

A Glimpse at Tourism Statistics in the GCC Countries for 2017



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Abbreviations

This edition has been prepared based on the statistical publications guide which is approved by the GCC-STAT

An electronic copy of the edition is available on the Center's website at the following link:

<https://www.gccstat.org/ar/statistic/publications>

Not available	...
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
UAE	United Arab Emirates
BH	Kingdom of Bahrain
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
OM	Sultanate of Oman
QAT	State of Qatar
KW	State of Kuwait

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In case of quotation, please refer to this edition as follows:

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Note to the users:

- Statement of inbound tourists number and their expenditure, in UAE includes Dubai data only.
- State of Kuwait 2017 data is preliminary
- The average expenditure per tourist was calculated **during the year** using the following equation:

$$\text{Average spending} = \frac{\text{Total tourist expenditure}}{\text{Total number of tourists}}$$

- The main purposes of the tour include the following:
 1. Personal purpose such as:
 - Holidays, entertainment, and recreation
 - Visit friends and relatives
 - Education and training
 - Health and Medical Care
 - Religion / Hajj
 - Marketing
 - Transit
 - Other: Includes, for example, voluntary work not included in other purposes
 2. Business and professional work
- Transportation used during the tour includes:
 - 1- Air transport
 - 2- Shipping
 - 3- Land transport



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Introduction

GCC-STAT is pleased to issue a publication entitled " A Glimpse at Tourism Statistics in the GCC Countries for 2017" which presents some of the tourism indicators represented in the indicators of tourism demand, hotel performance indicators and compare them between the GCC countries.

The tourism sector is considered to be one of the important and promising sectors as it is an important feeder to the economy and national income source for many countries in the world. Therefore, countries have put a particular interest on this vital and important sector and directed its instructions to work in developing and promote the sector to the best in order to become an important feeder to the economy of the GCC countries.

The GCC-STAT, in order to enable all interested parties to access to its publications, it uploads all its editions through the following link: www.gccstat.org

As well as database and that is through the data portal of the same link.

GCC -STAT expresses its thanks and gratitude to all national statistical centers in member countries for their efforts and cooperation by providing the required data for the preparation of this bulletin, which has had a great impact in the issuance of this publication of high quality and comprehensive.

GCC-STAT

Concepts and Definitions

Tourism: Tourism refers to specific types of trips that take a traveler outside his/her usual environment for less than a year and for a main purpose other than to be employed by a resident entity in the place visited.

Inbound tourism: Inbound tourism comprises the activities of a non-resident visitor within the country of reference on an inbound tourism trip.

Visitor: A visitor is a traveler taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited.

Tourist (or overnight visitor): A visitor is classified as a tourist (or overnight visitor), if his/her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a same-day visitor (or excursionist) otherwise.

Usual environment: The concept of usual environment as a fundamental element for the definition of tourism, is defined as the geographical area (though not necessarily a contiguous places) within which an individual conducts his/her regular life routines.

Tourism expenditure: Tourism expenditure is the amount paid for the acquisition of consumption goods and services, as well as valuables, for own use, gift, or for and during the tourism trips. It includes expenditure by visitors themselves as well as expenses that are paid for or reimbursed by others.

Tourism industries: The tourism industries comprise all establishments for which principal activity is a traditional

characteristic tourism activity. The term “tourism industries” is equivalent to “tourism characteristic activities” and the two terms are sometimes used synonymously in the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 (IRTS 2008).

Accommodation facilities: include hotels, hotel apartments, resorts, other furnished residential units and others.

Methodology:

