



World TVET  
Database  
**Saudi Arabia**

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## Abbreviations

GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
GOTEVOT	General Organisation for Technical Education and Vocational Training
ISVE	Industrial Secondary vocational Institutes
IVT	Industrial and Vocational Institutes
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
NAAC	National Organisation for Assessment and Accreditation
NOSS	National Occupational Skill Standards and Training
NSJT	National System for Joint Training
TTC	Technical Trainers College
TVTC	Technical and Vocational Training Corporation

## TVETipedia Glossary

Below are listed TVET terms mentioned in this report. Click on a term to read its definitions on the UNESCO-UNEVOC TVETipedia glossary.

Accreditation	Post-secondary education
Assessment	Prior learning
Basic skills	Programme
Career guidance/counselling	Qualification
Cooperative learning/training	Quality
Diploma	Quality Assurance
Dropout	Skill/qualification mismatch
Employment	Stakeholder
Higher education	Standard
Informal Learning	Sustainable development
Labour market	Teacher
Learning outcomes	Teacher In VET
Lifelong Learning	Trainee
Monitoring	Trainer
National Qualifications Framework	TVET
Non-formal education	TVET institution

# Saudi Arabia

Population:	31,540,000 (2015)
Youth population <sup>1</sup> :	4,929,000 (2015)
Median population age:	28.3 (2015)
Annual population growth (2010-2015) <sup>2</sup> :	2.32%



## 1. TVET mission, strategy and legislation

### TVET strategy

Developed by the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC), the Technical and Vocational Training (TVT) Strategy envisages Saudi Arabia as achieving international leadership in technical and vocational training.

The main objectives of the Strategy are to:

- "Absorb maximum number of students willing to benefit from TVET in order to achieve sustainable development;
- train and develop national manpower in technical and vocational fields according to labour market requirements – both in qualitative and quantitative terms;
- establish strategic partnerships with industry in order to carry out technical and vocational programs;
- achieve an even geographical coverage and increase the number and capacity of Colleges and Institutes (for boys and girls) in all governorates and cities in the Kingdom;
- disseminate awareness among communities about the importance of working in technical and vocational fields, as well as to create an appropriate environment for lifelong learning;
- develop capacity to adapt and deal with changes and challenges based on applied research;
- ensure quality when designing and offering training programs with the aim of gaining national and international accreditation; and
- consolidate the relationship with, as well as the integration of all national educational and training entities."

