Invest in the heart of the Gulf
You have arrived at the heart of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC): six economies and 36 million consumers that are expected to have a combined USD 2 trillion GDP by 2020.

You are close to Saudi Arabia, the Gulf’s largest economy, with USD 653 billion GDP and 3.4% growth1.

And you are within touching distance of the wider Middle East and North Africa (MENA) area, with 400 million consumers, a combined USD 3 trillion GDP and 3.8% growth2.

A business friendly environment

We do more to create the conditions in which business can flourish and succeed in these markets.

Location apart, we offer investors the ability to:

Pursue commercial opportunities from the region’s best-connected country3 and its proven centre for investment.

Gain competitive advantage with the help of a skilled, educated local workforce, well-developed infrastructure and the Gulf’s lowest operating costs4.

Operate freely within a mature regulatory framework, backed by a government committed to cutting red tape.

Enjoy a relaxed, liberal way of life that is rich and fulfilling. Bahrain is not just an excellent home for business; it is also a wonderful home for you and your family.

We have been pursuing this ambitious vision for over 40 years and continue to invest more than USD 32 billion in our economy.

Discover why Bahrain is the best home for your business.

Get the access you need

Bahrain’s central Gulf location and superb links to the rest of MENA place your enterprise at the heart of the action. Being nearer to export markets saves you, your customers and your employees time and money.

단지 연결 뒤와 더 효율적으로

Our transport links are so versatile that you can reach every country in the GCC quickly and conveniently by road, air or sea.

Saudi Arabia’s industrial powerhouse, the Eastern Province, is just a 30-minute drive across the 25km King Fahd Causeway.

The whole of the Middle East is easily accessible by air or by road. Neighbouring GCC cities lie between four and eight hours’ drive by road and are all within an hour’s flight from Bahrain International Airport.

주십시오 브로더에 효과적입니다

Everything seems to happen more efficiently in Bahrain. You will close business deals promptly. Your people will travel swiftly. You will keep your supply chain moving and you will keep your customers happy. Bahrain doesn’t just offer excellent connections, but a well-planned, integrated infrastructure.

Our airport, seaport and processing zones provide the shortest possible transit. If you are shipping by sea from Khalifa Bin Salman Port, Bahrain offers the fastest clearance time in the GCC. Employees and visitors can enter Bahrain easily too, thanks to our liberal visa policy, where 66 countries are eligible for an on arrival visa5.

Better still, all of Bahrain’s facilities and networks are constantly being developed, upgraded and expanded to meet growing demand.

"Bahrain is a perfect hub. Nothing is too far."
Jaap Vaandrager, President, MH Hydraulics

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5. www.evisa.gov.bh

Bahrain International Airport

- DHL headquarters for the Middle East
- Gulf Air’s international flight hub
- 60% expansion of cargo and passenger terminal planned

Khalifa Bin Salman Port

- Operated by the largest port operator in the world, APM Terminals
- Commercial and tourism port with a 15 metre depth
- Average clearance time of 7 hours per container
- Total capacity of 1,100,000 TEU

Transit times

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Air (Min)</th>
<th>Air (Hrs)</th>
<th>Road (Min)</th>
<th>Road (Hrs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>45</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dubai</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Air minutes are published flight times
Be more profitable

Invest in Bahrain and you will see significant financial benefits that ease business operations, increase competitiveness, bolster the bottom line and realise greater personal income.

This is thanks to Bahrain’s long-term economic vision; a deliberate blend of prudence and imagination that has created sustained, controlled growth with low inflation and price stability.

_low commercial costs_

Your cost burden will be lower in Bahrain, across all kinds of business activities, from set-up onwards.

We offer some of the lowest total operating costs in the region – approximately 30% lower than in neighbouring hubs. Rental, internet and telephone services are all more affordable. In comparison to other GCC states, Bahrain has the most competitive commercial property market, with rents as low as USD 10 per square metre⁶, and employee costs are consistently lower at all levels⁷.