Methodology of Data collected

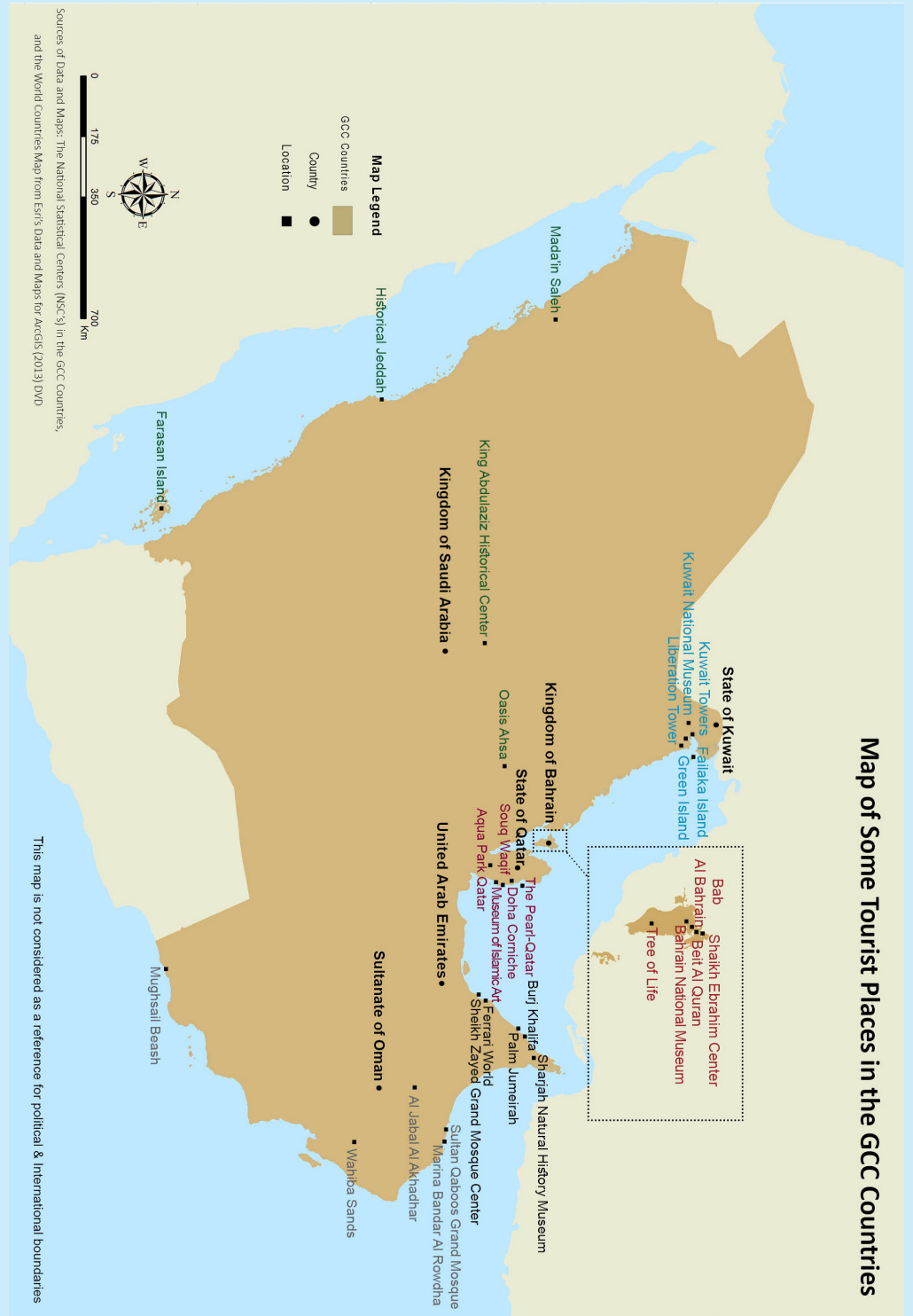
The main tool used for data collection was the tourism transmission tables that sent to the national statistical centers in the member countries to filled with the required information. In addition to the tourism transmission tables, the official websites of national statistical centers of the member countries referred to for further details and information.

Reference time

Tourism statistics cover GCC countries data for 2016 - 2017.

Data verification mechanism and Quality assurance

Data verification conducted by using equations to verify the accuracy of data and numbers. In addition, metadata received from countries were integrated to identify the methodology used by member countries in the calculation and on the sources and methods of collection.



Chapter 1

Tourism demand indicators



First: Inbound tourists number to GCC

At the level of tourism indicators for the GCC countries, the total number of inbound tourists to the GCC countries in 2017 reached about 59 million tourists, a decrease of 0.9% compared to the previous year. The Kingdom of Bahrain recorded the highest increase in the number of inbound tourists in 2017 at a rate of 11.9% compared to 2016, while Qatar recorded a decline in the number of inbound tourists by 17.9% compared to the previous year, and the following table presents more detailed data.

According to data from World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the number of international tourist arrivals in 2017 reached 1,323 million, of whom 4.5%⁽¹⁾ in the GCC countries.

