



March 2021

Global & GCC Capital Markets Review

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Market Commentary, March 2021

- Kuwait equity markets were positive for the month. Kuwait's cabinet has approved a bill to support extension of credit by local banks to customers affected by COVID-19. All Share index increased by 2.2%. Market liquidity in March, as indicated by the average daily traded value, stood at USD 136million, a decrease of 11% compared to the earlier month.
- Among Kuwait sectors, Basic Materials was the top gainer, rising 10.8%, while technology declined by 5.6% for the month. Among blue chips, Agility Public Warehousing gained 10% for the month, while Boubayan Bank gained 9.6%. Agility announced that its Dubai subsidiary Tristar Logistics would be listed in the DFM Stock exchange and Agility would be selling 15% of its stake in Tristar.
- Regionally, S&P GCC index continued its upward trend, ending the month 6.6% higher. Saudi Arabia gained 8.3% for the month supported by approval of a new privatization law as a part of the Shareek program. Abu Dhabi, Oman and Qatar gained 4.4%, 2.7% and 2.5%, respectively while Dubai and Bahrain lost 0.1% and 0.6%, respectively. The performance of GCC Sectors was positive in March with all sectors showing gains. Basic Materials and Non-Cyclicals gained the most at 9.9% and 8.6% respectively for the month. Real Estate and Energy gained the least at 3.4% and 2.3% respectively for the month. Among the GCC blue chip companies, International Holdings Company gained 36%. In Saudi Arabia, SABIC, NCB and Al Rajhi Bank gained 13.5%, 12.4% and 10.5% respectively.
- The performance of global equity markets was positive, with the MSCI World Index closing 3.1% higher in March. U.S. market (S&P 500) gained 4.2% for the month despite rising yields of Treasury bonds. U.K (FTSE 100) increased by 3.6% for the month as the government started relaxing restrictions and vaccinations continued at a fast pace.
- Oil prices closed at USD 62.7 per barrel at the end of March 2021, posting a monthly loss of 5.1% after reaching USD 70 levels earlier in the month. Oil prices fell due to rising coronavirus cases in Europe that led to fresh lockdowns. Prices however, were supported by renewed commitment by OPEC+ to continue production cuts and supply disruptions due to the shutdown of Suez Canal for a week.

Oil prices reach \$70 levels after OPEC+ extends production cuts, could reduce GCC financing needs

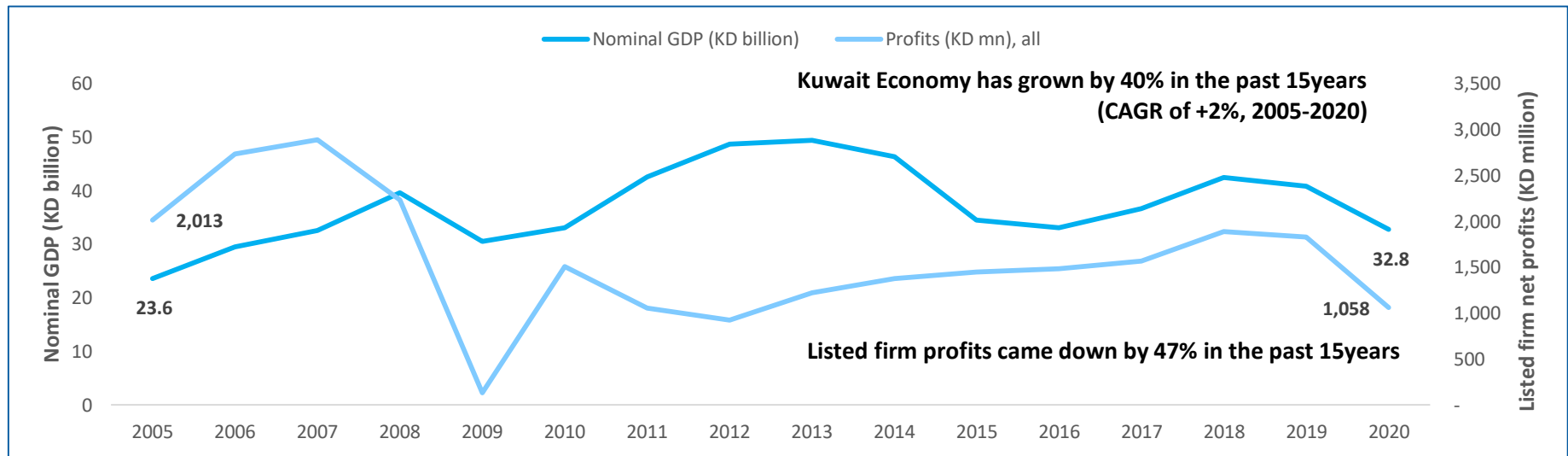
- Oil prices had a major boost in March when OPEC+ agreed to continue production cuts through April. Saudi Arabia also announced that it would extend its voluntary production cut of one million barrels per day (1mbpd) into April.
- The production cuts along with stimulus measures being passed in the U.S, accelerated vaccination increasing hopes of swift reopening of economies resulted in Brent crude prices hitting the \$70/ barrel mark in March though prices subsequently fell to around \$65 towards the end of the month.
- Banks like J.P Morgan and Goldman Sachs revised their estimates of oil prices for 2021. J.P Morgan expects oil prices to end 2021 at \$74/barrel and hit \$80/barrel in the second quarter of calendar year 2022. Goldman Sachs is even more bullish, expecting Brent crude prices to hit \$75/barrel in the third quarter this year.
- The increase in oil prices is expected to bolster the finances of GCC governments who were forced to increase borrowing due to low oil prices for much of 2020.
- GCC's borrowing requirements is estimated to drop to USD 10billion over the next three years from about USD 270billion, if oil prices continue to stay elevated, according to Goldman Sachs.
- If oil prices average USD 65/barrel and all other conditions are equal, borrowing needs for the six countries would drop 96% from what they'd be if oil traded at USD 45/barrel.
- Kuwait is likely to have the biggest improvement in its budget balance from high oil levels, with its shortfall narrowing by around 15 percentage points of GDP in 2021.

