

# GSBM

GERMAN-SAUDI BUSINESS MAGAZINE

December 2020

*Economy*

## DELIVERING ORAT TO BAHRAIN INT'L AIRPORT

*Interview*

## ON THE MOVE: NELLY ATTAR

*Culture & Tourism*

## FROM TAIF TO JEDDAH

*Cover Story*

# HYDROGEN IN KSA



**AHK**

Delegation der Deutschen Wirtschaft  
für Saudi-Arabien, Bahrain und Jemen  
German-Saudi Arabian Liaison Office  
for Economic Affairs (GESALO)  
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#### **V-LINE EUROPE GmbH**

Borsiring 11, 31319 Sehnde, Germany

Phone: +49 5138 7008-0

E-mail: [v-line@v-line.com](mailto:v-line@v-line.com)

#### **V-LINE MIDDLE EAST LTD.**

Office No: 401, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Chamber Of Commerce Building

P.O. Box 11052, Jubail 31961, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Phone: +966 13 3479018

E-mail: [v-line@v-line.com](mailto:v-line@v-line.com)



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# EDITORIAL

Dear Business Community, dear Reader,

2020 turned out very different from what we have expected. In March when we went into the lockdown we would have never thought that our life is still dominated by the virus until today.

Experts have readjusted their GDP predictions for Saudi Arabia from -5.2% at the beginning of the year to -3.6%. German Exports increased in the first half of 2020 by 18% compared to the same time in 2019.

The autumn AHK Business Outlook revealed that in the next 12 months, German companies expect to hire 24% more employees. 22% are planning more investments in Saudi Arabia.

One of the main challenges according to German companies, have been the travel restrictions. GESALO has been able to bring in more than 200 businesspeople in the field of critical infrastructure back to the Kingdom during the summer. We would like to thank the German Embassy, the relevant Saudi institutions and Lufthansa for supporting us.

Saudi Arabia is setting up a circular carbon economy. One focus is green hydrogen. The Kingdom announced its first green hydrogen plant in October. Until 2030 the Kingdom plans to generate 58.7 GW from Renewable Energy resources. Sustainability, Energy Efficiency, and hydrogen were also focus areas of GESALO within the last months. This issue highlights interesting activities around the hydrogen sector. A digital format of Energy Solutions Made in Germany gave German SME companies in the field of energy efficiency the possibility to conduct bilateral meetings organized in October.

Sustainable Water and Wastewater Management is a topic addressed by GESALO within the "Export initiative" of the German Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. We will continue to focus on the topic in February with another webinar.

For those of you not going home for Christmas we looked out what Saudi Arabia has to offer and included some travel tips in Saudi Arabia in our article "From Taif to Jeddah" in this issue.

GESALO is moving in January into new premises next to the Digital City. It will be an open space and interactive concept. We are looking forward to welcome all of you soon!

We wish you and your families, for those who celebrate, Merry Christmas and all the best for 2021.

Stay healthy and enjoy reading this GSBM issue.

Sincerely,



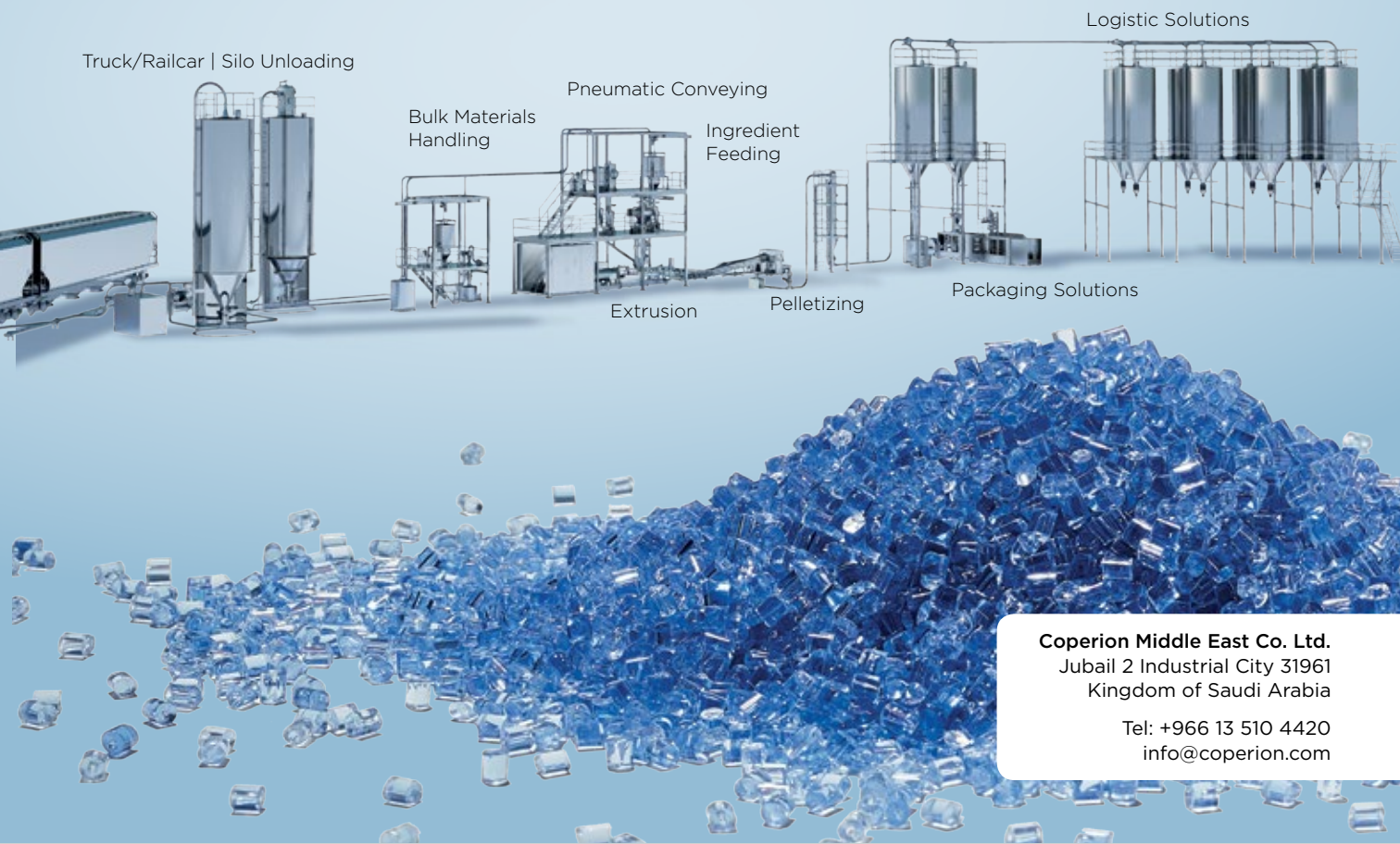
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**DR. DALIA SAMRA-ROHTE**  
*Delegate of German Industry &  
Commerce for Saudi Arabia,  
Bahrain and Yemen*

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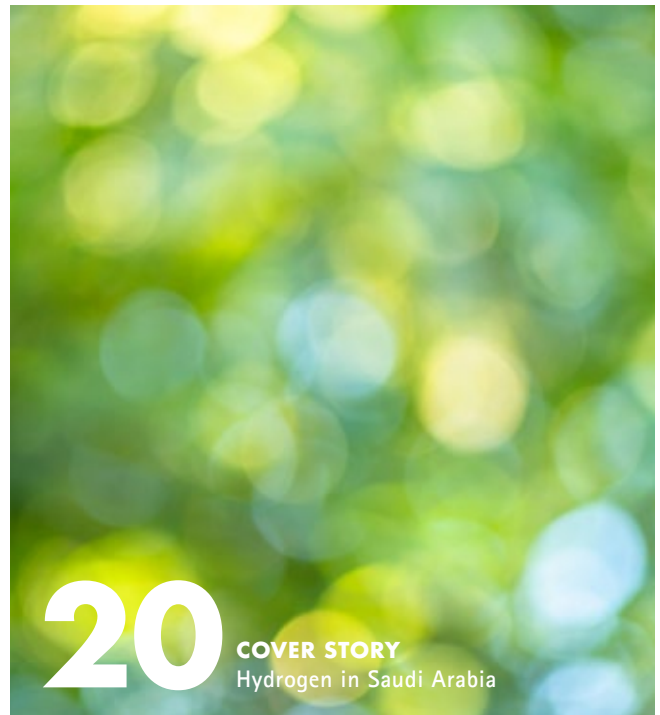
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MAN Energy Solutions is ready to build a 50 MW Power-to-X plant converting renewable energy into climate-neutral synthetic natural gas

# AMENDMENTS TO THE KSA CAPITAL MARKETS REGIME

Following an extensive public consultation period which commenced in late 2019 the Saudi Arabian Capital Markets Authority (CMA) issued long awaited amendments to the Securities Business Regulations (SBR) and the Authorized Persons Regulations.

**T**hese amendments have now been published as the Capital Market Institutions Regulations (CMIR). These changes represent the most significant amendments to the capital markets regime of the Kingdom in years.

To allow sufficient time for capital market intuitions to comply with the amendments, they will come into effect in two phases. Certain amendments came into effect on 1 November 2020, while more significant changes will become binding on 1 January 2022. Thus, where the application of an amendment to the SBR or the CMIR is delayed to 2022 the current regime will continue to apply until 2022. In particular, changes concerning the scope of securities activities, liability of capital market institutions, client classification, KYC requirements and suitability and risk assessment requirements will not bind the industry until 2022. Other amendments such as amended requirements for CMA authorizations to carry on securities business, requirements for capital market institutions to maintain adequate indemnity insurance for business, limitations of exemptions for securities advertisement and stricter notification, disclosure and reporting requirements became effective November 2020.

Changes to the scope of securities activities are among the most significant amendments introduced. These include amendments to the scope of authorizations and minimum capital requirements. The 'advising' activity within the meaning of the new regime will include financial planning and wealth management. Moreover, where activities are limited to making investment decisions for 'non-real estate investment funds' (but not operating these funds) or discretionary management of client portfolios capital requirements for acquiring a managing license have been reduced.

The Change to the client classification also will have far reaching implications. Starting 1 January 2022 clients will have to be classified as retail clients—thus, amateur investors—qualified clients—those being professional(-ized) investors—and institutional clients. With a few exceptions, all requirements which were previously applied only to clients classified as 'customers' will as of 2022 be applied to all clients regardless of classification. This expanded application of strict requirements will force capital market institutions to revise their client base and develop new or expend existing processes and documentation to comply with the requirements.

Another significant development is the limitations of exemptions for securities advertisement. Under the old regime securities advertisements did not have to be made or approved by the capital market institution, if they were directed only at other capital market institutions, exempt persons or investment institutions. With the amendment of the SBR investment institutions have now been removed from this exemption. Thus, the exemption will no longer apply to investment institutions such as family offices and corporates.

## AUTHOR



**DR. NICOLAS BREMER LL.B**

Partner | Attorney  
Alexander & Partner Rechtsanwälte mbB  
nb@alexander-partner.com

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# COLLATERAL ADVANTAGE

## Saudi Arabia's New Law on Guaranteeing Rights by Movable Property.

Its interpretation of Islamic law (sharī'a) has given Saudi Arabia a very distinct legal regime to collateralize obligations and secure payments. The Law on Guaranteeing Rights by Movable Property (LGMP) enacted by Royal Decree M/94 dated 15/08/1441 (8. 4. 2020) resembles nothing less than a game-changer in this regard.

The LGMP is of core interest for the banking and financial industries. Its impact however reaches far beyond these horizons. Payment discipline is a core issue in economics and commercial business relations with the Kingdom. The LGMP provides a multitude to tackle these challenges in the future for monetary receivables.

In a legislative U-turn, the LGMP recognizes sales under deferred transfer of title (Eigentumsvorbehalt) and transfer of ownership as collateral (Sicherungsübereignung). Both legal institutions have long been aligned to the KSA interpretation of sharī'a.

Conversely, they are a common appearance in German standard terms and conditions (AGB/Lieferbedingungen). Hence, German companies trading with or established inside the Kingdom can adopt dominant features of standard procedures and conditions for future Saudi transactions.

Drawbacks have been dropped and drained from the legislation. Guarantor and beneficiary of a guarantee can be natural and legal persons. The guarantor does not have to be a party to the underlying obligation. Such an underlying obligation can result from any kind of transaction. It can even be a future obligation. Collaterals can be any movable material or immaterial asset as well as present or future rights. Immovable collateral is subject to different legislation. The Collaterals can be owned by the guarantor, the beneficiary of the guarantee, or any third party.

To be valid between the parties, the guarantee transaction must be in written form (incorporated into the underlying contract or separately). The guarantor must be entitled to collateralize the collateral. The secured obligation must be described in a general or specific description, including the maximum amount secured by the guarantee. The consideration for the collateral must be specified. For third-party validity, the collateral must be in possession of the beneficiary or the transaction must be registered in a public register.

Enforcement into guaranteed collaterals receives special priorities under the LGMP. Transfer of ownership in collaterals may be subject to restrictions in favor of the beneficiary of the guarantee.

To sum it up, KSA law has opened new doors for collateralizing claims largely lining up with international standards and practices. KSA business partners several opportunities wait to be embraced.

### AUTHOR



**HEINRICH KOELLISCH**

*Associate (Dubai)*

*SCHLÜTER GRAF*

*Heinrich.Koellisch@schlueter-graf.com*



# HOW THE PANDEMIC HELPED TO DIGITALIZE THE JUDICIAL PROCESS IN KSA

With the digitization of the judicial process, lawyers can now participate in hearings from their offices, for example.

**B**y 2018, the Ministry of Justice had launched the internet platform 'Najiz' which centralizes notifications and communications of the judiciary. The new Commercial Court Law, in force since June 2020, regulates, amongst many other things, electronic case filing and electronic evidence.

When the first wave of the virus spread began in late April, the courts were shut down, as part of the measures imposed by the Saudi government. The Minister of Justice, Dr. Walid Al-Samaani, then issued the necessary decisions for the litigation sessions to be held remotely. The resulting progress has been revolutionary.

## THE COURTROOM IN YOUR OFFICE

Lawyers are now able to attend the hearings from their offices, through video calls with the judge, the clerk, witnesses, and experts all attending remotely. A true quantum leap! Considering the applicable rules regarding notifications, electronic links to the sessions are distributed by SMS message, 24 hours before the session date, to the litigant parties and their lawyers whose electronic powers of attorney have been registered.

