



Doing Business in Qatar 2014 Country Commercial Guide for U.S. Companies

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Chapter 1: Doing Business In Qatar

Market Overview

- Qatar's economic performance is expected to remain strong in 2014 despite difficult regional political conditions. Gross domestic product (GDP) grew 6.5% in 2013 and is projected to continue progressive growth to 6.8% in 2014. The economy is continuing a diversification agenda, with an increased focus this year on large investment spending in the non-hydrocarbon sector, which received stronger investments in 2013 growing at 11.4%.
- Qatar recorded GDP growth between 2008 and 2013, rising to \$USD181.7 billion from approximately \$USD 153 Billion in 2010, largely attributable to sustained high oil and gas prices and increases in LNG production as decades-long expansion plans reached completion. The main drivers for this growth can be attributed to general increases in production and exports of LNG, oil, petrochemicals and related industries. However, the hydrocarbon sector went through more stagnant growth compared to the non-hydrocarbon sector growing at 1% due to the shift in government sector development focus.
- The largest contributors to the non-hydrocarbon sector growth were Government Services, Financial Services, and Construction.
- U.S. and Qatari trade has increased significantly where in the last three years alone, U.S. exports to Qatar have grown by 77%.
- Exports totaled 5.0 billion in 2013 establishing a new record for Qatar and an increase of 39% over 2012. The U.S. accounts for 20% of Qatar's total imports worldwide placing the U.S. as the #1 import trading partner to Qatar ahead of China and Germany.
- Qatar is the fifth largest U.S. export market in the Middle East and the third largest in the GCC.
- Within the Commercial Service, the number of **new to market** U.S. companies that registered agreements and exports has increased from 39 in 2011 to 264 in 2013, representing an increase of 577%.

Market Challenges

- **Foreign Investment:** With certain exceptions, Qatar's foreign investment law limits foreign ownership of local entities to 49% of the entity's capital. Foreign investors may own 100% of an entity's capital in sectors like agriculture, industry, health care, education, tourism and the exploitation and development of natural resources subject to approval by the Government of Qatar ("GOQ"). The law further states that preference should be given to projects that use raw materials available in the local market,

manufacture products for export, produce a new product or use advanced technology.

Recently, a new law was proposed that would allow an increase in foreign ownership limits from 25% to 49%, a move expected to strengthen capital inflows into Qatar. There continues to be deliberations on the law. **Foreign investors** must receive permission from the government to invest in the banking and insurance sectors. Foreign investment is not allowed in commercial agencies and real estate, although with respect to real estate there are limited opportunities for foreigners to own interests in select residential real estate projects for a term of 99 years renewable upon government approval in the Pearl, West Bay Lagoon, Lusail, and the Al-Khor resort project.

- **Banking:** A total of 18 banks operate in Qatar, including 11 Qatari institutions and eight foreign branch banks. Out of the 11 Qatari banks, seven are commercial institutions (Ahlibank, Al Khaliji Bank, Commercial Bank of Qatar, Doha Bank, International Bank of Qatar, Qatar Development Bank, and Qatar National Bank); the other four are Islamic institutions (Masraf Al Rayan, Qatar International Islamic Bank, Qatar Islamic Bank, and Barwa Bank.) The seven foreign banks include: Arab Bank, Bank Saderat Iran, BNP Paribas, HSBC, Mashreq Bank, Standard Chartered, and United Bank.
- **Commercial Agents:** The Commercial Agents law requires all agency agreements to be exclusive arrangements.
- **Corporate Income Tax:** The corporate income tax rate has been cut to a flat rate of 10%, effective January 1, 2010. Previously, foreign companies had to pay between 5 and 35 percent, except for the energy sector where there is a 35 percent tax rate applicable to oil and gas operations, unless exempted by Amiri decree.
- **Government Procurement:** There are concerns about transparency in government procurement, particularly regarding the following: a lack of clarity in the conditions and criteria of tenders, improper notification or explanation to non-qualifying companies, and the inability to formally challenge awards. Qatar gives preferential treatment to suppliers that use local content in bids for government procurement. When competing for government contracts, goods with Qatari content are discounted by 10 percent and goods from other GCC countries receive a 5 percent discount. As a rule, participation in tenders with a value of USD 274,725 or less is confined to local contractors, suppliers and merchants.
- **Import Duties:** The import duty for most processed food products is a flat five percent ad valorem. There is no import duty for live animals, fresh fruits and vegetables, seafood, grains, flours, tea, sugar, spices and seeds for planting. Existing import duties on tobacco products have been increased two-fold, from 100 to 200%, based on talks between the ministers of finance and health of several GCC countries.

- **Import Restrictions:** Qatar has no import quotas. However, non-tariff barriers arise occasionally. For example, a ban on pork was maintained until late 2011 but has been lifted as of 2012. Sale of pork is, however, regulated heavily, with sales being restricted to only be handled by Qatar Distribution Company.
- **Inflation:** The booming economy in Qatar is leading to shortages of materials and labor. This is compounded by a rapidly growing population, which is approaching two million people, up from just 700,000 five years ago. Consumer prices are expected to rise faster in 2014 than in 2013, when inflation as measured by the consumer price index averaged 3.5%. The cost of living is high by U.S. standards.
- **Standards and Labeling:** As part of the GCC Customs Union, the six Member States are working toward unifying their standards and conformity assessment regimes. However, each Member State applies its own standards until a uniform GCC standard has been set. Labeling and marking requirements are compulsory for any products exported to Qatar.
- **Transparency:** Qatar ranked 28 on Transparency International's 2013 Corruption Perceptions Index.
- **Food Labeling and Packaging:** Arabic or bilingual English and Arabic language labels (or stickers) are required for all food products. Production and expiry dates are required to be on all "original" food labels.
- **Travel Advisories:** Americans visiting Qatar are advised to check the website for the latest information on travel to Qatar.
http://qatar.usembassy.gov/information_for_travelers.html

Market Opportunities

- Government spending will continue to support the long term strategic goals set by the Amiri Qatar National Vision for 2030. The vision targets developing a knowledge-based economy and growing the non-hydrocarbon sector to become the significant contributor to GDP rather than the hydrocarbon sector which is still the largest today. Amongst the economic policies directing government investment both locally in Qatar and internationally, sectors such as Education and Healthcare have been witnessing major investments and increase in government budget spending.
- The nearer term opportunities however revolve around Qatar hosting the FIFA World Cup in 2022 after winning the bid in 2010. More than \$USD 220 billion will be allocated by the government for construction, infrastructure, public transportation, and logistics projects, to meet and serve the demands of the country's growing population and projected event spectators.
- The Government of Qatar will continue to maintain high levels of capital spending specifically on Education, Health, Infrastructure, and Transportation which accounted for 54% of the total expenditure budget for 2014/2015. 2014 recorded the largest ever budget allocation for Qatar

The Government of Qatar's strong commitment to invest in economic diversification through these sectors will create multiplier effects on the rest of the economy, contributing to increased consumption and demand for better quality life standards.

- **Energy Sector:** Qatar has attracted an estimated \$USD 100 billion in investment, with approximately \$USD 60-70 billion coming from the U.S. It is estimated that Qatar will invest over \$USD 120 billion in the energy sector in the next ten years. Although a moratorium on North Field development is in place until at least 2015, Qatar is committed to diversifying within the hydrocarbon sector and developing its petrochemical industries in particular. **Construction:** It is estimated that Qatar will invest \$USD 220 billion in roads, rail, port and other infrastructure development, housing and real estate, health/medical and sanitation projects in the next decade. USD 17 billion of Qatar's FY 2012 budget has been allocated to public works (25% of the total). The GOQ and private sector are actively seeking project designers, engineers and managers, in addition to needed production inputs like cement and heavy machinery and equipment.
- Qatar imports over 90 percent of its food. Major food suppliers to Qatar include the EU, Australia and Saudi Arabia. Most of Qatar's food product imports transit through the United Arab Emirates.

Market Entry Strategy

- If you are a new-to-exporting company, first contact your local Export Assistance Center for free export counseling at the Commercial Section of the United States Embassy can give you a balanced assessment of your company's chances for success in Qatar. For more information, please visit www.export.gov/qatar
- **Come visit:** Qatar is like many Middle Eastern countries in that personal contact with potential agents and partners is key to successfully conducting business.
- **Get a lawyer:** Many U.S. companies advise that acquiring good legal representation is an important first step to entering the market. This helps you to establish and maintain good business relationships with Qatari partners. Hiring a lawyer is especially important before concluding commercial agreements. Occasionally, American firms, once their company starts making a profit, report difficulties with their Qatari sponsors and business partners. A good business lawyer can help you with such problems. The U.S. Embassy can provide you with a list of law firms currently operating in Qatar.
- **Feasibility study:** U.S. firms we interviewed recommend that you carefully conduct a feasibility study about your product or service's chances for success in the Qatari market. This study should be based on such factors as pre-existing competition, market channels, and local tastes. The

Commercial Service offers various industry market research reports, as well as *Customized Market Research* that can form a strong basis for a viable feasibility study. Please contact the Commercial Section for more information.

- Vet partners: The Commercial Section at the U.S. Embassy offers several services to help you thoroughly vet prospective Qatari business partners and determine which Qatari companies would be best to work with. These services include the *International Company Profile*, the *International Partner Search*, and the *Gold Key Service*. These services are described in more detail by visiting: <http://export.gov/qatar>
- Maintain independence: Having a reliable local partner can mean the difference between success and failure in Qatar. However, U.S. firms advise not to rely too much on your local partner for all market intelligence and contacts affecting your business. We advise U.S. companies to negotiate expatriate labor visa issues with their sponsors, agents, and partners in the early stages of contract negotiation.
- Adapt: Successful U.S., European and other foreign companies understand that doing business internationally always creates challenges, and doing business in Qatar is no exception. Learn to live with new procedures and laws by injecting a healthy dose of flexibility into your business plan. The Commercial Service suggests U.S. firms insist on payment by letter of credit to avoid costly payment delays.
- Importers and distributors are most commonly used in the retail food business.
- Food processors and the hotel, restaurant, and institutional (HRI) sector may import directly or purchase goods locally from distributors.

Chapter 2: Political and Economic Environment

For background information on the political and economic environment of the country, please click on the link below to the U.S. Department of State Background Notes.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5437.htm>

Chapter 3: Selling U.S. Products and Services

- Using an Agent or Distributor
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Using an Agent or Distributor

In certain circumstances foreign companies doing business in Qatar may elect to have a local commercial agent. A commercial agent generally acts as the exclusive provider of services of the foreign principal or exclusive seller in Qatar for foreign produced goods. U.S. firms are strongly advised to avoid appointing one regional agent for a number of countries. U.S. companies having agency agreements or planning to have agency agreements with Qatari firms are encouraged to review Law No. 8/2002 (the "Commercial Agents Law"). The law consists of 28 articles, enshrining two basic principles:

- The business of commercial agents is exclusively restricted to Qatari nationals or to companies wholly owned by Qatari nationals.
- Any Qatari agency is to be considered as an exclusive agency.

It should be noted that the Commercial Agents Law mandates certain outcomes with respect to the expiration or termination of agency contracts and these provisions should be reviewed carefully when entering into an agency or distribution agreement.

When finally approved by both parties, the Arabic text of agency or representation agreements should be registered with the Commercial Affairs Department of the Ministry of Economy & Commerce (MEC). Local agents usually follow up on the routine work required by the MEC registration regulations. Disputes between parties in relation to an agency agreement are filed at the MEC prior to referral to arbitration if appropriate. The local civil courts are the final course of action if the dispute cannot be resolved.

The Commercial Agents Law allows the importation and sale of brand name products by other local entities, upon payment of a commission not to exceed five percent to the appointed local agent, unless otherwise agreed between the parties in a written agency agreement.

To find a good agent, U.S. companies are encouraged to take advantage of services offered by the commercial section at the U.S. Embassy in Doha. A hyperlink to a full description of those services is provided below:

<http://export.gov/qatar/servicesforu.s.companies/index.asp>

Other resources for finding a local agent include international auditing firms, accounting firms and law offices. Even in these cases a visit to the Commercial Section of the United States Embassy in Doha is encouraged for additional information and insight.

The commercial agency law can be complex in its application and U.S. companies are encouraged to consult counsel prior to hiring an agent or selling goods or services into Qatar.

Establishing an Office

In order to do business in Qatar and establish a local office, foreign and local companies are required to obtain a commercial registration from the Ministry of Economy & Commerce. Qatar enacted Law No. 25/2005 (the “Commercial Registry Law”) which states that no individual person or single entity may engage in commercial activity before registering in the Commercial Registry maintained by the MEC. Any inquiries regarding the registration process should be directed to the Director of Commercial Affairs at the MEC. There is a proposed draft “Commercial Companies Law” which is still being deliberated which is expected to streamline and simplify the registration process under the Ministry of Economy and Commerce.

The general rule under Law No. 13/2000 (the “Foreign Investment Law”) is that non-Qataris, whether natural or juristic persons, may invest only through the medium of a joint venture company incorporated in Qatar in which one or more Qatari persons or 100 percent Qatari-owned entities hold no less than 51% of the share capital. Joint venture companies with Qatari partners are allowed in all sectors of the economy excluding commercial agencies and real estate. Establishing a joint venture in the banking and insurance sectors is possible with an approval from the Cabinet of Ministers.

Important exceptions to the general rule are as follows:

- 100 percent foreign investment: Subject to special government approval, the Foreign Investment Law allows foreign firms 100 percent ownership of the share capital of companies developing projects in the fields of agriculture, industry, health, education and tourism sectors, as well as projects involved in the development and exploitation of natural resources or energy or mining,

pending approval from the government. The law specifically prohibits foreign investment in banking, insurance, commercial agencies and procurement or purchase of real estate. However, Law No. 31/2004 allows foreign investment in the banking and insurance sectors upon approval of the Cabinet of Ministers. Each application is reviewed on a case-by-case basis and foreign firms working in sectors not specifically mentioned in these laws may be granted a 100 percent ownership on a case-by-case basis, upon special government approval. Although there is paperwork to be filed, approvals to be obtained and registration fees assessed during this process, this mode of registration offers the opportunity for foreign companies to operate independently. However, it should be noted that only a small number of foreign companies have received the necessary Ministerial resolution to operate as a 100% wholly owned subsidiary.

- Article 68 companies: The Foreign Investment Law provides that it shall not apply to companies and individuals whom the State entrusts with excavation, utilization or management of natural wealth resources under a concession or agreement, or to companies that are established by the Government or in which the Government participates (so called "Article 68 Companies"). Special rules apply in these circumstances.
- Representational office: The Decision of the Minister of Economy and Commerce No. 142/2006 provides that foreign firms may open representational offices without a local partner. Such offices may not conduct any financial transactions related to the company's commercial activities in Qatar and are therefore not subject to taxation. Though the representational office may be registered in the Commercial Registry and employ staff in its own name, it is really a "shop window" to source business. A representational office could be converted into a joint venture company or 100% foreign ownership at a later date.
- Branch registration: The Foreign Investment Law contains provisions that, subject to an exemption from the MEC, allow a branch of a foreign company to be registered in Qatar if that foreign company has a contract in Qatar that results in facilitating the rendering of a service or implies a public benefit. This has generally been interpreted to mean engaging in a contract with the GOQ or a quasi-government entity. This registration does not allow the foreign company to conduct commercial activity that is not related to the subject of its registration. Foreign companies registered under this category do not need a sponsor or service agent.
- Service agents or sponsorship: In the past this type of agency consisted of appointing a Qatari entity to act as a service agent for a foreign firm. Specific services would be determined by the two parties and may include handling administrative and business matters in Qatar, including immigration

procedures, import licenses, providing introductions to decision-makers, etc. Although the service agent remains a common business practice in the region, it is no longer appropriate as an option for doing business in Qatar, specifically in light of Law No. 25/2004 which is commonly known as the “Proxy Law”. The Proxy Law was enacted in Qatar to address the practice of concealing non-Qataris doing business in Qatar in violation of existing Qatari law. It prohibits natural or legal persons from concealing the business activities of non-Qataris, for example by allowing a non-Qatari to use the name, license or commercial registration of Qatari party. According to Law No. 25/2004, the service agent relationship is considered a form of proxy business and fines and imprisonment penalties can be imposed on whoever infringes the law.

- QFC, QSTP, and Free Zones: The State of Qatar has established the Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) and the Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP). Both provide environments for international companies and institutions to operate under certain free zone type conditions. The criteria and limitations to operate in these environments are fairly stringent. The QFC is restricted to financial services and ancillary services companies (excluding retail banking) and the QSTP is restricted to entities engaged in research and development activities in Qatar. Applications must be submitted by interested parties for both the QFC and the QSTP for assessment of eligibility to establish a corporate presence. Qatar is also developing additional investment free zones to attract investment in the industrial, agricultural, technical and tourism fields and other fields to be decided upon by the Cabinet of Ministers. These additional free zones are still in the developmental stage and it is not clear what rules and regulations will apply.

Franchising

There are many franchises in Qatar besides fast food or casual dining. Franchises such as fitness centers, car rental, computer learning centers, apparel shops, real estate brokerage, and language learning centers exist. The potential of growth in non-food franchises is significant. Some Qatari entities have a strong interest in investing in this business, given the ease of readymade business plans offered by franchises. A local sponsor is required to establish a franchise business.

- One of the keys to success in franchise operations in Qatar is to use a local franchisee versus a regional master franchisee expanding to Qatar. Qataris are sensitive to businesses owned or operated in Qatar by neighboring countries' companies or nationals.
- U.S. fast food and casual dining restaurants are popular in Qatar, particularly with the younger generation.

- Most major U.S. fast food franchises are established in Qatar, with new ones opening regularly. A local sponsor is required to establish a franchise business.
- High per capita income, a rather young population, a high rate of unaccompanied expatriate population and the lack of alternate entertainment venues encourage out of home dining.

There is no specific Franchising legislation enacted in the State of Qatar, the Franchise structuring options and any actual Franchise operations are dictated by, and need to comply with a loose collection of laws and regulations, which regulate general issues of commercial law and trade, commercial relationships, foreign investment, shareholder rights and obligations and so forth.

Direct Marketing

Foreign companies are generally not allowed to market their products and services directly. A local agent is needed to do so, unless the foreign company has an appropriately registered entity in Qatar. However, in cases where the foreign company is working on a major public project, direct marketing to the contractor is possible. Direct marketing is also possible through the representational office.

Direct marketing is possible in the food processing sector, particularly in vegetable oils, including corn oil, soybean and sunflower-seed oils, beverage bases, dried pulses and a variety of food ingredients, particularly for the snack food and bakery industries.

Also, the growing HRI sector, particularly the hotel and the U.S. fast food and casual dining restaurants sectors, provide opportunities for direct marketing.

Joint Ventures/Licensing

The Commercial Companies Law, Law No. 5/2002 (replacing Law No. 11/1981) controls the establishment of all private business concerns in Qatar. The updated law allows corporate mergers, corporate bonds, and the conversion of corporate partnerships into joint stock companies.

As mentioned above, joint ventures involving foreign partners primarily take the form of limited liability companies. Generally, foreign investors may own up to 49 percent and the Qatari partners no less than 51 percent of a limited liability concern. Foreign partners in partnerships organized as limited liability partnerships must pay the full amount of their contribution to authorized financial institutions in cash or in kind prior to the start of operations. These firms are normally required to set aside 10 percent of their profits each year in a statutory reserve, until it equals 50 percent of the venture's authorized capital.

Selling to the Government

The Qatari government is the biggest end-user of a wide range of products and services. In principle, all government procurement contracts are administered under provisions of bidding and tender regulations included in Law No. 26/2005. The Central Tenders Committee (CTC) of the Ministry of Finance is responsible for processing the majority of public sector tenders that are in excess of QR 1 million. The CTC applies standard tendering procedures and adheres to established performance practices. It also establishes the standards for rules that regulate bidding procedures.

Information on CTC tenders may be obtained from the CTC office in Doha or on the Internet at <http://www.ctc.gov.qa>. In tenders valued in excess of QR 50 million (USD 13.5 million), the approval of the Amir is required. Technical bids submitted to the CTC, or other specialized tenders committees as the case may be, are referred to the appropriate government end-user for short-listing. The CTC then opens the commercial bids and recommends the lowest priced technically qualified bidder to the entity concerned, who will make the final award decision. Inquiries about specific award decisions should be directed to the CTC.

Some governmental entities have internal tender committees. Qatar Petroleum processes all tenders independently. Qatar Armed Forces and the Ministry of Interior are responsible for issuing tenders for classified materials and services. The Public Works Authority and the Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning process their tenders independently as well. 4

Bid and performance bonds are required in the form of unconditional bank guarantees with a local bank or certified bank checks local. The standard bid bond is 5 percent and performance bond is 10 percent of the contract. However, the above rate can be larger for certain projects. Foreign architectural, contracting and engineering firms are not required to have a local presence for the bid process. However, by the time a contract is ready to be signed, participating foreign firms may need to have satisfied local establishment requirements.

The State Purchase Office (SPO), a division of the CTC, handles all local purchase orders (LPOs) for equipment and supplies required by various government ministries. The SPO handles bids worth hundreds of millions of dollars every year. The period for preparation of quotations is usually 30 days, but very often less than three weeks after the announcement of tenders. Under these circumstances, an established local distributor is very useful for successful bidding.

Government contracts may include arbitration clauses. Unless stated otherwise in the contract, the standard clauses stipulate that disputes emanating from government contracts will be subject to arbitration in Qatar. U.S. firms are

advised, whenever possible, to reserve the right to appeal local arbitration decisions abroad.

Foreign and local contractors are usually paid 20 percent of the contract awarded to them against unconditional bank guarantees. Further payments are made according to a standard payment schedule based on the progress of the project. It should be noted that the payment schedule almost always authorizes the government to retain portions of payments due until after the completion and acceptance of the project. Foreign and local contractors may experience delayed payments, which do not accrue interest, usually due to bureaucratic red tape.

Arabic is the official language in Qatar though English is widely used. Bids should be in Arabic unless the tender document specifically indicates that English is required or accepted. Specifications generally conform with British/European and, in recent years, American standards.

Distribution and Sales Channels

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The GOQ is the biggest end user of a wide range of products and services. The government procurement process is based on standard tender procedures. A foreign supplier wishing to participate in government tenders may appoint a local commercial agent; however, as noted in the beginning of this chapter, appointing a commercial agent in Qatar raises specific legal and commercial issues that should be carefully considered by a foreign company or supplier. An effective agent in Qatar will have extensive contacts in both the public and private sectors, enabling the collection of valuable information for the business.

Most Qatari trading entities represent a variety of foreign firms in the local market. To maximize their market penetration, U.S. firms planning to appoint a Qatari agent should ensure that the local agent does not represent any competitor.