Saudi Arabia approves new law to boost privatization in 16 sectors

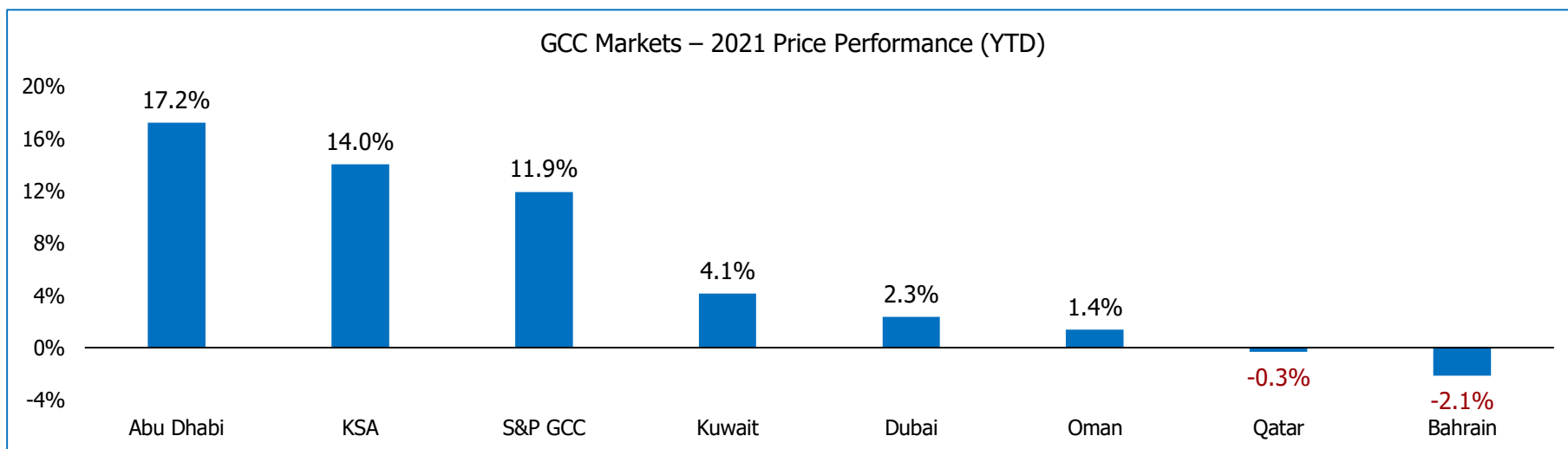
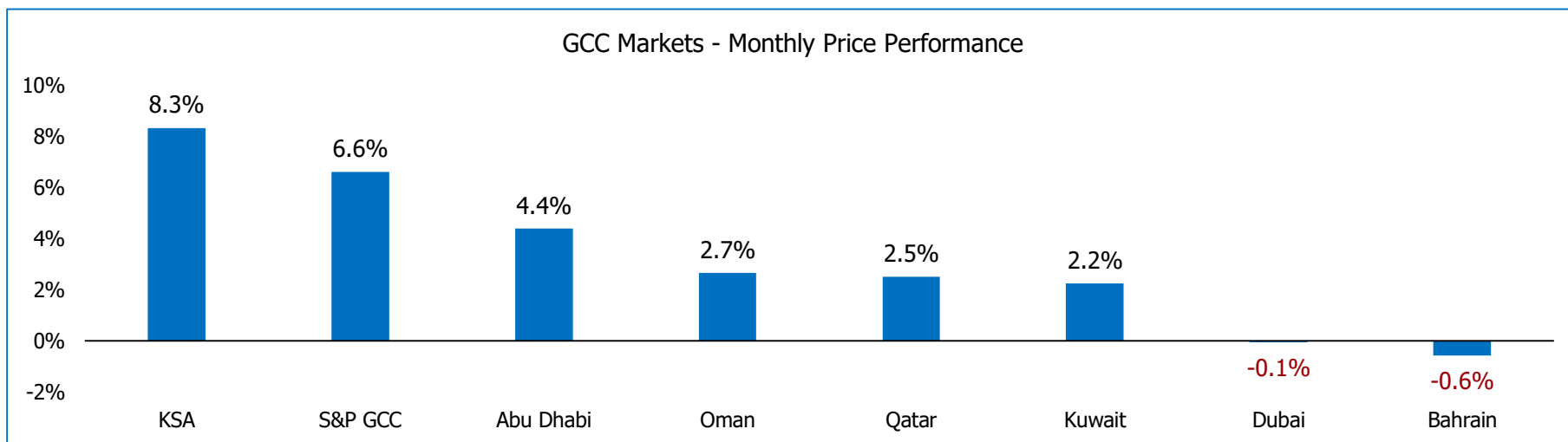
- Saudi Arabian cabinet has approved the Private Sector Participation Law (PSP Law), for 16 sectors with a goal of increasing the private sector's contribution to GDP from 40% to 65%.
- The initiative will increase private sector collaboration in infrastructure projects and public services by supporting public-private partnerships (PPPs) and the privatization of public sector assets. The regulations aim to level the distribution of risk between government and private sectors, while reducing the government's capital budget for large projects.
- The 16 sectors identified for privatization and asset sales are Education, Industry & Mineral resources, Environment & Water, Agriculture, Haj & Umra, Health, Housing, Labor & Social Development, Municipalities, Transportation, Communications & IT, Energy, Sports, Media , Interior and Financials.
- A key part of the law is an exception to the Law of Real Estate Ownership and Investment by non-Saudis. If approval is granted by the Council of Ministers in private sector participation projects, non-Saudis can own real estate in whole or in part, except for properties located within the boundaries of Makkah and Medina.
- The PSP Law is intended to attract foreign investment in key projects like the Red Sea tourism development project, the development of an indigenous military manufacturing sector and the launch of the smart city of NEOM, which will be designed to be a model for sustainable living.
- The aims of the privatization program is to realize revenues of SAR 10billion from asset sales. Achieve net government savings (in capital expenditure and operating expenses) of SAR 8.2billion and create 10,000 -12,000 new private sector jobs.