During the sessions, statements of both parties are being recorded in full

in the session reports. Furthermore, when exchanging notes, files or evidence, resolutions are being passed by the judge, regarding the specific written pleadings, whereby the parties can then present all their memorandums and documents using the 'Najiz' Internet platform.

At the end of the trial, a specific session is held to pronounce the verdict, and the judgment deed is then received electronically and thus becomes enforceable. If the parties wish to appeal, they can submit the appeal directly via 'Najiz'.

## CROSS-BORDER SESSIONS

The hearing of experts, the cross-examination and, if required, the swearing-in of witnesses is done through video sessions and sometimes across country borders! In one case attended by our firm on behalf of a German client before the Labor Court, the oath was requested by the judge to certify the number of expenses due. While being in Germany, the client attended the session along with the counsel of our firm and a translator appointed by the court, and the oath was taken with full legal effect.

In front of the Execution Courts, where the procedure has also been digitalized, the electronic verification of documents is done using the ser-

vices of the chambers of commerce. When executing commercial papers such as cheques and promissory notes, for example, the chamber issues a confirmation letter to the execution judge. The execution request can be raised electronically as well as any demands or challenges.

## CHALLENGES AHEAD

The remaining challenges of this digital transformation of the Saudi judiciary can be found mainly when cases are overly complex involving high volumes of documents. Under such circumstances, it is not easy for the parties to ascertain that the judge has seen the entire documentation. Furthermore, the structure and capacity of the 'Najiz' platform still limit the ability of the parties and their counsels in terms of document inventory, identification, and presentation of their claims.

### AUTHORS

#### NOUF ALQAHTANI

Head of Litigation  
Hundt Legal Consultancy  
noufalqhtani@hundtlegal.com

#### JOCHEN HUNDT

Managing Partner  
Hundt Legal Consultancy  
jochenhundt@hundtlegal.com

# NELLY ATTAR: SAUDI'S FIRST DANCE STUDIO OWNER

Recently the Saudi Sports for All Federation announced the appointment of fitness and dance instructor Nelly Attar as an addition to its official Ambassador program.

Nelly Attar, Founder  
MOVE Dance Studio.

**N**elly Attar is a Lebanese national, born and raised in Saudi Arabia. She started off her career as a mental health professional, specializing in general psychology (MRes and BSc in Psychology).

While working as a therapist and life coach for four years in Saudi Arabia, Nelly offered fitness and dance-fitness classes for females on a part-time basis. At the time, there were limited opportunities for females to get active in the Kingdom.

Nelly is now a thriving entrepreneur, trainer, and athlete. She has recently been awarded the 'Female Fitness Influencer of the Year Award' for the GCC at the FIT Awards hosted by Sport360 in Dubai.

We had the chance to interview Nelly to find out more about her journey.

**What made you decide to open the first dance school in Saudi Arabia?**

In 2017 I started MOVE with the intention of enabling more women in Riyadh to get active. I started with free boot camps and free dance classes. I did not have the intention to start a business, I actually just wanted to start a project that would help get more women active.

After a while I saw the impact I was creating with these women and more and more wanted to join my classes. By April I had a waiting list for my classes. This is when I decided to extend this initiative and morph it into a business. It had lots of potential to create impact on people's

wellbeing- not just clients but also for other dance trainers. That was when "MOVE" was born.

**What difficulties did you face on your path of development, and could it have been avoided?**

The biggest challenge I faced was the business aspect. Since it was not planned as a business model at first, when it turned into a business model, we had to tackle it month by month. We tried to follow up with the demand of our customers. There were a lot of risks along the way and we did not know how the response of your customers will be. But the team was very passionate, and our customers were very supportive with giving us honest feedback along the way. As the weeks went by, I learned more and more. I have a psychological background, so I've always worked in non-profit organizations, and it's always been about being on the ground and helping people, and I feel that we are still doing the same thing: helping people improve their lifestyle, but this time from a different perspective. I needed a more entrepreneurial mindset to be able to recruit a team and to secure the right business plan for the future. How to run a business, how to look at the business from a different perspective, understand finances, management, and recruitment, these were my biggest challenges.

In terms of societal challenges, we did introduce something highly unique - a dance studio for females, but we always had the Saudi culture and norms in mind to not intimidate anyone.



**Who were your biggest supporter and motivator?**

My family, they're my backbone. They support me in everything I do, and they instilled something precious in me: to follow my heart, do what I love, and be authentic! In fact, my siblings and I are totally different because my parents encouraged us to embrace our authenticity and live a life of purpose.

My stepdad and my mom helped set the ground for MOVE. My stepdad offered me the warehouse in his office space and my mom helped with the first administrative steps in creating MOVE.

**How did the role of sports change in Saudi Arabia over the last years?**

Up until 2-3 years back, sports was not embedded in people's everyday life in Saudi Arabia. Sports activities were neither appreciated nor encouraged. Since the development of the Ministry of Sports and its various federations, the sports landscape has flourished. Now the entire society is encouraged to do sports - men, women, and children.

There are ongoing activities across the country to help keep people active. With the opening of tourism, for example, people are encouraged to do more outdoor activities. Numerous gyms and sports facilities are opening on a monthly basis. It is simply amazing to see how fast the sports sector grew and how diverse it is becoming.

I am truly happy to not only witness, but also be part of this transformation.

**What would you like to achieve as the latest Ambassador of the Saudi Sports for All Federation?**

I aspire to support SFA in enabling and encouraging more and more people to get active across the Kingdom - sports and physical activity for ALL.

**You have done impressive things, including climbing up Mount Ever-**

One of Nellys biggest adventures: climbing Mount Everest



*“ Sports changed my life, and I strive to change the lives of many through movement and sports. ”*

**est! You also travel a lot. What was your biggest adventure so far?**

In terms of mountaineering, it would probably be Mount Everest. It took a year of solid training, 4 years of climbing to gain experience, and 2 months on the mountain itself.

As for general adventures, one of my favourite and biggest adventures was a 9-day tuk-tuk rally across Sri Lanka. We had to learn how to drive tuk-tuk, and navigate on our own using printed maps. Once we would drive to the new village or city, we had physical competitions and challenges awaiting us. My team and I, ended up winning the challenge (thanks to the Mexican brothers I had partnered with).

Having said that all that, I must highlight, that adventure is everywhere. You don't have to travel to seek adventure. Just be open, get out of your comfort zone, remain curious and try something new - that is the true meaning of adventure.

**Do you offer digital courses for companies? Are you engaging with the business world to increase fitness awareness?**

Absolutely. With the start of the pandemic MOVE started offering online classes on multiple platforms from Instagram to YouTube and ZOOM ses-

sions. These were not only dance but also fitness and yoga classes. My fitness program was so successful that I had a waiting list every month and I am currently still running it.

In terms of increasing fitness awareness, I partnered with multiple organizations and businesses to offer webinars and virtual talks about fitness, mental health, and wellness. I also regularly create online fitness content for various brands to encourage people worldwide to move. My current brand partnerships include - Nestle Fitness and Apple.

**What advice would you give to young women when deciding on their careers?**

Follow your passion and curiosity. If you know what you want, follow that voice. If you are not sure, try and experiment. It is your life to live, no one else's. Be the driver AND navigator, of where you'd like to head to.

Living a life of purpose is essential for wellbeing and happiness.

**CONTACT**

Nelly Attar  
Founder  
Move Dance Studio  
[nellyattar.com](http://nellyattar.com)



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# SADEEM TOWARDS SMART SUSTAINABLE CITIES



International Startups travelled to Munich to meet other Startups, local companies, and investors

KAUST Startup Sadeem prevailed in the GESALO Startup Competition 2019 through many applicants and won as best IoT Startup. Read about the company's latest achievements and international expansion.

**S**adeem provides solar-powered smart city solutions for flood, traffic, and environmental monitoring, saving money and lives in real-time.

Sadeem consists of four co-founders, KAUST graduates Mustafa Mousa, Ahmad Dehwah, and Esteban Canepa and former KAUST professor Christian Claudel. The company's team is comprised of seven different nationalities that bring 25 years of combined multi-disciplinary experience to the field of smart city solutions.

Upon winning the German Startup Pitch Night organized by the German

Saudi Liaison Office for Economic Affairs in 2019, in the category, IoT Sadeem qualified to participate at the Startup Germany Tour organized by the German Chamber of Commerce in Munich.

Mustafa Mousa had the chance to present Sadeem in front of corporate representatives. That resulted in very positive connections with different sectors in Munich and Germany, that highlighted the impact of Sadeem technology.

The Bits & Pretzels (Europe's biggest founders festival) was a fantastic opportunity for Sadeem to present its innovative products to investors, me-

dia, and other 5000 attendees.

The company also had the chance to have a booth to showcase its services and products that lead to fruitful conversations with investors, collaborators, and partners.

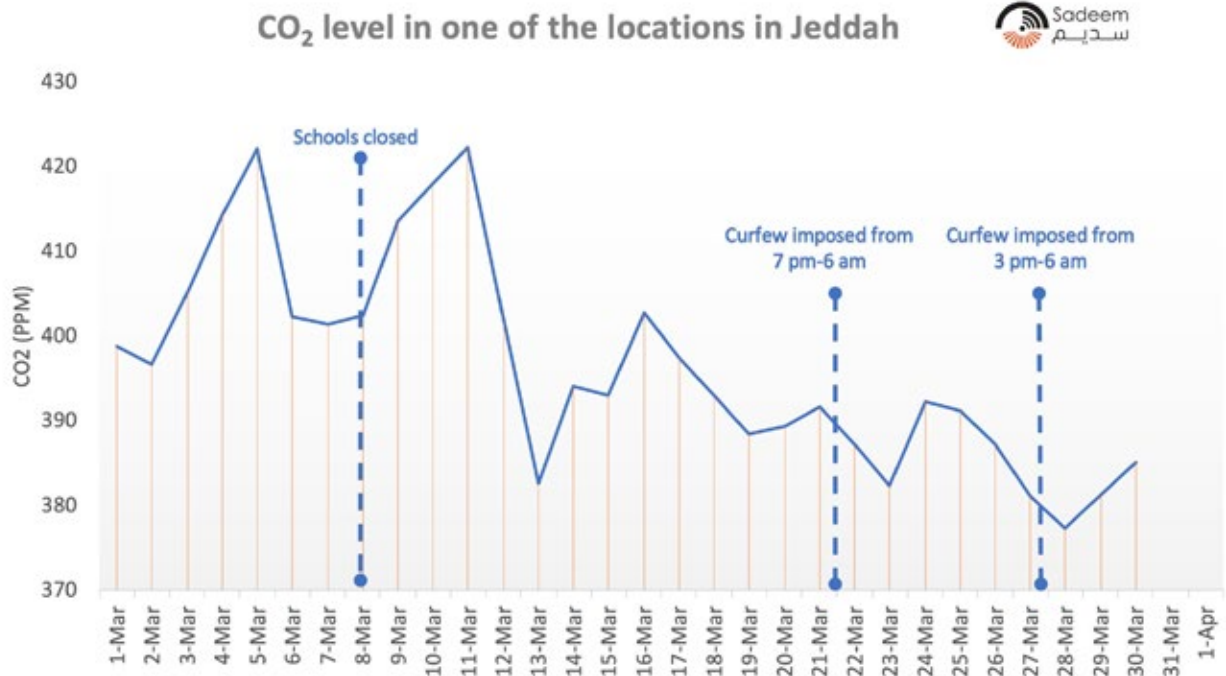
Mousa said: "Our experience at the Bits and Pretzels 2019 in Munich was unique by all means, the Startup ecosystem in Munich has high quality, but there is a huge room for the marketing."

## SADEEM JOURNEY

In January 2018 Sadeem officially incorporated in Saudi Arabia. "Since the early days, innovation is one of the main values of Sadeem. Also, as co-founders not only we wanted to bring an innovative solution but also to ensure that what we provide will be of a great positive impact on humanity. Not only we managed to save people's lives during flood events but also improve people's experience and give a different dimension for long-term infrastructure planning" Dehwah said.

Sadeem international is growing and expanding its presence around the world. Its wireless monitoring solutions have been installed in various countries, and cities such as Austin, Texas, Dubai, Mexico City, Jeddah and Riyadh. Its wireless sensing systems aim to empower cities around the world to achieve better monitoring and forecasting of floods, traffic, and air quality.





International Startups travelled to Munich to meet other Startups, local companies, and investors.

### COPING WITH COVID-19

During coronavirus lockdown and self-quarantine, Sadeem has been showing the impact of the curfew on the traffic and air quality by providing data-driven observations and highlights collected from its deployed wireless sensing systems in various roads around the Kingdom. “During the COVID 19 pandemic, we have been active in showing how the current situation and measures of curfews affect human behavior,” Mousa said. “From the dramatic drop in the traffic flow to the improvement in the air quality standards which are all very valuable data and information, that highlights the impacts in great detail at different moments in time. Our sensor networks can sense and can predict the short terms of outcomes when such scenarios happen. We have successfully shown some of these findings through our social media channels”.

In June 2020, Sadeem virtually participated and won first place in the World Bank Group’s Innovate4climate Pitch Hub 2020 competition outperforming over 400 applicants from

*“ Cities are like living organisms, and each one has different problems. ”*

Canepa

all over the world. The contest was focused on smart city solutions and innovations that help cities and urban environments to become low carbon and more resilient to climate change.

In September 2020, Sadeem has collaborated with Aguas de Alicante

and Ayuntamiento Alicante to deliver its debut project in Europe in the city of Alicante in Spain. its innovative technology will improve the city’s resilience and monitoring capability against flash floods and natural hazards. “The core of this project is the flood data; this data will be used by both the operations and R&D departments of the Water Management institution of a coastal city,” Canepa said. “The outcome of this project is not only the immediate optimization of the flood mitigation but also the enhancement of flood models currently being used.”

### CONTACT

Bayan Qashqari, MA  
Marketing Strategist  
Sadeem International Company  
bayan.qashqari@sadeemwss.com



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# MUNICH AIRPORT WORKING IN THE KINGDOM

Over the past decades, Munich Airport International has been involved in major projects in the Saudi Arabian airport market – which is considered to be one of the most dynamic markets worldwide.

**M**unich Airport International (MAI), a 100% subsidiary of Munich Airport, offers airport management, consulting and training services worldwide. We have a proven track record of more than 110 successfully delivered projects across more than 40 countries. Amongst these countries, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of our most active and targeted markets. In the last five years alone, MAI has worked on eight projects hand-in-hand with varied stakeholders at several airports including Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport and Jeddah's King Abdulaziz International Airport.