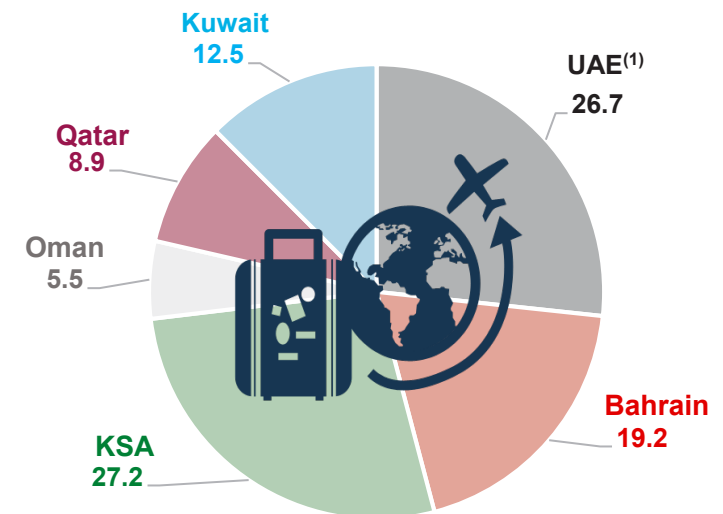
Table 1: Distribution of inbound tourists number to GCC
(Thousands)

Country	2016	2017	Exchange Rate%
GCC	59,714	59,174	-0.9
UAE	14,870 ⁽²⁾	15,790 ⁽²⁾	6.2
Bahrain	10,158	11,370	11.9
KSA	18,044	16,109	-10.7
Oman	3,207	3,258	1.6
Qatar	6,381	5,240	-17.9
Kuwait	7,054	7,407	5.0

- (1) Its calculated by GCC-Stat
- (2) Includes only data of Dubai
- (3) Data in table1 includes intra-tourism

At the level of GCC countries, more than half of the total number of inbound tourist to the GCC countries in 2017 were concentrated in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates with a percentage of 53.9% and the rest distributed in the other GCC countries, as shown in Figure below.

Figure 1: Distribution percentage (%) of inbound tourists to the GCC from the total number of tourists in 2017



- (1) Includes only data of Dubai according to data source

Figure 2: Distribution of inbound tourists to the GCC according to destination coming from in 2017

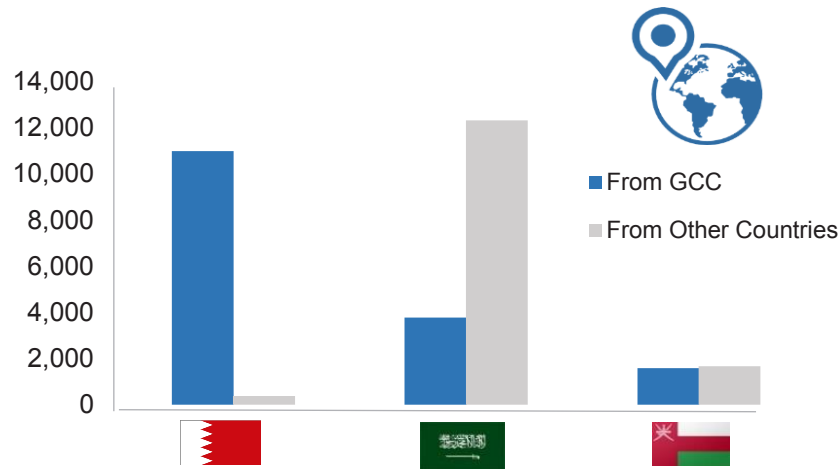


Table 2: Distribution of inbound tourists expenditure to GCC

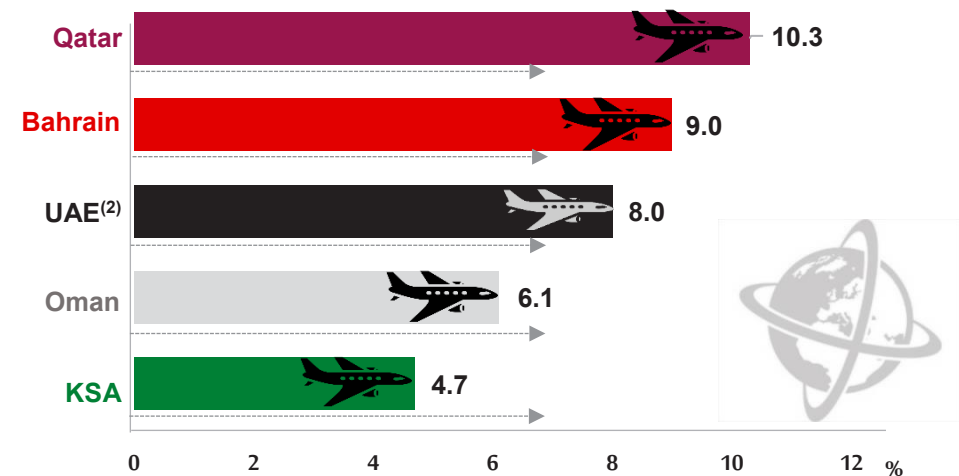
Country	2016	2017	(million US dollars) Exchange Rate%
GCC	...	...	...
UAE	19,496 ⁽¹⁾	21,048 ⁽¹⁾	8.0
Bahrain	4,021	4,381	9.0
KSA	24,900	26,074	4.7
Oman	839	890	6.1
Qatar	5,411	5,971	10.3
Kuwait	...	...	...

