

# Qatar

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Known as the State of Qatar or locally Dawlat Qa? ar, is an Arab emirate, in the Middle East, occupying the small Qatar Peninsula on the northeasterly coast of the much larger Arabian Peninsula. Its sole land border is with Saudi Arabia to the south, with the rest of its territory surrounded by the Persian Gulf. A strait of the Gulf separates Qatar from the nearby island state of Bahrain. Qatar has been ruled as an absolute monarchy by the al-Thani family since the mid-19th century.

Formerly a British protectorate noted mainly for pearling, it became independent in 1971, and has become one of the region's wealthiest states due to its enormous oil and natural gas revenues. In 1995, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani became Emir when he seized power from his father, Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani, in a peaceful coup d'etat. [7] The most important positions in Qatar are held by the members of the al-Thani family, or close confidants of the al-Thani family. Beginning in 1992, Qatar has built intimate military ties with the United States, and is now the location of U.

S. Central Command's Forward Headquarters and the Combined Air Operations Center. Qatar has the world's largest per capita production and proven reserves of both oil and natural gas. In 2010, Qatar had the world's highest GDP per capita, while the economy grew by 19.40%, the fastest in the world. The main drivers for this rapid growth are attributed to ongoing increases in production and exports of liquefied natural gas, oil, petrochemicals and related industries. Qatar has the highest human development in the Arab World after the United Arab Emirates.

In 2009, Qatar was the United States' fifth largest export market in the Middle East, trailing behind the U. A. E. , Israel, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. With a small citizen population of less than 300, 000 people, Qatar relies heavily on foreign citizens, both for its protection and generating labor demand. Qatar has attracted an estimated \$100 billion in investment, with approximately \$60–70 billion coming from the U. S in the energy sector. It is estimated that Qatar will invest over \$120 billion in the energy sector in the next ten years