Being an airport operator ourselves, we understand the challenges airports are facing in today's world. Munich Airport's integrated approach – managing all airport related services

in-house – not only allows us to see the big picture, but also gives us access to experts from every field. With the experience of Europe's only 5-star airport, we can support our clients throughout the entire airport lifecycle. During our projects in Saudi Arabia, for example, we developed and implemented tailored best-practices related to airport management, terminal and cargo operational readiness, ICT, commercial development and project management. By working in close collaboration with and within our clients' organization, we ensure a continuous knowledge transfer and an optimal project outcome at all times.

Our experience in Saudi Arabia as a company and as individuals has been enriched by the positive and open mind-set of our local colleagues. This openness not only laid the foundation for a long and successful cooperation, but also brought us closer to the Saudi Arabian culture. By embracing this wonderful culture, learning from each other and pooling our diverse strengths, we support our Saudi friends in improving and expanding the local airport market. Even now, with Covid-19 shaking up the world, we are continuously working together with our clients in the Kingdom and jointly heading towards our next successful project outcome. Our ties to

Saudi Arabia are stronger than ever and we already long ago moved beyond the role of a mere service provider to a trusted partner.

Being grateful for these experiences, we are looking forward to the further growth and development of the Saudi airport industry. We believe that it is of highest importance to foster collaboration among leading and committed stakeholders, both local and international, to achieve the best results and create new jewels in the airport world. We are confident to increase our contribution to this development and further strengthen the economic ties between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Germany.

**AUTHOR**



**LORENZO DI LORETO**

VP Business Development & Service Delivery  
Munich Airport International GmbH  
[lorenzo.di-loreto@munich-airport.de](mailto:lorenzo.di-loreto@munich-airport.de)  
[www.munich-airport.com/international](http://www.munich-airport.com/international)



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT! DR. ELTJE ADERHOLD

Dr. Aderhold is the new Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



**You just arrived in Jeddah in September. So far what were your impressions about Saudi Arabia?**

I am overwhelmed by the kindness of the people. As a newcomer I was received with much hospitality. Jeddah is breathing its long cosmopolitan history of pilgrims and traders. I like walking through the streets of Al-Balad or along the Corniche. I am looking forward to travelling around the country and discovering other regions.

**After St. Petersburg, Jeddah is climate-wise the complete opposite. How are you coping with it?**

In St. Petersburg I have experienced wonderful winters with white snow. Now I enjoy the summer in Jeddah. I swim almost daily. Jeddah is a Mediterranean city that conveys a lot of joie de vivre.

**This is your second post as Consul General, what are your ambitions and personal goals?**

Regional cooperation plays an important role in deepening bilateral relations. Encouraging links at regional and municipal level between Saudi Arabia and Germany will be at the core of my work. Personally, this gives me the opportunity to meet many committed people, to get to know the rich culture of Saudi Arabia and also to get to know new facets of my home country.

**What are your goals and focus areas during your time in KSA?**

There is a lot of potential to increase cooperation between Germany and Saudi Arabia in the field of economic, scientific and cultural cooperation. In order to overcome stereotypes, we have to bring people together. I would like to contribute to mak-

ing people curious about each other, to learn from each other and to come together for joint projects.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation based in Jeddah plays an important role in promoting understanding and dialogue, mutual respect and cooperation. I am honoured to serve as German Special Envoy to the OIC.

#### **How do you define the role of Germany in/with KSA today?**

German partners can make valuable contributions in support of projects with the 2030 Vision. It is important to encourage German businesses to invest in new sectors and markets. Therefore, I am pleased that the German-Saudi Arabian Liaison Office for Economic Affairs is having an office in Jeddah since the beginning of the year. To boost cultural cooperation, the Goethe-Institute is intensifying its work in Saudi Arabia and will also work more closely with partners in Jeddah and the western regions. The German Academic Exchange Service DAAD is once again present in Jeddah with a Lectureship.

#### **The pandemic influenced the economic and day to day life of everyone worldwide. How did it influence the work in the consulate?**

Due to travel restrictions worldwide, we have a reduced demand for visa and consular services. We had to postpone many events and projects. It is an important step forward that students can now travel again to Germany to take up their studies. We are in the starting blocks ready to receive visitors from Germany and organize face-to-face meetings as soon as the situation allows. However, we will remain mindful and continue to adjust using virtual or hybrid rooms for meetings and events.

#### **Women diplomat - What influenced your decision to ask for a posting in KSA?**

Saudi-Arabia is developing dynamically with a lot of social and economic developments yet to come. This opens up new opportunities in many regards. At the same time I have the privilege of immersing myself in the traditions of Saudi Arabia. I am confident, that as a women diplomat I am well placed to using opportunities in full respect of culture and traditions.

#### **What is/are your favorite city/cities in Germany?**

My family comes from Leipzig, the city of Johann Sebastian Bach. After the German reunification, the historical center of Leipzig was lovingly restored. As in the times of Bach, the Thomaskirche

invites you to the motet every Friday. I grew up in the Ruhr area. Where coal was once mined, you can find innovative start-ups and a creative art scene with many festivals, theaters and museums today. My birthplace Dortmund has changed into a hub of artistic dance. The Dortmund Ballet

has become an innovative power in the dance scene of Germany, building bridges between tradition and the future, fusing neoclassic and modern dance. I also feel very connected to the city of Hamburg and the Northern Seaside. With its unique architecture, the Elbphilharmonie Concert Hall, inaugurated in 2017, is Hamburg's new landmark.

#### **What do you like to do outside your office hours?**

I am currently discovering the diversity of Saudi Arabian cuisine, which is not only delicious but also healthy. I will definitively spend some time in the kitchen to learn how to prepare my favourite dishes. The first thing I do when I come home after work is to play with my two cats from Brandenburg that came with me to Jeddah. I am looking forward to getting to know the culture and the diverse landscapes of Saudi Arabia. As soon as possible I would like to travel to the oasis Tayma near Tabuk. The German Archaeological Institute is conducting excavations there in cooperation with the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities.

#### **BIOGRAPHY**

Dr. Eltje Aderhold studied law at the University of Bonn and was awarded a doctorate in law in 1991. She joined the German Foreign Service in 1992. Since then, she has held various postings at German Missions including in Hanoi and Kabul, at the United Nations in Geneva and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in Vienna. At the German Bundestag she held the position as a Scientific Coordinator for International Politics. Before coming to Jeddah she served as German Consul General in St. Petersburg, Russia.

# HYDROGEN IN KSA

Current developments and opportunities for German SMEs.

*“The Smart City  
“NEOM” is to be  
100% automated and  
powered exclusively  
by renewable  
energies.”*

**O**n July 7, 2020, the establishment of a hydrogen project worth 5 billion US dollars in the NEOM region in north-western Saudi Arabia was announced. By 2025, the plant will produce 650 tons of green hydrogen per day using renewable energy sources and thus 1.2 million tons of green ammonia per year for export to the world market. The project is a partnership agreement between NEOM, Air Products and Saudi Arabian ACWA Power.

Saudi Arabia plans to become a producer and exporter of CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral hydrogen, such as green or blue hydrogen. Currently Saudi Arabia is one of the largest producers and consumers of grey hydrogen. However, grey hydrogen is produced from fossil fuels. Saudi Arabia has one of the largest oil reserves in the world. During its production, natural gas is converted under heat, into hydrogen and CO<sub>2</sub> (steam reforming). The CO<sub>2</sub> is then released unused into the atmosphere, thereby intensifying the global greenhouse effect: the production of one ton of grey hydrogen produces around 10 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

With the focus on creating a more sustainable energy policy, Saudi Arabia has initiated a transformation process and plans to replace the grey hydrogen with blue and green hydrogen. According to the “Small Hydrogen Color Theory” of the Federal Ministry

of Education and Research, green hydrogen is produced by electrolysis of water, using only electricity from renewable energy sources for electrolysis. Regardless of the electrolysis technology chosen, hydrogen is produced CO<sub>2</sub>-free, since the electricity used is 100% from renewable sources and is therefore CO<sub>2</sub>-free<sup>2</sup>. In the production of blue hydrogen, CO<sub>2</sub> is separated and stored as it is generated. The CO<sub>2</sub> produced during blue hydrogen production is thus not released into the atmosphere and hydrogen production can be considered CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral in the balance sheet.

One of the lighthouse projects in the development of Saudi Arabia's hydrogen strategy is NEOM, a project that was launched in 2017. A Smart City is to be built on a total area of 26,500 km<sup>2</sup> and a budget of about USD 500 billion. The Smart City “NEOM” is to be 100% automated and powered

## INFO

The Article has been conducted in the frame of the Saudi-German Energy Dialogue. The Energy dialogue is supported by Guidhouse and the German-Saudi Arabian Liaison Office for Economic Affairs (GESALO).

The article is written on behalf of the German Ministry of economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi).



exclusively by renewable energies. The completion of the first expansion phase is planned for 2025. It will provide global corporations, SMEs and start-ups alike with ideal working and research conditions to accelerate the country's connection to the world's technological elite. NEOM is located in the border area to Egypt (maritime border) and Jordan and is to be connected in the long term with a bridge over the Red Sea with Egypt. NEOM also offers opportunities to conduct applied research with NEOM Bay.

Discussions are currently underway between the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Energy (BMWi) and the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Energy (MoE) on a planned hydrogen alliance as part of the energy dialog between the two countries.

### **VERY GOOD CONDITIONS FOR THE EXPORT OF GREEN HYDROGEN**

The framework conditions for green hydrogen in Saudi Arabia are extremely favorable. Its location between Asia and Europe and ports on the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea form the basis for green hydrogen exports. Demand is expected from Europe and Asia. In addition, there are ambitious targets for the expansion of renewable energies, with a generation capacity of only 0.4 gigawatts in 2019, to be increased to 27.3 gigawatts by 2023. More than 58.7 gigawatts are planned by 2030.

Renewable energies play a key role in the production of green hydrogen. Tenders for renewable projects are managed by the Renewable Energy Project Development Office (REPDO). The office reports to the Ministry of Energy. Current tenders have experienced slight delays due to COVID-19, however, a corresponding implementation can be expected. In the first round of the "National Re-

newable Energy Program" (NREP) the Sakaka PV power plant with 300 megawatts and the 400 megawatt Dumat-al-Jandal wind turbine were awarded. Ten projects are currently in the tendering phase.

Furthermore, the environmental conditions for renewable energies are favorable. Solar radiation in Saudi Arabia is considered one of the most favorable in the entire region. Therefore, it is possible to offer at very competitive prices. Most recently, a price of 1.7 USD cents per kwh was realized for a 300 megawatt PV plant in Rabigh. In the future, the price level is expected to drop even further.

According to analysts of the International Energy Agency (IEA), the production costs of green hydrogen are expected to fall by 30 percent by 2030. For 2030, the IEA expects the price in Saudi Arabia to be 1.9 US dollars per kilogram of green hydrogen from PV and wind energy. The price for blue hydrogen is expected to be 1.4 US dollars.

These favorable conditions are complemented by the already existing infrastructure and experience of the country's industry (especially Aramco) in the production and use of grey hydrogen.

### **SAUDI ARABIA IS OPEN TO INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO DIVERSIFY ITS ECONOMY**

In universities and think tanks, such as the "King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center" (KAP-SARC), competencies in the field of hydrogen are being further developed and expanded.

With the above-mentioned project in NEOM, the first project for green hydrogen is to be implemented. Furthermore, Saudi Aramco and SABIC are also tapping into the green hydrogen market. They are potential partners for German companies.

Saudi Arabia was able to improve its ranking by 30 places in the latest "Ease of Doing Business" report of the World Bank, aiming to become a more attractive business environment.

### **RIISING DEMAND FOR SOLUTIONS IN THE RENEWABLE ENERGY AND HYDROGEN SECTOR**

For German SMEs, developments in the field of renewable energies offer numerous market opportunities. There is potential in solutions for wind energy and solar energy (PV and CSP), and products for energy storage are in demand. In the field of hydrogen, there is a need for both production and infrastructure, as well as training and research.

This includes among other things: electrolysis systems, ammonia production, pressurized storage systems, eFuel production, (stationary) fuel cell systems, pipeline equipment, tank infrastructure, desalination plants and hydrogen-based CCUs.

As part of the development of the "circular carbon economy", increased demand for decarbonization solutions for the steel and chemical industries is also expected. In addition, in the longer term there could also be demand for solutions in the mobility sector, such as mobile fuel cells.

#### **CONTACT**




**HANNA RIEHLE**

GESALO, Head of Market Research -  
DEInternational  
riehle@ahk-arabia.com

# SECTOR COUPLING WITH POWER-TO-X

Accelerating the path to a decarbonized future.



MAN Energy Solutions is ready to build a 50 MW Power-to-X plant converting renewable energy into climate-neutral synthetic natural gas

**T**he world needs quick and efficient solutions to reach carbon neutrality by 2050. A vital part of those solutions will be hydrogen and synthetic fuels derived from renewable energy using Power-to-X technology. Experts predict massive cost efficiencies once facilities on an industrial scale are established. But a fitting political framework is needed to make the shift to green hydrogen now.

The call for action can't be any clearer: "The time is right," argues the International Energy Agency (IEA), "to tap into hydrogen's potential to play a key role in a clean, secure and affordable energy future." It is a message that resonates strongly with Marc Grünewald, Head of Business Development, Power and New Energies at MAN Energy Solutions: "We shouldn't talk about solutions available in a decade or so, but act now to reduce our carbon footprint. Power-to-X is one of

the technologies we have today that can lead to immediate carbon reductions and accelerate our path into a decarbonized future."

"We live in a world that can only partly be powered by electricity", explains Grünewald. "There are several use cases which call for alternative fuels – and for them sector coupling is key." Because of its versatility, green hydrogen is the answer to these critical energy challenges. Using electrolyzers, electricity from renewable energy sources such as wind or solar can be converted into "green" hydrogen. With the help of Power-to-X technology, this hydrogen can then be further converted by a methanation reactor into synthetic natural gas or syngas (SNG) to feed gas power plants or transformed into methane for industrial processes or other synthetic fuels for trucks, ships and planes, decarbonizing and interconnecting all sectors of the economy with the energy industry – and it's all carbon-neutral!



## SCALING UP: POWER-TO-X GOES INDUSTRIAL

The technologies to produce green hydrogen and synthetic fuels have already been put into small-scale production facilities. In 2013, for example, MAN Energy Solutions constructed a six-megawatt methanation reactor in Werlte, Germany, to produce syngas for the car manufacturer Audi. Thanks to the experience collected there, the technology has massively evolved.

