio.
Budget in € million	-	-	
Government support in € million	-	-	

## CURRENT ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

- In the framework of the “Vision 2030”, many new government-funded bodies and programs have been developed, several of which aim at Saudi ECP. Among these are, for instance, the grant & residency programs by the Misk Art Institute, as well as the Cultural Scholarship Program implemented through the Ministry of Culture.
- Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman remains an internationally controversial figure, as he is accused of the mass arrests of high-ranking government officials in 2017 and of the assassination of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in 2018. Particularly in response to the latter, Saudi Arabia has received international criticism. Partnering research institutions in the United States, for instance, have come under pressure to justify the collaboration with Saudi Arabia.

## FURTHER INFORMATION, SOURCES, AND REFERENCES

- A user-friendly summary with additional data and data sources is here: “*Saudi Arabia – External Cultural Policy: Data Fact Sheet*”
- A full set of references is presented here: “*Saudi Arabia – External Cultural Policy: References*”
- A fuller report with a descriptive analysis is found here: “*Saudi Arabia – External Cultural Policy: A Report*”

<sup>1</sup> King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology.

## Imprint

The External Cultural Policy Monitor

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