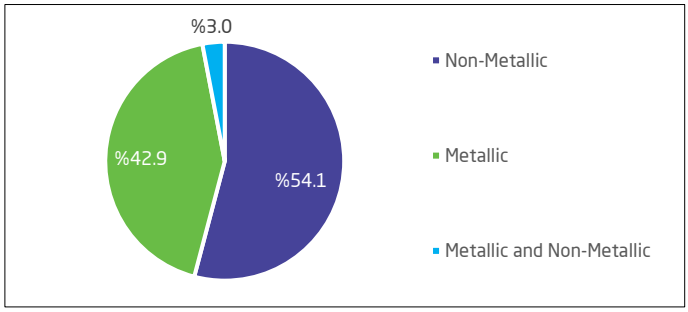
Total number of discovered mineralization sites in the Kingdom amount to 5,651 sites until 2024

Mineral Resources Statistics 2024 showed that the total number of discovered mining sites in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia amounted to 5,651 sites. Non-metallic minerals accounted for the largest share of the total sites at 54.1% (3,058 sites), followed by metallic minerals at 42.9% (2,423 sites). Meanwhile, sites containing both metallic and non-metallic minerals accounted for about 3.0%, totaling 170 sites (Figure1).

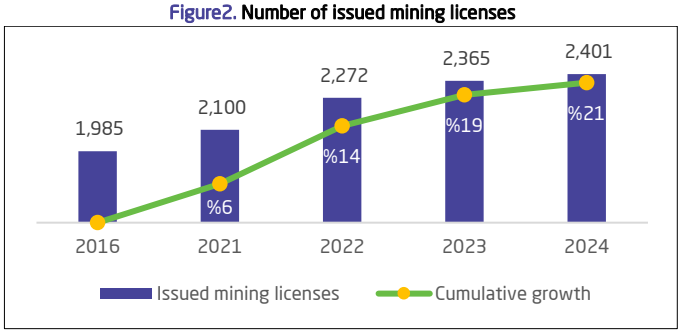
Figure1. Relative distribution of total number of discovered mineralization sites in the Kingdom (%)



Issues mining licenses

Statistics for 2024 showed that the number of issued mining licenses increased from 1,985 licenses in 2016 to 2,401 licenses in 2024, recording a cumulative growth of 21% during the period (2016-2024). In 2024, building materials quarry licenses made up the largest group, with 1,481 licenses. Exploration licenses came in second, with 642 licenses. Exploitation licenses—which include building materials, mining, and quarrying—totaled 215 licenses, while the number of reconnaissance licenses reached 41, and licenses for surplus mineral ores amounted to 22 (Figure2).

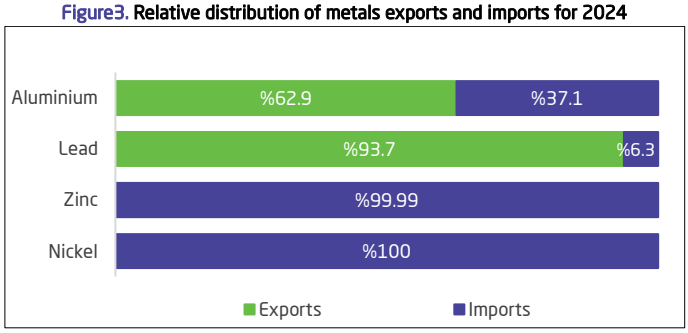
Figure2. Number of issued mining licenses



Metal exports and imports

Aluminum exports reached 283 thousand tons in 2024, accounting for 62.9% of the total aluminum trade movement, compared to imports of 167 thousand tons, constituting 37.1%. Lead exports were about 59,000 tons, or 93.7% of all trade, while imports were about 4,000 tons, or 6.3%. On the other hand, the zinc trade relied almost entirely on imports, which totaled 88 thousand tons, or more than 99.9% of the total. Exports, on the other hand, were only 6 tons. Furthermore, the trade movement of nickel was limited exclusively to imports, totaling 407 tons (100%) (Figure3).

Figure3. Relative distribution of metals exports and imports for 2024



Phosphate fertilizer exports and imports

Saudi Arabia's exports of phosphate fertilizers increased in 2024 to 5.7 million tons, compared to 5.4 million tons in the previous year, recording a growth of 4.6%. India ranked as the top export destination, with 2.1 million tons accounting for 37.7%. In contrast, imports of phosphate fertilizers reached 66.2 thousand tons in 2024, a decrease of 51.7% compared to 2023. Germany, China, and Jordan represented the main sources of these imports.

Classification of mineralization sites by degree of importance in the Kingdom up to 2024

Statistics indicate that the discovered mineralization sites in the Kingdom are classified into five importance levels: very high, high, medium, low, and very low (Figure4). The number of sites classified under the very high category reached approximately 99 sites, with Makkah Region ranked first with 28 sites, followed by Riyadh Region with 16 sites (Figure5).

* Degree of importance: Classified according to technical evaluation criteria, completeness and integration of geological survey data, and their availability.

Figure4. Relative distribution of discovered mineralization sites in the Kingdom by importance degree (%)

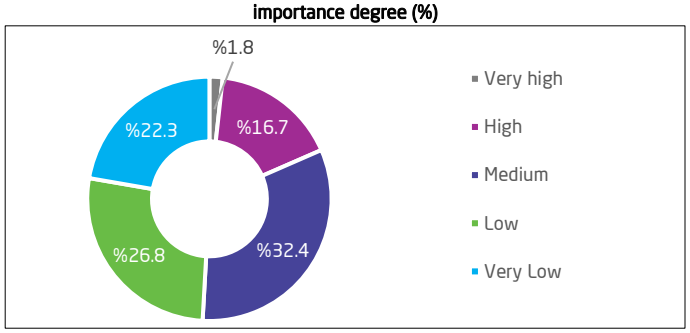
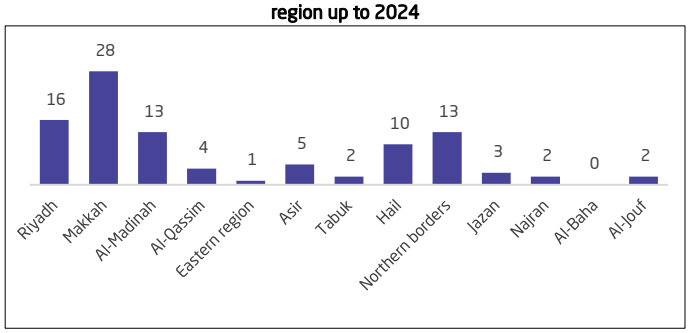


Figure5. Number of very high-importance mineralization sites by administrative region up to 2024



Key indicators of mineral resources statistics

Indicators	Unit	2023	2024
Total issued mining licenses	Number	2,365	2,401
Total aluminum exports	Thousand tons	307	283
Total aluminum imports	Thousand tons	194	167
Total phosphate fertilizer exports	Million tons	5.4	5.7
Total phosphate fertilizer imports	Thousand tons	137	66.2
Total seaborne metals exports	Million tons	5.8	6.1
Total seaborne metals imports	Million tons	3.4	2.4

Source: Tables.

Methodology and quality

The Mineral Resources Statistics Publication covers data on the number of mineralization sites discovered, issued mining licenses, and exports and imports of metals and their manufactured products, based on data from the General Authority for Statistics (GASTAT). It also incorporates register-based data from the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources and data from the National Geological Database of the Saudi Geological Survey. The data are available as a time series for the period 2021-2024, and the publication is published annually. For more information, refer to: Methodology and Quality Report