ABOUT QATAR

One fifth the size of New Zealand, this country of predominantly expatriates is sitting on a goldmine of natural gas. This is how it has achieved its status as having the highest per capita GDP in the world, at US$124,900. And with an incoming FIFA World Cup tournament being held there in 2022, infrastructure upgrades are starting to gather pace.

Qatar is a relatively small peninsula of 11,500 square kilometres, and a population of close to two million people. There are fewer than 300,000 Qatari.

The Qatar economy is underpinned by hydrocarbons, mainly natural gas. Economic policy is targeted at Qatar’s increasing private and foreign investment in non-energy sectors, but oil and gas still account for more than 50 per cent of GDP, roughly 85 percent of export earnings, and 70 percent of government revenues. Qatar has the third-highest known gas reserves in the world and also, at current rates of extraction, some 50-plus years of oil supply.

Qatar’s successful World Cup bid is slowly accelerating large-scale infrastructure projects including roads, a metro rail system and a rail network which will eventually link Qatar to Europe. In addition, construction projects abound as new hotels, office space, apartments, stadiums and hospitals are built.

The bilateral trade between New Zealand and Qatar is heavily weighted in Qatar’s favour. As at year ending 2012 the trade between the two countries amounted to NZ$525 million, of which New Zealand exports were approximately NZ$15 million, leaving the balance of NZ$510 million to New Zealand purchases, mainly gas from Qatar. New Zealand exports are predominately meat and dairy products.

QUICK FACTS

- **GDP**: US$166 billion (2017)
- **GDP per capita PPP**: US$124,900 (2017)
- **Official languages**: Arabic
- **Currency**: Qatari Rial (QAR)
- **World Bank Ease of Doing Business ranking (2018)**: 83 of 190 (NZ ranked 1 of 190)
- **Corruption Perceptions Index ranking (2017)**: 29 of 176 (NZ ranked 1 of 176)
- **Free Trade Agreements**: NZ – GCC FTA [pending]
- **Value of NZ exports**: US$20.44 million (2016)
- **New Zealand's 76th largest market in 2016**
- **Population**: 2.7 million (2018)
- **Land area**: 11,586 sq km
- **Density**: 192.9 people/km²
- **Qatar is**:
  - a country with the highest per-capita GDP in the world
  - home to more expatriates than nationals – just one sixth of the population are Qatari
  - sitting on the third-highest known gas reserves in the world
  - hosting the FIFA World Cup in 2022.
TRADE AGREEMENTS

If you are a goods exporter, use the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s tariff finder to find out the applicable tariff rates for Qatar, as well as HS codes, document and shipping requirements. For more details on Free Trade Agreements in force, go to the Free Trade Agreements section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s website.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW ZEALAND BUSINESSES

Building and construction
Surplus liquidity from gas sales and massive infrastructure spending, including spending in preparation for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, are expected to keep Qatar’s growth positive for at least the next decade. Even taking into account higher government spending, budget surpluses are projected to be close to 10 percent of GDP for the next two years.

Within the next seven years, Qatar is committed to completing at least US$70 billion worth of infrastructure projects. This includes US$35 billion on railways, US$14 billion on the new Doha International Airport, US$20 billion on roads and US$5 billion on a new deepwater port. The infrastructure programme also includes 50,000 hotel rooms, the building of nine new stadiums and the upgrading of three others, which is set to cost US$4 billion.

Food and beverage
Qatar imports more than 90 percent of its foodstuffs. Much of these imports come through neighbouring countries, for instance the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and to a lesser extent Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

New Zealand is a leading supplier of dairy products, including powders, proteins, butter and cheeses. Local consumption of dairy is high. New Zealand is also among the largest suppliers of meat to the retail and hotel markets and our fruit, vegetables and seafood are increasingly in demand.

Professional services
Qatar is embarking on a period of significant reforms in many areas. With a growing population, high spending power, and structural changes within a wide variety of sectors, there are many opportunities for New Zealand professional services companies. These range from high-value education training and research through to public-sector consultancy services. Education, health, administration, food security and agricultural development are all areas of potential.

Health care
The National Health Strategy (NHS) of Qatar is a partnership between the Supreme Council of Health (SCH), Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) and Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC). Beyond those partnerships, they are working with more than 50 organisations on 39 projects, under seven goals, to develop a comprehensive world-class health care system for Qatar.

The aim is to ensure that, by 2030, Qatar enjoys one of the best health care systems in the world, built on expertise, capacity, international best practices and technology. This will provide opportunities for a range New Zealand companies.

BUSINESS CULTURE AND ETIQUETTE
Qatar is an Islamic country with five scheduled prayer times daily. Prayer times relate to the position of the sun and are subject to slight daily variations.
Muslims who fast are not permitted to eat, drink or smoke between dawn and dusk during the month of Ramadan. Furthermore, it is illegal for anyone – Muslims and non-Muslims alike – to eat, drink or smoke in public during this period.

