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Editor’s note

This is the first issue of Gulf Constructs. It brings together everything we published on the site in November 2026: the foreign investment laws of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Egypt, corporate tax in the UAE and across the six Gulf states, the rules on foreign property ownership, and the comparison table for the countries we cover.

We have one rule: every number and date in this issue comes from an official text, cited at the end of each article with the date we accessed it. Anything we have not yet verified is marked “under verification” rather than guessed.

The content is general information, not legal, tax or investment advice; always check the latest official text and consult a licensed professional before any decision.

— The editorial team

Regulation & tax · Egypt

Egypt's Investment Law: guarantees, incentives and the Golden License

Investment Law No. 72 of 2017, amended by Law No. 141 of 2019 and Law No. 160 of 2023, governs investment in Egypt and is applied by the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones. These are its key provisions as set out in GAFI's official translation, with the headline tax rates.

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The Iconic Tower and the central business district in the New Administrative Capital, June 2023. Photo: Mohamed Ouda — Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Guarantees

- All investments receive fair and equitable treatment; the state guarantees foreign investors the same treatment as national investors, and the Council of Ministers may grant preferential treatment on the basis of reciprocity (Article 3).
- The state grants non-Egyptian investors residence for the term of the project, subject to the relevant laws (Article 3).
- Investment projects may not be nationalised, and their assets may only be expropriated for public utility against just compensation paid in advance without delay, equal to the assets' economic value on the day before the decision, and freely transferable (Article 4).
- No administrative body may revoke or suspend a project's licence or reclaim its allocated property without notifying the investor of the violations, hearing them and giving a grace period, and after obtaining GAFI's opinion (Article 5).

Free funding and transfers

The investor may set up, expand and fund the project from abroad without restriction and in foreign currencies, own, manage and dispose of it, make and transfer profits abroad, and liquidate it and transfer the proceeds in whole or in part. The state permits all transfers relating to foreign investment to and from Egypt in a freely convertible currency without delay (Article 6).

Projects may employ foreign workers up to 10% of the workforce, rising to 20% if qualified national workers are unavailable, and foreign workers may transfer their dues abroad (Article 8).

Special incentives

Projects set up in line with the investment map receive an incentive in the form of a deduction from taxable net profits (Article 11):

- A 50% deduction of investment costs in Sector (A), the areas most in need of development.
- A 30% deduction of investment costs in Sector (B), for projects including labour-intensive projects, SMEs, new and renewable energy, exporters, automotive and components, and food, engineering, metallurgical and textile industries.
- The incentive may not exceed 80% of paid-up capital at the start of activity, and the deduction period may not exceed seven years from the start of activity.

The Golden License

The law allows the Council of Ministers to grant a comprehensive approval known as the "Golden License" to companies setting up strategic or national projects. According to the Cabinet decree included in the official translation, the licence covers building, operating and managing the project, including building permits and the real estate required, may grant one or more of the law's incentives, and is self-executing. Criteria for a strategic project include exporting at least 50% of output a year, funding with foreign money transferred from abroad, or reducing imports and deepening local manufacturing.

Headline taxes

- Tax on the profits of companies operating in Egypt is 22.5%, according to GAFI.
- VAT is 14% since the start of fiscal year 2017/2018; 5% on machinery and equipment used in production except buses and passenger cars; exports zero-rated (Article 3 of VAT Law No. 67 of 2016).

Before any decision

This is a general summary of official texts at the time of publication, not legal or tax advice. Articles are quoted from GAFI's English translation; the Arabic text prevails. The law has been amended more than once, so check the latest text and GAFI's publications, and consult a licensed professional.

Sources

1. Investment Law No. 72 of 2017 — GAFI English translation (including Law No. 160 of 2023 amendments)
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4. Value Added Tax Law No. 67 of 2016 — Egyptian Tax Authority translation (updated to 15 January 2023)

Accessed: 21 November 2026

Real estate · GCC

Foreign property ownership in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar and Oman: what the official texts say

A new Saudi law on real estate ownership by non-Saudis entered into force on 22 January 2026, each UAE emirate regulates ownership on its land, Qatar has opened 25 areas to non-Qatari owners, and Oman allows ownership in integrated tourism complexes. These are the rules as published by the official bodies.

