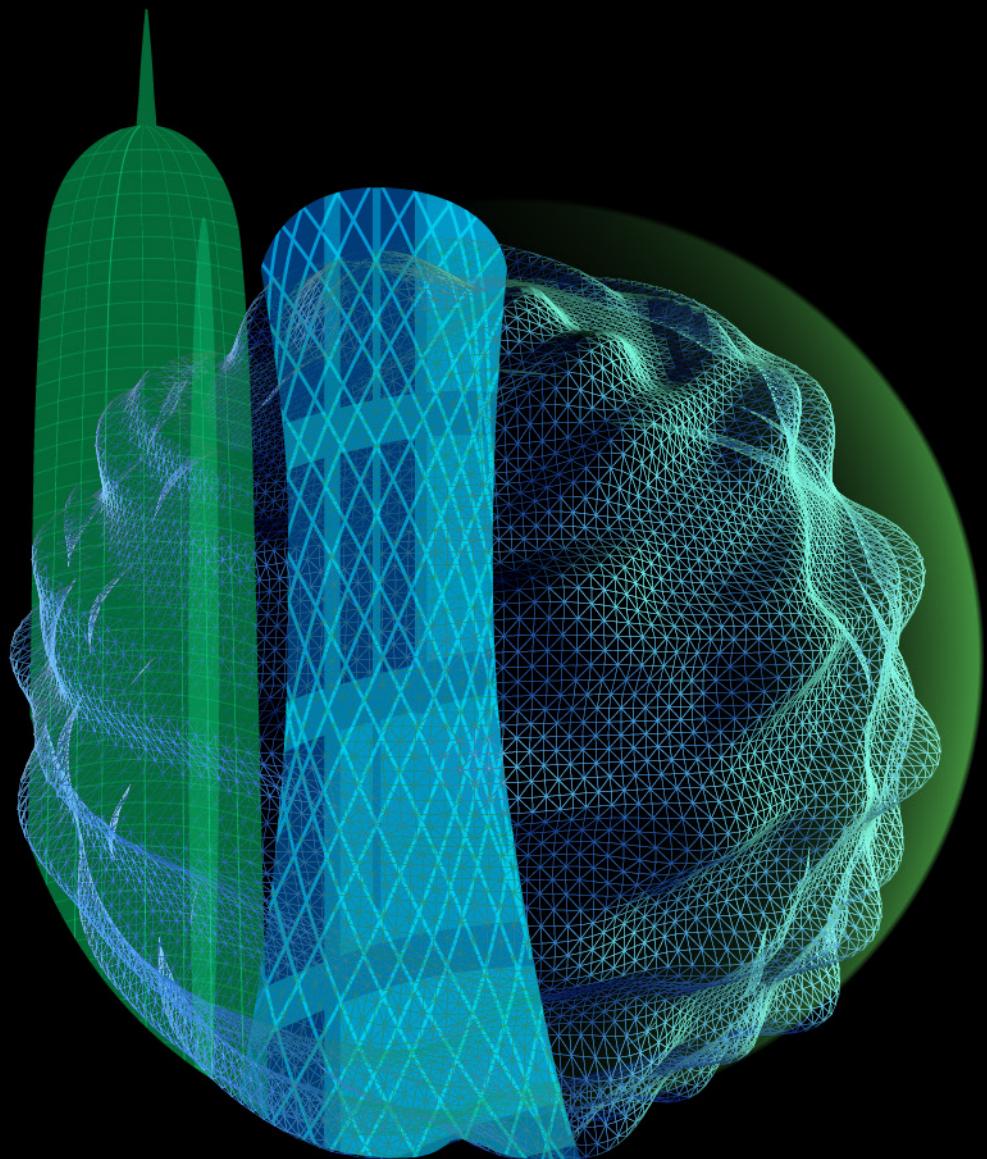


# Deloitte.

## Qatar business 101

### The ultimate tax guide for foreign investors



November 2025

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# Introduction

Qatar continues to strengthen its position as a global business hub, offering a dynamic and investor-friendly environment supported by robust economic growth, strategic reforms, and a commitment to sustainability. As we move into 2025, Qatar's evolving tax framework and economic diversification efforts provide exciting opportunities for businesses looking to invest or expand in the region.

**Strategic location** Qatar's strategic location at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa makes it an ideal gateway for businesses seeking access to major global markets.

**Economic growth** With a positive economic outlook, Qatar's economy is projected to grow steadily in 2025, driven by its thriving energy sector and significant investments in infrastructure and non-hydrocarbon industries. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasts Qatar's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth at 2.6%, reflecting the country's resilience and commitment to diversification.

**Tax updates** Recent developments in Qatar's tax framework reflect its alignment with global standards and its focus on creating a transparent and equitable business environment:

**Global Minimum Tax Implementation:** Effective 1 January 2025, Qatar has adopted the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) 2.0 framework, introducing a 15% global minimum tax for multinational enterprises with revenues exceeding EUR 750 million. This includes measures like the Income Inclusion Rule (IIR) and Domestic Minimum Top-Up Tax (DMTT).

**Expanded Compliance Obligations:** Enhanced reporting requirements now apply to economic substance regulations and beneficial ownership disclosures, ensuring greater transparency. **Penalty Relief Initiative:** Businesses can take advantage of the General Tax Authority's

Financial Penalty Exemption Initiative which has been extended until 31 December 2025.

Qatar is investing significantly in artificial intelligence through initiatives like Digital Agenda 2030. The AI market is projected to reach USD 567 million by 2025, with Generative AI (GenAI) playing a transformative role across sectors including healthcare, education, finance, and government services.

Building on momentum from President Trump's Gulf tour—which catalyzed major AI investment deals—Qatar is actively positioning itself as a global AI infrastructure centre, alongside Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The country has launched a large-scale AI joint venture backed by a USD 10 billion investment in compute and AI development, reflecting its commitment to becoming a regional innovation leader.