Kuwait corporate profits have fallen by half since 2005 even as the economy grew during the same period

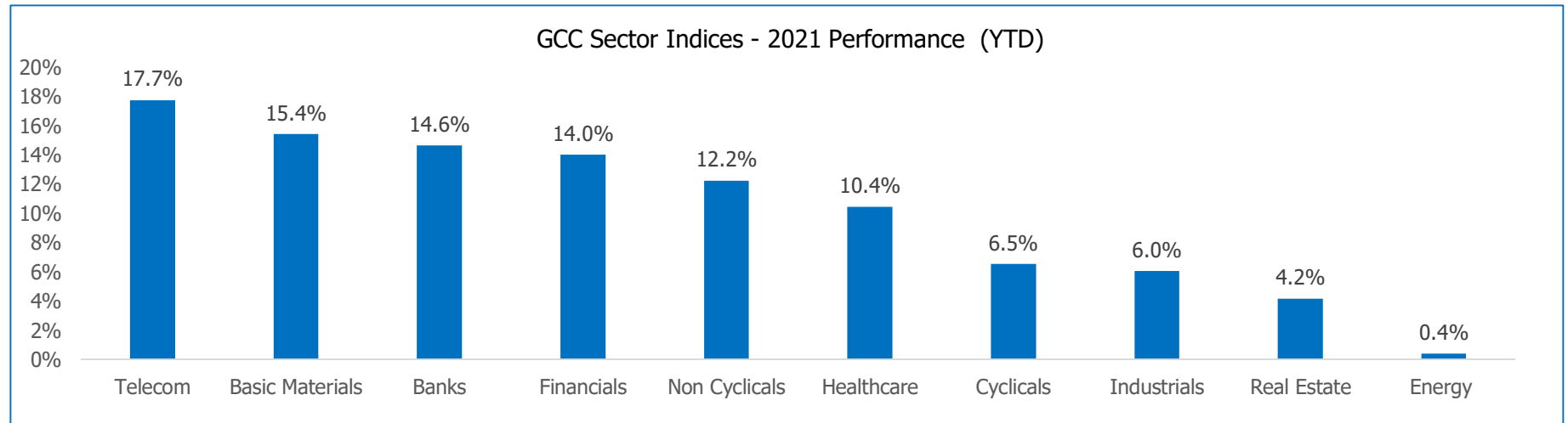
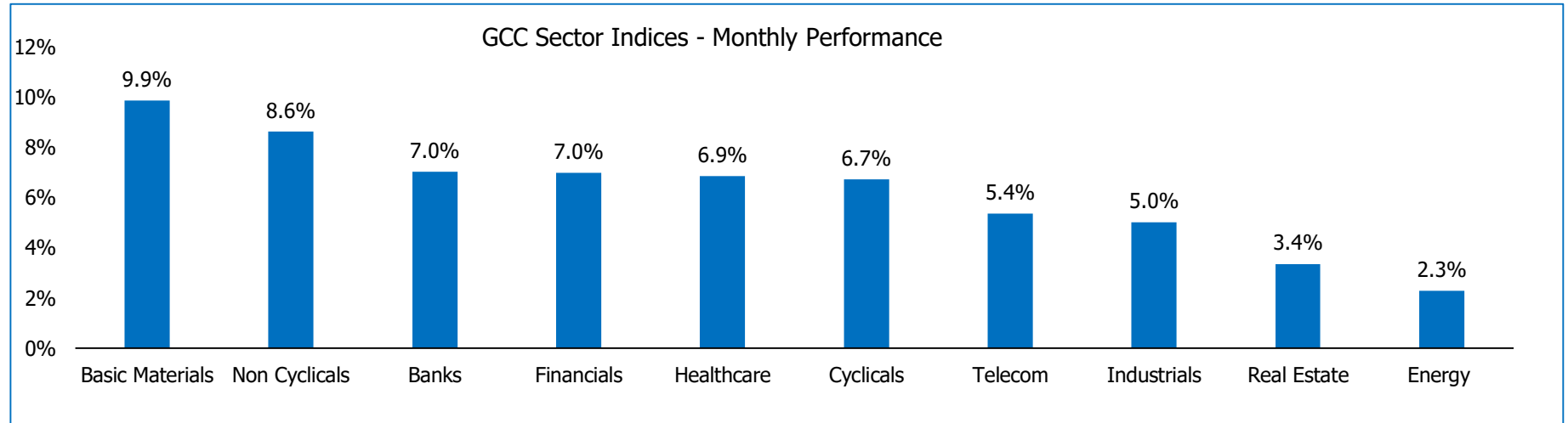
- Kuwait nominal GDP has grown by 40% in absolute terms from 2005 to 2020 and a CAGR of 2%. However, profits of Kuwaiti listed firms have decreased by 47% during the same period.
- Kuwaiti corporates have not recovered from the fall in crude oil prices since they reached a peak of \$147/barrel in 2008, just prior to the Global Financial Crisis. Despite recovery in oil prices from 2009 and Brent crude averaging \$100/barrel between 2010-2013, corporate profits in Kuwait remained tepid.
- Corporate profits have inched ahead since 2013. However, the COVID-19 crisis resulted in a 43% fall in profits in 2020 alone. Corporate profits in 2019 were still 9% below the levels in 2005, indicating that Kuwaiti Corporates were reporting sluggish earnings growth even before the crisis.