- Private supermarkets account for the vast majority of retail sales, and this sector is expanding.
- Consumer cooperative societies account for 20 percent of the food retail sales in Qatar.
- Institutional users account for 10 percent of food distributed.
- Wholesalers and small convenience stores account for the balance of 5 percent of food products marketed in Qatar.
- The distribution channel is as follows: importer/agent sells to private supermarkets (60 percent), cooperatives (20 percent), institutional users (10 percent) and wholesalers and convenience stores (5 percent).

- Wholesalers sell directly to consumers, to jobbers and small supermarkets and restaurants.
- Generic and brand supermarket promotions are common in Qatar and are commonly employed by both local and foreign companies.
- Newspaper advertisements and inserts are most commonly used for food and other products. TV advertising, while very effective, is expensive.
- Food product margins typically run 20-25 percent for distributors, 5 percent for wholesalers, when applicable, and 10-15 percent for retailers. Qatar does not apply a VAT.

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U.S. suppliers should emphasize the competitive price, high quality, and, if applicable, the new-to-market status of their products. Initial face-to-face contact with importers will significantly increase a company's business prospects. Qatari companies distributing foreign products usually request marketing and advertising assistance from the principals to introduce a new product to the market or to improve sales of existing products.

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E-Commerce is still developing in Qatar since a significant number of Qataris and businesses are still learning to fully utilize computers and information technology. The country's Electronic Commerce and Transactions Law was enacted in 2010, providing legislation in areas such as e-signatures, e-documents, and authentication. However, just 16 percent of companies in Qatar report awareness of the law, according to Qatar ICT's Landscape Report 2013. Only half of the group stated that they have benefitted from it. The highest awareness rates are found among larger establishments, as well as in the industry segments electricity, gas, water supply and waste management, real estate activities and

Qatar Central Bank (QCB) is primarily responsible for regulating electronic banking activities and electronic financial transactions. The GOQ is encouraging greater use of modern technology in government transactions. In fact, two major decisions were taken to promote and enhance E-Commerce. The first was the creation of the E-Government Committee and the second was the creation of the Supreme Council for Telecommunications and Information Technology. Several government services and transactions are now possible through the Internet. The private sector however, has taken slow steps in developing its B2B and B2C

portals. E-Commerce is expected to flourish given GOQ interest in enhancing this service throughout Qatar.

Trade Promotion and Advertising

Many advertising practices and strategies used by U.S. companies are familiar to Qatari firms. The most common forms of advertising are media announcements, billboards, and flyers. Local distributors generally develop advertising strategies in coordination with their principals. Several private advertising firms are equipped to handle promotional activities.

Most newspapers in Qatar, including four Arabic and three English dailies, have a large readership. These include the following:

Arabic:

Al-Sharq: P.O. Box 3488, Doha, State of Qatar, Tel: (+974) 4455-7731, Fax: (+974) 4455-7760, Email: alsharq1@qatar.net.qa; Website: <http://www.al-sharq.com>

Al-Watan: P.O. Box 22345, Doha, State of Qatar, Tel: (+974) 4466 5933 Fax: (+974) 4664 4482, Email: alwatan3@qatar.net.qa Website: <http://www.al-watan.com>

Al-Raya: P.O. Box 533, Doha, State of Qatar, Office of the Editorial President Tel: (+974) 4446 6599 or 4437 1353, Fax: (+974) 4435 0476, Email: Editor@raya.com, Website: <http://www.raya.com>

Al-Arab: P.O. Box 22612, Doha, State of Qatar, Tel: (+974) 4499 7333, Email: alarab@alarab.qa, Website: www.alarab.qa

English:

Gulf Times: P.O. Box 533, Doha, State of Qatar, Tel: (+974) 4435 0478(News) 4446 6404(Sports) 4446 6609(Advertising) 4446 6636(Home delivery), Fax: (+974) 4435 0474(Editorial) 44418811(Advertising), Email: editor@gulf-times.com, Website: <http://www.gulf-times.com>

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The state-owned Qatar Radio and Television Corporation operates Qatar Television (QTV) and the radio station Qatar Broadcasting Service (QBS). QTV, comprising Arabic and English channels, broadcasts pre-recorded commercials. QBS also carries advertisements. The locally operated pan-Arab satellite channel Al-Jazeera receives some public funding but is independently owned and operated. It also broadcasts advertising for local and regional companies and products. There are no private radio stations.

Qatar Broadcasting Service (QBS), P.O. Box 1414, Doha, State of Qatar, Tel: (+974) 4489 4444, Fax: (+974) 4487 0712.

Qatar Television, P.O. Box 1944, Doha, State of Qatar, Phone: (+974) 4486 4575, Fax: (+974) 4486 5411.

Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel with seven operational channels: Al-Jazeera Live, Al-Jazeera, Al-Jazeera Children, Al-Jazeera Sports 1 English and Al-Jazeera Documentary, P.O. Box 23123, Doha, Phone: (+974) 4489 7446 or 4489 7451, Fax: (+974) 4489 7472. Website: <http://www.aljazeera.net/e-marketing-eng/>

Al-Jazeera is an excellent means of promotion and advertising, as millions of people in the region watch its channels.

Pricing

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There is a large variety of local and foreign products in the Qatari market. Local consumers are very price conscious and actively seek out sales and promotions. Local distributors of international products often engage in promotions in order to attract consumers and gain market share. U.S. firms should work closely with their local distributor in order to determine appropriate pricing strategies.

There is no VAT or sales tax in Qatar. However, the matter is being discussed in the Gulf Cooperation Council meetings and VAT could be implemented in the future.

The average importer markup on food products is about 10-15 percent. Retail food prices are generally 25-30 percent above import prices.

Sales Service/Customer Support

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After sales service and customer support is considered to be the responsibility of the local distributor or agent. As a Qatari entity must obtain a license for all imports, local firms generally maintain a supply of spare parts for distributed products. Local distributors may also establish workshops for after-sales support, as appropriate. Foreign principals often provide regional and international training for technical support staff.

Protecting Your Intellectual Property

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Several general principles are important for effective management of intellectual property rights (IPR) in Qatar. It is important to have an overall strategy to protect IPR. IPR is protected in Qatar by virtue of international treaties and agreements to which Qatar is a member. In addition, it is also possible and recommended that IPR owners register such rights locally for added protection against violations. Companies may wish to seek advice from local attorneys or IP consultants. The U.S. Commercial Service can often provide a list of local lawyers upon request.

It is vital that companies understand that intellectual property is primarily a private right and that the U.S. Government generally cannot enforce rights for private individuals in Qatar. It is the responsibility of the rights' holders to register, protect, and enforce their rights where relevant, retaining their own counsel and advisors. While the U.S. Government is willing to assist, there is little it can do if the rights holders have not taken these fundamental steps necessary to securing and enforcing their IPR in a timely fashion. Moreover, in many countries, rights holders who delay enforcing their rights on a mistaken belief that the USG can provide a political resolution to a legal problem may find that their rights have been eroded or abrogated due to doctrines such as statutes

of limitations, laches, estoppels, or unreasonable delay in prosecuting a law suit. In no instance should USG advice be seen as a substitute for the obligation of a rights holder to promptly pursue its case.

It is always advisable to conduct due diligence on partners. Negotiate from the position of your partner and give your partner clear incentives to honor the contract. A good partner is an important ally in protecting IP rights. Keep an eye on your cost structure and reduce the margins (and the incentive) of would-be bad actors. Projects and sales in Qatar require constant attention. Work with legal counsel familiar with Qatari laws to create a solid contract that includes non-compete clauses, and confidentiality/non-disclosure provisions.

It is also recommended that small and medium-sized companies understand the importance of working together with trade associations and organizations to support efforts to protect IPR and stop counterfeiting. There are a number of these, including:

- The U.S. Chamber and local American Chambers of Commerce
- National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)
- International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA)
- International Trademark Association (INTA)
- The Coalition Against Counterfeiting and Piracy
- International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (IACC)
- Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)
- Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO)

IPR Resources

A wealth of information on protecting IPR is freely available to U.S. rights holders. Some excellent resources for companies regarding intellectual property include the following:

- For information about patent, trademark, or copyright issues -- including enforcement issues in the U.S. and other countries -- call the STOP! Hotline: **1-866-999-HALT** or register at **www.StopFakes.gov**.
- For more information about registering trademarks and patents (both in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries), contact the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) at: **1-800-786-9199**.
- For more information about registering for copyright protection in the U.S., contact the U.S. Copyright Office at: **1-202-707-5959**.
- For U.S. small and medium-size companies, the Department of Commerce offers a "SME IPR Advisory Program" available through the American Bar Association that provides one hour of free IPR legal advice for companies with concerns in Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Russia, and Thailand. For

details and to register, visit:

http://www.abanet.org/intlaw/intlproj/iprprogram_consultation.html

- For information on obtaining and enforcing intellectual property rights and market-specific IP Toolkits visit: **www.StopFakes.gov** This site is linked to the USPTO website for registering trademarks and patents (both in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries), the U.S. Customs & Border Protection website to record registered trademarks and copyrighted works (to assist customs in blocking imports of IPR-infringing products) and allows you to register for Webinars on protecting IPR.

IPR Climate in Qatar

In addition to international treaties and agreements to which Qatar is party, intellectual property rights in Qatar are protected by Law No. 7/2002 (Copyright and Neighboring Rights Law), Law No. 9/2002 (Trademarks and Geographical Indicators Law), Law No.5/2005 (Protection of Trade Secrets), and Law No. 6/2005 (Protection of Layout Design of Integrated Circuits). Qatar has adopted the GCC Patent Law and created a GCC Patent Office. The Ministry of Economy and Commerce is responsible for enforcing these laws and other intellectual property rights matters, although the Intellectual Property Rights Center remains housed at the Ministry of Justice.

An Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer (IPTT) office was created in June 2014 at Qatar Foundation to manage, evaluate, protect, and commercialize all IP-related agreements. The IPTT Office will also disseminate information about the specific needs of markets with regards to the fields of Energy & Environment, Information and Communications Technology, and Biomedical Research.

The National Health Authority (NHA) requires registration of all pharmaceutical products imported into the country and will not register unauthorized copies of products patented in other countries.

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In the absence of local credit rating companies, U.S. companies are advised to perform due diligence checks prior to dealing with any local company. Due diligence checks on public companies can also be useful. U.S. companies are encouraged to perform due diligence checks on privately owned companies to assure the following:

- The local company is not designated on a U.S. or United Nations watch list for terrorist financing activities.

- The local company is not involved in any bribery or corruption charges.
- The local company enjoys a certain financial stability enabling it to meet its financial obligations.
- The local company and its owners enjoy a sound business and professional reputation in Qatar.

The Embassy's Commercial Section offers U.S. companies the International Company Profile (ICP) as one due diligence tool to help the U.S. firms make assessments of potential local business partners. A description of the ICP service is provided at the hyperlink below:

<http://export.gov/qatar/servicesforu.s.companies/index.asp>

Local Professional Services

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Auditing
Banking
Freight Forwarding and Courier Services
Insurance
Law Firms
Media
Telecommunications
Tenders

Auditing Firms

Deloitte & Touche
Ernst & Young
KPMG
PricewaterhouseCoopers

Banking

Qatari Banks:

Ahlibank
Al Khaliji Bank
Barwa Bank
Commercial Bank of Qatar
Doha Bank
International Bank of Qatar

Masraf Al Rayan
Qatar Development Bank
Qatar International Islamic Bank
Qatar Islamic Bank
Qatar National Bank

Foreign Banks' Branches:

Arab Bank
Bank Saderat Iran
B.N.P. Paribas
HSBC
Mashreq Bank
Standard Chartered Bank
United Bank

Freight Forwarding and Courier Services

Aramex
DHL
Federal Express
TNT Express
UPS
Skynet

Hotels

Top 10 Hotels in Qatar

The Ritz Carlton Doha
W Doha
Grand Hyatt Doha
The St Regis Doha
InterContinental Doha
Kempinski Residences and Suites Doha
Four Seasons Hotel Doha
The Torch Doha
Movenpick Tower Doha
Sharq Village & Spa Doha

Other Hotels

Al-Bustan Hotel
Al Ghariya Resorts

Al Liwan Suites
Al Muntazah Plaza Hotel
Doha Grand Hotel
Doha Seef Hotel
Doha Marriott Hotel
Doha Palace
Gulf Horizon Hotel
Gulf Paradise Hotel
Hotel Souq Waqif
La Cigale Hotel
Mercure Grand Hotel
Merweb Hotel
Millennium Hotel
New Capital Hotel
Ramada Plaza Hotel
Retaj Al Rayyan Hotel
Sealine Beach Resort
Sheraton Doha Resort & Convention Hotel
Somerset West Bay, Doha
Wyndham Grand Regency Doha

Insurance Companies

Al-Khaleej Insurance Company
Al Koot Insurance and Reinsurance Co
Allianz Takaful QFC
Arabia Insurance Co
AXA Insurance (Gulf) BSC (C)
Capital Insurance Brokers LLC
Ceylinco Insurance
Doha Bank Assurance Company LLC
Doha Insurance Co (QSC)
General Takaful
Libano-Suisse Insurance Company
Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) International
Qatar General Insurance and Re-Insurance Company
Qatar Insurance Company
Qatar Islamic Insurance Company
SEIB Insurance & Reinsurance Co LLC
Tazur Company BSC
The American Life Insurance Company

Local Attorney List

Media

Al-Jazeera Satellite TV Station
Al-Watan
Al-Rayah
AL-Sharq
Gulf Times
The Peninsula
Qatar News Agency

Telecommunications

Qatar Telecom
Vodafone

Local Business Tenders List

Web Resources

Local Professional Services

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Contact the Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy at:

<http://export.gov/qatar/>

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Chapter 4: Leading Sectors for U.S. Export and Investment
Agriculture Sector
Commercial Sectors

- **Air-conditioning and Refrigeration Equipment**
- **Architectural/Construction/Engineering Services**
- **Automotive**
- **Construction Equipment & Tools**
- **Defense Sales**
- **Education Training & Equipment**
- **Medical Equipment and Services**
- **Oil & Gas Equipment and Services**
- **Security & Safety Equipment**
- **Travel and Tourism**

Agriculture Sector

In 2013, the United States agricultural and forest products exports to Qatar were valued at \$USD 74 million. Leading U.S. exports included poultry meat (\$USD35 million), red meat- chilled and frozen (\$USD 10 million), forest products (\$USD 5 million), processed fruits and vegetables (\$USD 84 million) and tree nuts (\$USD 3 million). By and large, Qatar's food import regimes are usually non-trade restrictive. However, U.S. exporters of poultry meat should work to limit the amount of water in their products as a number of U.S. shipments have been detained because of concerns regarding shipments thawing en route to Qatar. For more information about agricultural trade prospects in Qatar and the region, please visit www.fas.usda.gov

Contact the U.S. Agricultural Trade Office in Dubai at:

atodubai@usda.gov.

Commercial Sectors

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Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Equipment

Overview

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Unit: USD millions

	2013
Total Market Size	243
Total Local Production	0
Total Exports	2.35
Total Imports	246
Imports from the U.S.	67
Exchange Rate: 1 USD	3.64 QR

Total Market Size = (Total Local Production + Total Imports) – (Total Exports)

Sources: Trade estimates, U.S. Census Bureau, Qatar Planning Council

Given the nature of the climate that is prevailing in the Persian Gulf; the Heating Air-Conditioning, Ventilation and Refrigeration (HVAC/R) sector is always a best prospect. The boom in the real estate development market, the upgrade of existing infrastructure and the increase in population and visitors are the main drive for the increasing demand on HVAC/R equipment supplies and services.

The presence of an active chapter of The American Society for Heating, Refrigeration and Air-conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) has contributed, in a large measure, to an increase on the demand for US HVAC/R products and services, given the standardizing nature of ASHRAE. As Qatar seeks to reduce its carbon footprint, opportunities for innovative cooling technologies, products, and services are eagerly sought.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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- Central Air-Conditioning Units equipment and supplies
- District cooling equipment and supplies
- Operations and Maintenance services

Opportunities

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- All the projects mentioned in Architecture/ Construction and Engineering services
- Four District cooling plants: Lusail City Project – Tender details to be released

Web Resources

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Qatar Cool

ASHRAE

Contact the Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy at:

<http://export.gov/qatar/>

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Architecture Construction Engineering Overview

It is estimated that more than \$USD 200 billion will be invested in infrastructure development over the next ten years as part of the Amir's 2030 Vision and before the landmark event of Soccer FIFA World Cup 2022. The public and private sectors rely heavily on international expertise in the area of architectural, construction and engineering services and there are a number of opportunities in this sector for U.S. firms.

The Public Works Authority, also known as Ashghal, has a plan to invest over \$USD 27 bn in roads and drainage over the next five to seven years and the projects will be implemented with a strong emphasis on quality.

Current Largest Projects

Project	Bn USD	End	Details
Lusail	45.0	2019	Mixed-use Development
Qatar Rail	40.0	2026	Metro and rail links
Expressways	20.0	2018	Ashgal Expressways
New Airport	15.5	2017	Hamad International Airport
Local Roads	14.6	2018	Ashgal roads and drainage
Bul Hanine	13.0	2022	Oilfield redevelopment
Barzan	10.3	2023	Domestic gas production
Barwa Al Khor	10.0	2025	Mixed-use development

Barwa City	8.3	2015	Mixed-use development
Education City	7.5	2014	Universities and colleges
New Port	7.4	2020	New port south of Doha
Al Sajeel	7.4	2018	Petrochemical complex
Pearl Qatar	6.5	2016	Residential development
Al Karaana	6.4	2017	QP/Shell petrochemicals
Msheireb	5.5	2016	Mixed-use development
Oryx Island	5.5	2022	Tourist land
Sharq Crossing	5.0	2021	Crossing for Doha bay

2022 World Cup Stadiums Progress

Under its proposal to FIFA, Qatar stated it would build 9 new stadiums and renovate 3, with the 12 venues divided among 7 host cities. The 7 host cities are Al-Daayen, Al-Khor, Al-Rayyan, Al-Shamal, Al-Wakrah, Doha and Umm Salal.

Recently however, it was announced during a press conference by the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, that the number would be brought down to 8 with no clear justification for the reasoning behind the decision other than stating that FIFA required a minimum of 8 stadiums.

FIFA's regulations also require the host country to allocate 92 training fields for the competing country teams, which is also currently being discussed to bring down to 64 given Qatar's city state geography and limited space.

First and second phase earth works have commenced on the Al Khor and Al Wakrah stadiums, with anticipation on the commissioning the rest of the stadiums amid all the current media speculation circulating internationally on the viability of Qatar hosting the world cup.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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- Engineering and Architectural Services
- Construction and Program Management Services

Opportunities

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There are numerous opportunities for U.S. companies in the infrastructure and real estate development arenas. It is virtually impossible to list all the major opportunities, given their high numbers. We are referring the reader to the website of each government body for the most up-to-date information.

Qatari Business Tender List

Ashghal

Public Works Authority “Ashghal” was established in 2004, as an autonomous body to oversee all infrastructure related projects as well as public amenities of the State is under the Minister of Municipality and Urban Planning.

<http://www.ashghal.gov.qa/en/Tenders/Pages/default.aspx>

Civil Aviation Authority

The Civil Aviation Authority is the national aviation authority of Qatar. The CAA comprises 5 departments: Air Navigation, Air Safety, Air Transportation and Airport Affairs, Meteorology, and Joint Services in order to promote civil aviation and weather forecasts in terms of efficiency, accuracy and security.

<http://www.ctc.gov.qa/tender-en.aspx>

Doha Port

Preparing to gain operational readiness by 2016, the Port will comprise three container terminals with a combined annual capacity in excess of six million containers.

<http://www.npp.com.qa/Tenders.html>

Qatar Rail

Qatar’s Rail Company has been established to design and implement an integrated world-class railway system in the state of Qatar. The company is aiming to be an essential part of Qatar’s urban infrastructure and to be recognized as one of the most successful, safe and environmentally-friendly railway systems in the world. This system will meet the demands of Qatar’s dynamic growing population.

<http://www.qr.com.qa/English/Procurement/Tenders/Pages/default.aspx>

Supreme Committee For Delivery & Legacy

The 2022 FIFA World Cup, an international association football tournament is scheduled to take place in Qatar in 2022. The tournament will involve 32 national teams, including that of the host nation.

www.sc.qa

Companies can submit their profiles to supplychainregistration@sc-pmc.qa

Tenders are also published in:

International Publications:

- Estate Gazette
- New Civil Engineer
- Building Design
- Building Magazine

Digital Media:

- Nce.co.uk
- Estesgazette.com
- Constructionweekonline.com
- Building.co.uk

Basic Materials

QAFCO

The country's first large-scale venture in the petrochemical sector, the Qatar Fertilizer Company (QAFCO) was established with a view to diversify the economy and utilize the nation's enormous gas reserve.

<http://qafco.com/tender.php>

Q-Chem

Company Ltd. (Q-Chem) is a Qatari company owned by Qatar Petroleum (QP) and Chevron Phillips Chemical International Qatar Holdings LLC (CPCIQ). The Q-Chem facility is an integrated petrochemical plant capable of producing high-density and medium-density polyethylene (HDPE & MDPE), 1-hexene and other products.

<http://www.qchem.com.qa/internet/Tenders/Pages/Tenders.aspx>

Qatar Steel

Qatar Steel Company was formed in 1974 as the first integrated steel plant in the Arabian Gulf. Today, Qatar Steel is widely recognized as a foremost leader in the steel industry, extending its pioneering commitment from an expansive mill site located in the heart of the progressive Mesaieed Industrial. The Company also operates a UAE based subsidiary - Qatar Steel Company FZE.

<http://www.qatarsteel.com.qa/Tenders/SitePages/how%20to%20tender.aspx>

Education

Qatar Foundation

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) aims to support Qatar on its journey from a carbon economy to a knowledge economy by “unlocking human potential.” QF aims to bring world-class education, work experience and career opportunities to Qatar’s youth.

<http://www.qf.org.qa/content/about/do-business-with-qatar-foundation>

Government Agencies

Central Planning Office

The Qatar Central Planning Office coordinates all major infrastructure projects.
<http://www.ctc.gov.qa/tender-en.aspx>

Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Heritage

Established in 2008, the Ministry strives to make Doha, Qatar the “capital of Arab culture.”

<http://www.ctc.gov.qa/tender-en.aspx>
<http://www.moc.gov.qa/English/Pages/home.aspx>

Ministry of Education and Higher Education

Established in November 2002, the Supreme Education Council (SEC) directs the nation’s education policy. It plays an integral role in the development and implementation of the education reform effort.