**Business culture**

Normal business dress for men is shirt and tie. Suits should be worn to meet with high-ranking officials and senior businesspeople. Businesswomen should wear a conservative two-piece suit, preferably a skirt and jacket. Women face no discrimination and can drive and move around freely. They are not required to cover their head/hair in public and can wear Western swimwear to beaches and at hotel swimming pools. They are, however, still expected to dress modestly in public and it is wise to familiarise yourself with dress codes to avoid causing offence.

In business, it’s customary for visitors to be offered refreshments, usually coffee or tea. It is polite to accept at least one, but preferably two cups, before refusing a refill. Asking for water only is acceptable.

**TRAVEL AND VISITING QATAR**

**Visas and immigration**

Tourist visas are available to New Zealand passport holders and to a number of other nationalities, but not all, on arrival. Check Hukoomi, the Government’s official website for more Visa Information.

Note that Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates have suspended all flights to and from Qatar from 6 June 2017 until further notice. Qatar has also suspended all flights to and from these destinations.

**Safe Travel** suggests that New Zealanders travelling between Qatar and Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, or from New Zealand via Qatar to these destinations, contact their airline or travel agent to see if their bookings are affected.

**Accommodation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oryx Rotana</td>
<td>Al Nahda School Street, Airport Road, Doha</td>
<td>+974 4402 3333</td>
<td><a href="mailto:oryx.hotel@rotana.com">oryx.hotel@rotana.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsgate</td>
<td>Ali Bin Abdullah St, Doha</td>
<td>+974 4407 8888</td>
<td>millenniumhotels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss-Belhotel Doha</td>
<td>Jabr Bin Mohd St, Doha</td>
<td>+974 4408 5555</td>
<td>swiss-belhotel.com</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Check [www.booking.com](http://www.booking.com) for more hotels and deals.

**Transportation**

**Taxis**

Karwa Taxis are the most convenient and flexible mode of transport to and from the Doha International Airport. On leaving the airport, turn right and right again for the taxi rank. Beware of touts offering alternative taxis. Most official taxis are well-equipped, clean, safe, comfortable, brand new and spacious sedans. The minimum fare for airport taxis starts at QAR25, and the charge per kilometre is as low as QAR1.20. For regular taxis, the minimum fare is QAR10 and the charge per kilometre (after 5.5 kilometres) is QAR1.20. For booking through Mowasalat call centre, please telephone +974 4458 8888.

**Private taxis**

There are a number of companies operating taxis which can be booked by the hour. Fox Transport is one such company and can be contacted 24 hours a day. Telephone: +974 4462 2777

Email: info@foxtransport.qa

**Car rental**

Cars are available from car rental companies on arrival at the airport and in most hotels. Visitors who have a current New Zealand international driving licence will be allowed to drive for the period of their visa. Customers must produce their passport, along with the valid licence and a credit card which will be debited with a bond.

Driving in Qatar is on the righthand side and with the mix of cultures can be an exciting experience.

**Public holidays**

Business visits in summer (July/August) are not advised, as decision-makers may be away on holiday. Similarly, visits during Ramadan are inadvisable as business schedules are shortened and disrupted. Temperatures during summer months are often 45°C or more, so prolonged periods outdoors are not recommended.

There are two major religious celebrations in Qatar – Eid al Fitr, which lasts for three days, and Eid al Adha, for four days. These are also the major public holidays. d al Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, which is the holy month of fasting, and Eid al Adha follows approximately 70 days afterwards.

Note: As these festivals are timed according to lunar months and moon sightings, the days can move by a day or so and exact holiday dates are only fixed at the time.

Check [timeanddate.com](http://timeanddate.com) for a full list of national holidays in 2018.

**Language**

The official language is Arabic but English is also widely spoken.

**Business hours**

Working hours for the government sector are 7.30am to 3.30pm. General business hours are 7.30am to 5pm, with retail 10am to 10pm, except on Fridays and during Ramadan. Qatar is three hours ahead of GMT or 10 hours behind New Zealand Pacific Standard Time.
The normal working week is Sunday to Thursday (weekend is Friday/Saturday), although some private-sector businesses may work Saturdays.

**IT, internet and communications**

The Qatar country code is +974 and the internet country suffix is “.qa”. Doha is presently being upgraded to fibre high-speed internet. Mobile phone SIM cards are available on arrival at the airport from Ooredoo. Vodafone SIM cards are available throughout outlets in Doha.

**Currency, credit cards and ATMs**

The currency of Qatar is the Qatari Riyal (QAR). Credit cards are widely accepted in stores, restaurants, hotels and bars in Qatar. You can use your own bank’s ATMs and those of other banks (with small charges), to withdraw money with a limit of $450 to $700 worth of local currency per day. The two well-known credit cards in Qatar are Visa and MasterCard.

You can also access cash from ATMs with a charge card.

**SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Visit the Safe Travel website for the latest travel advisory updates. New Zealanders in Qatar are strongly encouraged to register their details on Safe Travel.

