

# Vision 2030: GBAC Board Study—Saudi MSCI Top 10 Lead in ESG, AI, Independence

*GBAC benchmark reveals Saudi boards outpace GCC peers and align with OECD, ESG, and AI standards—positioning the Kingdom for global FDI leadership.*

WASHINGTON D.C, MD, UNITED STATES, May 8, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Vision 2030 Boards Surpass Global Norms: GBAC Study Shows Saudi ESG, AI and Independence Leadership

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Saudi governance is no longer catching up—it's leading. Boards are now aligning with global investor expectations in ESG, AI, and independence.”

*Prof. Yusuf Azizullah, CEO of  
GBAC*

Global Board Advisors Corp (GBAC) and [BoardroomEducation.com](https://www.boardroomeducation.com) have released a landmark governance benchmarking study of the MSCI Saudi Top 10 companies, representing 73% of the Kingdom's market capitalization. The analysis reveals that Saudi Arabia's boards now meet or exceed international standards in ESG, AI oversight, and board independence—signaling the Kingdom's readiness for global capital inflows and a new

era of leadership in the MENA region.

The study benchmarks Saudi board practices against peers in the US, UK, UAE, and Qatar using globally recognized frameworks from the OECD, World Economic Forum, and MSCI ESG Governance Ratings.

**Key Findings – Saudi Boards Now Lead the GCC**

**Board Independence (43.8%):** Highest in the Gulf, strengthening board oversight and investor protection.

**AI & Tech Governance (10%):** Saudi Arabia is the only GCC market with board-level Technology & AI Committees—led by pioneers like Dr. Deema Alathel at Saudi Awwal Bank.

**ESG Oversight (60% ESG Committees; 100% Reporting):** A regional best, aligning with ESG fund mandates from BlackRock, State Street, and sovereign investors.

**Female Board Representation (10.4%):** Achieved without quotas, nearing UAE parity and supporting global diversity benchmarks.

CEO/Chair Separation (100%):  
Exceeding US (60%) and UK (90%)  
levels—reinforcing structural  
independence.

Government Representation (60%): The  
lowest among GCC peers, indicating a  
shift toward professionally governed  
boards in state-linked enterprises.

#### CEO Statement

“Saudi corporate governance is no  
longer catching up—it’s leading,” said  
Prof. Yusuf Azizullah, CEO of GBAC.  
“This study confirms that Saudi boards  
are aligning with the expectations of  
institutional investors, sovereign  
wealth funds, and capital  
markets—particularly in ESG oversight,  
AI governance, and board  
independence. These reforms lay a  
powerful foundation for Vision 2030’s  
economic transformation.”

He added:

“The MENA region is entering a new era of governance aligned with international best practices. Saudi Arabia is uniquely positioned to become the region’s first developed market—driven by Tadawul’s momentum and Riyadh’s bold ambition to emerge as the world’s third-largest financial center after New York and London.”

#### Next Steps for Boards

To help boards act on these insights, GBAC is launching tailored governance programs focused on:

Increasing board independence to global benchmarks (75%+)

Expanding female director pipelines and next-gen board talent

Institutionalizing AI and ESG oversight in board strategy

Aligning disclosures with ISSB, OECD, and sovereign fund mandates



On [May 28, 2025](#), GBAC and BoardroomEducation.com will host an exclusive Dubai launch event, convening board chairs, sovereign fund senior leadership, and institutional investors to explore the report's findings and boardroom priorities.

Participation is by invitation only. To request access, contact Chad Clark at [chad@globalboardadvisors.com](mailto:chad@globalboardadvisors.com).

#### About GBAC

Global Board Advisors Corp (GBAC) is the only board governance and education firm globally recognized as a member of the AACSB Business Education Alliance. GBAC advises sovereign wealth funds, listed companies, and Global 100 boards on board evaluations, AI/ESG oversight, and capital markets strategy—using frameworks aligned with OECD, WEF, and MSCI ESG standards.

□ [Full report available at: www.BoardroomEducation.com](http://www.BoardroomEducation.com)

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