



وزارة الاستثمار
Ministry of Investment

استثمر في السعودية

INVEST
SAUDI



Invest In Qassim



**Your Guide to Uncovering
Value Propositions in Qassim
Region**

| January, 2023



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My primary goal is to be an exemplary and leading nation in all aspects, and I will work with you in achieving this endeavor.

**Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,
King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud**



Our nation holds strong investment capabilities, which we will harness to stimulate our economy and diversify our revenues.

**His Royal Highness the Crown Prince,
Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud**



Al Qassim is a pioneer in investment and a core agricultural and industrial region, as well as a fertile land for investors.



HRH Prince Dr. Faisal bin Mishaal bin Saud bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud Prince of Qassim region,

Since the launch of the development project; “Saudi Vision 2030”, led by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques; King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and under the constant guidance and follow-up of His Royal Highness, Prince Muhammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud; The Crown Prince, the Prime Minister, and the Kingdom are in constant quest to achieve the goals of this ambitious Saudi Vision, starting with diversifying the resources of the national economy, as well as developing and putting into action ambitious plans and strategies designed to boost economic growth across the Kingdom. Work to attract and promote investments in all regions of the Kingdom is among the most crucial of these strategies.

In order to build a strong foundation for achieving Saudi Vision 2030’s goals, in the years since Saudi Vision 2030’s inception, the Kingdom will pursue strategies such as a strong and developing economy, abundant energy resources, distinctive geographical features, a young population, and an integrated infrastructure. and so on. The Kingdom benefited from this advantage to solidify its position as an ideal destination for those looking to invest in a number of highly competitive sectors and take advantage of promising investment opportunities.

The Kingdom’s focus on diversifying the national economy, coupled with its ambitious economic growth plans and unprecedented government support such as the Ministry of investment, has positioned Saudi Arabia as an ideal choice for investment. Saudi Arabia’s economy has proven to be both resilient and one of the fastest globally to rebound from the effects of the “COVID-19” pandemic. In fact, the Kingdom is predicted by the IMF to see the most rapid economic growth in the world at 7.6 percent in 2022. In addition, As one of the overarching objectives of Saudi Vision 2030 is to grow and diversify the economy, Saudi Vision 2030 aims to make Saudi Arabia one of the top 15 economies globally. Doing so requires significant investment that is estimated to exceed USD 3.2 trillion through the National Investment Strategy, launched by HRH the Crown Prince a year ago.

Over the past few years, the Kingdom has undergone a major transformation not seen anywhere else in the world. We have developed leading information and communications technologies (ICT) infrastructure, introduced comprehensive eGovernment solutions, and embraced public-private partnerships to deliver our ambitious targets on a scale and at a speed that are unparalleled. We are continuing to transform to create further investment opportunities and increase our competitiveness across key and emerging sectors. We are doing this through developed rules and regulation such as Mining Regulations and strategic initiatives such as Saudi Vision 2030, the National Investment Strategy, National Transport and Logistics Strategy, National Industrial Strategy, the National Development Fund, and Global Supply Chain Resilience Initiative. These initiatives come with significant government support in helping to attract investment and enable growth. further investment opportunities and increase competitiveness across key and emerging sectors. We are doing this through strategic initiatives such as Saudi Vision 2030, the National Investment Strategy, and the National Development Fund, among others. These initiatives come with significant government support in helping attract investment and enable growth.

We understand that one of the key factors associated with successful investment decisions is site selection. The Ministry of Investment (MISA), through collaboration with key entities, has developed reports such as this one to showcase opportunities found in all regions across the Kingdom. Our 13 provinces have key differentiators and a unique value proposition in specific sectors. Throughout this report, we help shine a light on Al-Qassim -- a leading jurisdiction for the bauxite industry, and the Kingdom’s ‘food basket’.

HE Minister of Investment Eng. Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih

SPOTLIGHT ON THE KINGDOM

The Kingdom's Transformational Journey Through Saudi Vision 2030

Saudi Arabia's Nominal GDP was ~USD 834 billion in 2021, Based on the efforts of Qassim region, the contribution of the Mining, and Agriculture to the Kingdom's GDP is expected to increase. The Kingdom's growth perspectives are supported by a set of major Saudi Vision 2030 Realization Programs and initiatives.

These programs and initiatives include the Public Investment Fund Program, Quality of Life Program, National Industrial Development and Logistics Program, Housing Program, Privatization Program, and the Regional Headquarters program, among others.

These transformative investment programs are critical components of the Kingdom's strategy to achieve Saudi Vision 2030 targets, including:

- Raising the share of non-oil exports in non-oil GDP to 50%
- Positioning the Kingdom within the top 15 economies worldwide
- Doubling overall domestic investment component
- Increasing foreign direct investment (FDI) approximately twenty-fold

The country's determination to diversify its economy has fueled both local and foreign investment, while increasing the contribution of small and medium-sized (SME) enterprises to the national GDP. According to the Saudi central bank (SAMA), foreign direct investment inflows to the Kingdom increased significantly from USD 1.4 billion in 2017 to almost USD 19.3 billion in 2021. This is mainly due to increased competitiveness in key areas such as ease of doing business, road connectivity, cybersecurity, and education.



Ranked
#36

For the ease of starting a business as per the 2021 Global Innovation Index (out of 132 countries)

Ranked
#1

For road connectivity as per the 2019 Global competitiveness report by the World Economic Forum (out of 141 countries)

Ranked
#2

Overall in the 2020 Global Cyber Security Index by the United Nations International Telecommunication Union (out of 194 countries)

Ranked
#6

For total public expenditure on education as per the 2021 IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook (out of 64 countries)

Ranked
#9

For technical and vocational education training as per the 2021 Global Knowledge Index (out of 154 countries)

Ranked
#41

Overall in INSEAD's 2021 Global Talent Competitiveness Index (out of 134 countries)

Ranked
#3

Ranked 3rd for the ease of protecting minority investors per the 2021 Global Innovation Index (out of 132 countries)

Ranked
#47

Ranked 47th for the gross expenditure on research and development as per the 2021 Global Innovation Index (out of 132 countries)

A key area of focus for the Kingdom has been building top-tier digital infrastructure to enable its digital transformation strategy, through adopting and implementing state-of-the-art information and communications technologies (ICTs).

E-government programs enabling the digitalization and improvement of multiple services have been leveraged to support this goal. This was done by developing electronic platforms, channels, and applications to improve the end-user experience and ensure the Kingdom can effectively support businesses and their new ways of working.