<http://www.sec.gov.qa/En/about/Pages/TendersListing.aspx>

Ministry of the Environment

The Ministry of Environment is striving to achieve several goals, most importantly, protecting the environment through inclusive and sustainable growth for future generations to achieve the vision of 2030.

<http://www.ctc.gov.qa/tender-en.aspx>
<http://www.moe.gov.qa/English/SitePages/Default.aspx>

Ministry of Interior

The Ministry of Interior’s functions and missions are to provide peace and security and organizing police forces guaranteeing the protection of national security and maintaining safety and security of nationals and expatriates as well as to prevent crime. Additionally, the MOI tends to the care of nationality related affairs, issuing travel documents, organizing expatriates entry to the country and their residence and organizing the prison.

<http://www.ctc.gov.qa/tender-en.aspx> <http://www.moi.gov.qa/site/english/>

Qatar Tourism Authority

Qatar Tourism Authority (QTA)’s role is to organize, enable, and supervise the tourism industry development in Qatar, as well as to represent and promote Qatar as a quality tourism destination for leisure, business, education, and sport.

<http://www.ctc.gov.qa/tender-en.aspx> <http://www.qatartourism.gov.qa/>

Ministry of Municipality & Urban Planning

The Ministry of Municipality & Urban Planning serves the public in all issues related to urban planning. It oversees the maintenance and beautification of public facilities, and provides municipal services to citizens and residents across the various municipalities.

<http://www.ctc.gov.qa/tender-en.aspx>
<http://www.baladiya.gov.qa/cui/index.dox?siteID=2>

Supreme Council of Health The Supreme Council of Health (SCH) aims to promote public health, encourage healthy lifestyles, and to provide community-based primary care with world class medical facilities. These facilities will not only provide quality care but also are expected to be research leaders on the frontiers of science.

<http://www.sch.gov.qa/home-en>

Qatar Central Tender Committee

The Qatar CTC's function is releasing and receiving tenders, opening envelopes and awarding tenders, and auctions for government's entities.

<http://www.ctc.gov.qa/tender-en.aspx>

Qatar Museum Authority

The QMA was founded in 2005 to manage the resources of all museums in the State of Qatar, to develop cultural institutions such as museums and galleries, and to provide an effective system for collecting, protecting, preserving and interpreting historic sites, monuments and artifacts.

<http://www.qm.org.qa/en>

Healthcare

SIDRA Foundation

Expected to open at the end of 2014, Sidra Medical and Research Center will be an ultra-modern, all-digital academic medical center that plans to offer specialty healthcare for women and children.

<http://sidra.org/procurement/>

Hospitality

KATARA Hospitality

Katara Hospitality, previously known as Qatar National Hotels Company is a hotel and resort owner, manager and developer, aiming to become one of the leading hospitality organizations in the world.

<http://www.katarahospitality.com/tenders/>

Media

Al Jazeera

Al Jazeera is an independent broadcaster owned by the state of Qatar through the Qatar Media Corporation and headquartered in Doha, Qatar.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/aboutus/2011/11/20111121102711394741.html>

Oil and Gas

Qatar Petroleum

Qatar Petroleum (QP), a state-owned corporation established in 1974, is responsible for all phases of the oil and gas industry in Qatar. The principal activities of Qatar Petroleum and its subsidiaries and joint ventures cover exploration, drilling and production operations, transport, storage, marketing and

sale of crude oil, natural gas liquids, liquefied natural gas, gas-to-liquids, refined products, petrochemicals and fertilizers, and helicopter and financial services.
<http://www.qp.com.qa/en/SupplyManagement/Tenders/Pages/Tenders.aspx>

Qatar Gas

Qatargas established in 1984, pioneered the liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry in Qatar. Today, Qatargas is the largest LNG producer in the world, with an annual LNG production capacity of 42 million tonnes per annum (mta).
<http://www.qatargas.com.qa/English/Tenders/Pages/default.aspx>

RasGas

RasGas Company Limited (RasGas) is a Qatari joint stock company established in 2001 by Qatar Petroleum and ExxonMobil. RASGAS oversees and manages all the operations associated with seven LNG trains, two sales gas production facilities, helium production facilities, as well as major shipping contracts and global commercial partnerships.
<http://www.rasgas.com/ContactUs.html>

Real Estate and Development

Msheireb

Msheireb Properties is a real estate company and a subsidiary of Qatar Foundation. The company was established as a commercial venture to support the Foundation's aims of creating leading edge urban living concepts that build on traditional Arabian architecture and design and contribute to the social and cultural heritage of Doha.
<http://www.msheireb.com/en-us/contactus/contactinformation.aspx>

Qatari Diar

Qatari Diar Real Estate Company was established in 2005 by the Qatar Investment Authority, the sovereign wealth fund of the State of Qatar. Headquartered in Doha, Qatari Diar is entrusted to support Qatar's growing economy and to coordinate the country's real estate development priorities.
<http://www.qataridiar.com/English/Pages/Contact-Us.aspx>

Sporting

ASPIRE

The Aspire Academy is a national sports academy for the development of Qatar's athletically talented boys. The Academy provides integrated sports development, sports science and academics in addition to providing an ambitious health and lifestyle program for the community that delivers over 25,000 education and classes per year.
<http://www.aspirezone.qa/Contacts/ContactUs.aspx>

Qatar Olympic Committee

The Qatar Olympic Committee is the National Olympic Committee representing Qatar. The committee's vision is to promote "Sport for Life," and to become "a leading nation in bringing the world together through sport."

<http://www.olympic.qa/en/Pages/ContactUs.aspx>

Telecommunications

Ooredoo Group The Ooredoo Group is a leading international communications company, with a significant presence in the MENA region and Southeast Asia, and having a consolidated customer base of 83 million as of December 2011. It operates a portfolio of brands including Ooredoo, Indosat, Asiacell, Wataniya, Nawras, Nedjma and Tunisiana.

<http://www.ooredoo.qa/en>

Vodafone

Vodafone Global Enterprise division provides telecommunications and IT services to multinational corporate clients in over 65 countries, partly owned by the Qatar Foundation.

<http://www.vodafone.qa/go/en/support/contactus>

Transportation

Qatar Airways

Qatar Airways is the state-owned flag carrier of Qatar. Headquartered in the Qatar Airways Tower in Doha, it operates a hub-and-spoke network, linking over 100 international destinations from its base in Doha, using a fleet of over 100 aircraft.

<http://www.ctc.gov.qa/tender-en.aspx>

Hamad International Airport

Formerly known as New Doha International Airport (NDIA), the airport opened on April 30, 2014. The new facility will set a new standard in airport and airline efficiency, passenger convenience and service standards. It is envisioned to become a major international gateway to the region.

<http://www.ndiaproject.com/main.html>

Mowasalat

Mowasalat, popularly known as the "The Transport Company" in Qatar, started its activities by providing land transport services and solutions in October 2004.

<http://www.mowasalat.com/en/staticpages/page/c7c26644-f59c-441e-b2d3-5a8f585d986a>

Utilities

KAHRAMAA

Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation "Kahramaa" is sole transmission and distribution system owner and operator (TDSOO) for the electricity and water sector in Qatar.

Automotive

Overview

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Unit: USD

	2013 (estimated)
Total Market Size	2.49 bn
Total Local Production	0
Total Re -Exports	640 796
Total Imports	2.5 bn
Imports from the U.S.	498 mn
Exchange Rate: 1 USD	3.64 QR

Total Market Size = (Total Local Production + Total Imports) – (Total Exports)

Sources: Trade estimates, U.S. Census Bureau, Qatar Planning Council

The automotive industry is a thriving mix of luxury and convenience for the local population. Qatar's residents are considered to be the wealthiest in the world as a result of having no form of income tax and a great deal of disposable income. According to the IMF estimates, Qatar's GDP per capita in 2014 was estimated to be at \$USD 98,342 ranked as the highest in the world. In September 2011, the government decided to increase the salaries of government agency workers by 60% and armed forces by 120%. This increased the demand of cars substantially. The prospects for the automotive industry are very bright for the next decade or two as Qatar is expected to enjoy continued growth in this sector.

Qatar has a relatively small automotive industry as the population itself is not that significant 2 174 035. Yet still there is intense competition and a wide range of car manufacturers from all over the world who are trying to exploit the market. The fact that most people have a high level of disposable income is a motivation for most manufacturers to innovate and tackle all levels of motor vehicles.

During 2013 the number of new registered vehicles reached an all record high of 90 000 units Japanese brands as Toyota and Nissan are very popular and

together control more than 40% of the market. American brands follow with an approximate market share of 12%. GMC, Chevrolet and Ford are among the most popular brands. Much of the population adopts motor vehicles for transportation. To that end the demand for spare parts has increased significantly in the past few years for all major players as people look to repair, modify or upgrade their vehicles. The majority of the working white collar population in Qatar relies on motor vehicles as their primary form of transportation so vehicles in general tend to be overused and pushed to their limits.

Therefore the need of commonly used spare parts such as brake pads, transmission controls, AC functions, coolant, wiper blades and belts are in constant demand. Demand for spare parts tends to increase substantially during the summer period in Qatar as many people tend to go on vacation using their vehicles preferring road trips for neighboring GCC countries. As such people purchase spare parts in sets and carry out the necessary vehicle checks and repairs before they leave for the summer. The reliance and demand for spare parts for motor vehicles is set to remain for the coming decade.

The public system in Qatar is mainly used by the labor force and the planned metro network is expected to be functional by the time the FIFA 2022 World Cup commences. The motor vehicle industry is expected to enjoy consistent growth for the coming decade hence making the need for spare parts highly relevant.

On the industrial side, the need for trucks and utility vehicles has increased given the level of economic activity in all sectors European brands dominate the truck and utility market leading the way Mercedes Benz with the Actros model controlling 90% market shares followed by MAN, IVECO and Renault. Nevertheless, aftermarket parts manufactured in the U.S. for European models have a great potential in Qatar. The demand for spare parts, car care products and accessories has likewise increased as the number of used vehicles has reached around 500,000 units. The number of medium and heavy duty trucks is in the neighborhood of 200,000 units.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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- Sports Utility Vehicles (Gas guzzlers)
- Trucks, Vans and Buses
- All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV), Utility Vehicles (UTVs)
- Specialized trucks and vehicles
- Car care products
- Aftermarket parts, accessories, and spare parts

Opportunities

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- Tenders published by the different governmental institutions
- Market penetration through appointment of distributors

Web Resources

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Contact the Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy at:

<http://export.gov/qatar/>

Construction Equipment and Tools

Overview

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Unit: USD thousands

	2013
Total Market Size	1,021
Total Local Production	0
Total Exports	53.63
Total Imports	100
Imports from the U.S.	438,805
Exchange Rate: 1 USD	3.64 QR

Total Market Size = (Total Local Production + Total Imports) – (Total Exports)

Sources: Trade estimates, U.S. Census Bureau, Qatar Planning Council

Given the magnitude and schedule of the construction projects planned, there is an increased need for new construction equipment. Local contractors recognize the superior quality and performance of U.S. construction equipment.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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- Heavy equipment (used and new)
- Refuse truck collectors
- Student buses
- Other Municipal equipment

Opportunities

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- All the projects mentioned in Architecture/Construction and Engineering services
- Other projects in the Oil & Gas sector

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Contact the Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy at:
<http://export.gov/qatar/>

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Defense Sales

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The U.S. Military strategic partnership in Qatar has made great strides since 1992 and become more robust since 9/11. The U.S. military commitment and relationship to Qatar is strong in view of its physical presence in Qatar, i.e., U.S. Central Command's Forward Headquarters and the Combined Air Operations Center. During Defense Secretary Hagel's visit to Qatar in 2013, the defense cooperation between the United States and Qatar got renewed for 10 years through a signing ceremony reinforcing the existing relationship between the 2 countries. =The defense alliance got

Qatar's defense expenditures are relatively minimal (in the single digits as a percentage of GDP). Qatar maintains a modest military force of about 12,000 men total, including an army, navy, and air force. The country has a public security force of about 10,000 men, including police, a coast guard, national firefighting force, air wing, marine police, and an internal security force. Qatar also has signed defense pacts with the U.S., U.K., and France. Qatar plays an active role in the collective defense efforts of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC- the regional organization of the Arab states in the Gulf; the other five members are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the U.A.E., and Oman). Qatari forces played an important role in the first Gulf War and the 2011 revolution in Libya, and Qatar has supported U.S. military operations critical to the success of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Qatar hosts CENTCOM Forward Headquarters. (US State Department Background Note)

In terms of commercial sales, this year's Doha International Maritime Defense Exhibition (DIMDEX) trade show which took place in March 2014 marked the sales of \$USD 23.9 billion worth of weapons and equipment, of which \$USD 7.6

billion were US manufactured including Apache helicopters, Javelin missiles, and PAC 3 Patriot systems. During the show as well, Boeing announced the sale of three 737 airborne early warning and control aircraft.

Lockheed Martin and Raytheon were the providers of the Patriot configuration-3 modernized fire units and associated equipment, parts, training, and logistical support.

Boeing, Lockheed Martin, General Electric and Raytheon were awarded a deal for the acquisition of AH-64D Apache Block III Longbow attack helicopters and associated equipment, parts, training and logistical support at the cost of \$USD 2.4 billion.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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- Military aircraft (fixed- and rotary-wing)
- Small arms and ammunition
- Anti-tank weapons systems
- Integrated air and missile defense systems

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Contact the Office of Military Cooperation Qatar of the U.S. Embassy in Doha through

<http://export.gov/qatar/>

Education Training and Equipment

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(Services statistics are not available from the GOQ.)

Qatar is using its hydrocarbon-fueled wealth in part to invest in educational reform. The Government of Qatar (GOQ) recognizes that it must develop a diversified, knowledge-based economy to ensure the country continues to thrive over the long-term. Seeing the failure of educational systems throughout the Arab world, Qatar is overhauling its primary and secondary schools along a U.S. model of competitive charter schools. For university education, they have imported not just the American model, but the U.S. universities themselves – six at last count, with others to come – with the goal of creating the best-educated citizens in the Middle East, fully prepared to participate in the global economy.

Qatar's thrust on quality education was reflected in the country's huge allocation of \$USD 7.02 bn for the sector (2014 -2015) -"known as the highest in the MENA region" a 7.3% increase over the previous year. . Qatar's public expenditure on

education represents 3.3% of the GDP and this increase will be partially allocated for expansion in facilities of Qatar Foundation and Qatar University. Funds will also go into the building of 85 new schools and to cover the expenses of 29 which are currently under construction.

Qatar Foundation (QF) is a major vehicle for the GOQ for education. Qatar Foundation's flagship project is a 2,500 acre campus in Doha which hosts 6 U.S. universities: Weill-Cornell Medical College (medicine); Carnegie Mellon University (computer science, business); Georgetown School of Foreign Service (political science and international affairs); Virginia Commonwealth University (design); Texas A&M University (engineering); and Northwestern University (journalism). Qatar Foundation intends to import more U.S. universities in the future. The Supreme Education Council, through the Outstanding Schools Initiative, has imported one U.S. high school and plans to import more.

Currently the Institute of Harvard Law and Policy in alliance with QF is sponsoring workshops on policy to deepen the knowledge of young Qatari graduates. The Institute is also advising on QF on a possible Harvard Doctoral Program.

Qatar has almost 90 independent schools which function like charter schools in the United States. While the Government of Qatar (GOQ) requires all independent schools to comply with national curriculum standards in all core subjects, the GOQ is gradually modifying its educational curriculum to match international baccalaureate standards. The GOQ is looking to expand the number of primary and secondary private schools, particularly high-quality ones, to cater to the growing population of foreign professionals working in Qatar, and provide options to its citizens. With the country growing at a fast pace the shortage of private international schools is becoming an issue that directly affects the families of the foreigners joining the work force. The waiting lists are extensive and the options are limited.

The arrival of foreign professionals will continue to increase in an effort to meet the deadlines of projects set by the National Vision 2030 and most recently, the new infrastructure projects to be executed under the umbrella of the World Cup 2022.

The Education sector is striving to keep up with the increasing market demands. Several new international schools are opening doors but with the demand growing at a faster pace, more institutions are needed. The Government is aware of the situation and the Supreme Education Council is making great efforts to promote the establishment of top international institutions in Qatar. In 2007 Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al Misnad launched "Qatar's Outstanding Schools Program". The main goal is to have growing collection of exceptional

schools from around the world establishing branches in Qatar, to serve both Qatari and expatriate students.

The first two schools established under the Outstanding Schools Initiative, the Michael E. DeBakey High School for Health Professions from Houston, Texas, USA and The International School of London from the UK opened their Qatar branches in fall 2008. The third Outstanding School, Sherborne School from Dorset, UK, opened its Qatar branch in fall 2009.

The Sherborne School, of British Curriculum is developing a new project that will eventually cater for approximately 1500 pupils. The developer of the new facility will invest \$USD 38 million. The Spanish School SEK is also joining the group of reputable school. Initially, the SEK School in Qatar will be limited to the primary stage in its first year and starting from pre-kindergarten up to the sixth primary class. The school will start by enrolling 180 students and gradually expand to enroll a total number of 460 students in academic 2014-2015. This number of students will increase to be not less than 600 students in academic 2016-2017.

The Government of Qatar provides every citizen free education at the primary and secondary level. The Government of Qatar's Higher Education Institute (HEI) scholarship awards full scholarships to Qatari nationals admitted into a variety of designated undergraduate and graduate schools in the United States (as well as other countries). The goal is to provide these Qataris with the appropriate mix of skills in key sectors in support of Qatarization. According to the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, student visas issued to Qataris are up 35% from 2011-2013. Qatar has the lowest worldwide rate of student visa denial only 3.8%.

A total of 979 Qataris are studying in the U.S. a significant number considering the population size is 2.1 million and expats represent more than 80%.

Qatar's senior leadership, as part of the vision 2030, established a strategy, which seeks to educate highly productive, skilled Qatari nationals to meet the demands of the labor market. This strategy is known as "Qatarization" and is designed to increase the number of Qatari nationals in all joint venture industries and government departments to assume key positions formerly occupied by expatriates. The target is 50% of the workforce in the industry and energy sector.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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- **Language:** ESL and TOEFL
- **Undergraduate:** Business Administration, Engineering and Communication

- **Certificate Programs: English as a second Language,** Firefighting, Law Enforcement Forensics, Security Training, Ongoing Professional Development at Qatari state-owned enterprises
- **Post-Graduate:** Pharmacy, Dentistry, MBAs

Opportunities

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This sector is open for new opportunities but must fit into the educational and economic goals of the Qatar Foundation and the GOQ. Qatar Foundation continues to look for U.S. universities to join Education City. The GOQ is investing significant resources to train Qatari youth to enable them to become entrepreneurs and qualified professionals for the economy.

School operators are in high demand as the country tries to cope with the growing education need. Several projects such as Lusail City are contemplating to build schools to cater their residents. Register for tender opportunities:
<http://www.lusail.com/English/E-Procurement/Pages/E-Vendor-Registration.aspx>

Law No. 13-2000 allows 100 percent foreign ownership in the education sector pending approval from the government.

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Qatar Foundation
Ministry of Education
Supreme Education Council
Qatar Petroleum

Contact the Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy at:

<http://export.gov/qatar/>

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Information and Communication Technology

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IT is one of the center points of the government's plans to create a diversified, knowledge-based economy in Qatar. Qatar's ICT strategy and master plan is in tandem with the National Vision, which seeks to adhere to principles of equality, democracy, and human development; while guided by international best practices with a strategy tailored to the country's unique circumstances and requirements.

Qatar's Supreme Council for Information and Communication Technology (SCICT) was established in 2005 to develop ICT in Qatar. At the launch of the new policy making and regulatory body – generally referred to as ictQATAR - Sheikh Tamim, now the Amir of Qatar, said that they aim to implement more than 100 programs and initiatives during the upcoming years. Building technology literacy and capability among the people of Qatar is crucial in view of overcoming the country's shortage of skilled manpower. ICT is having transformational effects across all sectors of the national economy, facilitating ongoing social and political reforms, and firmly paving the way to establish Qatar as a developed nation.

In the year 2006 the Decree Law Number 34 gave ictQATAR a full range of powers to regulate the telecommunications market. The Regulatory Authority started developing a full regulatory framework to advance healthy market conditions and ensure the respect of consumer rights.

Change in the telecom sector was already tangible by 2007, when ictQATAR achieved one of its earliest goals opening the mobile products and services sector to the competition. The latter was taken a step further when the government officially announced the liberalization of the fixed line telecoms in 2008.

IctQatar launched an e- Government 2020 strategy that offers a blueprint for moving forward building over the progress achieved during the past years. The three main objectives are:

1. Better serve individuals and businesses that fuel the nation's economic growth by offering end to end e-Services.
2. Create efficiency in government administration by maximizing the use of public funds. The main goal is to deliver consistent quality in the services.

Increase Government openness by establishing a platform where citizens can effectively connect with the local authorities.

In addition, ictQatar is fostering several national programs that cater both civil society and the industrial sector. The core programs are a) ICT infrastructure, b) Government network, d) E- Business and Cyber Security

The ICT infrastructure has to grow and evolve to meet the country's needs. In early 2013, Es'hailSat, the Qatar Satellite Company, launched their first satellite. The high-capacity satellite brings to Qatar and the surrounding Middle East and North African region enhanced availability and quality of communications services. This means more TV channel choices and cable provider options in Qatar, and improved military surveillance and radio communications for the country's armed forces.

This investment will help ensure Qatar's commitment to meeting the sophisticated broadband needs required to host FIFA's World Cup in 2022. Furthermore, the television market will especially benefit from the installed base of more than 13 million satellite homes already equipped for Direct-to-Home reception from this region.

Another milestone under the IT infrastructure goal is to reach a majority of Qatari households and businesses with enhanced broadband access and an open-access fiber network. Over the next five years, ictQATAR is committed to installing a next-generation, high-speed broadband network. To achieve such goal, ictQATAR is investing \$USD 550 million. Last year 63% of the households and businesses had broadband installed at 1 megabyte per second.

IctQatar has envisioned a common platform to enrich the government's network in terms of ICT environment, readiness and usage. By developing policies, guidelines and standards; implementing solid IT infrastructure bases and increasing the government's offering of online services.

In terms of E- business ictQatar- has several programs to encourage local companies into the technological world motivated by the competitive edge that this could bring to their daily operations and overall strategies.

The last component of the national agenda is Cyber Security. After investing millions in the development of IT infrastructure the GOQ has to effectively protect it and with this in mind developed Qatar Computer Emergency Response Team, (Q-CERT). Q-Cert studies the needs of specific sectors and their cyber security maturity levels. The studies lead to the development of protection strategies, practice frameworks and tools by working closely with stakeholders.