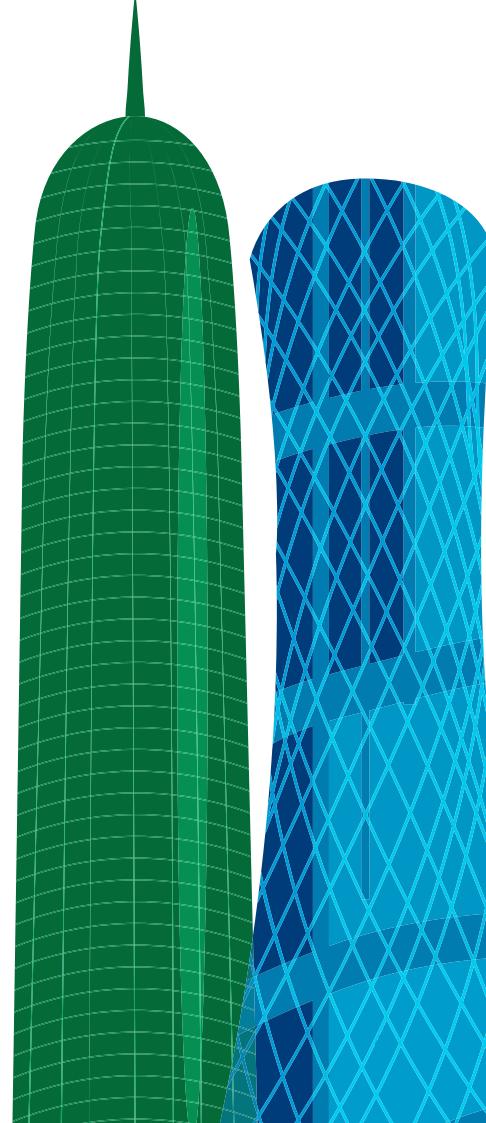
Supporting this ambition, Qatar offers 0% to very low corporate income tax (CIT) rates in the Qatar Free Zones (QFZ) and Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), along with government-backed grants for engineering talent and digital infrastructure. These incentives are designed to attract global AI firms and position the country as a hub for cutting-edge technology and talent.

**Diversified economy** Qatar continues to invest heavily in non-energy sectors such as logistics, healthcare, education, tourism, sports, and technology. These efforts are supported by incentives in Free Zones and Special Economic Zones (SEZs), fostering innovation and foreign investment.

**High-quality infrastructure** Qatar boasts world-class infrastructure, including advanced transportation networks, ports, airports, and digital connectivity. These developments support seamless business operations and enhance Qatar's appeal as a regional hub for trade and investment.

**Sustainable Development** Aligned with its National Vision 2030 goals, Qatar remains committed to sustainability through green technologies, energy efficiency projects, and eco-friendly infrastructure initiatives that reduce carbon emissions while promoting economic growth.

This guide provides foreign investors with comprehensive insights into Qatar's evolving legal, regulatory, tax, labor, and immigration frameworks to help them navigate opportunities in this dynamic market effectively.



# About Qatar

Qatar has established itself as one of the world's leading producers and exporters of liquified natural gas

Occupying 11,571 km<sup>2</sup> around the western coast of the Arabian Gulf, the State of Qatar, a peninsula, is a sovereign state in the Middle East that stresses on the importance of national economic development through diversifying sources of income and attracting foreign direct investment in various business sectors.

Based on the most recent population index published by the Qatar Statistics Authority, the current population of Qatar stands at 2.77 million, comprising of 313,000 Qataris and 2.4 million expatriates. Qatari laws and customs follow the Islamic traditions (Sharia) and the State operates under a civil legal system. The capital city is Doha and Arabic is the official language, although English is widely spoken and commonly used in business transactions.

Since 2013, the country has been governed by His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar. The monetary unit is the Qatari Riyal, which is divided into 100 sub-units called Dirhams. The Qatari Riyal is pegged to the US dollar for QAR 3.65 for 1 USD.

Qatar has established itself as one of the world's leading producers and exporters of liquified natural gas. Qatar's petroleum and petrochemical sector is the major contributor to the State's revenue, driving the economic growth and high per capita income levels. From 2022 onwards, Qatar plans to spend approximately US\$50 billion on the North Field Expansion to retain its status as a global leader in the liquified natural gas.

## **Qatar's National Vision 2030**

Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030) is a comprehensive vision that aims at transforming Qatar into an advanced country by 2030, capable of sustaining its own development and providing a high standard of living for all its people and the future generations to come. Launched in 2008 by the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, QNV 2030 was followed by the National Development Strategy as an outlined roadmap for the government to achieve the vision's goals

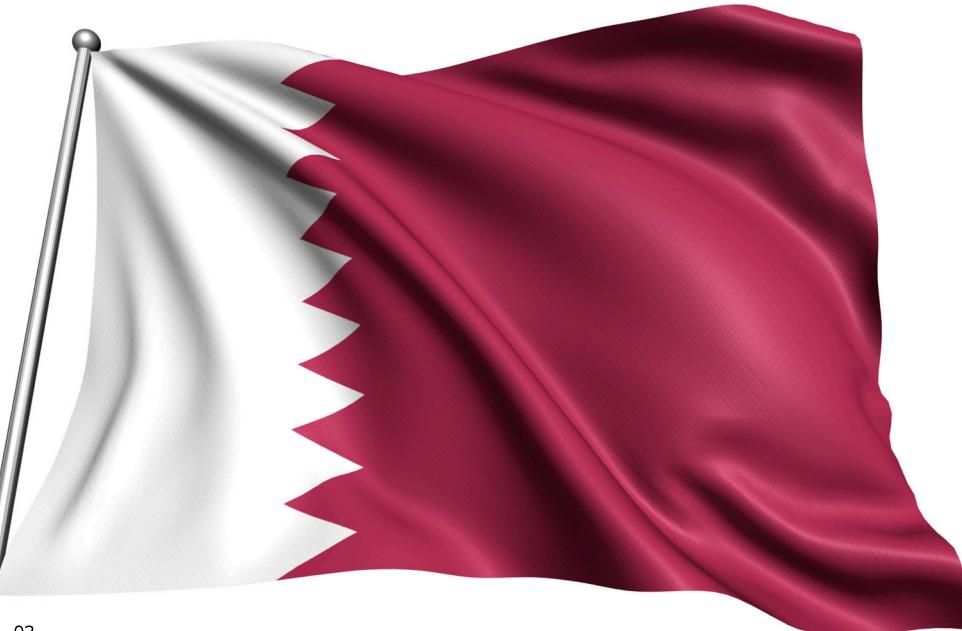
in an efficient manner. The QNV 2030 has four pillars as per the following:

**1- Economic development:** The QNV 2030 aims to diversify the economy, including investing in non-oil and gas sectors to create a knowledge-based economy.

