غرفة البحرين
BAHRAIN CHAMBER

Trade Relations Between Bahrain and GCC Countries

2025

Sameer Abdulla Nass
Chairman

Introduction

For over two decades, the worldwide trade relations landscape has been characterised by sharp and unexpected oscillations. Nevertheless, through the realistic perspective of the Gulf Cooperation Council nations that have established their national ambitions for 2030, nevertheless we are able to see the possibilities that lie behind these obstacles. The Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) has taken an interest in this kind of economic analysis, with a particular emphasis on the Gulf-to-Gulf trade exchange and its role in the country's trade balance.

Economic integration, with signs of growing trade exchange within the area, concrete improvements to infrastructure, and the simplicity of customs processes are some of the realistic and practical considerations that point to an optimistic and encouraging future for trade exchange. To diversify the economy away from its reliance on oil, we must first enhance trade agreements within the GCC, establish free trade zones, and eventually create a single market for all of the Gulf states.

There will be substantial prospects for attaining sustainable economic development in the Gulf region's commerce by 2030, owing to the increasing focus on environmental sustainability, which will cause it to become more varied and interconnected. The Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry has prioritised the release of this specialised study in order to provide light on this road using concrete statistical methods that represent this forward-looking viewpoint. Focussing on the Kingdom of Bahrain in particular, it discusses the commercial links among the GCC nations. The trade balance with all GCC nations has increased, with Saudi Arabia contributing $3.9 billion, the UAE $3.22 billion, Oman $518 million, Kuwait $499 million, and Qatar $82 million. Exports from Bahrain are ranked by raw aluminum at 77.308 million, iron and steel products at 538 million, and gold at 533 million.

From 2019 to 2023, Saudi Arabia remained at the top of the intra-trade balance for four years running, with a total trade volume of $3.8 billion, an increase of around 32%. Next on the list is the UAE, which saw a 36% increase in its trade volume to $3.2 billion. Second, Kuwait's $499 million in trade volume, an increase of over 30%, comes in second. Next on the list is Oman, whose $517 million in trade volume fell 16% during the same time frame. During the same period, Qatar had the greatest growth rate of any country, reaching approximately $82 million, an increase of 306% from 2021 to 2023.

This research by a non-governmental organisation (NGO) that represents the private sector is valuable since it states, according to data from Bahrain, the trends in trade and economic curves among the member states of the council. We may claim that the years hit by the Corona epidemic had an average 30% rise in trade exchange rates, which had a negative influence on world trade balances. The Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry shares the belief of other Gulf federations and chambers that the private sector must work tirelessly to enhance interrelations and diversify complementary partnerships within the Gulf. This is crucial because the foundational pillars, including economic integration, political cooperation, sustainable development, and cultural and social cooperation, have been in place since the leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries laid the groundwork for the Gulf Common Market. It is the hope of the Gulf chambers that their annual reports will help to forecast the future of the joint Gulf market up until 2030 while also pointing out potential roadblocks to the desired economic growth. These include, but are not limited to, factors influencing the global economy, the intricacy of the economic model, and the erroneous assumptions made by international organisations regarding growth rates, which prevent increased investment and trade and the development of a broader market. From this, the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry has advocated for the creation of an AI-powered integrated Gulf observatory to boost the joint Gulf market's competitiveness, find untapped areas in the Gulf markets through data-driven insights, increase investor confidence, and aid in the development of long-term strategies and predictions. This and future reports like it may help us better understand the economic patterns among the nations that make up the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Saleh bin Hamad ALSHARQI
General Secretary, Federation of GCC Chambers

Introduction

The Gulf Common Market functions as a regional free trade Zone. What is missing?

The leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council established the Gulf Common Market, founded on four pillars: economic integration, political cooperation, sustainable development, and cultural and social collaboration.

The Gulf area has achieved several accomplishments, establishing itself as a worldwide emblem of progress and stability. Indeed, several Gulf states have outperformed significant industrial countries in performance measures, trade balance, stability, and prospective security. Considering these internationally important advanced indicators, some of which are detailed in this study by the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the aspiration for more extraordinary achievements continues to prevail in Gulf projects and initiatives at the executive institutional level. The primary impetus stems from the uncertainty and ambiguity associated with efforts to ascertain the anticipated future outlook for the single Gulf market by 2030. We will encounter challenges that hinder our ability to ascertain an accurate economic growth rate for several reasons, including, for instance:

The evolving dynamics of a globally sophisticated, unstable, and uniquely contentious economy since World War II. The complexity of the economic growth model arise from the interplay of numerous complex variables rather than the influence of a singular factor; the implementation of the Gulf Common Market will induce extensive structural transformations in the region's economies, complicating the formulation of an accurate economic model for growth prediction. The foundational premises: Any estimate of economic growth % is contingent upon a series of assumptions about economic policies, sectoral development, and the reactions of corporations and people to alterations; these assumptions may not be inherently precise.

This has resulted in issues encountered by the Gulf private sector, primarily characterised by a lack of clarity in comprehending challenges and the intricacy of their interrelations, the necessary measures to navigate the phase with minimal losses and maximal profits, and its near-total dependence on disparate information sources and methods within the sector. The chambers of commerce serve as the cohesive platform for these industries, which are the foundation of non-oil economies. Nonetheless, they lack a “watchtower” monitoring and analytical system capable of delivering concise summaries of Gulf market dynamics tailored to the perspectives and requirements of economic and commercial decision-makers across various sectors. This includes insights on the five key drivers, procedural impediments, and the financial, administrative, and production challenges they engender, along with actionable strategies for prompt and measurable resolution.

This represents a strategic deficiency for the Gulf private sector, and we assert that it is the responsibility of the Gulf Chambers Federation to address it in a manner that benefits trade and industry, while also offering strategic partners guidance and consultation to facilitate decisions made through collaborative interest discussions. The forthcoming distinguished phase will necessitate a robust involvement of the Gulf Chambers Federation, collaborating alongside the national vision initiatives of the Council’s member states, and providing informed Gulf expertise to bolster the Gulf private sector’s role in diversifying national income streams.

CONTENTS

1

Trade Relations Between Bahrain and GCC Countries

Overview of Bahrain-GCC Trade

Volume Trade between Bahrain and GCC Countries in 2023 (USD)

1. **3,889,877,144** Saudi Arabia
2. **3,225,315,506** UAE
3. **517,761,016** Oman
4. **498,987,093** Kuwait
5. **81,831,723** Qatar

Top Bahrain-GCC commodities trade in 2023

Imported to Bahrain (Million USD)

537
Gold ingots

119
Petroleum Coke not Calcined

79.5
Unwrought Aluminum, not Alloyed

Exported from Bahrain (Million USD)

1170
Agglomerated Iron Ores and Concentrates

416.5
Unwrought Aluminum Alloys

253
Semi-Finished Iron and Steel, Under 0.25 Percent Carbon, Rect

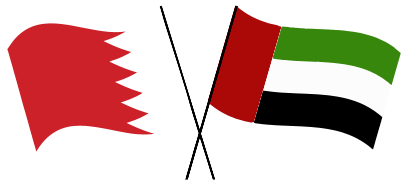
Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain & KSA 2023 (USD)

IMPORT	UNWROUGHT ALUMINIUM, NOT ALLOYED	77,308,776
	OTHER ALUMINIUM OXIDE	30,414,780
	REFINED SUGAR CRYSTALS	29,738,940
EXPORT	AGGLOMERATED IRON ORES AND CONCENTRATES	538,317,837
	UNWROUGHT ALUMINIUM ALLOYS	384,587,867
	SEMI-FINISHED IRON AND STEEL, UNDER 0.25 PERCENT CARBON, RECT	237,796,042

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Top Traded Commodities Between Bahrain and each Country in GCC



Bahrain & UAE 2023 (USD)

IMPORT

GOLD INGOTS	533,949,201
JEWELRY OF GOLD	131,177,220
OTHER PAINTS FROM OTHER POLYMERS NON-WATER BASE	27,107,331

EXPORT

AGGLOMERATED IRON ORES AND CONCENTRATES	407,811,041
JEWELRY OF GOLD	229,299,749
BRIDGES AND BRIDGE-SECTIONS	147,653,679

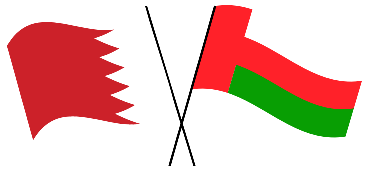
Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain & Kuwait 2023 (USD)

IMPORT	PETROLEUM COKE NOT CALCINED	119,029,764
	PETROLEUM COKE CALCINED	9,067,713
	POLYETHYLENE HAVING SPECIFIC GRAVITY OF LESS THAN 0.94	4,040,913
EXPORT	FERROUS PRODUCTS FROM THE DIRECT REDUCTION OF IRON ORE	65,751,821
	PROCESSED CHEESE, NOT GRATED OR POWDERED	29,011,058
	UNWROUGHT ALUMINIUM ALLOYS	18,285,820

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Top Traded Commodities Between Bahrain and each Country in GCC



Bahrain & Oman 2023 (USD)

IMPORT	
PETROLEUM COKE CALCINED	18,481,571
WATERMELONS FRESH	11,363,669
ELECTRIC CABLE OVER 10 MM WIDE AND OVER 300 V	7,514,720

EXPORT	
AGGLOMERATED IRON ORES AND CONCENTRATES	218,232,876
PROCESSED CHEESE, NOT GRATED OR POWDERED	40,128,856
UNWROUGHT ALUMINIUM ALLOYS	13,431,285

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain & Qatar 2023 (USD)

IMPORT	Fluting paper of recycled liner board weighing 150 g/m2 Or less	2,080,011
	Other bars and rods of iron or non-alloy steel,WITH DEFORMATIONS, rolled	1,435,908
	TESTINER (RECYLED LINR BOARD) WEIGHING 150 G/M2 OR LESS	1,259,461
EXPORT	JEWELLERY OF GOLD	12,115,032
	AGGLOMERATED IRON ORES AND CONCENTRATES	10,219,199
	OTHER CREAM, UNSWEETENED	4,177,581

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Trade between Bahrain and Saudi Arabia

Trading Activity Between Bahrain & GCC Countries

Bahrain- Saudi Arabia Total Trade Performance

Volume trade between Bahrain and KSA increased by 32% between 2019 and 2023.

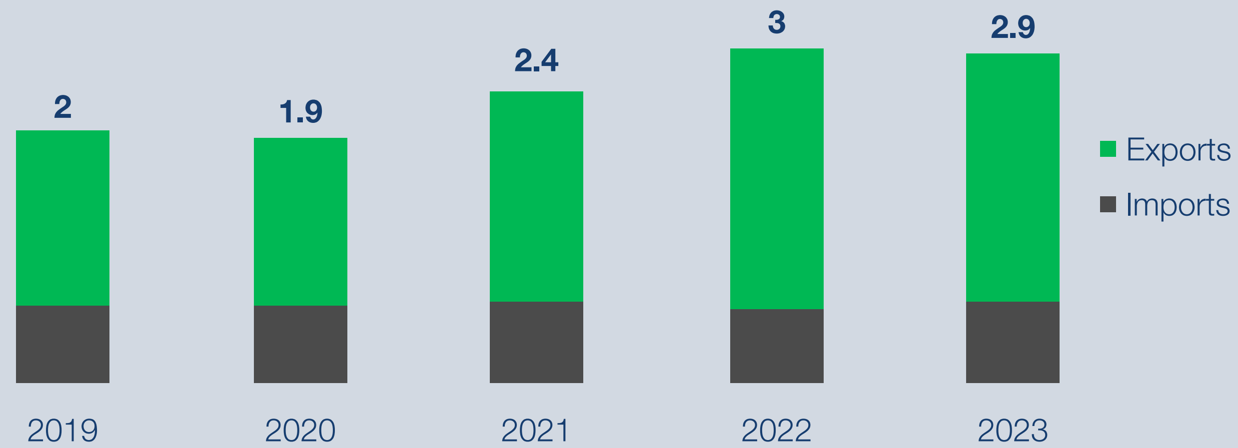
Saudi Arabia is one of Bahrain's top trade partners. Despite the slight decrease in the volume of trade between the two kingdoms by 2% from 2019 to 2020. However, the volume of trade between Bahrain and KSA increased by 19% from $2.9 billion in 2020 to $3.4 billion in 2021. Over the past 5 years, imports from KSA to Bahrain have increased by 5%, from $927 million in 2019 to $976 million in 2023. On the other hand, exports from Bahrain to KSA have increased by 44% during the same period. In 2023, KSA is Bahrain's top export partner and 5th top import partner.

Bahrain - Saudi Arabia Bilateral Trade (USD)

Year	Imports	Exports	Balance of Trade	Volume of Trade	VOT Annual Percentage Change
2019	926,755,158	2,027,446,711	1,100,691,553	2,954,201,869	-
2020	935,922,935	1,948,475,843	1,012,552,908	2,884,398,778	-2%
2021	969,976,716	2,460,689,757	1,490,713,041	3,430,666,473	19%
2022	888,027,649	3,048,114,060	2,160,086,411	3,936,141,709	15%
2023	976,054,462	2,913,822,682	1,937,768,220	3,889,877,144	-1%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain- Saudi Arabia Bilateral Trade (Billion USD)



Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Ranking of Saudi Arabia's Trade Level with Bahrain

Year	IMPORT	EXPORT
2019	4th	1st
2020	2nd	1st
2021	5th	1st
2022	7th	1st
2023	5th	1st

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Major Products Traded

Bahrain Imports from Saudi Arabia

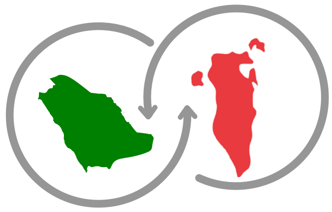
8 of Bahrain’s top 10 imports from Saudi Arabia witnessed y-o-y growth.

In 2023, Bahrain’s top imported product from KSA was Unwrought Aluminum, Not Alloyed, valued at $77 million. The import value of this product increased by 809% compared to the previous year and constituted 8% of total imports. The second most prominent imported product was other Aluminum Oxide, which accounted for around 3% of total imports and grew by 99% compared to 2023. The third major import was Refined Sugar Crystals, which valued at $30 million and grew by 27% compared to the previous year.

Bahrain Major Imported Commodities from Saudi Arabia 2023

	Commodity	Value (USD)	Share	y-o-y growth
1	UNWROUGHT ALUMINIUM, NOT ALLOYED	77,308,776	8%	809%
2	OTHER ALUMINIUM OXIDE	30,414,780	3%	99%
3	REFINED SUGAR CRYSTALS	29,738,940	3%	27%
4	MEAT AND EDIBLE OF FOWLS OF THE SPECIES GALLUS DOMESTICUS NOT CUT IN PIECES	27,157,924	3%	4%
5	OTHER MEDICAMENTS PUT IN FORMS OR PACKINGS FOR RETAIL SALE	25,308,488	3%	53%
6	HOT-ROLLED STEEL BARS WITH DEFORMA - TIONS, IRREGULAR COIL	22,443,752	2%	-3%
7	CARBOYS, BOTTLES, JARS, POTS, PHIALS AND OTHER CONTAINERS, OF GLASS	18,632,367	2%	29%
8	OTHER PORTLAND CEMENT	18,533,849	2%	-27%
9	OTHER MILK, UNSWEETENED	17,626,358	2%	0.2%
10	Non-aerated beverages, sweetened with fruit flavour	14,066,753	1%	79%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain



Bahrain Exports to Saudi Arabia

7 of Bahrain's top 10 exports to Saudi Arabia witnessed y-o-y growth, while 3 contracted.

Bahrain exported $538 million worth of Agglomerated Iron Ores and Concentrates to KSA in 2023, making it the top exported commodity. This product accounted for 18% of total exports in 2023. The second major product exported was unwrought aluminum alloys, accounting for 13% of the total annual exports and witnessing an increase of 10% compared to 2022. The third major product exported was Semi – Finished Iron and Steel Under 0.25 Percent Carbon Rect, accounting for 8% of total imports and increasing by 6% compared to 2022.

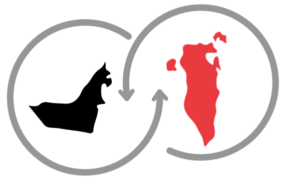
Bahrain Major Exported Commodities to Saudi Arabia 2023

	Commodity	Value (USD)	Share	y-o-y growth
1	AGGLOMERATED IRON ORES AND CONCENTRATES	538,317,837	18%	-22%
2	UNWROUGHT ALUMINIUM ALLOYS	384,587,867	13%	10%
3	SEMI-FINISHED IRON AND STEEL, UNDER 0.25 PERCENT CARBON, RECT.	237,796,042	8%	6%
4	BRIDGES AND BRIDGE-SECTIONS	227,428,238	8%	33%
5	PROCESSED CHEESE, NOT GRATED OR POWDERED	213,047,689	7%	-5%
6	ALUMINUM WIRE, NOT ALLOYED, OVER 7 MM THICK	212,505,241	7%	2%
7	SWEET BISCUITS	39,833,127	1%	13%
8	RIGID TUBES OF POLYMERS OF VINYL CHLORIDE	36,559,335	1%	-28%
9	PREPARATIONS FOR MAKING LEMONADE OR OTHER SOFT DRINKS	35,824,956	1%	17%
10	OTHER WOODEN FURNITURE	31,543,220	1%	95%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Trade between Bahrain and United Arab Emirates

Bahrain-United Arab Emirates Total Trade Performance



Volume trade between Bahrain and the UAE increased by 36% between 2019 and 2023.

