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Ministry of Municipal & Rural Affairs

CPI PROFILE RIYADH

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

مستقبل المدن السعودية
FUTURE SAUDI CITIES

The Future Saudi Cities Programme
CPI PROFILE - Riyadh

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Introduction

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (MOMRA) jointly launched UN-HABITAT Saudi Arabia Programme titled “ Future Saudi Cities Programme (FSCP)”. The UN-HABITAT Office provides technical support to the MOMRA and targets 17 key cities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The cities include Riyadh, Makkah, Jeddah, Taif, Medina, Tabouk, Dammam, Qatif, Ihsa, Abha, Najran, Jazan, Hail, Araar, AlBaha, Buraydah, and Sakaka, to respond to national and local urban challenges.

UN-Habitat provides a new approach for measuring urban prosperity: which is holistic, integrated and essential for the promotion and monitoring of socio-economic development, inclusion and progressive realization of the urban-related human rights for all. This new approach redirects cities to function towards a path of an urban future that is economically, politically, socially and environmentally prosperous. The new approach or monitoring framework, The Cities Prosperity Index (CPI), is a multidimensional framework that integrates six carefully selected dimensions and several indicators that relate to factors and conditions necessary for a city to thrive and prosper. The six dimensions include productivity, infrastructure development, equity and social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and urban governance. The CPI uses the concept of The Wheel of Urban Prosperity and the Scale of Urban Prosperity to enable stakeholders to assess achievements in cities. The City Prosperity Index (CPI) not only provide indices and measurements relevant to cities, but it is also an assessment tool that enables city authorities as well as local and national stakeholders, to identify opportunities and potential areas of intervention for their cities to become more prosperous.

Under FSCP, the UN-HABITAT, MOMRA, and ArRiyadh Development Authority together with its Local Urban Observatory have been working on developing urban statistics and spatial information (Geographic Information System) to provide relevant urban information that strongly support decision-making process on urban development and urban planning in the city.

This CPI Profile Report applies the CPI framework and provide a summary of the basic information and urban statistics about the City and gives an overview of the city’s achievements, opportunities and potential areas that contribute to its prosperity in areas such productivity, infrastructure development, equity and social inclusion, environmental sustainability and urban governance and legislation.

Historical Background

Riyadh is among the youngest capital cities in the world and also among the fastest growing capitals in the world with an average annual growth rate of about 8%. (The Comprehensive Strategic Plan of 2003). The city of Riyadh is located on Najd Plateau at a central location in the Najd Region. Despite the recent establishment of the City of Riyadh, the location had seen human presence since about 2500 years ago. The location of Riyadh has been mentioned in historical sources dating back to 715 BC in the context of mentioning of Hajar City the capital of Al - Yamamah Region, which included places such as Al-Aridh, Areed, Huta, Al Mahmal, Sadair, Aflaj and Al-Kharj. Hajar City had lost its value in the tenth Hijri century and scattered into small villages.

The name Riyadh is derived from the plural of the Arabic word ("rawdah") meaning a place of gardens and trees, owing to the natural fertility provided by its location in a place with many Wadis (water courses, now dry) in the vicinity.¹

Riyadh name re-emerged in the twelfth Hijri century and the new city covered the rest of the urban locations of Old Hajar City and its surrounding lands and farms. Riyadh walls and the Presidential Palace had been built about 1746. Riyadh came to the limelight under the banner of the first Saudi state in 1773 during the reign of Imam Abdul Aziz Bin Mohammed Bin Saud. It continued under the rule of the Saudi State until 1818; during which time Diriyah City had been the capital of the Saudi State. In 1901, King Abdul Aziz entered the city of Riyadh and started thereafter to unify the Arabian Peninsula whereby its pioneering position and role increased. Riyadh was announced as the capital of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1931 (Source: Riyadh in Fifty years -1424 H). Therefore, the history of Riyadh as a capital city and its growth from a relatively small settlement into a great modern city can be traced back to when it was raised to royalty status and made the Capital of the Kingdom.