**2- Social development:** The QNV 2030 aims to develop a caring society with high moral standards that has an active role in global development.

**3- Human development:** The QNV 2030 aims to develop the skills and knowledge of Qataris so that they can contribute to the country's development.

**4- Environmental sustainability:** The QNV 2030 aims to protect Qatar's environment and to develop sustainable practices through balancing the harmony among economic growth, social development, and environmental protection.





# Legal and regulatory framework

## Recent amendments

The legal framework for foreign investors in Qatar was reformed after hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup. These reforms made it easier for foreign investors to do business in the country. These reforms include amendments to the following laws:

- The Commercial Companies Law was amended to allow 100% foreign ownership of businesses in most sectors.
- The Foreign Investment Law was amended to allow foreign investors to own real estate in newly designated areas.
- The Investment Promotion Law was amended to simplify the investment approval process and provide more protection for foreign investors.

## Entering the market

The State of Qatar provides business entrepreneurs and companies opportunities to work in a dynamic business environment and a promising market. Qatar continues to implement new legislation aimed at liberalizing the business environment for foreign investors and to introduce incentives and innovative solutions for ease of doing business.

There are currently three business regimes available in Qatar:

1. The mainland regime regulated by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry;
2. The Qatar Financial Centre regime regulated by the Qatar Financial Centre Regulatory Authority; and
3. The Qatar Free Zone regulated by the Qatar Free Zones Authority.
4. Qatar media center.

## Mainland establishments

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) facilitates businesses fast-tracking their reach to domestic and foreign markets by providing ease of doing business and support with efficient legal entity set-ups in the State of Qatar. The Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP), which is part of the mainland regime, provides a suitable setting for companies and business owners to develop the latest

technology, as well as dedicate an office space and an incubation center that aims to accelerate the establishment of tech companies.

All businesses operating in the mainland must obtain a commercial registration from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry as well as a trade license from the Ministry of Municipality affairs. A computer card is also required from the Ministry of Interior to carry out the immigration function in the mainland.

## Qatar Financial Centre

The Qatar Financial Centre (QFC), a business and financial center located in Doha City, was created by QFC Law No. 7 of Qatar and has been open for business since 2005. The QFC works with businesses primarily in the sectors of banking, insurance and reinsurance, asset management, representative offices, and other sectors supporting financial firms (e.g., accounting, audit, consulting, law firms, and others) and operates a separate tax system to that of the State of Qatar. If a business operates within the QFC, it will be subject to QFC tax rules and will not be subject to State of Qatar tax rules.

Domestic and foreign businesses can benefit from QFC's extensive range of legal and regulatory services, both regulated and non-regulated, that are aligned with international best practice:

- **Regulated activities (financial services):** banking, asset management, insurance/reinsurance, Islamic finance, alternative finance, fund administration, fund advisory, and fiduciary businesses; and
- **Non-regulated activities:** professional and business services, family offices, corporate solutions, and not-for-profit organizations.

## Salient features of the QFC regime

- QFC allows full foreign ownership, 100% profit repatriation, and an attractive income tax rate of 10% on domestically sourced profits. Additionally, QFC's legal system operates in line with the English Common Law, making the regime attractive to foreign investors.

- Full repatriation of profits and capital (through dividends).
- No withholding tax in the QFC.
- An election for special exempt status is available for certain vehicles including registered funds and charities.
- Provisions are in place for QFC entities providing Islamic financial services or entering into Islamic finance transactions to ensure that the tax treatment is comparable to that available to non Shar'iah compliant institutions and conventional transactions.
- QFC has an advance tax ruling procedure in place.
- Furthermore, there are no restrictions on visas and employment, and QFC provides support with respect to dealings with the immigration department in order to obtain work visa requirements. QFC has an independent regulatory tribunal and court, and the legal system followed in the QFC is based on the English Common Law.

## Free Zone establishments

The Qatar Free Zone Authority (QFZA), established in 2018, is an independent authority which oversees and regulates Free Zones in Qatar. The Authority was established by Law No. 34 of 2005, as amended by Legislative Decree No. 21 of 2017. The QFZA has been established with the aim to build world-class Free Zones in Qatar attracting top international companies, which would contribute to the uphill economic growth of the State of Qatar. The QFZA focuses on logistics, chemicals, maritime industries, heavy manufacturing, emerging technologies, and industrial sectors.

As of now, the available Free Zones under QFZA are:

1. Ras Bufontas - the airport free zone; and
2. Umm Al Houl - the seaport free zone.

The QFZA has an independent regulatory team which develops tailored regulations for foreign investors as they deem fit with their operations. Foreign investors have the option to establish limited liability companies or branch entities depending on the requirement of the company.

## **Qatar media center**

Media City Qatar, established by Amiri Law No. 13 on May 30, 2019, is a government-backed media free-zone and creative ecosystem located in Doha's business district, which relocated its permanent headquarters to Msheireb Downtown Doha in September 2024. Serving as a regulator, developer and investor, it offers streamlined media licensing, 100% foreign ownership, corporate tax exemptions and customs-free benefits to broadcasters, digital publishers, content creators, gaming studios and AI-based media firms. Through its partnership with the Qatar Financial Centre (QFC), approved companies can register seamlessly and access financial and operational incentives, including fee waivers for early years. Media City Qatar has attracted global players such as Bloomberg, CNN and dpa, supports over 200 licensed companies — many of them startups — and continues to spearhead Qatar's goal of becoming a global hub of media innovation aligned with its National Vision 2030.