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The waterfront and marina at Al Mouj, Muscat, July 2026 (cropped). Photo: Karananand2 — Wikimedia Commons, CC0 1.0.

Saudi Arabia: a new law with geographic areas

The Law of Real Estate Ownership by Non-Saudis was issued by Royal Decree (M/14) on 14 July 2025, according to the Real Estate General Authority, superseding the law issued by Royal Decree (M/15) dated 17/4/1421H (Article 14). REGA announced its entry into force on 22 January 2026, the Saudi Press Agency reported.

- A non-Saudi individual, company or non-profit entity may own real estate or acquire other rights in rem within the geographic area set by the Council of Ministers, which also sets the types of rights, the maximum ownership percentage in each area and the maximum usufruct period (Article 2).
- A non-Saudi legally residing in the Kingdom may own one property outside these areas as a residence, except in Makkah and Madinah (Article 2).
- Within Makkah and Madinah ownership is limited to Muslim individuals; unlisted Saudi companies with foreign shareholders may own within the areas, including the two cities (Articles 2 and 3).
- A non-Saudi company or entity registers with the relevant agency before owning, and ownership is valid only upon registration in the Real Estate Registry (Article 8).

- A fee of up to 5% of the value applies to dispositions of rights in rem by non-Saudis (Article 9).
- Violations carry a warning or a fine of up to 5% of the value of the right, capped at SAR 10 million; deliberately false information can lead to a court-ordered sale of the right (Articles 10 and 12).

According to the Saudi Press Agency, applications go through the "Saudi Properties" portal: residents apply with their residency ID; non-residents start through Saudi missions abroad to obtain a digital ID; and non-Saudi companies with no presence in the Kingdom first register with the Ministry of Investment via the "Invest Saudi" platform to obtain a unified number.

UAE: each emirate has its own rules

The official UAE government portal says property laws differ from one emirate to another and sets out the rules of three emirates:

- Dubai: foreign ownership is permitted in designated freehold areas; residents and non-residents may acquire freehold ownership without restriction, or usufruct or leasehold rights for up to 99 years. Regulation No. 3 of 2006 lists the designated plots, the Land Department issues title deeds, and there is no age limit.
- Abu Dhabi: Law No. 19 of 2005, amended by Law No. 13 of 2019, allows expatriates to own floors and apartments but not land, through ownership for 99 years, musataha for 50 years renewable, usufruct for 99 years, or long-term lease of at least 25 years, in nine areas including Yas Island, Saadiyat, Reem and Masdar City. The 2019 amendment allows non-UAE nationals to own property in investment areas.
- Sharjah: foreigners cannot own outright, but may hold usufruct for up to 100 years after registration with the Real Estate Registration Department, in areas set by the Sharjah government and with special approval from the Ruler, under Executive Council Resolution No. 26 of 2014.

Qatar: 25 areas and property-linked residency

According to Invest Qatar, Council of Ministers Resolution No. 28 of 2020 allows non-Qataris to own and use property in 25 designated areas, including offices, shops, units and villas in residential complexes, and real estate development on designated plots.

- Freehold: full property rights, including selling, mortgaging and renting.
- Usufruct: rights for a specified period, usually up to 99 years, with the possibility of extension.
- Property worth at least QR 3.65 million qualifies for a residence permit with permanent residency privileges, including free healthcare and education.
- Property worth at least QR 730,000 qualifies for a residence permit without a local sponsor, subject to residency requirements.

Oman: integrated tourism complexes

Invest Oman says foreigners and foreign companies may own real estate only in specified integrated tourism complexes, and may enter into renewable 50-year leases in most areas of the Sultanate. In September 2025 the agency announced a 10-year Golden Residency programme whose seven routes include buying residential, commercial or hospitality property in integrated tourism complexes.