“Now we have to invest in facilities on an industrial scale,” Grünewald says. “It’s crucial to run a big model plant that could later become an export product. For now, we lack that kind of experience.” MAN Energy Solutions, together with the major wind energy providers Vattenfall and ARGE Netz, believe that such a plant – anywhere from fifty to a thousand megawatts in size – could be built on Germany’s west coast, at the mouth of the Elbe, in the city of Brunsbüttel. Brunsbüttel, says Grünewald, is a perfect location: Both hydrogen and oxygen could be used by the local chemical industry, and an already planned LNG terminal at the coastal town could eventually be used to blend SNG to create greener ship fuels. “Brunsbüttel,” predicts Grünewald, “could even work as a starting point for a hydrogen pipeline to Hamburg, a city of two million only 100 kilometers away.”

What is lacking, however, is an adequate framework to make plants like the one in Brunsbüttel competitive. “Producing green hydrogen today costs three to four times more than black hydrogen produced from gas and oil,” Grünewald criticizes. “Green hydrogen needs carbon pricing to make it competitive on the market.”

Another important factor to make viable business cases for Power-to-X-technology is cheap and ample renewable energy, since it is the primary resource for green fuels. And finally, Grünewald calls for tax incentives. “In Germany, we can produce renewable energy for three to four euro cents per Kilowatt-hour, but government taxes add another seven cents, which makes running an electrolyzer economically unviable.”

## SCALING OUT: COUPLING SECTORS BEYOND ELECTRIC

The benefits of hydrogen and its derivative synthetic fuels are obvious. But most of all, they have the potential to decarbonize sectors otherwise hard



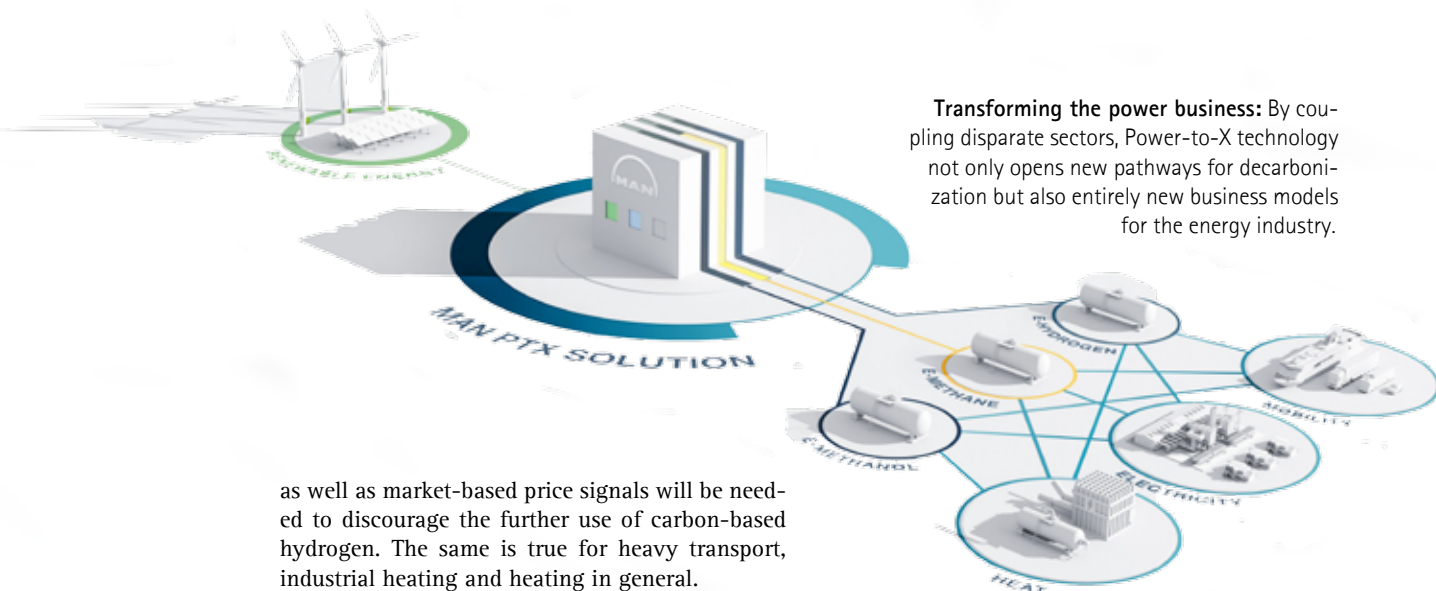
Our world can only partly be powered by electricity, says Marc Grünewald, Head of Business Development, Power and New Energies at MAN Energy Solutions, making the need for green hydrogen and alternative fuels necessary to decarbonize all sectors of the economy.

to change. Take maritime shipping for example: “Cruise ship companies like AIDA,” Grünewald points out, “have already replaced huge 60-megawatt diesel engines with ones powered by LNG, decreasing carbon emissions by 20 percent.” But for shipping to reach its self-set goal of reducing carbon emissions by half in 2050, synthetic carbon-free fuels generated from renewable energy will have to replace LNG. “The question is how to green the combustion engine; the answer is use green fuels.”

Wes Amelie, a 1,036-teu feeder container ship that was retrofitted in 2017 to allow for dual-fuel operation, is a perfect illustration of how shipping already can move forward by blending fuels. To showcase the potential synthetic fuels have for shipping, the vessel owned by Wessels Reederei will replace 20 of the 120 tons of LNG that it typically uses for a round trip with climate-neutral SNG produced by the Power-to-Gas plant at Audi in Werlte. As a result, the company expects carbon emissions for Wes Amelie to decline by 56 tons.

Industry provides another example: According to the IEA, the production of hydrogen for industrial processes – almost entirely supplied from coal and natural gas today – emits the same amount of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year as the United Kingdom and Indonesia combined. Greening industrial hydrogen would mean considerable gains toward decarbonization. “Many companies have already declared interest in green hydrogen from Power-to-X plants,” Grünewald says, “but it all depends on the price.” Again, restrictions





**Transforming the power business:** By coupling disparate sectors, Power-to-X technology not only opens new pathways for decarbonization but also entirely new business models for the energy industry.

as well as market-based price signals will be needed to discourage the further use of carbon-based hydrogen. The same is true for heavy transport, industrial heating and heating in general.

Because they can use the existing infrastructure for transport and distribution and the existing engine technology, fuels derived from Power-to-X will couple these disparate sectors in the long run – helping the world economy become carbon neutral while at the same time generating entirely new business opportunities and business models for the energy industry.

in global warming under 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels by the year 2050, green hydrogen is “required” as a key feature. In other words, Power-to-X is not a nice-to-have, but a must-have for the future of our planet. And there is not much time left to give it its rightful place.

### TIPPING THE SCALES: THE EMERGENCE OF A GLOBAL POWER-TO-X MARKET

The rise of Power-to-X technology is a global phenomenon. In those parts of the world where sun and wind are prevalent, costs of renewable energy have been declining, creating hotspots for a hydrogen economy. Australia, Northern Africa, and Patagonia, says Grünewald, are just some examples where large-scale projects are already being planned. Thanks to Power-to-X, these regions could become exporters of green fuels, producing, selling and transporting syngas or methanol on the world market just as oil and gas are today. “Of course MAN Energy Solutions, with presences in more than 120 countries, offers the necessary technology worldwide,” Grünewald emphasizes.

The global nature of the market underlines the need for global regulations, as well as a global carbon price or trading system that is binding for everyone. The stage is set and the general outlook is bright: Experts expect the cost of green hydrogen to fall sharply. The IEA predicts a decline of 30 percent in their The Future of Hydrogen report and cost parity for several use cases representing 15 percent of the world’s total energy consumption. The IEA also maintains that to reach the aims of the historic Paris Agreement and keep the increase

### ABOUT MAN ENERGY SOLUTIONS

MAN Energy Solutions enables its customers to achieve sustainable value creation in the transition towards a carbon-neutral future. By addressing tomorrow’s challenges within the marine, energy, and industrial sectors, we improve efficiency and performance at a systemic level – step by step. Our planet and our customers need solutions. Leading the way in advanced engineering for more than 250 years, we provide a unique portfolio of technologies. Headquartered in Germany, MAN Energy Solutions employs some 14,000 people at over 120 sites globally. A company advancing in tune with what the world needs. MAN Energy Solutions Saudi Arabia LLC was established in 2009, have currently 52 employees in Saudi Arabia with a workshop in Jeddah.

### CONTACT

Marc Grünewald  
Vice President, Head of Business Development and  
New Energies Power Unit  
MAN Energy Solutions  
[marc.gruenewald@man-es.com](mailto:marc.gruenewald@man-es.com)

# EXPORT INITIATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES

## Sustainable solutions for water and wastewater management needed.

**T**he first module of this project organized by GESALO and supported by the Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (abbreviated BMU) was completed with the successful completion of the webinar on September 16.

Mrs. Nilgün Parker (BMU) addressed the participants with a review of the project, which was successfully completed in 2016. Experts presented the urgent need for sustainable solutions. Mr. Nemer Alshebel, VP Privatization and Operations of the National Water Company (NWC), introduced the National Strategy in the Water and Wastewater Sector and the history and role of the National Water Company as well as upcoming tenders. Karen Stummeyer, Director of Seawater Desalination at Fichtner Engineers, spoke about the company's experience in the seawater desalination sector in Saudi Arabia, current trends and the corporate and institutional landscape in the country. She also gave valuable tips for German companies for future tenders and cooperation with other companies. Mr. Gavin van Tonder, Water Sector Head at NEOM,

spoke about water and wastewater in NEOM and sustainable solutions that NEOM is pursuing. He also gave an overview of different methods of seawater desalination and their future potential. The event was concluded by a presentation by Dr. Zeyad Ahmed and Mr. Syed Ahmed, Engineering Specialist, from the Environmental Protection Team of Saudi Aramco, representing sustainable concepts in Aramco's water management.

The feedback of the webinar, both from the Saudi Arabian side and the German side, was consistently positive. The webinar was attended by 57 participants. The idea of sustainability and the search for innovative solutions was clearly shown in presentations. These thoughts will guide the next events of this project series planned for the beginning of February.

Two workshops will take place online in the beginning of February 2021 and will be followed in the subsequent months with a series of working groups on the topic.

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### CONTACT

*Hanna Riehle*

*GESALO, Head of Market Research - DEinternational  
riehle@ahk-arabia.com*

# WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR HYDROGEN?

Hydrogen is a hot topic today: Hydrogen strategies and projects are being announced in a stunning number. The news is full of opinions about hydrogen's future. It is therefore important to answer the question: Is this just a hype or will hydrogen actually be the next big thing in the energy sector?

**H**ydrogen's potential is best understood by looking at potential hydrogen applications first. Since hydrogen is produced using other energy sources, such as natural gas and electricity, it is neither cheap nor readily available. To begin with, then, it's of key importance to find meaningful applications for hydrogen – regardless of whether you're developing a project or a national hydrogen strategy.

## HYDROGEN IN EXISTING APPLICATIONS

In the ongoing debate on hydrogen, you sometimes get the impression that the production and use of hydrogen is something new. However, the reality is that 70 million tonnes of hydrogen are already being produced worldwide each year. This means that hydrogen production is already a multi-billion dollar industry, with the largest consumers being the refinery and fertilizer industries.

Since production is largely based on fossil fuels (mainly natural gas), hydrogen production today is the source of some 830 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum, which roughly equates to all of Germany's annual carbon emissions put together. As a result, decarbonizing the production of hydrogen for the refinery and fertilizer industries would represent an important step towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

## HYDROGEN IN NEW APPLICATIONS

In order to recognize the potential of hydrogen, it's important to understand the form in which energy is consumed today: Only about 25% of Europe's total final energy consumption consists



of electricity. Over 60% comprises the direct use of chemical energy in the form of natural gas, coal and petroleum products in industry, heating and mobility. And this is exactly where the potential of hydrogen lies: It can replace this enormous amount of energy in a way that is low on carbon emissions.

### IS IT REALLY DIFFERENT THIS TIME AROUND?

Having understood the potential of hydrogen applications, it is important to assess whether this will translate into an actual development of hydrogen value chains. We at Fichtner have been working on hydrogen projects for 30 years. Over those three decades, hydrogen has repeatedly been predicted to have a great future ahead of it as an energy source, only for this prophecy never to come true. For this reason, the question must be asked: Will it be different this time around? In our view, there are four reasons why this may indeed be the case:

- Climate change is no longer an abstract threat, but a harsh reality that poses major challenges in many parts of the world.
- Public awareness of climate change is exerting enormous pressure on decision-makers in politics and business to legislate for and achieve greater sustainability.

- Renewable energies are now technologically advanced and attractively priced, and in some parts of the world even cheaper than fossil fuels.
- Huge amounts of capital are available for sustainable investments.

Together, these four factors create basic conditions and parameters that can help sustainable technologies, and especially hydrogen, succeed. So there's a good chance that this time around it really is different. This is also something that

we notice in our client projects that move to larger size and from feasibility into implementation phase.

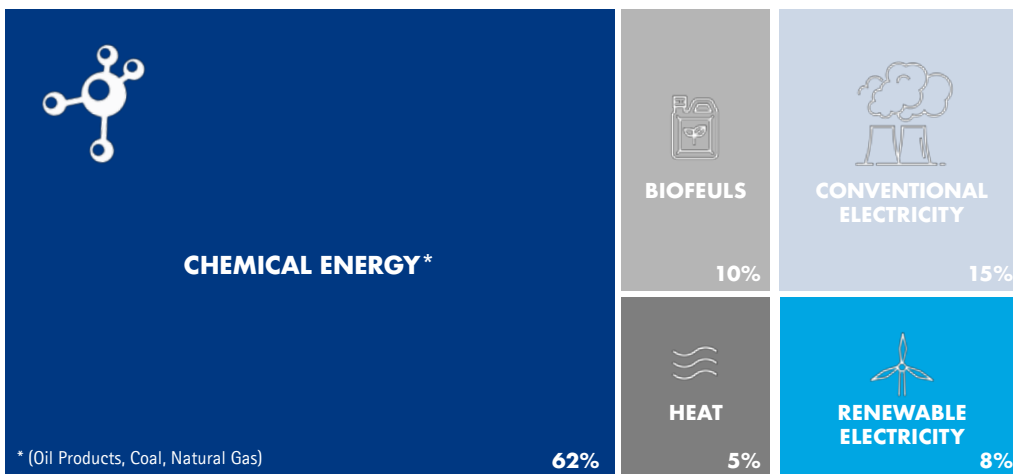
*“Is it really different this time? There are four reasons why this may indeed be the case.” ”*

#### AUTHOR



**MATTHIAS SCHLEGEL**

Head of Hydrogen  
Fichtner GmbH & Co. KG  
[hydrogen@fichtner.de](mailto:hydrogen@fichtner.de)



Source:  
Fichtner  
calculations  
based on  
Eurostat  
2017 data.

