



11 November 2021

If you would like to collaborate in our next newsletter, contact us at pr@meira.me

Weekend reading list

- > Corporate Access: formats, differentiators and opportunities for IR. *Michael Chojnacki* Blog [Read more](#)
- > Saudi GDP in Q3 hits the highest growth since 2012 on oil prices increase. *Arab News* [Read more](#)
- > GCC bond market in a green energy world. *Franklin Templeton* [Read More](#)

MEIRA Updates

from
the
GM



Dear all,

It's almost the end of the year, certainly our MEIRA financial year-end. Accordingly, just a timely reminder, if you have an outstanding MEIRA membership/partnership renewal due, please help us, your independent non-profit professional body, by making the payment as soon as possible. Thank you, you make a real difference and we are already planning for 2022!

In the meantime, COP26, the big United Nations discussion on the impact of climate change and climate action, soldiers on. Clearly, we can do our bit too. Let's start with a better understanding of what is material to our business in the region and do our bit by integrating these material financial and extra-financial factors into our reporting to all interested stakeholders. It takes time, we know that given the process needs to be understood internally and successfully embedded in our business thinking and supporting systems. Yes, we must do it, albeit, thoughtfully, perhaps even slowly, at least at first, but surely too given these are big issues. This is the definition of competitive advantage if we can get it right - our stakeholders demand it and our competitors are responding too. All to play for, for sure!

Allow me to bring the recent recordings on this very ESG discussion from the MEIRA annual conference to your attention. I thought the [MEIRA Talk on ESG trends](#) was brilliant in its punchy delivery and timely content - not easy in barely 20 minutes. And the following [closing keynote address by the UK Minister](#) with responsibility for ESG in our pensions/financial inclusion was a tour de force, such an intelligent wide-ranging discussion with Guy Opperman and our MEIRA A team. Bravo, let's do this!

Best wishes,

Team MEIRA



Three weeks ago, we all gathered together to celebrate IR best practice and to listen to various experts and speakers about the latest trends in the IR world. Well, we also celebrated that most of us managed to meet face-to-face and shake sanitised-hands again!

As we all know, the main conference theme was around ESG. We are becoming more and more familiarised with terms such as net-zero, carbon emissions and responsible investment. However, we should not forget that the "S" and the "G" are important factors in the ESG equation and D&I is definitely part of the social aspect.

On 2021 Women's Day, MEIRA launched the D&I Working Group, led by Sofia El Boury, our Vice-Chair. Since then, we have organised some virtual events, published some thought leadership pieces such as our [latest article featured in IR Magazine](#), and most importantly, we have developed our own Board D&I Policy. Quoting our Vice-Chair's remarks in the IR Practitioners Survey: "IR naturally lends itself as an agent of change for D&I given our proximity to the top table of business decision-makers. We all have a role to play, IR people!".

Similar to ESG, the term D&I could be a bit challenging to define. When the working

the initiative considers much wider aspects such as background, race, age, and any other bias that we might not even be aware of.

However, the key question is not "what?" but "why?" (apart from the fact that we all know that it's the right thing to do). Well, if we think about the future and the fact that COP has been running for 26 years and the hype that the last couple of them have generated, don't you think that it is worth considering staying ahead of future requirements and needs? The current generation has the possibility to access information instantly from any part of the world and the voices requiring more social and sustainable businesses have never been louder (let's not forget that this generation is not only consumers but prospective investors).

In the 70s, the research psychologist Irving Janis described the negative effects of over-cohesiveness in a team or group of people. In the pursuit of harmony and comfort, a unified group of individuals will tend to agree and avoid any sort of conflict. This scenario will lead to riskier and dysfunctional decision-making outcomes. This is known as "groupthink" and do you know the only way to challenge it? Yes, bringing diversity into the mix! What are businesses and companies if not a team? How do we want our boards to be run? What sort of outcomes are we expecting from the decision-makers? All of these questions are part and parcel of IR and essential to any business which wants to remain competitive in the long term.

So, if we have tackled "what" and "why", I guess it is time now for the "how?". Well, that's our job, to bring you the tools and knowledge to implement it into your IR efforts. For 2022, we have planned more publications and research, specialised events with regional and international experts, workshops and mentorship initiatives.

Two questions remain to answer our 5Ws exercise (as we call it in journalism). "When?" The time is now! "Where?" In the Middle East! The region that always finds a way to make the unimaginable a reality. We need more role models, like Hana Al Rostamani, Group Chief CEO at First Abu Dhabi Bank, to pave the way for more diverse and inclusive future leaders.

Alicia Gallego-Martinez
Senior Manager, Policy and Strategic Communications

Publications



Why fixed income is relevant to responsible investing (by BNY Mellon)

A focus on ESG risks and sustainability factors could help investors build fixed-income portfolios that can target both financial and sustainability targets with greater precision.