### TVET legislation

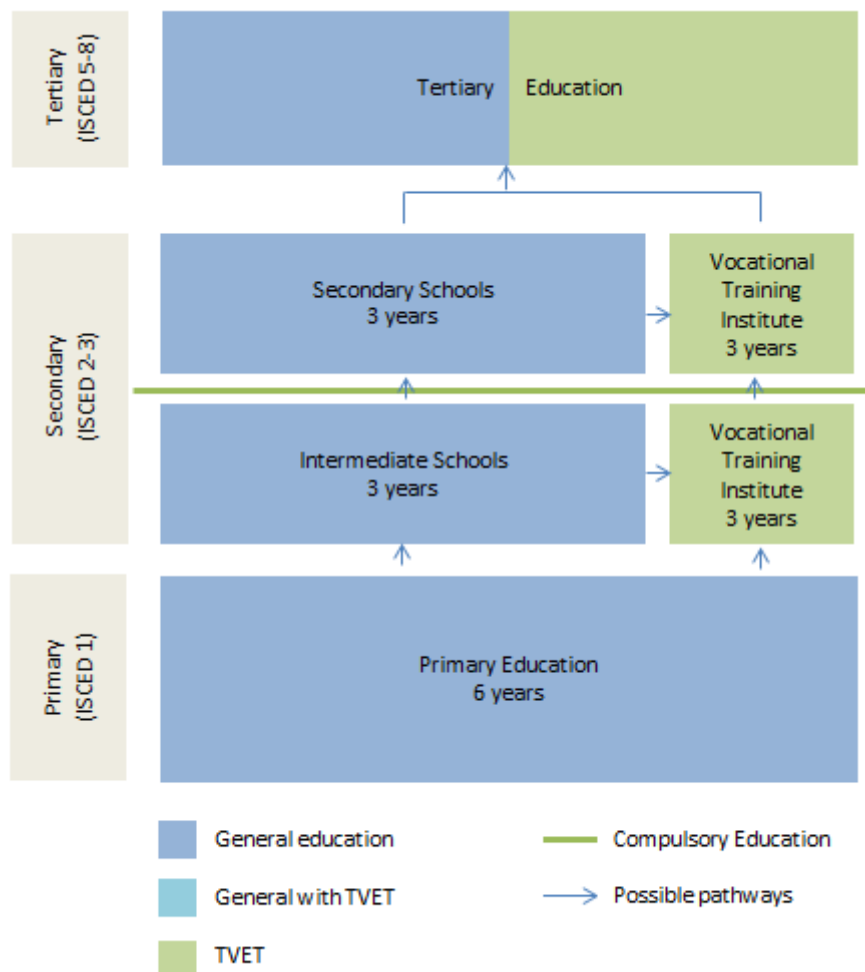
The Educational Policy Document is the basic document defining the objectives of education in Saudi Arabia. The document, issued by the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 779 of 17 December 1969, puts particular emphasis on Islamic principles in all forms of education. Article 233 of the Education Policy states that education at all levels should be free of charge.

<sup>1</sup> Population aged 14–25

<sup>2</sup> All statistics compiled from the United Nation's Population Division's *World Population Prospects, the 2015 Revision* (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DVD/>)

The Royal decree No. 30/m (10/08/1400) stipulates the establishment of the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation, an umbrella organisation for all TVET institutions.

## 2. TVET formal, non-formal and informal systems



Scheme compiled by UNESCO-UNEVOC from Technical and Vocational Training Corporation, 2011.

### Formal TVET system

Elementary education lasts for six years and is followed by a three-year intermediate level. At the intermediate level students receive the Intermediate School Certificate while those continuing at secondary level receive the Secondary School Certificate. At all stages students can opt for the vocational training institutes which offer three-year programmes in the fields of industry, commerce and agriculture. Intermediate school graduates can continue their vocational training at the Industrial Secondary Vocational Institutes while secondary school graduates can opt for Technical Colleges or Girls' Higher Technical Institutes, as well as the National System for Joint Training (NSJT) or the Military Vocational Training Programme.

### **Industrial Secondary Vocational Institutes (ISVE)**

TVTC works continuously to develop procedures, programmes and training plans for Industrial and Vocational Institutes (IVT). In 2010-2011, TVTC finalised the development of industrial secondary vocational centers and institutes. The main purpose guiding the development was to meet labour market demands. Part of the development plan included the establishment of an occupational framework for base training, a regional needs analysis and an operational infrastructure to enable institutes to provide for each community's training demands. TVTC prepared an improvement plan for its training programmes according to evolving labour market needs. As a result, TVTC restructured all training plans according to new developments on the labour market and according to the Ministerial Cabinet Executive Order No. 15 of 08 February 2004. TVTC saw the need to align its plans with output from education and training institutions and labour market requirements. ISVI provide different training programs with different certification periods according to levels in the national qualifications framework. TVTC developed specialisations through which surveyor programmes are now included in colleges of technology under departments of Civil and Architectural Technology. The old Construction Surveyors Institutes were transformed into Higher Institutes for Girls. Similarly, a number of training institutes were opened across the country to offer similar training.