If you are in manufacturing or logistics, shipping and port costs are lower than in other GCC markets, and transactions across the region are duty-free. These advantages extend worldwide thanks to more than 120 bilateral economic and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with more than 70 major markets including the USA, UK, Scandinavia, France, China, India and Singapore⁸.

-low tax_

You will benefit from the GCC’s most favourable tax regime. That means no corporate, personal income or inheritance taxes; no wealth taxes on capital gains; no withholding taxes; and few indirect taxes. It is no wonder those who make the decision to relocate and reside here, end up feeling a lot better off.

_full ownership and repatriation_

Through the US-Bahrain FTA, our IP (Intellectual Property) laws meet US standards, making Bahrain the only regional economy to offer most businesses 100% foreign ownership with competitive IP protection. Because all of Bahrain acts as a free zone, there are no free trade or zoning restrictions to purchasing property, and your company may buy land freehold throughout the Kingdom for commercial use. In addition, you can repatriate all capital, profits and dividends.
Find the workforce to propel your business

Bahrain provides the human capital your business needs to thrive. You will benefit from a highly skilled bilingual and educated local workforce.

Young, motivated and growing in number by around 3% year, our people are ready and willing to join your enterprise and help to propel you towards your goals.

✦ Commercially focused

Bahrain is unique in the region in employing the clear majority of its nationals in the private sector.

Many Bahrainis train at specialist institutions, such as the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance, on programmes designed to meet the specific needs of business. Several training institutions support workforce development to ensure better alignment with market demand. In fact, in 2014 alone, about 3,500 trainees were registered for vocational and technical programmes.

As a result, we provide expertise across all sectors, with particular strengths in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and financial services.

✦ Highly educated

We have the region’s longest-established education system. Academic achievement is central to growing up in Bahrain, with 78% of school leavers going on to earn a degree at our universities and polytechnics, rising to 89% in ICT. It means that our young people join the workforce with both an exceptional array of skills and extremely high levels of motivation.

✦ Deepest talent pool

Gender equality gives you access to the largest talent resource in the GCC. In contrast to some GCC countries, you can draw on the talents of a large number of highly educated and motivated women with Bahrain ranked first in the world for women in higher education (at 80%).

Matthew Deakin, CEO, HSBC Middle East

“...The majority of HSBC staff is female and that goes right through the organisation. Currently our head of operations, IT, retail banking and HR – all direct reports of mine – are Bahraini women.”

Supportive environment

There is a palpable passion for entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity in Bahrain. A number of government agencies help to foster it. For example, Tamkeen, a government backed labour fund, has invested to date over USD 600 million in training, grants, career guidance services and professional certifications, as well as international placements. For employers, Tamkeen offers salary subsidies, training and financing grants.

Add the benefits of high retention and low overall labour costs, and these initiatives make Bahrain compelling for local employment.

Operate as you want

You have total freedom in Bahrain thanks to our open economy, which consistently rates as one of the world’s most liberal. The 2016 Heritage Foundation and Wall Street Journal’s Index of Economic Freedom ranks us 18th out of 178 countries and 1st in MENA. In fact, we are the only MENA country to rank in the top 20.

Most importantly, your investment will thrive in an environment where regulation is clear, simple and transparent, and never for its own sake.

Solid foundations for business

Bahrain offers an attractive regulatory environment with governance standards that deliver exceptional stability.

Financial regulation is unified under the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB), which oversees the conduct of the Kingdom’s banks, stock and other exchanges and capital markets.

The judicial system is based on civil law and is largely similar to the Egyptian civil code, which is extensively modelled on the French civil code. Bahrain’s civil code is well-established, having been in force since 2001.

Transparency is a key feature. The CBB consults publicly and widely before issuing new regulations, and there are established institutions and processes to resolve disputes and combat corruption.