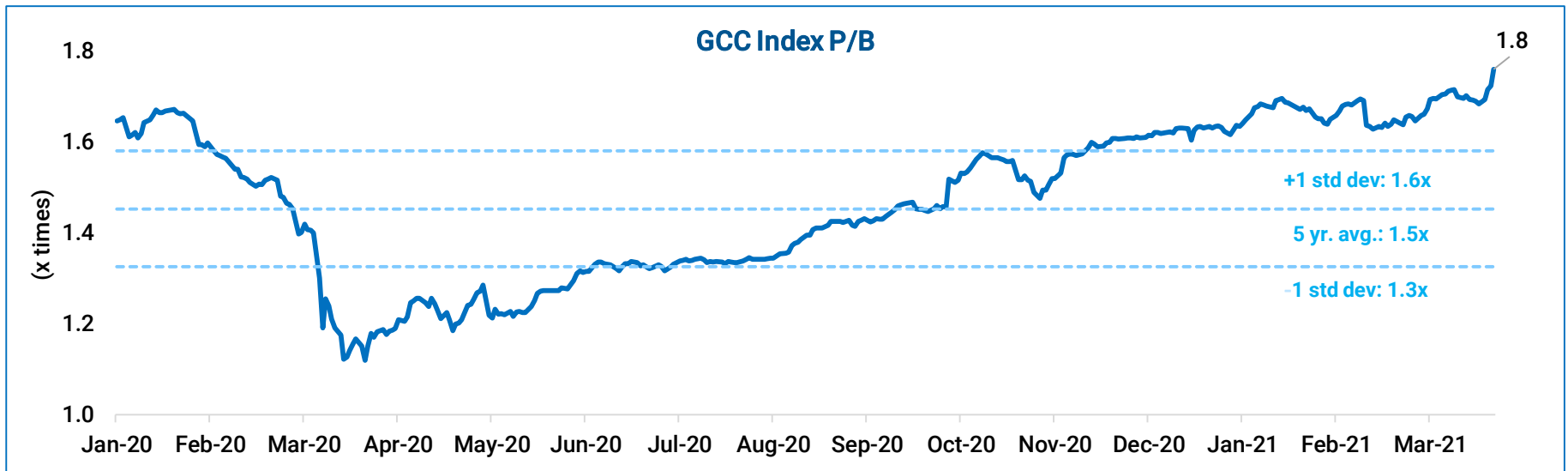
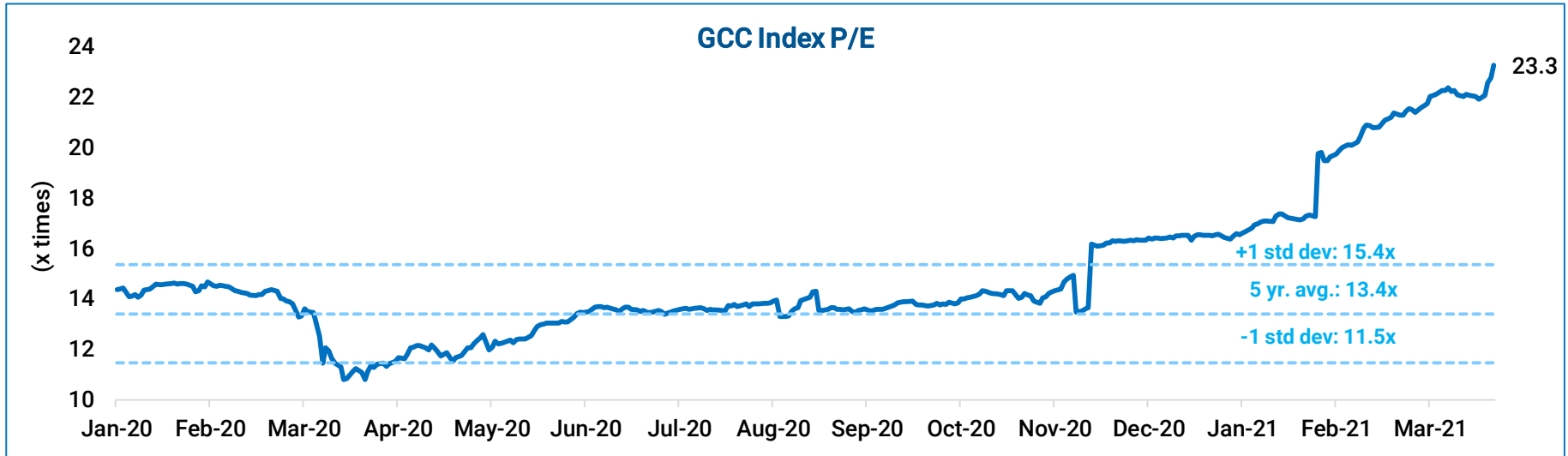
GCC Equity Market performance, March 2021



