Saudi Arabia

Introduction

Saudi Arabia is a country in the Middle East bordering the Persian Gulf and Red Sea. Extensive coastlines provide leverage on shipping, especially crude oil, through the Persian Gulf and Suez Canal. Neighboring countries include Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. The geography of Saudi Arabia is primarily desert with rugged mountains in the southwest. The government system is a monarchy. The chief of state and head of government is the King and Prime Minister. Saudi Arabia has an oil-based economy with strong government controls over major economic activities.

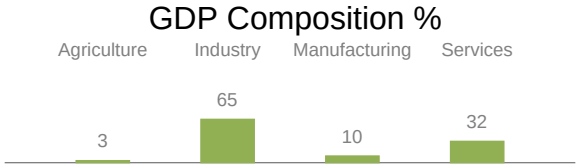
Location: Western Asia
Capital City: Riyadh (+3 GMT)
Chief of State: King and Prime Minister Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud
Head of Govt.: King and Prime Minister Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud
Currency: Saudi riyal (SAR)
Major Languages: Arabic
Primary Religions: Muslim 100%
Calling Code: 966
Voltage: 127/220

Key Websites

Main Government Page:	saudi.gov.sa
Commerce Ministry:	mci.gov.sa
Export Promotion Agency:	saudichambers.org.sa
Investment Promotion Agency:	sagia.gov.sa

Key Economic Facts

Budget Expenditures:	$.21 trillion (2011)
Budget revenues:	$.30 trillion (2011)
Debt - external:	$.11 trillion (2011)
Exports:	$364.70 billion (2011)
GDP per capita, PPP:	$24,434.25 (2011)
GDP, PPP:	$.69 trillion (2011)
Imports:	$120.00 billion (2011)
Industrial production growth rate:	8.40% (2011)
Inflation rate (consumer prices):	5.00% (2011)
Labor force:	7.63 million (2011)
Population:	26.53 million (2012)
Unemployment rate:	10.90% (2011)



Rankings

Index	Rank
Freedom of the Press	182/197
Global Competitiveness Report	18/144
Global Enabling Trade Report	27/132
Global Manufacturing Competitiveness Index (GMCI)	34/38
Index of Economic Freedom	82/177
International Logistics Performance Index (LPI)	37/155
Inward FDI Potential Index	28/141
KOF Index of Globalization	50/187
Networked Readiness Index (NRI)	34/142
Open Budget Index	96/100

Risk Assessment (Provided by Coface)

Country rating: A4 - A somewhat shaky political and economic outlook and a relatively volatile business environment can affect corporate payment behaviour. Corporate default probability is still acceptable on average.
Business Climate rating: B - The business environment is mediocre. The availability and the reliability of corporate financial information vary widely. Debt collection can sometimes be difficult. The institutional framework has a few troublesome weaknesses. Intercompany transactions run appreciable risks in the unstable, largely inefficient environments rated B.

Strengths

- Leading OPEC producer with one quarter of global oil reserves
- Leading regional economic and political role
- Economy more diversified and open since joining the WTO in late 2005
- Solid financial position

Weaknesses

- Strongly dependent on the hydrocarbon sector
- Unsuitable education system resulting in high unemployment, particularly among young people
- Business climate undermined by governance weaknesses and conservatism
- Unstable geopolitical environment

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