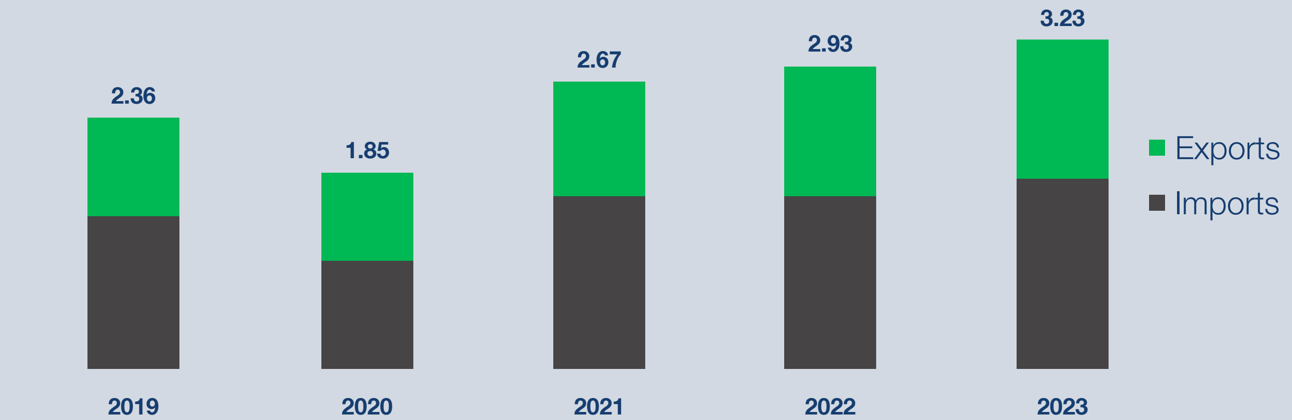
Despite a 22% decrease in the volume of trade between Bahrain and the UAE from 2019 to 2020, there was a significant increase of 44% in trade volume between Bahrain and the UAE from $1.85 billion in 2020 to $2.67 billion in 2021. Over the past five years, imports from the UAE to Bahrain have surged by 57%, rising from $928 million in 2019 to $1.45 billion in 2023. Additionally, exports from Bahrain to the UAE have increased by 23% during the same period. In 2023, the UAE ranked as Bahrain's second-largest partner for both exports and imports.

Bahrain - United Arab Emirates Bilateral Trade (USD)

Year	Imports	Exports	Balance of Trade	Volume of Trade	VOT Annual Percentage Change
2019	927,677,232	1,435,558,880	507,881,648	2,363,236,112	-
2020	828,138,899	1,023,591,171	195,452,272	1,851,730,070	-22%
2021	1,050,755,747	1,623,377,421	572,621,675	2,674,133,168	44%
2022	1,285,691,008	1,642,291,265	356,600,258	2,927,982,273	9%
2023	1,453,989,291	1,771,326,215	317,336,924	3,225,315,506	10%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain - United Arab Emirates Trade (Billion USD)



Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Ranking of United Arab Emirates' Trade Level with Bahrain

Year	IMPORT	EXPORT
2019	3rd	2nd
2020	5th	2nd
2021	3rd	2nd
2022	4th	3rd
2023	2nd	2nd

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain Imports from United Arab Emirates

4 of Bahrain's top 10 imports from UAE witnessed y-o-y growth, while 6 contracted.

In 2023, Bahrain's top imported product from the UAE was gold ingots, valued at $534 million. This represents a 46% increase compared to the previous year. Although the import value of gold jewelry decreased by 8% compared to the previous year, it remained the second most prominent imported product in 2023, accounting for $131 million. The product that showed the most significant growth was wheat flour, which accounted for $14 million, representing a 112% increase compared to the previous year.

Bahrain Major Imported Commodities from United Arab Emirates 2023

	Commodity	Value (USD)	Share	y-o-y growth
1	Gold ingots	533,949,201	37%	46%
2	Jewelry of gold	131,177,220	9%	-8%
3	Other paints from other polymers non-water base	27,107,331	2%	-3%
4	Cement clinkers	26,227,408	2%	-5%
5	Bars and rods of iron or non-alloy steel, WITH DEFORMATIONS, rolled, of circular cross-section measuring 8-40 mm in diameter	24,476,112	2%	-42%
6	Gravel, crushed stone, for concrete, road or railway	23,080,313	2%	-29%
7	Other electric conductors, for a voltage not exceeding 1000 v	18,730,464	1%	15%
8	Gasoline engine lubricating oil	15,715,484	1%	-11%
9	Homogenized preparations of fowls of the species gallus domesticus	15,094,396	1%	24%
10	Wheat flour	14,558,801	1%	112%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain Exports to United Arab Emirates

9 of Bahrain’s top 10 exports to UAE witnessed y-o-y growth

In 2023, Bahrain exported $408 million worth of agglomerated iron ores and concentrates to the UAE, making it the top exported commodity and accounting for 23% of total exports. The second major export was gold jewelry, which constituted 13% of the total annual exports and saw a 25% increase compared to 2022. The products that showed the most significant growth were ‘smartphones’ and ‘Parts for lamp or glass machines, with increases of 178% and 280%, respectively, compared to the previous year.

Bahrain Major Exported Commodities to United Arab Emirates 2023

	Commodity	Value (USD)	Share	y-o-y growth
1	Agglomerated iron ores and concentrates	407,811,041	23%	-10%
2	Jewelry of gold	229,299,749	13%	25%
3	Bridges and bridge-sections	147,653,679	8%	-9%
4	Gold ingots	97,804,881	6%	8%
5	Processed cheese, not grated or powdered	86,803,259	5%	34%
6	Jeeps, current year, spark ignition, over 3000 cc	59,360,028	3%	153%
7	Smartphones	44,232,349	2%	178%
8	Parts for aircraft engines	32,208,693	2%	-52%
9	Pickups, two cabs, spark ignition, 5 tons or less	31,169,143	2%	140%
10	Parts for lamp or glass machines	29,963,193	2%	280%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Trade between Bahrain and Kuwait

Bahrain-Kuwait Total Trade Performance

Volume trade between Bahrain and Kuwait increased by 30% between 2019 and 2023.

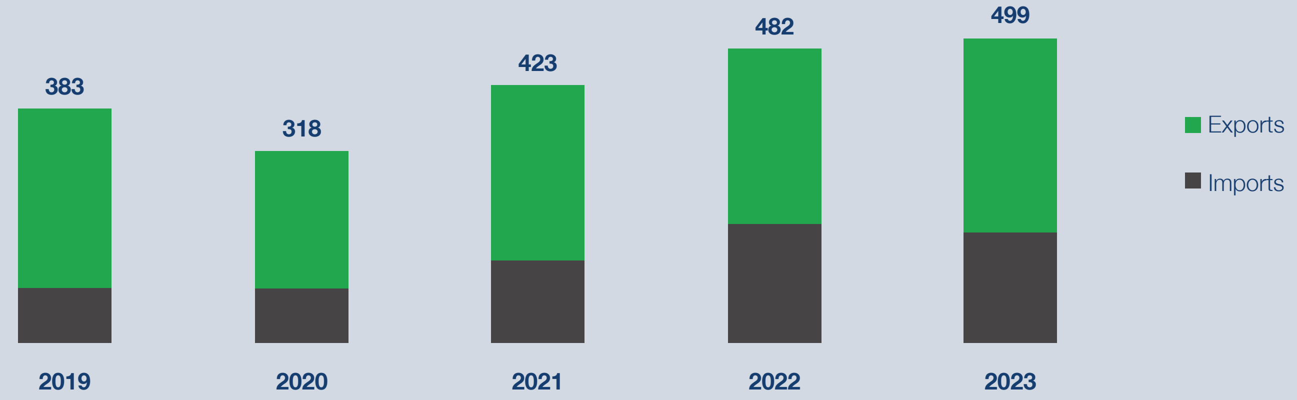
Despite a 17% decrease in trade volume between Bahrain and Kuwait from 2019 to 2020, trade rebounded with a 33% increase from $318 million in 2020 to $423 million in 2021. Over the past five years, imports from Kuwait to Bahrain have doubled, showing a 102% growth from $91 million in 2019 to $184 million in 2023. In contrast, exports from Bahrain to Kuwait have seen a slight increase of 8% during the same period.

Bahrain - Kuwait Bilateral Trade (USD)

Year	Imports	Exports	Balance of Trade	Volume of Trade	VOT Annual Percentage Change
2019	90,898,320	292,197,818	201,299,499	383,096,138	-
2020	92,661,214	225,040,400	132,379,186	317,701,614	-17%
2021	138,790,763	283,964,093	145,173,330	422,754,856	33%
2022	195,883,750	285,899,292	90,015,542	481,783,042	14%
2023	184,064,281	314,922,812	130,858,531	498,987,093	4%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain- Kuwait Trade (Million USD)



Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Ranking of Kuwait's Trade Level with Bahrain

Year	IMPORT	EXPORT
2019	26th	7th
2020	23rd	9th
2021	20th	11th
2022	18th	15th
2023	18th	9th

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain Imports from Kuwait

5 of Bahrain's top 10 imports from Kuwait witnessed y-o-y growth.

Despite a slight decrease compared to the previous year, both 'petroleum coke not calcined' and 'petroleum coke calcined' remained Bahrain's top imported products from Kuwait in 2023, valued at $119 million and $9 million, respectively. Together, they accounted for more than two-thirds of Bahrain's total imports from Kuwait. The product that showed the most significant growth was 'other iron or steel structures or parts,' which experienced a 247% increase compared to the previous year.

Bahrain Major Imported Commodities from Kuwait 2023

	Commodity	Value (USD)	Share	y-o-y growth
1	PETROLEUM COKE NOT CALCINED	119,029,764	65%	-11%
2	PETROLEUM COKE CALCINED	9,067,713	5%	-14%
3	POLYETHYLENE HAVING SPECIFIC GRAVITY OF LESS THAN 0.94	4,040,913	2%	-1%
4	BRIDGES AND BRIDGE-SECTIONS	3,553,455	2%	179%
5	OTHER REFINED COPPER WIRE	2,850,847	2%	49%
6	Fresh bird's eggs in shell of fowls of the species Gallus domestics	2,295,910	1%	-47%
7	POLYETHYLENE HAVING SPECIFIC GRAVITY OF 0.94 OR MORE	2,278,195	1%	-40%
8	OTHER HORMONES WITHOUT ANTIBIOTICS, NOT RETAIL	1,991,750	1%	126%
9	OTHER IRON OR STEEL STRUCTURES OR PARTS	1,974,642	1%	247%
10	APPARATUS FOR ELECTRICAL CONTROL OVER 1000 V	1,882,036	1%	44%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain Exports to Kuwait

5 of Bahrain's top 10 exports to Kuwait witnessed y-o-y growth

In 2023, Bahrain exported $66 million worth of ferrous products from the direct reduction of iron ore to Kuwait, making it the top exported commodity and accounting for 21% of total exports, with a 29% increase compared to 2022. The second major export was processed cheese, not grated or powdered, which made up 9% of the total annual exports. The product that saw the most significant growth was aluminum electric wire with a steel core, not insulated, which increased by 145% compared to the previous year.

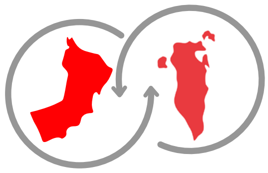
Bahrain Major Exported Commodities to Kuwait 2023

	Commodity	Value (USD)	Share	y-o-y growth
1	FERROUS PRODUCTS FROM THE DIRECT REDUCTION OF IRON ORE	65,751,821	21%	29%
2	PROCESSED CHEESE, NOT GRATED OR POWDERED	29,011,058	9%	18%
3	UNWROUGHT ALUMINIUM ALLOYS	18,285,820	6%	-22%
4	JEWELLERY OF GOLD	13,457,026	4%	-6%
5	MACHINERY FOR FILLING, CLOSING, ETC., CONTAINERS	13,280,529	4%	N/A
6	ALUMINUM ELECTRIC WIRE WITH STEEL CORE, NOT INSULATED	11,390,951	4%	145%
7	OTHER WOODEN FURNITURE	11,028,001	4%	44%
8	PREPARATIONS FOR MAKING LEMONADE OR OTHER SOFT DRINKS	10,897,016	3%	-0.8%
9	SWEET BISCUITS	8,034,178	3%	8%
10	BRIDGES AND BRIDGE-SECTIONS	7,985,652	3%	-9%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Trade between Bahrain and Oman

Bahrain-Oman Total Trade Performance



Volume trade between Bahrain and Oman decreased by 16% between 2019 and 2023.

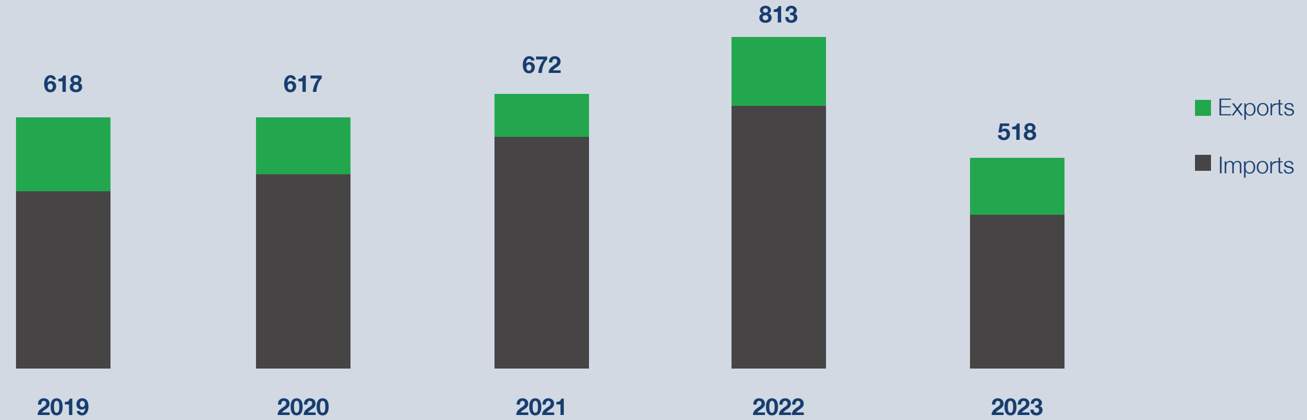
The trade volume between Bahrain and Oman peaked at $812 million in 2022, showing a 31% increase since 2019. However, in 2023, the trade volume dropped to $517 million, representing a 36% decrease compared to the previous year. Overall, imports have decreased by 23% since 2019, while exports have similarly shrunk by 13.5% over the same period.

Bahrain- Oman Bilateral Trade (USD)

Year	Imports	Exports	Balance of Trade	Volume of Trade	VOT Annual Percentage Change
2019	179,220,275	439,274,503	260,054,228	618,494,778	-
2020	137,240,825	479,415,512	342,174,687	616,656,338	-0.30%
2021	102,557,161	569,734,287	467,177,127	672,291,448	9%
2022	173,264,193	639,386,196	466,122,003	812,650,390	20%
2023	137,485,064	380,275,952	242,790,888	517,761,016	-36%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain- Oman Trade (Million USD)



Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Ranking of Oman's Trade Level with Bahrain

Year	IMPORT	EXPORT
2019	16th	4th
2020	18th	4th
2021	22nd	5th
2022	19th	5th
2023	22nd	7th

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain Imports from Oman

3 of Bahrain's top 10 imports from Oman witnessed y-o-y growth.

Bahrain's top imported product from Oman in 2023 was petroleum coke calcined, valued at $18 million. Despite a 42% decrease in its import value compared to the previous year, it still constituted 13% of total imports. The second most prominent imported product was fresh watermelons, which accounted for around 8% of total imports and grew by 49% compared to 2022. The third major import was electric cable over 10 mm wide and over 300 V, valued at $7.5 million. The product that showed the most significant growth was 'other sheep', with an increase of 133%.

Bahrain Major Imported Commodities from Oman 2023

	Commodity	Value (USD)	Share	y-o-y growth
1	PETROLEUM COKE CALCINED	18,481,571	13%	-42%
2	WATERMELONS FRESH	11,363,669	8%	49%
3	ELECTRIC CABLE OVER 10 MM WIDE AND OVER 300 V	7,514,720	5%	-45%
4	OTHER SHEEP	6,987,192	5%	133%
5	CRISPS (AS POP CORN, CHIPS AND THE LIKE)	5,259,641	4%	-6%
6	OTHER WELDED CIRCULAR PIPE OF IRON OR STEEL	3,259,850	2%	16%
7	OTHER MEDICAMENTS PUT IN FORMS OR PACKINGS FOR RETAIL SALE	3,116,429	2%	-16%
8	MAYONNAISE	3,039,153	2%	-3%
9	GOLD INGOTS	2,975,344	2%	NA
10	TUBES, PIPES AND HOLLOW PROFILES, OF CAST IRON	2,752,697	2%	-11%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain Exports to Oman

6 of Bahrain's top 10 exports to Oman witnessed y-o-y growth

In 2023, Bahrain exported $218 million worth of agglomerated iron ores and concentrates to Oman, making it the top exported commodity and accounting for 57% of total exports. The second major export was processed cheese, not grated or powdered, which constituted 11% of the total annual exports and saw a 13% increase compared to 2022. The products that showed the most significant growth was other optical media with increases of 732% compared to the previous year.

