[Template:Other places](/wiki/Template:Other_places" \o "Template:Other places) [Template:EngvarB](/wiki/Template:EngvarB) [Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [Template:Coord](/wiki/Template:Coord) [Template:Infobox country](/wiki/Template:Infobox_country) [Template:Contains Arabic text](/wiki/Template:Contains_Arabic_text) **Qatar** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en),[[1]](#cite_note-1) [Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en), [Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en) or [Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en);[[2]](#cite_note-2) [Template:Lang-ar](/wiki/Template:Lang-ar) [*Template:Transl*](/wiki/Template:Transl) [Template:IPA-ar](/wiki/Template:IPA-ar); local vernacular pronunciation: [Template:IPA-ar](/wiki/Template:IPA-ar)),<ref name=EoI>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web) [Template:Subscription required](/wiki/Template:Subscription_required)</ref>[[3]](#cite_note-3) officially the **State of Qatar** ([Template:Lang-ar](/wiki/Template:Lang-ar) [*Template:Transl*](/wiki/Template:Transl)), is a [sovereign](/wiki/Sovereignty) [country](/wiki/Country) located in [Southwest Asia](/wiki/Western_Asia), occupying the small Qatar Peninsula on the northeastern coast of the [Arabian Peninsula](/wiki/Arabian_Peninsula). Its sole land border is with [Saudi Arabia](/wiki/Saudi_Arabia) to the south, with the rest of its territory surrounded by the [Persian Gulf](/wiki/Persian_Gulf). A strait in the Persian Gulf separates Qatar from the nearby island of [Bahrain](/wiki/Bahrain), as well as sharing sea borders with the [United Arab Emirates](/wiki/United_Arab_Emirates) and [Iran](/wiki/Iran).

Following [Ottoman](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) rule, Qatar became a [British protectorate](/wiki/British_protectorate) in the early 20th century until gaining independence in 1971. Qatar has been ruled by the [House of Thani](/wiki/House_of_Thani) since the early 19th century. [Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed Al Thani](/wiki/Jassim_bin_Mohammed_Al_Thani) was the founder of the State of Qatar. Qatar is a hereditary monarchy and its head of state is Emir [Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani](/wiki/Sheikh_Tamim_bin_Hamad_Al_Thani). Whether it should be regarded as a [constitutional](/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy)<ref name=BBC9Sep05>BBC News, [*How democratic is the Middle East?*](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3784765.stm), 9 September 2005.</ref><ref name=USState2011>United States Department of State [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2011: Qatar](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/186656.pdf), 2011.</ref> or an [absolute monarchy](/wiki/Absolute_monarchy)<ref name=ftManage>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref><ref name=ciaw>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref><ref name=cangov>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> is a matter of opinion. In 2003, the constitution was overwhelmingly approved in a referendum, with almost 98% in favour.[[4]](#cite_note-4) Qatar is a [high income economy](/wiki/High_income_economy) and is a developed country, backed by the world's third largest [natural gas reserves](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_natural_gas_proven_reserves) and oil reserves.[[5]](#cite_note-5) The country has the [highest](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_(PPP)_per_capita) [per capita income](/wiki/Per_capita_income) in the world. Qatar is classified by the UN as a country of very high human development and is the most advanced Arab state for human development.[[6]](#cite_note-6) Qatar is a significant power in the Arab world, supporting several [rebel](/wiki/Rebellion) groups during the [Arab Spring](/wiki/Arab_Spring) both financially and through its globally expanding media group, [Al Jazeera Media Network](/wiki/Al_Jazeera_Media_Network).[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[8]](#cite_note-8)[[9]](#cite_note-9) For its size, Qatar wields disproportionate influence in the world, and has been identified as a [middle power](/wiki/Middle_power).[[10]](#cite_note-10)[[11]](#cite_note-11) Qatar will host the [2022 FIFA World Cup](/wiki/2022_FIFA_World_Cup), becoming the first Arab country to do so.[[12]](#cite_note-12)

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## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[Pliny the Elder](/wiki/Pliny_the_Elder), a Roman writer, documented the earliest account pertaining to the inhabitants of the Peninsula around the mid-first century AD, referring to them as the *Catharrei*, a designation which may have derived from the name of a prominent local settlement.[[13]](#cite_note-13)[[14]](#cite_note-14) A century later, [Ptolemy](/wiki/Ptolemy) produced the first known map to depict the peninsula, referring to it as *Catara*.[[14]](#cite_note-14)[[15]](#cite_note-15) The map also referenced a town named "Cadara" to the east of the peninsula.[[16]](#cite_note-16) The term 'Catara' (or, alternatively, *Cataraei*)[[17]](#cite_note-17) was exclusively used until the 18th century, after which 'Katara' emerged as the most commonly recognized spelling.[[16]](#cite_note-16) Eventually, the modern derivative *Qatar* was adopted as the country's name.[[16]](#cite_note-16) In [Standard Arabic](/wiki/Standard_Arabic), the name is pronounced [Template:IPA-ar](/wiki/Template:IPA-ar), while in the local dialect it is [Template:IPA-ar](/wiki/Template:IPA-ar).<ref name=EoI/>

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

### Antiquity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[thumb|Dot carvings at](/wiki/File:Dot_carvings_at_Jebel_Jassassiyeh.jpg) [Jebel Jassassiyeh](/wiki/Jebel_Jassassiyeh), dating to c. 4000 BC. Human habitation of Qatar dates back to 50,000 years ago.[[18]](#cite_note-18) Settlements and tools dating back to the [Stone Age](/wiki/Stone_Age) have been unearthed in the peninsula.[[18]](#cite_note-18) [Mesopotamian](/wiki/Mesopotamia) artifacts originating from the [Ubaid period](/wiki/Ubaid_period) (ca. 6500–3800 BC) have been discovered in abandoned coastal settlements.[[19]](#cite_note-19) [Al Da'asa](/wiki/Al_Da'asa), a settlement located on the northeast coast of Qatar, is the most important Ubaid site in the country and is believed to have accommodated a small seasonal encampment.[[20]](#cite_note-20)[[21]](#cite_note-21) [Kassite](/wiki/Kassites) [Babylonian](/wiki/Babylonia) material dating back to the second millennium BC found in [Al Khor Islands](/wiki/Al_Khor_Islands) attests to trade relations between the inhabitants of Qatar and the Kassites in modern-day Bahrain.[[22]](#cite_note-22) Among the findings were 3,000,000 crushed snail shells and Kassite potsherds.[[20]](#cite_note-20) It has been suggested that Qatar is the earliest known site of shellfish dye production, owing to a Kassite purple dye industry which existed on the coast.[[19]](#cite_note-19)[[23]](#cite_note-23) In 224 AD, the [Sasanian Empire](/wiki/Sasanian_Empire) gained control over the territories surrounding the Persian Gulf.[[24]](#cite_note-24) Qatar played a role in the commercial activity of the Sasanids, contributing at least two commodities: precious pearls and purple dye.[[25]](#cite_note-25) Under the Sasanid reign, many of the inhabitants in Eastern Arabia were introduced to [Christianity](/wiki/Christianity) following the eastward dispersal of the religion by Mesopotamian Christians.[[26]](#cite_note-26) Monasteries were constructed and further settlements were founded during this era.[[27]](#cite_note-27)[[28]](#cite_note-28) During the latter part of the Christian era, Qatar comprised a region known as 'Beth Qatraye' ([Syriac](/wiki/Syriac_language) for "region of the Qataris").[[29]](#cite_note-29) The region was not limited to Qatar; it also included [Bahrain](/wiki/Bahrain), [Tarout Island](/wiki/Tarout_Island), Al-Khatt, and [Al-Hasa](/wiki/Al-Hasa).[[30]](#cite_note-30) In 628, [Muhammad](/wiki/Muhammad) sent a Muslim envoy to a ruler in Eastern Arabia named [Munzir ibn Sawa Al Tamimi](/wiki/Munzir_ibn_Sawa_Al_Tamimi) and requested that he and his subjects accept Islam. Munzir obliged his request, and accordingly, most of the Arab tribes in the region converted to Islam.[[31]](#cite_note-31) After the adoption of Islam, the Arabs led the [Muslim conquest of Persia](/wiki/Muslim_conquest_of_Persia) which resulted in the fall of the Sasanian Empire.[[32]](#cite_note-32)

