

Relations between the EU and Saudi Arabia

2025/2082(INI) - 16/12/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 417 votes to 131, with 108 abstentions, a resolution on relations between the EU and Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia is a key bilateral and regional partner for the EU and it is important to deepen this cooperation towards a strategic partnership that aims to strengthen bilateral relations and promote cooperation in various sectors, including

defence, culture and innovation, but above all energy.

The next EU- Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit, set to take place in Riyadh in 2026, will be key to further broadening the scope of EU-Saudi Arabian relations and enhancing cooperation on crucial issues of mutual interest.

EU-Saudi Arabia bilateral relations

Parliament highlighted the positive engagement between the EU and the GCC. It affirmed that the EU aims to boost bilateral ties with each GCC country through Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPAs) that would **address the current lack of a legally binding framework** for bilateral relations between the EU and Saudi Arabia, unlocking the potential for areas of deeper and broader cooperation, such as foreign and security policy, justice and law enforcement, trade and investment, energy and climate, digital transformation, environment, research and innovation, artificial intelligence, connectivity, digital governance, education, culture, research, youth and people-to-people contact, and for securing human rights and labour rights reforms in GCC countries.

In addition, Parliament called for increased cooperation in the areas of sustainable energy, critical raw materials, information technology and entrepreneurship, noting that economic cooperation between the EU and Saudi Arabia is the cornerstone of the bilateral relationship. Parliament also highlighted that harnessing Saudi Arabia's vast **solar energy potential**, together with the EU's advanced renewable technologies, can enable joint initiatives in green hydrogen, sustainable fuels and next-generation energy infrastructure.

Noting the significant economic importance of Saudi Arabian tourists for the EU Member States, particularly in supporting key sectors such as hospitality, retail and cultural industries, the Commission and the Member States are called on to consider the introduction of a **Schengen visa waiver** once the cascade is granted to facilitate tourism, enhance people-to-people exchanges, and further strengthen economic and cultural ties between the EU and Saudi Arabia.

The resolution also welcomed the alignment and cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the EU in the field of foreign and security policy. It stressed Saudi Arabia's growing importance as a diplomatic actor and its significant contributions to regional and global stability, particularly in the context of Israel's military operations in Gaza, as well as with regard to recent developments in Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, the Red Sea and Sudan.

Parliament welcomed Saudi Arabia's involvement in hosting the Ukraine war ceasefire negotiations and urged Saudi Arabia to cooperate more closely with its partners in supporting sanctions against the Russian Federation and to take measures to help put an end to the activities of the Russian shadow fleet.

The resolution called on Saudi Arabia to:

- continue EU-Saudi Arabian cooperation on **counterterrorism** and the prevention of **radicalisation**;
- reshape its energy landscape and move towards **renewable energy and green hydrogen** and adhere to its commitments under the Paris Agreement;
- strengthen cooperation with the UN and the International Labour Organization on **migrant workers' rights**;
- decriminalise **same-sex sexual activity**;
- establish a moratorium on **executions**;
- immediately and unconditionally release all individuals detained for peacefully exercising their human rights;
- ratify all core international human rights and labour rights conventions.