By 1955 (1375 AH), all ministries and government offices had been moved to or established in Riyadh. Its scope of responsibility was greatly enlarged and its resources increased to enable it to cope with its growing size and population. Riyadh is also the capital city of Riyadh Province. Riyadh is the seat of government; ministries, embassies, diplomatic missions, as well as it contains educational, financial, agricultural, cultural, technical, commercial and social organizations. Riyadh is now a high-tech oasis of glass, steel and concrete, home to huge hotels, even larger hospitals and one of the biggest airports in the world; its road network is among the best in the world. Today Riyadh has six government owned/public universities and five privately owned universities and some middle-level colleges, specialized institutes, cultural information centers, sports facilities and stadiums, and public libraries.

¹ Encyclopedia Britanica

Geography and Location of the City.

Riyadh city lies approximately 1,950 feet (600 meters) above sea level in the northeastern part of Najd region – a region with a rocky plateau landscape at the center of the Arabian Peninsula. Its geographical coordinates are roughly 38° North and 43° East. The city is about 950km by road from Jeddah on the Red Sea and about 400km from Dammam on the Arabian Gulf. In Riyadh, the weather is usually dry and hot in the summer (April to September) and cold in the winter (September to March). In winter the temperature goes as low as 15°C and in summer the temperature can go as high as 45 °C and the average rainfall is 10-20mm. The city officially covers a total area of approximately 1782km²² while the urban footprint area of the city is about 1060km²³.

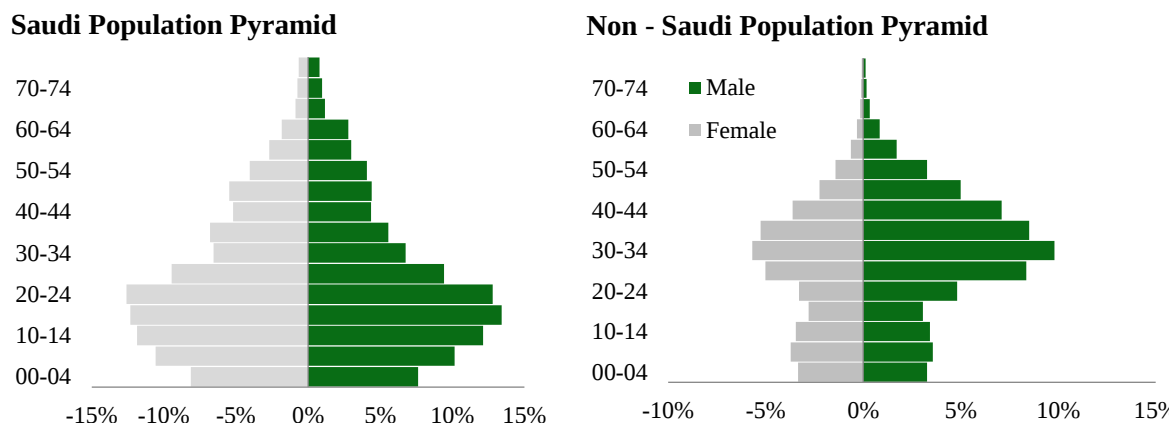
Demographic Background of the City

According to the 2010 census, the city of Riyadh had about 5.2 Million inhabitants, the Riyadh Household Survey 2016, conducted by the ADA put the population at 6.5 million in 2016. Thus Riyadh is the largest and among the fastest growing cities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with an annual growth rate of around of 4%, it is higher than the national average estimated at 2.11%. The average household size in Riyadh is projected at 5.7 persons per household in 2016, down from around 6.6 in 2010 census. The population density of the city of Riyadh has increased to about 4659 peoples per square kilometers in 2016, up from about 4000 persons per square kilometers in 2010. According to the 2010 census data, the population comprised of 56% male and 44% female, whereas non-Saudi males represent 63% compared to 37% females, this follows the national pattern. The distribution of non-Saudis with respect to age and gender is explained by the fact that majority of them are in the country to work, mostly without their spouses. Generally, Riyadh city has a young population, people below 24 years of age constitute about 46% of the total city population, while the population of people 60 years and above are only 4.19%. The population pyramid (Saudis population) show a wide base and gets smaller upwards, this indicates a bulging number of youths. On the other hand, the under-15 alone make up 30% of Saudis and 19.7% for non-Saudis. Other demographic indicators such as the average life expectancy in Riyadh is at 72 years and Old Age Dependency Ratio is at 3.2%.