### Early and late Islamic period (661–1783)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Abbasids850.png)[Abbasid Caliphate](/wiki/Abbasid_Caliphate) at its greatest extent, c. 850. Qatar was described as a famous horse and camel breeding center during the [Umayyad](/wiki/Umayyad_Caliphate) period.[[33]](#cite_note-33) In the 8th century, it started benefiting from its commercially strategic position in the Persian Gulf and went on to become a center of pearl trading.[[34]](#cite_note-34)[[35]](#cite_note-35) Substantial development in the pearling industry around the Qatari Peninsula occurred during the [Abbasid](/wiki/Abbasid_Caliphate) era.[[33]](#cite_note-33) Ships voyaging from [Basra](/wiki/Basra) to [India](/wiki/India) and [China](/wiki/China) would make stops in Qatar's ports during this period. Chinese porcelain, West African coins and artifacts from Thailand have been discovered in Qatar.[[32]](#cite_note-32) Archaeological remains from the 9th century suggest that Qatar's inhabitants used greater wealth to construct higher quality homes and public buildings. Over 100 stone-built houses, two mosques, and an [Abbasid](/wiki/Abbasid_Caliphate) fort were constructed in [Murwab](/wiki/Murwab) during this period.[[36]](#cite_note-36)[[37]](#cite_note-37) However, when the caliphate's prosperity declined in Iraq, so too did it in Qatar.[[38]](#cite_note-38)Qatar is mentioned in 13th-century Muslim scholar [Yaqut al-Hamawi's](/wiki/Yaqut_al-Hamawi) book, [*Mu'jam Al-Buldan*](/wiki/Mu'jam_Al-Buldan), which alludes to the Qataris' fine striped woven cloaks and their skills in improvement and finishing of spears.[[39]](#cite_note-39) Much of Eastern Arabia was controlled by the [Usfurids](/wiki/Usfurids) in 1253, but control of the region was seized by the prince of [Ormus](/wiki/Ormus) in 1320.[[40]](#cite_note-40) Qatar's pearls provided the kingdom with one of its main sources of income.[[41]](#cite_note-41) In 1515, [Manuel I of Portugal](/wiki/Manuel_I_of_Portugal) vassalized the Kingdom of Ormus. [Portugal](/wiki/Portugal) went on to seize a significant portion of Eastern Arabia in 1521.[[41]](#cite_note-41)[[42]](#cite_note-42) In 1550, the inhabitants of [Al-Hasa](/wiki/Al-Hasa) voluntarily submitted to the rule of the [Ottomans](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire), preferring them to the Portuguese.[[43]](#cite_note-43) Having retained a negligible military presence in the area, the Ottomans were expelled by the [Bani Khalid](/wiki/Bani_Khalid) tribe in 1670.[[44]](#cite_note-44)

### Bahraini rule (1783–1868)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[thumb|A map of East Arabia in 1794.](/wiki/File:Eastarabiamap1794.jpg) In 1766, the [Utub](/wiki/Utub) tribe of [Al Khalifa](/wiki/House_of_Khalifa) migrated from [Kuwait](/wiki/Kuwait) to [Zubarah](/wiki/Zubarah) in Qatar.[[45]](#cite_note-45)[[46]](#cite_note-46) By the time of their arrival, the Bani Khalid exercised weak authority over the peninsula, not withholding that the largest village was ruled by a distant kin of the Bani Khalid.[[47]](#cite_note-47) In 1783, Qatar-based [Bani Utbah](/wiki/Bani_Utbah) clans and allied Arab tribes invaded and annexed [Bahrain](/wiki/Bahrain) from the Persians. The Al Khalifa imposed their authority over Bahrain and extended their area of jurisdiction to Qatar.[[45]](#cite_note-45) [thumb|A partially restored section of the ruined town of](/wiki/File:Qatar,_Zubarah_(10),_ruined_city.JPG) [Zubarah](/wiki/Zubarah). Following the swearing in of Saud ibn Abd al-Aziz as crown prince of the Wahhabi in 1788, he moved to expand his empire eastward towards the Persian Gulf and Qatar. After defeating the Bani Khalid in 1795, the Wahhabi were attacked on two fronts. The Ottomans and [Egyptians](/wiki/Egypt) assaulted the western front, while the Al Khalifa in Bahrain and the [Omanis](/wiki/Oman) launched an attack against the eastern front.[[48]](#cite_note-48)[[49]](#cite_note-49) Upon being made aware of advancements by the Egyptians on the western frontier in 1811, the Wahhabi amir reduced his garrisons in Bahrain and [Zubarah](/wiki/Zubarah) in order to re-position his troops. [Said bin Sultan](/wiki/Said_bin_Sultan,_Sultan_of_Muscat_and_Oman) of Muscat capitalized on this opportunity and raided the Wahhabi garrisons on the eastern coast, setting fire to the fort in Zubarah. The Al Khalifa were effectively returned to power thereafter.[[49]](#cite_note-49) As punishment for piracy, an [East India Company](/wiki/East_India_Company) vessel bombarded [Doha](/wiki/Doha) in 1821, destroying the town and forcing hundreds of residents to flee. The residents were unclear of the reasons for the bombardment, and as a result, Qatari rebel groups began to emerge to fight the Al-Khalifa and to seek independence.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) In 1825, the [House of Thani](/wiki/House_of_Thani) was established with Sheikh [Mohammed bin Thani](/wiki/Mohammed_bin_Thani) as the first leader.[[50]](#cite_note-50) Although Qatar had the legal status of a [dependency](/wiki/Dependent_territory), there was a popular sentiment of resentment against the Al Khalifa. In 1867, the Al Khalifa, along with the ruler of [Abu Dhabi](/wiki/Abu_Dhabi), sent a massive naval force to [Al Wakrah](/wiki/Al_Wakrah) in an effort to crush the Qatari rebels. This resulted in the maritime [Qatari–Bahraini War](/wiki/Qatari–Bahraini_War) of 1867–1868, in which Bahraini and Abu Dhabi forces sacked and looted Doha and Al Wakrah.[[51]](#cite_note-51) However, the Bahraini hostilities were in violation of the [1820 Anglo-Bahraini Treaty](/wiki/General_Maritime_Treaty_of_1820). The joint incursion, in addition to the Qatari counterattack, prompted British political agent [Lewis Pelly](/wiki/Lewis_Pelly) to impose a settlement in 1868. His mission to Bahrain and Qatar and the resulting peace treaty were milestones because they implicitly recognized the distinctness of Qatar from Bahrain and explicitly acknowledged the position of Mohammed bin Thani. In addition to censuring Bahrain for its breach of agreement, the British [protectorate](/wiki/Protectorate) asked to negotiate with a representative from Qatar, a role which Mohammed bin Thani was selected to fulfill. The results of the negotiations left the nation with a new-found sense of political identity, although it did not gain an official standing as a protectorate until 1916.

### Ottoman rule (1871–1915)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[thumb|Qatar in an 1891](/wiki/File:Qatar_in_Stielers_Handatlas_1891_59.JPG) [Adolf Stieler](/wiki/Adolf_Stieler) map [thumb|left|Old city of Doha, January 1904.](/wiki/File:Olddoha2-771x410.jpg) Under military and political pressure from the governor of the [Ottoman](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) [Vilayet of Baghdad](/wiki/Vilayet_of_Baghdad), [Midhat Pasha](/wiki/Midhat_Pasha), the ruling [Al Thani](/wiki/House_of_Thani) tribe submitted to Ottoman rule in 1871.[[52]](#cite_note-52) The Ottoman government imposed reformist ([Tanzimat](/wiki/Tanzimat)) measures concerning taxation and land registration to fully integrate these areas into the empire.<ref name=Rogan1199/> Despite the disapproval of local tribes, Al Thani continued supporting Ottoman rule. However, Qatari-Ottoman relations soon stagnated, and in 1882 they suffered further setbacks when the Ottomans refused to aid Al Thani in his expedition of [Abu Dhabi](/wiki/Abu_Dhabi)-occupied [Al Khor](/wiki/Al_Khor). In addition, the Ottomans supported the Ottoman subject Mohammed bin Abdul Wahab who attempted to supplant Al Thani as [kaymakam](/wiki/Kaymakam) of Qatar in 1888.[[53]](#cite_note-53) This eventually led Al Thani to rebel against the Ottomans, whom he believed were seeking to usurp control of the peninsula. He resigned as kaymakam and stopped paying taxes in August 1892.[[54]](#cite_note-54) In February 1893, Mehmed Hafiz Pasha arrived in Qatar in the interests of seeking unpaid taxes and accosting Jassim bin Mohammed's opposition to proposed Ottoman administrative reforms. Fearing that he would face death or imprisonment, Jassim retreated to Al Wajbah (10 miles west of [Doha](/wiki/Doha)), accompanied by several tribe members. Mehmed's demand that Jassim disband his troops and pledge his loyalty to the Ottomans was met with refusal. In March, Mehmed imprisoned Jassim's brother and 13 prominent Qatari tribal leaders on the Ottoman [corvette](/wiki/Corvette) *Merrikh* as punishment for his insubordination. After Mehmed declined an offer to release the captives for a fee of 10,000 [liras](/wiki/Turkish_lira), he ordered a column of approximately 200 troops to advance towards Jassim's [Al Wajbah Fort](/wiki/Al_Wajbah_Fort) under the command of Yusuf Effendi, thus signalling the start of the [Battle of Al Wajbah](/wiki/Battle_of_Al_Wajbah).[[32]](#cite_note-32) Effendi's troops came under heavy gunfire by a sizable troop of Qatari infantry and cavalry shortly after arriving to Al Wajbah. They retreated to Shebaka fortress, where they were again forced to draw back from a Qatari incursion. After they withdrew to Al Bidda fortress, Jassim's advancing column besieged the fortress, resulting in the Ottomans' concession of defeat and agreement to relinquish their captives in return for the safe passage of Mehmed Pasha's cavalry to [Hofuf](/wiki/Hofuf) by land.[[55]](#cite_note-55) Although Qatar did not gain full independence from the [Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire), the result of the battle forced a treaty that would later form the basis of Qatar emerging as an autonomous country within the empire.[[56]](#cite_note-56)

