Saudi Arabia

The Network Readiness Index (NRI) is one of the leading global indices on the application and impact of information and communication technology (ICT) in economies around the world. In its latest version of 2025 the NRI Report maps the network-based readiness landscape of 127 economies based on their performances in four different pillars: Technology, People, Governance, and Impact. Each of these pillars is itself comprised of three sub-pillars (see Figure 1) that have been populated by a total of 53 variables.
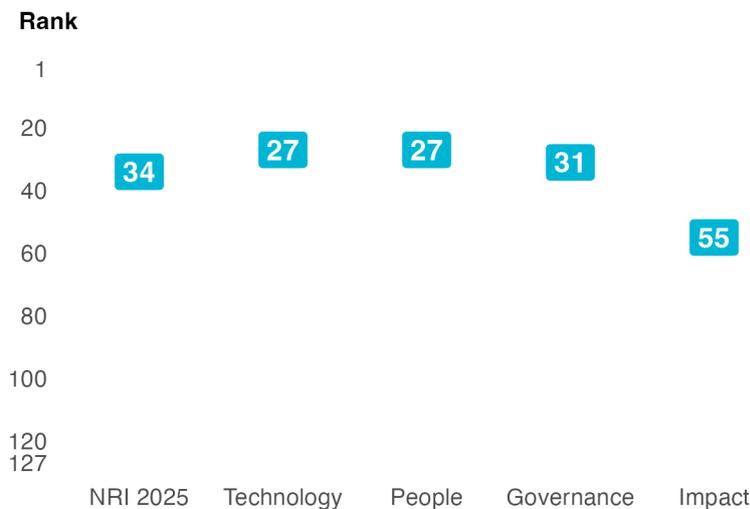
Figure 1: The NRI 2025 model

Global NRI position of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia ranks 34 out of the 127 economies included in the NRI 2025 (Figure 2). Its main strength relates to Technology and People. The greatest scope for improvement, meanwhile, concerns Impact.

Figure 2: Saudi Arabia global ranking, overall and by pillar

Performance at sub-pillar level

When it comes to sub-pillars, the strongest showings of Saudi Arabia relate to Access, Individuals and Future Technologies, among others (Table 1). More could be done, though, to improve the economy's performances in the Content, Businesses and SDG Contribution sub-pillars.

Table 1: Saudi Arabia rankings by sub-pillar

Sub-pillar	Rank	Sub-pillar	Rank
Access	7	Regulation	30
Individuals	10	Economy	46
Future Technologies	12	Trust	47
Inclusion	20	Content	60
Governments	22	Businesses	69
Quality of Life	23	SDG Contribution	110

NRI score and income

Figure 3 shows the position of Saudi Arabia in terms of both NRI score and GDP per capita (PPP). The trend line shows the expected NRI score given an economy's income level. As can be seen, Saudi Arabia is well below the trend line, which suggests that it is underachieving and that one would expect it could raise its network readiness in view of its income level.

Figure 3: NRI score and GDP per capita PPP (log)
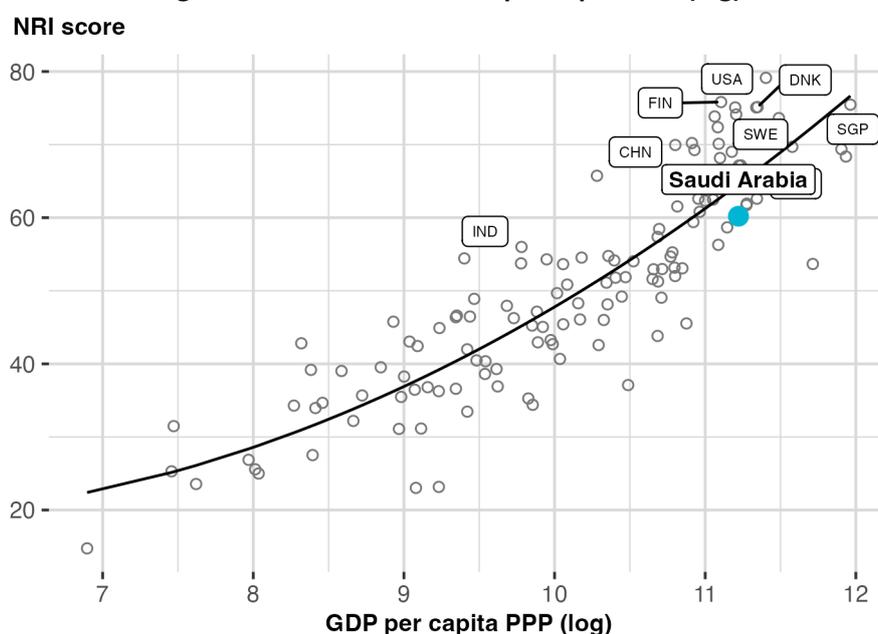
Note: USA = United States of America (rank: 1), FIN =Finland (rank: 2), SGP = Singapore (3), DNK =Denmark (4), SWE = Sweden (5), CHN =China (24), and IND = India (45).