**MEDICAL SERVICES AND HOSPITALS**

Health care in Qatar is highly modern and effective. The service is not free but substantially subsidised by the Government. Locals are provided with a National Health Insurance scheme, while expatriates are required to either receive health insurance from their employer or purchase it themselves if they’re self-employed. A Health Card is available at a subsidised rate, which makes health care quite affordable for expatriates as soon as they set up residence.

The best hospital in the country is Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), a non-profit, governmental health care provider with a wide range of services and facilities. For a list of public and private hospitals in Qatar, visit the Life in Qatar website.

**TRADE SHOWS AND INDUSTRY EXHIBITIONS**

Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC), located in the business district of Doha, is the central venue for trade shows and exhibitions in Qatar. A wide range of trade fairs and exhibitions take place annually in the country. Trade shows and exhibitions are regulated under the “Exhibition Law” through the Qatar Tourism Authority.

**PRODUCT REGISTRATION**

Product registration isn’t compulsory for every product imported from overseas or manufactured inside Qatar prior to launching in the market. However, a number of products – including imported and manufactured medicated cosmetics, antiseptic and disinfectants, and dietary supplements products – are to be evaluated and registered with the Qatar Supreme Council of Health.

**CUSTOMS AND IMPORT REGULATIONS**

In Qatar, import duty and taxation apply depending on weight or volume. (Luggage with a value of above QAR3,000 is subject to duty.) Electrical equipment, including but not limited to cameras, laptops and mobile phones (not in commercial quantity) accompanied by the foreign traveller are exempted from customs duty. The number of duty-free cigarettes brought to Qatar should not exceed 400. An import licence is required by law for all importers in Qatar. Only Qatari citizens or the Qatari partner in a limited-liability partnership can obtain an import licence. The Qatari Government prohibits/restricts importation of some goods in the country. For more information on Qatar customs and import regulations, please refer to the Qatar Country Commercial Guide.

**SETTING UP OPERATIONS AND ESTABLISHING A BUSINESS**

Foreign individuals or companies are welcome to invest in Qatar; however, they are required to have a Qatari partner with 51 percent ownership. Subject to an exemption from the Qatar Ministry of Economy and Commerce, a foreigner may hold 100 percent ownership, if the business is focused on one of the “Priority Sectors”. These are:

- business consulting
- technical services
- information technology
- cultural, sports and leisure services
- distribution services
- agriculture
- manufacturing
- health
- tourism
- education
- development and exploitation of natural resources
- energy and mining.

Taxation applies at a rate of 4 percent for foreign companies, while the share of profits of a Qatari partner in business is exempt from tax.

**TAXATION**

While Qatar has no system of personal income tax, no VAT or sales tax, a corporation tax does apply. This requires every licensed company in Qatar to register for taxation purposes. The current rate of corporate income tax is 10 percent. Qatar companies owned wholly by local or Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nationals are exempted. (GCC member states are: UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait.)
**NZTE/EMBASSY CONTACT DETAILS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Website / Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand Trade and Enterprise</td>
<td>Office 6A, Level 6, Emirates Tower</td>
<td>+971 4270 0100</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nzte.govt.nz">www.nzte.govt.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sheikh Zayed Road, Dubai</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:exporthelp@nzte.govt.nz">exporthelp@nzte.govt.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand Embassy</td>
<td>Office 2503, International Tower</td>
<td>+971 2496 3333</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mfat.govt.nz">www.mfat.govt.nz</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Capital Centre, Abu Dhabi</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) is the Government agency charged with a single purpose: growing companies internationally, bigger, better and faster, for the benefit of New Zealand.

We employ 600 people, have over 200 private sector partners and draw on a global network of thousands more. We have people based in 50 offices, working across 24 time zones and 40 languages to support New Zealand businesses in over 100 countries. Our global presence lets us deliver value to the businesses we support, through our unique know-how (knowledge and experience) and know-who (networks and connections).

Our know-how and know-who is expressed in our Maori name: Te Taurapa Tūhono. Te Taurapa is the stern post of a traditional Māori waka, which records valuable knowledge, and stabilises and guides the craft forward. Tūhono represents connections to people and an ability to build relationships.

We provide customised services and support to ambitious businesses looking to go global. We help them build their capability, boost their global reach, connect to other businesses and invest in their growth. We also connect international investors with opportunities in New Zealand through a global network of investment advisors.

We call on our Government network and work closely with our NZ Inc partners and the business community, to grow our national brand and help businesses to open doors in global markets.

nzte.govt.nz

**OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT**

There are many banks in Qatar that offer banking solutions for individuals and companies. Banking is generally of high quality and relatively modern. To open a bank account in Qatar, you’ll need to have a residence visa. However, some banks allow non-Qatar residents to open current and saving accounts.

The documents required to open an account include:
1. copy of Qatar ID (for locals and expatriates)
2. copy of passport (for expatriates)
3. employment certificate.

**BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS**

Qatar Chamber of Commerce
www.qatarchamber.com

Qatar Australia and New Zealand Business Association
www.facebook.com/pages/Qatar

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May 2018