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# Qatar-Germany Business and Investment Forum: a new chapter for growth

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7 September 2018  
Berlin, Germany



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منتدى قطر - ألمانيا للأعمال والاستثمار  
**KATAR – DEUTSCHLAND FORUM**  
**FÜR BUSINESS UND INVESTMENT**  
Deutschland - Berlin 2018 ألمانيا - برلين



# Foreword



The Qatar-Germany Business and Investment Forum is the result of a historic bilateral relationship that has continued to develop over the past few decades.

Qatar is a proud investor in the German economy, an economy that we are confident in, and one that has played an important role in developing many industries, technologies and services in Qatar. We are also proud that the Qatari private sector is a strong partner for German businesses.

The Forum will be bringing together political and business leaders from both countries. It will provide a wonderful opportunity to further develop our partnerships, as well as showcase Qatar's confidence in the German economy.

In these pages, you will read about the importance of Qatar - Germany trade relations. You will also learn about opportunities for investment, and how we hope our partnership can become even more fruitful over time. You will read of the practicalities of investing in Qatar, and of the opportunities for Qatari investments in German businesses.

The Forum will host a wide range of events to connect, develop, and inform participants. It is only through sharing our ideas that we can move forward.

We believe that Qatar and Germany can build even stronger ties and develop mutually beneficial business partnerships even further. Qatar offers fertile grounds for growth, as it is ideally placed economically, strategically and geographically to best compliment Germany's economy.

We look forward to a great shared future of innovation, trade and success.

**Saif bin Ahmed Al Thani**

Director of the Government Communications Office of the State of Qatar



# *The Qatar-Germany Business and Investment Forum: Top facts*



## THE FORUM



This is the 9th Business and Investment Forum organised by the State of Qatar. It has been organised under the patronage of His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of the State of Qatar, and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel.



## QATAR-GERMANY TRADE

The volume of trade between Qatar and Germany in 2017 amounted to €1.9 billion.



## THE 2022 WORLD CUP:

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR GERMANY

Several German companies are delivering 2022 World Cup projects, such as Hochtief, which is contributing to the building of football stadiums in Qatar, and Deutsche Bahn, which has been contracted to build a rail network.



## GERMAN BUSINESSES IN QATAR

Over 300 German companies are operating in Qatar. They are helping Qatar reach its vision of economic diversification. For example, German software giant SAP is training Qatari students in technology systems at Qatar Science and Technology Park.



## *“We look forward to doing business together”, says His Excellency the Prime Minister of Qatar*

His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani,  
Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of the State of Qatar,  
highlights Qatar’s growing economy.

I am delighted to welcome you to the 2018 Qatar-Germany Business and Investment Forum. I look forward to meeting many of you personally in the following days, and to sharing ideas and experiences.

The Forum will seek to open new markets for our nations, showcasing the best of our economies and furthering the partnership between us. We have much to give, and much to learn. Being open to new ideas is of course critical to business success.

For our part, I am pleased to say that Qatar is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. We are ranked second most competitive in the Arab world, and GDP growth is expected to reach 2.8% this year, according to figures published by the World Bank.

The Qatar Financial Centre Authority (QFC) announced a record growth in 2017, posting a 66% increase in new firms being licensed year-on-year. Foreign trade growth was up 16% last year.

We proactively work to create the best environment possible for foreign investors, amending laws to encourage unrestricted growth. The inauguration of

Hamad Port last year is a tangible example of a dramatic improvement in cross-border trading, by facilitating imports and exports.

While valuing traditional trade, we are also looking towards the future. Qatar’s e-commerce market is expected to almost triple to about € 2.8 billion by 2020. We are working on the new challenges around this industry in terms of trust, availability and price.

Economic diversification is one of Qatar’s major strategic priorities, and we are looking to increase the share of the private sector in the economy, grow the knowledge economy, and enhance productivity levels.

Manufacturing, financial services, tourism, logistics, and information and communications have been identified as the sectors which have the largest potential to contribute to economic diversification.

I am confident that these initiatives, and many others, will continue to allow us to stand out in the region as an innovative, open, modern and business orientated environment.



The 2022 World Cup will allow us to showcase these achievements internationally, and grow future partnerships – besides being a fantastic sporting event. We look forward to hosting this jewel in the sporting crown, which is already driving a climate of national optimism and pride.