And the rest of the Gulf?

We are working on Kuwait and Bahrain and will add them here and on the Gulf comparison page once verified against their official texts — not before.

Before any decision

This is a general summary of what the official bodies publish at the time of writing, not legal or property

advice. Implementing regulations, geographic areas and area lists may change; check with the relevant emirate or country authority and use a licensed lawyer before buying.

Sources

1. Law of Real Estate Ownership by Non-Saudis — Real Estate General Authority (Royal Decree M/14, 2025)
2. Q&A on the updated Law of Real Estate Ownership by Non-Saudis — REGA (Official document)
3. REGA announces entry into force of the law allowing non-Saudis to own property — Saudi Press Agency (22 January 2026)
4. Expatriates buying a property in the UAE — The Official Portal of the UAE Government (updated 2 November 2026)
5. Keys to unlocking opportunities in Qatar's real estate landscape — Invest Qatar (23 October 2023)
6. Real estate sector — Invest Qatar (Official page)
7. Oman Trade Agreements — Invest Oman (undated)
8. Oman launches 10-year Golden Residency — Invest Oman (1 September 2025)

Accessed: 21 November 2026

Regulation & tax · Saudi Arabia

Saudi Investment Law: registration with the Ministry and the rights of foreign investors

Saudi Arabia's Council of Ministers approved the Investment Law by Resolution No. 40 dated 16 July 2024, and it was issued by Royal Decree No. (M/19) dated 16/1/1446H, replacing the Foreign Investment Law. These are the key points for investors as stated in the official text and its Implementing Regulations.

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Riyadh skyline showing Kingdom Tower and the King Abdullah Financial District (KAFD), April 2016. Photo: B.alotaby — Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

What changed?

Article 16 of the law repeals the Foreign Investment Law issued by Royal Decree No. (M/1) dated 5/1/1421H. The Ministry of Investment says the law was redesigned as an integrated system to replace the previous law, in line with Vision 2030 and the targets of the National Investment Strategy.

Article 2 sets out the law's aims, including facilitating the establishment of investments, ownership of their assets and exit from or liquidation of them, guaranteeing investors' rights, and guaranteeing equal treatment for local and foreign investors.

Investors' rights

Article 4 provides that, without prejudice to relevant laws, an investor has the following rights:

- Equal treatment with other investors, and equal treatment of local and foreign investors under similar circumstances.
- Fair and just treatment.
- No full or partial confiscation of the investment except by a final judicial ruling, and no direct or indirect expropriation except for public interest, in accordance with legal procedures and in return for fair compensation.
- Transfer of funds within or outside the Kingdom without delay, including investment proceeds,

profits and the proceeds of sale or liquidation, through legal channels and in any recognized currency.

- Management and disposal of the investment, and ownership of any property necessary for the conduct of the business.
- Protection of intellectual property and trade secrets.
- Facilitation of administrative procedures and necessary support from the competent authority.

Registration with the Ministry of Investment

The Ministry establishes a national register of investors, and a foreign investor must register with the Ministry before engaging in any investment (Article 7). This does not apply to investments in securities subject to the Capital Market Law.

The Implementing Regulations set out the registration procedure, including:

- The Ministry notifies the applicant of registration within no more than 10 working days from the date all registration requirements are satisfied (Regulations, Article 12).
- If an application is incomplete, the Ministry sets a period to complete it of no less than 15 working days; the application is deemed cancelled if the information is not provided in time.
- A registered investor submits an annual update of the declarations and of any change to the registered data (Regulations, Article 13).

Through its comprehensive service center, the Ministry may receive an investor's applications for the legal approvals needed for the activity, including licenses and permits, in coordination with the competent authorities (Article 7).

Excluded activities and national security

The competent authorities issue a list of activities in which foreign investment is prohibited or restricted, and the Ministry publishes it (Article 8). Investing in any listed activity, or any change affecting ownership of an investment in a restricted activity, requires a prior approval application to the Ministry.