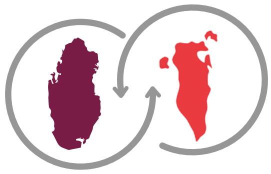
Bahrain Major Exported Commodities to Oman 2023

	Commodity	Value (USD)	Share	y-o-y growth
1	AGGLOMERATED IRON ORES AND CONCENTRATES	218,232,876	57%	-45%
2	PROCESSED CHEESE, NOT GRATED OR POWDERED	40,128,856	11%	13%
3	UNWROUGHT ALUMINIUM ALLOYS	13,431,285	4%	155%
4	FERROUS PRODUCTS FROM THE DIRECT REDUCTION OF IRON ORE	11,510,761	3%	-70%
5	BRIDGES AND BRIDGE-SECTIONS	6,968,056	2%	-24%
6	OTHER CREAM, UNSWEETENED	6,427,572	2%	1%
7	OTHER OPTICAL MEDIA	5,976,147	2%	732%
8	APPARATUS FOR ELECTRICAL CONTROL 1000 V OR LESS	5,881,911	2%	273%
9	SWEET BISCUITS	5,428,062	1%	10%
10	PERFUMES, LIQUID OR SOLID	3,538,708	1%	2%

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Trade between Bahrain and Qatar

Bahrain-Qatar Total Trade Performance



Volume trade between Bahrain and Qatar increased by 306% between 2021 and 2023.

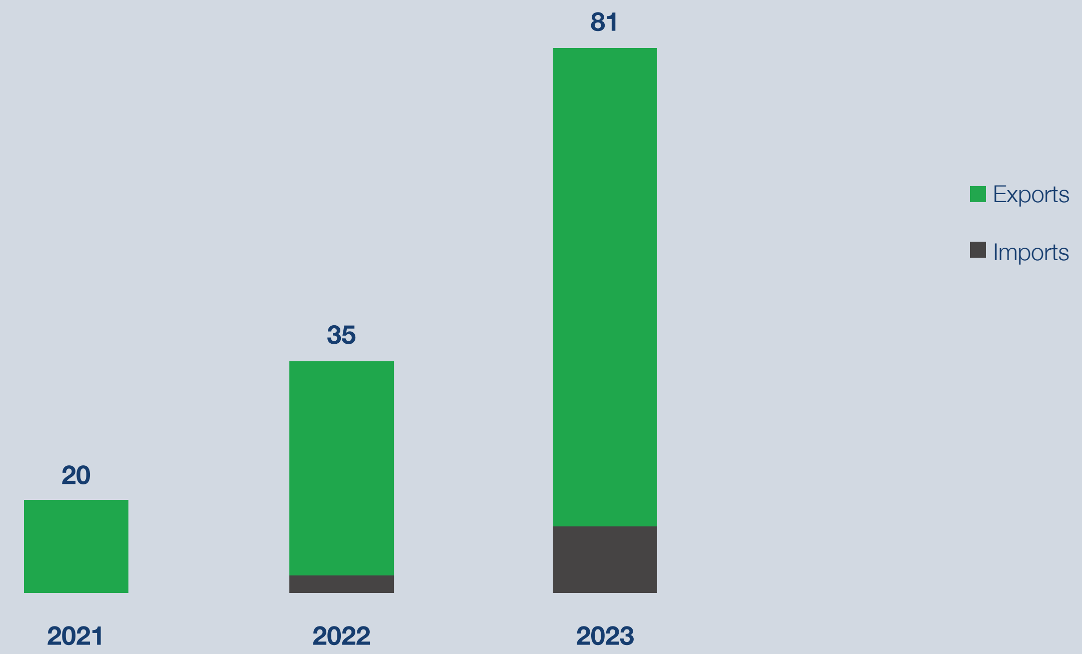
Bahrain-Qatar trade performance has seen a significant surge in recent years. Over the past three years, the volume of trade between Bahrain and Qatar increased by 306%, rising from $20 million in 2021 to $81 million in 2023. Imports from Qatar to Bahrain experienced an outstanding growth of 14,121%, soaring from just $69,000 in 2021 to $9.9 million in 2023. Additionally, exports from Bahrain to Qatar increased by 258% during the same period.

Bahrain- Qatar Bilateral Trade (USD)

Year	Imports	Exports	Balance of Trade	Volume of Trade	VOT Annual Percentage Change
2021	69,793	20,070,549	20,000,756	20,140,342	-
2022	1,892,305	33,303,429	31,411,124	35,195,735	74%
2023	9,925,303	71,906,420	61,981,117	81,831,723	132%

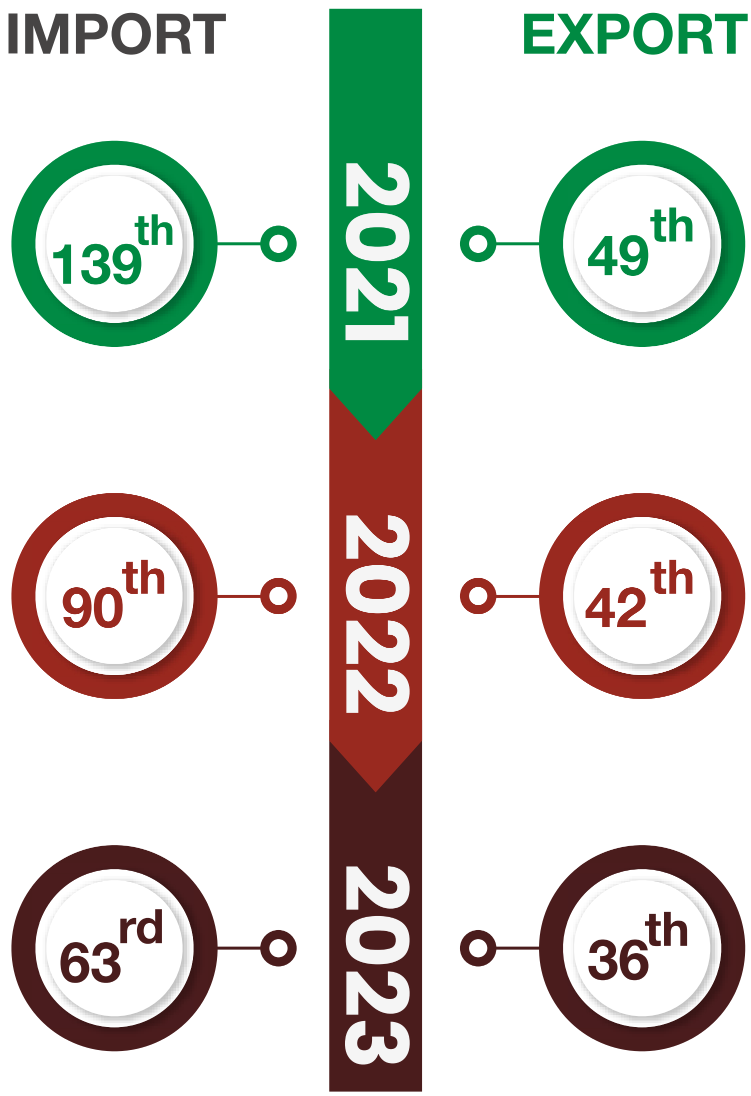
Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain- Qatar Trade (Million USD)



Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Ranking of Qatar's Trade Level with Bahrain



Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain Imports from Qatar

6 of Bahrain's top 10 imports from Qatar were newly introduced in 2023

Bahrain's top import from Qatar in 2023 was "Fluting paper of recycled liner board weighing 150 g/m² or less," valued at $2 million. This represents a significant growth of 629% compared to the previous year.
The second most prominent imported product was "Other bars and rods of iron or non-alloy steel, with deformations, rolled", which accounted for around $1.4 million and was newly introduced compared to 2022. The product that showed the most significant growth was TESTINER (RECYLED LINR BOARD) WEIGHING 150 G/M2 OR LESS ', with an increase of 2086%.

Bahrain Major Imported Commodities from Qatar 2023

	Commodity	Value (USD)	Share	y-o-y growth
1	FLUTING PAPER OF RECYCLED LINER BOARD WEIGHING 150 g/m2 Rr LESS	2,080,011	21%	629%
2	OTHER BARS AND RODS OF IRON OR NON-ALLOY STEEL, WITH DEFORMATIONS, ROLLED.	1,435,908	14%	N/A
3	TESTINER (RECYLED LINR BOARD) WEIGHING 150 G/M2 OR LESS	1,259,461	13%	2086%
4	GOLD INGOTS	1,161,784	12%	13%
5	Bars and rods of iron or non-alloy steel, WITH DEFORMATIONS, rolled, of circular cross-section measuring less than 8mm in diameter	984,110	10%	N/A
6	Bars and rods of iron or non-alloy steel, WITH DEFORMATIONS, rolled, of circular cross-section measuring 8-40 mm in diameter	696,604	7%	N/A
7	BARS AND RODS OF ALUMINIUM, NOT ALLOYED	380,549	4%	N/A
8	POLYETHYLENE HAVING SPECIFIC GRAVITY OF 0.94 OR MORE	289,457	3%	N/A
9	OTHER SHEETS, ETC., OF POLYMERS OF ETHYLENE	276,893	3%	735%
10	JEWELLERY OF GOLD	165,669	2%	N/A

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Bahrain Exports to Qatar

6 of Bahrain's top 10 exports to Qatar were newly introduced in 2023

In 2023, Bahrain exported $12 million worth of jewelry of gold to Qatar, making it the top exported commodity and accounting for 17% of total exports. The second major export was agglomerated iron ores and concentrates, which constituted 14% of the total annual exports. The product that showed the most significant growth was tires of a kind used on buses or lorries, new of rubber, with increases of 129%, compared to the previous year.

Bahrain Major Exported Commodities to Qatar 2023

	Commodity	Value (USD)	Share	y-o-y growth
1	JEWELLERY OF GOLD	12,115,032	17%	16%
2	AGGLOMERATED IRON ORES AND CONCENTRATES	10,219,199	14%	N/A
3	OTHER CREAM, UNSWEETENED	4,177,581	6%	N/A
4	BRIDGES AND BRIDGE-SECTIONS	3,410,081	5%	N/A
5	COLA	2,966,578	4%	N/A
6	OTHER WOODEN FURNITURE	2,212,570	3%	-47%
7	FEMALE DRESSES, OF OTHER TEXTILES, NOT KNITTED	1,817,471	3%	-7%
8	TIRES OF A KIND USED ON BUSES OR LORRIES, NEW OF RUBBER	1,583,807	2%	129%
9	FEMININE PADS, OF ALL MATERIALS	1,290,007	2%	N/A
10	LENTILS, DRIED AND SHELLED	1,183,239	2%	N/A

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

2

Foreign Trade of GCC Countries

GCC Foreign Trade Performance

(Million USD)

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Export Value	656,598.6	612,235.4	439,486.6	668,502.4	962,990.1
Total of Imports in Goods	444,184.0	457,520.2	407,716.5	477,951.3	581,298.6
Trade Exchange in Goods	1,100,782.6	1,069,755.6	847,203.1	1,146,453.7	1,544,288.7

Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

3

Promising Sectors for Investment

Promising Sectors in Bahrain

Top Promising Sectors in GCC - Bahrain

Bahrain

1. Financial Services
2. Manufacturing
3. Transportation and Logistics
4. Tourism
5. ICT

Financial Services

Bahrain has a long-standing reputation as a leading financial hub in the GCC, built over the past 40 years. The Kingdom hosts more than 400 financial institutions, including prominent local, regional, and international players in banking, insurance, asset management, and wealth management.

This thriving financial ecosystem is supported by a robust regulatory environment, largely due to the high-quality oversight of the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB). The CBB, serving as the Kingdom's sole regulatory authority, ensures that these institutions operate efficiently and effectively. This strong regulatory framework is a key factor in Bahrain's continued prominence in the financial sector.

Bahrain has established a progressive regulatory environment for FinTech, becoming the first MENA country to license a cryptocurrency exchange, Rain Financial, in 2019. This landmark move was followed by a significant milestone in January 2022 when Rain Financial secured $110 million in funding from Silicon Valley investors.

Bahrain's FinTech ecosystem encompasses a wide range of specializations, including digital banking, e-wallets, blockchain, smart contracts, artificial intelligence, and risk management. In addition, the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) launched the FinTech Regulatory Sandbox in mid-2017. This innovative platform allows entrepreneurs to test and refine their tech solutions with real customers before launching them to the broader market, further solidifying Bahrain's position as a FinTech leader.

Source: EDB/ Trade.gov

Manufacturing

Manufacturers in Bahrain benefit from an environment that minimizes many of the financial and logistical challenges encountered in other regions. The Kingdom's strategic location, coupled with lower operating costs, a skilled workforce, and world-class infrastructure, makes it an ideal regional base for businesses. Bahrain's diverse and open business climate fosters growth across various industries, from food and beverage production to fiberglass manufacturing.

Bahrain's business-friendly policies further enhance its appeal. As setting up and running a business in Bahrain can be up to 56% more cost-effective than in other GCC countries. The government, through Bahrain's labour fund, Tamkeen, also offers investment grants to support business growth. Furthermore, manufacturers can benefit from low industrial land lease rates, with no hidden fees or service charges. For those relocating to Bahrain, the lower overall cost of living compared to other GCC countries adds to the country's attractiveness as a business destination. Bahrain also stands out as the only country in the region that allows 100% foreign ownership in industrial manufacturing and distribution, without the restrictions typically associated with free zones. This unique policy gives businesses greater flexibility and control. Moreover, Bahrain's strategic trade agreements grant wide duty-free access to key economies, including the GCC, USA, Singapore, 14 Arab countries, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland, and Liechtenstein. This extensive duty-free network enhances Bahrain's position as a central hub for manufacturing and distribution in the region.

Source: EDB

Transportation and Logistics

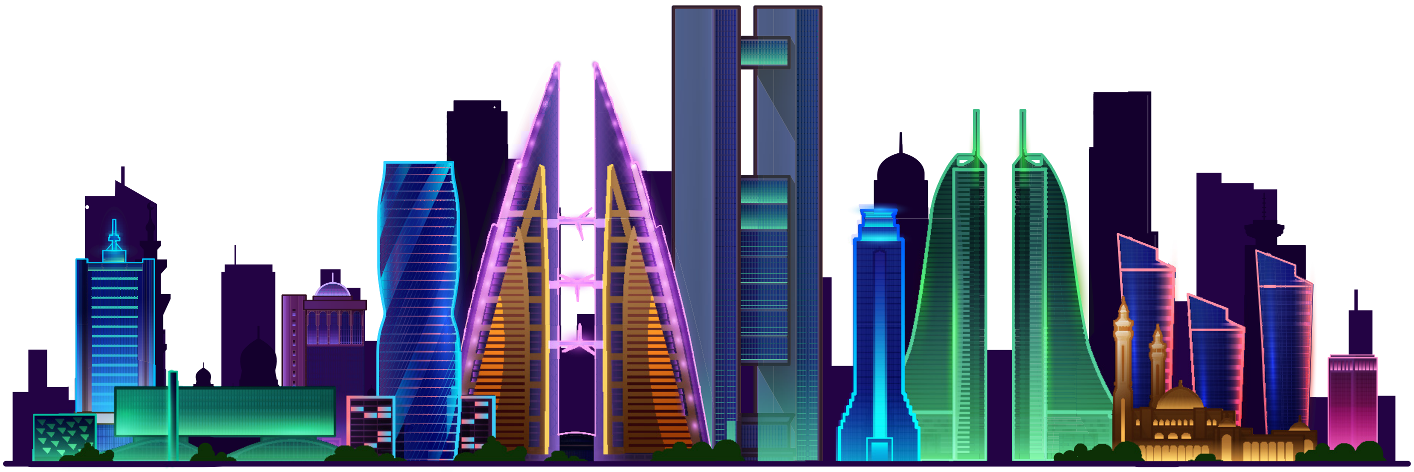
Bahrain presents a wealth of opportunities for international companies seeking to establish a cost-effective distribution and fulfillment base in the region. With unmatched access to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) markets, Bahrain maximizes the potential of your investment in transportation and logistics.
One of Bahrain's key advantages is its cost-effectiveness. The country offers the lowest setup and operating costs for transportation and logistics businesses in the GCC, providing savings of 50-72% compared to its regional peers. Additionally, Bahrain Logistics Zone offers competitive land lease rates without any hidden fees or service charges, making it an attractive option for businesses.

Bahrain's ports also stand out for their economic efficiency, with lower charges than any other ports in the Arabian Gulf. Strategically located in the heart of the Arabian Gulf, Bahrain provides unparalleled access to a growing regional customer base across the Middle East. Its strategic position allows for the shortest transit times between seaports, airports, and industrial zones within the GCC, enabling faster freight turnaround and streamlined procedures. Furthermore, Bahrain's proximity to Saudi Arabia offers the quickest transport routes, with 75% of Saudi Arabia's economy reachable within just a few hours.

Major global logistics and transportation companies, including UPS, ARAMEX, DHL, Agility, and FEDEX, have already established operations in Bahrain to support their supply chain activities, benefiting from the country's strategic location and competitive advantages.

Source: EDB

Tourism



Bahrain's tourism and hospitality sector is growing rapidly, thanks to its excellent infrastructure, variety of retail and leisure options, and opportunities in the food and hotel industries. The island's charm comes from its beautiful setting, relaxed lifestyle, rich history and culture, exciting events, and wide range of food and shopping choices.

Bahrain focuses on attracting tourists from the GCC and those just a short flight away, making it an easily accessible destination for millions. As a result, up to a million visitors come each month, with many spending more during their stay.

In 2022, Bahrain welcomed 9.9 million visitors, a 175% increase from the previous year. This influx brought in USD 3.9 billion in spending, showing the strong economic impact of the tourism sector.

Source: EDB

ICT

Bahrain is strategically located as a gateway to the GCC region, offering direct access to Saudi Arabia and other important markets in the area. This advantageous location, along with competitive costs, a skilled workforce, and favorable business ownership rules, makes Bahrain an appealing hub for global IT companies.

Cloud traffic in the MENA region is growing rapidly, with a 41% increase each year, the fastest in the world. Bahrain, as the first Gulf country to adopt a nationwide 'cloud-first' policy, is in a strong position to take advantage of the opportunities in ICT. This growth is opening new possibilities in business services outsourcing, cybersecurity, digital entertainment, gaming, and e-commerce.