On another note, Qatar ranks tenth globally in terms of the strength of its institutions. It is therefore the perfect destination for international businesses looking to invest globally.

We are not content when keeping still, however. Qatar is taking important steps to make our nation even more attractive as a place to invest.

We have introduced a digital portal called the Single Window to reduce the bureaucratic burden on countries and individuals seeking to invest in Qatar. This will greatly decrease the time spent on paperwork by new investors, streamlining procedures and introducing a one-stop-shop.

All licenses and approvals will be dealt with through this portal, across all sectors. Previously, several applications were necessary. This is just one example of our attempts to modernise and innovate when it comes to inward investment. We understand business, and we understand your needs.

Let me turn to our special relationship with Germany. Qatar values Germany as a political and trading partner, and would like to build on this already successful relationship.

My nation also hopes to seek out more investment opportunities in Germany. This Forum is the next step in a wonderful relationship between our two countries. We hope to further our economic ties and cooperation, for the greater good. It is an alliance that, I am convinced, will go on to bear fruit for generations to come. We look forward to doing business together.





## *A win-win situation*

His Excellency Mr Ali Shareef Al Emadi, Minister of Finance of the State of Qatar, says that greater economic collaboration between Qatar and Germany is mutually beneficial.

It is a unique collaboration. Both are world economic leaders. Qatar is among the fastest growing economies in the world. Germany has long been Europe's economic powerhouse.

According to His Excellency Mr Ali Shareef Al Emadi, Minister of Finance of the State of Qatar, the two countries are perfectly placed to complement one another. He hopes that Qatar's inaugural German Investment Forum will be the setting for these plans to come to fruition.

His Excellency Al Emadi says: "The Qatar – Germany Business and Investment Forum is a wonderful opportunity both for Germany and Qatar. We are thrilled and honoured to host this Forum.

To the German business community, it opens doors to access a growing market in a strategic geographic location. To Qatar, it enhances its technological know-how and equally opens doors to additional European conglomerates to have a presence in Qatar."

The objective of the Forum is two-fold, he says. "First to attain commercial benefits to both parties, second to enhance the political, economic and cultural cooperation between Germany and Qatar."

He expects the Forum to deliver results. "Our expectations are positive. It is our strong belief that Qatar offers exceptional opportunities to potential investors, a high standard of living, a secure environment and a gateway to the sub-continent markets of Asia. Such a business climate attracts investors."

Currently, Germany is amongst Qatar's largest trading partners, with bilateral trade reaching €1.9 billion, and imports to Qatar reaching €1.8 billion.

German firms operate in Qatar across various fields, ranging from the sporting industry to banking, science, technologies, research, engineering, construction, automotive, local public transportation, and more.

His Excellency says: "We have recently witnessed growing educational and cultural relations between the two countries, mainly through university cooperation.

Qatar Airways also played a key role in growing Qatar's relationship with Germany, notably by cooperating with German firms in aviation and technology."

There are over 300 German firms currently established in Qatar, including Allianz, Audi, Deutsche Bank, BMW, Siemens, Thyssen Krupp, Solar World and Wintershall.

Qatari companies and joint ventures are also growing rapidly in Germany. The Forum is set to draw more German companies to Qatar and build a solid foundation for further Qatari-German joint ventures and partnerships.

That is surely the definition of a win-win situation.







## *A spotlight on: Qatar Financial Centre Authority*

The Qatar Financial Centre Authority hails a record year for growth in number of new firms licenced.

With its overall objective being to diversify the economy and position Doha as the region's leading financial and commercial capital, the Qatar Financial Centre Authority (QFC) has a monumental task on its hands.

One way that the QFC contributes to the expansion of a strong private sector is by providing a comprehensive framework for firms to do business in Qatar and the region. This encourages local and international investment, helping to create jobs and opportunities.

The 2022 World Cup, to be held in Qatar, has accelerated this aspect of the QFC's work. The QFC

will provide the necessary legal, regulatory, and financial support to local and international firms working on projects related to the tournament.

There are still many opportunities for German companies to win contracts relating to the 2022 World Cup, particularly in the construction, mechanical engineering, automotive and transport sectors.