## **Most common forms of business entities available in the mainland regime**

Type of business entity	Description and key consideration
<b>Limited liability company (LLC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 1 shareholder and a maximum of 50</li> <li>No minimum capital requirement according to the current commercial law</li> <li>Unless a special ministerial approval is obtained for 100% foreign ownership under the Foreign Investment Law, foreign investors can generally own up to a maximum of 49% of the share capital</li> <li>Dividend rights can be higher than 49%</li> </ul>
<b>Branch of a foreign parent</b>	<p>There are two types of branches:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Temporary branch - Registered to execute a contract with a Qatari government or quasi-government entity. It is temporary and limited to the life of the project(s). Can execute more than one government/quasi-government project, but must be registered in the commercial registry of the branch maintained by the MOCI</li> <li>Permanent branch - Generally set up for professional services businesses such as lawyers, consulting engineers, public accountants, and medical doctors. These professionals practicing in Qatar must obtain a license from their respective regulators, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lawyers – by the Ministry of Justice</li> <li>Consulting engineers – by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture</li> <li>Medical doctors – by the Ministry of Public Health</li> <li>Public accountants – by the Department of Commerce at the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>General partnership company</b>	Formed between 2 persons or more and partners assume joint responsibility to the extent of all their funds for the partnership's obligations
<b>Simple partnership company</b>	<p>Consists of two categories of partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jointly and severally liable: those who run the company and are jointly and severally liable for the company's obligations in all their fortune.</li> <li>Sleeping or silent: those who have invested capital in the company but shall not be liable for the company's obligations only to the extent of their shares in the capital</li> </ul>
<b>Sole proprietorship company</b>	In the course of applying the provisions of this Law, every economic activity, the capital of which is fully owned by one natural person or corporate entity
<b>Shareholding company</b>	Capital is divided into tradable shares that are equal in value. These shares are traded on Qatar Exchange. Shareholders shall not be liable for the company's debts and liabilities except to the extent of the value of their shares
<b>Private shareholding company</b>	Several founding shareholders, not less than 5 persons, may establish a private shareholding company. Shareholders shall subscribe to all the shares of the company. Capital shall not be less than two million Qatari Riyals. Expect for provisions governing public subscription, listing, and trading. Governed by provisions applicable to shareholding companies
<b>Holding company</b>	A shareholding, limited liability or sole proprietorship company that financially and managerially controls another one or more companies
<b>Representative office</b>	Usually registered by non-Qatari companies for the primary purpose of marketing and sales. It is generally a cost center and does not generate any revenue or carry out the trading or any other business activity of the main entity



# Taxation in Qatar

## Recent amendments

Qatar has formally published the Pillar Two provisions in line with the global anti-base erosion (GloBE) or "Pillar Two" model rules by the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework on BEPS. These provisions are effective starting January 2025.

A 15% global minimum corporate tax rate will be applied to multinational companies and enterprises with foreign operations that generate annual revenues exceeding EUR 750 million. This includes Qatari companies with foreign operations as well as foreign companies with branches in Qatar.

Furthermore, Qatar has implemented a top-up tax mechanism called the Qualified Domestic Top-Up Tax (QDMTT) under the Pillar Two rule. The QDMTT is designed to ensure that revenues generated within a specific jurisdiction are taxed there, ultimately benefiting the Qatari economy. If QDMTT is not implemented in the jurisdictions where Qatari multinational enterprise (MNE) groups operate, the Income Inclusion Rule (IIR) will come into effect to mandate that parent entities pay a minimum level of tax. These measures are intended to create a level playing field and ensure that MNEs contribute a minimum level of tax.

## Overview

The State of Qatar imposes annual tax on the taxpayer's taxable income. As per the recent amendments to the Income Tax Law, the sources of taxable income now includes income generated from sources outside Qatar, with exception to income related to a permanent establishment of a Qatari project situated outside Qatar.

In Qatar, the General Tax Authority (GTA) is the competent body responsible for administration of all tax laws including the Income Tax Law No. 24 of 2018 and Law No. 25 of 2018, referred to as the Excise Tax Law which regulates the application of Excise Tax on selective consumables such as tobacco, energy drinks, and carbonated beverages.

The headline corporate income tax rate is 10%. A minimum tax rate of 35% is applicable to companies carrying out petroleum operations or operating in the petrochemical industry.

A withholding tax rate of 5% is applicable on payments made to non-residents without a permanent establishment for services performed wholly or partly in Qatar, consumed in or for the benefit of a Qatari entity.

In the recent amendment to the Tax Law, Qatar has acknowledged to adopt the Global Minimum Tax of 15%, further guidance is awaited.

The State of Qatar is also a signatory of the Multilateral Tax Instruments (MLI) introduced pursuant to Base Erosion Profit Shifting (BEPS) Action Plan. Further, in line with BEPS Action Plans, the GTA has also signed various international instruments (such as FATCA, CRS, CbCR reporting, etc.) and introduced various measures to align the domestic tax laws in line with the best international tax practice, including the Economic Substance requirements which could lead to a penalty of 15% of the net income for non-compliance. Qatar has signed Double Tax Avoidance Agreements (DTAA) with over 80 countries. In addition, the concept of foreign tax credit has also been introduced which allows a Qatari-registered entity to claim credit of taxes which was paid outside Qatar.