Bahrain's regulatory environment is designed to support businesses effectively. The Kingdom allows 100% foreign ownership in the ICT sector and offers a 0% tax rate on both corporate and personal income, making it a tax-friendly regime in the Arabian Gulf. Bahrain also has advanced internet and networking infrastructure, with four submarine fiber optic systems and two terrestrial dark fiber systems.

As a leader in the region, Bahrain is well-prepared to support the growth of ICT and communication technology companies. The cloud services sector is expected to see strong growth, with data center traffic projected to increase by 19% annually by 2024. Cybersecurity is another important area, where the average cost of a data breach in the Middle East is $6.93 million, much higher than the global average, creating significant demand for cybersecurity services. The MENA cybersecurity market is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7.92% from 2021 to 2026.

1st globally
in digital literacy

1st globally
in population covered by at least a 3G Mobile Network

6th globally
in investments in telecommunications

Source: EDB

Promising Sectors in Saudi Arabia

Top Promising Sectors in GCC - Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia

10 Agriculture & Food Processing

20 Healthcare and Life Sciences

30 Energy

40 Environmental Services

50 Industrial and Manufacturing

Agriculture & Food Processing

Saudi Arabia's food processing industry stands as a robust and expanding sector, with increasing demands both locally and internationally for its products, particularly seafood, dates, and halal items. With approximately $42 billion in food and beverage industry size and predicted to expand at 3% per year over the next five years, this industry is underpinned by a strong support system that meets both high quality standards and the dynamic needs of a growing market. Saudi Arabia has earned a reputation for producing genuine halal food, positioning it to potentially lead the global halal market, which is currently valued at $1.3 trillion. Given this background of excellence and significant growth potential, the food processing sector in Saudi Arabia represents a sound investment opportunity.

In addition, Saudi Arabia has a compelling value offering in the food processing sector, as evidenced by huge and expanding local and regional market demand. The country's exceptional supply of dates serves as an ideal foundation for export-oriented firms. Furthermore, its extensive marine resources assure large and sustainable seafood catches. These qualities, combined with a well-developed ecosystem and efficient supply-chain management, make Saudi Arabia an appealing location for food production and export businesses.

Source: Invest Saudi

Healthcare and Life Sciences

Saudi Arabia's healthcare and life sciences sector represents one of the most significant investment opportunities in the Kingdom, accounting for 60% of the healthcare expenditure among GCC countries. This sector remains a key priority for the Saudi Arabian Government, which is actively encouraging the growth of private sector involvement through various initiatives including privatization and the introduction of new healthcare financing models.

As part of Saudi Vision 2030, the government is dedicated to improving the quality of healthcare services and facilities, while making optimal use of available resources. This strategic vision includes an ambitious plan to invest over $65 billion to enhance the country's healthcare infrastructure. The plan also encompasses the reorganization and privatization of health services and insurance, the establishment of 21 regional health clusters, and the expansion of e-health capabilities across the nation.

The government's goal is to increase private sector participation in healthcare from 40% to 65% percent by 2030. This broad initiative targets the privatization of 290 hospitals and 2,300 primary health centers. There are numerous opportunities for private sector partnerships in areas such as primary care, hospital commissioning, development of medical cities, rehabilitation services, long-term care, laboratory and radiology services, home care, health insurance, and digital health solutions.

Source: Invest Saudi / Trade.gov

Energy

Saudi Arabia's solid energy sector, a cornerstone of its economic framework, is set for transformative growth driven by Vision 2030. This strategic plan aims to source over 50% of the country's energy needs from renewable sources, energizing the demand for technologies like solar, wind, and tidal energy. With substantial support from both government and private sectors, the Saudi Kingdom plans to achieve a capacity of 40 GW in solar energy in 2030, indicating an increase in demand for solar modules, which is expected to grow at a rate of 55-60%. This expansion is projected to raise the solar rack market size to $4.5 billion in 2030. Enhanced by initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and increased investments in renewable infrastructure, these developments are expected to open substantial opportunities for economic and sustainable growth.

Source: Invest Saudi / Saudi & Middle East Green Initiatives

Environmental Services

Saudi Arabia's environmental services sector is rapidly expanding, driven by a growing population, increasing living standards, and a boost in industrial activity. The Kingdom has set forth an ambitious plan to enhance and capitalize on the environmental services sector, offering a regulatory framework that not only creates enticing business opportunities throughout the sector's value chains but also ensures the protection of investor and customer rights. Key areas of focus include water and waste management, pivotal to Saudi Arabia's goal of achieving sustainability and advancing a circular economy that replenishes the earth's nutrients and recycles recovered materials back into industry. The sector is expected to contribute $10 billion to the local GDP while attracting $1.75 billion in Foreign Direct Investment.

In alignment with Saudi Vision 2030, critical investment opportunities include the development, operation, and management of waste management facilities to safeguard public health and maintain environmental cleanliness, alongside utilizing treated water in agriculture and other relevant areas. Additionally, there are substantial prospects for investment in waste recycling and the extraction of reusable materials from waste treatment processes.

Source: Invest Saudi / Ministry of Investment (Saudi)/ Trade.gov

Industrial and Manufacturing

Saudi Arabia stands out as one of the world's fastest growing manufacturing economies, with an average annual growth rate of 7.5%. This industry is a key component of the Kingdom's economic diversification, localization, and privatization policy, accounting for the third largest non-oil contributor to the Saudi economy. Several major elements contribute to the manufacturing industry's success, including a big market size, advanced R&D facilities, strong government support, contemporary infrastructure, and business-friendly policies.

Furthermore, the country has set ambitious goals for expanding this sector, seeking to build 36,000 new factories by 2035. This expansion is expected to generate large investment opportunities with $267 Billion in investment opportunities, particularly in the machinery and equipment industries, at an estimated $25.6 billion.

Source: Invest Saudi

Promising Sectors in United Arab Emirates

Top Promising Sectors in GCC - UAE

UAE

10 Fintech

20 Agritech

30 Healthcare

40 E-Commerce

50 Talent Retention

Fintech

The UAE is rapidly emerging as a major global fintech hub, making it a prime destination for investment in financial technology. The UAE leadership in digital banking within the region is evident, with 51% of Gen Z (18–25-year-olds) in the UAE using digital or mobile wallets for daily payments. As of January 2023, the UAE was home to over 800 fintech startups, collectively valued at USD 15.5 billion. This vibrant ecosystem is supported by substantial growth in funding, with fintech startup funding in the MENA region experiencing a 183% year-on-year increase in 2021, and the UAE alone accounting for 32% of fintech deals and 49% of the region's fintech funding that year.

Furthermore, the UAE ranked 28th globally and 2nd in the MENA region in the Global Fintech Rankings of 2021. The Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), a key player in this landscape, attracted over $615 million in fintech and innovation investments in 2022. These figures highlight the UAE's commitment to fostering innovation in the financial sector, making it an attractive opportunity for investors looking to capitalize on the rapid growth and potential of fintech in the region.

Source: Ministry of Economy (UAE) / UAE Embassy

Agritech

Agritech is emerging as a promising investment sector in the UAE, driven by significant financial backing and a commitment to advancing agricultural technology. UAE-based agritech companies have attracted over $50 billion in investments, representing around 1.1% of the global capital invested in this sector, reflecting the nation's dedication to agricultural innovation and sustainability.

The UAE ranked 23rd globally and 1st in the MENA region in the Global Food Security Index 2022, further highlighting its strategic focus on food security. Indoor farming, which includes companies like Aranya Farms and Merlin Farms, stands as the largest subsector in the UAE's agritech industry. With a projected 3.5% CAGR between 2022-2027, the sector is poised for robust growth. In addition, The UAE's agritech industry has attracted major foreign investors, with the USA and Switzerland each contributing 6.3% and the UK 3.1% of the investments, demonstrating international confidence in the UAE's agricultural technology potential.

Source: Ministry of Economy (UAE) / UAE Embassy

Healthcare

The UAE is positioning itself as a leading hub for world-class healthcare in the Middle East, with significant growth and investment opportunities. The Dubai Industrial Strategy 2030 and the Abu Dhabi Vision 2030 highlight the pharmaceutical industry as a key sector for development, given its strong growth prospects, export potential, and economic impact. Healthcare spending in the GCC grew at a 4.9% CAGR from 2020-2023, with the UAE and KSA accounting for 80% of this expenditure. By 2026, pharmaceutical sales in the UAE are expected to reach USD 5 billion, and overall healthcare spending is forecast to reach around 6% of GDP, up from nearly 4.3% in 2018.

The UAE's influence in the regional healthcare ecosystem is evident, with 44 out of the top 100 healthcare leaders in MENA being based in the UAE. In addition, Dubai's healthcare market is poised to play a pivotal role in driving the Middle East and North Africa healthcare sector from USD 144 billion in 2020 to USD 243 billion by 2023. To meet this demand, Dubai alone will require an additional 8,300 physicians and 8,800 nurses by 2025. Furthermore, In 2021, international visitors spent USD 198 million on healthcare in Dubai, reflecting the emirate's growing status as a medical tourism destination. Overall revenue in the UAE healthcare sector is expected to hit USD 10.7 billion by 2025, underscoring the UAE's commitment to becoming a central player in the global healthcare market and offering a robust environment for investment.

Source: Ministry of Economy (UAE) / UAE Embassy

E-Commerce

E-commerce in the UAE is rapidly expanding, presenting substantial investment opportunities. Between 2019 and 2021, e-commerce sales surged by 92%, reaching USD 5 billion in 2021 from USD 2.6 billion in 2019. The market is expected to grow further, with revenues projected to hit USD 8 billion by 2025. This growth is driven by a highly connected population, with 99.01% of UAE residents being internet users and 58.1% accessing the internet via mobile devices. Furthermore, 88% of UAE residents have engaged with at least one emerging payment method, and over 50% are active users of digital wallets.

The shift from cash to digital payments is significant, with 75% of digital consumers using credit/debit cards for online transactions and 21% relying on digital wallets. High social media engagement also supports e-commerce, with 73% of users accessing Facebook multiple times a day and 68% using it to learn about brands. The UAE's e-commerce landscape is further bolstered by a 66% increase in per capita spending expected over the next three years, and a strong inclination towards cross-border shopping, particularly from China, India, and the USA.

Source: Ministry of Economy (UAE) / UAE Embassy

Talent Retention

The UAE's strategic focus on attracting and retaining global talent has made it a prime destination for professionals seeking both career opportunities and a high quality of life. Dubai and Abu Dhabi consistently rank among the most desirable cities globally, with both cities appearing in the top 10 of their respective city groups according to BCG's 2023 report. The UAE's appeal is further highlighted by a net inflow of 23,000 skilled professionals in cutting-edge fields like AI, robotics, and cybersecurity between January 2020 and April 2021, as reported by LinkedIn. This influx reflects the nation's commitment to embracing future technologies, with the UAE workforce doubling its digital skills from 2015 to 2020. The UAE's leadership in innovation and talent competitiveness is underscored by its first place ranking in the Middle East on the 2021 Global Innovation Index and its position among the top 25 countries in the 2022 Global Talent Competitiveness Index. Dubai and Abu Dhabi also rank 3rd and 5th as the world's most desirable destinations for foreign workers, according to BCG's 2020 workforce mobility survey, solidifying the UAE's status as a global hub for talent.

Source: Ministry of Economy (UAE) / UAE Embassy

Promising Sectors in Kuwait

Top Promising Sectors in GCC - Kuwait

Kuwait

10 Infrastructure and Construction

20 Environmental Services Sector

30 Air, Maritime & Land Transport Sector

40 Healthcare & Pharmaceutical Sector

50 Financial Services & Banking Sector

Infrastructure and Construction

Kuwait's infrastructure sector is rapidly expanding to meet the demands of its growing population and economic development. Significant investments are being made across various subsectors, including desalination plants, power generation, and the establishment of economic and industrial zones. These developments align with Kuwait National Vision 2035, which prioritizes sustainable infrastructure and supports the country's broader goals under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030. For instance, Kuwait is focused on enhancing water and energy resources, with freshwater production set to increase and a target of meeting 15% of energy demand through renewable sources by 2035. These initiatives provide substantial opportunities for investors interested in contributing to Kuwait's
infrastructural development.

Kuwait's infrastructure sector also offers considerable investment potential in power generation, both from traditional fuel sources and renewable energy. With electricity production projected to grow significantly by 2028 reaching 100126 M.kWh , there is a clear demand for new power generation facilities. Additionally, the development of new economic and industrial zones across the country will cater to various competitive industries, creating further opportunities for investment. These zones are strategically located in the north, south, and west of Kuwait, making them accessible and well-positioned for growth. For investors looking to enter a market with robust government support and long-term growth prospects, Kuwait's infrastructure projects present an attractive opportunity.

Source: Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority

Environmental Services

Kuwait presents significant investment opportunities in the environmental services sector, particularly in solid waste recycling and management. With over 18.6 million tons of solid waste generated in 2019 and only 20% of it being recycled, the country has substantial room for improvement. The solid waste management sector has been growing at a CAGR of 10.2%, indicating increasing demand for innovative solutions and technologies to handle this waste effectively. Investors have the chance to enter a market that not only addresses a critical environmental challenge but also offers promising returns as Kuwait prioritizes sustainable practices.

The solar energy sector in Kuwait is another area ripe for investment, especially as the country aims to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels. Currently, only 1% of Kuwait's total energy capacity comes from renewable sources, highlighting a significant gap and a tremendous opportunity for growth. Kuwait has set ambitious targets to reduce carbon emissions by 7.4% by 2035 and to achieve the lowest possible emissions by 2050, further underscoring the need for substantial investment in renewable energy. With these targets in mind, there is a clear need for investment in solar and other renewable energy projects. This sector offers investors the chance to be part of Kuwait's transition to a more sustainable energy mix, which is crucial for the country's long-term environmental and economic goals.

In wastewater treatment, Kuwait is also seeking to expand its capacity to manage its growing urban population and industrial activities. The capacity for wastewater treatment is expected to increase to 1.35 million cubic meters per day with the implementation of new projects. This expansion provides investors with the opportunity to contribute to essential infrastructure that supports sustainable water management, a key component of Kuwait's environmental strategy. Given the country's commitment to improving its environmental impact and managing its resources efficiently, investing in wastewater treatment projects aligns well with Kuwait's broader goals for sustainable development.

Source: Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority

Air, Maritime & Land Transport

Kuwait's transport infrastructure sector presents significant investment opportunities as the country embarks on expansive projects aimed at boosting its connectivity and trade. With massive investments planned, these initiatives will enhance the quality of life for residents, improve international trade routes, and contribute to economic diversification. The country's commitment to developing its transport infrastructure aligns with the Kuwait National Vision 2035 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on innovation, infrastructure, and sustainable urban development.

The marine transport sector offers lucrative opportunities, with over USD 4.3 billion earmarked for port infrastructure development. Kuwait's ports handled nearly 46.5 million tons of cargo in 2019, highlighting the critical role these facilities play in the region's trade dynamics.

In land transport, Kuwait is making substantial investments in its rapid transit and rail systems, with over USD 30 billion allocated for the Kuwait Metropolitan Rapid Transit System and the Kuwait National Railroad projects. With over 750,000 square meters of land earmarked for facility management, there are significant opportunities for long-term contracts, making this a promising sector for investment.

The air transport sector also holds considerable potential, with Kuwait International Airport seeing 15.5 million passengers in 2019. As the country develops its aviation infrastructure, there are opportunities for investors to secure long-term facility management contracts at one of the regions' key travel hubs. These projects underscore Kuwait's commitment to modernizing its infrastructure, providing a strong foundation for sustained economic growth and diversification.

Source: Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority

Healthcare & Pharmaceutical

Kuwait's healthcare sector presents significant investment opportunities, driven by one of the highest healthcare expenditures in the GCC. With a growing population and rising health issues, the demand for advanced healthcare infrastructure is escalating. The Kuwaiti government's commitment to healthcare is evident in the substantial budget allocation of USD 8.9 billion for 2021–2022, reflecting a 12.93% increase from the previous year. This investment is part of Kuwait's National Vision 2035, which prioritizes high-quality healthcare and aligns with global sustainable development goals.

One key area for investment is pharmaceutical manufacturing. Currently, Kuwait has only one pharmaceutical manufacturer, creating a considerable opportunity for investors to enter the market, particularly in the production of generic drugs. Despite the presence of major international pharmaceutical companies like Pfizer, AstraZeneca, and Novartis, they operate through local partnerships, highlighting the potential for establishing local manufacturing to reduce dependency on imports and meet the growing demand.

In addition to pharmaceuticals, there are significant opportunities in the development and expansion of hospitals.

The government has allocated USD 538.2 million for specialty hospitals and USD 5.04 billion for general hospitals. These investments are aimed at enhancing healthcare services to meet the increasing needs of the population. With a higher hospital bed ratio compared to the GCC and MENA regions, but still below OECD standards, there is ample room for further development in this sector. Investors can contribute to Kuwait's healthcare goals by participating in the expansion of hospital facilities and improving access to high-quality medical care.

Source: Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority

Financial Services & Banking

Kuwait is positioning itself as a leader in the digital banking revolution, driven by the Central Bank of Kuwait's strategic push towards modernization. With 79.8% of the population above 15 years old holding a bank account, and 80-90% of people expressing willingness to adopt digital banking solutions, the demand for these services is on a rapid rise. Kuwait's financial sector is robust, with banks reporting an increase in customer numbers, revenues, deposits, and profitability due to the adoption of digital banking. This ongoing digital transformation aligns with Kuwait's Vision 2035, offering a promising landscape for innovation and growth in financial services.

The insurance sector in Kuwait presents a compelling investment opportunity, bolstered by regulatory reforms and a growing market. With 37 insurance companies operating in the country, including 15 Takaful insurers, the sector saw substantial growth, with the Gross Written Premium (GWP) rising from USD 0.8 billion in 2016 to USD 1.136 billion in 2020, at a CAGR of 9.2%. The market is dominated by non-life insurance, which makes up 89.1% of the total sector.

