

Saudi boosts global tourism ambitions with multi-billion dollar investments

In a bid to bolster its burgeoning tourism sector, His Excellency Ahmed Al-Khateeb, the Saudi Minister of Tourism, has introduced a groundbreaking initiative set to revolutionise the country's tourism landscape. The Tourism Investment Enabler Programme (TIEP) was revealed to the public, promising to streamline processes and create a conducive environment for both local and international investors.



Source: Haidan via [Unsplash](#)

The TIEP initiative, spearheaded by the Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the Ministry of Investment, aims to simplify and reduce the costs associated with investing in Saudi Arabia's tourism sector. Among its key components is the flagship Hospitality Investment Enablers, which seeks to enhance accommodation capacity in targeted tourism destinations, thereby diversifying the Kingdom's offerings and positioning it as a premier global tourism destination.

Catalysing economic growth

With an ambitious goal to catalyse private investments of up to SAR 42bn (\$11bn) and drive an annual GDP increase of SAR 16bn (\$4bn) by 2030, the TIEP initiative encompasses a range of strategic enablers. These include facilitating access to government-owned land, streamlining project development processes, and reducing barriers to market entry through

regulatory adjustments.

Crucially, the programme places a strong emphasis on benefiting local communities by localising services such as contracting, design, and consulting. This approach, coupled with over \$800bn invested to transform the tourism landscape, underscores Saudi Arabia's commitment to enhancing industry standards and providing lucrative opportunities for investors. This not only fosters socio-economic development but also supports Saudi's efforts, aiming to create 42,000 new room keys and approximately 120,000 job opportunities across tourism destinations.

The wider TIEP initiative also includes regulatory reforms across tourism licensing, tailored to meet the specific needs of investors. By partnering with the Saudi Business Center, the Ministry of Tourism plans to launch the Tourism Investment One Stop Shop, providing investors with a seamless investment journey and comprehensive support services under one roof.

Progress and future outlook

Commenting on the initiative, Minister Al-Khateeb emphasised Saudi Arabia's commitment to becoming a global tourism powerhouse, citing the remarkable progress made towards Vision 2030's targets. Notably, the goal of welcoming 100 million tourists has already been achieved seven years ahead of schedule, setting the stage for an even more ambitious target of 150 million annual tourists.

"In 2023, we saw a 390% increase in demand for tourism activity licenses and this is just the beginning. Over the next 10 years, Saudi Arabia will be the world's top investor in this sector as we continue to unlock our country's potential."

In conclusion, Minister Al-Khateeb said that the Tourism Investment Enabler Programme signifies a significant milestone in Saudi Arabia's journey towards economic diversification and global tourism leadership. With robust support from investors and a focus on sustainable development, the program is poised to unlock the Kingdom's vast tourism potential and propel it onto the world stage.

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