The Ministry may suspend any foreign investment to protect national security, provided the decision is based on objective grounds and is consistent with the Kingdom's international obligations (Article 9).

Disputes and penalties

An investor who is party to a dispute, including one with a government agency, may go to the competent court unless the parties agree otherwise, and may agree to arbitration, mediation or conciliation (Article 10).

Violating the registration or excluded-activities provisions can lead to a warning, a fine of up to SAR 300,000 (doubled for a repeat violation), or cancellation of registration (Article 11). A person may appeal a Ministry decision before the competent court within 30 days of notification (Article 12).

When did it take effect?

The law enters into force 180 days after its publication in the Official Gazette (Article 16), and its Implementing Regulations take effect on the same date (Article 15). On 11 August 2024 the Saudi Press Agency reported that the implementing regulations would come into effect beginning in 2025.

Before any decision

This article is a general summary of the official texts at the time of publication and is not legal or investment advice. Articles of the law are quoted from the official English translation by the Bureau of Experts at the Council of Ministers; the Arabic text is the governing text. Check the full text and the latest publications of the Ministry of Investment, and consult a licensed professional before any decision.

Sources

1. Investment Law — official English translation (Bureau of Experts at the Council of Ministers), published by the Ministry of Investment (Council of Ministers Resolution No. 40, 16 July 2024)
2. Implementing Regulations of the Investment Law — Ministry of Investment (2025)
3. Investment Minister: The Updated Investment Law Reaffirms Saudi Arabia's Commitment to Creating Welcoming, Secure Environment for Investors — Saudi Press Agency (SPA) (11 August 2024)
4. Updated Investment Law — Ministry of Investment (Official page)

Accessed: 21 November 2026

Regulation & tax · GCC

Corporate tax and VAT in the six Gulf states: a comparison from official sources

Gulf states differ widely in how they tax companies: some tax all companies, others only foreign shares. We gathered the rates as published by each country's official tax authority, with a link to every source.

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The overall picture

- Saudi Arabia: 20% income tax on non-Saudi shares in resident companies, and 2.5% zakat on the shares of Saudis and GCC nationals treated as Saudis. VAT 15%.
- UAE: 9% corporate tax on taxable income above AED 375,000 and 0% below it. VAT 5%.
- Qatar: 10% income tax on net income generated in Qatar; Qatari partners are exempt. No VAT applied.
- Kuwait: 15% tax on net taxable income of foreign companies, plus other taxes and contributions for Kuwaiti companies.
- Oman: 15% income tax on net taxable income, and 3% for small enterprises meeting conditions. VAT 5%.
- Bahrain: not yet published, because its official tax sites block access from abroad; we will not publish a figure before verifying it.

Saudi Arabia: tax on foreign shares, zakat on Saudi shares

According to ZATCA's Simplified Guideline for Income Tax (May 2026), income tax at 20% applies to resident companies on non-Saudi shares, to non-Saudi residents carrying on business, and to non-residents operating through a permanent establishment. Oil and hydrocarbon production has rates from 50% to 85%.

Saudi shares in resident companies are subject to zakat at 2.5% of the zakat base per Hijri year; the Zakat Collection Regulations define "Saudi" to include GCC nationals accorded similar treatment. VAT has been 15% since 1 July 2020.

UAE: an exempt band, then 9%

Federal Decree-Law No. 47 of 2022 applies to tax periods starting on or after 1 June 2023, at 0% on taxable income up to AED 375,000 and 9% above it under Cabinet Decision No. 116 of 2022. VAT has been 5% since 1 January 2018.

Qatar: 10% and no VAT

The General Tax Authority says income tax is 10% on net income generated in Qatar and 35% for oil and petrochemicals. Qatari partners are exempt, while foreign partners pay 10% on their share of net profit. The Authority states that Qatar has not applied VAT.