### British rule (1916–1971)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Al_Zubarah_(6989829695).jpg)[Zubarah Fort](/wiki/Zubarah_Fort) built in 1938. The Ottoman Empire fell into disorder after losing battles in different fronts in the [Middle Eastern theatre of World War I](/wiki/Middle_Eastern_theatre_of_World_War_I). Qatar took part in the [Arab revolt](/wiki/Arab_revolt) against the Ottomans. The revolt was successful and Ottoman rule in the country further declined. The United Kingdom and the Ottoman Empire accorded their recognition to Sheikh [Abdullah bin Jassim Al Thani](/wiki/Abdullah_bin_Jassim_Al_Thani) and his successors' right to rule over the whole of the Qatari Peninsula. The Ottomans renounced all their rights to Qatar and, following the outbreak of the [First World War](/wiki/First_World_War), [Abdullah bin Jassim Al Thani](/wiki/Abdullah_bin_Jassim_Al_Thani) (who was pro-British) forced them to abandon [Doha](/wiki/Doha) in 1915.<ref name=diwan>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

As a result of the [partitioning of the Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Partitioning_of_the_Ottoman_Empire), Qatar became a British protectorate on 3 November 1916. On that day, the United Kingdom signed a treaty with Sheikh Abdullah bin Jassim Al Thani to bring Qatar under its [Trucial System of Administration](/wiki/Trucial_States). While Abdullah agreed not to enter into any relations with any other power without prior consent of the [British government](/wiki/Government_of_the_United_Kingdom), the British guaranteed the protection of Qatar from all aggression by sea.[[57]](#cite_note-57) On 5 May 1935, Abdullah signed another treaty with the British government which granted Qatar protection against internal and external threats.[[57]](#cite_note-57) Oil reserves were first discovered in 1939. However, exploitation was delayed by [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II).

The sphere of influence of the [British Empire](/wiki/British_Empire) started diminishing after World War II, particularly after the Independence of India and Pakistan in 1947. In the 1950s, oil began replacing pearling and fishing as Qatar's main sources of revenue. Oil earnings began to fund the expansion and modernization of Qatar's infrastructure. Pressure for a British withdrawal from the Arab emirates in the Persian Gulf increased during the 1950s. When Britain officially announced in 1968 that it would politically disengage from the Persian Gulf in three years' time, Qatar joined Bahrain and seven other [Trucial States](/wiki/Trucial_States) in a federation. Regional disputes, however, quickly compelled Qatar to resign and declare independence from the coalition which would eventually evolve into the [United Arab Emirates](/wiki/United_Arab_Emirates).

### Special treaty arrangements with UK terminated (1971)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[thumb|left|Traditional](/wiki/File:Corniche_Doha_Qatar.jpg) [dhows](/wiki/Dhow) in front of the West Bay skyline as seen from the [Doha Corniche](/wiki/Doha_Corniche).

The State of Qatar entered into a general maritime truce with the [United Kingdom](/wiki/United_Kingdom_of_Great_Britain_and_Ireland) in 1868. A General Treaty was concluded between the two on 3 November 1916. The General Treaty reserved foreign affairs and defense to the United Kingdom but allowed internal autonomy. On 3 September 1971, those "special treaty arrangements" that were "inconsistent with full international responsibility as a sovereign and independent state" were terminated.[[58]](#cite_note-58) This was done under an agreement reached between the Ruler of Qatar and the Government of the United Kingdom.[[59]](#cite_note-59)[[60]](#cite_note-60) In 1991, Qatar played a significant role in the [Gulf War](/wiki/Gulf_War), particularly during the [Battle of Khafji](/wiki/Battle_of_Khafji) in which Qatari tanks rolled through the streets of the town and provided fire support for [Saudi Arabian National Guard](/wiki/Saudi_Arabian_National_Guard) units which were engaging [Iraqi Army](/wiki/Iraqi_Army) troops. Qatar allowed coalition troops from Canada to use the country as an [airbase](/wiki/Canada_Dry_One) to launch aircraft on [CAP](/wiki/Combat_Air_Patrol) duty, and also permitted air forces from the United States and France to operate in its territories.[[18]](#cite_note-18) In 1995, Emir [Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani](/wiki/Hamad_bin_Khalifa_Al_Thani) seized control of the country from his father [Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani](/wiki/Khalifa_bin_Hamad_Al_Thani), with the support of the armed forces and cabinet, and neighboring states,<ref name=resh>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> and [France](/wiki/Jacques_Chirac).<ref name=nobs>[nouvelobs.com: "Qatar : "S'ils pouvaient, ils achèteraient la Tour Eiffel"](http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/l-enquete-de-l-obs/20130405.OBS6953/qatar-s-ils-pouvaient-ils-acheteraient-la-tour-eiffel.html), 7 Apr 2013</ref> Under Emir Hamad, Qatar has experienced a moderate degree of [liberalisation](/wiki/Liberalisation), including the launch of the [Al Jazeera](/wiki/Al_Jazeera) television station (1996), the endorsement of [women's suffrage](/wiki/Women's_suffrage) or right to vote in municipal elections (1999), drafting its first written [constitution](/wiki/Constitution_of_Qatar) (2005), and inauguration of a Roman Catholic church (2008). In 2010, Qatar won the rights to host the [2022 FIFA World Cup](/wiki/2022_FIFA_World_Cup), making it the first country in the Middle East to be selected to host the tournament. The Emir announced Qatar's plans to hold its first national legislative elections in 2013. They were scheduled to be held in the second half of 2013, but were postponed in June 2013, and [may be delayed until 2016](/wiki/Next_Qatari_general_election).

In 2003, Qatar served as the US Central Command headquarters and one of the main launching sites of the [invasion of Iraq](/wiki/2003_invasion_of_Iraq).[[61]](#cite_note-61) In March 2005, a [suicide bombing](/wiki/Suicide_attack) killed a British teacher at the Doha Players Theatre, shocking the country, which had not previously experienced acts of terrorism. The bombing was carried out by Omar Ahmed Abdullah Ali, an Egyptian resident in Qatar who had suspected ties to [Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula](/wiki/Al-Qaeda_in_the_Arabian_Peninsula).[[62]](#cite_note-62)[[63]](#cite_note-63) In 2011, Qatar joined [NATO operations in Libya](/wiki/2011_military_intervention_in_Libya) and reportedly armed Libyan opposition groups.[[64]](#cite_note-64) It is also currently a major funder of weapons for rebel groups in the [Syrian civil war](/wiki/Syrian_civil_war).[[65]](#cite_note-65) Qatar is pursuing an Afghan peace deal and in January 2012 the Afghan [Taliban](/wiki/Taliban) said they were setting up a political office in Qatar to facilitate talks.