**Please note that Qatar is yet to issue the Executive Regulations for Pillar Two.**



## Key considerations to ensure compliance with Qatar's Income Tax Law:

Key tax consideration	Description
<b>Registration with the General Tax Authority</b>	As per the recently issued amendments to the Executive Regulations, there is a new requirement for foreign projects carrying out activities in the State of Qatar that do not constitute a PE to register for tax purposes. In addition, new thresholds were introduced for tax registration and tax filing.
<b>Corporate income tax (CIT) returns</b>	To be submitted within 4 months from the end of financial year/accounting period.
<b>Withholding tax (WHT)</b>	<p>5% withholding tax is applicable on gross amount made to non-resident service provider for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Royalties and interest; and</li> <li>Any other payments for services used and consumed for the benefit of a Qatari-registered entity, irrespective of the place of performance of that service.</li> </ul> <p>Not applicable on dividends and on payments made to non-resident for procurement of goods. Returns to be submitted monthly on or before the 15th day of the month following the month of payment to the non-resident.</p> <p>Double tax treaty relief is available under what is locally referred to as "deduct and claim" mechanism that requires non-residents suffering WHT under domestic WHT regime to claim under the provisions of the applicable treaty providing evidence of tax residency. The GTA generally will test permanent establishment implication and perform additional inquiries before granting the refund.</p>
<b>Contract reporting</b>	<p>All taxpayers are required to report commercial contracts with suppliers and customers within 30 days from the effective date of contract if they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concluded with non-residents – no thresholds.</li> <li>Contract concluded with resident entities are required to be reported in case the value exceeds QAR 200,000 (for service only contracts) and QAR 500,000 (for service and supply contracts).</li> </ul>
<b>Accounting, book-keeping, and document retention requirements</b>	<p>Taxpayers are required to maintain accounting books and records under the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) framework. Audit is mandatory and must be performed by an auditor registered in the State, with exception to wholly owned Qatari entities with Share Capital less than QAR 1 million and turnover less than QAR 10 million.</p> <p>The GTA issued a circular notifying all communications, including submission of the financial statements, to be carried out in Arabic Language in accordance with the Arabic language protection law.</p> <p>Taxpayers shall maintain accounting books, registers, and documents in the State for a period of 10 years.</p>
<b>Loss relief</b>	Taxable losses can be carried over for a period of 5 years. Taxable losses brought forward as of 1 January 2019 can be utilized for only 3 years.
<b>Cessation of activity and liquidations</b>	Notification to the GTA is required within 30 days from the decision to cease activity or put company under liquidation. A no objection letter (NOL) is required from the GTA to deregister an entity at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
<b>Value Added Tax (VAT)</b>	Currently, there is no VAT in Qatar. There are speculations of the implementation of VAT in 2024.
<b>Transfer Pricing</b>	<p>Taxpayers are required to comply with the following Transfer Pricing requirements in Qatar:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Transfer Pricing disclosure form (TPDF)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicable when annual turnover or total assets exceeds QAR 10 million for the year of declaration and the taxpayer undertakes domestic and/or cross-border related party transactions</li> <li>To be submitted along with corporate income tax return, i.e., within 4 months from the end of financial year/accounting period</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Transfer Pricing master file (MF) and local file (LF)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicable when annual turnover or total assets exceeds QAR 50 million for the year of declaration and taxpayer undertakes cross-border related party transactions</li> <li>To be submitted within 60 days from the due date of filing the tax return</li> <li>Prescribed format for the MF and LF is mostly aligned with OECD Action Plan 13 three-tier documentation requirements. However, some supplementary information would be required as per instructions from the GTA.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Country-by-country reporting (CBCR)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicable when consolidated revenue of multinational group is more than QAR 3 billion in the preceding financial year. CBCR reporting requirements are applicable on ultimate parent entity (UPE) or surrogate parent entity (SPE) that are resident in Qatar</li> <li>Currently, CBC notification and CBCR filing requirements are suspended for multinational groups headquartered outside Qatar</li> <li>CBC notification needs to be submitted on or before the end of the applicable fiscal year of the reporting entity. CBC report needs to be submitted within 12 months after end of the fiscal year of the reporting entity.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

## Penalties for non-compliance

Particulars	Penalty
<b>Late filing of tax return</b>	QAR 500 per day, up to a maximum of QAR 180,000
<b>Late payment of income tax</b>	2% per month, up to a maximum of the unpaid tax amount
<b>Late payment of withholding tax</b>	2% per month, up to a maximum of 100% of the amount of tax due
<b>Failure to withhold taxes</b>	100% of the withholding tax not deducted
<b>Contravention of the following provisions:</b> - Registration with the GTA - Notify the authority of any change that can affect tax obligations	QAR 20,000
<b>Tax-exempt entity failed to file a tax return and corresponding documents</b>	QAR 10,000
<b>Failure to maintain proper accounting records and submit audited financial statements to GTA</b>	QAR 30,000
<b>Failure to report contracts/agreements/dealings to GTA</b>	QAR 10,000
<b>Failure to comply with obligations as entered by the ministry/GTA for international agreements (such as Common Reporting Standard, Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA), Country-by-Country Reporting (CbCR), etc.)</b>	QAR 500,000 (maximum)

The Qatar Free Zone Authority (QFZA), established in 2018, is an independent authority which oversees and regulates Free Zones in Qatar.

## The Qatar Financial Center (QFC)

- QFC entities are subject to a tax rate of 10% on business profits generated by the licensed firm and based on accounts prepared under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), US Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), UK GAAP, Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI), and other reporting standards.
- Tax returns must be submitted within 6 months from the financial year end
- Tax losses can be carried for an unlimited period.

Advanced rulings can be procured from the QFC tax authorities to obtain clarity on any uncertain tax position.  
No WHT applicable in the QFC.

## Free Zones

The Qatar Free Zone Authority (QFZA), established in 2018, is an independent authority which oversees and regulates Free Zones in Qatar. The QFZA focuses on logistics, chemicals, maritime industries, heavy manufacturing, emerging technologies, and industrial sectors.

Foreign investors have the option to establish LLC's or branch entities depending on the requirement of the company. There is a possibility of 100% foreign ownership and there is a 20-year corporate tax holiday for all Free Zone investors. Imports into Free Zones are usually not subject to duty; however, this is subject to the nature of company's operations, license in place, and import

procedure applicable. Details of import procedures may vary depending on the Qatar port of entry and type of goods being imported.

Free Zone entities may be required to operate a fully computerized, thoroughly auditable and accountable inventory system. The system is used to trace the exact movement of goods from the time they are imported into the Free Zone until the entity exports or disposes the goods out or within the Free Zone.

Please note that due to the fact that Free Zones are new in Qatar in practice, the above requirements have not yet been imposed. Albeit, such requirements are indeed best practice, and may be introduced in line with other GCC states.

## Foreign investment regulations

Foreign investment can be made in most sectors in Qatar provided that a legal presence is registered. For companies, at least 51% of its shares must be owned by a Qatari partner (i.e., a Qatari national or a Qatar company wholly owned by a Qatari national).

The State ratified rules allowing foreign investors to carry out fully owned (100%) investment projects in a variety of industries; however, non-Qatari investors are prohibited to invest in the following sectors:

- A. Banks and insurance companies, except those excluded by a Council of Ministers decision,
- B. Commercial agencies, and
- C. Any specific sectors advised by the Council of Ministers.

In general, foreign ownership of real estate in Qatar is prohibited; however, the Foreign Ownership of Real Estate Law permits non-Qataris/non-GCC nationals to invest in and own "real estate," defined in the legislation as "lands, buildings, and constructions thereof," in three designated projects, subject to the terms and conditions set forth by cabinet resolution.