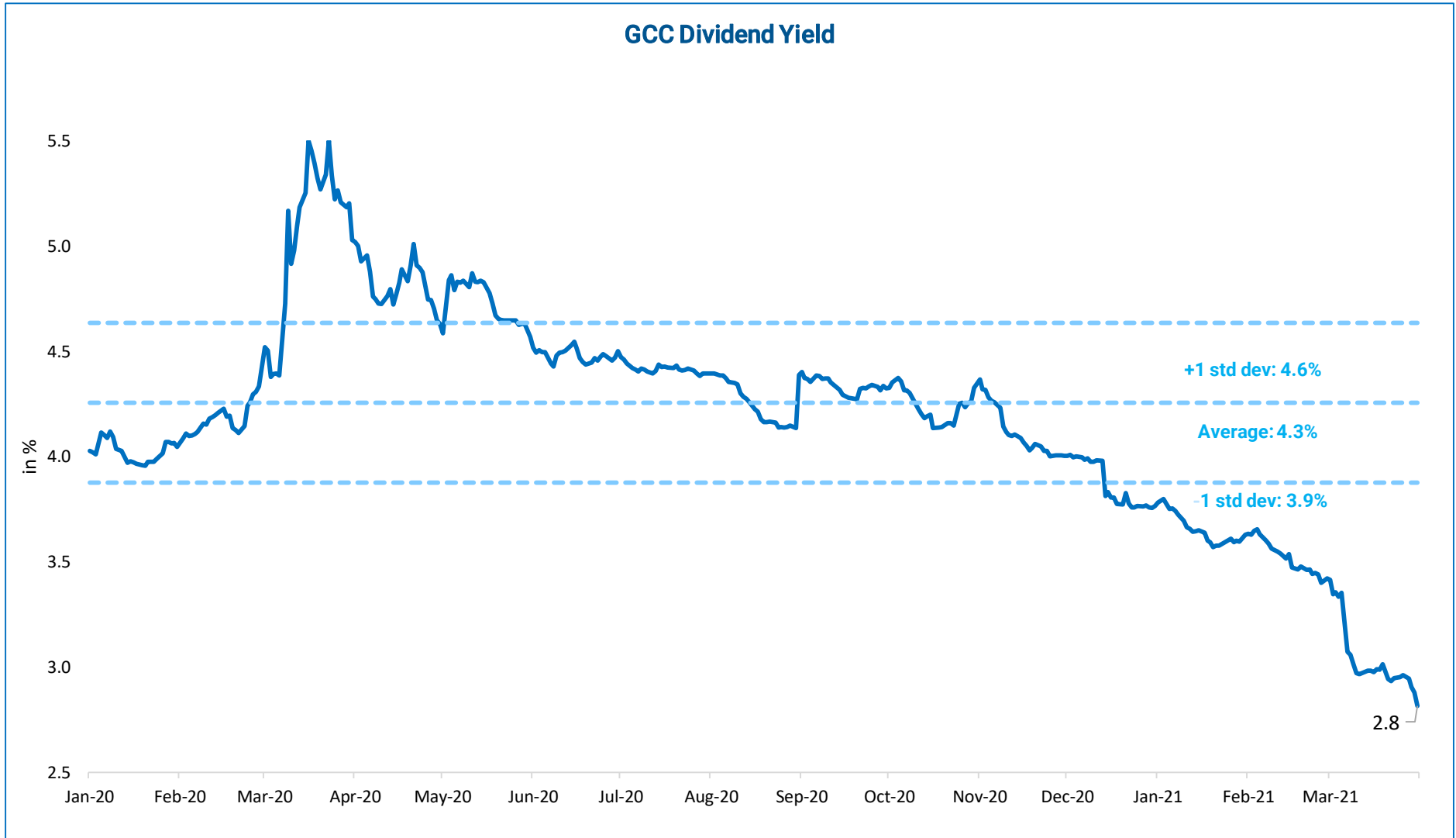
GCC Sectoral performance, March 2021



GCC Equity Market valuation

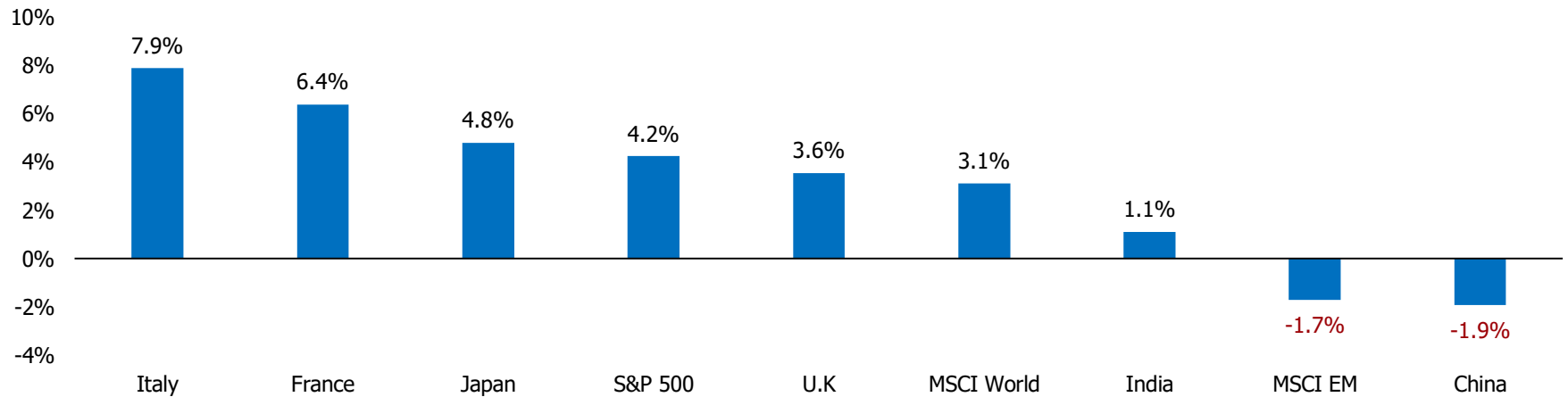


GCC Equity Market valuation

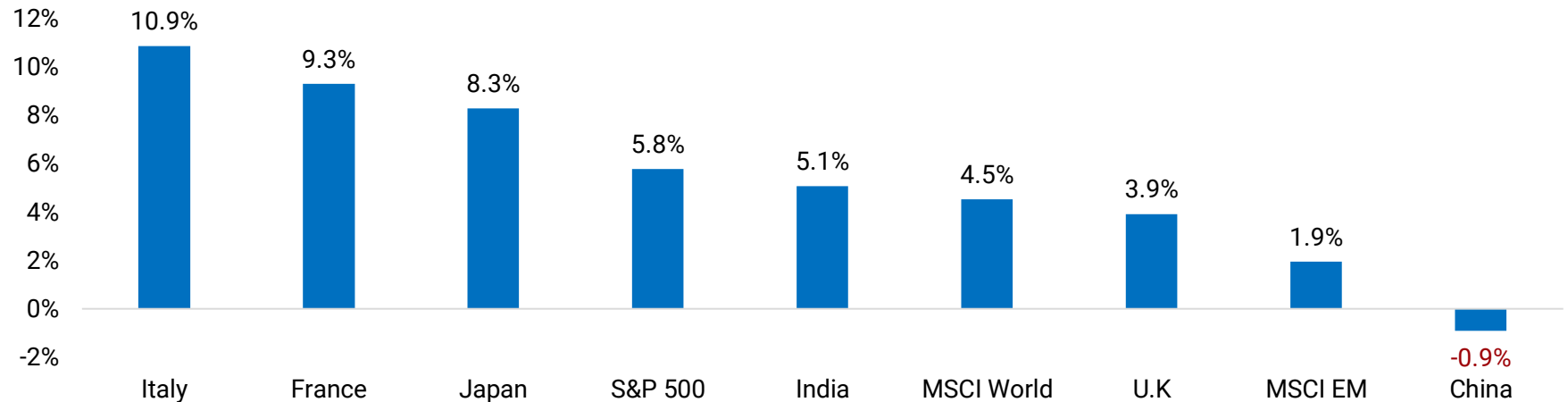


Global Equity Market performance, March 2021

Global Markets - Monthly Price Performance



Global Markets – 2021 Performance (YTD)



