



Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

European Union - Brussels

Mission of the Kingdom of  
**Saudi Arabia**  
to the European Union

March, 2021

**Saudi women  
rising in  
economic  
participation**



Message from the Ambassador

# HE Saad Bin Mohammed Al-arify

*Welcome to the monthly newsletter of the Mission  
of Saudi Arabia to the European Union*



Mission

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

European Union - Brussels

*In this  
edition*



Welcome to our monthly Newsletter. March being the Women's History Month, let me use this edition to make a recognition of the dedication and hard work of all women. All our appreciation for making our societies stronger.

Read about the great leaps the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has made in empowering women, as well as articles on other interesting topics.

On behalf of the Mission of Saudi Arabia to the European Union, we are delighted to stay in touch with you.

**Warm Regards,  
HE Saad Bin Mohammed Al-arify**

- » **Saudi women** rising in economic participation
- » The **Saudi-German** partnership against climate change
- » **Green hydrogen** is the new path for the Kingdom
- » **The race** is on
- » The first **all-women football team's** journey
- » **Every rock** tells a story
- » The use of technology to combat **COVID-19**
- » **Saudi Arabia** to join UN meeting on gender equality
- » HRSD launches the "**Professional Verification**" program
- » **Gender balance** is the goal
- » **Faces of Saudi Arabia**  
Ms Reema Al Asmari
- » **The Journey**, a Saudi-Japanese collaboration



# Saudi women rising in economic participation

**The World Bank report “Women, Business, and the Law 2020” recognized Saudi Arabia as the top reformer globally in the last year. Saudi Arabia implemented historic reforms to advance women’s economic participation.**

Saudi women are expected to play a vital role in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s development strategy, [Vision 2030](#). The number of Saudi women holding managerial positions has increased during the past decade, with the Kingdom recently enacting new reforms toward improving on its record of female empowerment and gender equality.

“The reforms that took place in Saudi Arabia resulted in 30 women being appointed for the first time to the Saudi Shoura Council in 2013, and 17 women being appointed to municipal seats in 2015,” says Issam Abousleiman, the

Country Director of the GCC. “Today, you can see a large number of Saudi women holding managerial positions in new fields and sectors from which they previously were excluded.”

Saudi Arabia also encouraged women’s entrepreneurship by prohibiting gender-based discrimination in accessing financial services.

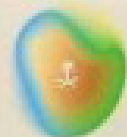
[Click here for more information](#)





Federal Ministry  
for Economic Affairs  
and Energy

وزارة الطاقة  
MINISTRY OF ENERGY  
Energy Has No Home



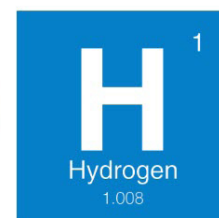
# The Saudi-German partnership against climate change

**Saudi Arabia and Germany have signed a landmark memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the production and use of hydrogen.**

The MoU was signed on 11 March 2021 during a virtual session by Saudi Arabia's Minister of Energy Prince Abdulaziz Bin Salman and Germany's Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy Peter Altmaier.

The energy partnership is an extension of the bilateral cooperation within the existing Saudi-German dialogue on energy and it seeks to implement the goals of the Paris Agreement on climate change, especially with regard to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases.

The agreement is also aimed at the strengthening of German-Saudi cooperation in the field of clean hydrogen fuel generation, processing, use, transportation, and joint marketing, through the participation of the



relevant authorities from research institutions, and institutions of the public and private sectors, to implement the required activities.

"The potential of hydrogen was never unknown, but now it has become a part of the strategic energy thinking because hydrogen is one of the most important future fuels," the Saudi energy minister said.

