

Gulf, France Forge Innovation Pact

Vision Golfe 2025 reshapes cooperation



Shaima Saleh AlHusseini, Managing Director of Saudi Sports for All Federation, Saudi Arabia



Éric Lombard

● 2,000 French firms active in GCC

● AI, health, energy drive agenda

● Talent seen as key connector

Mahir Haneef
TDT| Manama

France and the Gulf countries are entering a new phase of strategic cooperation, one driven by shared innovation, co-production, and human capital, recasting decades-old trade relationships into bold, future-focused economic partnerships.

That was the message com-



Éric Lombard, French Minister of Economy, Finance, and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty ©Business France



Didier Boulogne, Deputy CEO for Export, Business France

ing out of Vision Golfe 2025, a high-level forum held at the French Ministry of Economy in Paris, where over 1,200 participants, including 550 Gulf delegates and five ministers, took part in two days of deals, roundtables, and sector-led dialogue on energy, AI, health, and education.

From trade to transformation

Once defined by oil flows and exports, the France-GCC economic dynamic is now pivoting to deeper collaboration in industrial strategy, digital health, and talent development. France's 17,000 exporters and 2,000 subsidiaries in the Gulf have laid the foundation for a new joint economic playbook.

French Minister of Economy Éric Lombard described the moment as "strategic, human, and forward-looking" adding, "I believe our countries can serve each other as platforms to access new markets, especially in a context marked by tension and uncertainty."

AI, education, and health

From artificial intelligence and clean energy to digital medicine and workforce reform, the forum highlighted sectoral convergence. New collaborations such as the École Polytechnique-MBZUAI partnership underscored a growing French role in building the region's knowledge economy.

Gulf representatives, includ-



Didier Boulogne, Deputy CEO for Export, Business France & H.E. Mohammad Alhawi

ing Qatar's H.E. Ahmad Al-Sayed and Saudi Arabia's H.E. Dr Nouf Alnumair, framed the shift as a strategic investment in resilience, well-being, and innovation capacity. "France has long been a leader in public health," said Alnumair, "and Saudi Arabia brings scale and integration to transform care into an engine for growth."

Platform for shared value

Organised by Business France, Vision Golfe 2025 hosted 10 sectoral roundtables, 80 speakers, and more than 2,000 formal and informal meetings. Ministers, CEOs, and technocrats aligned on building co-investment platforms that merge France's industrial strength with Gulf

YOU
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More than 2,000 French subsidiaries now operate in the GCC, reflecting France's shift from traditional exporter to long-term innovation partner across Gulf economies.

transformation agendas. From inclusive sports initi-



H.E. Ahmad Al-Sayed, Minister of State for Foreign Trade Affairs, Qatar



Laurent Saint-Martin, French Minister Delegate for Foreign Trade and French Nationals Abroad



H.E. Dr Nouf Alnumair, Secretary General of the Ministerial Committee of Health in all Policies, Saudi Arabia

atives to smart city development and climate adaptation, the event showed how France and the GCC are moving from transaction to transformation, rewriting their economic terms for a world that demands both resilience and reinvention.

Oil prices seesaw as investors await Iran response to US strikes

London, United Kingdom

Oil prices wobbled and stock markets wavered Monday as traders awaited Tehran's response to US strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities over the weekend.

US stocks edged higher while European markets retreated and

Brent North Sea Crude: ▼ 0.9% at \$76.31 per barrel

West Texas Intermediate: ▼ 1.0% at \$73.10 per barrel

Asian equities were mixed, with markets keeping a close eye on whether Iran will block the crucial Strait of Hormuz, which carries one-fifth of global oil output.

When trading opened on

Monday, international benchmark crude contract Brent and US equivalent WTI both jumped more than four percent to hit their highest price since January.

They later dipped briefly into the red and then wobbled, standing down around one percent as European markets closed.

"Will Iran choose to choke off the Strait of Hormuz or not? That is the big question," said Bjarne Schieldrop, chief commodities analyst at SEB bank.

But, "looking at the oil price this morning it is clear that the oil market doesn't assign a very high probability of it happening," he added.

Iran is the world's ninth-biggest oil-producing country, exporting just under half of the 3.3 million barrels it produces

per day.

"The prevailing view appears to be that the US involvement will prove limited militarily, yet effective, by seriously undermining Iran's nuclear ambitions," said David Morrison, senior market analyst at Trade Nation.