# FROM TAIF TO JEDDAH



## JEDDAH: "BRIDE OF THE SEA"

The list of cultural sites in Jeddah is long. Known as the city of sculptures, I enjoyed 26 beautiful works of art by famous international sculptors such as Henry Moore, Joan Miró, Alexander Calder, to name a few. They are located in the sculpture park of Al Hamraa, right next to the Red Sea and the Al Enani Mosque, and are part of the largest collection of sculptures in the world, collected by Mohammed Said Farsi, the former mayor of Jeddah, who had the idea of "beautifying Jeddah" in 1972.

Beautiful private museums, such as the Safeya Bin Saqr Museum, are a delight for those interested in the Kingdom's cultural heritage. The museum is a palace-like building filled with traditional fine art, painted and collected by the famous artist Safeya Bin Saqr herself. She has also given art lessons. Her collection of Bedouin jewelry and traditional clothing is memorable.

Don't miss Al Tayebat, the international city of science and knowledge - a museum and science center that hosts another incredible collection of historical and traditional artifacts dating back hundreds of years, as well as a rich display of Islamic art and educational institutions in twelve buildings in the traditional style of Jeddah, including a mosque with a unique minaret.

One of the many highlights is the Saudi Heritage Wing; around 30 rooms decorated in the typical style of the 13 provinces. I like the Abha rooms most of all - richly decorated with the famous Al Qatt paintings (UNESCO heritage). Thanks to the founder Sheikh Abdul Raouf Hassan Khalil, who was a researcher in the history of nations and civilizations, these treasures have been made accessible to the public. Many ambassadors visit this unique museum, and an excellent guide leads the visitors around.

Another attraction is Al Balad, the old town of Jeddah, which has been a UNESCO World Herit-

age Site since 2014. In the meantime, old mosques such as the Al Shafi Mosque and many houses have been renovated into museums: original furniture and traditional objects create a unique atmosphere.

One of the largest is Bait Al-Matbouli Al Tareekhi, not far from the famous Al Naseem house. This is the area where the annual Jeddah Art Week takes place, and narrow paths lead to traditional galleries, a library, cafés, and cosy restaurants with a beautiful view from the roof in all directions over the old town.

The only traditional house with a green painted veranda on the ground floor accommodates the Academy of Fine Arts. Jameel House (behind the Al-Ma'amar mosque) was opened in 2015 as a center for arts and crafts, heritage conservation and architectural discourse in the heart of Al Balad. Visitors are welcome everywhere. Jeddah hosts the Red Sea Film Festival and will open the new Red Sea Museum in 2022.



Al Shobra Palace Taif.

Al Tayebat City  
Museum in  
Jeddah.



### MONKEYS ON THE HIGHWAY

I decide to leave the hot and humid coast of the Red Sea and discover the nearby Hejaz Mountains towards Taif an only 2-hour drive for 170 km. Mohammed, my driver-guide picks me up very early in the morning at my hotel in Al Balad. The first part of the highway leads to Mecca. From far away we can see Mount Arafat and parts of the holy city; most well-known is the famous clock tower, which can be seen between the mountains. "In this western area, a new district will be built called Masar," says Mohammed. "This megaproject consists of many hotels, shopping malls, cultural and governmental centres, and residential units. Phase one of Masar will be inaugurated in 2023; the first hotels will be Kempinski and Hilton Garden Inn. The aim is to improve the environment for future visitors and pilgrims as well as the quality of life for the residents. Vision 2030 speaks of 30 million pilgrims in 2030 and they can look forward to an

adequate infrastructure with modern public transportation. The location of Masar is important, as it will accommodate 80% of pilgrims and visitors from Mecca and more than 60% of vehicles coming from Jeddah".

The highway, once built by the Saudi Bin Laden Group, is in excellent condition, and what makes it special are the many curves that wind up into the mountains, requiring Mohammed's full concentration. I am enjoying spectacular views, a cable car and a huge street market, when suddenly a large group of wild monkeys sitting on the rocks appears. "Be careful, they like open windows, they might jump in the car and steal something valuable", Mohammed warns me.

### TAIF: CITY OF ROSES

Taif is considered the third oldest city after Mecca and Medina and is famous for its pleasant weather and fascinating natural scenery. "After Prophet



Mohammed had left Mecca, he came here. This is the reason why many pilgrims visit Taif,” Mohamed explains. Taif was the first stop on the trade journey from Mecca to Yemen. Its strategic location is obvious; it encouraged people to trade not only in perfume, honey, and livestock, but also in grain, fruit, and wood.

*“ Taif’s economy depends on roses, honey, and fruits - in that order. ”*

Our first stop is the Al-Shobra Palace. This snow-white palace of unique architecture was the residence of King Abdul Aziz and was used in summer by King Faisal as the presidency of the Council of Ministers. The palace was built in 1902 and is temporarily closed for renovation work, but the guard lets me in. I walk through wide rooms with high ceilings, huge chandeliers, and some original furniture. The long silk curtains still cover the high windows, and on my way to the second floor, ascending a huge staircase, I meet two young men. “We are consultants from Poland who make suggestions for the renovation”, they tell me. I am lucky, because they have the key to the door to the main terrace, and I can enjoy the view from up here. “Inside the Al-Shobra Palace, the Taif Regional Museum will reopen after the renovation”.

Of course, I want to see the famous Honey Souk in the old town, where I try different kinds of honey, some for 100 USD per kg. Every Thursday the men gather for the famous honey auction. - Taif is famous for roses and big perfume factories. Some of them are prepared for visitors. We visit one of the few factories where the rose farm is next door. The rose bushes line up to the horizon. The owner Sami explains: “Most roses in this area grow in Al Hada, 1,300 m high, about 20 km northwest of Taif. You have passed them coming from Mecca. Because of the special soil, the rose, which is called “Taif flower”, grows only in and around Taif. All attempts to plant it elsewhere failed. They come in a pink color and the flowering time is only 15-20 days a year.

The water wells are located directly on the farms, but the water is getting less and less every year. The drinking water is supplied by pipeline from Jeddah via Mecca. Taif’s economy depends on roses, honey, and fruits - in that order. “We pick the roses very early in the morning and use them

the same day to produce rose water and rose oil. The roses are boiled in water for at least one hour, the liquid passes through a sophisticated cooling system and about 24 hours later falls into 20 litre glass pots as rose water with some rose oil on top - all without chemicals.” While the rose water is sold in 0.25-liter bottles for 10 SAR, the light green colour of the rose oil is much more valuable: One litre of rose oil is sold for 240,000 SAR. Tea is served in the Majlis of the factory, and while I enjoy the great hospitality, Sami talks about his experiences with many famous European and American perfume manufacturers who had visited him to buy his rose oil for their perfume production. “The perfume business can be a successful one, and together with wealthy merchants from Mecca and Jeddah, some families built beautiful houses in Taif, some of which can still be seen in the city today. They were sold to the government, and there is a



B. Schumacher and Ali K. Al Shareef (owner of a private museum in Um El Sebaah).

plan to turn them into museums.

There are even more attractions in Taif: For many years, visitors have enjoyed the Taif Festival, which takes place once a year in August. Special events are spread all over the city and 40 km outside in Souk Okaz, where the old tradition of Bedouin poetry, camel races and horse shows attract many visitors. In 2019 they started the Taif Season with lots of entertainment for families”.

After a quick late lunch in Taif's only “skyscraper” - on the 30th floor in the revolving restaurant of Awaliv International Hotel with a spectacular view over the city and the surrounding mountains and farms - we continue to Um El Sebaah to visit a private museum. Ali K. Al Shareef, the owner, receives the guests with a warm welcome: “I opened the museum in 2005. For more than 30 years I had been traveling all over the Kingdom, buying heritage artifacts from auctions for my collection”.

Photos: Barbara Schumacher (2)



Every Thursday men gather for the honey auction at the Honey Souk in Taif.

From the outside, the museum looks rather modest, and nobody would imagine the variety of treasures behind the solid stone walls. Spread over an area of 6.000 sqm there is an endless seeming number of rooms filled with antiquities like stones with ancient inscriptions and thousands of traditional objects, arranged professionally under specific themes like clothing, jewellery, household, agriculture, etc. One highlight is the lively traditional souk, which looks real with life-sized puppets of silversmiths, carpenters, or shoemakers working with authentic traditional tools. A big hall, which serves for one day weekly as a meeting place for people who hand over their modest collections of antiquities to the museum, houses a collection of old cars - all in perfect condition. “My dream is to buy an original Mercedes car built in 1940 or earlier, but this is difficult”, says Ali.

**BARBARA SCHUMACHER** is a German freelance journalist, who is specialized in the Arab world since 1994 and has published countless articles about the Arab world.



Fraport ORAT Team returning to office after one of many terminal construction site visits where the construction process was followed, as well as operational processes verified.



# DELIVERING ORAT TO BAHRAIN INT'L AIRPORT

**F**raport AG, Germany's Frankfurt-based global airport company, has been supporting Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) during the past three years from May 2017 to June 2020 to achieve operational readiness for the staff and passenger facilities at the new Bahrain International Airport Terminal.

Despite the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic facing the international aviation industry, BAC and its construction contractors have been able to complete Bahrain International Airport's new state-of-the-art passenger terminal – an outstanding facility designed to enhance the customer experience and to provide capacity for

some 14 million passengers annually. In tandem with this task, Fraport experts worked closely with BAC to deliver a customized ORAT (Operational Readiness and Airport Transfer) program. This comprehensive program is based on Fraport's holistic management approach that ensures the successful start of operations for new airport infrastructure. Fraport's ORAT program was designed specifically to provide operational readiness of all airport stakeholders.

Indeed, Fraport AG is very proud to have been part of this exceptional project. During the three-year program, Fraport collaborated with BAC teams as well as major airport

stakeholders – including ground handlers, concessionaires, and public authorities. Fraport coordinated the development of operational concepts – defining and subsequently aligning Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) required for smooth-running and efficient operations, both during the startup and in regular operations-mode thereafter.

Fraport's ORAT consulting experts also focused on "people readiness", by coordinating BAC's overall training program, as well as for other staff of the new terminal. In total, more than 10,000 staff received training on operational concepts and standard operating procedures. Training also cov-





Farewell gathering of the BAC Executive Team under CEO Mohamed AlBinfalah and Fraport Project Management Alexander Larisch.

ered a variety of technical disciplines such as key technical systems, special airport systems, and new aviation security systems. Fraport also developed an extensive familiarization program that was rolled out to support all airport staff – thus ensuring proper staff orientation within the complex, new infrastructure, right from the start-up of terminal operations.

Additionally, more than 40 op-

pandemic precautionary measures, to ensure the health and safety of all the participants involved in the trial program, proved to be particularly challenging.

Fraport AG wishes the best of success to BAC and all the stakeholders for the start of operations at the new passenger terminal. We are proud to have supported BAC in preparing for the launch of this new era at the Bahrain International Airport gateway!

*“ Greater operational efficiency, agility, and customer responsiveness are the keynotes driving our future. ”*

erational exercises and trial sessions were conducted inside the new terminal building – for simulating operations, and using and fine-tuning the new infrastructure. Importantly, these exercises also focused on systems and operational procedures – one of the key factors required for delivering first-class service to visitors, passengers, air carriers, and other partners, from day one and onwards.

Implementing special COVID-19

Fraport AG is continuously developing Frankfurt Airport – one of the world's leading aviation hubs – to meet the unprecedented changes and challenges of the aviation industry. Greater operational efficiency, agility, and customer responsiveness are the keynotes driving our future. Fraport's know-how is transferred to some 30 airports that are managed by the company around the globe. Fraport is also renowned as a global leader in deliv-

ering airport operations & maintenance contracts.

How are you facing the challenges ahead? We would like to draw your attention to the right solution... Fraport AG offers customized airport consultancy services worldwide – in the areas of airport strategy and planning, operations, and development, airport commercial management, and air traffic development, and of course ORAT.

Fraport's vision is to continue working, contributing and adding value to airport operators in the Middle East. See you there in near future!

#### CONTACT



**ALEXANDER LARISCH**

Director ORAT

Fraport AG Frankfurt Airport Services Worldwide  
a.larisch@fraport.de

# V-LINE GROUP GROWS INTO AN INNOVATIVE SERVICES PROVIDER

Through relentless years of experience, V-LINE has continually grown its services portfolio into one of the most comprehensive in the world of maintenance, repair, and operation supply.

**V**-LINE is privileged to be directly involved in the tremendous industrial growth of KSA for more than 40 years. The world is evolving fast, with artificial intelligence and digital transformation at the forefront of changing the world and the way we live. Hence, the future in the digital environment requires more transparency, trust, and collaboration. V-LINE is dedicated to

vative solutions to the Saudi Arabian industries and businesses through collaboration, transparency, and trust is another proof that we live our vision of taking the lead by ownership, driving innovation with passion and integrity”, states Hasnain Jamil, CEO of V-LINE MIDDLE EAST.

V-LINE GROUP can provide best-practice solutions to resolve complexities through V-TECH CODA

science and value chains, thus developing transparency accountability”, Jamil adds. “These are our technology partners that V-LINE strongly collaborates with to serve the customers’ needs best. First to mention is CODA Technology solutions from Chennai India that is our technology partner in providing specialized service in Assets, Maintenance, Reliability, Materials, Master data, and Warehouse management, but also IT, security and SAP consulting. SMART Software Inc., from Boston, Massachusetts, USA, is our partner providing time-tested state-of-the-art algorithmic inventory-optimization, demand-planning, and forecasting software solution.

Next to mention is SH Tools from Hannover in Germany. They developed an efficient Toolbox-4.0 for digitizing data and providing Real-time asset-performance with early detection of various process parameters to enhance efficiency and reliability. Another close partner is Spare Parts Know-How from Melbourne Australia, providing specialized training specifically developed for spare parts inventory management. The last one to mention is Vested Contracts Management which is a collaborative approach to tackle current challenges through the collaboration for long-term sustainable growth.”

V-LINE takes pride with technology partners, with all of them being market leaders and subject experts in their field, collectively to offer such innovative solutions and proven con-



Hasnain Jamil, CEO of V-LINE MIDDLE EAST.



Abdul Kareem, Division Director for Data Services at V-TECH CODA .

improving the risk-cost-ratio and sees the opportunity to offer it to stakeholders within the value chain who have different value propositions.