### **Colleges of Technology**

Rapid economic development in Saudi Arabia creates the need for technical and vocational training programs. Developing TVET programmes is therefore a priority in human resources development and a way of responding to high manpower demands in several sectors with diverse technical specialisations. TVTC aims to fulfill the Kingdom's current and future needs for trained manpower through the establishment of colleges of technology in every major city in the Kingdom. The main purpose of the TVET expansion is to prepare high school graduates in technical and vocational specialisations. Graduates are awarded assistant engineer diplomas in one of the technical or administrative specialisations.

The academic year is divided into three trimesters, each lasting 14 weeks. To graduate, trainees are required to study five trimesters, plus a final trimester in cooperative training (an internship/placement). Trainees can choose one of the following specialisations: electrical; mechanical; chemical; administrative; computer; electronic; hotel and tourism technology; information; and environmental and food processing technologies.

### **Girls' Higher Technical Institutes**

Since TVTC took over girls' vocational and technical training from the Ministry of Education in 2005, it concentrated its efforts to improve operation within that sector. As a result, a number of achievements have occurred in the area of girls' TVET. These include:

- Continued operation of 14 Higher Institute for Girls in Riyadh, Alahsa, Buraidah, Tabouk, Madina, Jeddah, Albaha, Ha'il, Najran, Altaif, Alkharj, Ara'ar, Aljouf, Khamis Mushait. Additionally, 28 technical specialisations were introduced to enhance the training for 23 occupations;
- Graduation of the first cohort of girls from Higher Institutes for Girls in Riyadh, Jeddah, Tabouk, Buraidah and Madina;

- Introduction and administration of the parallel diploma in girls' technical training in Jeddah, Madina, Buraidah, Tabouk and Alahsa;
- Successful training of female students with special needs who have been awarded the parallel diploma in specialisations that best fit their needs, such as office applications and computer maintenance for hearing impaired girls;
- Cooperation with non-profit organisations, such as Fahad Ibn Salman organisation for Kidney Disease, Charity Committee for Orphans Care (INSAN), Alnahda Philanthropic Society for Women, and Alanoud Bint Abdulaziz Ibn Musaed Charitable Society, which were requested to nominate interested girls all over the Kingdom to continue their training and gain the parallel diploma;
- Establishment of an IT Department at the Office of the Vice Governor for Girls' Training in February 2009. One of its achievements included the development of a girls' technical training website which facilitates communication of admission and recruitment news; and of branches with headquarter officials in Riyadh;
- Supervision of girls who are undergoing cooperative training in computer specialisations in and outside of TVTC;
- Training of specialists in Occupational Skill Standards at Ohio State University in the USA;
- Participation in conferences and cultural activities;
- Promotion of TVTC to local and international delegations;
- Application of a unified e-admission system for all girls' institutes;
- Development of a procedural manual dealing with quality improvement for female trainees;
- Organising of workshops on building Occupational Skill Standards for beauty care and textile production;
- Preparation of trimester training plans and syllabi for all girls' specialisations;
- Establishment of an e-training unit that carried out e-training across training departments;
- Supervision of 16 programs aiming to develop and train girls' technical training staff;
- Cooperation with the government and private sector in running training programmes in travel and tourism and organising field trips to prisons and girls' correctional facilities which might result in the drawing up of additional programmes; and



- Establishment of an administrative unit in-charge of trainee services, such as the preparation of training plans, admissions, registration, summer activities, training and cooperative/career guidance; as well as the monitoring of these activities. The department encourages graduates to establish their own SME (Small and Medium Enterprise) through the Center of SMEs.

### **National System for Joint Training (NSJT)**

NSJT aims to engage the private sector in providing labour-market-relevant training. The benefits of this public-private partnership include reduced costs of training (provided that existing company facilities can be used and the capacity of technical and vocational training programmes is increased). Trainees are entitled to a one-month vacation, receive a stipend and are insured for the duration of training. The practical aspect of the training ensures employment for NSJT graduates. Private businesses train youth to become qualified workers in their companies and benefit from additional employees who are funded by NSJT (75% provided by the Human Resource Development Fund).