Performance against its income group and region

High-income countries
Saudi Arabia is ranked 33rd in the group of high-income countries (Figure 4, left panel). In terms of pillar performance, it has a score higher than the income group average in two of the four pillars: Technology and People. At the sub-pillar level, it outperforms high-income countries in seven of the twelve sub-pillars: Access, Future Technologies, Individuals, Governments, Regulation, Inclusion and Quality of Life.

Arab States
Saudi Arabia is ranked 2nd within Arab States (Figure 4, right panel). It outperforms its region in each of the four pillars. With regard to sub-pillars, it outperforms the average in Arab States in eleven of the twelve sub-pillars: Access, Content, Future Technologies, Individuals, Businesses, Governments, Trust, Regulation, Inclusion, Economy and Quality of Life.

Figure 4: Performance of Saudi Arabia against its income group and region, overall and by pillar
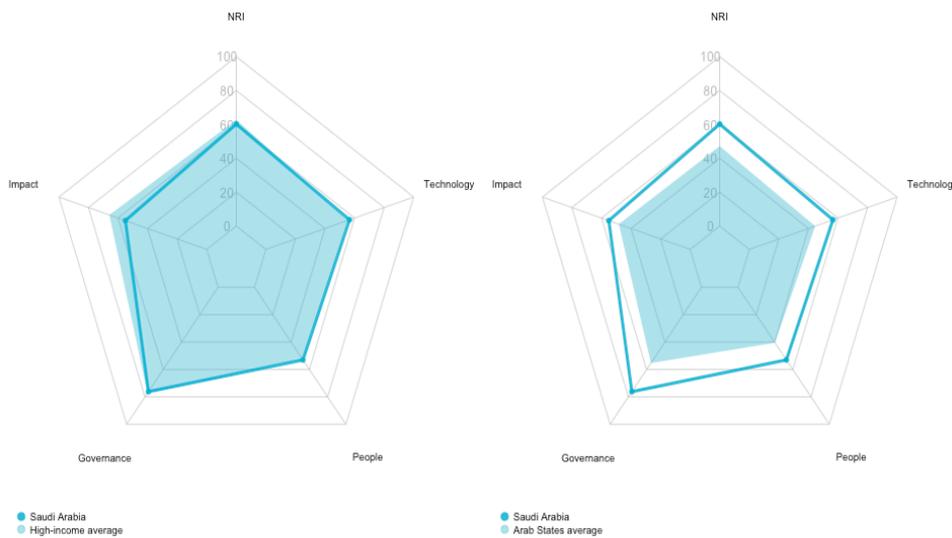

Table 2: Saudi Arabia scores vs. averages of its income group and region, overall and by pillar

Dimension	Saudi Arabia	High-income countries	Arab States
NRI	60.20	62.71	47.13
Technology	56.60	55.47	44.56
People	52.97	52.36	40.45
Governance	76.19	77.18	55.27
Impact	55.04	65.84	48.24

NRI 2025 At-A-Glance: Saudi Arabia

Network Readiness Index   Rank: 34 (out of 127)   Score: 60.20

Pillar/sub-pillar	Rank	Score	Pillar/sub-pillar	Rank	Score
A. Technology pillar	27	56.60	C. Governance pillar	31	76.19
1st sub-pillar: Access	7	83.64	1st sub-pillar: Trust	47	71.39
2nd sub-pillar: Content	60	26.44	2nd sub-pillar: Regulation	30	76.38
3rd sub-pillar: Future Technologies	12	59.73	3rd sub-pillar: Inclusion	20	80.81
B. People pillar	27	52.97	D. Impact pillar	55	55.04
1st sub-pillar: Individuals	10	69.31	1st sub-pillar: Economy	46	37.58
2nd sub-pillar: Businesses	69	29.51	2nd sub-pillar: Quality of Life	23	79.28
3rd sub-pillar: Governments	22	60.09	3rd sub-pillar: SDG Contribution	110	48.25