As a result, business dealings are straightforward. Bahrain has a zero-tolerance policy towards money laundering and companies are expected to meet international standards and pursue sound corporate governance.

Less red tape, more collaboration

Apart from 100% foreign ownership for most business activities, you will appreciate the Bahraini government’s commitment to minimal bureaucracy. And you can get involved; government, business and regulators work closely with each other to nurture the optimum commercial conditions, unfettered by interference.

Simpler to get started

You will find fewer hurdles to setting up a business in Bahrain. Organisations such as the Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB) make establishment faster and less costly than the MENA average.

“\textit{It only took us a few days to set up the company. It was great to see the efficiency.}\textendash$$\textit{Daniel Naoumovitch, CEO, Sabre Travel Network Middle East}
Love the life here

Living and working in Bahrain can be inspirational. The lifestyle that awaits you and your employees is superb.

✦ Welcoming people

Bahrain is not just business friendly. Friendliness is perhaps our defining national characteristic. Bahrainis are warm and welcoming and the atmosphere is relaxed, cosmopolitan and outward-looking.

✦ Live well

Surveys show that 68% of expats enjoy higher disposable income in Bahrain, with 70% finding they are able to save more than at home14. They are, perhaps, spoilt for choice when it comes to finding a home. Spacious villas with lush gardens and cooling pools abound, and there is a growing selection of waterfront properties in new and prestigious developments. The costs to buy or rent are low compared with those across the region, keeping disposable incomes high.

Healthcare is uniformly excellent. And as you might expect from a country that has historically invested so much in education, Bahrain is home to some of the world’s best-regarded international schools, as well as exceptional universities.

✦ Enjoy a fulfilling experience

There is so much to do in Bahrain for the family, and for you. Immerse yourself in Bahrain’s history, arts and culture by visiting UNESCO World Heritage sites, our national theatre or outdoor concerts; have fun at waterparks or go dolphin-watching; shop for premium brands at modern malls or immerse yourself in the sociable buzz of our lively cafés.

There is a wealth of sporting activities to enjoy, whether you are a spectator or a participant – from horse racing, triathlon events and the Bahrain F1™ Grand Prix, to golf, soccer and cricket.

✦ An inclusive society

Bahrain is a place where you can express yourself: it is the most liberal and diverse country in the Gulf. Our society is built on openness and tolerance; it is a melting pot of cultures, ethnicities and faiths. Alongside mosques, you will find churches of several denominations, temples and a historic synagogue.

✦ Expats say it all

HSBC’s 2015 Expat Explorer poll ranks Bahrain fourth out of 39 destinations for overall expat satisfaction – ahead of countries like Germany, Canada, Australia, Hong Kong and Switzerland.

“I have worked in many countries such as India, Kuwait and Dubai. I’ve found that Bahrain is the best place to achieve a real work-life balance when it comes to family.”

Arun Aravindan, Owner, Elite Technologies

“Moving to Bahrain, I had a great experience and was pleasantly surprised. I didn’t know what to expect, but I discovered a place full of lovely people.”

Nacira Ferdjoukh, Country Human Resources Head, Citibank

See strength in depth: Sector focus

Bahrain concentrates on sectors that flow from our natural advantages, not least our strategic location.

If you operate in any of the following four sectors, we offer the opportunity to outperform your competitors, just like the major companies who already operate here.
Financial services

Bahrain offers opportunities across all major aspects of finance, from banking and asset & wealth management, to insurance and Islamic finance.

With more than 40 years’ experience, Bahrain is the GCC’s longest-established financial centre. It is also the largest, with the region’s highest concentration of regulated financial services firms. Many financial institutions have their regional headquarters here.

Financial services are core to the Bahraini economy and account for no less than 16% of the Kingdom’s GDP. The sector employs more than 14,300 people, two-thirds of whom are Bahraini. This local expertise is unrivalled.

The CBB is widely regarded as one of the Middle East’s most advanced financial supervisors. It has been instrumental in setting the standard in establishing a transparent regulatory environment. As a result, Bahrain ranks first regionally in sub-pillars such as institutional environment, financial access and banking financial services15.