The stakeholders in NSJT include the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC), the Human Resource Development Fund and the Chambers of Commerce and Industry. TVTC is in charge of training implementation, the Human Resource Development Fund provides funds and supervises theoretical training while the Chamber of Commerce and Industry is in charge of ensuring quality for the practical training at company facilities.

Theoretical training (25%) focuses on basic skills, materials, work ethics, computer skills and English language. Practical training (75%) depends on specialisation and is conducted according to labour-market-related programmes. The duration of training varies from a couple of months to two years. Trainees admitted into the programmes include general secondary school graduates, university students and dropouts from all education levels.

### **Military Vocational Training Programme**

The Military Vocational Training Programme combines both technical and military education and aims to provide the Saudi labour force with young disciplined graduates through cooperation between the military and the TVET sector. The Programme takes on around 10 000 students a year, providing them with a living allowance and accommodation. Training sessions are divided into military training with a basic technical component and technical training with a discipline component. The vast majority of graduates join private sector companies with some joining the military or continuing at the College of Technology.

The stakeholders in the Programme are the Ministry of Defense and Aviation, the Ministry of the Interior, the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation and the National Guard.

## **Non-formal and informal TVET systems**

There is no overarching framework for informal education in general and TVET in particular. The National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Saudi Arabia (2009) recognises the need to ensure that students are not required to duplicate learning. However, it does not seek to establish a comprehensive policy on the recognition of informal learning but rather advises educational institutions to develop their own policies acknowledging prior learning. Institutions

should provide academic counseling and guidance, monitor performance, and adjust academic requirements for students who gained relevant knowledge through prior learning.

Responsibility for determining eligibility for credits towards a qualification should remain with the institution concerned. However, the Framework (2009) outlines a general guide for institutions to follow when establishing their prior learning criteria:

- "Students entering higher education with courses completed at another well regarded higher education institution might expect to receive full credit for courses that are substantially equivalent to courses at the receiving institution; and
- Students entering higher education who have completed a 60 credit hour technical diploma in a college of technology or a higher technical institute might reasonably expect to receive credit for about 30 credit hours of study in substantially equivalent courses in a higher education university or college program. Depending on the specific content of the courses involved, this number might be increased or reduced. In either of these cases it may be necessary to make provision for special transitional programs in subject areas that are prerequisite for more advanced studies in the discipline concerned".

### 3. Governance and financing

#### Governance

Initially, TVET was run by three different government bodies – the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs. In 2007, the Technical and Vocational Training Corporations (TVTC) was founded to serve as an umbrella organisation for all branches of TVET. It also runs Colleges of Technology, Girls' Higher Technical Institutes and Vocational Institutes.

The main functions of TVTC are to:

- design and implement TVET programmes;
- conduct TVET research;
- develop and review TVET plans and strategies in accordance with national policies and frameworks;
- qualify TVET teachers and trainers;
- set standards, issue licenses and supervise the establishment of private TVET institutions;
- establish strategic partnerships with training organisations to run and manage TVET institutions;
- advise the public and private sector on TVET;
- design and develop TVET training tools and technologies;
- participate in national and international TVET cooperation; and
- develop best practices of rules and regulations in TVET.

## Financing

The Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) is financed through a share of the annual State budget.

## 4. TVET teachers and trainers

Teacher training takes place at universities that prepare qualified staff, upgrade professional skills and educational standards. The minimum requirement for teaching at any level is a four-year bachelor's degree. Education departments at Saudi universities and colleges offer a wide range of subjects in education theory and methodology. All prospective teachers studying a certain subject need to take additional courses in education.

The Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) is in charge of providing TVET teacher training. Among others, it cooperates with international donors in boosting the capacity and increasing the quality of teacher training at new and existing institutions.

