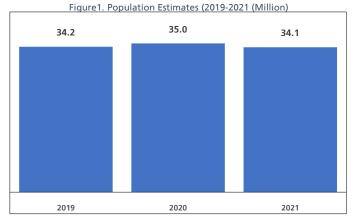الهيئة العامة للإحصاء
General Authority for Statistics

Population at 34.1 million in 2021

The total population in KSA amounted to 34.1 million in 2021 (mid-year), according to estimates by the General Authority for Statistics – a decrease of 2.6% compared to mid-2020, when the total population stood at 35.0 million. The main driving factor of the decline in the overall population in 2021 was the decline in the non-Saudi population by 8.6%, with many non-Saudis exiting the country during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Saudi population increased by 1.2% during the same period. Males accounted for 56.8% of the total population, or 19.4 million individuals, females made up 43.2% of the total population, with a population of 14.7 million females.

Population declined in 2021 after increases in 2019 and 2020

After the population numbers increased in KSA from 34,2 million in 2019 to 35,0 million in 2020, 2021 saw a decline in the overall population numbers to 34,1 million in midyear 2021. While the natural reproduction (births minus deaths) was positive for both Saudis and Non-Saudis in 2021, the decline in the overall population is mainly related to non-Saudi males (10.6% decline compared to 2020) leaving the Kingdom during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Figure1. Population Estimates (2019-2021 (Million)

The higher representation of males (56.8%) in the overall population is mainly due to non-Saudi males in working age. The gender distribution of the Saudi population alone is much more balanced, with 50.8% males and 49.2% females.
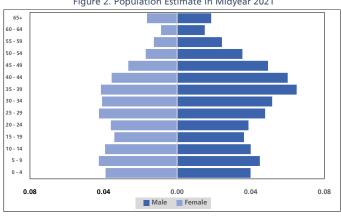

Figure 2. Population Estimate in Midyear 2021

Population per nationality

The Saudi population increased by 1.2% in mid-2021 compared to mid-2020. In the same period, the non-Saudi population decreased by 8.6%. In 2021, the Saudi population accounted for 63.6% of the total population, with non-Saudis at 36.4%.
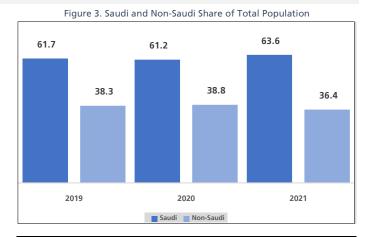

Figure 3. Saudi and Non-Saudi Share of Total Population

Table 1. Population Estimates and Distribution by Gender in Midyear 2021			
Age group	Total		
	Male	Female	Total
0 - 4	1,363,224	1,326,207	2,689,431
5 - 9	1,534,506	1,452,198	2,986,704
10 - 14	1,364,949	1,335,118	2,700,067
15 - 19	1,241,851	1,163,398	2,405,249
20 - 24	1,322,887	1,228,785	2,551,672
25 - 29	1,632,882	1,449,705	3,082,587
30 - 34	1,763,292	1,392,654	3,155,946
35 - 39	2,218,109	1,412,209	3,630,318
40 - 44	2,050,295	1,215,070	3,265,365
45 - 49	1,684,521	904,284	2,588,805
50 - 54	1,210,141	582,870	1,793,011
55 - 59	832,274	430,021	1,262,295
60 - 64	511,757	297,796	809,553
65 +	632,968	556,850	1,189,818
Total	19,363,656	14,747,165	34,110,821

* Preliminary estimates are in the middle of the year. Source: Tables.

GASTAT applies new population estimation methodology

In line with international standards and best practices, GASTAT applied for 2021, for the first time, a population estimation methodology – the so-called cohort component method - making best use of information from different data sources, including administrative data on births, deaths and international migration. The population estimate for 2021 is the last estimate before the Saudi Census 2022 results will be released at the end of 2022. For the population estimates for the years 2023 and following, the cohort component method will continue to be applied.

Methodology

The new methodology applied by GASTAT estimates the population by age groups, in addition to other attributes such as sex and nationality. The estimation is based on the component of demographic change, including births, deaths, and net migration. The population base is the GASTAT midyear projected population in 2020, and the main three components of change draw on administrative data provided by the National Information Center (NIC).

The Population is estimated in a given year as follows:

Population at the end of a given period or year = population in the period or previous year (population base) + number of births in the period or previous year - number of deaths in the period or previous year + number of arrivals from outside the country in the prior period or year - number of departures from the country in the previous period or year

The above equation is called Cohort Component Method (demographic balancing equation).