To foster new investment opportunities, facilitate investments for the private sector, and encourage innovation, an extensive network of institutions offers attractive incentives to projects across sectors and regions. These include nearly **290 programs** such as:



Employment support (covering a percentage of wages) offered by the Saudi Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF)



Project finance and working capital financing are offered by the Saudi Industrial Development Fund (SIDF)



Tax credits on R&D investment and tax exemption on earnings from exports are offered by the Zakat Tax and Customs Authority (ZATCA)



Customs exemption on raw material, machinery and equipment, and spare parts offered by the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources (MIMR)



Key sectors have been identified for the country which include tourism, agriculture, renewable energy, healthcare, financial services, industrial manufacturing, logistics, and mining. In line with Vision 2030, the Kingdom has set **ambitious goals across target sectors**, such as:



Reaching net-zero emissions by 2060



Doubling the number of Saudi heritage sites registered with UNESCO



Having three Saudi cities recognized in the top-ranked 100 cities worldwide



Increasing household spending on cultural and entertainment activities inside Saudi Arabia from the current level of 2.9% to 6%

Growing the Kingdom's global footprint through the increase in exports is also a key priority. The Kingdom's strategic geographical location makes it a key contributor to international trade as it connects three continents: Africa, Asia, and Europe. Trade-intensive sectors that are ripe for exporting are being supported through various incentives and enablers that are being rolled out across the Kingdom.



Spotlight: The Saudi Green Initiative

The Saudi Green Initiative is an ambitious national initiative for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia aiming to improve quality of life and protect future generations. Saudi Arabia is taking a leading role in global efforts, by committing to **protect at least 30% of global ocean** in marine protected areas, and other effective area-based conservation measures by 2030, contributing to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) climate action by guiding and supporting actors to achieve global climate change goals and cutting global **methane emissions by 30%** by 2030.



Top Commitments include

- Reducing Carbon emissions by more than **4%** related to global contributions by 2030
- Planting **10 billion** trees across Saudi Arabia by 2030
- Raising protected areas to more than **20%** of total land area by 2030
- Increasing domestic generation capacity from renewable energy to **50%** by 2030

Image source: www.saudigreeninitiative.org

WHY INVEST IN QASSIM

Qassim is a region rich in natural resources and agriculture. Home to the only bauxite mine in the Middle East, Qassim is a major contributor to the production of aluminum in the Kingdom. Beyond Bauxite, the region has nonfuel materials which are mined for their commercial usage.

With an abundance of natural resources and favorable climate conditions, Qassim offers notable investment opportunities in mining, agriculture (including a focus on date production and livestock breeding).

Qassim is known for its natural resources including non-metallic minerals, coal, and reserves of bauxites that provide the region with a promising investment ecosystem. The region hosts the only Bauxite mine in the Middle East, Al Baithah Mine – a high-efficiency aluminum production complex – which produces approximately 5 million tons of bauxite contributing to the production of 1.8 million tons of aluminum in the Kingdom in 2020. With bauxite reserves of 183.4 million metrics tons, Qassim presents unparalleled investment opportunities in this booming sector.

Qassim rich soil and a desirable climate, the region is an agriculture leader in the Kingdom. Specifically, Qassim is known for the crop production of grapes, lemons, oranges and dates. Home to the largest palm tree agriculture project in the world (Al Batin), the region is also rich in palm trees. Collectively, the region has approximately 8 million palm trees which produce around 370,000 tons of date products per year with more than 12,000 dates farms across the region and producing 13 different date products. Each year, the region hosts the biggest date festival in the world in the city of Buraidah.

In addition to being agriculturally rich, Qassim has rural lands that favor livestock production including sheep, goat, poultry and especially camels. To develop and support camel breeding production, the region has established the world's largest camel hospital (Salam Veterinary Camel hospital). Qassim provides different investment opportunities within the camel sector including production of meat and dairy products.



Home to the only bauxite mine in the Middle East (Al Baitha) – with abundant reserves accounting for **183.4 million metric tons**



2nd highest number of palm trees in the Kingdom, with around **8 million palm trees**



Worldwide date producer, Worldwide date producer, **370,000 tons per year** with **12,000 date farms** across the region



Agriculture leader in the cultivation of grapes, lemons, oranges and dates – with over **1.22 million tons of agricultural products produced per year**



Home to the world's largest camel market – with thousands of camels bought and sold in the region daily and single transactions at times reaching over **USD 1 million**

QASSIM AT A GLANCE

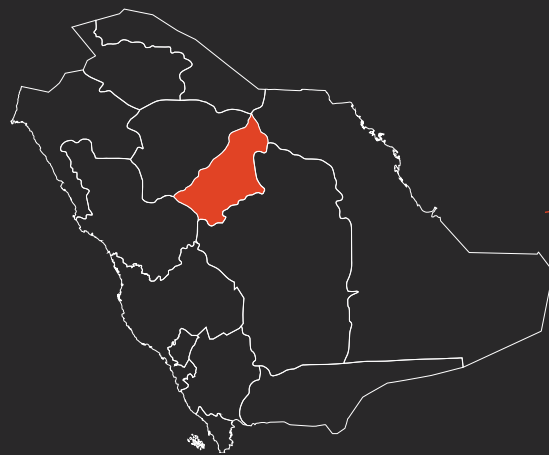


- Population >
- Education >
- Healthcare >
- Employment >
- Infrastructure >
- Economic Performance >
- Business Enablers >