ICT

Bahrain’s ICT market is growing annually at 10.3% and expected to reach USD 2.7 billion by 2020. This growth is greater than the rest of the GCC.

With the Middle East’s most liberal ICT infrastructure16, and an affluent population, Bahrain has some of the world’s highest mobile, internet and broadband penetration, diffusion and usage rates17.

It is therefore unsurprising that we are the Gulf’s most tech-enabled nation, or that our IT workforce is so tech-savvy. Trained at 35 Bahraini universities and technical institutes, the workforce is highly educated and qualified and, though young (60% are aged 25-34), has an average seven years’ experience.

At country level, Bahrain is also well connected, with four international undersea cables, two terrestrial cables and more than 30 IT service providers. And the Kingdom is emerging as the Middle East’s centre for start-ups, with at least 30 new tech companies actively doing business.

As proof, Bahrain’s Networked Readiness ranked amongst the top 30 countries (out of 143), for the sixth consecutive year. Bahrain is in the World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Information Technology Report’s top 30 economies for the sixth consecutive year19 and ranks 29th out of 139 economies20 in its Network Readiness Index. Bahrain ranks 26th globally and 1st in MENA in the Readiness sub-index this is due to its:

- Strong ICT infrastructure
- Affordability of tariffs
- Promotion of competition amongst internet and telephony providers
- Availability of good education that enables high literacy and promotes ICT usage

Who is here

Who is here

International banks include: Bank of China, BNP Paribas, Credit Suisse, Chi, HSBC, ICICI, JP Morgan Chase, Maybank, Standard Chartered, State Bank of India, Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, Dawes Securities Bahrain, Nomura Investment Banking, Korea Exchange Bank, Woori Bank

Middle Eastern banks include: Ahli United Bank, Arab Bank, Arab Banking Corporation, Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait (BBK), National Bank of Kuwait, Gulf International Bank, The Saudi National Commercial Bank, Kuwait Finance House, Mashreq Bank, National Bank of Abu Dhabi

International and regional asset managers include: BNP Paribas Asset Management, BSI, Credit Suisse, Lazard Asset Management, The Family Office, Investcorp, NCB Capital, Takaus Savings and Pensions

Asset administrators: Apex Fund Services, Keypoint Consulting, Karvy Computershare

Insurance and reinsurance companies: ACE, AF Willis, AG, AON, Arab Insurance Group, AXA, Hardy ARIG, Legal & General, Royal & Sun Alliance, Zurich, CIGNA SAICO Benefits Services, HDI-Geting, Trust Re, Hannover Re

Brokers: Marsh, Nexus

Manufacturing & logistics

Manufacturing contributes a significant proportion of Bahrain’s GDP, with an emphasis on light and downstream production. We cater for a range of sub-sectors, but aluminium is a particular speciality and our major export after oil.

Other industries developing rapidly include chemicals & plastics, consumer goods, food processing, steel production and industrial services for oil and gas.

Logistics companies benefit from advanced services and integrated infrastructure. Whatever your logistics strategy, we can match it. Bahrain has invested significantly in multi-modal logistics and technology for maximum flexibility and value.

Our major facilities are close together, giving the shortest transit in the Gulf between seaport, airport and processing zones. These include the Bahrain Logistics Zone (BLZ), Bahrain International Airport (BIA) and Bahrain International Investment Park (BIIP). Khalifa Bin Salman Port, operated by APM Terminals, is also nearby and core to the infrastructure.

We offer speedy processing of trade goods. Customs administration is streamlined and containers shipped by sea can clear on average in just seven hours.