Monthly Returns and Value of USD 1 Invested

Global Equities (MSCI World)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Yearly Returns	\$1 invested in 2015
2015	-1.9%	5.7%	-1.8%	2.2%	0.1%	-2.5%	1.7%	-6.8%	-3.9%	7.8%	-0.7%	-1.9%	-2.7%	0.97
2016	-6.1%	-1.0%	6.5%	1.4%	0.2%	-1.3%	4.1%	-0.1%	0.4%	-2.0%	1.3%	2.3%	5.3%	1.02
2017	2.4%	2.6%	0.8%	1.3%	1.8%	0.2%	2.3%	-0.1%	2.1%	1.8%	2.0%	1.3%	20.1%	1.23
2018	5.2%	-4.3%	-2.4%	1.0%	0.3%	-0.2%	3.1%	1.0%	0.4%	-7.4%	1.0%	-7.7%	-10.4%	1.10
2019	7.7%	2.8%	1.0%	3.4%	-6.1%	6.5%	0.4%	-2.2%	1.9%	2.5%	2.6%	2.9%	25.2%	1.38
2020	-0.7%	-8.6%	-13.5%	10.8%	4.6%	2.5%	4.7%	6.5%	-3.6%	-3.1%	12.7%	4.1%	14.1%	1.57
2021	-1.1%	2.5%	3.1%										4.5%	1.64

U.S. (S&P 500)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Yearly Returns	\$1 invested in 2015
2015	-3.1%	5.5%	-1.7%	0.9%	1.0%	-2.1%	2.0%	-6.3%	-2.6%	8.3%	0.1%	-1.8%	-0.7%	0.99
2016	-5.1%	-0.4%	6.6%	0.3%	1.5%	0.1%	3.6%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-1.9%	3.4%	1.8%	9.5%	1.09
2017	1.8%	3.7%	0.0%	0.9%	1.2%	0.5%	1.9%	0.1%	1.9%	2.2%	2.8%	1.0%	19.4%	1.30
2018	5.6%	-3.9%	-2.7%	0.3%	2.2%	0.5%	3.6%	3.0%	0.4%	-6.9%	1.8%	-9.2%	-6.2%	1.22
2019	7.9%	3.0%	1.8%	3.9%	-6.6%	6.9%	1.3%	-1.8%	1.7%	2.0%	3.4%	2.9%	28.9%	1.57
2020	-0.2%	-8.4%	-12.5%	12.7%	4.5%	1.8%	5.5%	7.0%	-3.9%	-2.8%	10.8%	3.7%	16.3%	1.82
2021	-1.1%	2.6%	4.2%										5.8%	1.93

Monthly Returns and Value of USD 1 Invested

U.K (FTSE)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Yearly Returns	\$1 invested in 2015
2015	2.8%	2.9%	-2.5%	2.8%	0.3%	-6.6%	2.7%	-6.7%	-3.0%	4.9%	-0.1%	-1.8%	-4.9%	0.95
2016	-2.5%	0.2%	1.3%	1.1%	-0.2%	4.4%	3.4%	0.8%	1.7%	0.8%	-2.5%	5.3%	14.4%	1.09
2017	-0.6%	2.3%	0.8%	-1.6%	4.4%	-2.8%	0.8%	0.8%	-0.8%	1.6%	-2.2%	4.9%	7.6%	1.17
2018	-2.0%	-4.0%	-2.4%	6.4%	2.2%	-0.5%	1.5%	-4.1%	1.0%	-5.1%	-2.1%	-3.6%	-12.5%	1.02
2019	3.6%	1.5%	2.9%	1.9%	-3.5%	3.7%	2.2%	-5.0%	2.8%	-2.2%	1.4%	2.7%	12.1%	1.15
2020	-3.4%	-9.7%	-13.8%	4.0%	3.0%	1.5%	-4.4%	1.1%	-1.6%	-4.9%	12.4%	3.1%	-14.3%	0.98
2021	-0.8%	1.2%	3.6%										3.9%	1.02

Emerging Markets Equities (MSCI EM)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Yearly Returns	\$1 invested in 2015
2015	0.6%	3.0%	-1.6%	7.5%	-4.2%	-3.2%	-7.3%	-9.2%	-3.3%	7.0%	-4.0%	-2.5%	-17.0%	0.83
2016	-6.5%	-0.3%	13.0%	0.4%	-3.9%	3.3%	4.7%	2.3%	1.1%	0.2%	-4.7%	-0.1%	8.6%	0.90
2017	5.4%	3.0%	2.3%	2.0%	2.8%	0.5%	5.5%	2.0%	-0.5%	3.5%	0.2%	3.4%	34.3%	1.21
2018	8.3%	-4.7%	-2.0%	-0.6%	-3.8%	-4.6%	1.7%	-2.9%	-0.8%	-8.8%	4.1%	-2.9%	-16.6%	1.01
2019	8.7%	0.1%	0.7%	2.0%	-7.5%	5.7%	-1.7%	-5.1%	1.7%	4.1%	-0.2%	7.2%	15.4%	1.17
2020	-4.7%	-5.3%	-15.6%	9.0%	0.6%	7.0%	8.4%	2.1%	-1.8%	2.0%	9.2%	7.2%	15.8%	1.35
2021	3.0%	0.7%	-1.7%										1.9%	1.38