With its booming economy and ambitious ICT investment program Qatar is expected to be the fastest growing IT market in the region over five-year forecast period. (2012-2016) IT spending CAGR is forecast at 10%, with opportunities in sectors such as infrastructure, hydrocarbons, banking and telecoms. The decision to award Qatar the 2022 FIFA World Cup is expected to fuel a wave of investment in IT products and services.

The Qatari government has outlined plans to invest QAR6bn (\$USD 1.6bn) in information technology and IT services as part of its ICT-2015 strategy.

Computer Hardware Sales: Despite high PC penetration, high incomes will drive multiple device ownership as tablets and other new touch form factors make up a larger share of sales. Estimate sales USD 810 .4 mn in 2014 to USD 1.2 bn in 2018, CAGR of +9.6%

Software Sales: Scope remains for growth in enterprise software market over the medium term with low penetration by international standards. Growth areas include business intelligence and other information management applications, as Qatari companies seek more efficiency in both internal collaboration and relationships with international customers and partners. Estimate sales USD 360.2 mn in 2014 to USD 595.8 mn in 2018, CAGR of +13.6%.

IT Services Sales: The IT services market is forecast to be the fastest-growing segment of the Qatari IT market between 2014- 2018 .Services are expected to outperform in the IT market in the medium term due to demand for cloud computing, smart systems and security services from the public and private sectors. Estimated sales USD 630mn in 2014 to USD 1.05 bn in 2018 CAGR of +14.9%.

E-Readiness: Leading the Arab world, Qatar ranked (23rd) in the UN's 2013 /2014 e-readiness survey. Qatar moves five places in the rankings thanks to the government's sharp effort to expand its offerings of online services and increase the online participation of citizens. Moreover, mobile broadband subscriptions have exploded, leaping from 9.6% in 2012 to 70.3% in 2013 year. While fixed broadband affordability remains a pending issue which may affect the level of broadband Internet subscriptions the overall level of penetration and use of ICTs (16th) is high. The government's strong vision and its commitment to rapidly develop ICTs as a means to diversify its economy, along with its efforts to create a business-friendly environment to spur entrepreneurship, have resulted in this

strong overall assessment by the UN.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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- Software and hardware security solutions
- E-commerce
- E-Education

Opportunities

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- Tenders published by the different governmental institutions
- Market penetration through appointment of distributors

Web Resources

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Ooredoo

Qatar E-Government

Vodafone Qatar

The Supreme Council for Information & Communication Technology

Contact the Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy at:

<http://export.gov/qatar/>

Medical Equipment and Services

Overview

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Unit: USD thousands

	2013
Total Market Size	
Total Local Production	
Total Exports	
Total Imports	
Imports from the U.S.	
Exchange Rate: 1 USD	

Total Market Size = (Total Local Production + Total Imports) – (Total Exports)

Sources: Trade estimates, U.S. Census Bureau, Qatar Planning Council

Note: The above figures relate only to equipment.

Health care is a priority concern for the Qatari leadership. The Qatari Government is constantly upgrading the quality health services using technology, international expertise and knowledge. In Qatar, healthcare services are either free or highly subsidized. According to industry estimates, the market for medical equipment will grow over the next five years. The market relies on imports from Europe, Asia and the United States. In fact, the U.S. is one of the leading exporters of medical equipment, medical supplies, medicines and pharmaceuticals to Qatar. Qatar's strong interest in importing medical equipment, healthcare technology and supplies from the U.S. is driven by two factors: (1) the rise of new construction projects for hospitals and health care centers; and (2) Qatar's lack of local production capacity in this area.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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- Medical Equipment
- Medical Supplies
- Equipment and supplies for persons with special needs

- Specialized medical services
- Healthcare technology
- Books and publications
- Training

Opportunities

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- Hamad Medical City, owned and funded by Hamad Medical Corporation, is a USD 900 million integrated medical complex consisting of several specialty hospitals. Work is underway to build an associated medical complex that will consist of the following: a 338 bed-Pediatric Hospital, a 200-bed Orthopedic Hospital, a 230-bed Physical Medicine and Physiotherapy Hospital, a 40-bed Day Care Surgery Center, and a 228-room Home Care Center for the elderly.
- Sidra Medical and Research Facility owned and funded by the Qatar Foundation with an \$USD 8 billion endowment. Sidra will be the first academic medical center in Qatar based on a U.S. model. Working in partnership with the Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar and the Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), the hospital's main focus will be to provide world-class medical care for women and children, to train medical students and clinicians, and to specialize in pregnancy health, infertility, genetic abnormalities, and other diseases specific to females. Several U.S. companies providing medical equipment have already won lucrative contracts with HMC.

Web Resources

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Central Tenders Committee
Hamad Medical Corporation
Sidra Foundation

Contact the Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy at:

<http://export.gov/qatar/>

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Oil & Gas Field Machinery and Equipment

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The state of Qatar is the largest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the world, and the country's exports of LNG, crude oil, and petroleum products

provide the major portion of government revenues. Qatar's earnings from its hydrocarbons sector accounted for more than 50% of the country's total government revenues over the past five years (2008 -2013)

The country is proprietor of the third largest proven reserve of natural gas in the world after Russia and Iran and (QP) Qatar Petroleum the State owned company manages all the processes. It oversees the oil, gas, fertilizer, petrochemicals and refining operations in country and abroad. QP has developed the sector through key partnerships with international companies; promoting the transfer of knowledge and fostering synergies, as many foreign companies, purchase LNG or oil from projects they have invested in.

Qatar enjoys a reserve of approximately 14.6 billion barrels of crude oil and 910 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. These reserves would translate into 13.7% of the world total and will be sufficient to support planned production of natural gas for over 200 years.

The country has attracted an estimated \$USD100 billion in investment, with approximately \$USD 60-70 billion coming from the U.S. Although a self-imposed moratorium on North Field development is in place until at least 2015, growth from new projects is expected to be low.

According to QNB's Economic Insight 2013, Asia remains the primary destination for LNG exports but Europe is increasingly important. Asia has been the primary destination for Qatar's LNG exports for some time as the region is characterized by a shortage of hydrocarbon resources combined with rapidly rising demand for gas-fired power generation. The largest Asian destinations in 2012 were Japan (15.7m tons), India (11.8m) and South Korea (10.4m). Europe has taken an increasing share of Qatar's LNG exports, mainly going to the UK, which has increased imports from Qatar as production from its domestic North Sea reserves has declined.

In general, Qatar has opened up new export destinations for its LNG over the last five years, including in the Middle East, with exports to the UAE and Kuwait, and to South America, with exports to Argentina, Brazil and Chile. There are a number of Sport Market Agreements (SPAs) currently under discussion, with Croatia, India, Pakistan and Turkey.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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- Oil & Gas Field Machinery, Equipment and Supplies
- Oil & Gas Field Services

Opportunities

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Law No. 13-2000 permits foreigners, upon approval, to own up to 100 percent of any investment made in the energy and mining sectors.

A new Petrochemicals Complex at Ras Laffan: The petrochemicals complex will include a mono-ethylene glycol (MEG) plant with a capacity of up to 1.5 million tones a year (t/y), along with other olefin derivatives. Shell will develop the complex at Ras Laffan. Project completion date is expected in 2018.

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Qatar Petroleum

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Safety and Security Equipment

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High economic and demographic growth and the changing geopolitical climate have led to an increased focus on security. There has been a noticeable increase in security procedures in private and government establishments. Private and semi-private entities are upgrading existing security and safety equipment to keep ahead of changing security requirements.

The unrest witnessed by certain countries in the region, and the Qatari involvement in the regional and international political arena have raised the awareness of the Qatari decision makers to beef up their security procedures and logistics. That will involve the use of state-of-the-art technology given the limited human resources.

Qataris recognize the need to secure vulnerable offshore assets, and other high-profile facilities including the new airport, port, stadiums, aluminum smelter, hospitals, power plants, pipelines, steel plants, and ministries. Furthermore, high-tech, integrated security systems are required for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, where approximately 500, 000 million people from around the world will participate.

The World Cup Phenomena implicates the implementation of additional safety and security regulations. FIFA requires each stadium to have a Venue Operations Center (VOC) from which all safety and security operations will be controlled and managed. Each VOC should have:

- a. **CCTV surveillance** monitors to properly undertake proactive and reactive surveillance monitoring and control of the cameras. Furthermore, the system shall contain digital video recorders (DVRs) of sufficient capacity to record and store images for a minimum of 60 days.
- b. **Fire panels** linked to the installation of an automatic fire detection (AFD) system and firefighting equipment such as hose reels, fire extinguishers and blankets.
- c. **Communication system** is required to be robust and comprehensive for all aspects of stadium safety and security.
- d. **Uninterruptible Power Supply** to guarantee the continuity of operations during an emergency.

Expert advice will also be required to assess the stadium risks and develop a contingency and emergency plans in case of an incident.

During 2013 in response, to several cyber-attacks including one perpetrated in August 2012 that shut down the web site and some internal servers at RasGas, a major producer of liquid natural gas in Qatar and another one that affected

Qatar's Foundation social media accounts where supporters of the Syrian regime posted hateful messages; the Ministry of Interior (MOI) announced that they will heighten Cyber Defense measures implementing adequate IT infrastructure paired with legislative initiatives that will severely punish cybercrime.

Qatar's growing international profile brings a greater awareness of the country's wealth making it a more attractive mark, for the cybercrime. In 2013, a steady rise is expected in targeted attacks to Qatar with financial and political motivation.

A Cyber Security Committee has been appointed government officials and consultants are deliberating to identify and determine the best technological and legal approach to ensure National Security and Cyber Defense.

The Qatari government wants to boost its offensive and defensive cyber-capabilities. Like many other countries, Qatar wants to improve its computer defenses in the face of a growing network warfare threat and there is an opportunity for U.S. technology firms that are acknowledged leaders in the field of cyberwarfare and cyberdefense.

Several steps have been taken to boost the defensive capabilities and cyber intelligence. In 2006 Q-CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team) was created under the umbrella of ictQatar with the objective to serve as coordination center in dealing with Internet security. The entity has a Q- Lab that proactively researches for cyber threats and ensure that attacks can be detected and prevented before they cause real harm. Q-CERT's cyber security intelligence aims to stay vigilant against possible cyber threats that may arise in today's networked world, through threat monitoring, trend analysis and advisories.

In the safety arena and after few unfortunate fire incident that cost the life of a dozen of expatriates, the government of Qatar is expected to upgrade all of its safety standards and NFPA, UL and other US standards are more likely to be widely adopted.

Given the high regard local consumers have for U.S. expertise in the security sector and the favorable exchange rate compared to other convertible currencies, U.S. exports of security related equipment and systems are expected to increase in coming years.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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- CCTV Surveillance
- Access control
- Asset tracking
- Chemical trace detection
- Computer security

- Forgery/ Fraud
- Integrated security systems, Building management systems
- Intrusion detection equipment
- Perimeter protection
- Protective barriers
- Travel safety and security
- Electronic safety and fire detection
- Metal detection
- Communications systems
- Fire protection equipment and supplies

Opportunities

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Qatar has embarked on a vast program to reform its police and military units. Information about projects with the Ministry of Interior, Qatar Armed Forces or any other security agency is considered sensitive.

Without doubt the World Cup is represents an important opportunity for the Safety and Security industries to provide products and services.

Web Resources

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Ministry of Interior
Q-CERT HYPERLINK "<http://www.qcert.org>"

Contact the Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy at:

<http://export.gov/qatar/>

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Travel and Tourism

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The U.S. Department of Commerce projects a sustained growth of international travel to the United States through 2018. Building on a record breaking 2012, of 17.6 million visitors that spent \$USD165,6 billion.

According to this forecast the U.S. would experience visitor growth rates of up to 4.2% from 2013-2018. All the world regions are forecasted to grow and the Middle East is not the exception with a possible 67% increase during this period.

The number of travelers from Qatar to the U.S. - during January and February 2014- increased by 14.4% a total of 2, 605. A total of 26 007 visitors from Qatar during 2013 were registered by the immigration authorities positioning Qatar as the 6th largest market from the Middle East. The first place belongs to Israel accounted for 331 589 visitors followed by Saudi Arabia with 221,230 and Turkey with 160 417 tourists.

Qatar's USD153 Million U.S.-bound market holds enormous potential for the domestic U.S. travel industry. In order to increase market share, U.S. travel entities are encouraged to promote their products and services directly to Qatar's consumers and travel agents. Doha's strategic location coupled with the new massive international airport will definitely make Qatar a major transit point for people in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. The flag carrier, Qatar Airways, already flies to five destinations in America: Washington, DC, New York, Houston, Chicago and Miami. Among its expansion plans is contemplating to add Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, Dallas and Philadelphia to its U.S. network of destinations.

In addition to Qatar Airways, the Emirates, Etihad, Royal Air Jordan, Egypt Air and Turkish Airlines fly directly to several U.S. destinations, including New York, Houston, Los Angeles and Chicago. United Airlines and Delta are flying directly to cities in the Gulf Cooperation Council. United started a direct service from Washington Dulles to Doha via Dubai in May 2012. European carriers such as Lufthansa, Air-France-KLM-Northwest and British Airways are also carrying passengers from Qatar to different destinations in the United States, leveraging their network and daily flights to the region.

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Office of Tourism Industries forecasts a 10 % growth rate in the number of Middle East travelers to the United States during 2013/ 2014 totaling 891,756 visitors. Most Qataris who travel to the United States are business travelers, though considerable numbers of individuals, tour groups and families also visit the United States.

Qataris are also starting to consider the U.S. as a medical tourism destination. According to the latest Medical Tourism Climate Survey 2013, the United States was among the top 3 destinations in terms of quality and services. Qatar spent \$USD 29 million on health care overseas last year. Hamad Corporation reported that the numbers have doubled since 2009. Approximately 2000 patients are receiving medical attention abroad due to emergency treatments or elective surgeries. When patients travel abroad usually the whole family accompanies them; complete arrangements are made for the patient and family members including airline ticket, accommodation and transportation. Definitely, medical tourism is an attractive niche for U.S. travel services and healthcare providers.

The average tourist spends approximately \$USD 5,297 per day in the United States including accommodations, meals, and shopping (excluding airfare). Industry experts report over \$USD153 million in expenditures per year by inbound travelers from Qatar within the United States on travel-related services, excluding airfare.

Best Products/Services

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Over 70 travel agents and 12 tour operators work in the Qatari outbound travel market. This market is fast-paced and competitive. Operators and airlines advertise special packages and seasonal deals on an almost daily basis, especially during summer vacation between July and August and Qatar's holidays in the months of September and December. Tour operators specialize in market segments rather than in specific destinations and most operators are conservative when selecting new travel products.

U.S. passenger service companies, travel attractions, restaurants, outlet shopping and family travel destinations may find opportunities in Qatar, especially by offering new travel packages and a high level of services. Medical tourism is on the rise and could benefit from the increasing number of Qataris receiving medical treatment overseas. Elective surgery represents a large portion of the expenditure abroad and special premium packages could be tailored to attract locals.

Opportunities

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For more information please contact the Commercial Service at:
<http://export.gov/qatar/>

You can also contact us for customized, individualized or standard information on the Qatari travel market, responding with specific information relevant to your products or services. We can provide answers regarding the overall marketability of a product or service, market size and trends, customary distribution and

promotion practices, market entry requirements and potential agents, distributors, or strategic partners.

Resources

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U.S. Dept. of Commerce Office of Travel & Tourism Industries
Amadeus Market Information
Qatar Airways
Qatar Tourism & Exhibitions Authority

Contact the Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy at:

<http://export.gov/qatar/>

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Import Tariffs

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In accordance with the GCC Customs Union, outlined in Law No. 41/2002 and implemented as the GCC Unified Customs Law on January 1, 2003, Qatar imposes a five percent ad valorem tariff on the cost, insurance and freight (C.I.F.) invoice value of most imported products, including food products. The GCC has approved exemptions for approximately 400 goods (including basic food products such as live animals, fresh fruit and vegetables, seafood, wheat, flour, rice, feed grains, spices, seeds for planting and powdered milk), diplomatic and consular imports, military and security products, civilian aviation, personal effects and used household items, passenger accompanied luggage and gifts, goods destined for charitable use, ships and other vessels for the transport of passengers and floating platforms, and products to be used for industrial projects. Qatar also has a 20 percent tariff on iron bars and rods, non-alloy hot-rolled steel and 12 millimeter steel bars as well as cement. 30 percent customs duties are levied on imports of urea and 15 percent are levied on imports of records and musical instruments. Pork and pork products are illegal under Qatari law. Tobacco products and alcoholic beverages are subject to a 100 percent import duty. Projects funded by the Qatar Industrial Development Bank (QIDB) can be granted a customs duty waiver for the import of machinery, raw materials, and other industrial inputs.

Trade Barriers

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Qatar has no trade barriers regarding the exportation and importation of goods and products. Qatar adheres to the WTO agreements for customs valuation and trade facilitation.

Import Requirements and Documentation

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All importers are required by law to have an import license. Import licenses are issued only to Qatari nationals, or to the Qatari partner in a limited liability

partnership, and must be registered with the Ministry of Economy and Commerce. This regulation also applies to wholly foreign owned entities operating in Qatar.

Import Licenses: All imported meats, including beef and poultry products, require a health certificate issued by the country of export and a "Halal" slaughter certificate issued by an approved Islamic center in that country.

In order to clear goods from customs zones at ports or land boundaries in Qatar, importers must submit a variety of documents, including a detailed customs declaration, bill of lading, certificate of origin, pro forma invoice and import license. Information on specific requirements should be obtained from the Customs and Ports General Authority. Inspection of goods is generally conducted at the customs station, or as directed by the Director General, in the presence of the owner or his representative

Recent Update to Qatar Import Regulations:

"Effective 1st April, 2011, Qatar Customs will impose the following new rules & regulations for imported shipments heading to Qatar and entering through Doha's airport and Seaport.

We kindly request that all of our customers instruct their shippers at the origin to also abide by the following rules:

1. Qatar Customs will only accept official invoices, official Certificate of Origin (COO) & packing lists; these are now mandatory. Shipment without these documents will not be cleared under any circumstances and shall be returned back to origin.
2. It is now mandatory to write the HS CODE of the Commodity in the official invoices and COO; otherwise Shipment will not be accepted for clearance.
3. "COUNTRY OF ORIGIN" OR "MADE IN" fields are mandatory for each piece, on materials, and on cartons.
4. The "COUNTRY OF ORIGIN" OR "MADE IN MARK" details on the shipment should match the information on the Official Invoice, COO, and on the materials. (Any discrepancies will cause the shipment to be returned to the origin.)
5. For Goods originating from Europe: Please mention clearly on the COO the country of origin. Example: "Country of Origin: European Community – UK. If the Products are made in 2 different countries, the Country of Origin should be both countries in the COO, Invoice, and on the materials. Example: European Community – UK & POLAND.

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Customs and Ports General Authority

P.O. Box 81, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (974) 4441-1149

Fax: (974) 4441-4959

Contact: Sheikh Hassan Bin Nasser Bin Jassim Al-Thani, Director General

Mr. Essa Jassim Mohammed, Office Director

In Qatar, the letter of credit (L/C) is the most common instrument for controlling exports and imports. When an L/C is opened, the supplier is required to provide a certificate of origin and a certificate from the captain of the ship or from the shipping agency stating that the ship is allowed to enter Arab ports. An Arab Embassy or Consulate or an Arab Chamber of Commerce should notarize both documents in the exporting country.

A letter of credit initiated in Qatar is usually endorsed with transshipment clauses. Most of the goods imported into Qatar from the U.S. and elsewhere come via the nearby ports of Dubai and Sharjah, both in the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.). Transshipment clauses serve the purpose of advancing those goods from the U.A.E. to Qatar by land (by truck) and/or sea (by barge). It is customary in Qatar for importers to build their L/C's computations on "cost and freight (C&F)" basis, and not C.I.F. Qatari merchants prefer to have insurance coverage provided by local and international insurance companies, to cover damage in transit to the goods covered under the L/C.

U.S. Export Controls

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A variety of sensitive items may not be imported into Qatar. The Qatar Distribution Company monopolizes the importation of alcohol. Pork and pornographic items may not be imported. Military and security items are forbidden unless licensed by local authorities. Narcotics, flammable and radioactive products are also banned, as are any products that violate trademarks or originate in boycotted countries.

Standard U.S. export controls and licensing procedures are applicable to Qatar.

Temporary Entry

Some categories of goods may be temporarily admitted without collection of customs duties. These include: heavy machinery and equipment for project execution, semi-finished products, use in exhibitions and temporary events and machinery, equipment imported for repair, containers and materials for refilling, animals for grazing, and commercial samples.

Labeling and Marking Requirements

Current laws and regulations of the Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning and the Supreme Health council require labeling and marking requirements to be honored, especially where import of foodstuffs is concerned.

All imported meats require a health certificate issued by the country of export and a Halal slaughter certificate issued by an approved Islamic center in that country.

Qatar enforces GCC shelf-life standards GS 150/1993, Part I and II, which combined affect 170 food products. The manufacturer's established shelf life is accepted for other food products. Production and expiry dates must be printed on the original label or container by the manufacturer. Dates cannot be added after the fact via a sticker. Products must arrive at destination with at least half the shelf-life duration remaining. The U.S. supplier should work closely with the importer to ensure compliance with local shelf-life requirements. Food labels

must include product and brand names, production and expiry dates, country of origin, name and address of the manufacturer, net weight in metric units, and a list of the ingredients in descending order of importance. All fats and oils used as ingredients must be specifically identified on the label. Labels must be in Arabic only or in Arabic/English. Arabic stickers are accepted.

Prohibited and Restricted Imports

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Pork, pork products and pornographic material are illegal in Qatar. The Qatar Distribution Company monopolizes the importation of alcohol. Military and security items are forbidden unless licensed by local authorities. Narcotics, flammable and radioactive products are also banned. Any products that violate trademarks are also banned. Qatar participates in the primary aspects of the Israel boycott but there is an Israeli Trade Representative Office located in Doha.

Customs Regulations and Contact Information

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Qatar is a member of the GCC Customs Union which came into effect in 2003. In accordance with the GCC Customs Union, Qatar maintains a five percent tariff on a wide range of products. Basic food products such as wheat, flour, rice, feed grains and powdered milk are exempted from tariffs. The tariff on alcoholic beverages and tobacco products is 100 percent. Qatar also has a 20 percent tariff on iron bars and rods, non-alloy hot-rolled steel and 12 millimeter steel bars. Qatar maintains a five percent tariff on all textile imports. Projects funded by the Qatar Industrial Development Bank (QIDB) can be granted a customs duty waiver for the import of machinery, raw materials and other industrial inputs.

