QATAR

LEGAL & TAX FRAMEWORK FOR INVESTMENT — AUGUST 2026 EDITION

Qatar offers an unusual tax configuration: 10% corporate tax, no value added tax, no personal income tax on salaries, and a 5% withholding tax from which dividends are excluded. This overall lightness does not dispense with careful reading, because what matters most lies elsewhere: in the **choice of establishment regime** — mainland, Qatar Financial Centre, free zones or the science and technology park — which together determine the applicable rate, the competent court and the real scope of filing obligations. Two developments define the period: the transposition of the 15% global minimum tax, effective for financial years commencing on or after 1 January 2025, and the opening of foreign capital up to 100%, whose practical scope deserves clarification.

POPULATION
≈ 2.97 M
World Bank, 2025

CURRENCY
RIYAL · QAR
pegged to the dollar at 3.64

GDP 2025
≈ $215.6 BN
World Bank

GDP PER CAPITA
≈ $69,680
IMF, 2025

GROWTH 2025
+ 2.8 %
IMF

GROWTH 2026
– 8.6 %
IMF projection — LNG production disrupted

GROWTH 2027
+ 8.6 %
projected rebound, IMF

INFLATION
+ 3.9 %
2026 projection, IMF

A SECTORAL 2026 CONTRACTION, NOT A STRUCTURAL ONE

The projected contraction for 2026 reflects disruptions affecting liquefied natural gas production at the Ras Laffan complex. The International Monetary Fund projects a rebound of similar magnitude in 2027. Gas expansion timelines remain subject to adjustment, without affecting the legal and tax framework described in this factsheet.

A NATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK, WITH NO UNIFORM LEGAL AREA

No OHADA, no equivalent. Qatar applies its own business law: company law (Law No. 11 of 2015), foreign investment (Law No. 1 of 2019), taxation (Law No. 24 of 2018, amended by Law No. 11 of 2022). No regional uniform act and no supranational court overlay this framework. **Mainland**: companies registered with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, direct access to the domestic market, 10% corporate tax. **The Qatar Financial Centre (QFC)**: a financial hub with its own regulatory and tax regime, its own courts, and open to full foreign ownership. **The free zones (QFZ)**: two zones — Ras Bufontas, adjoining the airport, and Um Al Houl, adjoining the port — offering full foreign ownership and a twenty-year exemption. **The Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP)**: a dedicated regime for research and development, giving entitlement to a full exemption.

THE QFC AND FREE ZONES DO NOT SERVE THE SAME NEED

	QATAR FINANCIAL CENTRE (QFC)	FREE ZONES (QFZ)
Purpose	Financial and professional services, holding structures, asset management	Industry, logistics, trading — adjoining the airport or the port
Taxation	10% on locally sourced profits. **0%** concessionary rate for investment managers, reinsurers and captive insurers, or where at least 90% owned by Qatari interests.	**Twenty-year exemption**: nil corporate tax, nil customs duties, no income tax.
Foreign ownership	100%, full repatriation of profits	100%
Point of attention	The concessionary rate is tied to the nature of the activity, not merely to QFC registration.	**Customs duties become due again** on goods leaving the zone for the Qatari market.

QICCA AND QICDRC: AN ARBITRATION CENTRE AND A COURT, NOT TWO COMPETING CENTRES

The confusion is common, including in specialist literature, and it has direct consequences for the drafting of an arbitration clause.

	QICCA	QICDRC
Nature	**Arbitration centre** — the *Qatar International Center for Conciliation and Arbitration*, attached to the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry	**State court** — the *Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre*, the court of the Qatar Financial Centre, comprising a *Civil and Commercial Court* and a *Regulatory Tribunal*
Role	Administers arbitration, conciliation and mediation proceedings. 2024 arbitration rules.	May be designated "*Competent Court*": interim measures, enforcement, annulment appeals.
Key takeaway	An arbitration clause designates **QICCA** to administer the proceedings; **QICDRC** is not an arbitral institution and should not be designated as one.	

USUAL CORPORATE FORMS AND STRUCTURING

FORM	REGIME	TYPICAL USE
LLC / WLL	Mainland — 1 to 50 partners. **No minimum capital** since Law No. 11 of 2015 (removed the QAR 200,000 threshold).	Most common form: trade, distribution, services
Closed joint stock company	Minimum paid-up capital of **QAR 2 m**	Mid-sized projects, joint ventures
Public joint stock company	Minimum paid-up capital of **QAR 10 m**	Fundraising, listing in Doha
QFC or free zone company	Full foreign ownership, own regime	Financial services, trading, industry
Branch	Licence for holders of a public or quasi-public contract	Execution of a specific contract
Representative office	Promotion only — no sales, no contracts	Preliminary commercial presence