² King Saud Abdulaziz University - <http://www.ksau-hs.edu.sa/english/lifeincampus/pages/historyofriyadh.aspx>

³ Local Urban Observatory of Riyadh.

Figure 1: Population Pyramid for Riyadh (Saudi and Non-Saudi)



Source: ADA Household Survey 2016

Socio-Economic Background

Since the oil boom in the 70s and 80, the city has witnessed huge social and economic transformation. Riyadh is the most diverse in terms of economic sectors including petroleum, commerce, manufacturing, finance, real estate, insurance and many others. Manufacturing industries sector is one of the most important productive sectors in the Riyadh, the city has 2 industrial cities, affiliated to the Saudi Industrial Property Authority (MODON). There are two industrial areas in Riyadh provided with various services and facilities. In 2013 Riyadh had 44.3% of the total number of manufacturing factories in the Kingdom. In 2014 the total amount of industrial investments in the Riyadh region amounted to about 101.1 billion riyals, accounting for 11.6% of the total investments in factories in the Kingdom. The trade sector is another very important economic sector in Riyadh. The companies and establishments operating in Riyadh represent 30% of all trade establishments in the kingdom. Other major economic sectors in Riyadh are Mining and Quarrying, Financial and banking services and Insurance, and tourism. The building and construction sector plays a very important role in contributing to economic growth of the city and the country at large. The housing conditions in Riyadh has also improved, on average, about 99% of households have access to electricity, quality housing, improved water, internet access, and good income.

Due to the advancements in all important economic sectors, the city has a low rate of informal employment at 5.2% and the general unemployment rate is at 3.5%, however, the youth unemployment rate is still high at 6.9%.

The city has made significant progress in service delivery, improvements in employment, growth in the housing sector and recently greater community participation in decision making especially women voting and representation in local government. This has increased the public participation in political affairs. As a result, by 2016 the number of registered civic associations in Riyadh had reached 1.5 per 10,000 persons.

The trend on Urban Growth and Existing Structure Plan

In this section, we trace the stages of the urban development of Riyadh City and the trends of this development during the past fifty years starting in 1971. This is considered the year of developing the first master plan for the city prepared by Doxiadis Associates Company which had been adopted in 1974 (the Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the city of Riyadh - the final reports and the comprehensive report).

The city has witnessed several stages of growth and urban development that can be presented as follows:

The first stage (Pre-Urban Development): It is the period prior to the year 1971 wherein the development in the city of Riyadh has a reflection of major urban decisions such as the establishment of (AL-Malaz - the old airport, ...Etc.). However, the planning authorities quickly realized the importance of setting regulations for the process of urban development by the preparation of an indicative plan for the city.

The Second stage: The first master plan of 1971 was prepared by Doxiadis Associates Company and it was adopted in 1974. The plan specified the growth of the city to be in the north-south direction and suggested an area of 300 km² for urban development and allocated 150 km² for housing to accommodate 760, 000 persons until the year 1985 and the plan was expected to guide the development of the city until the year 2000. Concerning structure, the plan was composed of a super-grid which runs in a north-south and east-west direction. In this grid, the city was cut into six large divisions, each composed of eight to twelve localities of 2km × 2 km. However, the rapid growth of the city led to the development of large areas outside the city boundaries in a manner that went beyond the planned boundaries. Hence, the planning units had to be repeated outside the planned boundaries in all directions.

The Third Stage: The second master plan of 1976 by the Cete International Inc. which was finalized in 1982. In this plan, an area of 850 km² was allocated for development until the year 1990 in order to accommodate 1.6 million people. This plan was not formally approved, but its principles have been applied on areas already located outside the coverage of the plan.

The Fourth Stage: the urban boundary of the city of Riyadh was approved in 1989 (The High Commission for the Development of Riyadh). In this stage the policies and controls of lands located between the boundaries of development protection and the boundaries of the second stage of the urban boundaries were approved in addition to the division of the second stage of the urban boundaries into two stages, one to accommodate the growth from 1994 to 1999 and the other to accommodate the growth from 1999 to 2004.

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