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Overview

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The Government is currently developing its standards regime to meet internationally and regionally-recognized norms and practices, such as the ISSO standards. The Qatar Laboratories and Standardization Affairs is in charge of

developing and conformity assessment body for Qatar. However, Qatari government ministries such as the National Health Authority (NHA), the Ministry of Energy and Industry and Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning provide recommendations for standards. The Qatar Laboratories and Standardization Affairs continually develop new standards and criteria for various items and merchandize.

Standards Organizations

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The only standards organization in Qatar is the Qatar Laboratories and Standardization Affairs

NIST Notify U.S. Service

Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) to report to the WTO all proposed technical regulations that could affect trade with other Member countries. **Notify U.S.** is a free, web-based e-mail subscription service that offers an opportunity to review and comment on proposed foreign technical regulations that can affect your access to international markets. Register online at Internet URL: <http://www.nist.gov/notifyus/>

Conformity Assessment

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Qatar has laboratories to test construction materials, food and calibration scales. The Qatar Laboratories and Standardization Affairs is charged with the task of developing laboratories and facilities to test electrical equipment and supplies, toys and oil fabrication equipment as well as other items and merchandize. The Departments of Central Laboratories, and Quality and Standards, which are under the supervision of the Qatar Laboratories and Standardization Affairs, are the primary testing facilities for Qatar. There are no conformity assessment bodies in Qatar.

Product Certification

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Qatar applies product certification according to ISSO standards 22 and 28. Product certification takes place by way of a conformity certificate from the manufacturer, self-declaration or tests reported by accredited laboratories from exporting country.

Accreditation

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There are no accreditation organizations in Qatar.

Publication of Technical Regulations

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The name of the national gazette is the Government Official Gazette. Proposed regulations are currently not published but final regulations are published and are considered law once listed in the Official Gazette. The General Organization for Standards and Metrology has developed a website that lists all Qatari standards and allows for governments and the private sector to make comments on draft legislation for 60 days. More information can be found at: www.qs.org.qa

Labeling and Marking

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Qatar enforces GCC shelf-life standards GS 150/1993, Part I and II, which combined affect 170 food products. The manufacturer's established shelf life is accepted for other food products. Production and expiry dates must be printed on the original label or container by the manufacturer. Dates cannot be added after the fact via a sticker. Products must arrive at destination with at least half the shelf-life duration remaining. The U.S. supplier should work closely with the importer to ensure compliance with local shelf-life requirements.

Food labels must include product and brand names, production and expiry dates, country of origin, name and address of the manufacturer, net weight in metric units, and a list of the ingredients in descending order of importance. All fats and oils used as ingredients must be specifically identified on the label. Labels for food must be in Arabic or Arabic/English. Arabic stickers are accepted.

Contacts

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Qatar's primary point of contact for matters on standards is the following:

Dr. Mohammed Bin Saif Al-Kuwari
Assistant Under Secretary
Qatar Laboratories and Standardization Affairs

Trade Agreements

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Qatar is a strong supporter of regional integration and has ties with several Arab League member states. Qatar has signed several bilateral agreements to ease

trade and investment restrictions with Arab countries in the Gulf and North Africa. Over the past ten years, Qatar has signed bilateral investment protection agreements with several countries, including Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Croatia, Cuba, Finland, France, Germany, India, Iran, South Korea, Morocco, Pakistan, Romania, Senegal, Sudan, Switzerland and Turkey.

As a member of the GCC, Qatar is a signatory to the GCC Free Trade Agreement. This agreement provides duty free access to all goods produced in the GCC States, provided that the goods meet the content requirements (at least 40 percent value added within GCC factories, which are at least 50 percent owned by GCC entities). In January 2003, the GCC implemented a unified customs tariff to facilitate regional trade. The GCC aims to adopt a common currency.

Qatar has not entered into a bilateral investment or taxation treaty with the United States, although there is ongoing interest in exploring a U.S.-Qatar free trade agreement.

Web Resources

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Contact the Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy at:

<http://export.gov/qatar/>

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Chapter 6: Investment Climate

Executive Summary

Qatar has one of the fastest growing economies with the highest per capita income in the world. Qatar's economy is projected to continue slowing down in 2014 after recording one of the world's highest growth rates following the completion of major gas projects. Growth slowed down to an estimated 6.1 percent in 2013 and is expected to continue its downward trend to reach 5.9 percent in 2014, according to IMF estimates.

Qatar is currently undergoing massive transformation under the rubric of the 2030 National Vision, which aims to establish an advanced, knowledge-based, and diversified economy, no longer reliant on the hydrocarbon sector. The government is heavily involved in Qatar's economy, although it strongly encourages private investment in many sectors. Investments in various sectors including health care, education, tourism and financial services, among others, are expected to offer greater opportunities for foreign investment.

In June 2013 Qatar's Amir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, abdicated to his son Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. The smooth transfer of power to Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani is unlikely to lead to any major changes to the country's implementation of the 2030 National Vision. Amir Sheikh Tamim is expected to continue focusing on infrastructure development, economic diversification, education, and healthcare, underwritten by the country's natural resource wealth.

1. Openness to, and Restrictions Upon, Foreign Investment

Qatar has won the right to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Preparations will have a lasting impact on Qatar's real estate, construction, and finance markets as companies scramble to obtain a portion of the more than USD 150 billion in infrastructure investments needed before 2022. The government has allocated 40 percent of its budget through 2016 to infrastructure projects, including USD 11 billion on a new international airport, USD 5.5 billion on a deepwater seaport, and USD 12.36 billion on improving and creating road networks. Qatar will also invest USD 20 billion to USD 25 billion in tourism infrastructure development; it hosted the 2006 Asian Games and will be the host of the 2022 FIFA World Cup, the first Arab country to host either of the events. The largest planned development is the USD 29 billion metro and rail project. It will be implemented in three phases with completion scheduled for 2022. Other focal areas include roads, industrial zones, and information and communication technology. These developments will stimulate the domestic economy and create substantial export opportunities for foreign businesses. In addition to energy and infrastructure development, significant opportunities exist for foreign investment in medical, safety and security, education, and franchising.

The main economic stimuli in Qatar are oil, gas, and related industries, in particular the development of the North Field, the largest non-associated natural gas field in the world. Qatar's liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry has attracted tens of billions of dollars in foreign investment and made Qatar the world's

largest exporter of LNG. Qatar has imposed a moratorium on increasing natural gas production from the North Field that took effect in 2012 and will last until 2015. However, the Energy Ministry has indicated that it may increase its LNG production by 10 million tons if it can improve efficiency in its production units. Significant investment in the downstream sector is likely to continue.

In July 2013, it was announced that Qatar would be elevated to emerging markets status by Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) Inc. Qatar first sought entry to the emerging-markets tier in 2008. The decision by the index compiler Morgan Stanley Capital International MSCI to upgrade Qatar to emerging market status from frontier market was very well received by investors and bankers. Stocks initially rose sharply reaching their highest level since September 2008. The upgrade is expected to open the country's exchange to increased global investment flows, most specifically from investors focused on emerging markets and attract considerably more foreign portfolio investment, in addition to increasing the depth and liquidity of the market, with more listings expected.

The Ministry of Finance is currently deliberating a proposed law which would regulate financial activities of the government and public sector organizations. The proposed legislation aims to help Qatar develop a long term investment strategy by setting up a macroeconomic unit. In addition, a public investment program will also be established to identify the State's major projects and ways in which to prioritize them.

Qatar's investment liberalization policies are proceeding on a gradual basis, based on a desire to protect local companies from rapid competition. Qatar gives preferential treatment to suppliers that use local content in bids for government procurement. When competing for government contracts, goods with Qatari content are discounted by 10 percent and goods from other GCC countries receive a 5 percent discount. As a rule, participation in tenders with a value of QR 1,000,000 or less is confined to local contractors, suppliers and merchants registered by the Qatar Chamber of Commerce, and tenders with a value of more than this amount do not require any local commercial registration to participate, but in practice certain exceptions exist. Tender and bid details are available at the Central Tender Committee website: <http://www.ctc.gov.qa/tender-en.aspx>.

Laws/Regulations of FDI

Investment Law No. 13/2000 is the primary legislation governing foreign investment. Foreign investment is generally limited to 49 percent of the capital for most business activities, with a Qatari partner(s) holding at least 51 percent. However, the law allows, upon special government approval, up to 100 percent ownership by foreign investors in certain sectors, including: agriculture, industry, health, education, tourism, development and exploitation of natural resources, energy, or mining. Qatar amended the law in 2004 to allow foreign investment in

the banking and insurance sectors upon approval of the Cabinet of Ministers. Moreover, foreign financial services firms are allowed 100 percent ownership at the Qatar Financial Center (QFC). On October 31, 2009, the Council of Ministers agreed on the amendments proposed by the Ministry of Economy and Commerce to allow foreign investors to hold 100 percent stakes in certain activities, including: business consultancy and technical services; information and communication services; cultural services; sports services; entertainment services; and distribution services.

International law firms with 15 years of continuous experience in their countries of origin are allowed to set up operations in Qatar, but the license will be granted only if authorities in Qatar are convinced that the field in which the applying firm specializes is of use to Qatar. On the recommendation of the Ministry of Justice, the Cabinet may reduce the number of required years' experience or waive the condition fully. Cabinet Decision Number 57 of 2010 states that the Doha office of an international law firm would be permitted to carry out activities in Qatar only if the main office in the country of origin remains operative. These requirements do not apply to law firms registered with the Qatar Financial Center (QFC).

Foreign firms are required to use a local agent for matters related to sponsorship and residence of employees. Certain sectors are not open for domestic or foreign competition, including public transportation, electricity and water, steel, cement, and fuel distribution and marketing. In these sectors, a single semi-public company has complete or predominant control.

Qatar has begun to liberalize its telecommunications sector to permit outside private investment, starting with the issuance in December 2007 of a second mobile license to a consortium including Vodafone and the Qatar Foundation. The same consortium was awarded the country's second fixed-line license in September 2008. However, there is a minimum requirement of QR 200,000 in initial capital for any telecommunication business, which creates a barrier to entry for small entrepreneurs.

When approving majority foreign ownership in a project, the law states that the project should fit into the country's development plans. It adds that preference should be given to projects that use raw materials available in the local market, manufacture products for export, produce a new product or use advanced technology, facilitate the transfer of technology and know-how in Qatar, and promote the development of national human resources.

Non-Qataris may also have the right of land use over real estate for a term of 99 years renewable upon government approval in Cabinet-designated "investment areas." Foreigners can own residential property in select projects, including the Pearl, the West Bay Lagoon, Lusail, and the Al-Khor resort project. Law No. 23/2006 provides for foreigners being issued residency permits without local

sponsors if they own residential or business property in Cabinet-designated "investment areas."

Import licenses are issued only to individuals with Qatari nationality, or companies owned or controlled by Qataris. In practice, exceptions are sometimes made for foreign companies, such as those with government contracts.

Qatar remains the second easiest country in which to pay tax globally for the fourth year running, according to *Paying Taxes 2013*, an annual report issued by Price Waterhouse Coopers, the World Bank, and the International Finance Corporation. Qatari nationals are not subject to any kind of corporate or income tax, although nationals are required to pay Zakat [1], which usually amounts to around 2.5 percent of profits. Although there is no income tax on salaries in Qatar, foreign investors are subject to taxation on their investment income.

On January 1, 2010 a new tax law went into effect. This law imposes a 10 percent flat rate for all non-Qatari companies and foreign partners in Qatari companies, except for the energy sector where there is a 35 percent tax rate applying to oil and gas operations, unless exempted by Amiri Decree. Companies currently receiving tax holidays or those with government tax exemptions will not be taxed until the contractual end of these agreements. If these agreements were entered into by the Government (ministry, agency, body, or public institution) prior to enforcement of the new law and no tax rate was specified, the 35 percent tax rate will be imposed, unless exempted by Amiri Decree. The tax rate and all other tax requirements set forth in agreements related to oil operations will continue to be defined by Law No. 3/2007 on the exploitation of natural wealth and resources.

The new tax law applies to revenues from business activities, contracts – which are partly or wholly implemented in Qatar – properties, including sales of stakes in the shareholding companies or privately-owned companies whose assets are mainly comprised of properties. Revenue from exploration and natural resource extraction in the state and loan interest received within the state are also taxable. Gifts, luxury items, and entertainment expenses are not deductible. Qatari-owned companies; small handicraft companies with a maximum of three workers and not exceeding 100,000 Qatari Riyals profit (USD 27,473); individual income from sources such as bank interest, stock dividends, salaries, wages and allowances; and foreign charitable and other non-profit organizations and associations and societies are all exempted from taxation.

In February 2014, the Cabinet approved a draft law exempting the share of non-Qatari investors in the profits of some companies and investment funds from income tax, and referred the draft to the Advisory Council. Press reports indicate that an amendment to Article 13 of the Statute of the Commercial Bank went into effect April 2014, allowing non-Qataris to own 25 percent of the total equity in the

Qatar stock exchange. Such an amendment aims to encourage foreign capital investment in the Qatari market through exempting the share of non-Qatari investors in corporate profits and units of funds which are listed for trading in the financial market from income tax, as well as exempting their share in the profits resulting from the trading of all securities, including units of the investment funds listed for trading in the financial market.

Under Law No. 13/2000, the Ministry of Finance may grant a tax holiday of up to 10 years for new foreign investments in key sectors. Other exemptions may be granted under Law No. 21/2009 on a case-by-case basis for a period up to 6 years.

According to Article 11-2 of Law No. 21/2009, payments made to non-residents for activities not connected with a permanent establishment in Qatar shall be subject to a final withholding tax, as follows: 5 percent of gross royalties and technical fees; 7 percent of the gross interest, commissions, brokerage fees, director's fees, attendance fees and any other payments for services carried out wholly or partly in Qatar. However, the enforcement of this article is currently frozen while the government reviews a written petition submitted by Qatari banks.

Companies established in the Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) enjoyed a tax exemption since the start of operations in 2005 through 2009. QFC's new tax regime, levying a flat 10 percent on profits, came into force in 2010, but captive insurance, reinsurance and asset management businesses are exempted.

There are two types of penalties for failing to pay taxes: penalties associated with delays in filing, and delays in payment. Companies that fail to file their tax return will be fined QR 100 per day up to a maximum of QR 36,000. Those convicted of making false statements on their taxes, or trying to evade taxes face up to three months' imprisonment and a maximum fine of QR 15,000. A further fine of 20 percent of the tax due will be levied on companies shown to be in violation of the tax law. Penalties may be doubled for repeat offenders. Delayed payment may result in a financial penalty equal to the amount of unpaid tax, in addition to the payment of the tax due.

Judicial decisions in commercial disputes are primarily based on contractual agreements, provided these agreements are not in conflict with applicable Qatari laws. U.S. firms are strongly encouraged to consult a local attorney before concluding any commercial agreement with a local entity.

Limits on Foreign Control

Foreign investors and GCC nationals may own 25 percent of the shares in any company listed on the Qatar Exchange (QE). Foreign investors are generally not allowed to participate in initial public offerings (IPO), though exceptions are occasionally made on a case-by-case basis (primarily for other GCC nationals).

Rules of foreign ownership percentage restrictions can be waived with approval from the Cabinet. In 2009, NYSE Euronext purchased a 20 percent stake in the QE for USD 200 million. The Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) owned the remaining 80 percent of the QE. At the end of 2012, the two companies signed another agreement giving QIA 88 percent of QE and 12 percent to NYSE. In October 2013, the investment arm of QIA, Qatar Holding (QH), became the full owner of the QE. QE has 42 listed companies and its market capitalization was valued at QR 460 billion at the end of December 2012. The foreign ownership of shares usually hovers around 11 percent, with most owned by other GCC citizens or local expatriates. The Mutual Fund Law (Law No. 25/2002) allows expatriates to invest indirectly in the stock market. No bonds have been traded on the Qatar Exchange so far, however; trade in Qatari Government short term Treasury Bills commenced on the Qatar Exchange from December 29, 2011, with trade in government bonds and sukuk (Islamic bonds) starting at a later stage.

There are 18 licensed banks in Qatar, 11 of which are Qatari institutions including four Islamic banks (Qatar Islamic Bank "QIB," Qatar International Islamic Bank "QIIB," Masraf Al Rayan and Barwa Bank) and 7 commercial banks (Qatar National Bank "QNB", The Commercial Bank of Qatar "Commercialbank," Doha Bank, Ahli Bank, International Bank of Qatar "IBQ," Qatar Development Bank "QDB," Al Khaliq Commercial Bank "al khaliqi").

Qatari regulations for local and foreign banks are the same. New licenses for new banks are available through application to the Qatar Central Bank (QCB). License requirements can be found at the following link:

<http://www.qcb.gov.qa/English/SupervisionApproach/LicensingAndRegistration/Pages/Licensing.aspx>

Qatar also has 20 exchange houses, three investment companies and three commercial finance companies as of September 2013.

In addition, Doha is home to the Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) which allows major international financial institutions and corporations to set up offices with 100 percent foreign ownership, and all profits to be remitted outside of Qatar. The QFC is neither an offshore center nor a free zone nor a property development. Companies licensed by the QFC are free to operate in local and other currencies. Financial firms investing in Qatar enjoy an attractive tax regime; all QFC registered companies are subject to a 10% corporate tax on locally sourced profits. The QFC legal framework allows buildings in Doha to be designated as QFC sites so licensed firms do not have to be physically based in QFC premises, provided there is no objection from the Ministry of Economy and Commerce, and that they pay local market rents. As of December 31, 2011, there were 42 approved sites.

There are currently 171 licensed firms at the QFC, representing a spectrum of banks, investment companies, insurance houses, and related professional services. Approximately 70 QFC licensed firms are regulated by Qatar Financial Center Regulatory Authority (QFCRA), the QFC's independent regulatory body. QFC firms are generally limited to providing services to wholesale clients. However, insurance companies can provide services to both wholesale and retail clients, and retail asset management is allowed as of January 1, 2011.

The Qatar Financial Centre Authority (QFC Authority) issued regulations governing special purpose companies, holding companies and single family offices operating in or from the QFC. The Special Company Regulations and Single Family Office Regulations (the 'Regulations') were issued on 27 September 2012. The Regulations provide for a more attractive legal, regulatory and business environment. They will expand the range of services the QFC firms will offer and the structures they may adopt, notably single family offices and special purpose companies.

On December 9, 2013 Qatar's financial sector regulatory authorities the Qatar Central Bank, Qatar Financial Center Regulatory Authority, and Qatar Financial Markets Authority launched a joint strategic plan for the "future of financial sector regulation in Qatar." The plan established a framework for financial regulation, setting out a road map of strategic priorities for the next three years (2014-2016). The goals of the plan are to enhance regulation by developing a consistent risk-based micro prudential framework; expanding macro prudential oversight; strengthening financial market infrastructure; enhancing consumer and investor protection; promoting regulatory cooperation; and building human capital.

Qatar's economic freedom score is 71.2, and ranks 30th in the 2014 Index of Economic Freedom. Its score is essentially unchanged from the previous year, with improvements in half of the 10 economic freedoms, including business freedom, labor freedom, and monetary freedom, offset by declines in the control of government spending and trade freedom, according to the Heritage Foundation. Qatar is ranked 3rd out of 15 countries in the Middle East/North Africa region, and its overall score is above world and regional averages.

Measure	Year	Index or Rank
Transparency International Corruption Index	2013	28 of 177
Heritage Foundation's Economic Freedom Index	2014	30 of 177
World Bank's Doing Business Report	2014	

Ease of Doing Business		48 of 189
Starting a Business		112 of 189
Dealing with Construction Permits		23 of 189
Getting Electricity		27 of 189
Registering Property		43 of 189
Getting Credit		130 of 189
Protecting Investors		128 of 189
Paying Taxes		2 of 189
Trading Across Borders		76 of 189
Enforcing Contracts		93 of 189
Resolving Insolvency		36 of 189

2. Conversions and Transfer Policies

Due to minimal demand for the Qatari riyal outside Qatar and the national economy's dependence on oil and gas revenues, which are priced in dollars, the government has pegged the riyal to the U.S. currency. The official peg is QR 1.00 per USD 0.27 or USD 1.00 per QR 3.64, as set by the government in June 1980 and reaffirmed by an Amiri decree issued July 9, 2001.

GCC states have officially discussed harmonizing their monetary policies although have not established a timeline for the implementation of a common currency. In January 2010 the Qatar Central Bank stopped providing loans to the public sector in preparation for implementing the GCC unified currency plan. However, at the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit held in Abu Dhabi in December 2010, participants indicated that there are still significant obstacles to achieving a single currency. Despite a number of recent private sector analyses suggesting Qatar may reassess its dollar peg policy, the government has maintained the exchange rate.

Law No. 15/1990 does not allow foreign investors to enter into a joint stock company with Qatari partners. However, foreign investors can hold up to a combined total of 25 percent of the shares of Qatari companies listed on the Qatari Exchange. In addition, at least three foreign companies have been allowed to exceed this 25 percent. Exceptions are based upon a ministerial decree and are decided on a case-by-case basis. Foreign investors may own up to 49 percent, and the Qatari partners no less than 51 percent, of a limited liability partnership. Foreign partners in ventures organized as limited liability partnerships must pay the full amount of their contribution to capital in cash, or in kind, prior to the start of operations. Usually, such firms are required to set aside 10 percent of profits each year in a statutory reserve until it equals 50 percent of

the venture's authorized capital. The legal reserve shall not be distributed among the shareholders; however the excess of the half of the paid-in capital may be used in distributing the profits among the shareholders (up to 5 percent of profits). This requirement is the only legal restriction to a foreign company desiring to repatriate all of its annual profit after tax deduction.

Qatar neither delays remittance of foreign investment returns nor restricts transfer of funds associated with an investment, such as return on dividends, return of capital, interest and principal payments on private foreign debt, lease payments, royalties and management fees, amounts generated from sale or liquidation, amounts garnered from settlements and disputes, and compensation from expropriation to financial institutions outside Qatar without undue delay.

Qatar Central Bank (QCB) authorized mobile phone service providers Ooredoo and Vodafone to add payment services and money transfers via mobile phones in direct collaboration with banks and licensed money exchangers in Qatar.

The Government of Qatar signed a new Anti-Money Laundering/Counter-Terrorism Finance (AML/CFT) law into force on April 30, 2010. The law addresses many of the deficiencies identified by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and makes money laundering and terrorist financing offences in line with international standards. It also introduces a suspicious transaction reporting regime and requirements for consumer due diligence and record-keeping. Consistent revised regulations have been issued by all three of the main financial regulators in Qatar: the Qatar Central Bank (QCB), the Qatar Financial Markets Authority (QFMA), and the Qatar Financial Center Regulatory Authority (QFCRA). All three regulators do on-site inspections to check compliance with the new law and regulations. However, significant work remains to implement the new financial regulations and there remain some deficiencies with regards to terrorism financing.