In June 2013, Sheikh [Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani](/wiki/Tamim_bin_Hamad_Al_Thani) became the Emir of Qatar after his father handed over power in a televised speech.[[66]](#cite_note-66) Sheikh Tamim has prioritized improving the domestic welfare of citizens, which includes establishing advanced healthcare and education systems, and expanding the country's infrastructure in preparation for the hosting of the 2022 World Cup.[[67]](#cite_note-67) Qatar participated in the [Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen](/wiki/Saudi_Arabian-led_intervention_in_Yemen) against the [Houthis](/wiki/Houthis) and forces loyal to former President [Ali Abdullah Saleh](/wiki/Ali_Abdullah_Saleh), who was deposed in the 2011 [Arab Spring](/wiki/Arab_Spring) uprisings.[[68]](#cite_note-68)

## Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Emir](/wiki/File:131210-D-BW835-295.jpg) [Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani](/wiki/Tamim_bin_Hamad_Al_Thani) with Former US Secretary of Defense [Chuck Hagel](/wiki/Chuck_Hagel). Qatar is either a [constitutional](/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy)<ref name=BBC9Sep05/><ref name=USState2011/> or an [absolute monarchy](/wiki/Absolute_monarchy)<ref name=ftManage/><ref name=cangov/> ruled by the [Al Thani family](/wiki/House_of_Thani).[[69]](#cite_note-69) [Blasphemy](/wiki/Blasphemy) is punishable by up to seven years in prison and [proselytizing](/wiki/Proselytizing) can be punished by up to 10 years in prison.[[91]](#cite_note-91) [Homosexuality](/wiki/Homosexuality) is a crime punishable by the [death penalty](/wiki/Death_penalty).[[92]](#cite_note-92) [Alcohol](/wiki/Alcoholic_beverage) consumption is partially legal in Qatar; some five-star luxury hotels are allowed to sell alcohol to their non-Muslim customers.<ref name=wsj20120107>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref><ref name=arabist20120115>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> Muslims are not allowed to consume alcohol in Qatar and Muslims caught consuming alcohol are liable to [flogging](/wiki/Flogging) or deportation. Non-Muslim expatriates can obtain a permit to purchase alcohol for personal consumption. The Qatar Distribution Company (a subsidiary of [Qatar Airways](/wiki/Qatar_Airways)) is permitted to import alcohol and pork; it operates the one and only liquor store in the country, which also sells pork to holders of liquor licences.[[93]](#cite_note-93)[[94]](#cite_note-94) Qatari officials have also indicated a willingness to allow alcohol in "fan zones" at the [2022 FIFA World Cup](/wiki/2022_FIFA_World_Cup).[[95]](#cite_note-95) Until recently, restaurants on the [Pearl-Qatar](/wiki/The_Pearl-Qatar) (a man-made island near Doha) were allowed to serve alcoholic drinks.[[96]](#cite_note-96)[[97]](#cite_note-97) In December 2011, however, restaurants on the Pearl were told to stop selling alcohol.[[96]](#cite_note-96)[[98]](#cite_note-98) No explanation was given for the ban.[[96]](#cite_note-96)[[97]](#cite_note-97) Speculation about the reason includes the government's desire to project a more pious image in advance of the country's first election of a royal advisory body and rumours of a financial dispute between the government and the resort's developers.[[98]](#cite_note-98) In 2014, Qatar launched a modesty campaign to remind tourists of the modest dress code.[[99]](#cite_note-99) Female tourists are advised not to wear leggings, miniskirts, sleeveless dresses and short or tight clothing in public. Men are advised against wearing only shorts and singlets.[[100]](#cite_note-100)

### Human rights[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

According to the [U.S. State Department](/wiki/U.S._State_Department), expatriate workers from nations throughout [Asia](/wiki/Asia) and parts of [Africa](/wiki/Africa) voluntarily migrate to Qatar as low-skilled laborers or domestic servants, but some subsequently face conditions indicative of involuntary servitude. Some of the more common labor rights violations include beatings, withholding of payment, charging workers for benefits for which the employer is responsible, restrictions on freedom of movement (such as the confiscation of passports, travel documents, or exit permits), arbitrary detention, threats of legal action, and sexual assault.[[101]](#cite_note-101) Many migrant workers arriving for work in Qatar have paid exorbitant fees to recruiters in their home countries.[[101]](#cite_note-101) [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), certain provisions of the Qatari Criminal Code allows punishments such as [flogging](/wiki/Flogging) and [stoning](/wiki/Stoning) to be imposed as criminal sanctions. The [UN Committee Against Torture](/wiki/UN_Committee_Against_Torture) found that these practices constituted a breach of the obligations imposed by the [UN Convention Against Torture](/wiki/United_Nations_Convention_Against_Torture).[[102]](#cite_note-102)[[103]](#cite_note-103) Qatar retains the death penalty, mainly for threats against national security. Use of the death penalty is rare and no state executions have taken place in Qatar since 2003.[[104]](#cite_note-104) Under the provisions of Qatar's sponsorship law, sponsors have the unilateral power to cancel workers' residency permits, deny workers' ability to change employers, report a worker as "absconded" to police authorities, and deny permission to leave the country.[[101]](#cite_note-101) As a result, sponsors may restrict workers' movements and workers may be afraid to report abuses or claim their rights.[[101]](#cite_note-101) According to the [ITUC](/wiki/ITUC), the visa sponsorship system allows the exaction of [forced labour](/wiki/Forced_labour) by making it difficult for a migrant worker to leave an abusive employer or travel overseas without permission.[[105]](#cite_note-105) Qatar also does not maintain wage standards for its [immigrant](/wiki/Immigrant) labourers. Qatar commissioned international law firm [DLA Piper](/wiki/DLA_Piper) to produce a report investigating the immigrant labour system. In May 2014 DLA Piper released over 60 recommendations for reforming the kafala system including the abolition of exit visas and the introduction of a minimum wage which Qatar has pledged to implement.[[106]](#cite_note-106) In May 2012, Qatari officials declared their intention to allow the establishment of an independent trade union.[[107]](#cite_note-107) Qatar also announced it will scrap its sponsor system for foreign labour, which requires that all foreign workers be sponsored by local employers.[[107]](#cite_note-107) Additional changes to labour laws include a provision guaranteeing that all workers' salaries are paid directly into their bank accounts and new restrictions on working outdoors in the hottest hours during the summer.[[108]](#cite_note-108) New draft legislation announced in early 2015 mandates that companies that fail to pay workers' wages on time could temporarily lose their ability to hire more employees.[[109]](#cite_note-109) In October 2015 Qatar's Emir signed into law new reforms to the country's sponsorship system, with the new law taking effect within one year.[[110]](#cite_note-110) Critics claim that the changes could fail to address some labour rights issues.[[111]](#cite_note-111)[[112]](#cite_note-112)[[113]](#cite_note-113) The country enfranchised women at the same time as men in connection with the 1999 elections for a Central Municipal Council.<ref name=Lambert2011a/>[[114]](#cite_note-114) These elections—the first ever in Qatar—were deliberately held on 8 March 1999, [International Women's Day](/wiki/International_Women's_Day).[[71]](#cite_note-71)

### Foreign relations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Former Emir](/wiki/File:Secretary_Kerry_Meets_With_Amir_Hamad_bin_Khalifa_al-Thani.jpg) [Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani](/wiki/Hamad_bin_Khalifa_Al_Thani) and US Secretary of State [John Kerry](/wiki/John_Kerry) in 2013. As a small country with larger neighbors, Qatar seeks to project influence and protect its state and ruling dynasty.<ref name=Boghardt>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref> The history of Qatar's alliances provides insight into the basis of their policy. Between 1760 and 1971, Qatar sought formal protection from the high transitory powers of the Ottomans, British, the Al-Khalifa's from Bahrain, the Arabians, and the [Wahhabis](/wiki/Wahhabi) from Saudi Arabia.[[115]](#cite_note-115)[Template:Page needed](/wiki/Template:Page_needed) Qatar's rising international profile and active role in international affairs has led some analysts to identify it as a [middle power](/wiki/Middle_power). Qatar was an early member of [OPEC](/wiki/OPEC) and a founding member of the [Gulf Cooperation Council](/wiki/Gulf_Cooperation_Council) (GCC). It is a member of the [Arab League](/wiki/Arab_League). The country has not accepted compulsory [International Court of Justice](/wiki/International_Court_of_Justice) jurisdiction.[[70]](#cite_note-70) Qatar also has bilateral relationships with a variety of foreign powers. Qatar hosts the [Al Udeid Air Base](/wiki/Al_Udeid_Air_Base), a joint U.S.-British base, which acts as the hub for all American and British air operations in the Persian Gulf.[[116]](#cite_note-116) It has allowed American and British forces to use an air base to send supplies to Iraq and Afghanistan.[[117]](#cite_note-117) Despite hosting this strategic military installation, Qatar is not always a strong Western ally. Qatar has allowed the Afghan [Taliban](/wiki/Taliban) to set up a political office inside the country and has close ties to Iran, including a shared natural gas field.<ref name=NRPpunch>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> According to leaked documents published in *The New York Times*, Qatar's record of counter-terrorism efforts was the "worst in the region".[[118]](#cite_note-118) The cable suggested that Qatar's security service was "hesitant to act against known terrorists out of concern for appearing to be aligned with the U.S. and provoking reprisals".[[118]](#cite_note-118) Qatar has mixed relations with its neighbors in the Persian Gulf region. Qatar signed a defence co-operation agreement with Saudi Arabia,[[119]](#cite_note-119) with whom it shares the largest single non-associated gas field in the world. It was the second nation, the first being France, to have publicly announced its recognition of the [Libyan opposition's](/wiki/Libyan_opposition) [National Transitional Council](/wiki/National_Transitional_Council) as the legitimate [government](/wiki/Government_of_Libya) of [Libya](/wiki/Libya) amidst the [2011 Libyan civil war](/wiki/2011_Libyan_civil_war).[[120]](#cite_note-120) In 2014, Qatar's relations with [Bahrain](/wiki/Bahrain), [Saudi Arabia](/wiki/Saudi_Arabia), and the [United Arab Emirates](/wiki/United_Arab_Emirates) came to a boiling point over the Qatar's support for the [Muslim Brotherhood](/wiki/Muslim_Brotherhood)[[121]](#cite_note-121) and extremist groups in Syria.[[122]](#cite_note-122)This culminated in the three aforementioned countries withdrawing their ambassadors from Qatar in March 2014.[[123]](#cite_note-123) When the ambassadors withdrew, the GCC was reportedly on the verge of a crisis linked to the emergence of distinct political blocs with conflicting interests. Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain were engaged in a political struggle with Qatar, while Oman and Kuwait represent a non-aligned bloc within the GCC.[[123]](#cite_note-123) Relations between the countries improved after the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) announced Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE returned their diplomats to Qatar.[[124]](#cite_note-124) Islam Hassan, a researcher in Persian Gulf Studies at [Qatar University](/wiki/Qatar_University), claims that, with the resolution of the GCC crisis, Qatar reached a new level of political maturity. He goes on to assert that Qatar managed to bring an end to the crisis without changing any of its foreign policy principles or abandoning its allies.[[123]](#cite_note-123) [left|thumb|Qatar's flag in](/wiki/File:Flag_of_Qatar_in_Libya.jpg) [Libya](/wiki/Libya) after the [Libyan Civil War](/wiki/2011_Libyan_Civil_War); Qatar played an influential role during the [Arab Spring](/wiki/Arab_Spring).