[Click here for more information](#)



# Green hydrogen is the new path for the Kingdom



**Going green and salvaging the damaged climate have been the topics of the decade all around the globe. In the lead and the top countries to keep on your watchlist regarding this matter is Saudi Arabia, which has announced the building of a \$5-billion green fuel plant for hydrogen export.**

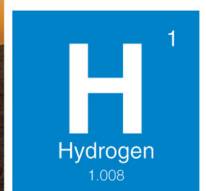
According to a report by Bloomberg, the hydrogen plant will be located in the \$500-billion megacity of [NEOM](#) and will be powered entirely by the sun and wind. The Kingdom's competitive advantage is its vast lands that have been preserved and untouched by humans, which absorb and are exposed to continuous sunshine and wind, the essential natural resources to produce the chemical.

So far, the cost of producing green hydrogen stands at \$5 per kilogram, a number the Kingdom aims to decrease to \$1.5 by 2030.

The market is estimated to be worth \$700 billion by 2050.

During the International Energy Forum (IEF) last month, Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdul Aziz bin Salman extended the Kingdom's wishes to collaborate with the rest of the world to combat climate change by switching to cleaner alternatives for electricity production.

[Click here for more information](#)





# The race is on

**Douglas Motorsport has announced its first driver for the 2021 BRDC British F3 Championship, in the form of Saudi Arabian Reema Juffali.**

For Saudi Arabia's first-ever female Formula racer, the high-velocity, adrenaline-packed action has become a way of life. "It's a privilege to be able to do what I'm doing, racing, and racing under the Saudi flag," the Jeddah-born motorist said. "It's a humbling experience representing my country by being the first, and alhamdulillah (praise God), I'm pursuing my passion and doing what I love."

Ahead of the Formula E double-header last weekend at Diriyah, Juffali announced that she will be making the move from Formula 4 to Douglas Motorsport in the BRDC British Formula 3 Championship this year.

Douglas Motorsport has been taking part in the series since 2016, with 14 wins and over 60 podiums to its name. This is a major step up for Juffali, but surpassing expectations is what she does.

[Click here for more information](#)





# The first all-women football team's journey



**The Saudi Greens' historic appearance at the 2019 Global Goals World Cup (GGWCup) has been immortalized in a new documentary by the Saudi Sports for All Federation.**

Launched across the SFA website, YouTube channel, and social media accounts, the documentary chronicles the all-women football team's journey at the tournament in New York City – the first time a female sports team from the Kingdom had ever competed in the USA.

The GGWCup unites sport and environmental awareness, with teams of women from around the world campaigning for the UN Sustainable Development Goal of their choice while competing in five-a-side football tournaments. Regional heats determine which teams progress to the finals in New York, where the competition winner is decided based on the impact of their activism as well as their performance on the pitch.

In 2019, the Greens chose to focus on SDG 15 'Life on Land', bringing attention to the effects of single-use plastics on the environment.

Prior to the tournament team members hosted community events and campaigns across the Kingdom, helping to educate people on the impact of plastics, and the wider SDGs in general.