Recently, Qatar has offered various investment incentives to non-Qatari investors such as:

1. Implementation of the Integrated GCC Customs Tariff

On January 1, 2025, Qatar adopted the Integrated GCC Customs Tariff, transitioning from 8-digit to 12-digit tariff codes. This enhancement allows for more precise product classification, facilitating customs procedures and improving statistical accuracy.

### 2. Legislative Initiatives to Boost Foreign Investment

In January 2025, Qatar announced plans to introduce three new laws aimed at attracting foreign investors:

- a) Bankruptcy Law: Establishing clear guidelines for insolvency proceedings.
- b) Public-Private Partnership Law: Encouraging collaboration between the government and private sector.
- c) Commercial Registration Law: Simplifying the process for businesses to register and operate in Qatar.

These legislative efforts are part of Qatar's strategy to attract \$100 billion in foreign direct investment by 2030.

### 3. Energy Trade Agreements

Qatar continues to solidify its position in the global energy market through strategic partnerships:

With Kuwait: In August 2024, Qatar signed a 15-year agreement to supply Kuwait with 3 million tons of liquefied natural gas (LNG) annually, starting from January 2025.

4. Compliance with International Regulations

Qatar has expressed concerns regarding new international regulatory measures:

EU Due Diligence Law: Qatar has warned that it may halt gas shipments to the European Union if new legislation imposing penalties on companies failing to meet criteria for carbon emissions and human rights is strictly enforced.

5. Assisting approved industrial projects in obtaining loans from the Industrial Development Bank and other lenders; and

6. Providing electricity, oil, water, and natural gas to the project at a reasonable cost.

## Protection of industrial and intellectual property

The Ministry of Economy and Finance is responsible for enforcing Intellectual Property (IP) laws and regulations. Specific offices, such as the Trademarks Office, the Office for the Protection of Copyright and Neighboring Rights, and the Patents and Innovation Section, have been established within this Ministry. Trademark and Copyright Laws were introduced in 2002, and a new Patent Law was passed in 2006.



## Patents

Patents are protected by Decree-Law No. 30 of 2006 on Patents Law, which provides patent protection for 20 years. A Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) patent can be obtained by registering at the Patent Office in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

## Copyrights

Copyrights are protected by Law No. 7 of 2002 on the Protection of Copyright and Neighboring Rights (the "Copyright Law") which gives protection for 50 years after an author's death, or after the first date of publication for anonymous or collective works. The law also applies to works protected by international agreements, or by an international court to which Qatar is a party. Owners of copyrights can register them with the Office of Protection of Copyright and Neighboring Rights, located at the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

## Trademarks

Trademarks are protected by Law No. 9 of 2002 on Trademarks, Commercial Indications, Trade Names, Geographical Indications and Industrial Designs (the "Trademarks Law"). Once registered, trademarks are valid for 10 years and can be renewed indefinitely. If a trademark has not been used for five consecutive years, it may be cancelled. Foreign applicants have the same rights as Qataris under this law, if they are nationals of a state that grants Qatar reciprocal treatment. In December 2006, the GCC Supreme Council approved a Unified Trademarks Law to harmonize the protection of trademark rights throughout the GCC.

## Imports and exports

Imports of goods into Qatar are regulated by Qatar Custom Law No. 40 of 2002, which implemented the regulations of the GCC Customs Union. The General Authority of Customs (GAC Qatar) is the government authority responsible for monitoring importation and exportation of goods in and out of the State in accordance with the governing legislation.

## Partnership Renewal to Enhance 'Al Nadeeb' System:

In December 2024, the General Authority of Customs renewed its partnership with Malomatia to further develop the 'Al Nadeeb' system. This collaboration focuses on enhancing digital transformation, improving customs operations efficiency, and incorporating advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things (IoT).

In addition, Qatar has focused on enhancing its existing free zones rather than establishing new ones.

### Key updates include:

- **Ras Bufontas Free Zone:** Partnered with FedEx Logistics to open a regional logistics facility and launched a new Visa Service Office for businesses.

- **Umm Alhoul Free Zone:** Signed agreements for QTerminals to operate Marsa Port and for Milaha to establish a Yachts and Ships Yard, boosting maritime trade.

- **Sustainability Initiatives:** Two projects in Ras Bufontas received GSAS certification for environmental sustainability. These updates highlight Qatar's commitment to improving infrastructure, logistics, and sustainability within its free zones to attract global investment.

The importation of goods is confined to Qatari individuals and companies who are registered as importers in Qatar, and the place of registration does not limit its ability to import and export in Qatar. These individuals and companies can only act as an importer or exporter in Qatar if it has a Qatari commercial registration and a valid import license. Foreign entities (non-GCC) will not be able to obtain a Qatar commercial registration or an import license if they are not incorporated in Qatar.

The customs duty payable is calculated on the complete shipping value, which

includes the cost of the imported goods, the cost of freight, and the cost of insurance. In practice, the value of the goods shall be calculated at the time of registering the customs declaration. As per Article 28 of the Common Customs Law of the GCC States, the value of imported goods is that indicated in the customs declaration plus all the costs until the arrival of the goods at the customs office. Therefore, the value at the GCC States shall be calculated on the basis of the delivery condition CIF. In addition to customs duty, legalization fees are also usually payable upon importation.

Qatar is part of the GCC. As such, goods of GCC State origin are exempted from customs duty.

In addition, Qatar has customs exemption regimes that businesses can benefit from such as the industrial exemption regime and temporary importation. Such regimes are usually subject to specific conditions and provision of a guarantee. It is important for businesses to evaluate if they qualify for such exemption regimes.

### The required documents to import goods into Qatar include:

- Commercial invoice and shipping documents;
- Detailed description of goods; and
- Certificate of origin

Original documents are usually needed for customs clearance; however, Qatar Customs Authorities allow a specific process for clearance with copies in certain cases and subject to specific criteria being met.