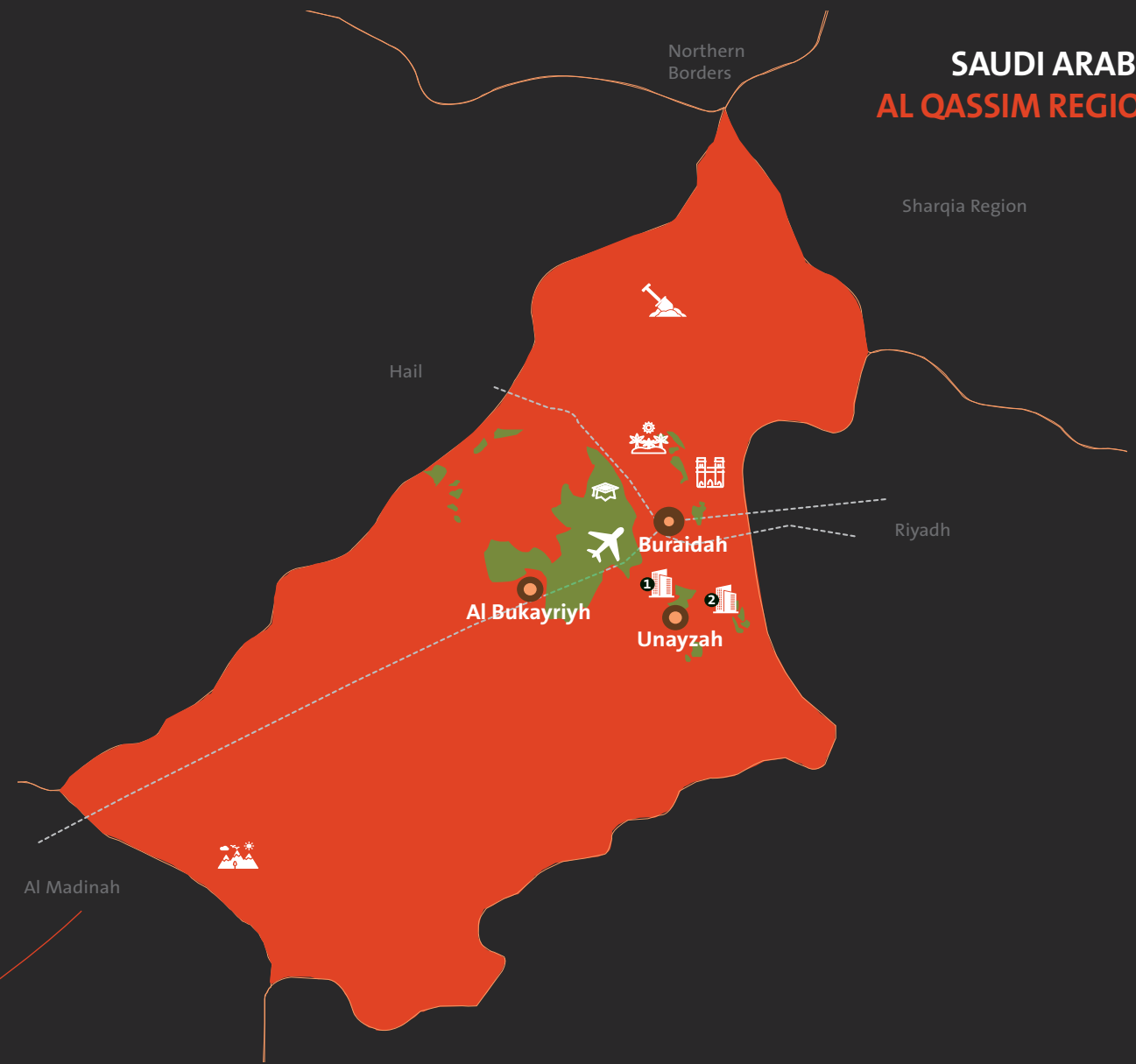
Located in the heart of the Kingdom near Riyadh region, Qassim region covers a total of area of 73,000 square kilometers and shares borders with Riyadh, Al-Madinah, Hail and Eastern Region.

The region is located within Saudi Arabia's longest valley, the 600-Kilometer-long Wadi al-Rumah which crosses the province from the West towards the Northeast. Qassim is divided administratively into twelve governorates. Major cities in the region include Buraidah (the capital), Unayzah, Alrass and Albukairiyah.

The region is characterized as having a year-round warm desert climate with temperatures ranging from a minimum of 9°C to a maximum of 44°C throughout the year. Despite the dry and hot climate, the region is one of the few green areas in the Kingdom due to the existing generous amount of groundwater.



SAUDI ARABIA AL QASSIM REGION



Legend:

- Main cities - Buraidah, Al Bukayriyh, and Unayzah
- Airports - Prince Naif Bin Abdulaziz International Airport
- Key projects - MODON Oasis | Buraidah Suburb Project
- Industrial cities - 1 Qassim 1st Industrial City | 2 Qassim 2nd Industrial City
- Mining site - Al Baiṭha Bauxite Mine | Qassim University | Wadi al-Rumah
- Agriculture land | Railways



Population

Qassim's total population ascends to 1,520,434 (2020), with 60% of individuals under the age of 35 (2019).

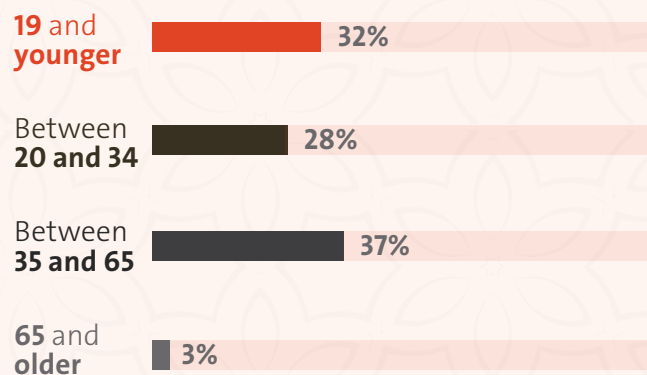


Population growth
(2016-2020)

9.4%



Population age groups
(2019)



Education

Qassim's education system offers a variety of programs which help ensure that necessary skillsets are present across the region. The region's talent pool is further supported by vocational schools and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) related programs, such as physical sciences, engineering, communication & IT, biological sciences, and mathematics & statistics.

Number of technical and vocational training units (2019):



Number of schools (2021):



International 29

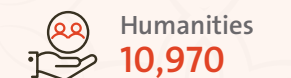
Private 119

Public 1,510

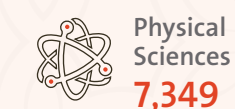
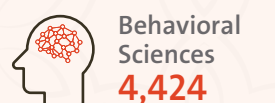
Ratio of students per the number of teachers and schools (2021):



Number of university students by (largest programs category)(2019) :