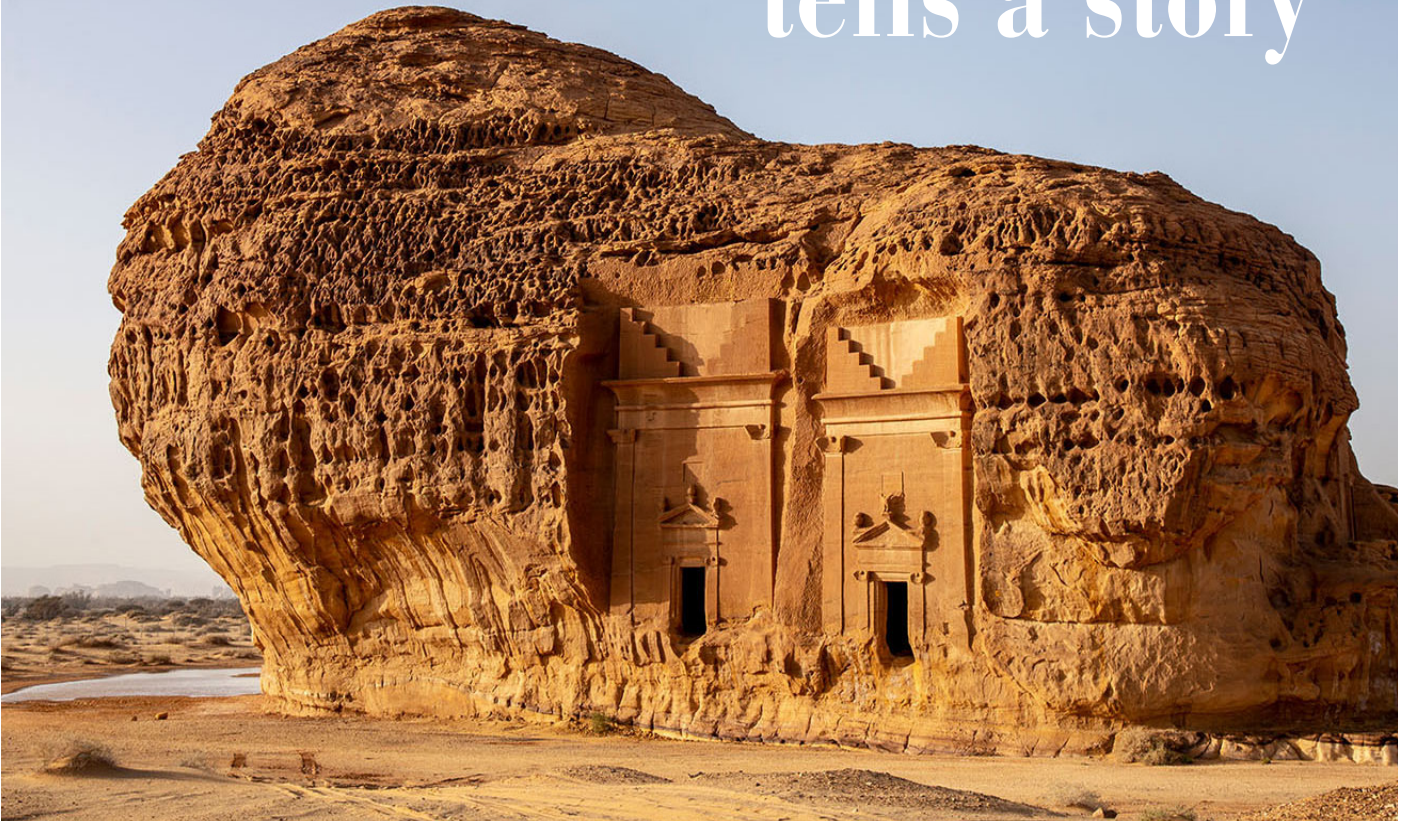
Among their initiatives were the distribution of reusable bags, litter collection, awareness talks, collaborations with schools and sports clubs to collect plastic bottles, and family fun days to teach children about the importance of recycling.

Progressing through their qualifier in Copenhagen, the Greens joined 14 other teams at the 2019 finals, where they took second place.

The documentary highlights the team's experience in New York, but not just in footballing terms. As well as sport and SDGs, the film reflects on social development, international bridge-building, and the Greens' role in boosting female empowerment within Saudi Arabia.

[Click here for more information](#)

# Every rock tells a story



## **New archaeological finds in Saudi Arabia's AlUla are filling in "missing links" in the history of the region.**

Amid a vast and enigmatic monumental landscape, forgotten kingdoms, and layers of history, archaeologists are only just beginning to reveal the secrets of this heritage jewel in north-west Saudi Arabia. In what has become one of the world's most active archaeological explorations, experts are beginning to fill in missing links in our understanding of the region's human history with discoveries, and further announcements are expected soon.