### Clearing with copies

- The Qatar Customs Authorities will accept a non-certified original commercial invoice issued by suppliers arriving from outside of the GCC provided that a penalty of 1% of the total invoice value is paid by the Importer of Record or the clearing agent.
- The grace period to submit the original invoice is set on a case-by-case basis at the Qatar land borders with a maximum of 90 days. In practice, the period may be significantly lower. The penalty amount



# Immigration and labor landscape

## Recent amendments

The labor and immigration landscape in Qatar became more accommodating to foreign investors after the 2022 FIFA World Cup. The government introduced reforms to make it easier for investors to obtain a resident visa, and hire and manage migrant workers, as well as improving their rights. These reforms include amendments to the following:

- Immigration Law amendments to allow investors to obtain a resident visa without a sponsor and to bring their families to Qatar.
- The Labor Law was amended to simplify the visa application process, improve the kafala system, introduce minimum wage, and provide more protection for migrant workers.

## Introduction

Labor Law No. 14 of 2004 governs the rights, duties, and responsibilities of both employers and employees. Its provisions do not apply to government ministry employees, employees of public institutions, members of the police, and the armed forces. Also excluded are workers at sea, domestic workers, casual workers, and working members of a family.

The Law applies to both Qatari nationals and foreigners, and covers matters such as employment contracts, working hours, sickness benefits, holidays, disputes, and disciplinary codes.

## Work authorization

### General requirements

A non-Qatari national must obtain a work visa before entering the State of Qatar for employment. To obtain a visa, the foreign national must be sponsored by an authorized company, business, or person. On arrival, the foreign national must apply for a residence permit. Residence permits are issued annually up to a maximum of 3 years and are renewable for similar periods. Employee cannot work for anyone other than their sponsor. However, employees do have the ability to change jobs and transfer their sponsorship to a new employer, as long as they follow the

correct procedures.

The maximum working hours are 8 per day or 45 hours per week. As in most Muslim countries, Friday is the weekly holiday. In practice, commercial and professional firms work approximately 45 hours per week, while ministries, governmental departments, and banks work approximately 36 hours per week. During Ramadan, the Muslim holy month, normal working hours are reduced by 2 hours per day.

Pursuant to the decision of the Minister of Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs No. 25 of 2020, the minimum salary for domestic workers is based on the basic salary, food allowance, and housing allowance. The minimum basic salary for domestic workers should be QAR 1,000. In case the employer fails to provide adequate housing or food to the employee, the minimum housing allowance is QAR 500 and the minimum food allowance is QAR 300.

There is no social security for non-Qatari employees working in Qatar. For Qatari employees employee contribution is 7% and employer's contribution is 14% of the total wage and such contributions must be made to the General Retirement and Pension Fund. Insurance, such as workers' compensation against work injuries, is common in all industrial establishments and contracting companies. Workers' compensation applies to Qatari, as well as to expatriate workers.

The Labour Law stipulates that every employee who has completed one year or more of continuous service is entitled to an indemnity at the end of his or her services provided it is not less than 3 weeks of wages for every year of employment. The last basic wage shall be the base for the calculation.

### Ultimate beneficial owner

In April 2022, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) issued guidance on beneficial ownership following the Law No. 1 of 2020 and the accompanying Executive Regulations (12/2020) relating to

the Unified Economic Register that came into effect last year. Based on discussions with the MOCI, it is now mandatory for most companies (with a few exceptions) operating in the State of Qatar and registered with the MOCI to disclose the Beneficial Owners (BOs) and comply with all related requirements mentioned in the referred Law.

The MOCI would require the referred disclosures at the time of submitting applications for any licenses, registrations, amendments, renewals, or putting a company under liquidation.

All impacted entities are required to maintain updated records supported by evidencing documents in a register, which should be kept at the entity's premises.

The BO is a natural person (and only a natural person) who ultimately and effectively owns or controls an entity through:

1. The ownership interest,
2. Voting rights, or
3. The natural person on whose behalf a transaction is being conducted, whether by proxy, trusteeship or mandate, or by any other form of representation.

It also includes any person who exercises ultimate effective control over a legal person or arrangement, including any person exercising ultimate effective control by any means.

The obligation to disclose the identity of the BO is applicable to individual institutions (e.g. limited liability companies), other commercial entities mentioned in the Commercial Companies Law (such as economic establishments, investments funds, representative offices, and the branches of non-Qatari economic establishments operating in the State of Qatar), in addition to the not-for-profit organizations and the sole practitioner. In addition, the provisions of the Executive Regulations 12/2020 are also applicable to entities registered in the Qatar Financial Center, Qatar Free Zones, Qatar Science

Technology Park, and Media City.

The aforementioned Law does not apply to the following entities:

- A company listed on the financial market (stock exchange) and the subsidiaries in which the listed companies have controlling interest; or
- A company owned by the State or other public bodies and institutions in full or with a controlling ownership stake.



# Generative AI: Transforming tax functions and business operations in Qatar

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is no longer a future possibility — it is rapidly becoming a defining force in how businesses operate, compete, and grow. As global momentum builds around GenAI, Qatar is actively embracing its potential, guided by a strong national digital agenda, targeted investments, and a growing appetite for innovation across the private and public sectors.

This section introduces the emergence of GenAI in Qatar's business environment — a development that is already reshaping strategic priorities, prompting new investment decisions, and accelerating digital capabilities. With clear direction from government, rising adoption by business leaders, and a fast-maturing ecosystem, GenAI is poised to play a central role in the next chapter of Qatar's economic transformation.

## Investment landscape and opportunities

Qatar is making significant strides in positioning itself as a regional leader in artificial intelligence (AI), with GenAI playing an increasingly prominent role. The country's AI market is projected to reach USD 567.10 million by 2025, with a remarkable compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 27.93% forecast between 2025 and 2030. This rapid growth is underpinned by strategic government initiatives, including a USD 2.4 billion incentive package aimed at accelerating AI capabilities and driving comprehensive digital transformation across the nation.

The broader economic impact is equally promising — AI is expected to contribute an additional 2.3% to Qatar's economic growth and generate

approximately USD 5 billion in revenue by 2030. These figures not only reflect Qatar's ambition but also present a compelling opportunity for businesses, including tax and legal functions, to embed AI into their operations and remain competitive in a digitally evolving landscape.