Moreover, Kuwait's consumer finance and brokerage services sectors are thriving, with consumer finance growing at a CAGR of 6.7% from USD 36.7 billion in 2016 to USD 47.7 billion in 2020, further increasing to USD 51.3 billion by August 2021. Installment loans make up 88.7% of the total consumer financing, with consumer loans accounting for 37.3% of all loans extended by the banking sector. With a prevailing interest rate of 6.0% and a well-regulated brokerage market, there is considerable potential for investors to engage in both consumer finance and stock broking activities. The volume of securities traded on Boursa Kuwait also saw a significant increase, reaching 84.6 billion shares in 2021, up from 52 billion in 2020 and 39 billion in 2019.

Source: Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority

Promising Sectors in Oman

Top Promising Sectors in GCC - Oman

Oman

1. Circular Economy
2. Healthcare
3. Manufacturing
4. Renewable Energy
5. Tourism

Circular Economy

Oman is targeting to divert 80% of municipal solid waste into recovery, recycling, and reuse by 2030, with plans to reduce per capita waste from 1.2 kg/day to less than 1 kg/day by 2040. These goals create significant investment opportunities in waste management infrastructure and recycling technologies, aligning with Oman's vision for a sustainable future.
The country's push toward a circular economy emphasizes the need for durable, reusable, and recyclable products. This shift opens opportunities for investors in developing innovative materials and sustainable product designs that reduce reliance on non-renewable resources and support Oman's low-carbon goals.

Oman's move from traditional waste management to a resource recovery model, aiming for zero waste to landfills, offers substantial potential for investment in technologies that support recycling and circular supply chains. Investors can play a crucial role in driving Oman's transition to a more sustainable and resilient economy.

Source: Invest Oman

Healthcare

Oman's healthcare sector, with over 70,000 employees and 88 hospitals housing 7,000+ beds, is poised for significant growth. The sector's spending reached $4.9 billion in 2022, and with the bed requirement expected to grow at a CAGR of 3.2%, there will be a need for 1,100 new beds. The introduction of mandatory health insurance in 2019 and the Dhamani Unified Health Insurance Scheme, which connects 1,700 healthcare providers, highlights the increasing demand for healthcare services. Additionally, Oman will need an additional 13,000 medical professionals by 2040, presenting significant investment opportunities in healthcare infrastructure, workforce development, and service provision.

Looking ahead, there is a strong emphasis on digitalization within Oman's healthcare industry, particularly in telemedicine, mobile health, and medical technology, which is set to enhance patient care and accessibility. The Omani government's focus on strengthening health research, especially in biomedical technology and pharmaceuticals, alongside an increased push for the local manufacture of medical equipment, presents ripe opportunities for investment in innovation and production. There is also a rising demand for specialized healthcare services, such as pediatrics, gynecology, and oncology, and increased investment in primary healthcare and disease prevention to alleviate the strain on hospitals. Furthermore, the growing interest in immunity management, vitamins, supplements, and food therapies indicates expanding market potential in health and wellness sectors.

Source: Invest Oman

Manufacturing

Oman’s manufacturing sector made a significant contribution to the economy, adding $8 billion to GDP in 2021 and employing over 225,000 people in 2022. The sector saw a notable rise in non-oil exports, with an impressive 15% increase from July 2021 to July 2022. Within this growth, mineral products surged by 165%, plastics and rubber by 57.1%, and base metals by 32.5%. These figures underscore the robust expansion of Oman’s manufacturing base, driven by diversification efforts and the country’s rich natural resources. Looking ahead, Oman’s manufacturing sector is set to capitalize on its abundant natural resources, focusing on industries such as petrochemicals, construction, and building materials like cement, marble, and gypsum. The sector is also targeting growth in capital-intensive industries, including the production of electrical equipment, machinery, and shipbuilding. Additionally, with the adoption of Industry 4.0, there are promising opportunities for investments in knowledge-driven areas like pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, renewable energy, and recycling. These developments present a compelling case for investors to explore opportunities in Oman’s evolving manufacturing landscape.

Source: Invest Oman

Renewable Energy

Oman is making notable advancements in its renewable energy sector, with a goal to generate 30% of its electricity from renewable sources by 2023. The country is leveraging its vast natural resources, including over 50,000 km² of land that is ideal for solar and wind energy development. These resources provide a substantial foundation for Oman's transition to a sustainable energy future. In line with this vision, the government has established Hydrogen Development Oman, a dedicated entity to oversee and drive the country's energy transition, particularly focusing on the development of green hydrogen, a key area of growth in the global energy market.

Oman's commitment to becoming a leader in renewable energy is further evidenced by its national alliance, Hy-Fly, which brings together public and private institutions to support and accelerate green hydrogen projects. This alliance is critical in positioning Oman as a major player in the emerging hydrogen economy. The country's efforts in renewable energy have not gone unnoticed, as it was ranked third in the MENA region by Bloomberg NEF's Climate scope for its progress in renewable energy transition. Moreover, Oman has set an ambitious target of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, reinforcing its dedication to environmental sustainability and long-term economic growth.

Source: Invest Oman

Tourism

Oman's tourism sector presents compelling investment opportunities, particularly as the country seeks to enhance its international tourism profile post-COVID-19. In 2021, tourism contributed 2.4% to the national GDP, and the sector is poised for significant growth. The number of hotel stays by European tourists saw a remarkable 578% increase between January and September 2022, highlighting the rising interest in Oman as a travel destination. Muscat International Airport also recorded a 200% increase in passenger traffic in the first eight months of 2022 compared to the same period in 2021, reflecting the country's growing appeal to international travelers.

The Omani government, through the Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran), is prioritizing the development of luxury, adventure, and eco-tourism experiences. High-profile projects like the US$12.9 billion mixed-use development Madinat Al Irfan, also known as the "City of the Future," are set to become key attractions. Additionally, Oman's strategic decision to allow citizens from 103 countries to enter without a visa for stays up to 14 days will likely boost tourist arrivals, further driving the sector's growth. Moreover, Oman's National Tourism Strategy aims to create 500,000 jobs in the sector by 2040, emphasizing the country's commitment to building a sustainable and vibrant tourism industry.

Source: Invest Oman

Promising Sectors in Qatar

Top Promising Sectors in GCC - Qatar

Qatar

1. Cybersecurity
2. Pharmaceuticals
3. Cleantech
4. E-Commerce
5. Waste Management

Cybersecurity

Qatar is rapidly emerging as a leader in cybersecurity investment within the Middle East, with its spending in this sector expected to grow significantly, reaching over $1.64 billion by 2026. This growth is driven by the Qatar National Cyber Security Strategy, which aligns with the Qatar National Vision 2030 and aims to create a secure cyberspace to protect national interests. The strategy is supported by a robust legal framework, advanced research centers like the Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI), and educational institutions like the Qatar Cybersecurity Academy (QCA). These initiatives, combined with strong government support and state-of-the-art infrastructure, make Qatar a promising destination for cybersecurity companies looking to invest in a market with high potential for growth.

Qatar's commitment to digital adoption and building a robust technology infrastructure offers substantial investment opportunities, particularly in sectors requiring advanced technological capabilities. Ranked 4th globally in 5G adoption and internet speed, with nearly 99% internet penetration, Qatar is a leader in tech infrastructure within the GCC. The country's focus on integrating advanced technology across sectors is further supported by its first national-level data protection law in the GCC, providing a secure environment for tech companies to operate.

Source: Invest Qatar

Pharmaceuticals

The global pharmaceuticals market is poised for significant growth, driven by an expanding middle class and aging population. Qatar, with its substantial investments in medical infrastructure and R&D, offers a promising environment for foreign investors. Qatar's health expenditure per capita is the highest in the GCC, and it ranks third in the MENA region for health infrastructure. Recognized as a "Healthy City" by the WHO, Doha is also gaining traction as a medical tourism destination, making Qatar an attractive market for pharmaceutical investments.

Qatar's National Health Strategy 2018-2022 supports this sector by encouraging private investment in healthcare. Government health spending is expected to grow at 5% annually until 2025, with private healthcare spending projected to increase at 9.6% annually. The country offers a streamlined pharmaceutical distribution market and enhanced access to healthcare, presenting numerous opportunities for investors. Partnerships with entities like Qatar Foundation and Sidra Medicine further enhance the environment for innovation and growth.

Moreover, Qatar provides a secure legal framework to protect intellectual property and industrial designs, ensuring a stable market for pharmaceutical companies.

The Ministry of Public Health enforces strict regulations on drug import, export, and distribution, maintaining an organized and efficient pharmaceutical market. Additionally, growing regulatory alignment within the GCC reduces barriers for foreign investors.

Source: Invest Qatar

Cleantech

Qatar's commitment to sustainable development and environmental conservation presents significant investment opportunities, particularly in the areas of renewable energy and green technologies. The country's National Environment and Climate Change Strategy aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% by 2030 and increase the use of renewable energy in total power generation. With plans to conserve over 25% of its land and enhance water management through advanced desalination technologies, Qatar is positioning itself as a leader in environmental stewardship in the MENA region. The government's focus on integrating sustainability into national and corporate planning makes Qatar an attractive destination for investors in renewable energy, waste management, and circular economy initiatives.

The energy sector in Qatar also offers substantial investment potential, especially in renewable resources. Qatar is expanding its capacity for solar energy, with major projects like the Al-Kharsaah solar power plant contributing to the country's goal of adding 800 megawatts of renewable energy. Qatar Energy's Sustainability Strategy, which includes a 35% reduction in the carbon intensity of LNG facilities and the implementation of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technologies, further underscores the country's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint. These initiatives create a favorable environment for investments in solar energy, carbon capture, and other green technologies.

Furthermore, Qatar's push towards smart cities and sustainable urban development is supported by initiatives like Msheireb Downtown, the world's first sustainable downtown regeneration project, and energy-efficient buildings targeting LEED certification. The Qatar Free Zones Authority (QFZA) supports the commercialization of smart city applications and sustainable technologies, offering incentives such as tax reductions and subsidies. These factors, combined with Qatar's robust legal framework and supportive government policies, create a compelling case for investment in the country's burgeoning sustainable technology and smart city sectors.

Source: Invest Qatar

E-Commerce

Qatar's e-commerce sector is poised for significant growth, driven by high internet and mobile penetration rates, which are among the highest globally. The country's fourth-highest GDP per capita and leadership in 5G technology provide a strong foundation for e-commerce expansion. Despite this potential, the sector remains underdeveloped, offering substantial opportunities for investment across the e-commerce value chain. With 40% of the population under 30 and the highest spending per digital consumer in the MENA region, Qatar's e-commerce market is expected to reach $4.2 billion by 2024, with an estimated growth rate of 9.4% annually from 2024 to 2029. This combination of high consumer spending power and untapped market potential makes Qatar an attractive destination for e-commerce investments.

Qatar's commitment to enhancing its digital ecosystem is evident through initiatives such as the Qatar National Vision 2030, which aims to position the country as one of the most advanced in the world. The Qatar Electronic Transactions and Commerce Law, overseen by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), supports this goal by fostering a secure and efficient e-commerce environment. Programs like Theqa, Qatar's e-commerce trustmark, and other support initiatives are designed to build trust and promote best practices among eMerchants, facilitating the sector's growth. These initiatives, combined with government support, create a favorable environment for investors looking to tap into Qatar's rapidly expanding e-commerce market.

Qatar's superior infrastructure further enhances its attractiveness as an investment destination. The country is ranked first globally for general infrastructure, with world-class logistics facilities including the best cargo airline globally, the second-best airport, and the eighth-largest container port at Hamad Port. Special economic zones like Manateq and the Qatar Free Zones Authority provide advanced infrastructure and seamless access to both local and regional markets, making Qatar a strategic hub for e-commerce and related businesses. The combination of top-tier infrastructure, government support, and a growing digital economy presents a compelling case for investment in Qatar's e-commerce sector.

Source: Invest Qatar

Waste Management

Qatar's waste management sector offers significant investment opportunities, driven by the country's commitment to environmental sustainability and ambitious targets under the Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030). The country generates approximately 8 million metric tons of solid waste annually, with nearly half of this coming from construction activities. To address this, Qatar has launched the Integrated National Solid Waste Management Program, aiming to divert 95% of waste from landfills and achieve 75% waste segregation at source by 2030. This program opens up avenues for investments in remediation, treatment, and materials recovery, making Qatar a promising hub for waste management in the MENA region.

The recycling sector in Qatar is another area ripe for investment, bolstered by the government's efforts to promote sustainability through various initiatives. The Integrated Waste Sorting and Recycling Program, launched in 2021, aims to reduce waste generation and increase recycling rates across the country. The Qatar National Development Strategy II (NDS II) supports the use of recycled materials in construction projects, presenting opportunities for businesses involved in recycling technologies and services. Additionally, Qatar's pioneering waste-to-energy (WtE) program generates over 30 megawatts of electricity from waste, highlighting the potential for further investments in WtE technologies within the GCC region.

Source: Invest Qatar

4

GCC Economic and Financial Statistics

GDP per Capital (Current Prices, USD) - 2025 f

Bahrain	29,337
Saudi Arabia	34,295
United Arab Emirates	55,781
Kuwait	31,680
Oman	20,660
Qatar	83,382

GDP Annual % change (Constant prices) - 2025 f

Bahrain	3.16
Saudi Arabia	5.97
United Arab Emirates	4.17
Kuwait	3.80
Oman	3.09
Qatar	1.99

Top Sector Contributed to GDP

Bahrain

Financial Corporation

Saudi Arabia

Government Activities

United Arab Emirates

Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles Sector

Kuwait

Public Administration, Defense and Social Security Sector

Oman

Services activities

Qatar

Construction

Bahrain

Bahrain Economy

With particular strengths in the financial services, technology innovation, manufacturing and logistics sectors, Bahrain's economy is the most diversified in the GCC region. Bahrain's economy is also one of the most open economies in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The Kingdom is well positioned to provide traders and investors with access to regional and international markets due to the free trade agreements in place, excellent infrastructure, and strong financial institutions.

Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030, which is based on the principles of sustainability, competitiveness, and fairness, aims to improve living standards, enhance the economy's competitiveness, and create job opportunities for citizens. Consequently, Bahrain views foreign direct investment as key to its long-term plan and is committed to build the Middle East's most attractive center for business through enhancing the country's existing advantages.

The Government's national economic growth and fiscal balance plan includes several initiatives aimed at developing the economy and creating quality opportunities for citizens. It is based on 5 pillars as follows:

- Create promising job opportunities and make the Bahraini citizen the first choice in the labor market. The program aims to create 20,000 Bahraini jobs and train 10,000 Bahrainis annually until 2024.
- Facilitate business procedures and increase their efficiency to attract investments worth more than $2.5 billion by 2023.
- Launch strategic projects worth more than $30 billion.
- Develop promising sectors and grow the non-oil sector by 5% in 2022.
- Enhance financial sustainability and economic stability by achieving fiscal balance by 2024.

Source: International Trade Administration, Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bahrain EDB

General Economic Statistics

Government	Contribution as a proportion of (GDP)
General Government Total Expenditure	29%
General Government Gross Debt	125%
Gross National Savings	35%
General Government Revenue	21%

Other Economic Indicators	
Inflation (Dec 2023)	-0.3%*
Total investment	28%

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024 – Information and EGovernment Authority*

Bahrain GDP

Bahrain's economy is expected to grow by 3.16% in 2025, according to the IMF's forecasts.