AlUla, in north-west Saudi Arabia, is a region of deserts and arid mountains. Yet, crucially, amid this hard landscape is a fertile oasis valley that has long sustained life and the wider area has drawn people and civilisations for more than 200,000 years. As a result, while AlUla is best known for the Nabataean tombs

of Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage site, over 27,000 other archaeological sites have been identified within its borders with more set to be discovered and recorded in the coming months.

Archaeologists, conservators, photogrammetrists, and other specialists are returning to AlUla, following the Covid-19 lockdown, and resuming their fieldwork. Thanks to the recent work, this "jewel in the heritage crown of Saudi Arabia" is beginning to fill in the missing links of the region's development and the generations that have crossed it, and whose descendants still inhabit it.

[Click here for more information](#)



# The use of technology to combat COVID-19



**The Saudi Data and Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA) has launched the “Tabaud” application to support government efforts in tackling Coronavirus.**

According to the health system and its implementing regulations, the Ministry of Health has approved health standards on which the “Tabaud” application has been developed.

The “Tabaud” application is a way to notify those who are in contact with people infected with the coronavirus. The application sends camouflaged identifiers data to the smartphones using the same application, which were registered during the contact with people infected with Coronavirus, accompanied by the data of the infected people devices, in accordance with the policies that the two international companies (Google and Apple) established, while maintaining the full privacy of users.

The application enables the user to receive direct and proactive notifications in case of any registered infected person has been detected, for the purpose of requesting direct health support from the Ministry of Health in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



[Click here for more information](#)

# Saudi Arabia to join UN meeting on gender equality



**Saudi Arabia will take part in the 65th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, which will be held in New York from March 15-26.**

The gathering will discuss the full and effective participation of women in decision-making and public life, efforts to eliminate violence against women and ways to achieve gender equality.

The Kingdom will be represented by a delegation headed by Dr. Hala Al-Tuwaijri, secretary-general of the [Family Affairs Council](#), with the participation of Dr. Lana bint Saeed, chair of the [women's committee in the Family Affairs Council](#); Dr. Hind bint Khalid Al-Zahid, representative of the [Women Empowerment Agency](#) at the [Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development](#); and Dr. Amaal Al-Habdan, representative of the [Human Rights Commission](#).

The delegation will also brief participants on the Kingdom's efforts to address domestic violence and safeguard women. It will take part in a number of virtual meetings, complemented by an event organized by the Kingdom, entitled "Women's Economic Empowerment," which will be held on March 22.

[Click here for more information](#)





## Human Resources and Social Development

# HRSD launches the *“Professional Verification”* program

**The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (HRSD) launched 7 March 2021 the “Professional Verification” program, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation.**

The program aims to verify that all skilled workers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have the required skills to perform the occupation they were recruited against effectively, and will include practical and theoretical examinations in the workers' specialized fields.

The “Professional Verification” program has two separate tracks: one track aims to examine all skilled workers in their countries, in cooperation with selected international examination centers, before their arrival to the Kingdom.

While the other track aims to examine existing skilled workers in Saudi Arabia in cooperation with certified local examination centers.

The verification will become gradually enforced - based on the size of the establishment - starting July 2021.

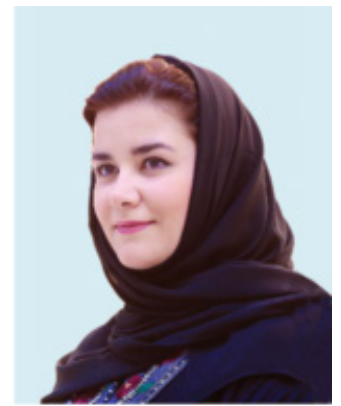
[Click here for more information](#)



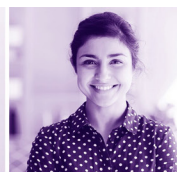
A close-up photograph of two women wearing hijabs, one black and one grey, looking intently at a laptop screen. The woman on the left is resting her chin on her hand. The background is softly blurred, suggesting an office or meeting environment. A dark green horizontal bar is visible at the top of the image.