These factors have made Bahrain 2nd in the GCC for customs clearance efficiency and 30th globally.21

Who is here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aluminium production:</th>
<th>Aluminium Bahrain (Alba), Gulf Aluminium Rolling Mill (Garmco), Matal Cables Ltd, Bahrain Aluminium Extrusion Co (Balco), BAMCO, Bahrain Aluminium International (BAI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steel production:</td>
<td>Foulath Holding Company, Bahrain Steel, United Steel Company (KULTEC, United)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food, beverages and consumer products:</td>
<td>Mondelēz, Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Olayan Kimbolton-Clark, Reckitt Benckiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other companies:</td>
<td>MTO Corporation, RMA Middle East S.P.C., Saudi Arabian Amiantit, Bell Helmets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logistics:</td>
<td>Agility, APM Terminals, Aramex, DHL, Expeditors, FedEx, QAC, Kuehne+Nagel, Panalpina, TNT, UPS, Kintetsu World Express</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tourism

Tourism is perhaps Bahrain’s newest success story. An increasing number of visitors seek out our relaxed, informal lifestyle and want to experience both our historic attractions and our burgeoning calendar of events. Our hotels, restaurants and shopping malls all serve to make their stays even more enjoyable.

In 2015, around 13.2 million visitors arrived in Bahrain, 27% more than in 2014. These arrivals helped the hospitality sector to grow by 4.1%.

Bahrain is investing more than USD 2.5 billion in major infrastructure projects over the next ten years to ensure travel stays both easy and pleasant. This includes the expansion of Bahrain International Airport. The new terminal will increase capacity from 8 to 14 million passengers a year. Cargo is expected to increase to 1 million metric tonnes a year.

Who is here

Hospitality: The Ritz-Carlton Bahrain, Gulf Hotel, Four Seasons, ART Rotana, ibis, Westin, Le Méridien, Fraser Suites, Swiss Belhotel, Mövenpick, Sofitel, Sheraton, Golden Tulip, Crowne Plaza, Radisson, Intercontinental, Arjaan Rotana, Mariott, Ramada, Namee Hotels, Creek&Only Resorts

Retail groups: Chalhoub Group (Saks Fifth Avenue, Carolina Herrera, Marc Jacobs), Alshaya Group (Debenhams, Pottery Barn, Starbucks), Azadea (Zara, Massimo Dutti, Vero Moda, Papaya, Virgin Megastore), Al-Futtaim (Marks & Spencer, Panasonic, Microsoft Xbox, Toshiba), Majid Al Futtah (Bahrain City Centre, Le Méridien Bahrain City Centre, The Westin Bahrain City Centre)

Our brand. Your future.

Our tourism brand expresses the essence of Bahrain and its people, and is at the heart of our strategy to grow our visitor numbers — and your business.
We’ve found that engaging with the EDB has been a very good experience for us. We’ve gained a lot of beneficial support particularly from a strategic perspective.

Kyriako Zarkadas, Founder, Visit Bahrain
Contact the Bahrain EDB: We make entry easier

As part of a no-cost practical facilitation service for first-time investors, our sector specialists can help advise on factors such as costs, infrastructure, workforce requirements, regulatory, legal and tax issues, market opportunity and ease of registration.

In addition, we can act as your first point of contact in the Kingdom and discuss available incentive packages to make setting up even more attractive. We strive to understand your objectives and respond efficiently with all the information you need to get up and running.

✧ Who we are

The EDB is a dynamic public agency responsible for attracting investment into Bahrain.

The EDB works with government and both current and prospective investors to enhance Bahrain’s investment climate, communicate its key strengths and identify opportunities for further economic growth. The EDB focuses on several economic sectors that capitalise on Bahrain’s competitive advantages. These sectors include financial services, manufacturing, ICT, tourism, logistics and transport.

✧ How to get in touch

For all investment enquiries, please email us at investorenquiries@bahrainedb.com or visit www.bahrainedb.com. You can also call us on +973 175 89 999 for general enquiries. Our business hours are Sunday to Thursday, 8am to 4pm (GMT +3hrs).
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For more information on the Kingdom of Bahrain, visit www.bahrain.com.