BNY Mellon new paper, *Why Fixed Income is Relevant to Responsible Investing*, responsible investing has traditionally focused on equities, given shareholders' ability to influence management decisions. But as responsible investing evolves, some global institutional investors are widening their focus

to fixed income. Bondholders can also have a far-reaching influence over governments and companies, and fixed income investors may seek to engage with debt issuers to better understand the ESG risks they face, evaluate how they manage them and encourage them to improve their practices.

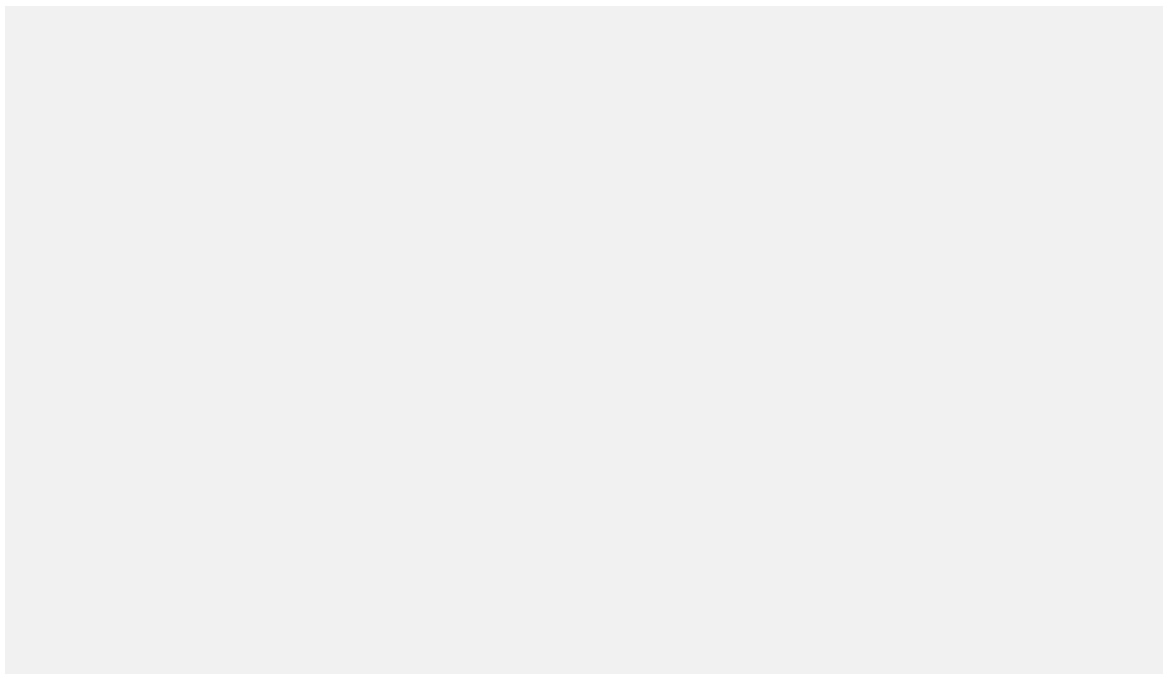
[Download the paper here](#)

Events



2021 MEIRA Annual Conference Highlights Video

A glimpse of what we achieved together on 25 October. Check it out now!





2021 MEIRA Annual Conference Interviews (in collaboration with H+K Strategies)

Since the MEIRA Annual Conference is the most important gathering of IR professionals in the Middle East, we took the opportunity to interview some of them and discuss their views and thoughts on the IR profession.

You can now enjoy the first one with Danko Maras, CFO at Almarai, interviewed by Andrea Benton, Account Director at H+K Strategies.

More to come next week!

Training

Integrating ESG/Sustainability into IR

MEIRA is delighted to partner with SRI-Connect, a pioneer in understanding and addressing sustainability issues for IR, and SITA (Sustainable Investment Training Associates), to offer an ESG/sustainability training course for IR practitioners.

Upon completion of training, course delegates will understand how to respond to the needs of the investment community, including being in a position to begin the integration of ESG into IR programmes.

For more information and registration, contact info@meira.me

Training flyer



Register now

Are you looking for bespoke or in-house training?

Members



Do you want to join MEIRA?

Don't miss the opportunity to join our IR community and become a member today.

You just need to fill our [membership form](#) and send it to info@meira.me in order to finalise the process.

We are looking forward to welcoming you!

[Membership form](#)

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About Middle East Investor Relations Association

The Middle East Investor Relations Association (MEIRA) is an independent non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting the Investor Relations (IR) profession and industry standards in corporate governance. The mission of MEIRA is to enhance the reputation, efficiency and attractiveness of the Middle East capital markets.

This involves a commitment to fostering increased dialogue among its members and to encourage them to share and adopt best practice techniques within the field of IR. In partnership with stock exchanges, regulators and other market participants, MEIRA supports companies through its professional development and certification programmes as well as its membership community and network of country chapters.



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