“V-LINE’S ability on agile transformation, emerging as a leader by innovating itself and offering inno-

products and services. V-TECH CODA (located in Jubail, KSA) is a business unit of V-LINE MIDDLE EAST and acts as a technology arm of V-LINE. “It provides innovative and intuitive solutions, with the mission to help customers fulfill their goals using data

cepts that solve problems and promote growth. Abdul Kareem, Division Director for Data Services at V-TECH CODA, points: "We are consistently engaging with our customers to meet their ongoing and upcoming challenges ranging from Master Data (Assets, Materials, Vendors, and Services), SMART Inventory optimization, excess-stock liquidation through our product Goospares, warehouse management through data validation and Robotics process automation (RPA). V-LINE is also harnessing the potential of digital technology via the e-commerce enabler solution V-Marketplace to efficiently manage sourcing and supply. Thus V-LINE also complements as an e-vendor aggregator ready for versatile ERP integration." Hasnain Jamil concludes:

"V-LINE reiterates its unparalleled will to facilitate more employment opportunities for Saudi citizens and actively participating in localization. Local content and local talent development are of paramount importance at V-LINE. This is in continuation of our strong commitment towards the realization of the Saudi Vision 2030, bringing innovative solutions and technological advancements to KSA. V-LINE believes this is a step in the right direction towards collaborative excellence and digitalization growth."

**JANINE KATZWINKEL**

Marketing & PR Manager  
V-LINE EUROPE GmbH  
[janine.katzwinkel@v-line.com](mailto:janine.katzwinkel@v-line.com)

**INFO**

If you are interested to get to know more about the innovative services of V-LINE and how they may help you, watch the movie...



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We are in the kingdom for almost 40 years, constancy with a trustworthy partner is a key factor for the success of your projects. Safety is our credo, we fulfill the highest standards in this

area, our team and our equipment are certified to operate.

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## CONTACT



**FERIDUN MEHMET KARAALI**

*General Manager*  
Saudi Liebherr Company LTD.  
[Info.slc@liebherr.com](mailto:Info.slc@liebherr.com)  
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Photo: Liebherr

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[Liebherr.com](http://Liebherr.com)

# GOETHE-INSTITUT KSA: GATE TO INTERCULTURAL COOPERATION

Goethe-Institut expands its language courses and culture programmes in Saudi Arabia.

## A BIT OF HISTORY

It is history that I would like to start with, because it clearly shows the growth potential both for German language and culture in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The German language centre in Riyadh started in 2014 with about 50 students in the premises of the German Embassy and later at the German International School in Riyadh, only to move 2016 to a villa in the Umm Al Hamam district, near the Diplomatic Quarter. With the rising demand for the German courses and the official Goethe-Institut exams at all levels the number of students has increased to about 1200 a year.

## PIONEER IN ONLINE LANGUAGE COURSES IN THE REGION

Long before the worldwide pandemic we had introduced the German online courses at the Goethe-Institut in Saudi Arabia as one of the first institutes in the region and we continuously expand our portfolio. The new products are online courses for medical and dental professionals and students as preparation for the medical exams in Germany. We now present tailor-made German language

courses and intercultural trainings for the businesses, with the possibility of courses in small groups (7-10) at your office. Mid 2021 we prepare to expand our offer of physical courses and exams to Jeddah.

## BEYOND LANGUAGE COURSES

Learning German language is a prerequisite for attractive employment in one of many German companies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as in Germany, Austria, or Switzerland. German language is a gate to free education at one of the renowned German universities and to intercultural competences. The mission of our institution is to foster understanding between the nations through language and culture. With the Vision 2030 and the subsequent developments in KSA, the Goethe-Institut will enhance its presence in the Kingdom through cultural programs from 2021 onwards.

## KATARZYNA WIELGA-SKOLIMOWSKA

*Profession/Director  
Goethe-Institute Saudi Arabia  
info-riad@goethe.de  
www.goethe.de/saudiarabien*

## ABOUT



Katarzyna Wielga-Skolimowska is a theatre scholar, manager, and curator with experience in cultural diplomacy. She developed and managed international cultural projects in Austria, Spain, France, Poland, Ukraine, Germany, and Israel among others. She was the director of the Polish Institute Berlin and has worked as the scientific advisor for culture and Eastern Europe programs at the Federal Agency for Civic Education in Berlin. 2018 she joined the Culture Department of the Goethe-Institut in Munich. Since September 2020 she is based in Riyadh as Head of the Goethe-Institut Saudi Arabia.



# WASTEWATER TREATMENT IN KSA

Private investment is to become the rule in the construction of wastewater treatment plants in Saudi Arabia. For existing plants long-term operating contracts with private companies are in preparation.

**I**n Saudi Arabia, only about 60 percent of the wastewater produced is currently fed into sewage networks. It is planned to increase this proportion to 95 to 100 percent by 2030. An almost complete utilization of the treated wastewater is targeted. For the capital city of Riyadh, Stuttgart-based engineering firm Fichtner is drawing up a master plan for sustainable wastewater management; currently, only 15 percent of treated wastewater is used for irrigation.

In line with the expansion of the wastewater networks, new treatment plants will have to be built. There is also a need to replace old sewage treatment plants. Government planners expect the volume of wastewater to increase to about 11 million cubic meters per day by 2030. Currently, sewage treatment plant capacities of less than 6 million cubic meters/day are installed.

## FIRST WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS AWARDED AS PPP PROJECTS

In the water sector, the Saudi Water Partnerships Company (SWPC), which was founded in 2003 and is part of the Ministry of Finance, has the lead role in tendering and awarding PPP (Private Public Partnerships) projects. The National Water Company (NWC) is responsible for demand planning in the wastewater treatment sector. In 2019 SWPC awarded the first three wastewater treatment plants on a BOOT basis (Build, Own, Operate, Transfer) (West Dammam, Jeddah Airport 2, North Taif). In the period 2020 to 2024, SWPC plans to tender for up to 13 additional medium and large wastewater treatment plants.

In January 2019, a consortium consisting of Metito (founded in Beirut in 1958; today part of

Mitsubishi) and the local Mowah Company was awarded the contract for the US\$ 196 million ISTP West Dam (Independent Sewage Treatment Plant; capacity: 350,000 cubic metres/day). The construction contract was awarded to Orascom Construction (Egypt). Financing is provided by the National Commercial Bank (Saudi Arabia), the Arab Petroleum Investments Corporation and the Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation.

In February 2019, the US\$240 million ISTP Jeddah Airport 2 (capacity: 500,000 cubic meters/day) was awarded to a consortium comprising France's Veolia and the two local companies Marafiq (Power and Water Utility Company for Jubail and Yanbu) and Amwal Al Khaleej. Marafiq is a privately owned company, but the majority of its shares are owned by state actors. The financing of the project was only recently finalized. The construction work has not yet begun.

The US\$160 million ISTP North Taif project (capacity: 170,000 cubic meters/day) was awarded to a consortium of Cobra Instalaciones y Servicios (Spain) and the Saudi Arabian International Water Distribution Company (Tawzea) in October 2019. The project financing does not yet appear to have been clarified.

SWPC currently has three wastewater treatment plants for a total of US\$ 450 million (total capacity: 440,000 cubic meters/day) in the tendering phase (Buraydah 2, Madinah 3, Tabuk 2). Contract award is not expected before spring 2021. The other wastewater treatment projects announced by SWPC are still in an early planning stage. For most of the projects, an initial phase will be tendered first.

In addition to the construction of medium and large wastewater treatment plants, SWPC is working on a program for 147 small wastewater



treatment plants (under 25,000 cubic meters per day) with a total capacity of 489,250 cubic meters per day. The plants will be offered to the private sector in six packages: (1) Southern Cluster (total capacity: 164,500 cubic meters/day), (2) Western Cluster (80,500 cubic meters/day), (3) Central Cluster (91,000 cubic meters/day), (4) North Western Cluster (49,000 cubic meters/day), (5) Northern Cluster (81,000 cubic meters/day) and (6) Eastern Cluster (23,250 cubic meters/day).

### NATIONAL WATER COMPANY WANTS PRIVATE INVOLVEMENT

The largest operator of sewage treatment plants is the National Water Company (NWC), which belongs to the state Public Investment Fund. According to the company, NWC is responsible for 114 wastewater treatment plants nationwide, with a processing capacity of 5.1 million cubic meters per day. The capacity of all wastewater treatment plants in Saudi Arabia currently totals about 5.7 million cubic meters/day.

The NWC wastewater treatment plants are to be operated by private companies in the future, which will also be responsible for modernization and maintenance. To this end, the conclusion of long-term contracts with terms of 10 to 25 years (Long Term Operation and Maintenance Contracts/LTOM) is planned. The LTOM contracts will provide that the financing of all necessary investments as well as the running costs will be carried out by the contractor, who will receive a remuneration for the treated wastewater. There will be no state financing aid. The contract will also contain an obligation to build plants for the environmentally friendly treatment of the sewage sludge.

In July 2020, the NWC invited interested companies to prequalify (Request for Qualification/RFQ). The application period ran until August. A result of the prequalification procedure (Notice of Pre-Qualification) is not yet known; a total of 24 companies have submitted their documents. Fichtner was engaged as technical consultant for the

**Table: Saudi Water Partnerships Company (SWPC): Wastewater treatment plants in the planning**

Project (City)	Planned commissioning 1)	Capacity (cubic meters/day)2)	Investment (million US\$) 3)
Buraydah 2 (Qassim) 4)	2022	150.000	150
Madinah 3 (Madinah) 4)	2023/2026	200.000/375.000	200
Al Haer 2 (Riad) 5)	2023/2026	100.000/200.000	100
Riyadh East (Riad) 5)	2023/2028	50.000/100.000	50
Tabuk 2 (Tabuk) 4)	2023	90.000	100
Khamis Mushait 2 (Khamis Mushait) 5)	2023/2027	25.000/50.000	25
Abu Arish 3 (Jazan) 5)	2024/2028	25.000/50.000	25
Najran South (Najran) 5)	2024/2028	25.000/50.000	25
Jeddah North 1 (Jeddah) 5)	2025/2029	25.000/50.000	25
Hafar Al Batin 2 (Hafar Al Batin) 5)	2026/2030	50.000/100.00	50
Kharj 3 (Kharj) 5)	2026/2030	25.000/50.000	25
Turaif (Turaif) 5)	2024	k.A.	140
Sakaka (3 Plants; Al Jouf) 6)	2024	86.000	140

1) second year: commissioning of an expansion; 2) second capacity figure: capacity after expansion; 3) investment amount without expansion; 4) project put out to tender; 5) project in early planning stage; 6) FEED created

RFQ process. It is planned to publish the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a first LTOM contract in the third quarter of 2020.

Initially, five LTOM contracts are to be concluded for a total of 15 wastewater treatment plants with a total capacity of 2.51 million cubic meters/day. The five contracts relate to (1) four wastewater treatment plants in Riyadh (Manfouha South, North, East and Phase 4; total capacity: 900,000 cubic meters/day), (2) two plants in the Mecca region (Hada, Arana; 500,000 cubic meters/day), (3) four plants in the Jeddah region (Jeddah Airport 1, Al-Khumrah 3, 4 and 6; 830.000 cubic meters/day), (4) two plants in the Taif region (Wadi Al-Arj 1 and 2; 167,000 cubic meters/day) and (5) three plants in the Northern Borders and Al Jouf regions (Arar, Turaif and Sakaka; 108,000 cubic meters/day).

### CONTACT



**ROBERT ESPEY**  
Director

Germany Trade & Invest Dubai  
robert.espey@gtai.de



# BAVARIA IN SAUDI-ARABIA AND BAHRAIN

To support Bavarian companies in setting up or enhancing their business potential in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, a Bavarian representation has been opened at the German Economic Liaison Office (GESALO) in Riyadh on August 1st, 2020.

**B**avaria is Germany's largest state in terms of area and second largest in terms of population. Bavaria is one of the strongest economic regions in Europe and enjoys an excellent global reputation as a high-tech location. The gross domestic product per capita is one of the highest worldwide. Bavaria also offers companies from all over the world an attractive location to make investments, with top rankings in international benchmarking. Bavarian companies take advantage of the opportunities available on the global market.

Bavaria is home to global players like Adidas, Puma, Allianz, MunichRe, BMW, Audi, and Siemens. The backbone of its economy is a vibrant population of medium-sized enterprises, many of whom are acknowledged world market leaders. Many of them are present in the GCC region and are already participating in numerous mega projects in Saudi Arabia.

However, Bavaria is also home to numerous SME companies, exploring new markets. Saudi Arabia is undergoing an economic transformation,

hoping to attract more international business and investments. The opportunities are numerous. The development of the Tourism sector needs cooperation partners. Bavaria, with a long-standing experience in tourism, would be a good match. Within the transformation of the medical sector, several Bavarian companies are already very active in the market. There is more room for further cooperation especially in the field of E-Health as Saudi Arabia is digitalizing the sector also including remote areas to upgrade the health care sector. Infrastructure and the logistic sectors are further areas with a cascade of opportunities.

Neighboring Bahrain is as well aiming to enhance the cooperation in the financial sectors and offering an attractive ecosystem to startups. The Kingdom of Bahrain, located in front of the powerhouse of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, is home to many foreign company representations. Furthermore, niche sectors like jewelry or the sports sector are also in search of cooperation partners.

The Bavarian representation is the first point of contact for Bavarian or local companies in Saudi Arabia or Bahrain to support the market entry, extend cooperation for already established companies, and offer a networking platform.

We are looking forward to hearing from you!

## CONTACT



**DR. DALIA SAMRA-ROHTE**

*Delegate GESALO*

*Bavarian Representative*

*rohte@ahk-arabia.com*

# GESALO RETURNING EXPERTS OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO KSA

One of the challenges in the COVID-19 crisis is travel restrictions. This has also a major impact on business operations in Saudi Arabia. Critical infrastructure projects between German companies and Saudi entities are affected by travel restrictions.

**T**o ensure business continuity, the German-Saudi Arabian Liaison Office for Economic Affairs (GESALO) has been able to evoke special permission to bring back more than 200 businesspeople, mainly in the field of critical infrastructure.

Over 35 German companies followed the call of GESALO in cooperation with the German Embassy, to register their specialists, who are needed back in the Kingdom to ensure ongoing projects.

On Monday, July 13th, the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gave GESALO and the German Embassy the green light to bring back the first experts on the Lufthansa flight from Frankfurt on July 18th. Further Lufthansa flights followed on August 29th and on September 26th.