TVTC takes the lead in a German-funded project which established the Technical Trainers College (TTC) in Riyadh. The college offers a three-year programme at the end of which graduates receive an internationally recognised bachelor's degree. The German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) started its work establishing the institution in 2008, admitted the first 150 students in 2009 and is expected to increase the number up to 1200 by 2012. College infrastructure is provided by TVTC while GIZ takes responsibility for delivering on the college strategy, teaching methodology, human resources, administration, didactic and technical matters and the general management of the institution (GIZ, 2012).

## 5. Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks

### National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

With regard to the relationship between higher education and technical and vocational training, the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Saudi Arabia (2009) recognises the similarities of both higher education and TVET and the importance of linking both education levels. It emphasises the importance of granting credits or allowing for exemptions from programme requirements for students wishing to change their education path.

### The Preparation of Training Packages

The creation of national occupational skill standards was necessary for the improvement of training, occupational certification, and employment. One of the most important achievements of the National Occupational Skill Standards and Training (NOSS) is the development of standardised training plans for all training programmes. Thanks to NOSS, TVTC succeeded in preparing training plans for Colleges of Technology, Industrial and Vocational Institutes (IVT), Higher Technical Institutes for Girls, Military Vocational Training Program, Vocational Institutes for Architecture and Construction, and the National Organisation for Joint Training.

The Directorate continues to review and develop training plans to keep pace with the emerging needs of TVTC. As a result, the Directorate conducted a comprehensive evaluation of all plans,

training programmes for Colleges of Technology and IVT during the fiscal year 2009. Based on the evaluation and review of the training plans, training packages were authored, amended and reviewed to suit the new training needs resulting from the new academic calendar to be implemented in 2009.

## Quality assurance

One of the most important initiatives of the TVT Strategy will be establishing a TVET quality assurance body.

Currently, the National Commission for Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) is in charge of evaluating the quality of post-secondary institutions and their programmes. NCAAA has developed a set of standards which aim at ensuring that student learning outcomes, institutional management and research contributions are of high international quality. Assessment is conducted according to eleven areas which need to comply with NCAAA standards for an institution to receive accreditation.

The assessment areas include:

- Mission, goals and objectives;
- Programme administration;
- Management of programme quality assurance;
- Employment processes;
- Research; and
- Community relations.

## 6. Current reforms, major projects and challenges

### Current reforms and major projects

By 2017, the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation will have completed 50 Technical Colleges, 50 Girls' Higher Technical Institutes and 180 Industrial Secondary Institutes. The plan is the first step in creating training placements for about 500 000 students, including 250 000 girls. Boys and girls will be trained in vocational professions such as IT, medical equipment handling, training for plumbers, electricians, mechanical technicians, body care specialists, and hairdressing. The plan aims to reduce the number of foreign workers who are currently employed in technical and vocational professions in Saudi Arabia (Khan, 2011).

The priority given to education is evident "in the sharp rise in the number of students at all levels from about 547 thousand in 1390H (1970) to over 5 million in 1422H (2002)." (Human Development Report, 2011). The increase in the number of secondary school graduates poses major challenges for the education system in the Kingdom. These challenges need to be addressed by developing effective policies that will help absorb students in higher and vocational education. Technical and vocational training facilities need to be expanded to increase the number of skilled workers. Too often, graduates – particularly females – are being confronted with a mismatch between their qualifications and the needs of the labour market. Therefore, the Saudi Government is keen to take further steps in reviewing curricula and developing training programmes. Such efforts should consider labour-market needs which are

increasingly driven by scientific and technological knowledge (Human Development Report, 2003).

## 7. Links to UNEVOC centres and TVET institutions

### UNEVOC Centres

- [Technical and Vocational Training Corporation \(TVTC\)](#)

### TVET Institutions

- College of Technology
- [Colleges of Technology](#)
- Girls' Higher Technical Institutes
- Industrial Secondary Vocational Institute
- [Technical and Vocational Training Corporation](#)
- [Technical Trainers Colleges](#)

## 8. References and further reading

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