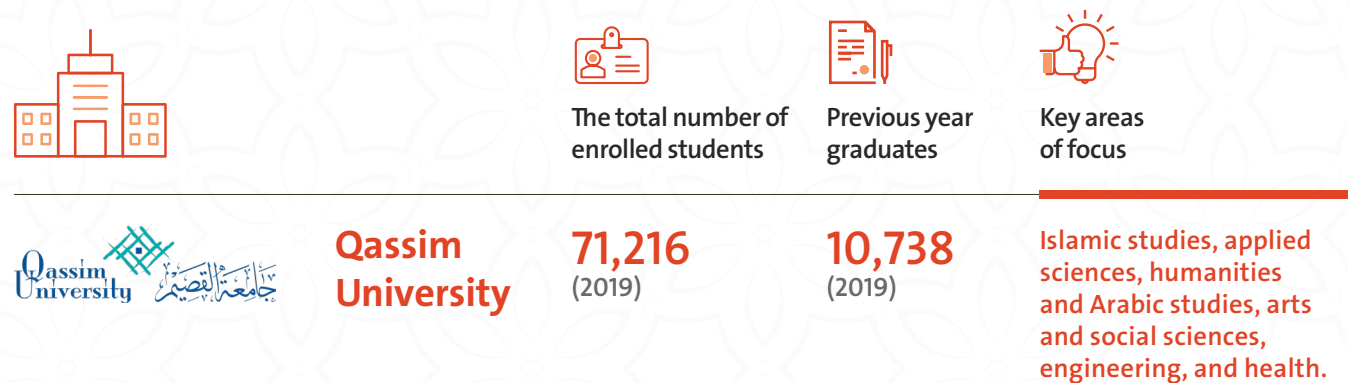


Number of university students in STEM-related programs (2019):



Education (cont.)

The region's higher education system relies on Qassim University:



Qassim University is one of Saudi Arabia's notable public institutions. The university is committed to developing and updating its curricula and courses, and providing an atmosphere conducive to academic progress. The university is focused on conducting scientific studies and research on environmental and societal issues. Qassim University has rapidly expanded, with 38 colleges already in operation.

The university has five specialized research centers in applied health, basic and theoretical sciences, humanities, religion, and the Arabic language.



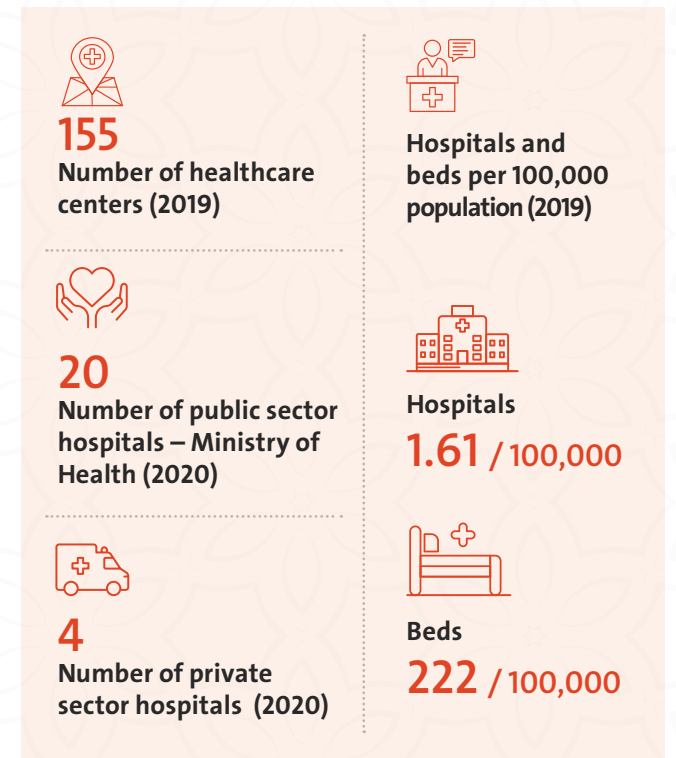
Qassim university hospital & medical colleges

Image source: <https://www.saudconsult.com>

Healthcare

Qassim's healthcare sector is comprised of public and private facilities. Major investments have recently been made in the sector, with recent initiatives focused on boosting the number of intensive care units and adding an emergency department to offer timely and high-quality services for the population.

Further investment opportunities exist to further develop the region's healthcare infrastructure and services. Investors in the sector can benefit from government support from various National Transformation Programs related to the Kingdom's Saudi Vision 2030 priorities for healthcare.



Al-Qassim National Hospital

Image source: <https://www.qnhospital.com>

Employment

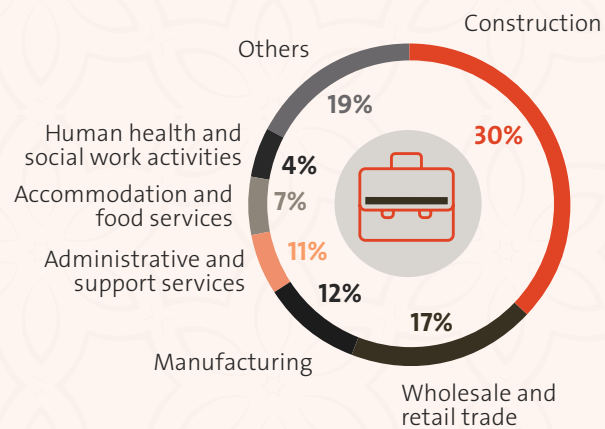
According to Saudi Labor Law, the legal working age in the Kingdom is 15 years. Top sectors of employment in Qassim include construction, wholesale and retail, and manufacturing.

Employment rate (Q2/2022):



Average monthly wage (salary) of Qassim (2019):
Male: 1,511.73 USD Female: 1,898.93 USD

Employment by sector (2022/Q2):



Infrastructure

Qassim's central location and strong road and railway infrastructure support the efficient movement of goods to and from the region.

Government initiatives have been announced to further develop the region's logistics and transportation network. One of these initiatives includes launching a public transportation network that will have 12 bus routes and 107 stops between the cities of Buraidah and Unayzah. Another initiative supporting the logistics sector is to establish a dry port located on an area of 1.6 million square meters with a connection to King Abdulaziz port in Dammam to facilitate and ease the access to the Arabian Gulf. Investment opportunities exist to support the region's and Kingdom's focus on developing Qassim's infrastructure.

Major ports

Prince Naif Bin Abdulaziz International Airport (pre-pandemic 2019)

Total flights	Passengers	International flights
15,151	1,652,703	6,083

Domestic destinations
Riyadh, Dammam, Jeddah, and Al-Madinah

The airport serves the area of Qassim and has non-stop passenger flights to 13 destinations - including 3 international flights and 10 domestic flights. Direct flights to countries in the Middle East, such as Egypt and United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain.