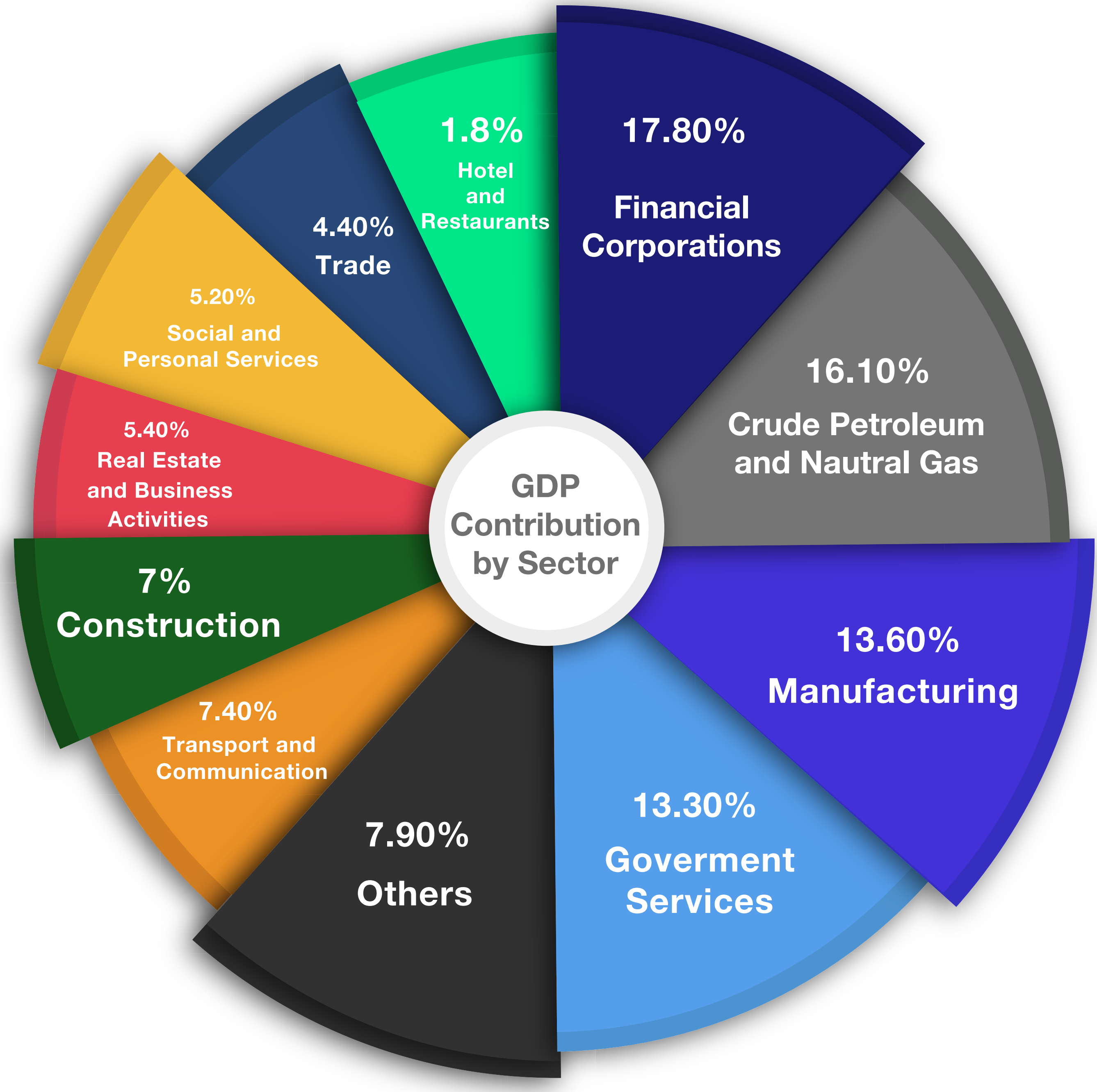
	2021	2022	2023 f	2024 f	2025 f
GDP (Current prices, billions USD)	39.29	44.38	44.67	46.79	48.73
GDP (Constant prices, Annual % Change)	2.59	4.89	2.62	3.57	3.16
GDP per Capita Current Prices, USD	26,116	28,782	28,262	28,876	29,337
GDP Based on Purchasing Power Parity (%)	0.054	0.055	0.054	0.055	0.055

Note
f = forecasted data
A = Actual data

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024

GDP Contribution by Sector

The Financial Corporations Sector is the highest contributor to GDP in 2023 at 17.80%, followed by the Crude Petroleum & Natural Gas Sector at 16.10% and Manufacturing at 13.60%.

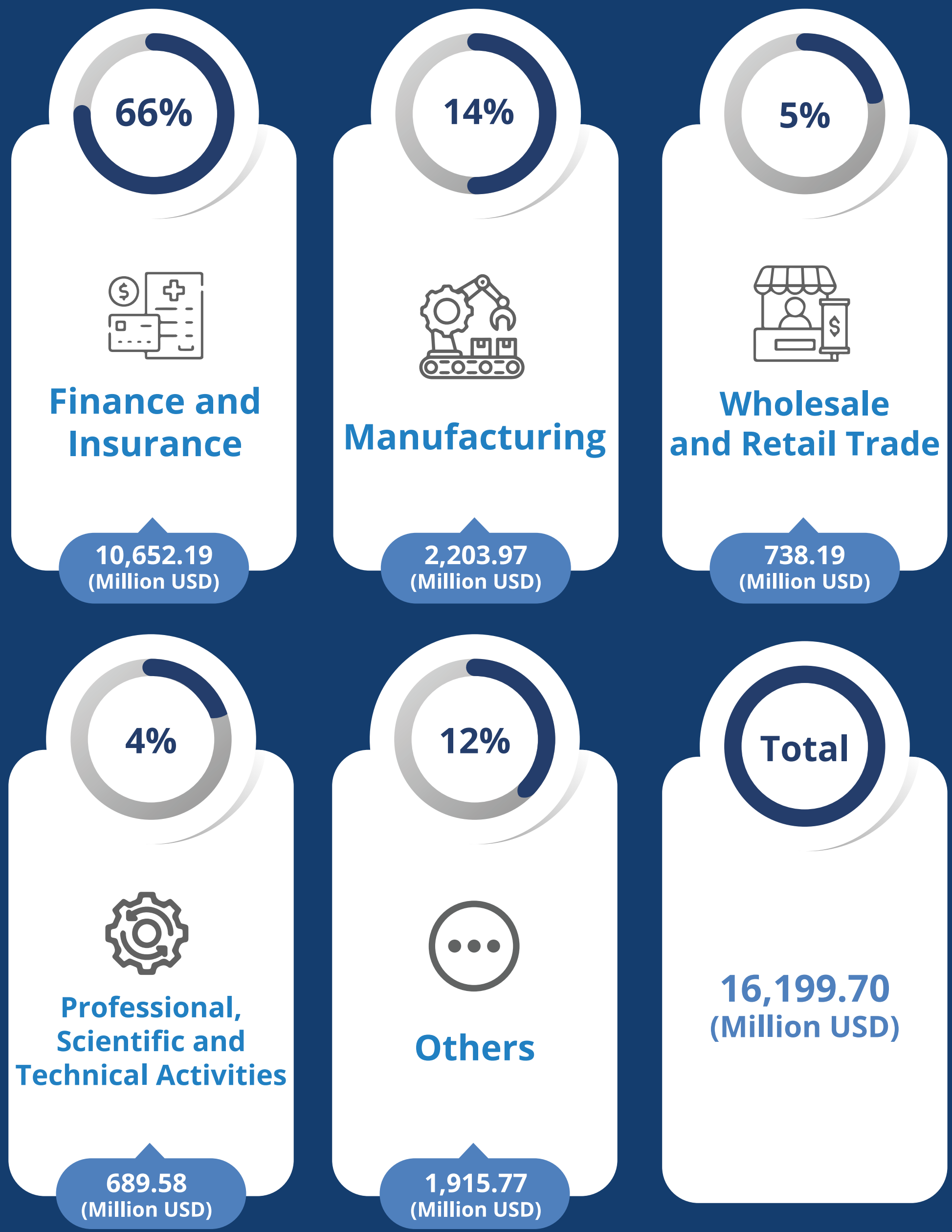


Source: Information and EGovernment Authority

Bahrain FDI

The Finance and Insurance sector acquired the highest share of FDI stocks in 2023, amounting to $10,652 million and constituting 66% of total inward FDI stocks. Inward FDI stocks in the Manufacturing sector amounted to about $2,204 million, constituting 14% of total inward FDI stocks. In addition, 5% of the total inflow value was injected into the Wholesale and Retail Trade sector, amounting to $738 million.

Inward Foreign Direct Investments Stocks in 2023



Source: Information and e-Government Authority Bahrain

Foreign Investment Advantages in Bahrain

100% foreign ownership in several economic activities, without the need for a local partner.

Talented workforce with exceptional skills and a very high level of professionalism.

Annual cost of operating a manufacturing business in Bahrain is 20-56% lower than that of its select GCC peers.

Access to the Gulf markets, which are worth nearly $2 trillion and include 54 million consumers.

Among the top ten attractive destinations for expatriate workers in the world.

Source: Bahrain EDB

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia Economy

The Kingdom was the fastest growing G20 economy in 2022, with non-oil GDP growing by about 4.8%, and unemployment rates among Saudis falling to their lowest historical level. It decreased to 8%, noting that Saudi women's participation in the labor market has reached a record level of about 37% (from 18% in 2017), exceeding the 30% target within Saudi Vision 2030.

As for foreign direct investment, the FDI inflow was 19,269 million USD in 2023, while the net flow of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Kingdom amounted to 12,304 million USD.

It is noteworthy that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is currently witnessing an acceleration in the pace of digital transformation and an increase in women's participation in the labor market, in addition to reforms in the regulatory and business environment, investment in human capital, and the continued growth of the non-oil gross domestic product. Saudi Vision 2030 builds a vibrant and diversified economy, works to develop promising industries, attract investments, and provide growth opportunities for entrepreneurs and job opportunities for individuals.

Source: IMF – Ministry of Finance KSA – General Authority of Statistics

General Economic Statistics

Government	Contribution as a proportion of (GDP)
General Government Total Expenditure	32%
General Government Gross Debt	26%
Gross National Savings	33%
General Government Revenue	30%

Other Economic Indicators	
Inflation (Dec 2023)	1.5%*
Total investment	29%

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024 – General Authority of Statistics*

Saudi Arabia GDP

KSA's economy is expected to grow by 5.97% in 2025, according to the IMF's forecasts.

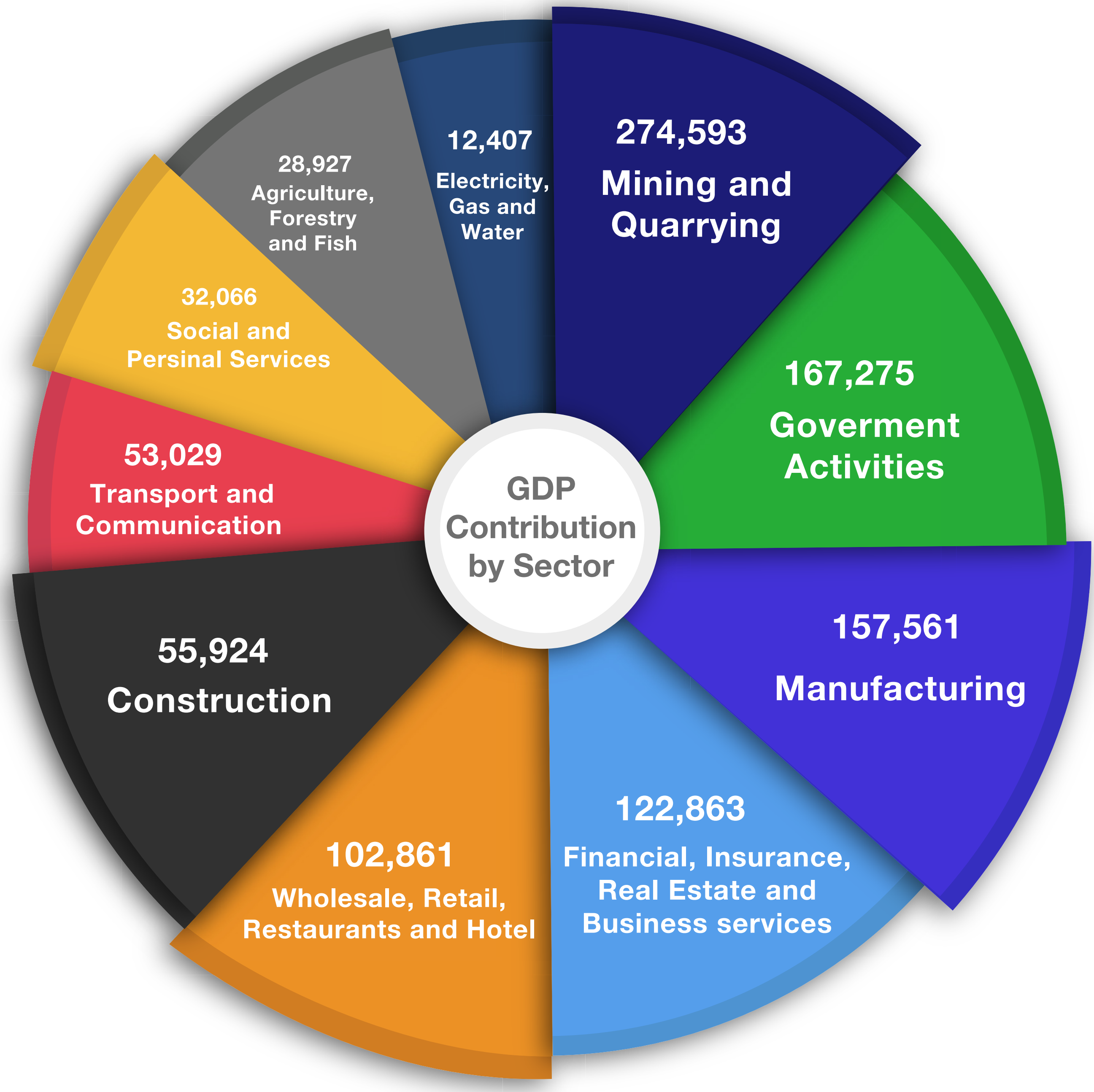
	2021	2022	2023 f	2024 f	2025 f
GDP (Current prices, billions USD)	874.16	1,108.57	1,067.58 A	1,106.02	1,171
GDP (Constant prices, Annual % Change)	5.08	7.49	-0.76 A	2.55	5.97
GDP per Capita Current Prices, USD	28,396	34,454	32,530	33,040	34,295
GDP Based on Purchasing Power Parity (%)	1.27	1.33	1.28 A	1.27	1.30

Note
f = forecasted data
A = Actual data

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024

GDP Contribution by Sector

The Mining and Quarrying Sector is the highest contributor to GDP in 2023 at 274,593 million USD followed by the Government Activities at 167,275 million USD and the Financial, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services Sector at 122,863 million USD.



The above figures were converted from the national currency to USD in October 2024

Source: General Authority of Statistics

Saudi Arabia FDI

The FDI inflow was 19,269 million USD in 2023, while the net flow of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Kingdom amounted to 12,304 million USD, taking into consideration that the FDI Stock in Saudi Arabia in 2023 amounted to 215,256 million USD with an increase of 6% compared to 2022, which was about 202,952 million USD.

Period	FDI Stock (Million USD)	FDI Net Inflow (Million USD)	FDI Inflow (Million USD)
2018	146,505	12,126	18,726
2019	148,989	3,075	8,476
2020	152,003	1,620	7,954
2021	175,497	23,083	27,219
2022	202,952	28,020	32,663
2023	215,256	12,304	19,269

The Manufacturing sector acquired the highest share of FDI in 2022, amounting to $63,606 million and constituting 31% of total FDI. FDI in the Transportation and storage sector amounted to about $29,996 million, constituting 15% of total FDI. In addition, 13% of the inflow value was injected into the Wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles sector, amounting to $25,935 million.

Saudi Arabia FDI

Sector	Foreign Direct Investments in 2022 (Million USD)	Share of Sectors (%)
Manufacturing	63,606	31%
Transportation and storage	29,996	15%
Wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	25,935	13%
Financial and insurance activities	23,044	11%
Real estate activities	16,171	8%
Construction	12,025	6%
Information and Communication	6,810	3%
Mining and quarrying	6,365	3%
Others	19,000	9%
Total	202,952	

The above figures were converted from the national currency to USD in October 2024

Source: FGCC

Foreign Investment Advantages in Saudi Arabia

Large Economy

The 18th largest economy in the world and the 1st in the Arab world and the Middle East, supported by a stable government system.

Quality Healthcare

Ranked number 26 worldwide for the quality of the healthcare system, Saudi Arabia enjoys world-class facilities and services.

Strategic Location

Saudi Arabia is located at the center of three continents which provides up to 10% distribution cost advantage to GAFTA and Arabian Peninsula markets.

Ease Of Access

Visitors from 51 countries are now able to obtain e-visas online in less than 2 hours or upon arrival, making it easier to visit and conduct business in the Kingdom.

Leading Reforms

Saudi Arabia is the first reformer and improver in the world according to the World Bank Group.

Quality Of Life

Transformation of the quality of life in the Saudi Arabia is stimulating market demand and growing the potential for investment.

Financial Investment

Saudi Arabia offers the financial benefit of having no income tax from individuals.

Source: Industrial Center - KSA

United Arab Emirates

United Arab Emirates Economy

Previously, the region's economy relied heavily on oasis agriculture, fishing, and the trade in dates and pearls. But after the discovery of oil in the 1950s, a radical change occurred in the structure of economic life in the UAE, helped by its strategic location, government spending and state policies in
economic diversification.

UAE enjoys an important strategic location between major business centers in Asia, Europe and Africa. 33% of the world's population can reach the UAE within 4 hours of flight, and 66% of them within 8 hours.

There are many free zones and specialized economic zones in the UAE, which offer several economic incentives and benefits such as tax exemption for companies, import and export duties, full ownership by foreigners without the need for a citizen sponsor, and 100% return of profits. There are about 45 free zones in the UAE.

However, UAE has allocated a budget for the year 2023, with total public expenditures presented for approval in the amount of 63,066 billion dirhams. (2.4) billion dirhams were allocated from the budget to the infrastructure and economic sector, which constitutes (3.8%) of the total general budget.

Source: Ministry of Economy – Ministry of Finance

General Economic Statistics

Government	Contribution as a proportion of (GDP)
General Government Total Expenditure	26%
General Government Gross Debt	31%
Gross National Savings	35%
General Government Revenue	32%

Other Economic Indicators	
Inflation (Dec 2023)	0.56%*
Total investment	26%

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024 – Dubai Statistics Center*

United Arab Emirates GDP

UAE's economy is expected to grow by 4.17% in 2025, according to the IMF's forecasts.