TAX REGIME — THE ESSENTIALS

TAX	RATE	DETAILS
Corporate tax	10 %	Law No. 24 of 2018, amended by Law No. 11 of 2022; executive regulations amended effective 16 May 2023. Filings via *Dhareeba*.
Companies 100% Qatari/GCC-owned	0 %	Out of scope. Mixed-ownership companies taxed pro rata to the foreign share.
Oil and gas operations	≥ 35 %	Law No. 3 of 2007. Agreements concluded before 1 January 2010: contractual rate maintained.
Global minimum tax	15 %	Law No. 22 of 2024 + Cabinet Resolution No. 2 of 2026. Groups with ≥ €750 m consolidated revenue. Financial years commencing 1 January 2025. DMTT and IIR adopted, no UTPR at this stage.
VAT	NONE	No VAT currently in force. GCC framework agreement signed (announced rate 5%); draft law approved by Cabinet, **not yet published**.
Withholding tax	5 %	Unified rate: technical fees, commissions, brokerage, interest, royalties. *Pay and reclaim* mechanism.
Dividend withholding	0 %	Not subject to withholding tax.
Personal income tax	NONE	Salaries not taxed. Self-employed individuals taxable on Qatar-sourced income.
Social security	EMPLOYER	Limited to Qatari employees; no obligation for other nationalities.
Customs duties	5 %	Goods originating outside the GCC.
Excise tax	50-100 %	Law No. 25 of 2018: tobacco 100%, energy drinks 100%, carbonated drinks 50%.
Treaty network	80+	France–Qatar (2007): nil rate on dividends, interest, royalties.

Tax sources: Qatar General Tax Authority, Qatar Financial Centre, PwC Worldwide Tax Summaries — Qatar.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND ATTRACTIVE SECTORS

The principle. Law No. 1 of 2019 allows foreign ownership up to **100%** in most sectors. **The condition, often overlooked**: approval from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; absent approval, a local partner holding at least 51% remains required. **Restricted sectors**: banking, insurance (unless approved by Cabinet decision), commercial agencies, real estate; foreign ownership of listed companies capped at 49%. **Liquefied natural gas**: current capacity ≈ 77 Mt/year, target 142 Mt/year (North Field expansion, adjustable timeline). **Financial services**: the natural ground for QFC structures. **Logistics**: free zones adjoining the airport and the port. The **Tawteen** programme and In-Country Value certification govern local content policy in the energy sector — the level of requirement varies by procuring entity.

EXCHANGE CONTROL REGULATIONS

The riyal is **pegged to the dollar at 3.64 QAR** (buy 3.6385 / sell 3.6415, Qatar Central Bank), neutralising currency risk on dollar-denominated flows. **No restrictions** on transferring funds abroad. Repatriation of dividends and capital is **uncapped**; combined with the absence of dividend withholding, no Qatari deduction applies to profit remittances to a foreign parent. **Good practice**: document the origin and destination of flows — banking compliance checks remain the main point of friction.

SECURING THE INVESTMENT — THREE UNDERESTIMATED POINTS

1. "No VAT" is true today, fragile tomorrow. The trap is set by the tax administration itself: the General Tax Authority publishes the GCC framework agreement citing a 5% rate — this is not a tax currently in force. A draft law is approved by Cabinet but not published. Design invoicing systems from the outset capable of absorbing a future VAT.

2. Full foreign ownership is an authorisation, not an acquired right. Law No. 1 of 2019 sets out the principle, but obtaining it in practice requires ministerial approval on a case-by-case basis. Address the sector qualification and the approval file upstream, not after signature.

3. An exemption does not remove filing obligations. At the QSTP, an exempt entity still has to file returns and apply the 5% withholding tax on payments to non-residents.

MAINLAND, QFC OR FREE ZONE: THE DECISIVE CRITERION

The rate gap between regimes looks narrow (10% on the mainland as at the QFC) — the decisive criterion lies elsewhere. An activity aimed at the domestic market sits poorly with a free zone, whose benefit dissipates once goods enter the customs territory. Trading and re-export activities make full use of the twenty-year free zone exemption. Financial services find at the QFC a dedicated regulator and courts sitting in English. Research and development finds at the QSTP an unmatched exemption regime, subject to the filing obligations that remain. A favourable point worth knowing: Qatar acceded to the **1958 New York Convention with no reservation** — neither reciprocity nor commerciality — a more open position than several of its neighbours.

OUR SUPPORT IN QATAR

UGGC Africa supports you in Qatar through its pan-African platform. Structuring across mainland, QFC and free zones, qualification of the foreign investment regime, dividend repatriation, drafting of arbitration clauses. Contact: **africa@uggc.com** — uggcafrica.com

Disclaimer. This country factsheet is provided for general information purposes, as at August 2026; it does not constitute legal or tax advice and cannot bind UGGC Africa. Rates, free zone regimes and foreign ownership rules evolve rapidly in the Gulf. Any investment decision should be the subject of a tailored analysis. **Sources:** Qatar General Tax Authority, Qatar Central Bank, Qatar Financial Centre, PwC Worldwide Tax Summaries, International Monetary Fund.