In recent years, Qatar has been using Islamist militants in a number of countries including Egypt, Syria, Libya, Somalia and Mali to further its foreign policy. Courting Islamists from the Muslim Brotherhood to [Salafist](/wiki/Salafi_movement) groups has served as a power amplifier for the country, as it believes since the beginning of the [Arab Spring](/wiki/Arab_Spring) that these groups represented the wave of the future.<ref name=nyt20130630>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref>[[125]](#cite_note-125)[[126]](#cite_note-126) David Cohen, the Under Secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence at the U.S. Treasury, said that Qatar is a "permissive jurisdiction for terrorist financing."[[127]](#cite_note-127) There is evidence that these groups supported by Qatar include the hard-line Islamic militant groups active in northern Syria.[[118]](#cite_note-118) [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey are openly backing the [Army of Conquest](/wiki/Army_of_Conquest),[[128]](#cite_note-128)[[129]](#cite_note-129) an umbrella group of anti-government forces fighting in the [Syrian Civil War](/wiki/Syrian_Civil_War) that reportedly includes an [al-Qaeda](/wiki/Al-Qaeda) linked [al-Nusra Front](/wiki/Al-Nusra_Front) and another [Salafi](/wiki/Salafi_jihadism) coalition known as [Ahrar ash-Sham](/wiki/Ahrar_ash-Sham), a group "loosely tied" to [ISIS](/wiki/Islamic_State_of_Iraq_and_the_Levant).[[127]](#cite_note-127)[[130]](#cite_note-130) Qatar supported the democratically elected President [Mohamed Morsi](/wiki/Mohamed_Morsi) with diplomatic support and the state-owned [Al Jazeera network](/wiki/Al_Jazeera_network) before he was deposed in a military coup.[[131]](#cite_note-131)[[132]](#cite_note-132) Qatar offered Egypt a $7.5 billion loan during the year he was in power.[[133]](#cite_note-133) Qatar's alignment with [Hamas](/wiki/Hamas), first reported in early 2012,<ref name=bbchamas>[bbc.com: "Hamas political leaders leave Syria for Egypt and Qatar"](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-17192278), 28 Feb 2012</ref> has drawn criticism from Israel, the United States, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, "who accuse Qatar of undermining regional stability by supporting Hamas."[[134]](#cite_note-134) However, the Foreign Minister of Qatar has denied supporting Hamas, stating "We do not support Hamas but we support the Palestinians."[[135]](#cite_note-135) Following a peace agreement, Qatar pledged $1 billion in humanitarian aid to Gaza.[[136]](#cite_note-136) Qatar has hosted academic, religious, political, and economic conferences. The 11th annual Doha Forum recently brought in key thinkers, professionals of various backgrounds, and political figures from all over the world to discuss democracy, media and information technology, free trade, and [water security](/wiki/Water_security) issues. In addition, the forum has featured the Middle East Economic Future conference since 2006.[[137]](#cite_note-137) In more recent times, Qatar has hosted peace talks between rival factions across the globe. Notable among these include the Darfur Agreement. The Doha Declaration is the basis of the peace process in Darfur and it has achieved significant gains on the ground for the African region. Notable achievements included the restoration of security and stability, progress made in construction and reconstruction processes, return of displaced residents and uniting of Darfur people to face challenges and push forward the peace process.[[138]](#cite_note-138) Qatar donated £88.5million in funds to finance recovery and reconstruction in Darfur.[[139]](#cite_note-139)

### Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Qatar's](/wiki/File:Dassault_Mirage_2000-5_participating_in_Odyssey_Dawn_(cropped).jpg) [Dassault Mirage 2000](/wiki/Dassault_Mirage_2000) flying over [Libya](/wiki/Libya). The Qatar Armed Forces are the military forces of Qatar. The country maintains a modest military force of approximately 11,800 men, including an army (8,500), navy (1,800) and air force (1,500). Qatar's defence expenditures accounted for approximately 4.2% of gross national product in 1993. Qatar has recently signed defence pacts with the United States and United Kingdom, as well as with France earlier in 1994. Qatar plays an active role in the collective defence efforts of the [Gulf Cooperation Council](/wiki/Cooperation_Council_for_the_Arab_States_of_the_Gulf); the other five members are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the UAE, and Oman. The presence of a large Qatari Air Base, operated by the United States and several other UN nations, provides a guaranteed source of defence and national security. In 2008 Qatar spent US$2.355 billion on military expenditures, 2.3% of the gross domestic product.[[140]](#cite_note-140) Qatari special forces have been trained by [France](/wiki/France) and other Western countries, and are believed to possess considerable skill.<ref name=strangepow>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> They also helped the Libyan rebels during the [2011 Battle of Tripoli](/wiki/Battle_of_Tripoli_(2011)).<ref name=strangepow/>

The [Stockholm International Peace Research Institute](/wiki/Stockholm_International_Peace_Research_Institute), SIPRI, found that in 2010–14 Qatar was the 46th largest arms importer in the world. However, SIPRI writes, Qatar's plans to transform and significantly enlarge its armed forces have accelerated. Orders in 2013 for 62 tanks and 24 self-propelled guns from Germany were followed in 2014 by a number of other contracts, including 24 combat helicopters and 3 AEW aircraft from the USA, and 2 tanker aircraft from Spain.[[141]](#cite_note-141)

### Administrative divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[thumb|250px|Municipalities of Qatar since 2004](/wiki/File:Qatar,_administrative_divisions_-_Nmbrs_-_colored.svg) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

Since 2004, Qatar has been divided into seven municipalities (Arabic: [baladiyah](/wiki/Baladiyah)).[[142]](#cite_note-142)

1. [Madinat ash Shamal](/wiki/Madinat_ash_Shamal)
2. [Al Khor](/wiki/Al_Khor_(municipality))
3. [Umm Salal](/wiki/Umm_Salal)
4. [Al Daayen](/wiki/Al_Daayen)
5. [Al Rayyan](/wiki/Al_Rayyan)
6. [Doha](/wiki/Doha)
7. [Al Wakrah](/wiki/Al_Wakrah)

For statistical purposes, the municipalities are further subdivided into 98 zones ([Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of)),<ref name=admdiv>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> which are in turn subdivided into blocks.[[143]](#cite_note-143)

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image)

The Qatari [peninsula](/wiki/Peninsula) [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) protrudes into the Persian Gulf north of Saudi Arabia. It lies between latitudes [24°](/wiki/24th_parallel_north) and [27° N](/wiki/27th_parallel_north), and longitudes [50°](/wiki/50th_meridian_east) and [52° E](/wiki/52nd_meridian_east). Most of the country consists of a low, barren [plain](/wiki/Plain), covered with [sand](/wiki/Sand). To the southeast lies the [*Khor al Adaid*](/wiki/Khor_al Adaid) ("[Inland Sea](/wiki/Inland_sea_(geology))"), an area of rolling sand dunes surrounding an [inlet](/wiki/Inlet) of the Persian Gulf. There are mild winters and very hot, humid summers.

The highest point in Qatar is Qurayn Abu al Bawl at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)[[70]](#cite_note-70) in the Jebel Dukhan to the west, a range of low [limestone](/wiki/Limestone) [outcroppings](/wiki/Outcrop) running north-south from Zikrit through [Umm Bab](/wiki/Umm_Bab) to the southern border. The Jebel Dukhan area also contains Qatar's main onshore [oil deposits](/wiki/Oil_field), while the [natural gas fields](/wiki/Natural_gas_field) lie offshore, to the northwest of the peninsula.

