

SAUDI ARABIA 2021 ATTRACTIVENESS AND UNCERTAINTIES

10 key points



1. SAUDI ARABIA'S ECONOMY IS LARGE

GDP reached US\$793 billion in 2019, accounting for 21% of the MENA zone's total GDP, i.e. 4 times its share of the region's population (5.73%).

2. SAUDIS ARE STILL VERY YOUNG

40% of the population is under 25, including 49% of Saudi nationals.

3. SAUDI ARABIA HAS "THE LARGEST SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE IN THE WORLD"

As a consequence of its young population, social media's penetration is extremely high: 72% of Saudis are active social media users. With 40.2 million mobile subscribers, mobile penetration stands at a record 116% of the total population.

4. UNEMPLOYMENT REMAINS A WORRYING PROBLEM

With the Covid-19 crisis leaving its impact, unemployment ranked among the top three concerns among Saudi Arabians in 2020.

EMERGING FOOD TRENDS



53% have become more conscious about healthy eating during the pandemic



67% are eating more home cooked meals

TOP FIVE WORRIES FOR SAUDI ARABIA

CORONAVIRUS COVID-19



49%

TAXES



35%

UNEMPLOYMENT



32%

FINANCIAL/POLITICAL CORRUPTION



19%

TERRORISM



16%

5. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WORKFORCE IS RISING

The ratio of female to male labour force participation rate (modeled ILO estimate) in Saudi Arabia was reported at 28.29 % in 2020.

6. VISION 2030 WILL BE A GAME CHANGER

The ambitious Vision 2030 strategy aims to diversify the economy and reduce its dependency on oil exports. The government has approached investors about expanding the role of the private sector in healthcare, education and tourism. According to the preliminary estimates, the oil sector's output contracted by 4.6%, in the first quarter of 2020, while the non-oil Sector recorded a positive growth rate of 1.6%. Within the non-oil Sector, the private sector grew by 1.4% and the Government Sector by 1.9%.

7. SAUDI ARABIA THE NEW TOURIST HOTSPOT?

To boost its transition from an oil economy to a tourist economy, the government introduced In September 2019 a new e-visa program, which allows visitors from 49 countries to travel to the Kingdom either by applying ahead of time or upon arrival. Ipsos data shows that Saudis are largely confident that Saudi Arabia provides the necessary level of entertainment that will appeal to tourists' expectations (70%) and that their country's infrastructure has the ability to handle a large number of tourists (66%).

8. MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT IS ON ITS WAY

Almost all are thus supportive of the government's new infrastructure plans. They foresee new, affordable homes, new roads, and new railway lines, and more easy transportation across the country.

9. COVID-19 HAS SPED UP CHANGE

The pandemic has been an accelerator of trends in mobility, home, health, and demography. The majority say that they will either make small permanent changes in their lives (39%) or change many things about the way that they lived before lockdown (44%).

10. OBESITY IS THE TOP PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN

While the vast majority believe they are in good health, six in 10 are overweight (33%) or obese (26%). However, consumers are becoming more aware and more concerned about what they eat, and more loyal to manufacturer brands that produce healthier products.

PREDICTIONS FOR 2021

89% are optimistic that 2021 will be a better year than it was in 2020

75% of Saudi Arabians think life will have got back to normal after the effects of the pandemic

58% think the world will change for the better because of the Covid-19 crisis

62% think in 2021 women will be paid the same as men for the same work

58% think in they will buy more online than in-store in 2021

IPSOS FLAIR COLLECTION

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Launched in 2005, the Ipsos Flair Collection was created in order to affirm Ipsos' intellectual leadership and relevancy of its experts:

- Analysing countries' mood and feelings of consumers-citizens
- Exploring key topics (aging, emancipation of women, the environment, purchasing power, changing attitudes, the impact of digital)
- A selection of successes and examples for strategists

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