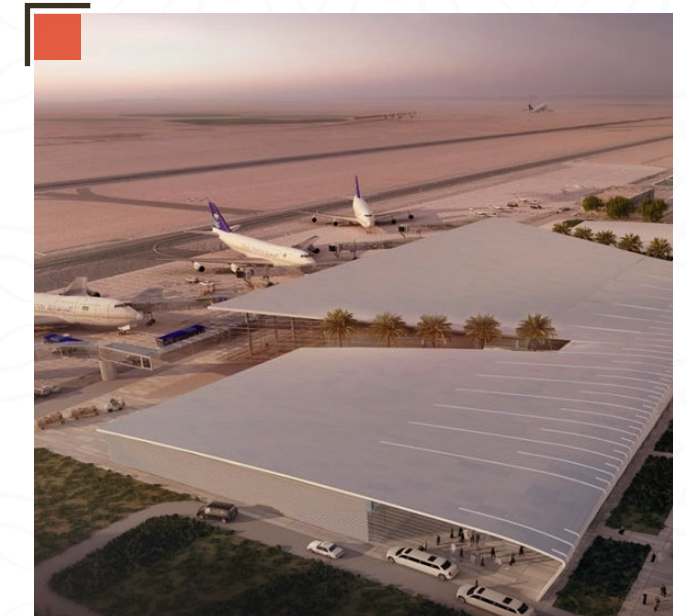
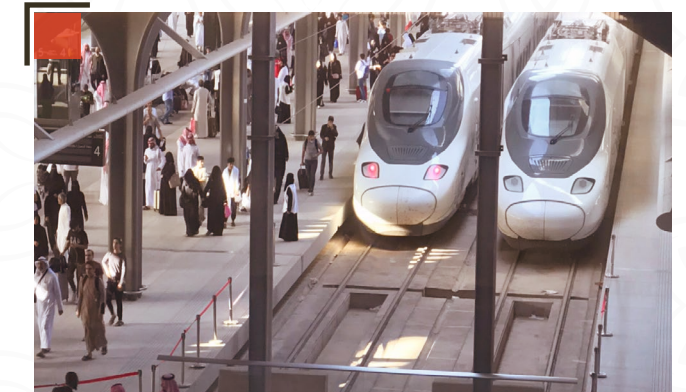


Image source: <https://metenders.com>

North Train Network

The passenger network which extends over 1,250 kilometers starts from Riyadh and passes through Majmaah, Hail, Jouf, Qurayyat and ends in Haditha near the Jordanian border.

The freight network extends over 1,550 kilometers connecting Qassim, Al Baithah mine to Al Jalamid mine in the Northern Borders passing through Hail and Al Jouf.



Infrastructure (cont.)

Industrial cities



Number of industrial cities administered by Saudi Authority for Industrial Cities and Technology Zones (MODON)

2

Further details on some of the key industrial cities include:



Annual rental rates for industrial land



Leasing prices for Ready- built factories



Utilities



Targeted industries

Qassim 1st Industrial City

USD 1.07/ square meter

USD 40,000 for 1,500 square meters

Electricity provided by Saudi Electric Company (SEC)

Drinking-water capacity 4,000 cubic meters

Service contracts, rubber and plastics, food products, fabricated metal products, other non-metallic minerals and fabricated metal products.

Qassim 2nd Industrial City

USD 0.53 / square meter

USD 32,000 for 1,500 square meters

Electricity 334 MVA
Drinking-water capacity 1,000 cubic meters

Rubber and plastics, food products, paper and paper products, other non-metallic mineral products, and fabricated metal products



Real estate average prices (latest available as of 2022)



Agricultural land
USD 28/ square meters



Commercial land
USD 88/ square meters

Number of real estate deals (2020)



Agricultural
233



Commercial
1,164

Further information on real estate prices in Qassim and across the Kingdom can be found via the [Real Estate Indicators database \(https://en.rei.sa/\)](https://en.rei.sa/)

Economic Performance

Qassim's economy mainly consists of mining and agriculture. The region is expected to undergo significant economic development due to the Kingdom's focus on the mining sector. The region is also expected to see a further boost to its GDP as result of future targeted government initiatives such as the National Transformation Program, National Industrial Development and Logistics Program and the Agricultural Development Fund.

Average household monthly income (2018): USD 2,939



Volume of point of sales transaction in Buraidah city (2021):

USD 3.2 billion



Number of commercial registers (2021):

213,269

Inflation rate (Buraidah) (Q3 2022):

2.1%

Number of active foreign investment licenses (2015-2021):

44



Business Enablers

Investors in the region can benefit from a developing network of enabling services including ICT and access to capital. In addition to existing enablers, the region is continuously improving its services to further promote the region as a key investment location for strategic sectors including mining and agriculture. Potential investors can benefit from opportunities that exist throughout the region to facilitate overall growth of the regional economy.

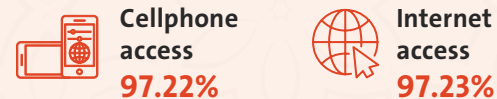


Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

Qassim offers strong ICT infrastructure with high cell phone and internet access rates. Development of the region's ICT infrastructure is ongoing through governmental initiatives such as the Information Technology Commission's Universal Services Fund (USF). The initiative deployed connectivity services in 570 locations across Qassim, which benefited over 300,000 inhabitants.

The main players in the ICT space in the Kingdom are Mobily, Zain, STC, with all three having presence in Qassim. The 5G network has increased its coverage and speed through the Kingdom, covering a total of **84 governorates** by 4Q2021 with an average download speed of **368.69 Mbps**.

Percentage of household ICT access indicators (2021)



Internet penetration (%) (2019) **94%**

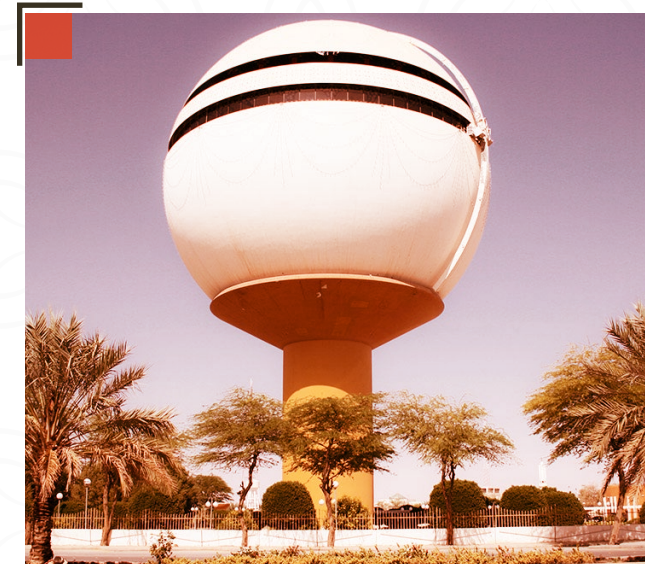


The National Development Fund

Established in 2017, the fund's mandate is to advance the performance of development funds and banks to fulfill the Kingdom's aspirations for economic diversification and realizing Saudi Vision 2030 objectives.



