



## ***Press Release***

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# ***Saudi Arabia will need over a million new school places in grades 1-12 by 2020: PwC report***

- *PwC Middle East launches the Saudi Arabia edition of its GCC Education Sector series <http://www.pwc.com/m1/en/industries/education/education-country-profile-ksa.html>*
- *Private schools in the Kingdom are growing at only 3% per annum and currently make up 12% of total enrolment*
- *Private sector is having more impact at the primary level – with stronger growth levels seen against a decline in public sector enrolment. Pressure on provision creates an opportunity for greater collaboration between the public and private sectors*

**19<sup>th</sup> April 2017 – Riyadh, Saudi Arabia** – PwC Middle East's Education practice has launched the [Saudi Arabia findings of its GCC Education Sector: a country by country overview](#). The report offers insight into a large and fluid market in which the national transformation of the approach to delivering education may prove to be a source of great potential for investors, providers and students, PwC said.

## **Key findings**



- Based on current growth rates, Saudi Arabia is predicted to need over a million new school places by 2020 in grades 1-12, of which 150,000 are expected to come from the private sector. The number of private schools in the Kingdom has only been growing at 3% per annum, with the strongest growth being seen at the primary level, where enrollment in public schools has declined.
- Despite further growth expected in the private sector, market share for private schools is unlikely to grow from around 11% to the aspirational 25% unless significant changes are seen to encourage growth and investment.

**Sally Jeffery, PwC Partner, Middle East Education & Skills Practice Leader and Global Education Sector Leader, said:**

*“By 2020, Saudi Arabia is predicted to need over a million new school places for grades 1-12 and 125,000 seats in post-secondary. With an already high university enrolment rate, predominantly at public institutions, the Kingdom is facing budgetary pressure and a shortage of good alternatives to public universities. In the coming years, it will be crucial for the government to help deliver more private sector education provision.”*

### **Opportunity for Public Private Partnership**

The report also indicates that tightening restrictions on international visa and scholarship qualifications may cause a proportion of the estimated 190,000 Saudi students that study abroad each year (12% of all university enrolled students in 2014) to look for university places at home. Finding places will be harder however; added pressure on funding public provision in the Kingdom may mean additional demand for private institutions, which will consequently need to enhance their capacity and offerings.

Saudi Arabia faces tough policy choices in Higher Education. If historical rates of enrollment continue, and the university age population continues to grow, around 125,000 additional seats will be required in post-secondary education by 2020. Questions arise around how to encourage the private sector to increase capacity, and what alternatives can be offered (such as vocational and technical training) which are attractive to young people leaving school and seeking success in a knowledge-based economy. In the coming years, it will be crucial for the government to further enable the private sector to ensure adequate provision.



*For more information on the report findings and PwC's **Understanding the GCC***

***Education Sector - a country by country guide: Saudi Arabia**, visit:*

*<http://www.pwc.com/m1/en/industries/education/education-country-profile-ksa.html>*

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## **About PwC's Education & Skills Practice**

PwC has a dedicated Education and Skills Practice based in the UAE and KSA, which works with governmental and regulatory organizations, in addition to a wide range of large employers and private sector investors across all parts of the Education landscape. We are supported by a network of senior international experts with deep global experience in higher education, vocational training, schools, and children's services.

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