Monthly Returns and Value of USD 1 Invested

Saudi Arabia

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Yearly Returns	\$1 invested in 2015
2015	6.5%	4.9%	-5.7%	12.0%	-1.5%	-6.2%	0.1%	-17.3%	-1.6%	-3.8%	1.6%	-4.5%	-17.1%	0.83
2016	-13.2%	1.6%	2.1%	9.4%	-5.3%	0.8%	-3.0%	-3.5%	-7.5%	6.9%	16.4%	3.0%	4.3%	0.87
2017	-1.5%	-1.8%	0.4%	0.2%	-2.0%	8.1%	-4.5%	2.3%	0.3%	-4.8%	1.0%	3.2%	0.2%	0.87
2018	5.9%	-3.0%	6.1%	4.3%	-0.6%	1.9%	-0.2%	-4.2%	0.6%	-1.2%	-2.6%	1.6%	8.3%	0.94
2019	9.4%	-0.8%	3.8%	5.5%	-8.5%	3.6%	-1.0%	-8.2%	0.9%	-4.3%	1.5%	6.7%	7.2%	1.01
2020	-1.7%	-7.5%	-14.7%	9.3%	1.4%	0.2%	3.3%	6.5%	4.5%	-4.7%	10.6%	-0.7%	3.6%	1.04
2021	0.1%	5.1%	8.3%										14.0%	1.19

Kuwait (All Share Index)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Yearly Returns	\$1 invested in 2015
2015	0.6%	0.4%	-4.8%	1.5%	-1.3%	-1.4%	0.8%	-6.9%	-1.6%	0.9%	0.5%	-3.2%	-14.1%	0.86
2016	-8.9%	1.8%	0.4%	3.1%	0.2%	-0.7%	1.6%	-0.6%	-0.4%	0.0%	2.8%	3.5%	2.4%	0.88
2017	18.9%	-0.7%	3.6%	-2.7%	-0.8%	-0.3%	1.3%	0.6%	-3.1%	-2.5%	-4.9%	3.4%	11.5%	0.98
2018	4.4%	1.3%	-2.1%	-4.0%	-1.3%	3.3%	5.7%	-0.7%	-0.1%	-1.7%	1.3%	-0.6%	5.2%	1.03
2019	2.5%	0.5%	7.4%	0.2%	1.8%	1.8%	4.9%	-2.9%	-4.4%	0.7%	3.7%	6.0%	23.7%	1.28
2020	0.7%	-4.0%	-20.6%	3.2%	0.4%	2.7%	-3.2%	6.6%	2.9%	0.0%	0.3%	1.6%	-11.7%	1.13
2021	4.2%	-2.3%	2.2%										4.1%	1.17

Monthly Returns and Value of USD 1 Invested

Abu Dhabi

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Yearly Returns	\$1 invested in 2015
2015	-1.6%	5.1%	-4.7%	4.0%	-2.6%	4.3%	2.3%	-7.0%	0.2%	-4.0%	-2.0%	1.7%	-4.9%	0.95
2016	-5.9%	7.3%	0.9%	3.5%	-6.5%	5.8%	1.7%	-2.3%	0.1%	-3.9%	0.2%	5.5%	5.6%	1.00
2017	0.1%	0.1%	-2.4%	1.8%	-2.1%	0.0%	3.2%	-2.1%	-1.6%	1.9%	-4.4%	2.7%	-3.3%	0.97
2018	4.6%	-0.1%	-0.3%	1.8%	-1.4%	-1.0%	6.6%	2.6%	-1.0%	-0.7%	-2.7%	3.0%	11.7%	1.09
2019	2.6%	1.8%	-1.2%	3.6%	-4.8%	-0.5%	6.8%	-2.9%	-2.1%	1.0%	-1.5%	0.9%	3.3%	1.12
2020	1.6%	-4.9%	-23.8%	13.3%	-2.1%	3.5%	0.4%	5.0%	0.0%	3.1%	6.5%	1.6%	-0.6%	1.11
2021	10.9%	1.3%	4.4%										17.2%	1.31

Dubai

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Yearly Returns	\$1 invested in 2015
2015	-2.6%	5.2%	-9.1%	20.3%	-7.2%	4.2%	1.4%	-11.6%	-1.9%	-2.5%	-8.5%	-1.7%	-16.5%	0.83
2016	-4.9%	8.1%	3.6%	4.1%	-5.1%	-0.1%	5.2%	0.6%	-0.9%	-4.1%	0.9%	5.1%	12.1%	0.94
2017	3.2%	-0.3%	-4.1%	-1.9%	-2.2%	1.6%	7.1%	0.1%	-2.0%	2.0%	-5.9%	-1.5%	-4.6%	0.89
2018	0.7%	-4.4%	-4.2%	-1.4%	-3.3%	-4.8%	4.8%	-3.9%	-0.2%	-1.8%	-4.2%	-5.2%	-24.9%	0.67
2019	1.5%	2.7%	0.0%	5.0%	-5.3%	1.5%	9.8%	-5.5%	0.8%	-1.2%	-2.5%	3.2%	9.3%	0.73
2020	0.9%	-7.2%	-31.6%	14.4%	-4.0%	6.2%	-0.7%	9.5%	1.3%	-3.8%	10.6%	3.0%	-9.9%	0.66
2021	6.5%	-3.9%	-0.1%										2.3%	0.68

Monthly Returns and Value of USD 1 Invested

Qatar

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Yearly Returns	\$1 invested in 2015
2015	-3.1%	4.6%	-5.9%	3.9%	-1.0%	1.3%	-3.4%	-1.9%	-0.9%	1.2%	-13.0%	3.4%	-15.1%	0.85
2016	-9.1%	4.3%	4.9%	-1.8%	-6.4%	3.6%	7.3%	3.6%	-5.0%	-2.5%	-3.7%	6.6%	0.1%	0.85
2017	1.5%	1.0%	-2.9%	-3.1%	-1.6%	-8.8%	4.2%	-6.4%	-5.5%	-1.8%	-5.5%	10.5%	-18.3%	0.69
2018	8.0%	-6.0%	-0.9%	6.3%	-2.5%	1.6%	8.9%	0.6%	-0.7%	5.0%	0.6%	-0.6%	20.8%	0.84
2019	4.1%	-5.7%	0.0%	2.7%	-1.0%	1.8%	0.5%	-2.6%	1.3%	-1.7%	-0.4%	2.7%	1.2%	0.85
2020	0.2%	-9.1%	-13.5%	6.8%	0.9%	1.7%	4.1%	5.1%	1.5%	-3.0%	5.9%	1.7%	0.1%	0.85
2021	0.4%	-3.1%	2.5%										-0.3%	0.85