Kuwait: 15% on foreign companies

Law No. 2 of 2008 fixes tax at 15% of net taxable income. According to KDIPA's brochure (November 2025), this applies to foreign companies' share of profit; there is also a 2.5% National Labour Support Tax on listed companies' profits, and 1% zakat and a 1% KFAS contribution on shareholding companies' profits. We have not yet found an accessible official text confirming Kuwait's current VAT position.

Oman: 15%, and 3% for small enterprises

Oman's Tax Authority portal lists 15% of net taxable income for establishments and commercial companies, 3% for small enterprises meeting conditions such as revenue and headcount, and 55% for oil and gas exploration companies under concession contracts. VAT is 5% on most goods and services, zero-rated for some such as exports, with exemptions including financial services and residential rent.

Before any decision

These are the headline rates as published by the official bodies at the time of writing; each country has exceptions, exemptions, incentives and multinational group rules not covered here. This is not tax advice; check the full texts and consult a licensed tax adviser. You can compare the countries side by side on our Gulf comparison page.

Sources

1. Simplified Guideline for Income Tax, second version — ZATCA (May 2026)
2. Implementing Regulations for Zakat Collection 1445H — ZATCA (2024, amended 1446H)
3. About Value Added Tax — ZATCA (Official page)
4. Federal Decree-Law No. 47 of 2022 on the Taxation of Corporations and Businesses — Ministry of Finance (December 2022)
5. Cabinet Decision No. 116 of 2022 — Ministry of Finance (2022)
6. Value Added Tax (VAT) — UAE Ministry of Finance (Official page)
7. Investors guide — General Tax Authority, Qatar (Official page)
8. Law No. 2 of 2008 amending Kuwait Income Tax Decree No. 3 of 1955 — published by KDIPA (2008)
9. Invest in Kuwait brochure — KDIPA (November 2025)
10. Tax rates — Oman Tax Authority portal (Official page)

Accessed: 21 November 2026

Regulation & tax · UAE

UAE Corporate Tax: what investors need to know

The UAE taxes the net profit of corporations and businesses under Federal Decree-Law No. 47 of 2022 on the Taxation of Corporations and Businesses. This is a summary of the key points as stated in the official texts.

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The Hatta mountains and dam lake in Dubai, June 2018. Photo: Chuck202 — Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

When did it start?

Article 69 of the Decree-Law provides that it applies to tax periods commencing on or after 1 June 2023. According to the official UAE government portal, businesses became subject to Corporate Tax from the beginning of their first financial year starting on or after that date; a company whose financial year starts on 1 January became subject to the tax from the financial year that began on 1 January 2024.

What is the rate?

The Decree-Law (Article 3) sets two rates and leaves the threshold between them to a Cabinet decision. Cabinet Decision No. 116 of 2022, published by the Ministry of Finance on 1 February 2023, sets it as follows:

- 0% on the portion of taxable income not exceeding AED 375,000 in the tax period.
- 9% on taxable income exceeding AED 375,000.

Illustrative calculation: a company with taxable income of AED 1 million in a year pays 9% on AED 625,000 (the amount above 375,000), giving tax of AED 56,250.

The same decision warns that artificially splitting a business across several persons to keep income under the AED 375,000 threshold is considered by the Federal Tax Authority an arrangement to obtain a tax advantage.

Who is subject to it?

According to the official UAE government portal, Corporate Tax applies to:

- All businesses and individuals conducting business activities under a commercial licence in the UAE.
- Free zone businesses, with incentives continuing for those that comply with regulatory requirements and do not conduct business in the UAE mainland.
- Foreign entities and individuals, only if they conduct a trade or business in the UAE in an ongoing or regular manner.
- Banking operations.
- Businesses engaged in real estate management, construction, development, agency and brokerage.

Some persons are exempt, including government entities, government-controlled entities specified in a Cabinet Decision, extractive and non-extractive natural resource businesses subject to conditions, qualifying public benefit entities, and pension, social security and qualifying investment funds approved by the Federal Tax Authority.