### Key sectors for GenAI integration

Businesses operating in or entering the Qatari market can leverage GenAI to enhance productivity, streamline processes, and unlock new value across a range of key sectors:

#### Finance and banking:

AI-powered tools are increasingly being used for risk assessment and fraud detection, offering greater accuracy and responsiveness. Financial institutions are also adopting AI to personalize customer interactions, provide automated financial advice, and support data-driven investment strategies.

#### Energy:

As a major player in the global energy sector, Qatar is embracing AI to optimize oil and gas operations, enable predictive maintenance for critical equipment, and integrate AI-driven strategies for managing renewable energy sources more efficiently.

#### Transportation and logistics:

The integration of GenAI is enhancing route planning and traffic management, supporting the development of autonomous vehicle technologies, and improving supply chain performance through predictive analytics and logistics optimization.

#### Retail and e-commerce:

Retailers and online platforms are

utilizing AI for smarter inventory management, tailored shopping experiences, and more accurate demand forecasting. This enables better pricing strategies and improved customer satisfaction.

#### Government services:

Qatar's public sector is exploring the use of AI to improve service delivery, support smart city initiatives, and strengthen urban planning. Applications such as predictive policing and enhanced security systems are also being piloted to increase operational efficiency and public safety.

#### Government support and initiatives

Qatar's commitment to AI adoption is reinforced by a robust national framework. The country's **National AI Strategy** is built on six foundational pillars — education, data access, employment, business, research, and ethics — creating a comprehensive ecosystem to guide AI development and integration. In line with global best practices, Qatar is also harmonizing its AI regulations with those of the U.S. and the European Union to promote cross-border trade, encourage foreign investment, and ensure regulatory consistency.

A notable step in local innovation is the launch of **Fanar**, an Arabic-language large AI model that underscores Qatar's dedication to developing homegrown AI capabilities tailored to regional needs.

#### Business adoption trends

GenAI is quickly becoming a strategic focus for businesses operating in Qatar. A striking **97% of CEOs** in the country report plans to integrate GenAI into their technology platforms within the next three years. This enthusiasm reflects a broader trend — **72% of companies** in Qatar now consider AI and GenAI among their top three strategic priorities.

The investment outlook is equally optimistic. One in four GCC companies, including those in Qatar, is expected to allocate **more than USD 25 million** to AI development by 2025. This financial commitment is accompanied by a growing emphasis on workforce transformation, with **90% of CEOs** planning to embed GenAI into their broader workforce strategies.

What's more, Qatar is emerging as an early adopter of GenAI on a global scale: **90% of CEOs** report having already implemented GenAI solutions in the past 12 months — a figure that surpasses the global average of 83%.

#### Challenges and considerations

While the momentum behind GenAI adoption in Qatar is strong, businesses should be mindful of several key challenges when planning AI-driven initiatives.

#### Skills and talent availability:

Qatar currently faces a shortage of specialized AI talent, which could pose a barrier to widespread adoption. In response, the government has launched the National Skilling Program, which aims to train 50,000 individuals in advanced digital skills — including AI and data science — by 2025.

#### Technical capabilities:

Over half of Qatari CEOs (56%) identify a lack of technical skills within their organizations as a significant hurdle to implementing AI solutions effectively.

#### Data readiness and sharing:

Only 32% of CEOs express confidence in their organization's data readiness for AI. This is a critical concern, given that GenAI depends heavily on data quality, accessibility, and consistency. Additionally, challenges around data standardization and regulatory compliance persist, especially when sharing information across sectors.

#### Cybersecurity preparedness:

While 64% of Qatari CEOs feel their organizations are well-equipped to handle cyber threats, only 40% are confident in their ability to align cybersecurity measures with the demands of AI technologies — highlighting the need for greater integration between cybersecurity protocols and AI systems.

#### Infrastructure development:

To support large-scale AI adoption, Qatar is investing in its digital infrastructure, with a particular focus on high-performance computing (HPC). Plans are underway to expand cloud-based capabilities through the National HPC Program, which will be instrumental in powering advanced AI models and analytics.

#### Future outlook

Qatar's ongoing investment in artificial intelligence, combined with its commitment to evolving a supportive regulatory framework, is setting the stage for a dynamic and forward-looking business environment. As

the country deepens its focus on digital transformation, businesses operating in or entering the Qatari market can look forward to several promising developments.

They can expect to operate in a more technologically advanced and efficient landscape, benefit from greater opportunities for AI-driven innovation and product development and enhance their competitiveness in the global marketplace through cutting-edge, AI-powered solutions.

By strategically embedding GenAI into their operations, businesses can align with Qatar's vision of becoming a leading digital economy — and position themselves to capitalize on the full potential of transformative AI technologies.

# Want to do business in Qatar?

## Serving as trusted advisors for clients in the Middle East since 1926

We welcome the opportunity to discuss your needs further and provide you with a better understanding of the issues discussed in this material. The 'Doing business guide' series is supplemented by the Middle East Tax Handbook, which provides a summary of basic tax information in a country-by-country snapshot.

Deloitte has created a series of Business Guides to help clients learn more about influential tax considerations, alongside key legal, economic and market drivers which may impact those who are maintaining a business or looking to invest in countries such as UAE, KSA, Iraq, and Kuwait.

### Our tax team can support

Deloitte's Tax professionals in the Middle East provide both compliance and advisory services across a broad range of matters affecting businesses. This approach ensures clients' most demanding challenges when operating in multiple jurisdictions are holistically addressed in a coordinated way, by subject matter and industry specialists, locally and abroad.

### Tax team based in Qatar

We have a team of dedicated tax professionals, based in Qatar, who possess a solid understanding of the local market. With their practical experience and familiarity with the country's business environment, they are well-equipped to provide valuable guidance on tax matters. Their knowledge extends beyond just regulations, encompassing insights into market trends that can be critical for business planning. They help businesses navigate Qatari tax regulations while taking into consideration the specificities of the local market. Whether you are looking to maintain compliance or seeking ways to optimize your tax position, our team is here to support your business in a grounded and effective manner.

### Summary of tax services

- Business Tax
- International Tax
- Transfer Pricing
- Mergers and Acquisitions Tax
- Indirect Tax
- Global Employer Services
- Business Process Solutions
- Tax Technology Consulting and Support

### Our tax teams across the region

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	Egypt		Qatar
	Iraq		Cyprus
	Jordan		Oman
	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia		United Arab Emirates

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