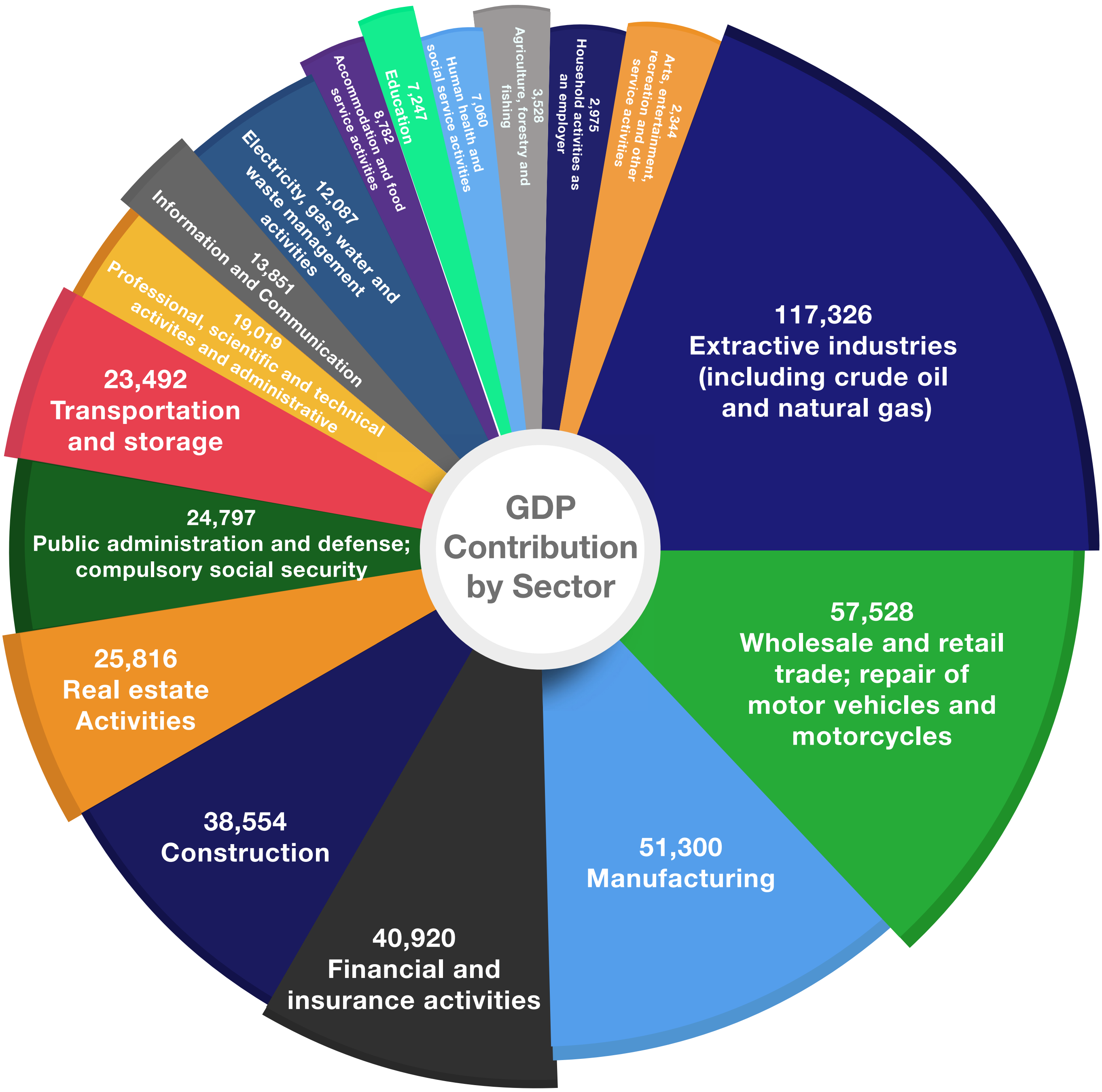
	2021	2022	2023 f	2024 f	2025 f
GDP (Current prices, billions USD)	415.18	507.06	504.17	527.80	550.24
GDP (Constant prices, Annual % Change)	4.36	7.85	3.40	3.52	4.17
GDP per Capita (Current Prices, USD)	43,439	52,625 f	51,909	53,916	55,781
GDP Based on Purchasing Power Parity (%)	0.49	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.52

Note
f = forecasted data
A = Actual data

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024

United Arab Emirates GDP

The Extractive industries (including crude oil and natural gas) Sector is the highest contributor to GDP in 2023 at 117,326 million USD followed by Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles Sector at 57,528 million USD and the Manufacturing Sector at 51,300 million USD.



Source: FGCC

United Arab Emirates FDI

The foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to the UAE in 2023 amounted to about 30.688 billion US dollars, compared to 22 billion and 737 million US dollars in the previous year 2022, with a growth rate of about 35%, ranking second globally in FDI inflows in 2023, and the cumulative balance of inward FDI inflows rose to about 201.6 billion US dollars. The UAE has signed approximately 107 agreements with its trading partners to protect and encourage investments.

Inward Investment

(Billion US dollars)

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
8.5	9.6	10.3	10.3	17.8

2020	2021	2022	2023*	Cumulative
19.8	20.7	22.7	30.688	201.6

Source: FGCC

Foreign Investment Advantages in United Arab Emirates

Strategic Location

where the East meets West.

Infrastructure

state of the art transportation and logistics infrastructure.

Talent

competitive destination for the world’s top talent.

Connectivity

leading ICT connectivity in a competitive digital society.

Innovation

a hub for digital transformation.

Investment Outlook

divers growth opportunities with government support.

Quality of Life

commitment to residents’ happiness.

Ease of Business

a clear and transparent regulatory environment.

Source: Abu Dhabi Investment Office

Kuwait

Kuwait

Kuwait Economy

Kuwait follows a free-market policy within the framework of a liberal economic system, making its markets a hub for free trade. Under the Unified Customs Law of the GCC countries, customs duties on most goods imported from outside the customs union are capped at 5%. However, tobacco and cigarettes are subject to a 100% customs duty, while over 400 types of goods are exempt from customs duties altogether. There are no quantitative or standard-based restrictions on imports, although imported goods must comply with Kuwaiti standards.

Kuwait has embraced a free trade system for over 350 years. The country's relationship with trade has always been more than just an economic activity, it has been a deep historical and cultural connection. In the past, trade was the primary livelihood for Kuwaitis and a vital link to ancient global civilizations. Kuwaiti ships sailed across the seas to reach places like Zanzibar in the south and the shores of India in the east, while desert caravans transported goods to the northern regions. Over time, Kuwait expanded its trade relations, developing strong commercial ties with the countries of the West and increasing its global trade connections.

Source: Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry

General Economic Statistics

Government	Contribution as a proportion of (GDP)
General Government Total Expenditure	51%
General Government Gross Debt	3.18%
Gross National Savings	53%
General Government Revenue	80%

Other Economic Indicators	
Inflation (Dec 2023)	3.4%*
Total investment	20%

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024 – NBK*

Kuwait GDP

Kuwait's economy is expected to grow by 3.8% in 2025, according to the IMF's forecasts.

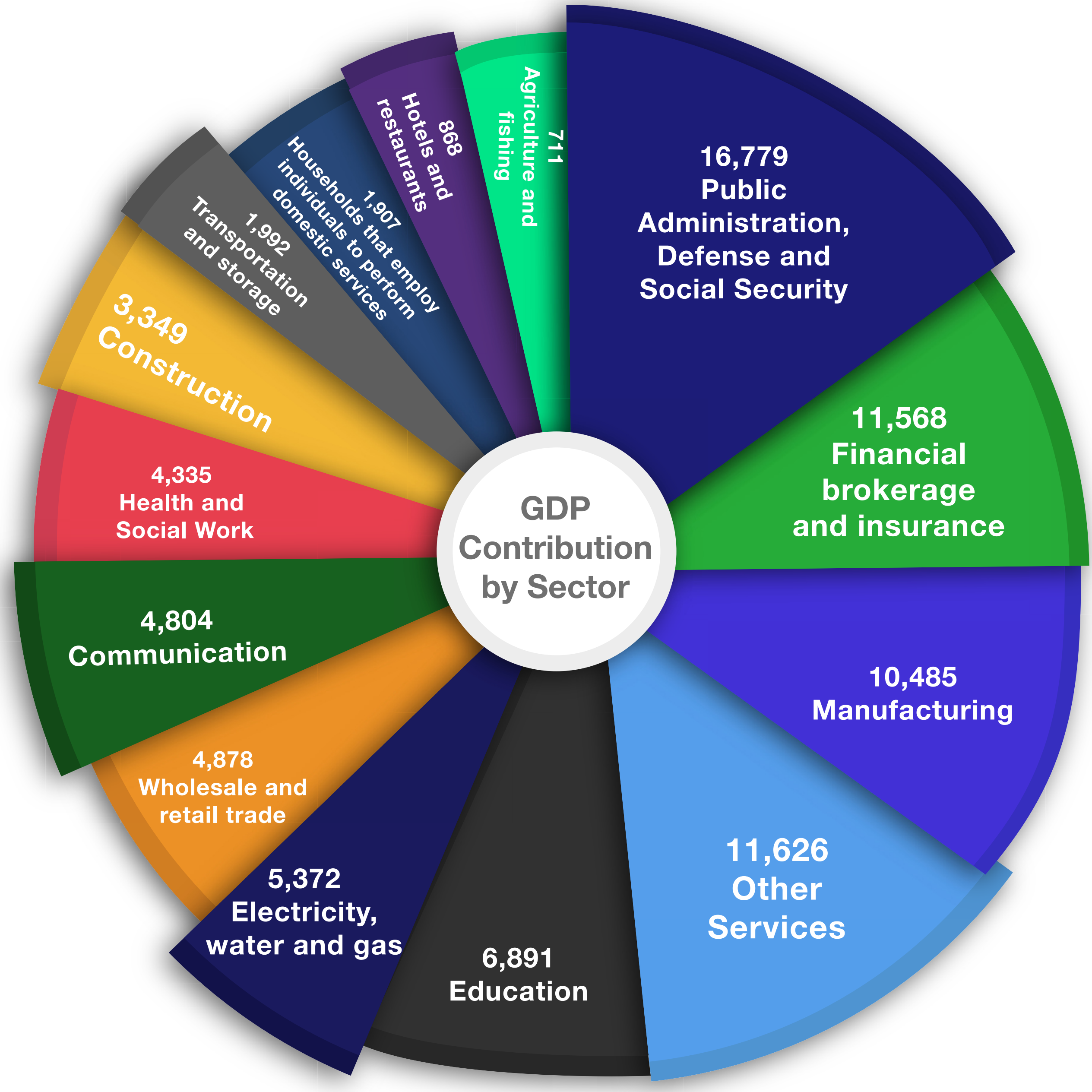
	2021	2022	2023 f	2024 f	2025 f
GDP (Current prices, billions USD)	141.77	182.85	161.78	160.40	163.38
GDP (Constant prices, Annual % Change)	1.70	6.14	-2.23	-1.44	3.80
GDP per Capita (Current Prices, USD)	29,757	37,625	32,638	31,724	31,680
GDP Based on Purchasing Power Parity (%)	0.153	0.157	0.149	0.142	0.143

Note
f = forecasted data
A = Actual data

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024

GDP Contribution by Sector

The Public Administration, Defense and Social Security Sector is the highest contributor to GDP 2023 at 16,779 million UDS followed by the Other Services Sector at 11,626 million USD and the Financial brokerage and insurance at 11,568 million USD.



The above figures were converted from the national currency to USD in October 2024

Source: Central Bank of Kuwait

Foreign Investment Advantages

Substantial Government Resources

Kuwait is a founding member of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. It has the 6th largest oil reserves globally, estimated at around 101.5 Bn barrels.

Private Sector Involvement

Increasing the involvement of the private sector is a key priority for the Government under its diversification program.

Significant Infrastructure Development

Kuwait is promoting unprecedented levels of infrastructure development activity aimed at realizing its long-term vision of diversifying the economy and transforming Kuwait into one of the leading hubs for trade & logistics in the Middle East.

Encouraging Macroeconomic Environment

WEF's Global Competitiveness Report ranks Kuwait at 3rd position among 140 countries in terms of overall macroeconomic environment and 1st position for Government budget balance as a percentage of GDP.

Enabling 100% Foreign Ownership in Business

Kuwait Government is making concerted efforts towards facilitating both local and foreign investment in Kuwait.

Cost Competitiveness

Kuwait is cost competitive in terms of power, water, land and labor. Power tariffs are subsidized by up to 86% by the Government with tariffs as low as US 1 cent/KWh for residential users and farms and US 0.5 cent/KWh for industrial users.

Source: Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority

Oman

Oman Economy

Oman strategically overlooks the Strait of Hormuz, a key passage to the Gulf and a critical conduit for two-thirds of global oil exports. Positioned along major trade routes between East and West, Oman benefits from easy access to markets in the Middle East, India, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Europe.

While oil revenues have fueled rapid economic growth, the government has proactively pursued a development strategy aimed at diversifying the economy, promoting industrialization, and encouraging privatization to reduce reliance on the oil sector's contribution to GDP.

On the other hand, Oman Vision 2040 serves as the nation's roadmap for overcoming challenges, staying aligned with regional and global shifts, and capitalizing on opportunities to enhance economic competitiveness, improve social well-being, and foster growth.

With significant investments in infrastructure and efforts to facilitate access to both local and international markets, Oman continues to attract businesses from diverse sectors, further driving economic development.

Source: Foreign Ministry of Oman

General Economic Statistics

Government	Contribution as a proportion of (GDP)
General Government Total Expenditure	26%
General Government Gross Debt	36%
Gross National Savings	26%
General Government Revenue	32%

Other Economic Indicators	
Inflation (Dec 2023)	0.62%*
Total investment	24%

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024 - National Center for Statistics and Information*

Oman GDP

Oman's economy is expected to grow by 3.09% in 2025, according to the IMF's forecasts.

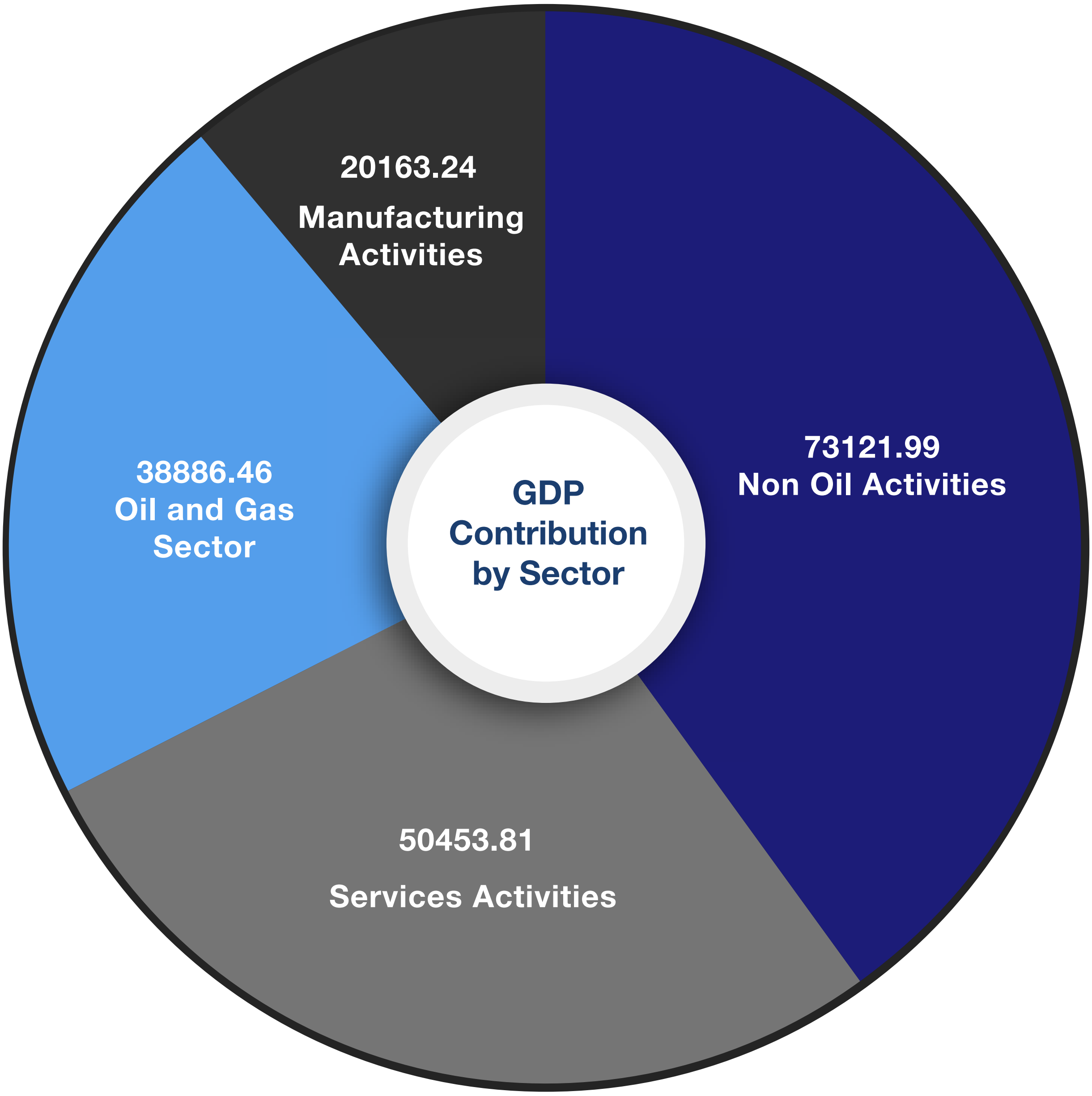
	2021	2022	2023 f	2024 f	2025 f
GDP (Current prices, billions USD)	88.20	114.67	109.13	108.93	111.05
GDP (Constant prices, Annual % Change)	3.10	4.31	1.31	1.20	3.09
GDP per Capita (Current Prices, USD)	19,652	23,447	21,623	20,913	20,660
GDP Based on Purchasing Power Parity (%)	0.115	0.116	0.114	0.112	0.112

Note
f = forecasted data
A = Actual data

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024

GDP Contribution by Sector

The non-oil activities Sector is the highest contributor to GDP in 2023 at $73,122 million USD followed by the services activities at $50,454 million USD.