### Biodiversity and environment[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|left|Qatari Ostriches](/wiki/File:Qatari_ostriches_(3206781575).jpg) Qatar signed the Rio [Convention on Biological Diversity](/wiki/Convention_on_Biological_Diversity) on 11 June 1992, and became a party to the convention on 21 August 1996.[[144]](#cite_note-144) It has subsequently produced a [National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan](/wiki/Biodiversity_Action_Plan), which was received by the convention on 18 May 2005.[[145]](#cite_note-145) A total of 142 fungal species have been recorded from Qatar.[[146]](#cite_note-146) A book recently produced by the Ministry of Environment documents the [lizards](/wiki/Lizards) known or believed to occur in Qatar, based on surveys conducted by an international team of scientists and other collaborators.[[147]](#cite_note-147) For two decades, Qatar has had the highest [per-capita carbon dioxide](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_carbon_dioxide_emissions_per_capita) emissions in the world, at 49.1 metric tons per person in 2008.[[148]](#cite_note-148) Qataris are also some of the highest consumers of water per capita per day, using around 400 litres.[[149]](#cite_note-149) In 2008 Qatar launched its [National Vision 2030](/wiki/Qatar_National_Vision_2030) which highlights environmental development as one of the four main goals for Qatar over the next two decades. The National Vision pledges to develop sustainable alternatives to oil-based energy to preserve the local and global environment.[[150]](#cite_note-150)

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[Template:Weather box](/wiki/Template:Weather_box)

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Graphical depiction of Qatar's product exports in 28 color-coded categories (2011).](/wiki/File:Qatar_Export_Treemap.png) [thumb|Location of the North Field natural gas deposit.](/wiki/File:SouthParsLocationMap.jpg) Before the discovery of oil, the economy of the Qatari region focused on fishing and [pearl hunting](/wiki/Pearl_hunting). Report prepared by local governors of Ottoman Empire in 1892 states that total income from pearl hunting in 1892 is 2,450,000 kran.[[51]](#cite_note-51) After the introduction of the Japanese [cultured pearl](/wiki/Cultured_pearl) onto the world market in the 1920s and 1930s, Qatar's pearling industry crashed. Oil was discovered in Qatar in 1940, in [Dukhan Field](/wiki/Dukhan_Field).<ref name=emboil>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The discovery transformed the state's economy. Now, the country has a high [standard of living](/wiki/Standard_of_living) for its legal citizens. With no [income tax](/wiki/Income_tax), Qatar (along with [Bahrain](/wiki/Bahrain)) is one of the countries with the lowest tax rates in the world. The unemployment rate in June 2013 was 0.1%.<ref name=newhopenyt>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> Corporate law mandates that Qatari nationals must hold 51% of any venture in the Emirate.<ref name=nobs/>

[Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), Qatar has the highest GDP per capita in the world, according to the World Atlas Factbook[[151]](#cite_note-151) and approximately 14% of households are dollar millionaires.[[152]](#cite_note-152) It relies heavily on foreign labour to grow its economy, to the extent that [migrant workers](/wiki/Migrant_worker) compose 86% of the population and 94% of the workforce.[[153]](#cite_note-153)[[154]](#cite_note-154) Qatar has been criticized by the [International Trade Union Confederation](/wiki/International_Trade_Union_Confederation).[[155]](#cite_note-155) The economic growth of Qatar has been almost exclusively based on its petroleum and natural gas industries, which began in 1940.[[156]](#cite_note-156) Qatar is the leading exporter of [liquefied natural gas](/wiki/Liquefied_natural_gas).[[157]](#cite_note-157) In 2012, it was estimated that Qatar would invest over $120 billion in the energy sector in the next ten years.[[158]](#cite_note-158) The country is a member state of [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries](/wiki/OPEC) (OPEC), having joined the organisation in 1961.[[159]](#cite_note-159) In 2012, Qatar retained its title of richest country in the world (according to per capita income) for the third time in a row, having first overtaken [Luxembourg](/wiki/Luxembourg) in 2010. According to the study published by the [Washington](/wiki/Washington,_D.C.) based Institute of International Finance, Qatar's per capita GDP at purchasing power parity (PPP) was $106,000 (QR387,000) in 2012, helping the country retain its ranking as the world's wealthiest nation. Luxembourg came a distant second with nearly $80,000 and Singapore third with per capita income of about $61,000. The research put Qatar's GDP at $182bn in 2012 and said it had climbed to an all-time high due to soaring gas exports and high oil prices. Its population stood at 1.8 million in 2012. The same study published that Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), with assets of $115bn, was ranked 12th among the richest sovereign wealth funds in the world.[[160]](#cite_note-160) Established in 2005, [Qatar Investment Authority](/wiki/Qatar_Investment_Authority) is the country's [sovereign wealth fund](/wiki/Sovereign_wealth_fund), specialising in [foreign investment](/wiki/Foreign_investment).[[161]](#cite_note-161) Due to billions of dollars in surpluses from the oil and gas industry, the Qatari government has directed investments into United States, Europe, and [Asia Pacific](/wiki/Asia_Pacific). [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), the holdings were valued at $100 billion in assets. [Qatar Holding](/wiki/Qatar_Holding) is the international investment arm of QIA. Since 2009, Qatar Holding has received $30–40bn a year from the state. [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), it has investments around the world in [Valentino](/wiki/Valentino_SpA), [Siemens](/wiki/Siemens), [Printemps](/wiki/Printemps), [Harrods](/wiki/Harrods), [The Shard](/wiki/The_Shard), [Barclays Bank](/wiki/Barclays_Bank), [Heathrow Airport](/wiki/Heathrow_Airport), [Paris Saint-Germain F.C.](/wiki/Paris_Saint-Germain_F.C.), [Volkswagen Group](/wiki/Volkswagen_Group), [Royal Dutch Shell](/wiki/Royal_Dutch_Shell), [Bank of America](/wiki/Bank_of_America), [Tiffany](/wiki/Tiffany_&_Co.), [Agricultural Bank of China](/wiki/Agricultural_Bank_of_China), [Sainsbury's](/wiki/Sainsbury's), [BlackBerry](/wiki/BlackBerry),[[162]](#cite_note-162) and [Santander Brasil](/wiki/Santander_Brasil).[[163]](#cite_note-163)[[164]](#cite_note-164)

### Energy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[left|thumb|](/wiki/File:QTR_A7-APA_A380!137_EDHI_16-04-14.jpg)[Qatar Airways](/wiki/Qatar_Airways) [Airbus A380](/wiki/Airbus_A380), Qatar Airways, one of the world's largest airlines, links over 150 international destinations from its base in [Doha](/wiki/Doha). [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), Qatar has proven oil reserves of 15 billion barrels and gas fields that account for more than 13% of the global resource. As a result, it is the richest state per-capita in the world. None of its 2 million residents live below the poverty line and less than 1% are unemployed.[[165]](#cite_note-165) Qatar's economy was in a downturn from 1982 to 1989. OPEC quotas on crude oil production, the [lower price for oil](/wiki/1980s_oil_glut), and the generally unpromising outlook on international markets reduced oil earnings. In turn, the Qatari government's spending plans had to be cut to match lower income. The resulting recessionary local business climate caused many firms to lay off expatriate staff. With the economy recovering in the 1990s, expatriate populations, particularly from [Egypt](/wiki/Egypt) and South Asia, have grown again.

Oil production will not long remain at peak levels of 500,000 barrels (80,000 m³) per day, as oil fields are projected to be mostly depleted by 2023. However, large natural gas reserves have been located off Qatar's northeast coast. Qatar's proved reserves of gas are the third-largest in the world, exceeding 250 trillion cubic feet (7,000 km³). The economy was boosted in 1991 by completion of the $1.5-billion Phase I of North Field gas development. In 1996, the Qatargas project began exporting [liquefied natural gas](/wiki/Liquefied_natural_gas) (LNG) to Japan. Further phases of North Field gas development costing billions of dollars are in various stages of planning and development.