National Development Fund will inject more than **USD 152 billion into Saudi Arabia's real GDP growth by 2030**. NDF also aims to expand non-oil GDP by more than thrice to **USD 161 billion by 2030**, as well as create a large number of job opportunities in the Kingdom.



Buraidah Water Tower
Image source: <https://www.visitsaudi.com/>

Key funds related to Qassim's key sectors include (but are not limited to):



Saudi Industrial Development Fund – Focused on the financing of industrial investment opportunities, the fund aims to support the industrial sector through project financing, the allocation of land and factories, provision of funding schemes to small and medium-sized businesses (e.g., the 'Kafalah' funding scheme). Since its inception, the fund provided a total of almost **USD 703 million** through 113 loans to projects in Qassim.



The Agricultural Development Fund (ADF) – The Fund was established to develop the agricultural sector and improve its efficiency in all regions of the Kingdom. Contributing to the enchantment of food security and safety while maintain the natural resources available. The fund also seeks to support the development of rural areas and help establish competitive advantages that can further support the Kingdom and Saudi Vision 2030. The Fund has provided USD 24.4 million for 253 development loans for projects in Qassim in 2021.

KEY COMPETITIVE SECTORS

 Mining >

 Bauxite >

 Agriculture >

 Date Products >

 Livestock >

Mining

Qassim is widely recognized for its natural resources including non-metallic minerals, coal, and reserves of bauxites that provide the region with a promising investment ecosystem.

Qassim's mining industry is expected to grow in the years to come, in large part due to the Kingdom's ongoing support for the industry, creating key investment opportunities within the country.

The Kingdom aims to increase mining exploration efficiencies, expand and develop an integrated value chain and further unlock untapped reserves – which in 2021 amounted to an estimated **USD 1.3 trillion**. By 2035, the sector's value chain is expected to contribute **USD 75 billion** to the GDP and create **256,000 job opportunities**.

To support Saudi Vision 2030's goal of attracting and enabling mining sector investments, the Kingdom has introduced a new mining regulatory regime. The Ministry of Industrial and Mineral Resources (MIMR) will launch a Mining Fund Initiative that will provide financing for exploration and development activities. Mining investment regulations encourage investments in mining value chains and offer sustainable funding to attract investment from outside and inside the Kingdom, enabling both foreign and local investments.

through greater transparency, environmental commitments, and furthering sustainability practices to enable foreign and local investments.

To facilitate and ease the investor's journey, MIM has initiated the Tadeen platform. The initiative is in line with the Kingdom's effort to digitize governmental services to create a seamless experience for investors. The initiative will support further investments in the industrial and mining sector as it will be a one stop platform of all services for investors.



Bauxite

Qassim holds an abundant reserve of bauxite, which contributes to the production of aluminum in the Kingdom. The region is home to the only bauxite mine in the Middle East – Al Baithah – which produces approximately 4 million tons of bauxite per year and contributes to the production of 1.8 million tons of alumina through the Ras Al Khair refinery (the first alumina refinery in the Middle East).

Specifically, Qassim's bauxite reserves amount to **183.4 million metrics tons**. The reserves of Qassim feed the fully integrated aluminum production complex in Ras Al Khair, supporting growth in the mining industry across the Kingdom.

Al Baithah is the only bauxite mine in the Middle East – producing **4 million tons of bauxite per year**.

Bauxite extraction has increased in the Kingdom from **1.1 million tons in 2014 to approximately 5 million tons in 2019 with a CAGR of 35%**. The Kingdom's goal of increasing the mining sector, metals and mineral cluster is set to focus on developing high value aluminum products for various industries.

The Al Baithah mine feeds raw material into the Ras Al Khair greenfield smelter and will contribute to maximizing the Kingdom's mining value chain

The increased demand for Aluminum in automotive, aerospace and other advanced industries play a major factor in the increased demand for Bauxite globally. Saudi Arabia's aluminum market size was valued at **USD 1.7 billion in 2018** and is expected to increase to **USD 2.4 billion by 2026**.

As of 2018, Saudi Arabia's aluminum market was valued at **USD 1.7 billion** and expected to increase to **USD 2.4 billion by 2026**

Qassim is connected to the North and East of Saudi Arabia through the North Train freight line with a length of **1,550 kilometers**. The line connects Al Baithah mine in the region to Al Jalamid in Northern Borders and export facilitates through its connection to Ras Al Khair port and the upcoming industrial city in Eastern Region on the Arabian Gulf. The first greenfield smelter is located in Ras Al Khair and has become the Kingdom's aluminum and phosphate center. With Qassim's abundant bauxite reserves and access to well-developed infrastructure in Eastern Region, this will aid in the Kingdom's strategy to maximize value and unlock the full potential of the mining sector.

The region offers competitive positioning for mining operations due to the availability of raw materials and of developed infrastructure and transport links. This creates investment opportunities throughout the sector value chain from extraction to distribution.

The Kingdom's bauxite extraction increased by a **CAGR of 35%** from 2014 to 2019 from **1 to ~5 million tons**.

Aluminium

Raw Materials

- Mining of bauxite ore on site
- Aluminium scrap

Conversion Processes

- Convert bauxite ore into alumina powder
- Turn into aluminium by smelting
- Casting process to into aluminium to ingots, t-bars, slabs & billets (primary aluminium)
- Smelting scrap into secondary aluminium

Processing or Semi Fabrication

- Aluminum ingots, t-bars, slabs & billets are converted into semi products such as bars, rods, foil, plates, sheets, tubes, pipes, powder and flakes

Machining or Fabrication

- Create end products for several industries including transportation, construction, manufacturing, consumer etc.