The Delegate of the German In-

dustry, Dr. Dalia Samra-Rohte together with the German industry is extremely thankful for the tremendous support the respected Saudi partners and the German Embassy have given, and for the generous opportunity to evoke special permission.

“Working together with the respected Saudi government entities, Lufthansa and the German Embassy was a great experience, and we are very grateful for the fast and non-bureaucratic solution that

was offered to us. It is another positive milestone in the economic bilateral relationship and great support for the German companies in Saudi

Arabia and their local counterparts”, said Dr. Dalia Samra-Rohte, Delegate of GESALO.

“It is a big honor for us to bring the first specialists back to Riyadh on our flight. Our special thanks go to MOFA but also to GACA which made this flight possible,” says Peter Mosch, Lufthansa Station Manager.

Thyssenkrupp appreciates the efforts undertaken by the local authorities and GESALO to enable some of our specialists to re-enter the Kingdom in these critical times. “We see this as an important step on the path to having a more regular and frequent exchange of personnel between Germany and Saudi Arabia”.

We are very pleased to have made this important contribution to secure ongoing business processes and that we were not only able to support our German companies but also many Saudi Arabian project partners. Our whole team is very proud to have been a part of this massive mission.



Over 200 employees travelled back to Saudi Arabia within 3 months.



Dr. Samra-Rohte, Omar Hamza and Iman Staab welcomed the arriving travelers from Germany.



An enormous organizational and administrative effort, which paid off in the end, thanks to 3 successfully accomplished flights.



# AHK WORLD BUSINESS OUTLOOK – AUTUMN 2020

## SAUDI ARABIA

The AHK World Business Outlook is based on a regular DIHK survey of the member companies of the German Chambers of Commerce Abroad, delegations and representative offices (AHKs). In October 2020, it collected feedback from more than 3,500 German companies, branches and subsidiaries, as well as companies closely related to Germany.

### SAUDI ARABIA

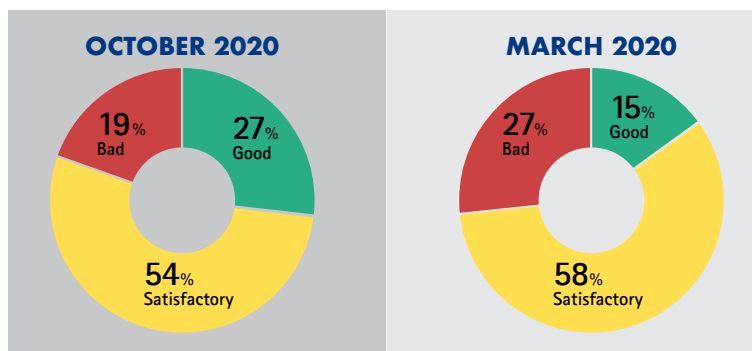
In Saudi Arabia we collected feedback from 41 German companies, branches and subsidiaries, as well as companies closely related to Germany.

- 44 percent of the responding companies come from the industrial and construction sector
- 41 percent from the service sector and
- 15 percent are trading companies.
- Smaller companies with fewer than 100 employees account for 20 percent of the answers. 25 percent of the companies employ 100 to 1,000 people. Large companies with more than 1,000 employees account for 55 percent of the respondents.

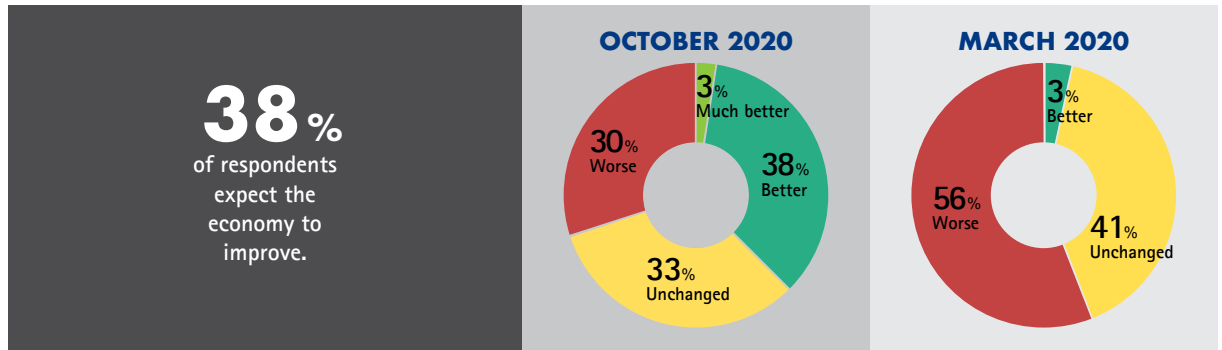
### 1. Current situation of the company

# 27%

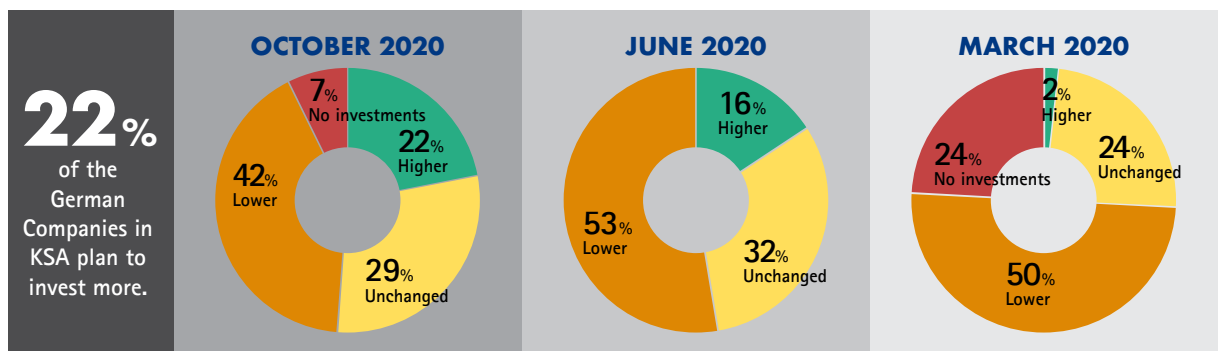
of companies consider their situation as good – more than in March.



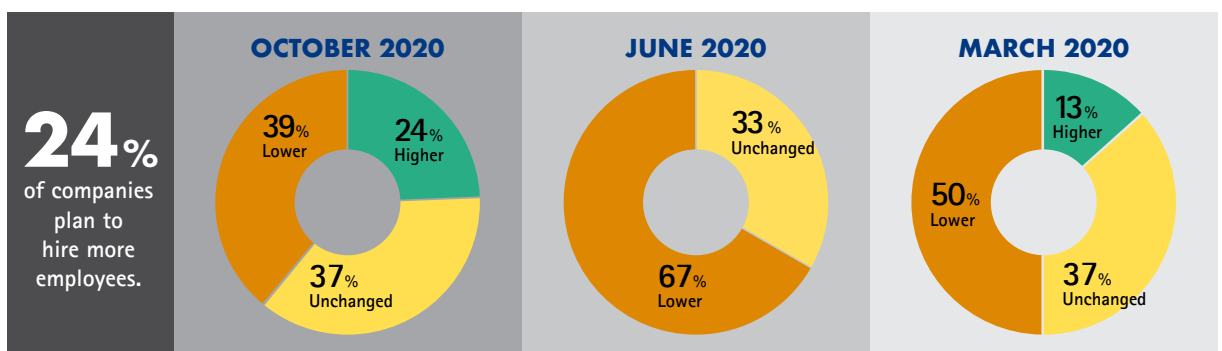
## 2. Expected economic development (mid-term)



## 3. Expected investments in the next 12 months



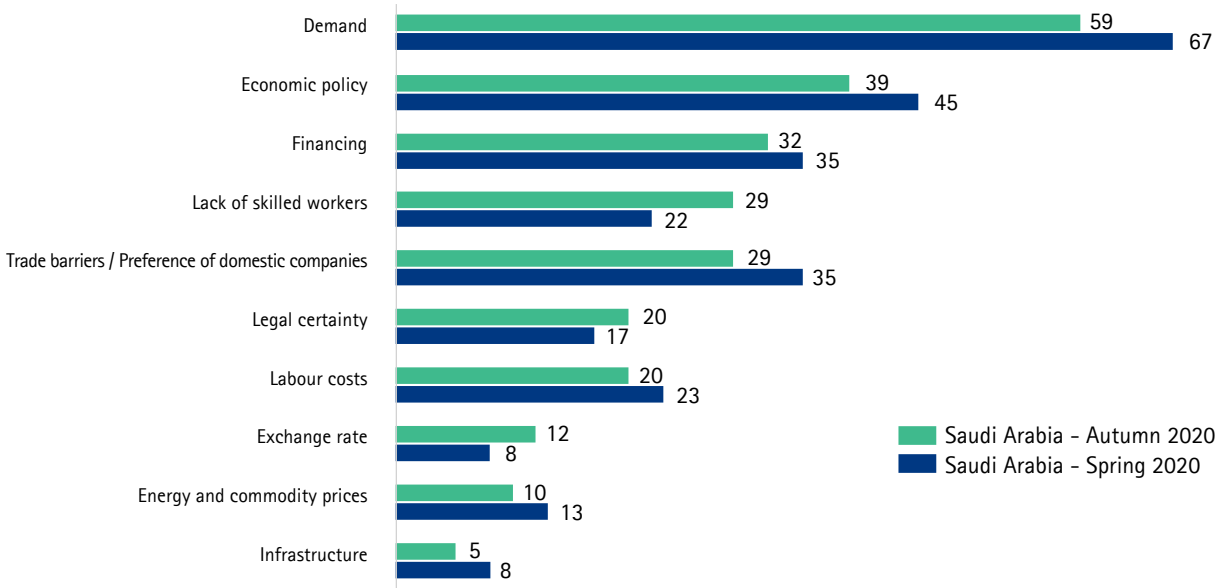
## 4. Expected change in the number of employees in the next 12 months



## 5. Coming 12 months – Saudi Arabia

### PERCEIVED RISKS FOR THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

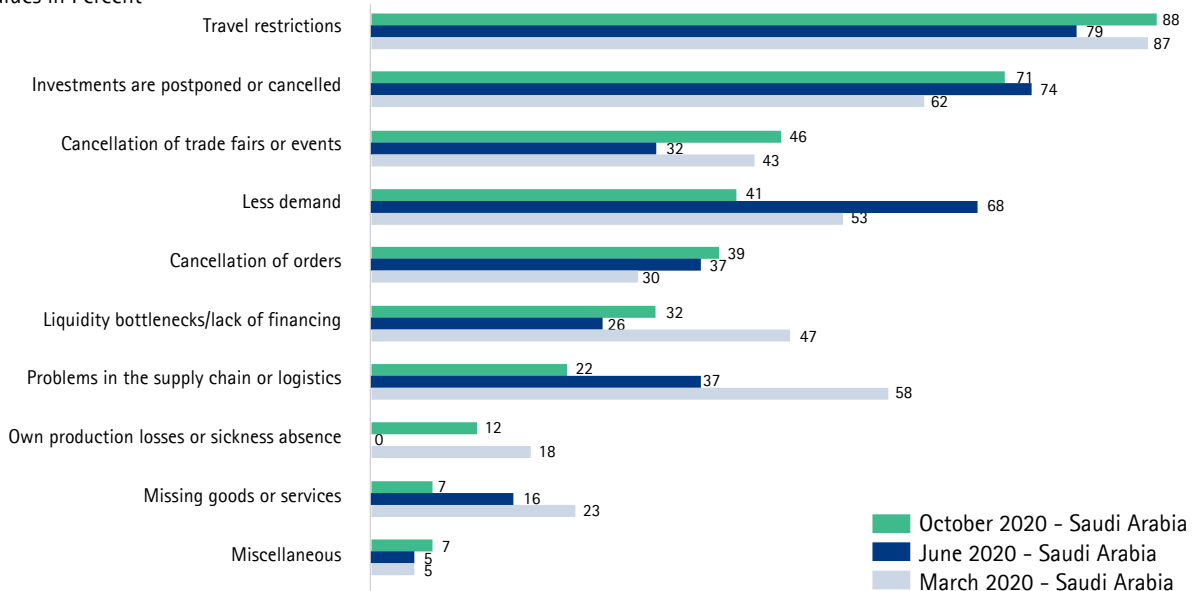
Values in Percent



## 6. Current and expected impact of the coronavirus pandemic on businesses

### TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS, INVESTMENTS & THE CANCELLATION OF EVENTS ARE IMPACTING GERMAN BUSINESSES IN SAUDI ARABIA

Values in Percent





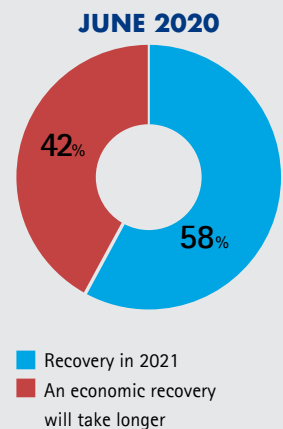
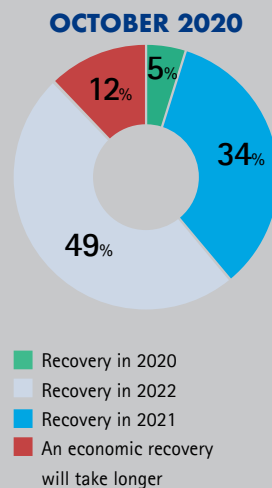
## 7. Measures taken because of Corona pandemic

**80%**  
of companies  
reduce costs  
because of the  
pandemic.



## 8. When do you expect the economy to recover in your country?

**34%**  
of respondents  
expect the  
economy to  
recover in 2021



# WE ARE MOVING

**G**ESALO is also following the trend and will move to the north of Riyadh in the upcoming weeks. After a long and intensive search, we decided on the "Pure" complex. The direct neighbourhood to the Digital City and the optimal location at the Takhassusi makes it even easier for us to stay in contact with our business partners.

The construction work has already started, and we will be able to welcome you to our new office in the new year.

Here comes a fun fact: Did you know that in Germany (and other European countries like France and Austria) there is a tradition to start life in a "new home" with something to eat?

Bread and salt are given away as a present to symbolize sedentariness, community, and prosperity.

With that being said, we hope that we will soon be able to invite you to visit our new premises.

We are looking forward to your visit in 2021!



Photo: GESALO (3)

## MORE INFO

New address starting 01.01.2021  
Pure  
7993 Safarjal 3213  
Takhassusi  
Riyadh 12364  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



# BAVARIAN START-UP SUPERNUTURAL

Munich based start-up enters the KSA market.