Qatar's heavy industrial projects, all based in Umm Said, include a refinery with a 50,000 barrels (8,000 m³) per day capacity, a fertiliser plant for urea and ammonia, a steel plant, and a petrochemical plant. All these industries use gas for fuel. Most are joint ventures between European and Japanese firms and the state-owned [Qatar General Petroleum Corporation](/wiki/Qatar_Petroleum) (QGPC). The US is the major equipment supplier for Qatar's oil and gas industry, and US companies are playing a major role in North Field gas development.[[165]](#cite_note-165) Qatar's [National Vision 2030](/wiki/Qatar_National_Vision_2030) has made investment in renewable resources a major goal for the country over the next two decades.[[150]](#cite_note-150) Qatar pursues a vigorous program of "[Qatarization](/wiki/Qatarization)", under which all joint venture industries and government departments strive to move Qatari nationals into positions of greater authority. Growing numbers of foreign-educated Qataris, including many educated in the US, are returning home to assume key positions formerly occupied by expatriates. To control the influx of expatriate workers, Qatar has tightened the administration of its foreign manpower programs over the past several years. Security is the principal basis for Qatar's strict entry and immigration rules and regulations.[[165]](#cite_note-165)

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Wide image](/wiki/Template:Wide_image) The number of people in Qatar fluctuates considerably depending on the season, since the country relies heavily on migrant labour. In 2013, Qatar's total population was 1.8 million, of which 278,000 were Qatari citizens (13 percent) and 1.5 million were [expatriates](/wiki/Expatriates).[[166]](#cite_note-166) Non-Arab foreigners make up the vast majority of Qatar's population; [Indians](/wiki/Indians_in_Qatar) are the largest community, numbering 545,000 in 2013,[[166]](#cite_note-166) followed by 341,000 [Nepalis](/wiki/Nepalis_in_Qatar), 185,000 [Filipinos](/wiki/Filipinos_in_Qatar), 137,000 [Bangladeshis](/wiki/Bangladeshis), 100,000 [Sri Lankans](/wiki/Sri_Lankans) and 90,000 [Pakistanis](/wiki/Pakistanis_in_Qatar) among [many other nationalities](http://www.bqdoha.com/2013/12/population-qatar).[[166]](#cite_note-166) Qatar's first demographic records date back to 1892, and were conducted by Ottoman governors in the region. Based on this census, which includes only the residents in cities, the total population in 1892 was 9,830.[[51]](#cite_note-51)[Template:Historical populations](/wiki/Template:Historical_populations) The 2010 census recorded the total population at 1,699,435.[[167]](#cite_note-167) In January 2013, the Qatar Statistics Authority estimated the country's population at 1,903,447, of which 1,405,164 were males and 498,283 females.[[168]](#cite_note-168) At the time of the first census, held in 1970, the population was 111,133.<ref name=qsahist>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The population has tripled in the decade to 2011, up from just over 600,000 people in 2001, leaving Qatari nationals as less than 15% of the total population.[[169]](#cite_note-169) The influx of male labourers has skewed the gender balance, and women are now just one-quarter of the population.

Projections released by Qatar Statistical Authority indicates that the total population of Qatar could reach 2.8 million by 2020. Qatar's National Development Strategy (2011–16) had estimated that the country's population would reach 1.78m in 2013, 1.81m in 2014, 1.84m in 2015 and 1.86m in 2016 – the yearly growth rate being merely 2.1 percent. But the country's population has soared to 1.83 million by the end of 2012, showing 7.5 percent growth over the previous year.[[170]](#cite_note-170) Qatar's total population hit a record high of 2.46 million in November 2015, an increase of 8.5% from the previous year, far exceeding official projections.[[171]](#cite_note-171)

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Template:Pie chart](/wiki/Template:Pie_chart) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Mosque in Qatar](/wiki/File:Alwakhra_Masjid.jpg) [Sunni Islam](/wiki/Sunni_Islam) is Qatar's predominant religion and enjoys [official status](/wiki/State_religion).[[172]](#cite_note-172) Most Qatari citizens belong to the [Salafi](/wiki/Salafi) [Muslim](/wiki/Muslim) movement of [Sunni Islam](/wiki/Sunni_Islam),<ref name=wahh>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref><ref name=insom>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref><ref name=risingreuters>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> with about 5% percent adhering to [Shia Islam](/wiki/Shia_Islam).[[173]](#cite_note-173) According to the 2004 census, 71.5% of the population are Sunni [Muslims](/wiki/Muslims) and about 5% are [Shia](/wiki/Shia) [Muslims](/wiki/Muslims), 8.5% are foreigner Christians and 10% are "other" foreigner religions.[[70]](#cite_note-70)[[174]](#cite_note-174)[[175]](#cite_note-175) [Sharia law](/wiki/Sharia_law) is the main source of Qatari legislation according to Qatar's Constitution.[[77]](#cite_note-77)[[176]](#cite_note-176) In 2010, the religious affiliation in the country was estimated by the [Pew Forum](/wiki/Pew_Forum) as 67.7% [Muslim](/wiki/Muslim), 13.8% Christian, 13.8% Hindu and 3.1% Buddhist. Other religions and religiously unaffiliated people accounted for the remaining 1.6%.<ref name=pewrel>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

The Christian population is composed almost entirely of foreigners; a 2015 study estimates a mere 200 Muslim converts to Christianity.[[177]](#cite_note-177) Since 2008, Christians have been allowed to build churches on ground donated by the government,[[178]](#cite_note-178) though foreign missionary activity is officially discouraged.[[179]](#cite_note-179) Active churches include the [Mar Thoma Church](/wiki/Malankara_Mar_Thoma_Syrian_Church), [Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church](/wiki/Malankara_Orthodox_Syrian_Church), the [Roman Catholic](/wiki/Roman_Catholic) [Our Lady of the Rosary](/wiki/Catholic_Church_of_Our_Lady_of_the_Rosary_(Doha)), the [Anglican](/wiki/Anglican) Church of the Epiphany.[[180]](#cite_note-180)[[181]](#cite_note-181)[[182]](#cite_note-182) There are also two [Mormon wards](/wiki/Ward_(LDS_Church)).[[180]](#cite_note-180)[[181]](#cite_note-181)[[182]](#cite_note-182) Despite hosting significant Hindu and Buddhist populations, neither religious group has an official place of worship.

### Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

Arabic is the official language of Qatar, with [Qatari Arabic](/wiki/Qatari_Arabic) the local dialect. [Qatari Sign Language](/wiki/Qatari_Sign_Language) is the language of the deaf community. [English](/wiki/English_language) is commonly used as a second language,[[183]](#cite_note-183) and a rising [lingua franca](/wiki/Lingua_franca), especially in commerce, to the extent that steps are being taken to try to preserve Arabic from English's encroachment.[[184]](#cite_note-184) English is particularly useful for communication with Qatar's large expatriate community. In 2012, Qatar joined the international French-speaking organization of [La Francophonie](/wiki/Organisation_internationale_de_la_Francophonie) as a new associate member,[[185]](#cite_note-185) justifying its inscription by the consequent number of French speakers in the country (10% of the Qatari population would be francophone).[[186]](#cite_note-186)[[187]](#cite_note-187) Reflecting the multicultural make-up of the country, many other languages are also spoken, including [Baluchi](/wiki/Baluchi_language), [Hindi](/wiki/Hindi), [Malayalam](/wiki/Malayalam), [Urdu](/wiki/Urdu), [Pashto](/wiki/Pashto), [Tamil](/wiki/Tamil_language), [Telugu](/wiki/Telugu_language), [Nepali](/wiki/Nepali_language), [Sinhalese](/wiki/Sinhalese_language), [Bengali](/wiki/Bengali_language), and [Tagalog](/wiki/Tagalog_language).[[188]](#cite_note-188)

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Qatar's culture is similar to other countries in [Eastern Arabia](/wiki/Eastern_Arabia), being significantly influenced by Islam. [Qatar National Day](/wiki/Qatar_National_Day), hosted annually on 18 December, has had an important role in developing a sense of national identity.[[189]](#cite_note-189) It is observed in remembrance of [Jassim bin Mohammed Al Thani's](/wiki/Jassim_bin_Mohammed_Al_Thani) succession to the throne and his subsequent unification of the country's various tribes.[[190]](#cite_note-190)[[191]](#cite_note-191) Since July 1, 2008, [Hamad Bin Abdulaziz Al-Kawari](/wiki/Hamad_Bin_Abdulaziz_Al-Kawari) has been the Minister for Culture, Arts and Heritage of Qatar.

### Arts and museums[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|210px|](/wiki/File:Doha_Museum_of_Islamic_Art_-_stairs.jpg)[Museum of Islamic Art, Doha](/wiki/Museum_of_Islamic_Art,_Doha) Several senior members of Qatar's ruling Al Thani family are noted collectors of Islamic and contemporary art.

The [Museum of Islamic Art](/wiki/Museum_of_Islamic_Art,_Doha), opened in 2008, is regarded as one of the best museums in the region.<ref name=sandsmith>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> This, and several other Qatari museums, like the [Arab Museum of Modern Art](/wiki/Mathaf:_Arab_Museum_of_Modern_Art), falls under the [Qatar Museums Authority](/wiki/Qatar_Museums_Authority) (*QMA*) which is led by Sheikha [Al-Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani](/wiki/Al-Mayassa_bint_Hamad_bin_Khalifa_Al-Thani), the sister of the ruling Emir of the State of Qatar, and the prominent collector and art patron Sheikh [Hassan bin Mohammed Al Thani](/wiki/Hassan_bin_Mohamed_bin_Ali_Al_Thani).[[192]](#cite_note-192) The QMA also sponsors artistic events abroad, such as major exhibitions by Takahashi Murakami in Versailles (2010) and Damien Hirst in London (2012).