Free zone companies

The Decree-Law (Article 3, Clause 2) distinguishes two kinds of income for a Qualifying Free Zone Person: 0% on Qualifying Income and 9% on taxable income that is not Qualifying Income. The Federal Tax Authority's free zone guide (May 2024) explains that a Qualifying Free Zone Person is not entitled to the 0% rate on its first AED 375,000 of taxable income.

Tax returns

The Federal Tax Authority administers, collects and enforces the tax. Under Article 53 of the Decree-Law, a tax return must be filed with the Authority no later than nine months from the end of the tax period, or by another date set by the Authority. The Authority publishes registration and filing guides on its website.

Before any decision

This article is a general summary of the official texts at the time of publication and is not tax advice. Specific situations, such as groups, exemptions and free zones, require checking the full texts and the latest decisions of the Ministry of Finance and the Federal Tax Authority, and consulting a licensed tax adviser.

Sources

1. Federal Decree-Law No. 47 of 2022 on the Taxation of Corporations and Businesses — unofficial translation, Ministry of Finance (December 2022)
2. Cabinet Decision No. 116 of 2022 on the annual Taxable Income subject to Corporate Tax — Ministry of Finance (2022)
3. Ministry of Finance Confirms Applicable Taxable Income Threshold for Corporate Tax — Ministry of Finance (1 February 2023)
4. Corporate tax (CT) — The Official Portal of the UAE Government (updated 28 October 2026)
5. Corporate Tax Guide: Free Zone Persons (CTGFZP1) — Federal Tax Authority (May 2024)

Accessed: 21 November 2026

Regulation & tax · Qatar

Qatar’s foreign investment law: full ownership, guarantees and incentives

Law No. (1) of 2019 on Regulating Non-Qatari Capital Investment in the Economic Activity governs foreign investors’ access to the Qatari market. This is a summary of what the law offers as presented by Invest Qatar, the country’s investment promotion agency.

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West Bay skyline in Doha, February 2026 (cropped). Photo: P. Hughes — Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 4.0.

Full ownership

According to Invest Qatar, the law enables the establishment of fully foreign-owned companies, a departure from the previous requirement for a Qatari national or a Qatari-owned entity to hold at least 51% of the share capital for foreign investors to participate in the economy. The agency says this requirement is often no longer necessary under the law.

Guarantees

- Protection of foreign capital from expropriation, while the state retains the right to acquire assets for public benefit on a non-discriminatory basis, paying the full economic value of the asset.
- The right to transfer funds relating to the investment out of Qatar.
- The right to lease premises for up to 50 years.
- The right to transfer ownership of the investment to another investor, or to relinquish it to the national partner in a joint venture.
- Settlement of disputes with third parties through arbitration or other means of dispute settlement, except labour disputes.

Incentives

Invest Qatar lists the following incentives for non-Qatari investors:

- Allocation of land for investment projects through rent or usufruct.
- Exemption from income tax as stipulated under the Income Tax Law.

- Exemption from customs duties on raw and semi-manufactured goods required for production that are unavailable locally.

The Council of Ministers may, on the Minister's suggestion, grant investment projects incentives and benefits in addition to those in the law.

Excluded sectors

According to the agency, 100% foreign ownership does not apply to banking and insurance, companies engaged in the exploitation of natural resources, commercial agencies, and any other sectors decided by the Council of Ministers.

Before any decision

This article is a general summary of what Invest Qatar publishes at the time of writing and is not legal or investment advice. Conditions vary by activity; check the law, its regulations and any later decisions, and consult a licensed professional before any decision.

Sources

1. Investment laws — Invest Qatar (Official page)
2. 100% foreign ownership in Qatar — Invest Qatar (Official page)

Accessed: 21 November 2026

Regulation & tax · Kuwait

Kuwait's Direct Investment Promotion Law: licensing, incentives and guarantees

Law No. 116 of 2013 on the Promotion of Direct Investment in the State of Kuwait was promulgated on 16 June 2013, replacing Law No. 8 of 2001. These are its key provisions for investors as stated in its text.

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Kuwait City skyline, December 2022 (cropped). Photo: Zairon — Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 4.0.