(1) includes only data of Dubai according to data source

Second: Expenditure of inbound tourists to GCC:

As for the expenditure of inbound tourists to the GCC countries, the data indicate that there is a general increase in the total expenditure of inbound tourists to it during 2017 compared to 2016. The total expenditure of inbound tourists to Saudi Arabia in 2017 was about 26 billion US dollars and an increase of 4.7% compared to 2016, and the State of Qatar show an increase in the expenditure of inbound tourists in 2017 at an average of 10.3% compared to 2016. As shown in the following table and figure.

Figure 3: Total expenditure rate change of inbound tourists to the GCC from 2016 to 2017



(2) Includes only data of Dubai according to data source

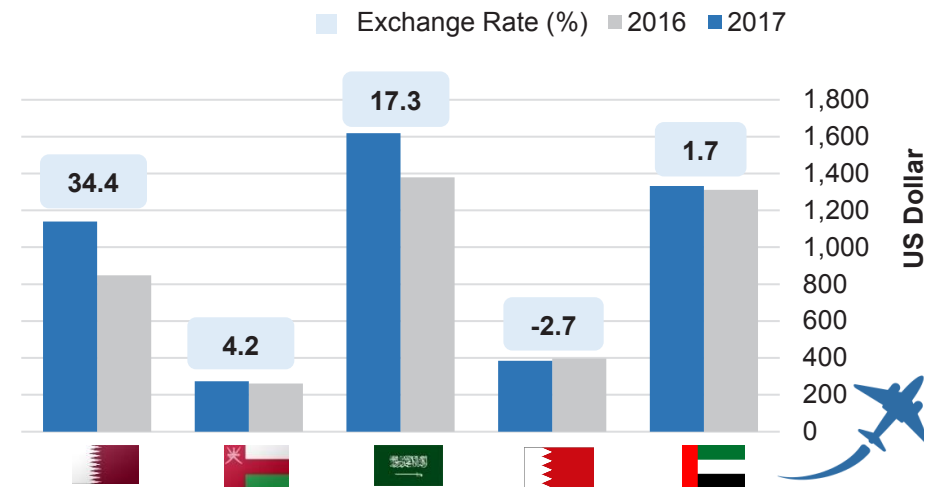
On the level of indicators of the inbound tourists' expenditure to GCC countries in 2017, the State of Qatar recorded an increase in the average expenditure of inbound tourist from 2016 to 2017 at an average rate of 34.4%. While the Kingdom of Bahrain show a decline in the average expenditure by 2.7% in 2017 compared with 2016, as shown in the following table.

Table 3: Average expenditure of inbound tourists to GCC

Country	(US dollars)		Exchange Rate%
	2016	2017	
GCC	...	...	...
UAE	1,311 ⁽¹⁾	1,333 ⁽¹⁾	1.7
Bahrain	396	385	-2.7
KSA	1,380	1,619	17.3
Oman	262	273	4.2
Qatar	848	1,140	34.4
Kuwait	...	...	...

(1) includes only data of Dubai according to data source

Figure 4: Average expenditure of inbound tourists to GCC in 2016 and 2017



Chapter 2

Hotel Performance Indicators



First: Accommodation facilities number in GCC:

Tourism occupies third place in terms of its contribution to the international economy after chemicals and fuels with total exports of US \$ 1.6 trillion in 2017 according to data released by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)⁽¹⁾. It has a large role in increasing the operational capacity in terms of the absorption of labor, as well as its association with other economic activities such as transportation, restaurants, etc., as well as its direct and indirect economic effects. Therefore, countries are interested in investing in tourism infrastructure and services sector, the number of accommodation facilities increased in the GCC countries in 2017 by 13.2% compared to the previous year. The number of accommodation facilities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia increased by 18.4% compared to 2016, while accommodation facilities in the United Arab Emirates decrease slightly by 0.2% in 2017 compared with 2016.

At the level of distribution of accommodation facilities for 2017, most of these establishments were concentrated in Saudi Arabia by 80.3% of the GCC countries. The remaining percentage distributed among the other GCC countries. The following table presents more detailed data.