Oman

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Yearly Returns	\$1 invested in 2015
2015	3.4%	0.0%	-4.9%	1.4%	1.0%	0.6%	2.1%	-10.5%	-1.4%	2.4%	-6.4%	-2.6%	-14.8%	0.85
2016	-4.2%	4.2%	1.3%	8.7%	-2.2%	-0.6%	1.2%	-1.9%	-0.2%	-4.3%	0.1%	5.4%	7.0%	0.91
2017	-0.1%	0.1%	-4.0%	-0.7%	-1.7%	-5.6%	-1.8%	0.6%	1.7%	-2.5%	2.0%	-0.2%	-11.8%	0.80
2018	-1.9%	0.1%	-4.6%	-0.9%	-2.6%	-0.8%	-5.1%	1.9%	2.8%	-2.7%	-0.2%	-2.0%	-15.2%	0.68
2019	-3.6%	-0.5%	-3.9%	-1.0%	-0.3%	-1.3%	-3.2%	6.5%	0.3%	-0.4%	1.6%	-2.0%	-7.9%	0.63
2020	2.5%	1.3%	-16.5%	2.6%	0.1%	-0.8%	1.5%	5.7%	-4.2%	-1.6%	2.4%	0.4%	-8.1%	0.58
2021	-0.2%	-1.1%	2.7%										1.4%	0.58

Monthly Returns and Value of USD 1 Invested

Bahrain

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Yearly Returns	\$1 invested in 2015
2015	-0.2%	3.5%	-1.7%	-4.1%	-1.9%	0.3%	-2.6%	-2.4%	-1.8%	-2.0%	-1.4%	-1.4%	-14.8%	0.85
2016	-2.4%	-0.7%	-4.0%	-1.8%	0.1%	0.6%	3.3%	-1.2%	0.7%	-0.1%	2.2%	3.9%	0.4%	0.86
2017	6.8%	3.5%	0.5%	-1.5%	-1.2%	-0.7%	1.4%	-1.9%	-1.5%	-0.5%	0.5%	3.7%	9.1%	0.93
2018	1.4%	1.4%	-3.8%	-4.6%	0.6%	3.6%	3.6%	-1.5%	0.0%	-1.8%	1.1%	0.6%	0.4%	0.94
2019	4.0%	1.5%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	2.6%	5.2%	-0.9%	-1.1%	0.4%	0.2%	5.5%	20.4%	1.13
2020	2.9%	0.2%	-18.7%	-3.0%	-3.1%	0.6%	1.0%	7.0%	3.9%	-0.5%	3.5%	0.8%	-7.5%	1.04
2021	-1.8%	0.3%	-0.6%										-2.1%	1.02

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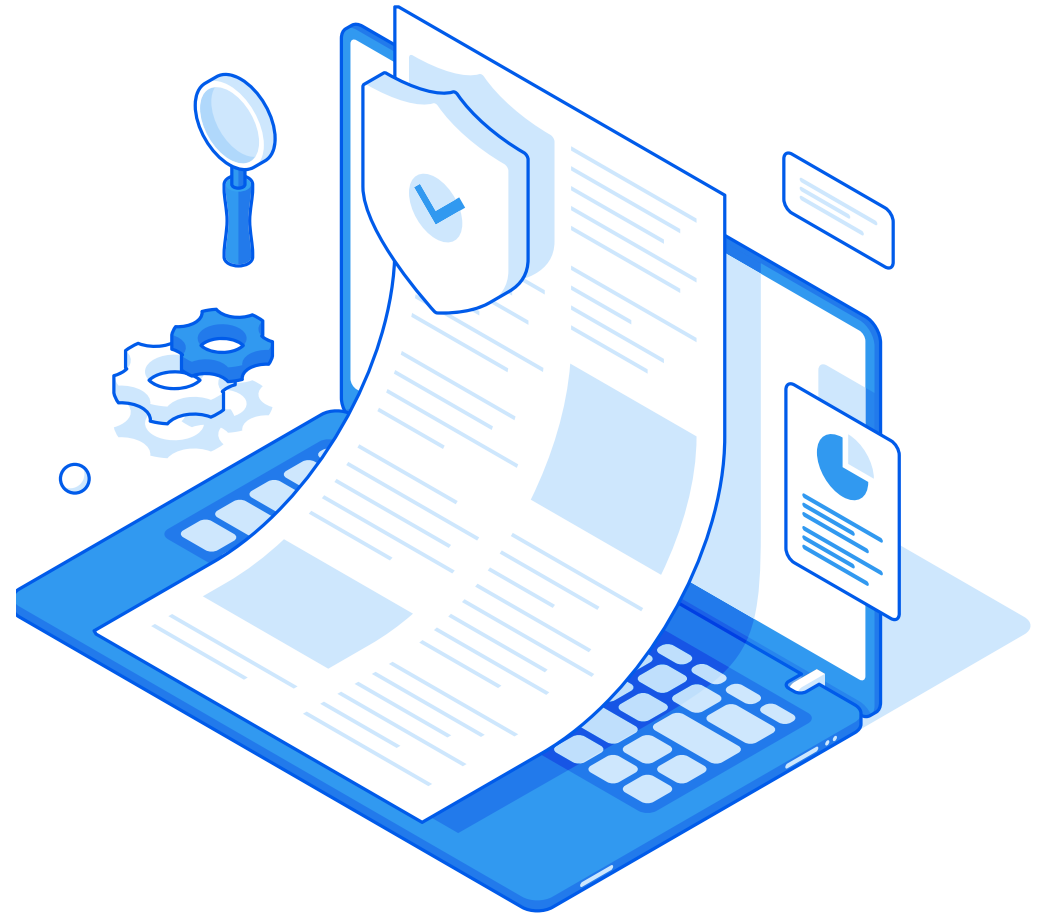
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