The Network Readiness Index in detail

Indicator	Rank	Score		Indicator	Rank	Score	
A. Technology pillar	27	56.60		C. Governance pillar	31	76.19	
1st sub-pillar: Access	7	83.64		1st sub-pillar: Trust	47	71.39	
1.1.1 Mobile tariffs	53	73.81		3.1.1 Secure Internet servers	85	49.61	
1.1.2 Handset prices	24	92.22		3.1.2 Cybersecurity	1	100.00	●
1.1.3 FTTH/building Internet subscriptions	23	48.45		3.1.3 Online access to financial account	n/a	n/a	
1.1.4 Population covered by at least a 3G mobile network	1	100.00	●	3.1.4 Internet shopping	26	64.56	
1.1.5 International Internet bandwidth	8	87.35	●	2nd sub-pillar: Regulation	30	76.38	
1.1.6 Internet access in schools	1	100.00	●	3.2.1 Regulatory quality	47	55.17	
2nd sub-pillar: Content	60	26.44		3.2.2 ICT regulatory environment	11	92.50	●
1.2.1 GitHub commits	90	3.27		3.2.3 Regulation of emerging technologies	18	76.98	
1.2.2 Internet domain registrations	82	1.90		3.2.4 E-commerce legislation	1	100.00	●
1.2.3 Mobile apps development	64	64.94		3.2.5 Privacy protection by law content	78	57.28	
1.2.4 AI scientific publications	22	35.65		3rd sub-pillar: Inclusion	20	80.81	
3rd sub-pillar: Future Technologies	12	59.73		3.3.1 E-Participation	7	95.65	●
1.3.1 Adoption of emerging technologies	8	95.39	●	3.3.2 Socioeconomic gap in use of digital payments	37	86.99	
1.3.2 Investment in emerging technologies	30	61.50		3.3.3 Gender gap in Internet use	31	67.93	
1.3.3 Robot density	n/a	n/a		3.3.4 Rural gap in use of digital payments	25	72.66	
1.3.4 Computer software spending	46	22.31		D. Impact pillar	55	55.04	
B. People pillar	27	52.97		1st sub-pillar: Economy	46	37.58	
1st sub-pillar: Individuals	10	69.31		4.1.1 ICT patent applications	34	5.76	
2.1.1 Mobile broadband internet traffic within the country	6	60.82	●	4.1.2 Domestic market scale	18	72.75	
2.1.2 ICT skills in the education system	11	81.05	●	4.1.3 Technology-Enabled Work Flexibility	25	68.01	
2.1.3 Use of virtual social networks	1	100.00	●	4.1.4 ICT services exports	101	3.81	○
2.1.4 Adult literacy rate	33	96.81		2nd sub-pillar: Quality of Life	23	79.28	
2.1.5 AI talent concentration	39	7.87	○	4.2.1 Happiness	29	74.62	
2nd sub-pillar: Businesses	69	29.51		4.2.2 Freedom to make life choices	25	87.37	

Indicator	Rank	Score	
2.2.1 Firms with website	103	21.37	○
2.2.2 Number of venture capital deals invested in AI	49	9.67	
2.2.3 Annual investment in telecommunication services	16	59.68	
2.2.4 Public cloud computing market scale	27	27.33	
3rd sub-pillar: Governments	22	60.09	
2.3.1 Government online services	4	98.79	●
2.3.2 Data Capabilities	38	45.84	
2.3.3 Government promotion of emerging technologies	6	86.91	●
2.3.4 Gross expenditure on R&D	61	8.82	

NOTE: ● indicates a strength and ○ indicates a weakness.

Indicator	Rank	Score	
4.2.3 Income inequality	n/a	n/a	
4.2.4 Healthy life expectancy at birth	42	72.42	
3rd sub-pillar: SDG Contribution	110	48.25	
4.3.1 SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being	63	86.67	
4.3.2 SDG 4: Quality Education	66	20.61	
4.3.3 SDG 5: Women's economic opportunity	107	58.18	○
4.3.4 SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	109	50.27	○
4.3.5 SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	95	41.25	

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