Who applies the law?

The law established a public authority called the Direct Investment Promotion Authority, attached to the relevant minister, the Minister of Commerce and Industry (Articles 1 and 2). It defines an investor as a natural or legal person of any nationality.

Types of investment entity

Article 12 sets out the cases in which a licence application is submitted, including:

- A Kuwaiti company in one of the forms under the Companies Law, incorporated for direct investment, in which foreign participation may amount to 100% of the capital in accordance with the Companies Law.
- A branch of a foreign company licensed to operate in Kuwait for direct investment.
- Representative offices for the purposes set out in the law.

Decision time and one-stop shop

- A decision on the application is made within 30 days of submission of a complete application (Article 15).
- A rejection must be reasoned and in writing; the applicant may appeal, and no response to the appeal within 30 days is deemed a rejection (Article 16).
- A "One-Stop Shop" unit within the Authority, staffed by employees of the relevant government bodies, completes licensing and incorporation within the set period (Article 17).

The Council of Ministers prepares a list of investments excluded from the scope of the law, updated in light of state policy (Article 11).

Incentives

Under Article 27 an investor may receive some or all of the following incentives, among others:

- Exemption from income tax or any other taxes for up to ten years from the actual commencement of operations of the licensed investment entity.
- Exemption of expansions of a licensed investment entity from these taxes.
- Full or partial exemption from taxes and customs duties on imports required for direct investment, such as machinery, equipment and means of transport, subject to the GCC Unified Customs Code.

The value, type and duration of incentives are linked to criteria including transfer of technology and modern management methods, the needs of the local and Gulf market, increased exports, and job creation and training for the national workforce (Article 29).

Guarantees

- A licensed investment entity may not be confiscated or expropriated except in the public interest and in accordance with the law, against compensation equal to the true economic value of the project at the time of expropriation, paid as soon as the decision is taken (Article 19).
- The investor may transfer or relinquish ownership of the entity, in whole or in part, to a foreign or Kuwaiti investor (Article 20).
- The investor may transfer profits, capital and the proceeds of disposal abroad, and employees may transfer their savings and entitlements (Article 22).
- Kuwaiti courts are competent for disputes between investment projects and third parties, and the parties may agree to arbitration (Article 26).

Sanctions

For violations of the law or licence conditions, the Authority's board may impose sanctions including a written warning and partial or total withdrawal of incentives and exemptions. The licence becomes void by law if the entity ceases its activity for more than a year, or if actual operations start more than a year late, without acceptable justification (Article 32).

Before any decision

This article is a general summary of the law and is not legal or investment advice. Provisions are quoted from the English translation published on WIPO Lex; the Arabic text is the governing text. Check the full text, its executive regulations and the Authority's publications, and consult a licensed professional before any decision.

Sources

1. Law No. 116 of 2013 on the Promotion of Direct Investment in the State of Kuwait — English text on WIPO Lex (promulgated 16 June 2013)

Accessed: 21 November 2026

Regulation & tax · Oman

Oman's Foreign Capital Investment Law: registration, incentives and guarantees

The Foreign Capital Investment Law was issued by Royal Decree No. 50/2019 on 1 July 2019 and entered into force on 1 January 2020, replacing the law issued by Royal Decree 102/94. These are its key provisions as stated in its text.

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Muttrah corniche in Muscat at sunset, May 2017. Photo: Muiad123 — Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Registration and licensing

- A foreigner, whether a natural or legal person, may not undertake any investment activity in the Sultanate except in accordance with this law (Article 3).
- The Investment Services Centre at the Ministry registers foreign investors and facilitates approvals, permits and licences. If no response is given within the periods set in the regulation, the request is deemed accepted (Article 5).
- Foreign investment is carried out through an establishment or company in a permitted activity, owning the invested capital in whole or contributing to it, with a licence issued by the Centre (Article 6).
- The list of activities prohibited to foreign investment is issued by a decision of the Minister (Article 14).