In accordance with the QCB instructions on AML/CFT, the financial institutions must apply due diligence prior to establishing business relationships. Certain originator information should be secured in case the wire transfer exceeds QR 4,000. Similarly, due diligence should be made when a customer is carrying out occasional transactions in a single or several linked operations of an amount exceeding QR 55,000 or equivalent in foreign currencies at the relevant time as per the provisions of Article 23 of Law No. 4/2010.

3. Expropriation and Compensation

Law No. 13/2000, Article 8 states: 1) Foreign investment shall neither directly nor indirectly be subject to expropriation unless such measures are for the public welfare and implemented in a non-discriminatory way, against a prompt and reasonable compensation; 2) Compensation shall be equal to the market value of the investment at the time of expropriation, and shall be paid without undue

delay. There have been no cases of expropriation or sequestration of foreign investment in Qatar since nationalization in the mid-1970s of Shell and Dukhan Services (the latter was a combination of six international oil companies handling Qatar's onshore operations on the country's west coast). The foreign interests were compensated promptly.

4. Dispute Settlement

In March 2003, Qatar became a signatory to the New York Convention of 1958 and in November 2010, Qatar ratified its membership to the International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). If investment disputes occur, Qatar accepts binding international arbitration between the government and foreign investors. However, Qatari courts do not enforce judgments of other courts in disputes emanating from investment agreements made under the jurisdiction of other nations.

In December 2010, the civil and commercial court, and the regulatory tribunal, for Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) were officially launched. Together they form the QFC Judiciary and the legal infrastructure behind the QFC. In addition, the court also features an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) center. Although primarily concerned with hearing commercial matters arising from within the QFC itself, the QFC intends to expand courts' jurisdiction to enable it to accept other disputes at their discretion.

In Qatar there are two concurrent bankruptcy regimes. The first is the local regime, the provisions of which are set out in the Commercial Law No. 27/2006. However, the bankruptcy law is largely untested. The bankruptcy of a Qatari citizen or a Qatari-owned company is rarely announced and the Government sometimes plays the role of guarantor to keep a bankrupt business running and safeguard creditors' rights.

The second bankruptcy regime is found in the QFC Insolvency Regulations of 2005 and applies to bodies corporate and branches registered in the QFC. There are currently two firms in the U.K. offering full dissolution bankruptcy services to QFC-registered companies.

In order to protect their interests, U.S. firms are advised to consult with a Qatari or foreign-based law firm when executing contracts with local parties.

5. Performance Requirements and Investment Incentives

Performance requirements for foreign investment in Qatar, including a counter-trade offset program, do not exist. While screening investment proposals, the government may indicate preferences for locating facilities, capital investments and other matters. Disclosure of financial and employment data is required, but proprietary information is not.

The government offers a variety of incentives to foreign investors which may include tax exemptions, property grants, energy subsidies, and low-cost financing. The following is a list of incentives sometimes offered to foreign investors:

- Natural gas priced at 60-75 U.S. cents per MBTU (Million British Thermal Units)
- Electricity offered at less than two U.S. cents per KWH (Kilowatt Hour)
- Industrial land offered at 27 U.S. cents per square meter per year for a period of 50 years, including options for renewing the lease
- Exemption from customs duties on imports of machinery, equipment and spare parts;
- Exemption on export duties
- Exemption from corporate taxes for up to ten years
- Exemption from income taxes
- Absence of quotas on imports
- Low cost financing through Qatar Development Bank (QDB)
- Flexible immigration and employment rules to enable the import of foreign labor

The same incentives are offered to Qatari investors.

Qatar does not maintain measures inconsistent with the agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMs), though in practice they provide preferential treatment for those who use local content in investments or government procurements.

The Ministry of Energy and Industry determines the amount of foreign equity and the extent of incentives for industrial projects. Industrial projects can be established only in designated industrial zones. Necessary investment approvals may be required from the Ministry of Health, Qatar Tourism Authority, Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning, Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Supreme Education Council, and Ministry of Environment.

Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP) is the national agency charged with executing applied research and delivering commercialized technologies in four themed areas. They have developed centers for each of the following areas: Energy, Environment, Health Sciences and Information & Communication Technologies. QSTP is located in Qatar Foundation's Education City and has access to the resources of its cluster of universities. In addition to QSTP's four centers, members include small companies, international corporations, and research institutions. QSTP seeks to attract U.S. and other foreign investors to start up research and development facilities in the Park, and provide opportunities for companies to engage in commercializing the technology they develop. Participating companies are allowed 100 percent foreign ownership,

and exemption from payment of income tax. Microsoft, ExxonMobil, GE, Shell, Tata, Total, and ConocoPhillips are among QSTP member companies.

6. Right to Private Ownership and Establishment

The Commercial Companies Law, Law No. 5/2002, controls the establishment of all private business concerns in Qatar. The law provides for corporate mergers, corporate bonds, and the conversion of corporate partnerships into joint stock companies.

Joint ventures involving foreign partners usually take the form of limited liability partnerships. Law No. 15/1990 does not allow foreign investors to enter into a joint stock company with Qatari partners. However there are exceptions as mentioned in the “CONVERSION AND TRANSFER POLICIES” section above.

Citizens of member states of the Gulf Co-operation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) also have some exemptions from the application of the foreign investment laws of Qatar, including the ability to own 50 percent of businesses, as opposed to 49 percent for other foreigners, and the ability to own freehold land in three designated zones – Lusail, Al Khuraj, and Thayleeb Mountain.

7. Protection of Intellectual Property Rights

Within Qatar, owners of trademarks, copyrights and patents depend on Qatari laws and regulations for protection. Intellectual property rights in Qatar are protected by Law No. 7/2002 (Copyright and Neighboring Rights Law), Law No. 30/2006 (Patent's Law), Law No. 9/2002 (Trademarks and Geographical Indicators Law), Law No. 5/2005 (Protection of Trade Secrets), and Law No. 6/2005 (Protection of Layout Design of Integrated Circuits).

Qatar adopted the GCC Patent Law and has assigned the Industrial Property Section in the Ministry of Economy and Commerce to handle issues related to trademarks, commercial indications, trade names, geographical indications and industrial design. An Intellectual Property Centre was also established by Amiri decision No. 53/2009 and is affiliated with the Ministry of Justice. This center oversees implementation of Qatari law on patents, copyright protection, and protection of trade secrets. In February 2014, the Amir of Qatar issued several decisions on the organizational structure and function of ministries, establishing and reorganizing some authorities, public institutions and governmental entities. The Office of Intellectual Property Rights is expected to transfer from a center within the Ministry of Justice to a department within the Ministry of Economy and Commerce.

According to Law No. 30/2006, patents are valid for twenty years from the date of submission. The Ministry of Health requires registration of all pharmaceutical

products imported into the country and will not register unauthorized copies of products patented in other countries.

The 2002 copyright law does not explicitly provide for national treatment or coverage of unpublished works and does not criminalize end-user piracy. However Qatar is party to the Berne and Paris Conventions and abides by their mandates concerning unpublished works.

As for end-users, some Qatari companies have already complied with the law and others are making provisions to do so. The Copyright Office works with law enforcement authorities to prosecute resellers of unlicensed video and software. In 2013, the IP center carried out 15 raids from January 1 until June 30, including 10 cases

Qatar uses the GCC patent law with derogations as needed to comply with its obligations under the TRIPS Agreement. A joint committee between the Ministry of Economy and Commerce and Ministry of Health has yet to be established to coordinate their efforts and ensure that only patented products or authorized copies of pharmaceutical products are registered for sale.

In 2006, an Amiri Decree on patents was issued stipulating that: (1) only inventions of industrial use can be registered as a patent; (2) an industrial product or means or process of production must have something innovative about it to merit patent registration; (3) inventions in health, agriculture, plants and software development are not eligible for patent; (4) only Qatari citizens or foreigners of WTO signatory countries will be allowed to register a patent; (5) the Ministry of Economy and Commerce will frame and implement executive regulations to help enforce the law; and (6) the Ministry of Economy and Commerce will set up a patent registration office. This office has been established and named the Patents Unit and falls under the Ministry of Economy and Commerce.

As part of the GCC Customs Union, the six member states are working toward unifying their intellectual property regimes. In this respect, the GCC has recently approved a common trademark law. All six member states are expected to adopt this law as national legislation in order to implement it. However, the new law raises questions about consistency with GCC member state obligations under the TRIPS Agreement and U.S. free trade agreements with Bahrain and Oman.

Qatar is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and is a signatory to the following WIPO Treaties:

- WIPO Convention, since September 1976
- Paris Convention (Industrial Property), since July 2000
- Berne Convention (Literary and Artistic Works), since July 2000

- Nairobi Treaty (Olympic Symbol), since July 1983
- WCT (WIPO Copyright Treaty), since October 2005
- WPPT (WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty), since October 2005
- Qatar has also been a member and signatory to the TRIPS Agreement since January 1996

Embassy point of contact: Hala Rharrit RharritH@state.gov

Local lawyers list: http://qatar.usembassy.gov/legal_information.html

For additional information about treaty obligations and points of contact at local IP offices, please see WIPO's country profiles at <http://www.wipo.int/directory/en/>.

8. Transparency of the Regulatory System

There are three regulatory bodies in Qatar. Law No. 13/2012 enacted by the Amir on December 2, 2012, set the Qatar Central Bank as the primary regulator of financial institutions operating in Qatar. It also transferred the regulation of the insurance sector from the Ministry of Business and Trade to the Qatar Central Bank and the regulation of the Qatar Financial Center from the Qatar Financial Center Regulatory Authority to the Qatar Central Bank. The law, which unifies Qatar's three regulators, the Qatar Central Bank, the Qatar Financial Markets Authority, and the Qatar Financial Center Regulatory Authority, aims to promote financial stability and enhance regulation coordination through the Financial Stability and Risk Committee, which is headed by the Central Bank Governor.

In Qatar, the government is the major buyer and end-user of a wide range of products and services. Government procurement regulations provide a ten-percent preference for Qatari products and five-percent for GCC products.

The Central Tenders Committee (CTC) of the Ministry of Finance is responsible for processing the majority of public sector tenders. The CTC applies standard tendering procedures and adheres to established performance norms. It also sets the standards for rules and regulations for bidding procedures.

In tenders valued in excess of QR 100 million (USD 27 million), the CTC may invite and pre-qualify international firms to bid for a specific product or service. Technical bids submitted to the CTC are referred to the appropriate government end-user for short-listing. The CTC then opens the commercial bids and recommends the lowest priced, technically qualified bidder to the entity concerned, which will make the final award decision. Inquiries about specific award decisions should be directed to the CTC.

Some governmental entities have established internal tender committees. The Ministry of Energy and Industry, Qatar Petroleum and Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning process all tenders independently. Qatar Armed Forces and the Ministry of Interior are responsible for issuing tenders for classified materials and services.

Foreign firms wishing to participate in government procurement programs may be required to have a local agent and provide bid and performance bonds. International bidders should contact end-users directly for information on local agent requirements.

Other regulatory policies do not significantly affect foreign investment decisions. Some U.S. companies have expressed concerns about the lack of transparency in government procurement.

9. Efficient Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment

In Qatar, there are no restrictions on the flow of capital. The Qatar Central Bank (QCB) adheres to conservative policies aimed at maintaining steady economic growth and a stable banking sector. Loans are allocated on market terms, and foreign companies are essentially treated the same as local companies.

Qatar National Bank (QNB), 50 percent state-owned, is the largest bank in the country, with total assets equal to 50.48 percent of the total assets of all Qatari Banks (local). The total assets grew to QR 443 billion as of December 2013, representing an increase of 21.1 percent compared to December 2012 QR 367 billion.

The following represents Qatar banking sector assets, based on QCB data:

Total Assets of Banking Sector (Qatari and foreign banks):

December 2013 - QR 915,911 million increase by 10.42 percent over December 2012 - QR 820,512 million

Total Assets of Local Qatari Banks:

December 2013 - QR 878,509 million

Total Assets of Local Commercial Banks:

December 2013 - QR 652,725 million - 72.03 percent of total banking sector assets

Total Assets of Branches of Foreign Banks:

December 2013 - QR 37,402 million - 4.08 percent of total banking sector assets.

Almost all import transactions are controlled by standard letters of credit processed by local banks and their correspondent banks in the exporting countries. Credit facilities are provided to local and foreign investors within the framework of standard international banking practices. Foreign investors are usually required to have a guarantee from their local sponsor/local equity partner.

However, in accordance with QCB guidelines, banks operating in Qatar give priority to Qataris and to public development projects in their financing operations. Additionally, single customers may not be extended credit facilities by a bank exceeding 20 percent of the bank's capital and reserves. In addition, QCB does not allow cross-sharing and stable shareholder arrangements among banks and other business concerns that result in fewer shares of some corporations actually trading freely in the market. QCB requires banks to maintain a maximum credit ratio of 90 percent.

On December 10, 2012, Law No.13/2012 regulating the QCB and its financial institutions was issued. It mandates the QCB to act as a supreme authority for framing the policies for the regulation and supervision of all financial services and markets in the country. It lays the foundation for increased cooperation between the regulatory bodies in Qatar to develop and apply regulatory policies and implement international standards to deliver the objectives of Qatar's 2030 National Vision and Qatar's National Development Strategy (2011-2016). The most significant aspects of the law, which consists of 238 articles, are that QCB shall be deemed an autonomous corporate body with its own budget and shall be under the direct control of the Amir. Its capital will be QR 50 billion, equivalent to USD 13.7 billion, and will be fully owned by the government.

QCB acquired responsibility for the licensing and supervision of insurance companies, reinsurance companies and insurance intermediaries that were previously licensed by the Ministry of Economy and Commerce. The Law repealed Decree Law No. 1/1966 on the Supervision and Control of Insurance Firms and Agents. The Qatar Financial Markets Authority and the Regulatory Authority remain independent regulators under the management and direction of their respective boards of directors in accordance with the Law regarding the Qatar Financial Market Authority (Law No. 8/2012) ("QFMA Law") and the Qatar Financial Centre Law (Law No.7/2005) ("QFC Law").

10. Competition from State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs)

Several state-owned companies still operate under monopoly, or exclusive rights in some economic sectors. The following are Qatar's major state-owned enterprises:

- In February 2013 Ooredoo was introduced by Qatar Telecom, Q.S.C, to replace Qtel, the former operating name. Ooredoo is a dominant player in the Qatari telecoms market and is 76 percent owned by Qataris. Its revenues from outside Qatar currently constitute more than 75 percent of its total revenue. In 2007, the mobile products and services sector was opened to competition. In 2008, the fixed line telecoms market was also liberalized. Vodafone was selected to compete in both mobile and fixed line against Ooredoo, and is 96 percent-owned by Qatari shareholders. Both companies are listed in the Qatar Exchange (QE). Prior to 2007, both the mobile and fixed line telecoms markets in Qatar were dominated by Ooredoo.
- KAHRAMAA (Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation) operates all water and electricity activities and is 90 percent owned by Qatari shareholders. The government owns 43 percent of the capital. The government has indicated that it may privatize segments of the water and electricity sectors. A first step in this direction occurred when the Ras Laffan Power Company, which is 55 percent owned by a U.S. company, was established in 2001.
- Qatar Petroleum (QP) operates all oil and gas activities and is wholly owned by the government. QP's oil and gas fields fall into three categories - the North Gas Field, onshore oil, and offshore oil. In addition, QP carries out activities through the following subsidiaries, joint ventures and other investments:
 - Al-Koot Insurance & Reinsurance
 - Al-Shaheen Energy Services (ASES)
 - Amwaj Catering Services (ACS)
 - Gasal
 - Gulf Drilling International (GDI)
 - Gulf Helicopters (GH)
 - Industries Qatar (IQ)
 - Laffan Refinery
 - Oryx GTL
 - Qatar Aluminum (Qatalum)
 - Qatar Chemical Company (Q-Chem)
 - Qatar Fertilizer Company (QAFCO)
 - Qatar Fuel Additives Company (QAFAC)
 - Qatar Liquefied Gas Company Ltd. (Qatargas)
 - Qatar Melamine Company (QMC)
 - Qatar Petrochemical Company (QAPCO)
 - Qatar Petroleum International (QPI)
 - Qatar Steel Company (QASCO)
 - Qatar Vinyl Company (QVC)
 - Qatofin
 - Q-Chem 2

- Ras Laffan Olefins Company (RLOC)
- Ras Laffan Power Company (RLPC)
- RasGas
- SEEF
- Tasweeq has the exclusive right to deliver Qatar's energy products abroad.
- Q-Post (Qatar General Postal Corporation) is the state-owned postal company. Several other delivery companies are allowed to compete in this courier market: Aramex, DHL Express, and FedEx Express.
- Qatar Airways is the country's designated National Carrier and is now wholly owned by the state.
- The subsidiaries of Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), the State of Qatar's sovereign wealth fund, also play a prominent role in the local economy:
- Qatar Holding LLC (QH), the direct strategic investment arm of QIA
- Qatari Diar, a property investment vehicle;
- Hassad Food Company (HDC), a vehicle for investment in agriculture and livestock

In June 7, 2010 Qatar notified the WTO that it does not maintain any state trading enterprises (STEs), under the working definition that STEs are governmental and non-governmental enterprises, including marketing boards, which have been granted exclusive or special rights or privileges, including statutory or constitutional powers, in the exercise of which they influence through their purchases or sales the level or direction of imports or exports.

The government's economic strategy, as expressed in its 2030 National Vision, is to reduce the dependence of the country's budget on oil and gas.

11. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

There is a general awareness of corporate social responsibility principles. Those firms that pursue CSR are viewed favorably. The Ministry of Economy and Commerce announced plans to introduce a corporate social responsibility index for companies listed on Qatar Exchange in order to measure their "social commitment." This has yet to be implemented. Many companies in Qatar, however, have begun to publicize their policies regarding corporate social responsibility, and are interested in publishing sustainability reports, including their CSR initiatives, in conjunction with their annual reports.

12. Political Violence

Qatar is politically stable. The crime rate is low. There are no political parties or labor unions. There is no known organized domestic political opposition. The U.S. government believes the potential exists for acts of transnational terrorism to occur in Qatar. Potential investors and U.S. citizens are encouraged to stay in close contact with the Embassy for up-to-date threat information.

13. Corruption

Bribery is a crime in Qatar and the law imposes penalties for public officials convicted of taking action in return for monetary or personal gain, or for other parties who take actions to influence or attempt to influence a public official through monetary or personal gain. The current Penal Code (Law No. 11/2004) governs corruption law and stipulates that individuals convicted of bribery may receive up to ten years imprisonment and a fine not greater than the amount of the bribes but not less than 5,000 Qatari Riyals (USD 1,374).

Those convicted of embezzlement and damage to the public treasury are subject to terms of imprisonment of no less than 5 and no more than 10 years. The penalty is enhanced to a minimum term of 7 and a maximum term of 15 years if the perpetrator is a public official in charge of collecting taxes or exercising fiduciary responsibilities over public monies. Investigations into allegations of corruption are handled by the Qatar State Security Bureau (QSS) and Public Prosecution. Final judgments are made by the criminal court. By Amiri Decree No. 17/2007, Qatar ratified the UN Convention for Combating Corruption, and Amiri Decree No. 84/2007 established a National Committee for Integrity and Transparency. The permanent committee is headed by the chairman of the Audit Bureau and is tasked with combating corruption in Qatar and reports directly to him. Qatar is not a party to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials. Qatar opened the Anti-Corruption and Rule of Law Center on November 25, 2012 in Doha in partnership with the United Nations.

Qatar has retained its position as the least corrupt country in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) in the 2013 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). Qatar was ranked 28 of 177 globally with a score of 68 same as the year before

On November 29, 2011 an Amiri Decree No. 75/2011 was issued ordering the establishment of an Administrative Control and Transparency Authority. Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy and Industry H.E. Abdullah bin Hamad al-Attiya has been appointed as its Chairman. The Authority will have within its jurisdiction private sector companies that provide public services. The objectives of the Authority are to help prevent official corruption and ensure that the various ministries, state agencies and their arms as well as their officials operate with transparency. The Authority is to be autonomous and accountable only to the Amir, who will be approving an annual budget for the body prepared by its chairman. The authority is charged with investigating alleged crimes against public property or finances perpetrated by public officials.

U.S. investors and Qatari nationals, if they are agents of U.S. firms, are subject to the provisions of the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

14. Bilateral Investment Agreements

Qatar has 49 bilateral international investment agreements, listed below. Seventeen have been enacted including those signed with Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, China, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, India, Iran, Italy, Republic of Korea, Macedonia, Morocco, Romania, Russian Federation, Switzerland and Turkey:

- 1996 (Algeria, France, Germany, Romania, and Tunisia)
- 1998 (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Senegal, and Sudan)
- 1999 (Chad, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Morocco, Pakistan, and South Korea)
- 2000 (Eritrea, Indonesia, Italy, and Yemen)
- 2001 (Belarus, Croatia, Cuba, Finland, Switzerland, and Turkey)
- 2002 (Armenia, Gambia, and Mali)
- 2003 (Mauritania, South Africa, and Syria)
- 2004 (Libya)
- 2007 (Azerbaijan, Belgium & Luxembourg, Mongolia, Russian Federation, and Tajikistan)
- 2008 (Cyprus and Kazakhstan)
- 2009 (Jordan, Montenegro, and Portugal)
- 2010 (Lebanon, Panama, and Costa Rica)
- 2011 (Macedonia, Albania)
- 2012 (Timor-Leste)
- On the trade and economic side, Qatar signed several Technical, Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement with the following countries:
 - 2000 (Cuba, Lebanon, Yemen, and Eritria)
 - 2001 (Belarus)
 - 2002 (Finland, Ukraine, Mali, South Africa, Gambia, Armenia, Ivory Coast, Guinea, and Niger)
 - 2003 (Mauritania)
 - 2004 (Libya, and Azerbaijan)
 - 2005 (Germany and Nepal)
 - 2007 (Mongolia, Greece, Vietnam, Singapore, and Tajikistan)
 - 2008 (Cyprus and Philippine)
 - 2009 (Albania (ratified), Croatia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, and Belarus)
 - 2010 (Congo, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, and Slovenia)
 - 2011 (Chad)
 - 2012 (Ethiopia)

Qatar has 46 Agreements for the Avoidance of Double Taxation.

Qatar has not entered into a bilateral investment, trade, or taxation treaty with the U.S. However, Qatar and the U.S. signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) in April 2004.

15. OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs

Due to concerns about labor practices in Qatar, OPIC suspended its operations in Qatar in 1995. However, Qatar is working to improve its labor standards in order to reinstate OPIC coverage.