Recycling

- Recollection of aluminium scrap
- Smelting and refining scraps into pure aluminium
- Recycle products



Key Projects and Initiatives

01 Al Baithah Mine

Utilizing the abundant reserves of bauxite in the region, Maaden – one of the top ten global mining companies – created a joint venture with **Aloca – the third largest aluminum producer – in 2009 to build the world's first fully integrated, high-efficiency aluminum complex for USD 10.8 billion** between Qassim and Ras Al Khair in Eastern region. The project consists of the bauxite mine, refinery and a smelter, supporting the full value chain of aluminum production. **The mine complies with the highest international standards of aluminum production**. Access to Ras Al Khair Industrial City and port facilitate the usage of the aluminum produced in the local and global markets. Maaden undertook the project to expand its value chain into downstream industries and tap into the market of aluminum, which is considered one of the world's most versatile and recycle metals.

02 Sukhaybarat Mine

One of Maaden's six gold mines, **Sukhaybarat mine** in Qassim located 280 kilometers from Buraidah is considered the first open pit mine and the third discovered gold mine in the Kingdom. The mine includes a Carbon-in-leach processing facility which produces Dore. Oxid ore are transported from the mine to Bulghah site for Dore production. The mine produced a total of **21,955 ounces of gold in 2020**.

Agriculture

Referred to as the ‘food basket’ of the Kingdom, Qassim boasts great climate and groundwater conditions as well as soil richness to support ongoing agriculture growth. These conditions help to grow a wide range of agricultural products including grapes, oranges, lemons, grapefruit, mandarin, oranges, pomegranates, and a variety of vegetables.

The region is characterized by its large rural area and cattle breeders with expertise in the areas of sheep and camel breeding. The region possesses 3 agriculture research departments and a well-established agriculture school at Qassim University.

The market for agricultural products in the Kingdom reached a value of **USD 10.3 billion** in 2020, growing significantly at a CAGR of 4.5% since 2017. Saudi Arabia’s objectives for 2030 include continuing to enhance food security by boosting local production and reducing import dependency. In 2020, Saudi Arabia’s imports ascended to **USD 6.9 billion**, with food exports being **USD 1.64 billion**.

The Agricultural Development Fund specializes in funding a variety of agricultural activities across Saudi Arabia to support the development of the sector and increase production efficiency by using the most up-to-date scientific methods and modern technology. This is accomplished by providing farmers with no interest loans to acquire machinery, pumps, and agricultural equipment for raising cattle, poultry, and sheep, as well as beekeeping and fish breeding. In 2021, the Fund offered a total of almost **USD 24.4 million** through 253 loans across projects in Qassim. More than **USD 20 million** in loans were long-term credit service loans, while the rest was dedicated to short-term credit service loans.

With suitable soils for agriculture activities, Qassim offers opportunities for investors across the value chain, from processing and distribution.

The Agricultural Development Fund recently introduced initiatives worth **USD 665 million** across the Kingdom to support farmers and food imports, of which **USD 24.4 million** is for projects in the Qassim region.



Agriculture & Food

Inputs	Growing	Distribution	Processing & Selling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fertilizers Agricultural machinery & equipment Precision farming Crop production Food additives Precision farming Plant genetic Refrigeration equipment Packaging materials Animal genetics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Row crops Sugar Cash crops Milk Meat Aquaculture Vertical farming other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trading platform Grain storage & seed handling eq. Animal genetics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milling Oilseeds crushing Biofuel production Veg & fruit wholesale Dairy processing Meat processing Fish processing Meat by products Non-food processing Brand packaged goods Processed fruits & veg Baked goods Rice, pasta & noodles Beverages Confectionary Oils, spreads & source Dairy Baby food Snacks Ready Meal
Food testing and quality control			
Ag. Financing			
Other Ag. Services			

As part of Saudi Vision 2030’s goal to promote food security, the Agricultural Development Fund created a program to promote and support agriculture companies in going public, including:

Up to 75% of funding for projects that use modern technologies

Increasing the estimated value of the project assets mortgage to 50%

Raising the funding ceiling for strategic projects related to food security to USD 266 million and USD 240 million for non-listed companies.

The program provides a key opportunity for companies looking to benefit from increasing agriculture opportunities in Qassim.

Date Products

Qassim is known for its expanding agricultural activities related to date production. Home to Batin (the world's biggest palm tree project), the region contains around 8 million palm trees and 12 thousand palm farms. The trees account for 24% of all palm trees in Saudi Arabia, producing approximately 370 thousand tons of dates per year with 13 different dates products.

In 2020, the global date market accounted for 9.6 million metric tons, with an expected CAGR growth rate of 5.1% between 2022-2027. Home to 31 million palm trees, the Kingdom has a large dates market, capturing 17% of the global date production. The value of date exports increased by 73% from 2015 to 2020 reaching 215.3 thousand tons, further demonstrating the increasing demand for Saudi dates.

Qassim's competitive advantages as it relates to date products provide opportunities for the region to support the Kingdom in further capitalizing on growing global demand.

Home to 24% of the Kingdom's palm trees

The Kingdom is the 2nd largest date producer in the world with a production of more than 1.5 million tons covering 17% of total world production

Producer of more than 13 dates products

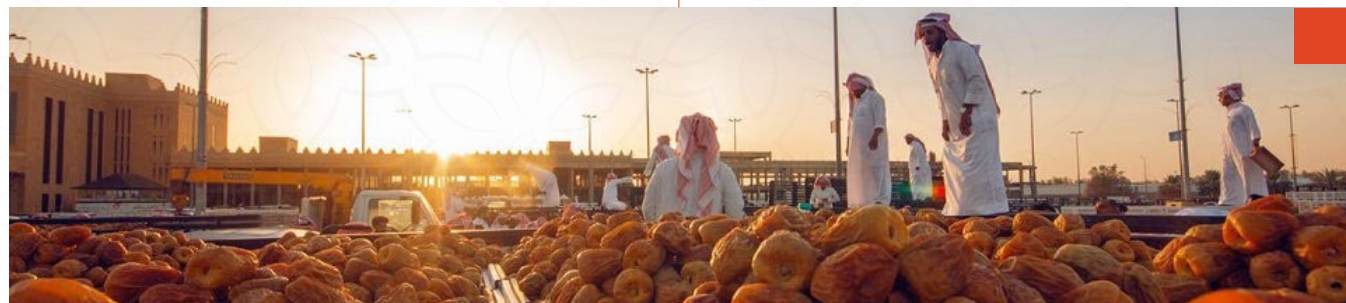


Image source: <https://alghad.com/>

Key Projects and Initiatives

01 Qassim Date Festival

Every year Qassim hosts 7 different festivals including the largest date festival and date market in the world in the city of Buraidah. Thousands of farmers depend on the 35-day festival to generate high sales. The festival includes heritage and cultural activities to attract visitors from neighboring regions and countries to drive sales for local farmers.