# Gender balance is the goal

**Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Culture has reached a new gender balance of 50% in the workplace with many female employees holding top positions.**



## International Women's Day Special Coverage



Dur Kattan, the general director of the deputyship of communication and media, outlined the Ministry of Culture's mission of empowerment aligned with [Vision 2030](#).

Over the past two years, the ministry has been exploring new ways to empower Saudi women, not only by offering employment opportunities but also by providing skill development and professional training and ensuring equal opportunities without gender bias.

Since the launch of [Vision 2030](#), women's overall presence in the workplace has increased by 35% in the Kingdom with a 38% rise in the public sector and a 32% increase in private-sector jobs.

The ministry's top positions are occupied by women such as CEOs, managing directors and operational managers. The ministry has made progressive changes over the years to ensure it

complies with [Vision 2030](#) plans to empower and create leaders across the Kingdom without gender discrimination.

Some of the female leaders in the Ministry of Culture include Dr. Sumaya Al-Sulaiman, CEO of the Architecture and Design Commission; Noha Kattan, general director of the deputyship of national partnerships and development; Dina Amin, CEO of the Visual Arts Commission; Mayada Badr, CEO of the Culinary Arts Commission; Razan Al-Ayed, general manager of delivery and project management; and Felwa Al-Bazai, general manager of planning and performance.

The ministry, under the leadership of Culture Minister Prince Badr bin Abdullah bin Farhan Al-Saud, is eager to propel women forward as leaders in the cultural sector.

[Click here for more information](#)



Faces of  
**Saudi Arabia**

**Ms Reema  
Al Asmari**





## **Reema Al Asmari joins BNP Paribas as newly appointed Head of Territory for Saudi Arabia, reinforcing the bank's corporate and institutional (CIB) presence in the Kingdom.**

In her new role, Reema will oversee the bank's national commercial strategy, with a focus on strengthening relationships with strategic clients, multi-national corporates and government related entities. She will also drive BNP Paribas' product and service offering across all CIB metiers, including growth in areas such as sustainable finance.

Reema joins BNP Paribas from Natixis, where she held the position of CEO for Saudi

Arabia. Before joining Natixis, Reema worked nine years with JPMorgan Chase & Co in the Kingdom. Her last role with the US bank was Treasury Services Country Head. Prior to that, she was the Treasurer for Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Johannesburg.

[Click here for more information](#)

# The Journey, a Saudi-Japanese collaboration



Shizuno Kobun's *The Journey* is the first feature produced by the pioneering collaboration between Saudi Arabia's Manga Productions and Japanese major Toei Animation.

Based on an epic tale drawn from the Arabian Peninsula and featuring the distinctive anime animation look, *The Journey* is emblematic of Manga Productions' aims to create content for global audiences with international standards, support local talent and showcase the region, its people, and its culture.

Set 1,500 years ago, the film details the story of Aws and the people of Mecca who are forced to take up arms to liberate themselves and their city from enslavement by a ruthless general and prevent it from being destroyed.

"The Journey is a milestone project for Manga Productions, which since its start has been seeking to be a global pioneer in creative content," says

Essam Bukhary, CEO of Manga Productions (Saudi Arabia) and executive producer of *The Journey*.

Manga and Toei collaborated on the pre-production and creation of the story, character design and other assets with both Japanese and Saudi artists working together to bring the tale to life and screen.

"It is an example of the results of empowering Saudi talents and artists, and investing in their talents," says Bukhary. "Young Saudi men and women were sent to be trained at Toei Animation studios (in Japan) and were recruited by Manga Productions to work on this film that is the result of Saudi creative content production in cooperation with international partners at the highest level."

The Journey is the latest in a long-standing relationship between Manga and Toei.

[Click here for more information](#)

© 2021 KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

MISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