Qatar is not a member of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).

16. Labor

According to the World Bank Migration & Remittances Fact Book 2011, Qatar has the world's highest level of migrant workers, relative to population, with non-Qataris making up 87 percent of the country's population. Qatar's labor force consists primarily of expatriate workers.

Qatar's current population is estimated at around 2.1 million as of February 2014, doubling in the last four years. Qatari citizens are estimated to number approximately 250,000 - less than one-eighth of the total population. The largest group of foreign workers comes from the Indian sub-continent. The Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Labor regulate recruitment of expatriate labor.

The 2004 labor law and subsequent regulations provide for the right of Qatari citizens to form workers' committees in private enterprises with more than 100 Qatari citizen workers. Non-citizens are not eligible to form worker committees. Those working in the government sector, Qatari and non-Qatari, are prohibited from joining unions. Further, the law and regulations permit only a single national trade union structure and forbid affiliation with groups outside the country.

These restrictions mean that, in practice, no labor unions currently exist. Under the labor law, workers are granted the right to bargain collectively and to sign joint agreements, i.e., agreements reached between employer and worker regarding a work-related issue.

This right, however, is circumscribed by the government's control over the rules and procedures of the bargaining and agreement processes. Collective bargaining is not freely practiced, and there are no workers employed under collective bargaining contracts. The law also grants workers the right to strike, but the restrictive conditions imposed by the statute make the likelihood of an approved strike extremely remote.

Unapproved and spontaneous strikes occasionally occur, though they are typically confined to industrial areas, and resolved with intervention by the embassies or communities of the involved workers and/or shows of force by Qatari security forces. Leaders of such disturbances are routinely deported.

Employers set wages without government involvement. Local courts handle disputes between workers and employers; however, the majority of foreign workers avoid drawing attention to problems with their employers for fear of

reprisals, particularly repatriation. According to source country embassies and migrant community leaders, the Labor Department was widely perceived to be objective within its mandate to enforce the labor law. The Labor Department claimed that it resolves the vast majority of worker complaints amicably, with a very small percentage referred to the labor courts for judgment.

Over the last year, the Labor Inspection Department has doubled its trained inspectors corps from 150 to 300, who are provided with the power of labor law enforcement. Some labor camps have been closed and forced to comply with minimum standards by the labor inspectors. All expatriate labor must have a Qatari sponsor. Therefore, foreign investors are urged to negotiate labor visa issues with their sponsors/local agents/partners in the early stages of contract negotiation.

In order to bring an expatriate employee into the country, sponsors must submit a request to the Ministry of Labor specifying the employee's nationality and the job he will perform in Qatar. The Ministry of Labor maintains a quota system that restricts the number of workers that may come to Qatar from any particular country.

The Ministry of Interior and the current sponsor must approve all transfers of sponsorship of an expatriate from one individual or firm to another. With the approval of the Ministry of Interior, sponsorship of employees who filed valid complaints of abuse by employers can be transferred without the current employer's agreement. The Ministry of Interior may reject the transfer due to public safety.

If the residence permit is canceled, the expatriate is not allowed to return to Qatar on a work visa for a period of two years unless he obtains a no objection certificate from his previous employer. If an employee has been terminated under article 61 of the law, he is barred from reentering the country for four years from the date of his exit.

It is common practice in Qatar for expatriate workers to be provided accommodation, end of service benefits specified in their contract, and homeward passage allowance, in addition to salaries. Qatar does not have a minimum wage regulation, though Qatar's labor agreements with some countries stipulate a minimum wage for certain types of work. The Labor Law does not apply to household staff to include domestic workers, drivers, and gardeners.

Qatar is a member of the International Labor Organization (ILO). Generally, labor experts believe that Qatar's labor law meets ILO minimum requirements, although they assert that enforcement of the labor law is inconsistent. The sponsorship system, which governs the relationship between the employer and employee, is widely considered to be a structural concern as it places significant control in the hands on employers. Several senior level Qatari officials have

made several public overtures suggesting that the sponsorship system may be reformed in the near future.

17. Foreign Trade Zones/Free Ports

Companies operating at the Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP) can import goods and services duty free. Foreign entities wishing to invest in the QSTP apply for a license with the Park's managing board. No other licensing rules prevalent in the country will apply to the above businesses, although individuals, contracts and agreements are subject to the criminal and civil laws of the state. Licensed foreign companies can enjoy 100 percent ownership and full capital and income repatriation benefits.

Businesses in the QSTP are exempt from all taxes, including income tax. The property of such a business is not to be seized under any circumstance, but capital and other cash can be seized on the orders of a local court. Equipment, machinery, or any other goods being imported for use by an entity doing business in QSTP are exempt from customs duty, and goods produced in the Park are not subject to export tax.

Goods being sold within Qatar, but outside the QSTP, are subject to the normal customs duty applicable to imported products. Flammable and radioactive materials, drugs, weapons, and explosives are banned from import by any of the licensed entities, unless the licensed entity obtains the necessary permit from the competent governmental authority and a written approval from the QSTP Board.

In addition to the QSTP, Qatar established Manateq (formerly known as the Economic Zones Company), affiliated with the Ministry of Economy and Commerce, to manage and develop economic zones, although the primary focus is on Qatari SMEs. Manateq has started work on three economic zones in and around Doha, and anticipates the first phase of economic zone 1 to be operational by 2016. Priority at the zones will be given to Qatari nationals.

18. Foreign Direct Investment and Foreign Portfolio Investment Statistics

The Government of Qatar does not publish detailed statistics for foreign direct investment (FDI) in Qatar or the government's direct investments overseas. However, according to The World Bank, the latest foreign direct investment net inflows in Qatar were valued at USD 326,923 million in 2012, up from USD -86.7 million in 2011. The FDI outflows in 2012 totaled USD 1,840 million down from USD 6,027 million in 2011, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

According to FDI Intelligence, a research unit of the Financial Times, Qatar saw a 29 percent decrease in FDI outflows in 2012, with FDI projects overseas falling

from 38 in 2011 to 27 in 2012. The stock of U.S. foreign direct investment in Qatar was USD 8.2 billion in 2011, down from USD 10.0 billion in 2010.

Qatar FDI inward stock was USD 30,804 million in 2012 while the FDI outward stock was USD 20,413 million for the same period. Qatar liberalized foreign investment in a number of sectors, including consultancy services, information technology, services related to sports, culture and entertainment, and distribution services.

In recent years, Qatar has attracted sizeable investments in the areas of enhanced oil recovery and production, as well as the development of Qatar's gas industry. During the past ten years, QP and its partners have invested an estimated USD 100 billion in upstream and downstream operations. Qatar's North Field, discovered in 1971, is the largest non-associated gas field in the world, with proven reserves estimated at more than 902tn cu ft. (tcf), the equivalent of about USD 162 billion barrels of oil. Qatar holds the world's third largest gas reserves after Russia and Iran.

Qatar's 14 LNG trains are based in Ras Laffan Industrial City (RLIC), including six mega trains which produce 7.8 million tons each annually, and operated by two companies: Qatargas and RasGas Company Limited. Together, these companies provide Qatar's 77 Mta production capacity. Qatari LNG is now delivered to over 23 markets across four continents. Qatar has a fleet of 54 LNG vessels representing some 20 percent of the world's total LNG fleet. Qatar's gas industry has attracted investors/creditors from around the world. The following is a list of foreign equity participation investors, U.S. firms included, in some major state-owned industrial/petroleum-related industries:

Exxon-Mobil investment in Qatar is around USD 15 billion and the company currently holds around 10-30 percent stakes in 12 liquefied natural gas production units in Qatar as well as a condensate refinery.

Petrochemicals

The following companies are predominant in Qatar's petrochemical sector. Industries Qatar (IQ) 51 percent, Qatar Petroleum (QP) 49 percent Public - Industries Qatar was incorporated in 2003 - Commencement of commercial production: 1974 - Total shareholder equity as end of 2004 was USD 791.5 million - The IQ group companies are:

Qatar Steel - incorporated in 1974 as a joint venture between the Qatar government 70 percent and two Japanese companies, Kobe Steel 20 percent and Tokyo Boeki 10 percent, to establish an integrated steel plant, in 2003 it became 100 percent owned by Qatar Industries (IQ).

Qatar Fertilizer Company (QAFCO) - established in 1969 and incorporated in 1975 in a joint venture agreement between the Qatar government and two foreign shareholders. In the same year, the Government transferred its shares to Qatar Petroleum. It is jointly owned by Industries Qatar (IQ) 75 percent, Yara International 25 percent shareholders.

Qatar Petrochemical Company (QAPCO) - established in 1974 - Commencement of commercial production: 1981 - as a joint venture between Qatar Petroleum 80 percent and Total Petrochemicals 20 percent. Qatar Petroleum's shares in QAPCO were taken over by Industries Qatar in 2003 - Total capital as of 31 December 2012 was QR 7.02 billion (USD 1.93 billion).

Qatar Fuel Additives Company Ltd. (QAFAC) - incorporated in 1991 - Commencement of commercial production: 2001 - as a joint venture for the construction and operation of a methanol and MTBE production facility - is jointly owned by Industries Qatar (IQ) 50 percent, OPIC Middle East Corporation 20 percent, Lee Chang Yung (LCY) Middle East Corporation 15 percent and International Octane Limited 15 percent - Total capital QR 2.5 billion (USD 687 million) - Year established: 1992 - End users: Far East, India, Europe and Arabian Gulf - Total shareholder equity: Unknown.

Qatar Vinyl Company (QVC) is jointly owned by Qatar Petroleum 25.5 percent, QAPCO 31.9 percent and Arkema (a global chemical company and France's leading chemicals producer) 12.9 percent - Year established: 1997 - End-users: Asian countries - Commencement of commercial production: Mid-2001 - Total shareholder equity: Unknown.

Qatar Chemical Company (Q-Chem I): Equity Share Capital: Unknown - Shareholders: Qatar Petroleum (QP) 51 percent; Chevron-Phillips Chemical Company (USA) 49 percent – (ConocoPhillips has collaborated with Qatar Petroleum since 1997 with the establishment of the Q Chem I joint venture) - Year established: 1997 - End-users: Asia, Europe, Middle East and Africa - Commencement of commercial production: 2003 - Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Qatar Chemical Company II (Q-Chem II): Equity Share Capital: Unknown - Shareholders: Qatar Petroleum 51 percent and Chevron Phillips 49 percent (ConocoPhillips participated with Qatar in the Q Chem II and RLOC petrochemical ventures through its 50 percent ownership in Chevron Phillips Chemicals) - Year Established: 2002 - End-users: Local and international - Commencement of commercial production: 2007 - Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

QATOFIN: Equity Share Capital: Unknown - Shareholders: QAPCO 63 percent, Total Petrochemicals (formally Atofina) 36 percent and QP 1 percent - Year

Established: 2002 - End-users: Asia and Europe - Commencement of commercial production: 2007 - Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Ras Laffan Ethylene Cracker: Equity Share Capital: Unknown - Shareholders: Q-Chem II 53.31 percent, Qatofin 45.69 percent and QP 1 percent - Year Established: 2002 - End-users: Domestic - Commencement of commercial production: 2007 - Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

The Qatar Industrial Manufacturing Company (QIMC), with a capital base of more than QR 360 million, has equity interests in industries such as chemicals, petrochemicals, construction, aluminum, paper and food processing. The subsidiaries of QIMC are Qatar Metal Coating Company, National Paper Industries Company, Qatar Sand Treatment Plant, Qatar Nitrogen Company, Qatar Paving Stones, National Food Company and Qatar Acids Company. Its business associates are Qatar Jet Fuel Company, Qatar Saudi Gypsum Industries Company, Qatar Clay Bricks Company, Qatar Plastic Production Company, Gulf Formaldehyde Company, Gasal, and Amiantit Qatar Pipes and Qatar Tunisian Food Company.

Qatar Petroleum (QP), via its subsidiary Qatar Intermediate Industries Company Ltd., (Alwaseeta) formerly known as (Qatar Holding, or QH) which was established in 2005 is expanding its production capability for petrochemicals with the construction of a new plant in Mesaieed Industrial City (MIC). The new Qatar Petrochemicals Complex (QPCC) will be a multi-billion-dollar (USD 2.6 billion) project developed in a 70:30 partnership between Qatar Holding and Honam Petrochemical Corporation of South Korea. The new petrochemicals complex was scheduled to come in stream in 2012-2013.

Qatar Petroleum (QP) and Qatar Petrochemical Company (QAPCO) have signed a Front-End Engineering and Design (FEED) contract with Tecnimont SpA for Al Sejeel Petrochemical Complex, which will be built in Ras Laffan Industrial City. This multi-billion dollar (USD 5.5 billion) project, scheduled for completion in 2018, is 80:20 owned by QP and QAPCO, respectively, and will feature one of the world's largest mixed-feed steam crackers and is designed to produce 2.2m MTPA of polymers.

Liquefied Natural Gas Projects

Qatar Liquefied Gas Company (Qatargas I): Equity share capital: QR 500 million (USD 137 million). Shareholders: Upstream: Qatar Petroleum (QP) 65 percent, Total (France) 10 percent, Marubeni Corporation (Japan) and Mitsui and Company Ltd. (Japan) 7.5 percent each and ExxonMobil Oil (USA) 10 percent. Shareholders: Downstream: Qatar Petroleum 65.0 percent, Total 20.0 percent, ExxonMobil 10.0 percent, Mitsui 2.5 percent, Marubeni 2.5 percent. Year established: 1984. End-users of LNG: main Markets are Japan and Spain. Commencement of commercial production: December 1996. Current value of

foreign equity: Unknown. The production capacity of Qatargas I was 6 Mta and increased to 10 million tons after the process of de-bottlenecking.

Qatar Liquefied Gas Company (Qatargas II): Equity share capital: Unknown. Shareholders: Train 4 (capacity of 7.8 mtpa): Qatar Petroleum 70 percent and ExxonMobil 30 percent. Train 5 (capacity of 7.8 mtpa): Qatar Petroleum 65 percent and ExxonMobil 18.3 percent and Total 16.7 percent. Year Established: 2002. End-users: United Kingdom's gas market Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Qatar Liquefied Gas Company (Qatargas III) - (Train 6 - capacity of 7.8 mtpa): Equity Share Capital: USD 5 billion; Shareholders: Qatar Petroleum (QP) 68.5 percent and ConocoPhillips 30 percent (ConocoPhillips' upstream collaboration (with Qatar) has been since 2003 through the development of Qatargas 3, a large- scale LNG project at Ras Laffan with a capacity of 7.8 million tons per year (tpy) and Mitsui & Co. Ltd 1.5 percent. Year Established: 2003. End-users: Europe, Asia and the United States. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Qatar Liquefied Gas Company (Qatargas IV) - (Train 7 - capacity of 7.8 mtpa) is the last of the 7.8 million tpy mega trains constructed by Qatargas in Ras Laffan. Shareholders: Qatar Petroleum 70 percent and Royal Dutch Shell plc 30 percent. Qatargas 3 and Qatargas 4 supply LNG to Europe, Asia and the United States. Established: 2005

Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Co. (RasGas I) – owns Trains 1 and 2: Equity share capital: QR 7.28 billion (USD 2 billion). Shareholders: Qatar Petroleum (QP) 63 percent, Mobil QM Gas Inc. 25 percent, Itochu Corporation 4 percent, Nissho Iwai Corporation 3 percent and KOGAS 5 percent. Year established: 1993. End-users of LNG: South Korea Gas Corporation (KOGAS 91 percent, Spain 6 percent and the U.S. 3 percent. Commencement of commercial production: 1999. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Co. (RasGas II) - owns Trains 3, 4 and 5: Equity Share Capital: USD 550 million. Shareholders: QP 70 percent and ExxonMobil 30 percent. Year Established: 2001. End-users: India, Edison Gas of Italy, Distrigas of Belgium and Endesa of Spain. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Co. (RasGas III - owns Trains 6 and 7): The investment in Ras Laffan Industrial City, the hub of Qatar's upstream industry, reached USD 70.0 billion in 2009. Equity Share: Unknown. Capital: USD 12-14 million. Shareholders: QP 70 percent stake and ExxonMobil 30 percent. Year Established: 2005. End-users: United States and Asian market. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown

Laffan Refinery (LR), Qatar's first condensate refinery, started production in September 2009 with a processing capacity of 146,000 barrels per stream day (BPSD). According to Qatar Gas, it currently utilizes the field condensate produced from the Qatargas and RasGas facilities. The Laffan Refinery has a production capacity of 61,000 barrels per stream day (BPSD) of naphtha, 52,000 BPSD of kerojet, 24,000 BPSD of gasoil and 9,000 BPSD of LPG. Laffan Refinery Venture activities continue with plans to expand condensate refining capacity, supplying more products from a second refinery expected in 2016, this is known as Laffan Refinery 2 (LR-2). Shareholders include Qatar Petroleum at 51 percent, ExxonMobil at 10 percent, Total at 10 percent, Idemitsu at 10 percent, Cosmo at 10 percent, Mitsui at 4.5 percent and Marubeni at 4.5 percent.

Laffan Refinery 2 (LR-2) - is expected to be fully operational by early 2016. This facility will be able to process an additional 146,000 barrels per stream day (BPSD); the total processing capacity that will be available to Laffan Refinery will be 292,000 bbl/d. Shareholders include Qatar Petroleum at 51 percent, ExxonMobil at 10 percent, Total at 10 percent, Idemitsu at 10 percent, Cosmo at 10 percent, Mitsui at 4.5 percent and Marubeni at 4.5 percent.

Gas-to-Liquids Projects

Oryx GTL Project: Equity Share Capital: Unknown. Shareholders: Qatar Petroleum 51 percent and Sasol 49 percent. Year Established: 2003. End-users: Singapore, Japan and Europe. Commencement of commercial production: 2007. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Pearl GTL Project: Equity Share Capital: Unknown. Shareholders: Qatar Petroleum 51 percent and Royal Dutch Shell Group 49 percent. Year Established: 2004. Commencement of commercial production: 2011. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Other Gas Projects

Dolphin Gas Project: Equity Share Capital: Unknown. Shareholders: Mubadala Development Company (Abu Dhabi) 51 percent, Occidental Petroleum of the U.S. 24.5 percent, Total of France 24.5 percent, End-users: UAE and Oman. Commencement of commercial production: 2007. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Al-Khaleej Gas Project: Equity Share Capital: Unknown. Shareholders: Qatar Petroleum, ExxonMobil. Year Established: 2000. End-users: Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain. Commencement of commercial production: Unknown. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Barzan Gas Project: Qatar Petroleum (QP) completed a USD 10.4 billion financing of its Barzan Gas Project mid December 2011. The Barzan Gas Project

will be completed in two phases. Train 1 is expected to be operational in 2014 and Train 2 in 2015. Together they will supply around 2 billion standard cubic feet per day of sales gas. RasGas will develop and operate the project on behalf of its Qatar Petroleum and ExxonMobil, which have a 93 percent and 7 percent stake in the project respectively. The project aims to satisfy local demand for natural gas. The project will supply natural gas to power generation and water desalination plants as well as small- and medium-sized industries in Qatar.

Other Oil and Gas-Based Industries

Gulf International Drilling: Equity Share Capital: USD 258 million. Shareholders: Qatar Petroleum 60 percent and JDC 40 percent. Year Established: 2004. End-users: TBD. Commencement of commercial operations: 2004. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Power and Utilities

Ras Laffan Independent Water and Power Project: Equity Share Capital: USD572 million. Shareholders: AES Corporation 55 percent, Qatar Electricity and Water Company 25 percent, Qatar Petroleum 10 percent and Gulf Investment Corporation 10 percent. Year Established: 2001. End-users: Local. Commencement of commercial production: 2004. Current value of foreign equity: Unknown.

Q Power Company: Equity Share Capital: Unknown. Shareholders: Qatar Electricity and Water Co. - 55 percent, International Power Plc (UK) - 40 percent Chubu Electric Power Company (Japan) 5 percent.

Nebras Power: Shareholders: Qatar Electricity and Water Co. - 60 percent, while Qatar Holding LLC and Qatar Petroleum International, the foreign investment arm of Qatar Petroleum each control 20 percent stakes. It is likely to begin commercial activities during the first half of 2014.

[1] Zakat is an obligation in Islam for Muslim individuals and corporations to donate a certain portion of their wealth to charitable causes.

Chapter 7: Trade and Project Financing

- How Do I Get Paid (Methods of Payment)
- How Does the Banking System Operate
- Foreign-Exchange Controls
- U.S. Banks and Local Correspondent Banks
- Project Financing

- [Web Resources](#)

How Do I Get Paid (Methods of Payment)

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Standard Letters of Credit processed by local banks and corresponding banks in the exporting countries control almost all import transactions. In accordance with QCB policy, merchants in Qatar make use of the credit facilities provided by banks to facilitate their imports. Letters of Credit are the safest means of payment that protect the rights of the Qatari importer and the foreign exporter.

Qatari companies also use other methods of payment such as advanced payment and “open accounts” via banks, but these options all depend on the relationship established with the foreign principal.

Banks in Qatar also provide short-term overdrafts and loans to their customers and issue Performance Bonds, Bid Bonds and Advance Payment guarantees on behalf of their customers to support local contracting activities. They can also facilitate foreign exchange transactions and most banks are able to structure basic derivatives such as Interest Rate Swaps to hedge interest rate risk.

Opening an account in Qatar is usually subject to “Know Your Customer” and Anti-Money Laundering due diligence common in developed countries, requiring proof of identity and ascertaining the source of funds. Cash is more widely used in local commercial transactions compared to some western countries. However, checks are also a common method of payment, especially for larger sums. It is important to note that a ‘bounced’ check is a criminal offence in Qatar and can attract stiff penalties including a prison sentence for the account holder.

To date, there is no factoring company in Qatar. Also there is no credit rating agency in Qatar.

How Does the Banking System Operate

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There are a total of eleven local banks operating in Qatar: Ahlibank, Al Khaliiji Bank, Barwa Bank, Commercial Bank of Qatar, Doha Bank, International Bank of Qatar, Qatar Development Bank, Qatar Islamic Bank, Qatar International Islamic Bank, Masraf Al Rayan and Qatar National Bank. Seven foreign banks also work in the local market: HSBC, Mashreq Bank, Arab Bank, BNP Paribas, Standard Chartered Bank, United Bank and Bank Saderat Iran. The Qatari banking sector is dominated by Qatar National Bank (QNB, 50% state-owned), which is the oldest and largest Qatari bank and has 50.48% share of the banking sector’s total assets as of December 2013. QNB is followed by Commercial Bank and Doha Bank,

Additionally, the Qatar Financial Centre, established in 2005 to attract international banks, law firms and insurance companies to Qatar by offering a streamlined and modern regulatory framework, has so far attracted over 80 institutions, including a branch of Citibank N.A. offering Corporate and Investment Banking services (no retail banking), and investment banks such as Goldman Sachs. Other banks in QFC include Credit Suisse, Bank Audi and Arab Jordanian Investment Bank. Institutions residing in the QFC are regulated by the Qatar Financial Centre Regulatory Authority (QFCRA).