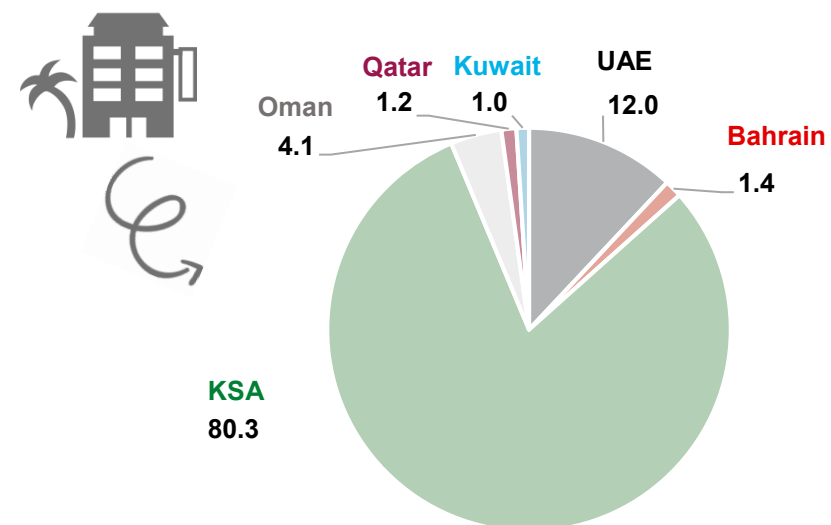
(1) UNWTO. UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2018.
<http://www2.unwto.org>

Table 4: Distribution of accommodation facilities number in GCC

Country	2016	2017	Exchange Rate%
GCC	7,808	8,839	13.2
UAE	1,060	1,058	-0.2
Bahrain ⁽¹⁾	119	125	5.0
KSA	5,994	7,099	18.4
Oman	340	359	5.6
Qatar	106	108	1.9
Kuwait	90	90	0.0

(1) Includes only hotels

Figure 5: Distribution percentage (%) of accommodation facilities in the GCC in 2017

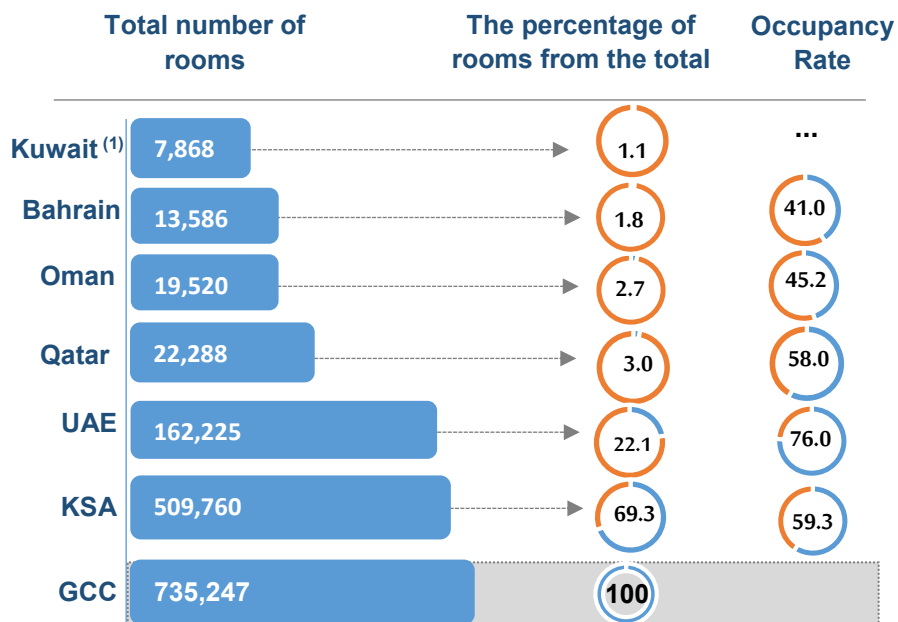


Second: Number of rooms and occupancy rates in GCC:

In terms of number of rooms and occupancy rates in GCC in 2017, the total number of rooms in the accommodation facilities amounted to 735,247 rooms, 91.4% were concentrated in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates and the remaining 8.6% distributed in the other GCC countries.

The highest occupancy rate in the GCC countries in 2017 was 76.0% in the United Arab Emirates, while the lowest occupancy rate in the Kingdom of Bahrain was 41.0% compared to other GCC countries as shown in the following figure.

Figure 6: Distribution of the total number of rooms and occupancy rates in GCC in 2017



(1) Includes rooms and suites