By decision of the Council of Ministers, strategic projects in public utilities, infrastructure, new or renewable energy, roads, transport or ports may be granted a single approval to establish, operate and manage the project (Article 10).

Incentives

- An investment project enjoys all the benefits, incentives and guarantees of a national project; the Council of Ministers may grant preferential treatment on the basis of reciprocity, and additional benefits for projects in the least developed areas (Article 18).
- Land and real estate may be allocated through long-term leases or usufruct rights (Article 19).
- The project may import production supplies, materials and machinery without registering in the

Importers Register (Article 21).

- Tax exemption follows the provisions of the Income Tax Law (Article 22).

Guarantees

- An investment project may not be confiscated, nor its assets impounded or frozen, except by a judicial decision; tax debts due to the state are excepted (Article 23).
- A project may not be expropriated except for public benefit and against fair compensation paid without delay (Article 24).
- An approval or licence may only be revoked by a reasoned decision after a written warning, a hearing, and a period of up to 30 days to remedy the violation (Article 25).
- The foreign investor may freely make all transfers relating to the project to and from abroad at any time, including returns, proceeds of sale or liquidation, and compensation (Article 26).
- The investor may transfer ownership of the project in whole or in part to another foreign or Omani investor (Article 27).
- Omani courts are competent for disputes, investment cases are treated as urgent, and arbitration is permitted (Article 17).

Violations and grievances

The Ministry notifies the investor in writing of any violation, to be remedied within up to 30 days; otherwise incentives may be withdrawn, the activity suspended for up to six months, or the licence permanently revoked for repeat violations (Articles 28 and 29). A foreigner who undertakes investment activity in violation of the law faces a fine of OMR 20,000 to OMR 150,000 (Article 33). Grievances may be filed with a committee at the Ministry within 60 days of notification of the decision (Articles 30 and 31).

Before any decision

This article is a general summary of the law and is not legal or investment advice. Provisions are quoted from the English translation by the Ministry of Legal Affairs published on WIPO Lex; the official reference is the Arabic text. Check the full text, its executive regulation and any later amendments, and consult a licensed professional before any decision.

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Accessed: 21 November 2026

Country comparison

Country comparison

The headline rate or rule as stated in the official source. Full details and conditions are on the comparison page: gulfconstructs.com/en/compare/

Gulf states

Criterion	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Qatar	Kuwait	Bahrain	Oman
Corporate tax	20%[12]	9%[34]	10%[5]	15%[67]	*Under verification*	15%[8]
VAT	15%[9]	5%[1011]	Not applied[5]	*Under verification*	*Under verification*	5%[8]
Foreign ownership	Permitted, with a list of excluded activities[12]	Up to 100% on the mainland[13]	Up to 100%[14]	Up to 100%[15]	*Under verification*	Full or partial[16]
Investment legal framework	Investment Law[12]	Commercial Companies Law[13]	Law No. (1) of 2019[17]	Law No. 116 of 2013[15]	*Under verification*	Foreign Capital Investment Law[16]
Foreign property ownership	Permitted within set geographic areas[1819]	In areas set by each emirate[20]	In 25 designated areas[2122]	*Under verification*	*Under verification*	In integrated tourism complexes[2324]
Investor residency	Premium residency, permanent or fixed-term[25]	Golden visa, 5 or 10 years[26]	Residency via property from QAR 730,000[21]	*Under verification*	*Under verification*	10-year golden residency from OMR 200,000[24]

Middle East

Criterion	Egypt	Jordan	Iraq
Corporate tax	22.5%[2728]	*Under verification*	*Under verification*
VAT	14%[29]	*Under verification*	*Under verification*
Foreign ownership	Equal treatment with Egyptian investors[28]	*Under verification*	*Under verification*
Investment legal framework	Investment Law No. 72 of 2017[28]	*Under verification*	*Under verification*
Foreign property ownership	*Under verification*	*Under verification*	*Under verification*

Criterion	Egypt	Jordan	Iraq
Investor residency	Residence for the project term[28]	*Under verification*	*Under verification*

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