02 Al Batin Project

The Al Batin project is considered to be the largest date project in the Middle East, with an area of 5,466 hectare. The project includes more than 200 thousand palm trees, 45 different types of palm trees, and a connection to a modern irrigation network. In 2005, the Batin project was registered in the Guinness book as the largest palm tree project in the world.

Livestock

With a warm climate and favorable landscape, Qassim is one of the most suitable places in the world for camel breeding. As a result, Buraidah (Qassim's capital) is home to the largest camel market in the world.

Each day thousands of camels are bought and sold in the region, with single transactions at times reaching over USD 1 million. With a notable camel breeding market in the Kingdom and across neighboring countries, Camel breeding presents different opportunities including dairy milk products and racing.

The camel market in the Middle East is notable and set to continue growing. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) camel dairy market reached a value of USD 502 million in 2020 while the income from camel meat market in Middle East reached USD 1.1 billion in 2018. Further, the GCC camel dairy market is anticipated to grow by a CAGR of 7.1% between 2021-2026, with the global camel meat market is forecasted to increase by a CAGR of 5.36% between 2022-2027. Saudi Arabia also, hosts the annual King Abdulaziz Camel Festival, a renowned cultural, economic and sports events that highlighting the camel heritage within the Saudi culture.

With a favorable climate and land conditions, as well as local expertise in the camel industry, Qassim presents notable investment opportunities in the sector. Additionally, the region's transportation infrastructure – including the rail link which connects Riyadh to Al Haditha (along the Jordan border) – helps facilitate the expansion distribution of camels across the country and the Middle East.

The city of Buraidah (Qassim's capital) has the largest camel market in the world

Established in the Kingdom in 2019, the International Camel Organization played major role in the contribution to the institutionalization of camel care. The organization aims to develop and service all camel related legacies.



Image source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org>

Key Projects and Initiatives

01 Salam Veterinary Camel Hospital

The world's largest camel hospital was established in Buraidah, Qassim in 2020. The hospital was built over an area of 140,000 square meters and can receive up to 4,000 camels at one time. The estimated cost of the hospital is around USD 36.5 million. The project aims to provide private camel breeders with high quality veterinary services, and ensure the development and sustainability of the overall camel sector.

KEY PROJECTS

MODON Oasis

Buraidah Suburb Project



MODON Oasis

The Oasis project spans across different industrial cities operated by Modon. The project covers 5 different cities in the Kingdom including; Al Ahsa, Jeddah, Buraidah, Al Jouf and Yanbu. Initiated in 2012, one of the destinations of the project will be in South Buraidah.

The destination has a total area of 740 square kilometers and is 3 kilometers North of Qassim's 1st Industrial City and 60 kilometers away from Prince Naif Bin Abdul Aziz International Port. Oasis has 31 industrial factories servicing the following sectors: food and dates, jewelry and accessories, cosmetics, fashion and textiles.

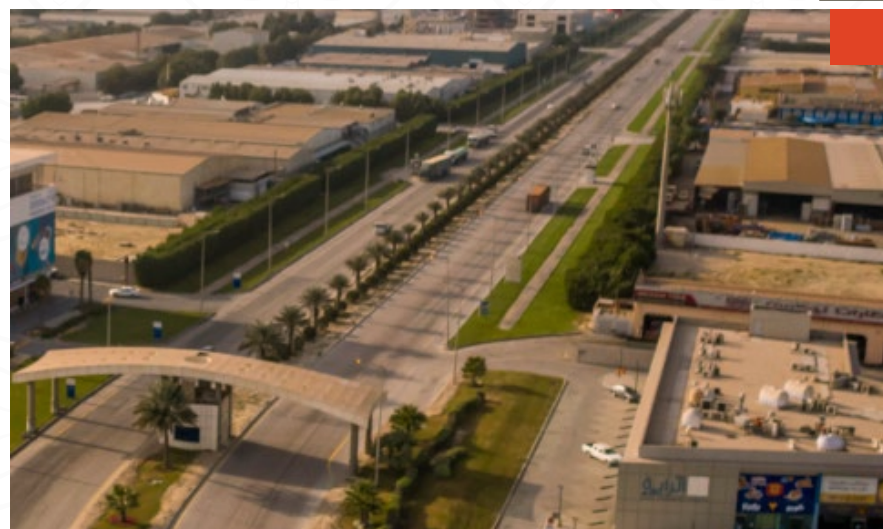


Image source: www.modon.gov.sa/



Buraidah Suburb Project

The Buraidah Suburb project contributes widely to the development of quality of life and creates various investment opportunities in the Qassim Region.

The project, built on 5,676 square kilometers was 60% complete in 2020 with the value set to reach USD 49.8 million. Upon completion, the project will include 4,487 residential units, 22 parks, and 35 investment zones, as well as public facilities and a 32,691-meter-long flooding drainage channel.



Image source: <https://www.constructionweekonline.com/>

INTERESTED IN INVESTING IN QASSIM?

The Kingdom's Ministry of Investment (MISA) is your gateway to tapping into unique and fruitful investment opportunities in Qassim.

MISA aims to facilitate and support new and current investors in their journey of venturing into a land of countless opportunities. MISA is eager to provide you with the necessary components to successfully invest within the Kingdom. This includes sharing relevant market and economic information, site research, and real-estate values to help familiarize investors with the Saudi Arabian ecosystem. Investors also have access to MISA's well-established infrastructure and connectivity.

Not only does MISA's connectivity range from trade associations, all sector companies, relevant universities, and much more, but the Ministry is responsible for issuing and regulating investment licenses.



The range of MISA's support is uncanny; whether it is providing and advising on available incentives or ongoing support for operational issues, MISA will serve as your guide to opportunities in Qassim.



More detail can be found in investsaudi.sa and [Investor Journey](#).

Invest in Saudi

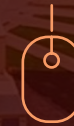


Scan here

Investor Journey



Scan here



For more information about investment opportunities, please [click here](#) or scan the QR code



Scan here!

Existing opportunities in Qassim region include:

- Agriculture
 - Dried fruit
- Meat production
 - Red Meat



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Reach out to the Ministry of Investment
to learn more and begin your investment
journey in Qassim today

For questions and to learn more about opportunities in
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