In Saudi Arabia, the eating habits are changing towards natural, regional and organic products. Innovative concepts are sought after. Our niche product fits perfectly into this market gap", says Amelie Sperber (37). Together with her husband, she runs the young company supernatural based in Munich, which manufactures machines for nut cream focused on the B2B sector. The customers are supermarkets, delis, hotels and restaurants in 20 countries around the world. "Our secret of success lies in the absolute purity of the product", emphasizes the managing director. Consumers can tap fresh nut creams without any additives from the supernatural machines.

Saudi Arabia has quickly become an important market for the Munich start-up, even if the company originally intended to limit its activities to Germany and its European neighbors. The first Saudi customer, an owner of an organic super-market, made contact at the Nuremberg organic trade fair. With success. Three nut machines were ordered. The second deal was already more extensive: One of the largest Saudi Arabian supermarket groups is equipping its branches across the country with supernatural.

But there were hurdles to be overcome. Amelie Sperber emphasizes that the bureaucracy for exports to the Gulf state is a real challenge. Issues that could relatively easily be solved for the first customer with the support of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce turned out to be extremely complex for the delivery to the second customer, the Saudi group. However together with the local IHK and practice-oriented advice from the German Desk of GESALO in Jeddah, supernatural was able to master the challenges. "Through digital video conferences, all points could be clarified directly with the German Desk of GESALO - an absolute

added value in times of Corona", says Sperber. Above all, the export of the supplied "nut" food was extremely bureaucratic. "You really have to want that," says the managing director. She is equally impressed by the long-term cooperation with Saudi customers: "Our partners are very western-oriented, cultural differences are not a big issue in business. I am accepted as a woman in leadership without any problems."

supernatural still sees a lot of potential in the Gulf State and wants to further expand its customer relationships. However, a planned delegation trip had to be postponed due to the pandemic. Nevertheless, new contacts are still being made, says Amelie Sperber: "The Saudis are approaching us. Our product - made in Germany - has an incredibly high value here".

## CONTACT

Amelie Sperber  
supernatural GmbH  
CEO & Founder  
[amelie.sperber@supernatural.com](mailto:amelie.sperber@supernatural.com)

Amelie Sperber,  
CEO & Founder  
supernatural.





# EXPLORE & CONNECT

GESALO are the official representative of some of the most renowned German trade fair companies. We help companies from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Yemen to exhibit their products and services in the shows we represent and thereby to establish and strengthen business connections. Our exhibitors and visitors receive a personalized and targeted service. Whether you are interested in exhibiting in a fair or just to visit, please contact the respective GESALO colleagues for detailed information.

## JAN 13 - 15



**WHAT** BAU Online  
**WHERE** Munich  
**WEB** [www.bau-muenchen.com](http://www.bau-muenchen.com)  
**CONTACT** Mr. Asif Ansari,  
[ansari@ahk-arabia.com](mailto:ansari@ahk-arabia.com)

The international construction industry is networking. Exhibitors will present their products and solutions and will also be offering virtual one-on-one meetings. An extensive conference program will also be organized. The four main topics of BAU 2021 also determine the online format: Digital Transformation, The Climate Change Challenge, Resources and Recycling, and The Future of Housing. Another topic for discussion will be "The Construction Industry after Coronavirus".



## MAR 16-18



**WHAT** TWENTY2X  
**WHERE** Hanover  
**WEB** [www.twenty2x.de/en/](http://www.twenty2x.de/en/)  
**CONTACT** Mr. Asif Ansari,  
[ansari@ahk-arabia.com](mailto:ansari@ahk-arabia.com)



**Digital future of the SME sector.** TWENTY2X has its fingers on the pulse of the latest advances and approaches. The digital transformation is happening. Right now, small, and medium enterprises are setting the course for their future. The key questions: What direction will they take, and how fast will they go? What they need is smart technologies and market-ready solutions. Solutions that will help them modernize their business models, develop innovative products and services, streamline their organizational structures, make their processes agile and leverage modern forms of collaboration.

## APR 12 - 16



**WHAT** Hannover Messe  
**WHERE** Hanover  
**WEB** [www.hannovermesse.de/en/](http://www.hannovermesse.de/en/)  
**CONTACT** Mr. Asif Ansari,  
[ansari@ahk-arabia.com](mailto:ansari@ahk-arabia.com)

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**APR 15 - 19****INHORGENTA  
MUNICH****WHAT** INHORGENTA**WHERE** Munich**WEB** [www.inhorgenta.com/en/](http://www.inhorgenta.com/en/)**CONTACT** Mr. Asif Ansari  
[ansari@ahk-arabia.com](mailto:ansari@ahk-arabia.com)

Europe's leading platform for jewelry, watches and gemstones. Discover fascinating jewelry collections, inspiring design jewelry, and experience the gleaming facets of INHORGENTA MUNICH. Europe's leading platform is making a strong statement with a new date for the event in spring 2021. Highlights: Bigli, Pasquale Bruni, Oris and Leo Pizzo will be represented for the first time.

**APR 17 - 25****WHAT** boot Düsseldorf**WHERE** Duesseldorf**WEB** [www.boot.com](http://www.boot.com)**CONTACT** Mr. Asif Ansari,  
[ansari@ahk-arabia.com](mailto:ansari@ahk-arabia.com)

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**APR 20-23****bauma CONEXPO INDIA****WHAT** bauma CONEXPO INDIA**WHERE** Greater Noida /  
Delhi NCR India**WEB** [www.bcindia.com/en/](http://www.bcindia.com/en/)**CONTACT** Mr. Asif Ansari,  
[ansari@ahk-arabia.com](mailto:ansari@ahk-arabia.com)

Trade Fair for Construction Machinery, Building Material Machines, Mining Machines & Construction Vehicles. Held on a biennial frequency, for four days, bauma CONEXPO INDIA brings together both global market leaders and the Indian industry to present their products to their customers from the Indian subcontinent and neighboring regions.

**MAY 18 - 20****WHAT** DOMOTEX**WHERE** Hanover**WEB** [www.domotex.de/en/](http://www.domotex.de/en/)**CONTACT** Mr. Asif Ansari  
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**MAY 18 - 20**



**WHAT** Fruit Logistica - International fresh produce trade show

**WHERE** Berlin

**WEB** [www.fruitlogistica.de/en/](http://www.fruitlogistica.de/en/)

**CONTACT** Mrs. Iman Staab,  
[staab@ahk-arabia.com](mailto:staab@ahk-arabia.com)



**JUN 8 - 10**

**DMEA**

**WHAT** DMEA - Leading platform for digital healthcare

**WHERE** Berlin

**WEB** [www.dmea.de/en](http://www.dmea.de/en)

**CONTACT** Mrs. Iman Staab,  
[staab@ahk-arabia.com](mailto:staab@ahk-arabia.com)



**JUN 15 - 18**

**glasstec**

**WHAT** glasstec

**WHERE** Duesseldorf

**WEB** [www.glasstec-online.com/](http://www.glasstec-online.com/)

**CONTACT** Mr. Asif Ansari,  
[ansari@ahk-arabia.com](mailto:ansari@ahk-arabia.com)



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**JUN 20 - 24**



**Spielwarenmesse**

**WHAT** spielwarenmesse

**WHERE** Nuenberg

**WEB** [www.spielwarenmesse.de/en/](http://www.spielwarenmesse.de/en/)

**CONTACT** Mr. Asif Ansari,  
[ansari@ahk-arabia.com](mailto:ansari@ahk-arabia.com)





# GERMAN EXHIBITIONS REMAIN ESSENTIAL FOR NEW CUSTOMER CONTACTS

Exhibitions in Germany have been the central instrument in BtoB communication for many years. But exhibitions suddenly came to a standstill in March due to the start of the Corona Pandemic - with considerable consequences for many of those involved.

**T**he entire trade fair ecosystem has suffered heavy losses in turnover - from the organizers to the stand builders, the hotel industry, the transport sector, and the retail trade. The trade fair industry's contribution to German economic output will fall from 28 billion euros to around 8 billion euros in 2020. Above all, however, it's about the loss of sales by exhibitors who were unable to conclude or initiate business at exhibitions. This involves high amounts in the billions. And the lack of networking, building trust through personal encounters, or the media impact of exhibitions can hardly be quantified in euros. And what is most lacking is the ability to address customers via all their senses, whether hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, or tasting. Here, digital formats quickly reach their limits.

Especially in these times of trade show downtime, they help to show presence and convey information. But they are not a medium-term replacement for exhibitions. Because real exhibitions have a completely different convincing power. Many companies tell us that it is very difficult to win new customers digitally and convince customers of the quality of new products. That's why we need strong real exhibitions. They will certainly be supplemented by digital elements in

the future as well, because travel restrictions, often imposed by the companies themselves, mean that not all of the previous exhibition participants will be able to attend.

The trade fair relaunch in September was a success: twelve exhibitions took place - trade visitor and public fairs, events with international and more regional appeal. There were no objections concerning the health protection of the participants. Exhibitors and visitors followed the usual rules. Generally speaking, participation in an exhibition and a retail situation, for example in a shopping center, have a lot in common. But above all: in many cases, the exhibitors have done good business.

But the development of infection figures shows that the road to normality is still long. In 2021, the German

trade fair industry will still be quite a way from the previous level, but there will be strong signs of recovery, first at regional events, but also at international trade fairs in the course of the year. Germany's international trade fairs will retain its leading role and will start to attract exhibitors and visitors from all over the world again next year. The German organizers are doing everything in their power to ensure that the highest trade fair quality is once again offered as early as possible.

## HARALD KÖTTER

*Director of Public Relations & Trade Fairs Germany Division*

*AUMA - Association of the German Trade Fair Industry*  
*h.koetter@auma.de*



Messe Frankfurt  
Exhibition GmbH.

# MOHAMMED FALEEL: 34 YEARS „LIVING CONTACT NETWORK“

1986 Mr. Mohammed Faleel joined the GESALO Team in Riyadh and is so far the longest-serving employee.

**A**s B2B Director and specialist for Market Entry, he was not only the “living contact network” of GESALO but also appreciated and respected by his business partners and colleagues alike.

For almost 35 years Mr. Faleel was giving consultations and support for small and medium-sized companies. His know-how and business strategies were valued and beneficial for the entities and his junior consultants.

In September Mr. Faleel officially started his well-deserved retirement. With a heavy heart, he was bid farewell in the circle of his colleagues. To his surprise, his former delegates, who are now in new positions all over the world, joined his farewell party too via video conference.

Even former interns and colleagues did not miss the opportunity to send Mr. Faleel a video message with their congratulations and memories of their time with him.

We all wish Mr. Faleel and his wife all the best for their return journey to their home country Sri Lanka. His knowledge, his inimitable nature, and his eventful stories will be greatly missed by the GESALO team.



Delegate Dr. Samra-Rohte presented Mr. Faleel with a remembrance of his outstanding achievements at the GESALO.



The GESALO Team with Mr. Faleel and his wife Samzul.



Former Delegates and colleagues did not hesitate to take the time and say goodbye personally via video conference.





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## TESTIMONIALS



“Wie immer, eine sehr kompetente Vorbereitung und Durchführung von Herrn Faleel und seinem Team. Meine Erwartungen wurden mehr als erfüllt. Die Qualität der Kontakte ist ausgezeichnet und wir sind aktuell im Gespräch mit mehreren potentiellen Geschäftspartnern für Saudi-Arabien”

**Dennis Kottman**

Export Area Manager, Alois Dallmayr Kaffee oHG

Zum Service : Business Partner connect

Die Bürokratie für Export in den Golfstaat ist eine echte Herausforderung (...) Gemeinsam mit der lokalen IHK und praxisorientierter Beratung der Delegation der Deutschen Wirtschaft für Saudi-Arabien konnte der vergleichbar hohe Aufwand gestemmt werden.

„Durch digitale Videokonferenzen konnten alle Punkte direkt mit den Experten vor Ort geklärt werden - ein absoluter Mehrwert in Zeiten von Corona.”

**Amelie Sperber**

CEO & Founder, supernatural



## OUR NEW COLLEAGUE



**ENG. ABDULLAH ALSALIM**

Market Entry Consultant

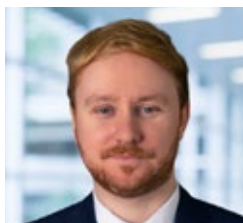
During studying for his bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering (focused on Energy Technology) at Kassel University in Germany, Abdullah gained some skills and work experience as a student trainee at Volkswagen AG, Sartorius AG, and DHL GmbH. He wrote his bachelor's thesis about modelling a Liquid Desiccant Air Conditioning System. In his free time, Abdullah loves to inline skate, play football, and meeting with friends. He returns to his hometown Riyadh and joins the GESALO Team as our Market Entry Consultant.

## OUR TEAM



**DR. DALIA SAMRA-ROHTE**

*Delegate of German Industry  
& Commerce for Saudi Arabia,  
Bahrain and Yemen*



**JAN LUTZ MUELLER**

*Deputy Delegate,  
Head of Market Entry*



**IMAN STAAB**

*Deputy Delegate,  
Head of Trade Fair & Marketing*



**MOHAMMED AKBAR**

*System Administrator*



**ROSA ALJOHANI**

*Head of German Desk Jeddah*



**ENG. ABDULLAH ALSALIM**

*Market Entry Consultant*



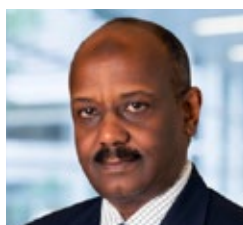
**ASIF ANSARI**

*Senior Trade Fair Officer*



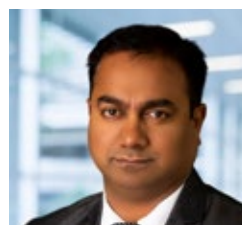
**MOHAMMED RIYAS GUL KHAN**

*Administration Assistant*



**OMAR HASSAN HAMZA**

*Assistant of the Delegate &  
Head of Legal Affairs*



**MUHANAD KHUSRO**

*Head of Finance &  
Administration*



**FAISAL NALPURAKKAL**

*Administration & Front Desk*



**HANNA RIEHLE**

*Head of Market Research*



# IMPRINT

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Dr. Dalia Samra-Rohte

## EDITOR

Iman Staab

## CONTRIBUTORS

Hanna Riehle  
Iman Staab  
Dr. Samra-Rohte

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Ghia Müller-Heywes

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## GESALO OFFICE

Pure  
7993 Safarjal 3213  
Takhassusi  
Riyadh 12364  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
T +966 92 0005863

in @GESALO  
@ahksaudi  
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