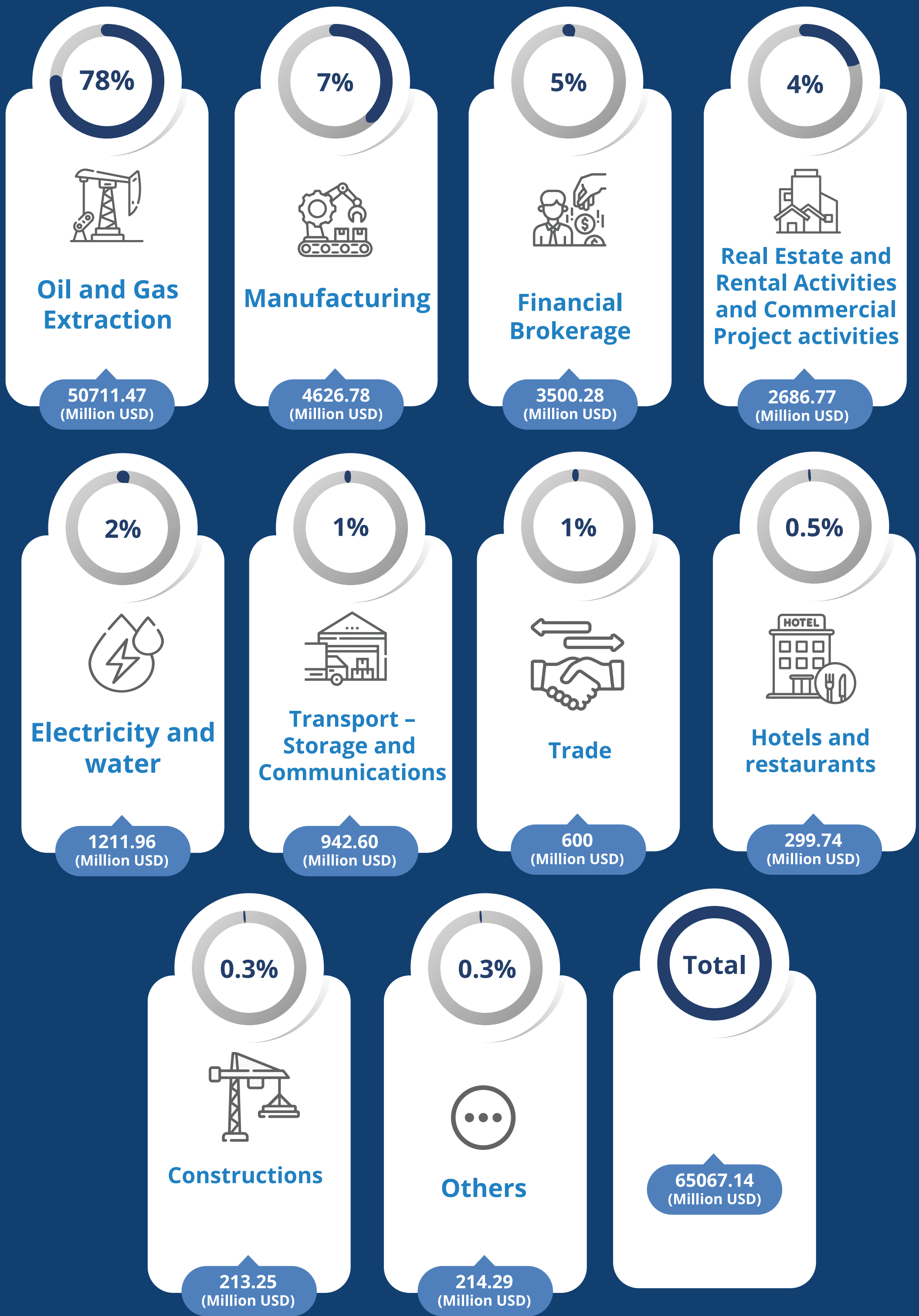
The above figures were converted from the national currency to USD in October 2024

Source: Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Oman FDI

The Oil and Gas Extraction sector acquired the highest share of FDI in 2023, amounting to $50,711 million and constituting 78% of total FDI. FDI in the Manufacturing sector amounted to about $4,627 million, constituting 7% of total FDI. In addition, 3% was injected into the Financial Brokerage sector, amounting to $3,500 million USD.

Inward Foreign Direct Investments Stocks in 2023



The above figures were converted from the national currency to USD in October 2024

Source: Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Foreign Investment Advantages

Robust Evolving Economy

Oman has a fast diversifying economy with local-to-global growth prospects. In an effort to diversify Oman's economy, the government is focused on developing.

Cost of doing Business

The World Bank ranks Oman as one of the most cost-effective countries in the Middle East for doing business in terms of labor, utilities, facilities, transportation, financing costs and taxes.

Strategic Location

Oman is at the nexus of trade routes and at the heart of the GCC market with its 59mn consumers. Plus, the neighbour the growing markets of Asia and Africa. By 2025, emerging markets will account for US$30tr of consumer spend - nearly half the global total. location and world-class infrastructure, reaching these markets from Oman is easy.

Intellectual Capital

Oman has an abundance of intellectual capital. Our higher education institutes have a track record of working with industry to deliver innovation across major sectors.

Foreign Investment Advantages

Framework for Success

Providing a framework that supports successful investment and business in Oman are the industrial estates, free zones, special economic zones and technology parks – all future-ready and thriving hubs of enterprise and innovation.

Top Talent

Oman has a qualified, capable and productive workforce equipped with the in-demand skills needed by ambitious companies as the power forward in domestic and international markets is the National Training Fund. Companies in Oman also benefit from the contributions of talent from across the world.

Natural Resources

Oil, gas, minerals, metals, seafood, and other natural resources of Oman give producers access to a ready supply of raw materials. Our strategic position and logistical network offer a dependable supply for any additional resources that may be imported, keeping costs down because production inputs and machinery are exempt from import charges.

Economic and financial plans

By aligning financial policies with the needs of economic growth through a set of economic and financial plans, Oman Vision 2040 seeks to achieve financial sustainability without harming the government’s capacity to carry out the vision’s economic and social goals, With the aim of encouraging the private sector, attracting investments, and attracting competencies.

Source: Invest in Oman

Qatar

Qatar Economy

Today, the Qatari economy is one of the strongest economies in the region, and among the most promising economies globally. Over the past years, the State of Qatar has succeeded in consolidating its advanced position on the global economic map.

Qatar has given the energy sector the necessary attention as an important source for expanding the base of the national economy by working to increase the production capacity of natural gas through the expansion of the North Field for natural gas, which will increase its production of liquefied natural gas by 46% to 126 million tons annually by 2027.

Qatar's move towards adopting open economic policies and establishing a diversified economy has contributed to enhancing the attractiveness of the investment environment by launching important projects that embody the values of partnership between the public and private sectors and provide promising investment opportunities in the logistics, food security, education, health, tourism and sports sectors.

Source: Government Communications Office

General Economic Statistics

Government	Contribution as a proportion of (GDP)
General Government Total Expenditure	24%
General Government Gross Debt	39%
Gross National Savings	57%
General Government Revenue	30%

Other Economic Indicators	
Inflation (Dec 2023)	1.59%*
Total investment	-

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024 – Planning and Statistics Authority*

Qatar GDP

Qatar's economy is expected to grow by 1.99% in 2025, according to the IMF's forecasts.

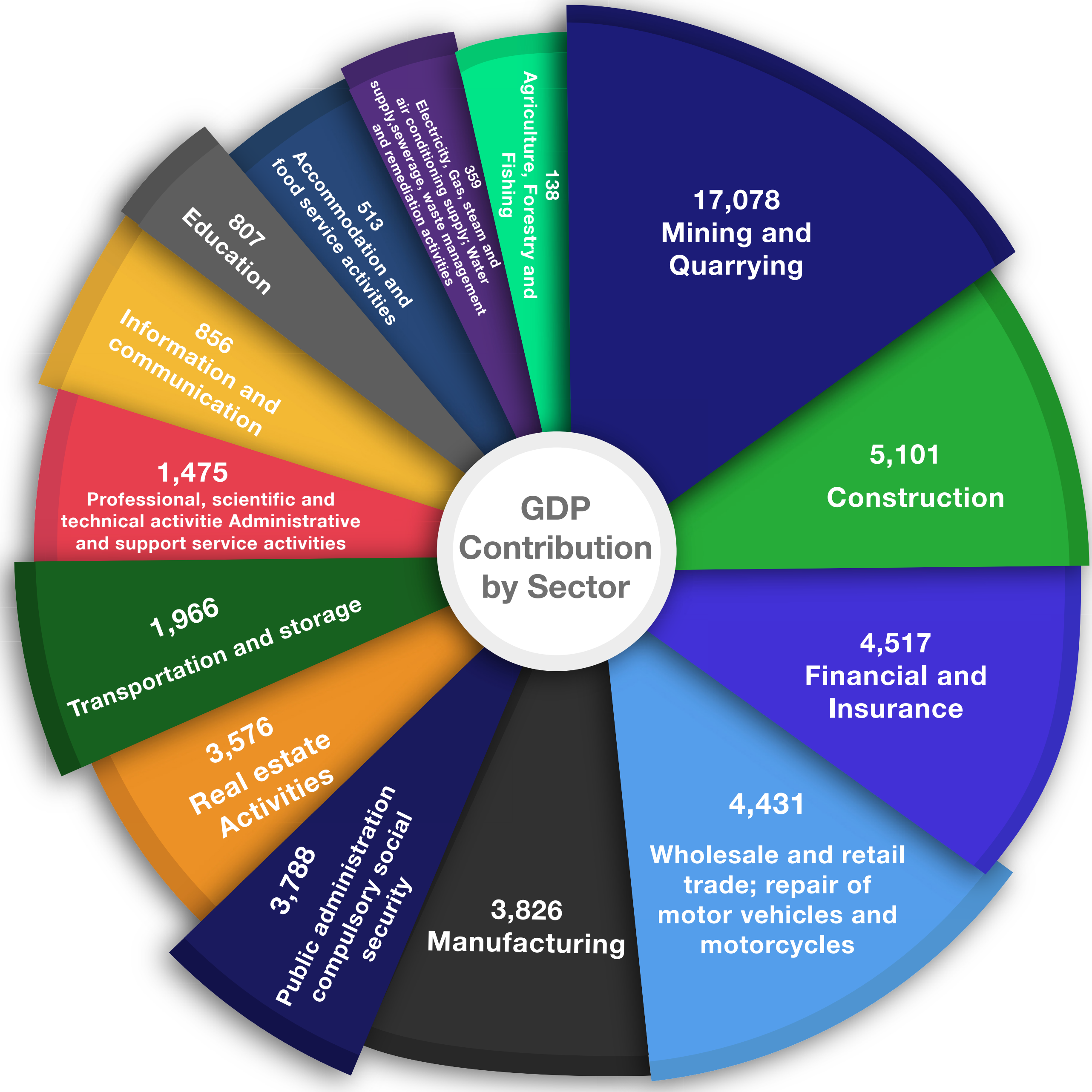
	2021	2022	2023 f	2024 f	2025 f
GDP (Current prices, billions USD)	179.73	236.26	234.22	244.69	251.90
GDP (Constant prices, Annual % Change)	1.63	4.20	1.56	1.99	1.99
GDP per Capita (Current Prices, USD)	65,401	80,573	78,696	81,400	83,382
GDP Based on Purchasing Power Parity (%)	0.185	0.187	0.184	0.182	0.180

Note
f = forecasted data
A = Actual data

Source: IMF – World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024

GDP Contribution by Sector

The Mining and Quarrying Sector is the highest contributor to GDP in Q4 2023 at 17,078 million USD followed by the Construction Sector at 5,101 million USD and the Financial and Insurance at 4,517 million USD.



• The above figures were converted from the national currency to USD in October 2024

Source: National Planning Council of Qatar

Qatar FDI

Inward Investment / Financial Liabilities to Non-Residents

Foreign Direct Investment in Qatar in Q1 2019 was 0.11 billion USD, the Foreign Portfolio Investment was 1.57 billion USD and the Foreign Other Investment was 0.58 billion USD in Q1 2019.

Functional Type of Investment

Foreign Direct Investment	Foreign Portfolio Investment	Foreign Other Investment	Financial Derivatives
0.11	1.57	0.58	-0.082

Flows during the quarter* (Bn USD) Q1, 2019

Total
2.17

The above figures were converted from the national currency to USD in October 2024

Source: National Planning Council of Qatar

Foreign Investment Advantages

Up to 100% foreign ownership in all sectors.

Double Taxation Agreements (DTA) with 80+ countries.

10% corporate tax rate.

No restrictions on profit repatriation.

Zero tax on personal income.

Single-window registration services to simplify commercial registration.

Expanded economic zones (with Tax Holidays).

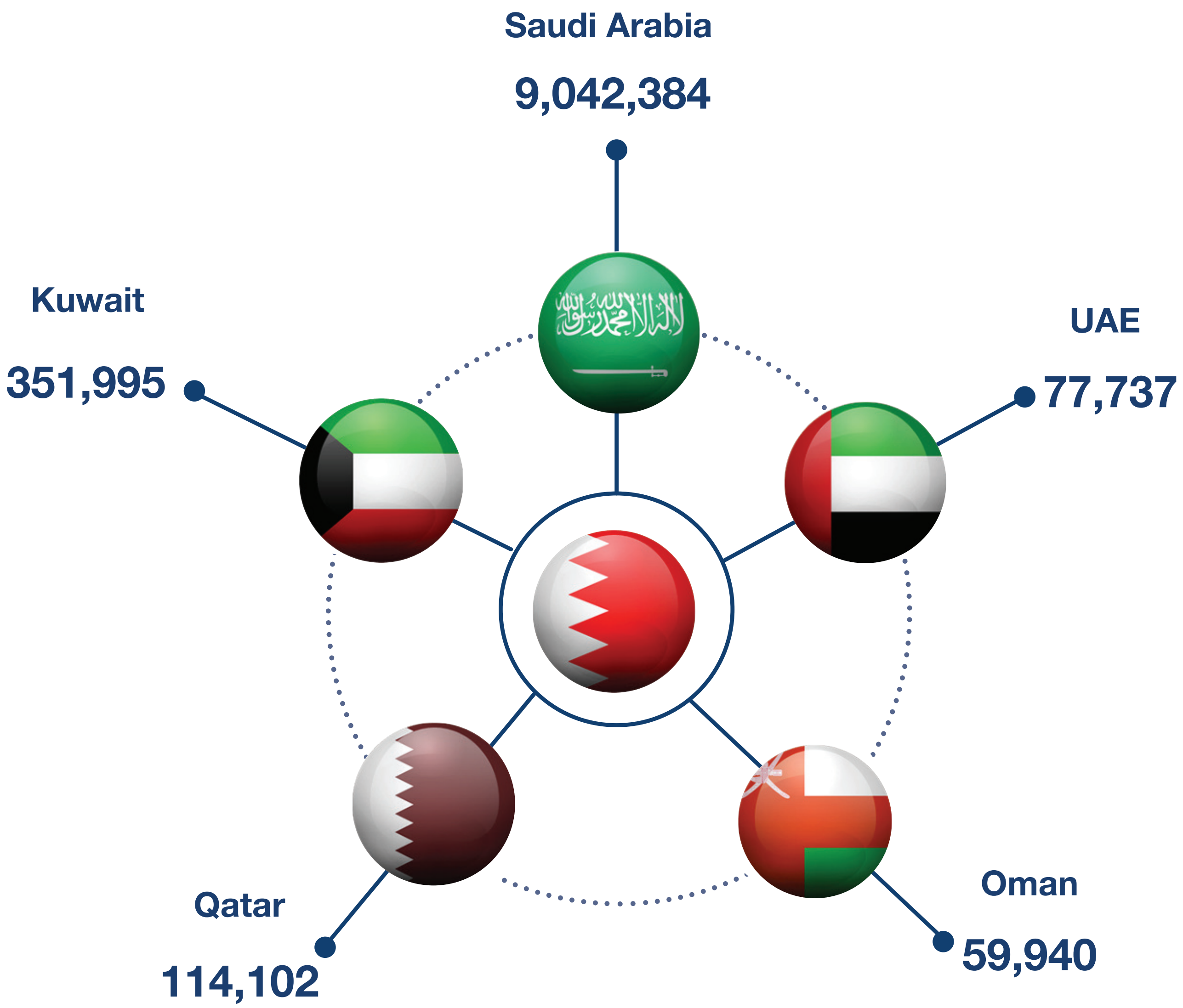
Access to the international court for alternative dispute resolution (QICDRC).

Source: Invest Qatar

5

Gulf Nationals in Bahrain

Number of arrivals of Gulf nationals



Source: Information and EGovernment Authority

Education

	Number of Students in Schools (2023)	Number of Students in Higher Education Governmental and Private (2023)
	585	1561
	11	11
	40	828
	130	183
	60	14

Source: Information and EGovernment Authority

Economy & Real Estate

					
Property owned by Gulf Nationals (2023)	719	812	656	33	187
GCC Shareholders in Joint Stock Companies in Bourse (2023)	27,069	8,224	13,805	1,374	2,195
Number of Licenses Granted to Gulf Nationals to practice commercial activities (2023)	429	97	69	29	0
Number of Licenses Granted to Gulf Nationals to practice commercial activities (cumulative) (2023)	20,677	2,075	2,279	1,236	979

Source: Information and EGovernment Authority

Workers

	Number of Gulf Nationals Working in Public Sector (2023)	Number of Gulf Nationals Working in Private Sector (2023)
	170	384
	7	4
	4	28
	13	115
	3	4

Source: Information and EGovernment Authority

غرفة البحرين
BAHRAIN CHAMBER

Since its inception in 1939, the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) has played a prominent role in shaping the national economy of Bahrain and creating a vigorous private sector. It has kept abreast of the fast-paced economic and social developments, and consolidated its efforts to stimulate the growth and expansion of the private sector and empower its role in the economic development of the country alongside the public sector.

The confidence bestowed upon the chamber by the esteemed government reinforced its influence on economic decisions and streamlined its endeavor to create an attractive ecosystem that fosters the flourish of businesses .
In addition, the growing base of its members contributed to reinstating its standing as the sole representative of the private sector and an advocate of its interest.