Qatar Central Bank (QCB) supervises all banks, financial institutions and exchange houses in Qatar outside the QFC. In addition to its normal responsibilities, which include issuance/redemption of Qatar's currency, control of monetary policy and monitoring of the banking system, QCB requires all banks to meet the standards of the Bank of International Settlement (BIS), a council of worldwide central bank governors. Most banks in Doha have maintained a comfortable capital adequacy ratio above the 8 percent level required by the BIS. This is a ratio between total equity and reserves and total risk weighed assets, i.e., loans and investments of a bank not including loans to the GOQ.

The GOQ ensures that the banking sector continues to enjoy depositors' confidence, despite the fact that no deposit insurance exists. QCB also ensures that annual financial statements of all banks operating in Qatar comply with international standards and that the auditing process is carried out by internally recognized auditors. QCB requires that auditors be changed every three or four years.

The banking sector in Qatar has grown very rapidly over the past few years on the back of a robust economy with high rates of GDP growth. From 2005-2008, total assets of the banking sector grew at a compounded average growth rate (CAGR) of almost 47% whereas loans grew by 48% during the same period.

Foreign-Exchange Controls

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The Qatari Riyal (QR) is fixed to the U.S. Dollar (USD) at USD 1:00 = QR 3.64. Qatar has no restrictions on foreign exchange and money transfer. However, some restrictions exist when transferring in excess of QR 100,000 (USD 27,472), as well as in cases where suspicion of money laundering calls for official intervention.

U.S. Banks and Local Correspondent Banks

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Ahlibank

Bank of America, New York, NY

Union Bank of California International, New York,

NY

Commercial Bank	American Express Bank, New York, NY First Union Bank International, New York, NY The Chase Manhattan Bank, New York, NY Citibank, New York, NY
Doha Bank	Doha Bank, New York, NY
International Bank of Qatar	Standard Chartered Bank, New York, NY
International Islamic	Dutch Bankers Trust, New York, NY Wachovia Bank, New York, NY
Qatar Islamic Bank	American Express Bank, New York, NY JP Morgan Chase Bank, New York, NY Wachovia Bank, New York Int'l Branch, New York, NY
Qatar National Bank	JP Morgan Chase Bank, New York, NY

Project Financing

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Commercial banks in Qatar, both local and foreign, are the main source of financing for individuals and companies operating locally. In 2007, personal / retail loans accounted for the largest share of domestic loans at 32%, followed by the Public Sector at 25% and Land, Housing and Construction at 19%. Trade-related loans were relatively modest at 12%. These figures, however, do not capture the large project financing facilities raised by the State of Qatar in the international loans and bonds markets over the years to finance the massive gas infrastructure.

Commercial banks actively provide long-term financing for local projects, based on the merit of each proposal. U.S. firms interested in seeking financing for projects or local operations in Qatar should enquire with the leading banks in Qatar. An easier route may be to enquire with international banks with branches in Qatar, either in QFC or outside, with whom the borrower may already have a relationship overseas.

Established in 1997, state-owned Qatar Development Bank (QDB) encourages industrial and economic development and diversification of the State of Qatar through financing small to medium sized joint venture industrial projects. In

addition to financing, QDB provides assistance with project development, including project assessments and feasibility studies, obtaining legal documentation and government approvals.

U.S. Export-Import Bank (Ex-Im Bank) participated in the finance package for the Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Company. Other U.S. firms are encouraged to seek Ex-Im Bank financing for industrial projects, medical, environmental and transportation security initiatives, and major construction projects.

Due to concerns about labor practices in Qatar, OPIC suspended its operations in Qatar in 1995. However, Qatar is working diligently to improve its labor standards in order to reinstate OPIC coverage. In May 2004, Qatar passed a new labor law which provides more rights and protections for Qataris and non-Qataris.

In August 1998, the Qatar Central Bank decreed that banks operating in Qatar are not allowed to provide loans more than 20 percent of their equity (capital plus reserves) to a single customer (the government excluded). The QCB also discourages local banks from financing stock market operations.

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Export-Import Bank of the United States: <http://www.exim.gov>

Country Limitation Schedule:
http://www.exim.gov/tools/country/country_limits.html

OPIC: <http://www.opic.gov>

Trade and Development Agency: <http://www.tda.gov/>

SBA's Office of International Trade: <http://www.sba.gov/oit/>

USDA Commodity Credit Corporation: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/cc/default.htm>

U.S. Agency for International Development: <http://www.usaid.gov>

Qatar Financial Center: www.qfc.com.qa

Qatar Financial Center Regulatory Authority: www.qfcra.com

Qatari Banks

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Chapter 8: Business Travel

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Business Customs

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U.S. citizens should expect to have meetings in the morning or evening. The ability to say a few Arabic greetings or words will impress Qatari contacts. Always use the right hand when shaking hands and eating. Do not show the palms of your hands or the soles of your feet/shoes. Be prepared for small talk and then business discussion. Always accept tea, coffee or other refreshments during meetings. Invitations to lunch, dinner, receptions and other hospitalities are normally offered and should always be accepted. Dress should be business attire. It is advisable to print business cards with one side in English and the other side in Arabic. It is advisable to have at least a temporary local or international mobile phone. Giving gifts depends on the closeness of the relationship but it is advisable to not give gifts during the first meeting.

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The State Department Consular Information Sheet for Qatar is available at:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1003.html

Visa Requirements

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All travelers to Qatar should have passports valid for at least six months. It is best to obtain Qatari visas in advance from the Qatari Embassy in Washington, DC, the Qatari Consulate in Houston, Texas, or the Qatari Mission to the United Nations in New York. Qatari Embassies in other countries also provide this service to foreign nationals. Four passport-sized photographs, a visa application and a letter from the sponsor in Qatar should be submitted for this purpose. A sponsorship letter, however, is not always a basic requirement. This procedure usually takes at least four working days. The U.S. and the Qatari governments have a reciprocal arrangement by which Qatar issues U.S. businessmen a multiple-entry visa for 10 years. This type of entry visa does not entitle visitors

and/or businessmen to work in Qatar, unless it is exchanged for a residence permit. A U.S. Citizen is entitled to a multiple entry visa valid for 10 years. However, the maximum length of stay in the country is 6 months after which the holder of the visa must leave the country. The application for a multiple entry visa must be made to a Qatari Diplomatic mission outside Qatar. The visa is valid for business and tourism purposes.

Tourist visas valid for 14 days, extendable for another 14 days, are available upon arrival for nationals of 33 different countries (USA , Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Portugal, Ireland, Greece, Finland, Spain, Monaco, Vatican, Iceland, Andorra, San Marino, Liechtenstein, Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and South Korea). A 14 day visa costs QR 55 (USD15). Foreigners with valid residence permits from other Gulf Cooperation Council countries do not require a visitor's visa. Upon arrival to Qatar they will be granted an entry visa valid for 14 days, provided the residence permit stamped on their passports would be valid for at least one month.

However, U.S. businesspersons are advised to obtain a visa prior to arrival, since it will enable them to go through Qatari immigration more quickly.

The same visa can also be obtained online at the following link:

Business Visa

U.S. Companies that require travel of foreign businesspersons to the United States should be advised that security evaluations are handled via an interagency process. Visa applicants should go to the following links.

State Department Visa Website: <http://travel.state.gov/visa/>

United States Visas.gov: <http://www.unitedstatesvisas.gov/>

Telecommunications

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Qatar enjoys good local and international telecommunications facilities. Automatic telephone and fax dialing is available to more than 150 countries worldwide. Internal calls are free of charge if conducted through regular telephones. U.S. calling cards are not accepted in Qatar.

Prepaid cellular (mobile) phones may be rented locally for a small fee. There are charges for all calls made to and from mobile telephones. "World phones" do not provide reliable local service.

Qatar's Internet service is run by partially state-owned Qatar Telecom (Q-Tel). In 2003, Q-Tel introduced ADSL high-speed internet access. Most hotels offer in-room Internet access and there are a number of Internet cafes in Doha. In 2005, Q-Tel introduced wireless internet services. Hotspots are available in several hotels and trendy coffee-shops of Doha.

Transportation

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Transportation options for business travelers are basically limited to car rentals or private taxi. Most major international rental firms are represented in Qatar, including Avis, Budget, Eurodollar, Hertz, Thrifty, etc. Private cars and drivers can be hired from a number of local firms and at hotels. In 2005, Mowasalat (Transportation in Arabic), a wholly owned government entity, launched the first public bus service in Qatar. Taxi service is operated by a sister company called Karwa. The service is not always reliable or on time for pick-ups, and bookings should be made in advance (local number 458-8888). It is usually not possible to hail a taxi in Doha, even in high traffic areas. All 4 and 5 star hotels can also arrange transportation via private vehicle.

Language

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Although Arabic is the official language in Qatar, English is widely spoken in business.

Health

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Qatari nationals receive free State-provided medical care ranging from outpatient clinics to hospitalization. Medical fees for expatriate residents holding a government health card vary according to the type of service provided. The price of a health card is QR 100 (USD 27) and is only valid in governmental health care facilities. While medicines are generally dispensed free of charge for Qatari patients, expatriates pay a nominal charge. Visitors to Qatar are required to pay for all medical services throughout their visit to Qatar.

There are numerous private clinics and small hospitals, all licensed by the State through the National Health Authority (NHA).

Local Time, Business Hours, and Holidays

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Qatar local time is GMT plus 3 hours. Qatar is 8 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time, except during Daylight Saving Time, when it is 7 hours ahead.

The Government's official working hours are 7:00 AM to 2:00 PM, Sunday through Thursday. Banking hours are 8:00 AM to 1:30 PM, Sunday through Thursday, while private sector hours are generally 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM and 4:00

PM to 7:30 PM, Saturday through Thursday. Friday, the Muslim holy day, is a day of rest for all sectors; however, shops and shopping malls are open on Friday evenings. The U.S. Embassy hours are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Sunday through Thursday.

Officially, Qatar uses the Gregorian calendar, with corresponding dates in the Hijra (Islamic) calendar. There are two major religious holidays that vary from year to year, as they are based on the lunar calendar. Eid Al-Fitr marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan (during which business hours are restricted to five hours per day) and Eid Al-Adha marks the conclusion of the pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca. The exact dates of these holidays are determined by the government shortly in advance of their observance. Government ministries are generally closed for a longer period than private and partially private entities. The only fixed holiday is the Qatar's National Day, which is celebrated on December 18.

The months from October through June are generally considered the best period for foreign business representatives to visit Qatar. Public and private sector officials usually vacation during some part of the period July to September. Business trips during the fasting month of Ramadan are not advisable as most Qatari businessmen focus on family and worship.

The U.S. Embassy closes for Qatari and American Holidays.
Embassy schedule: <http://qatar.usembassy.gov/holidays.html>

Temporary Entry of Materials and Personal Belongings

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Most standard business equipment for individual use may be brought into Qatar temporarily without incurring customs duties. Exhibition materials may be imported for temporary use. However, if these items are sold in Qatar, customs duties will be applicable. Exhibition organizers generally appoint an exclusive local freight forwarder and clearing agent for specific events to assist foreign exhibitors with entry procedures.

Communications, military or security equipment may require prior approval from the relevant authority in Qatar.

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State Department Consular Information Sheet for Qatar
Travel Info for U.S. Businesspersons
State Department Visa Website
United States Visas.gov
U.S. Embassy Qatar Consular Section
Qatar E-Government On-line Visa

Qatar Telecom

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Chapter 9: Contacts, Market Research and Trade Events

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Contacts

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Note: The country code for Qatar is 974 for all telephone and fax numbers. There are no area codes within Qatar.

Bilateral Business Councils

American Arab Chamber of Commerce

12740 West Warren, Suite 101

Dearborn, MI 48126 USA

Phone: (313) 945-1700

Fax: (313) 945-6697

Contact: Fay Beydoun, Executive Director

Email: sbazzi@americanarab.com, faybeydoun@americanarab.com

Website: www.americanarab.com

U.S.-Qatar Business Council

1341 Connecticut Ave NW, Suite 4A

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: (202) 457-8555

Fax: (202) 457-1919

Contact: Patrick Theros, President

Email: patricktheros@usqbc.org

Website: www.usqbc.org

National U.S. -Arab Chamber of Commerce

1023 15th Street, N.W., Suite 400

Washington, DC 20005

Phone: (202) 289-5920

Fax: (202) 289-5938

President: Mr. David Hamod

Email: INFO@NUSACC.ORG

Website: www.nusacc.org

Branch Offices of National U.S. -Arab Chamber of Commerce:

Houston Office

1330 Post Oak Boulevard

Suite 1600

Houston, TX 77056

Phone: (713) 963-4620

Fax: (713) 963-4609
Contact: Ms. Rand Zalzalá
E-mail: rzalzalá@nusacc.org
Website: www.nusacc.org

New York Office
420 Lexington Avenue, Suite 2034
New York, NY 10170
Tel: (212) 986-8024
Fax: (212) 986-0216
Contact: Mr. Gilbert Hage
E-mail: ghage@nusacc.org
Website: www.nusacc.org

Los Angeles Office
8921 S. Sepulveda Boulevard, Suite 206
Los Angeles, CA 90045
Phone: (310) 646-1499
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E-mail: eatallah@nusacc.org
Website: www.nusacc.org

Bilateral U.S. Arab Chamber of Commerce
5721 Memorial Dr. Suite 206
Houston, TX US 77007
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 571870
Houston, TX US 77257-1870
Phone: 713-880-8168
Fax: 713-880-8278
Contact: Aida Araissi, Founder and Managing Director
Email: info@arabchamber.org, aida@bilateralchamber.org
Website: www.bilateralchamber.org/

USDA -- Washington Contact Information

Trade Assistance and Promotion Office (TAPO)
Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Ag Box 1052
1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250
Tel: 202-720-7420
Fax: 202-690-4374
The FAS Home Page address on Internet is www.fas.usda.gov

Country Trade or Industry Associations in Key Sectors

Qatar Chamber of Commerce & Industry (QCCI, also include International Chamber of Commerce)
P.O. Box 402, Doha, Qatar
Tel: (+974) 4455 9111
Fax: (+974) 4466 1693; 4466 1728
Contact: Mr Khalifa Bin Jassim Bin Mohammed Al Thani, Chairman
Email: info@qcci.org, qcci@qatar.net.qa
Website: www.qatarchamber.com

Qatari Businessmen Association
P.O. Box 24475, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (+974) 4435 3120
Fax: (+974) 4435 3834 / 4435 3847
Contact: Mr. Faisal Bin Qasem Al Thani, Chairman
Email: qba@qataribusinessmen.org
Website: <http://www.qataribusinessmen.org/>

Country Government Offices Relating to Key Sectors and/or Significant Trade Related Activities

Doha Customs and Ports Authority –
P.O. Box 81, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (+974) 4445 7457
Fax: (+974) 4441 4959
Contact: Mr. Ahmad Ali Mohammad Al Mohannadi, Chairman
Email: questions@customs.gov.qa
Website: <http://www.customs.gov.qa>

Civil Aviation Authority
P.O. Box 3000, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (+974) 4455 7333
Fax: (+974) 4455 7105
Contact: Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Noaimi, Chairman & Managing Director
Email: info@caa.gov.qa
Website: <http://www.caa.gov.qa/>

Ministry of Economy and Trade
P.O. Box 1968, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (+974) 4494 5001, 4494 5555
Fax: (+974) 4494 5000
Contact: Mr. Hamad Ali Al-Mannai, The Minister's Office Manager
Email: mbt@mbt.gov.qa / halmannai@mbt.gov.qa
Website: <http://www.investinqatar.com.qa/English/Pages/Home.aspx>

Laboratories and Standardization P. O. Box 23277
Tel: (+974) 4413 9400 / 4413 9401
Fax: (+974) 4413 9411
Contact: Dr. Mohammed bin Seif Al-Kuwari,
Assistant Undersecretary For Laboratories and Standardization Affairs
Email: info@qs.org.qa / dr.malkuwari@qs.org.qa

Ministry of Finance
P.O. Box 83, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (+974) 4441 4944
Fax: (+974) 4443 1177 / 4443 5370
Contact: H.E. Ali Sherif Al-Emadi, Minister;
Abdulrahman Al-Dashti, Office Director
Phone: (974) 4441 3300/3131
Fax: (974) 4443 1177

Ministry of Energy and Industry
P.O. Box 3212, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (+974) 4484 6444 / 4449 1444
Fax: (+974) 4483 2024
Contact: H.E. Mohammed bin Saleh Al-Sada, Minister

Department of Industrial Development:
(+974) 4484 6444 | did@mei.gov.qa

Department of Industrial Zones:
(+974) 4423 4111 | dihe@mei.gov.qa

Department of Common Services:
(+974) 4484 6444 | djs@mei.gov.qa

Department of Energy
(+974) 4484 6444 | dae@mei.gov.qa

Public Relations and Communications Unit
(+974) 4484 6577 | relation@mei.gov.qa

Website: <http://www.mei.gov.qa/home-en/>

Ministry of Interior
P.O. Box 2433, Doha, State of Qatar
Tel: (+974) 4433 0000
Fax: (+974) 4472 7828

Contact: H.E. Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Minister of Interior

Email: info@moi.gov.qa

Website: <http://www.moi.gov.qa/site/english/>

Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning

P.O. Box 22332, Doha, State of Qatar

Tel: (+974) 4434 8070 / 4434 8888

Fax: (+974) 4443 0239

Contact: H.E. Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz Al Thani, Minister of Municipality and Urban Planning

Email: info@baladiya.gov.qa

Website: <http://www.baladiya.gov.qa/cui/index.dox?siteID=2>

Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning

P.O. Box 1966, Doha, State of Qatar

Tel: (+974) 4465 3083

Fax: (+974) 4466 3163

Contact: Dr. Kassim Al Qahtani, Assistant Director for Animal Health Affairs, Agricultural Development Department (Live animal and pet import regulations)

Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning

P.O. Box 1966, Doha, State of Qatar

Tel: (+974) 4449 2666

Fax: (+974) 4432 2002

Contact: Mr. Yousuf Qulaifi, Director of Agricultural Development Department (Live plants and pesticide import regulations)

Supreme Council of Health

P.O. Box 42, Doha, Qatar

Tel: (+974) 4407 0000

Contact: H.E. Abdulla bin Khalid Al-Qahtani, Minister of Public Health

Email: info@sch.gov.qa

Website: <http://www.sch.gov.qa/sch/En/catcontent.jsp?scatId=211&scatType=1>

Qatar Armed Forces

P.O. Box 37, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (+974) 4461 2400

Fax: (+974) 4450 4228/4229

Contact: Director of Procurement, General Headquarters

Government and Quasi-Government Organizations

Hamad General Hospital, A Member of Hamad Medical Corporation

P.O. Box 3050, Doha, State of Qatar

Phone: (+974) 4439 4444
Fax: (974) 4439 1118
Contact: Mr Abdul Razaq Al-Kubaisi, Head of Admin Affairs
Website: <http://hgh.hamad.qa/en/index.aspx>

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development
P.O. Box 5825, Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (+974) 4454 0000
Fax: (+974) 4480 6117
Contact: HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Misnad, Chairperson; Engineer Saad Al Muhannadi, President of Qatar Foundation
Email: info@qf.org.qa
Website: <http://www.qf.org.qa>

Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation (Kahramaa)
P.O. Box 41
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (+974) 4484 5555
Fax: (+974) 4484 5496
Contact: H.E. Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Attiyah, Chairman of the Board
Email: contactus@km.com.qa
Website: <http://www.km.com.qa/en/Pages/home.aspx>

Qatar Electricity and Water Company (QEWG)
P.O. Box 22046
Doha, State of Qatar
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Fax: (+974) 4483 1116
Contact: H.E. Essa Shaheen Al-Ghanim, Vice Chairman
Email: Welcome@qewg.com
Website: <http://www.qewg.com>

Ooredoo
P.O. Box 217
Doha, State of Qatar
Phone: (+974) 4440 0400
Fax: (+974) 4447 6231
Contact: Dr. Nasser Marafih, Chief Executive Officer
Email: investor@ooredoo.qa
Website: <http://www.ooredoo.qa/>

Market Research

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To view market research reports produced by the U.S. Commercial Service please go to the following website: <http://www.export.gov/mrktresearch/index.asp> and click on Country and Industry Market Reports.

Please note that these reports are only available to U.S. citizens and U.S. companies. Registration to the site is required, and is free.

List of Agricultural Reports:

- American Food Directory for the GCC-5 Countries
- Guide for Doing Business in the Gulf
- Update of U.S. Agricultural Exports to the GCC-5
- Qatar Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS)
- GCC-5 Food Retail Sector Report
- Hotels and Restaurants Sector in the Gulf Region

Note: Agricultural reports are available via the Reports Office, USDA/FAS, Ag Box 1052, Washington, D.C. 20250-1052 and via the FAS Home Page on the Internet at the following URL:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/>

Trade Events

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Please click on the link below for information on upcoming trade events.

<http://www.export.gov/tradeevents/index.asp>

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Chapter 10: Guide to Our Services

The President's National Export Initiative aims to double exports over five years by marshaling Federal agencies to **prepare U.S. companies to export successfully, connect them with trade opportunities and support them once they do have exporting opportunities.**

The U.S. Commercial Service offers customized solutions to help U.S. exporters, particularly small and medium sized businesses, successfully expand exports to new markets. Our global network of trade specialists will work one-on-one with you through every step of the exporting process, helping you to:

- Target the best markets with our world-class research
- Promote your products and services to qualified buyers
- Meet the best distributors and agents for your products and services
- Overcome potential challenges or trade barriers
- Gain access to the full range of U.S. government trade promotion agencies and their services, including export training and potential trade financing sources

To learn more about the Federal Government's trade promotion resources for new and experienced exporters, please click on the following link:
www.export.gov

For more information on the services the U.S. Commercial Service offers to U.S. exporters, please click on the following link:

<http://export.gov/qatar/>

U.S. exporters seeking general export information/assistance or country-specific commercial information can also contact the **U.S. Department of Commerce's Trade Information Center** at **(800) USA-TRAD(E)**.

To the best of our knowledge, the information contained in this report is accurate as of the date published. However, **The Department of Commerce** does not take responsibility for actions readers may take based on the information contained herein. Readers should always conduct their own due diligence before entering into business ventures or other commercial arrangements. **The Department of Commerce** can assist companies in these endeavors.

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