Qatar is the world's biggest buyer in the art market by value.<ref name=theart>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The Qatari cultural sector is being developed to enable the country to reach world recognition to contribute to the development of a country that comes mainly from its resources from the gas industry.[[193]](#cite_note-193)

### Media[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|The news desk of](/wiki/File:Al_Jazeera_English_Newsdesk.jpg) [Al Jazeera English](/wiki/Al_Jazeera_English), a Qatari news channel Qatar's media was classified as "not free" in the 2014 [Freedom of the Press](/wiki/Freedom_of_the_Press_(report)) report by [Freedom House](/wiki/Freedom_House).[[194]](#cite_note-194) TV broadcasting in Qatar was started in 1970.[[195]](#cite_note-195) [Al Jazeera](/wiki/Al_Jazeera) is a main television network headquartered in [Doha](/wiki/Doha), Qatar. Al Jazeera initially launched in 1996 as an [Arabic](/wiki/Arabic) news and current affairs [satellite](/wiki/Satellite) TV channel of the same name, but has since expanded into a global network of several speciality TV channels known collectively as the [Al Jazeera Media Network](/wiki/Al_Jazeera_Media_Network).

It has been reported that journalists practice self-censorship, particularly in regards to the government and [ruling family](/wiki/House_of_Thani) of Qatar.[[196]](#cite_note-196) Criticism of the government, Emir and ruling family in the media is illegal. According to article 46 of the press law "The Emir of the state of Qatar shall not be criticized and no statement can be attributed to him unless under a written permission from the manager of his office."[[197]](#cite_note-197) Journalists are also subject to prosecution for insulting [Islam](/wiki/Islam).[[194]](#cite_note-194) In 2014, a [Cybercrime](/wiki/Computer_crime) Prevention Law was passed. The law is said to restrict press freedom, and carries prison sentences and fines for broad reasons such as jeopardizing local peace or publishing false news.[[198]](#cite_note-198) The Gulf Center for Human Rights has stated that the law is a threat to freedom of speech and has called for certain articles of the law to be revoked.[[199]](#cite_note-199) Press media has undergone expansion in recent years. There are currently [seven newspapers in circulation in Qatar](/wiki/List_of_newspapers_in_Qatar), with four being published in Arabic and three being published in English.[[200]](#cite_note-200) There are also newspapers from India, Nepal and Sri Lanka with editions printed from Qatar.

In regards to telecommunication infrastructure, Qatar is the highest ranked Middle Eastern country in the World Economic Forum's Network Readiness Index (NRI) – an indicator for determining the development level of a country's information and communication technologies. Qatar ranked number 23 overall in the 2014 NRI ranking, unchanged from 2013.[[201]](#cite_note-201)

### Music[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The music of Qatar is based on [Bedouin](/wiki/Bedouin) poetry, song and dance. Traditional dances in Doha are performed on Friday afternoons; one such dance is the [Ardah](/wiki/Ardah), a stylized martial dance performed by two rows of dancers who are accompanied by an array of [percussion instruments](/wiki/Percussion_instrument), including [al-ras](/wiki/Al-ras) (a large drum whose leather is heated by an open fire), [tambourines](/wiki/Tambourine) and [cymbals](/wiki/Cymbal) with small drums.[[202]](#cite_note-202) Other percussion instruments used in folk music include *galahs* (a tall clay jar) and tin drinking cups known as *tus* or *tasat*, usually used in conjunction with a *tabl*, a longitudinal drum beaten with a stick.[[203]](#cite_note-203) [String instruments](/wiki/String_instrument), such as the [oud](/wiki/Oud) and [rebaba](/wiki/Rebaba), are also commonly used.[[202]](#cite_note-202)

### Sport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Association football](/wiki/Association_football) is the most popular sport in Qatar, both in terms of players and spectators.[[204]](#cite_note-204) The [Qatar national under-20 team](/wiki/Qatar_national_under-20_football_team) finished runners-up to West Germany in the [1981 FIFA World Youth Championship](/wiki/1981_FIFA_World_Youth_Championship) after a 4–0 defeat in the final. In January 2011, the Asian Football Confederation's [fifteenth Asian Cup](/wiki/2011_AFC_Asian_Cup) was held in Qatar. It was the second time Qatar had hosted the tournament, with the other instance being the [1988 edition](/wiki/1988_AFC_Asian_Cup).[[205]](#cite_note-205) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:KhalifaStadiumDoha.jpg)[Khalifa International Stadium](/wiki/Khalifa_International_Stadium), home stadium of the [Qatar national football team](/wiki/Qatar_national_football_team). On 2 December 2010, Qatar won their bid to host the [2022 FIFA World Cup](/wiki/2022_FIFA_World_Cup), despite never previously qualifying for the [FIFA World Cup Finals](/wiki/FIFA_World_Cup_Finals).[[206]](#cite_note-206) Local organizers are planning to build 9 new stadiums and expand 3 existing stadiums for this event. Qatar's winning bid for the 2022 World Cup was greeted enthusiastically in the Persian Gulf region as it was the first time a country in the Middle East had been selected to host the tournament. However, the bid has been embroiled in much controversy, including allegations of bribery and interference in the investigation of the alleged bribery. European football associations have also objected to the 2022 World Cup being held in Qatar for a variety of reasons, from the impact of warm temperatures on players' fitness, to the disruption it might cause in European domestic league calendars should the event be rescheduled to take place during winter.[[207]](#cite_note-207)[[208]](#cite_note-208) In May 2014, Qatari football official [Mohammed bin Hammam](/wiki/Mohammed_bin_Hammam) was accused of making payments totalling £3m to officials in return for their support for the Qatar bid.[[209]](#cite_note-209) However, a FIFA inquiry into the bidding process in November 2014 cleared Qatar of any wrongdoing.[[210]](#cite_note-210) [*The Guardian*](/wiki/The_Guardian), a British national daily newspaper, produced a short documentary named "Abuse and exploitation of migrant workers preparing emirate for 2022".[[211]](#cite_note-211) A 2014 investigation by The Guardian reports that migrant workers who have been constructing luxurious offices for the organizers of the 2022 World Cup have not been paid in over a year, and are now "working illegally from cockroach-infested lodgings."[[212]](#cite_note-212) For 2014, Nepalese migrants involved in constructing infrastructure for the 2022 World Cup died at a rate of one every two days.[[213]](#cite_note-213) The Qatar 2022 organising committee have responded to various allegations by claiming that hosting the World Cup in Qatar would act as a "catalyst for change" in the region.[[214]](#cite_note-214) [thumb|195px|](/wiki/File:2015_Ladies_Tour_of_Qatar_Cucinotta_winning_stage_1.jpg)[2015 Ladies Tour of Qatar](/wiki/2015_Ladies_Tour_of_Qatar) Though football is the most popular sport, other team sports have experienced considerable success at senior level. In 2015, the [national handball team](/wiki/Qatar_national_handball_team) emerged as runners-up to [France](/wiki/France_national_handball_team) in the [World Men's Handball Championship](/wiki/2015_World_Men's_Handball_Championship) as hosts, however the tournament was marred by numerous controversies regarding the host nation and its team.[[215]](#cite_note-215) Further, in 2014, [Qatar](/wiki/Qatar_national_3x3_team) won the world championship in men's [3x3 basketball](/wiki/FIBA_3x3_World_Championships).[[216]](#cite_note-216) [Khalifa International Tennis and Squash Complex](/wiki/Khalifa_International_Tennis_and_Squash_Complex) in Doha hosted the [WTA Tour Championships](/wiki/WTA_Tour_Championships) in women's tennis between 2008 and 2010. Doha holds the [WTA](/wiki/Women's_Tennis_Association) Premier tournament [Qatar Ladies Open](/wiki/Qatar_Ladies_Open) annually. Since 2002, Qatar has hosted the annual [Tour of Qatar](/wiki/Tour_of_Qatar), a cycling race in six stages. Every February, riders are racing on the roads across Qatar's flat land for six days. Each stage covers a distance of more than 100 km, though the time trial usually is a shorter distance. Tour of Qatar is organised by the Qatar Cycling Federation for professional riders in the category of Elite Men.[[217]](#cite_note-217) The Qatar Army Skydiving Team has several different skydiving disciplines placing among the top nations in the world. The Qatar National Parachute team performs annually during Qatar's National Day and at other large events, such as the 2015 World Handball Championship.[[218]](#cite_note-218)