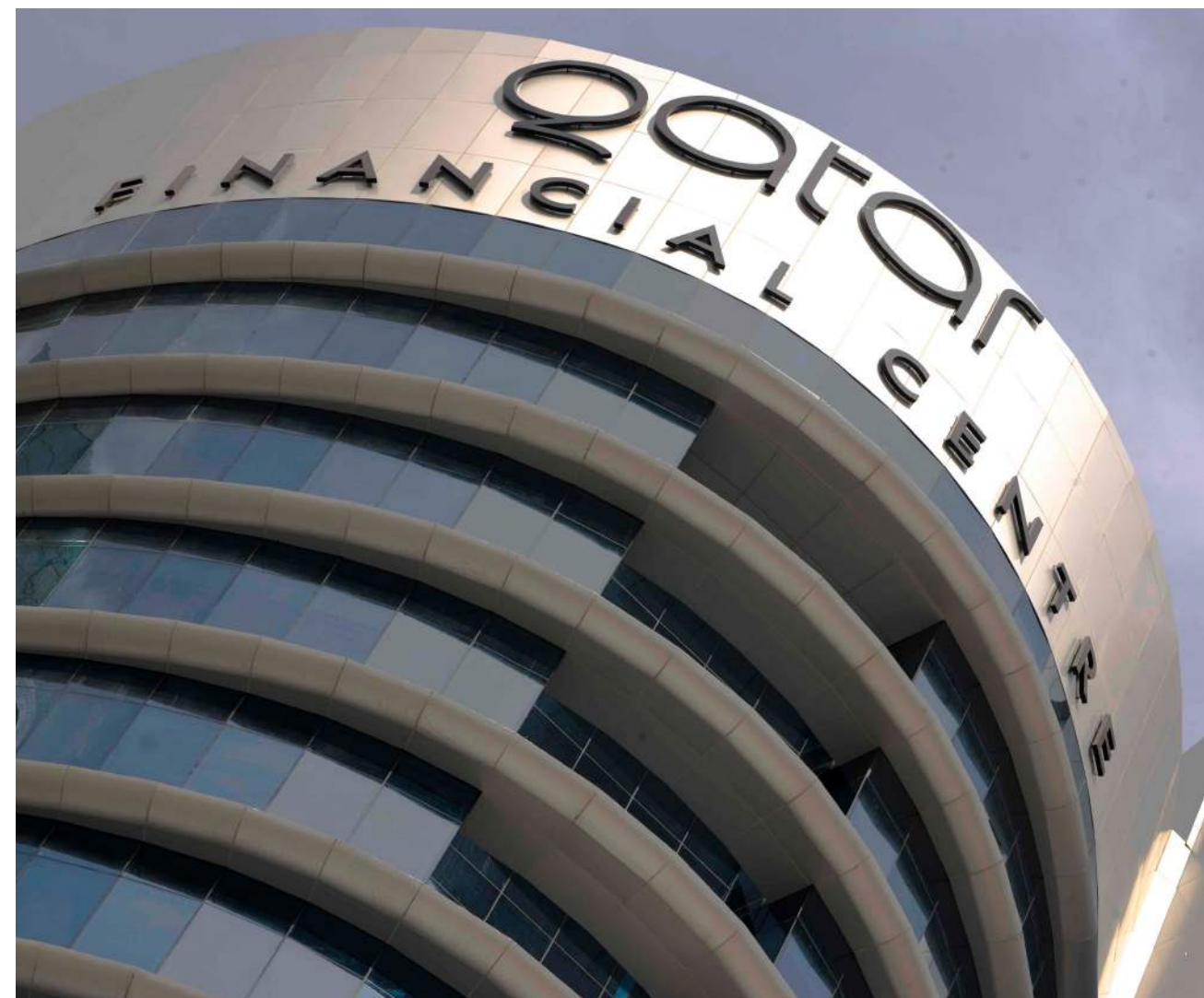
For German businesses that win contracts in Qatar, or choose to set up business operations in the country, the QFC can support them to ensure that they have all the necessary registrations and paperwork needed.

However, the QFC's job does not end there. It aims to support Qatar's economy for the long term. Qatar's plans for economic diversification and human capital growth pursuits are well enshrined in the Qatar National Vision 2030, and the QFC plays an important role in realising these plans.

To demonstrate the success of the QFC in its mission, the numbers speak for themselves. Despite the illegal blockade that was imposed on Qatar by a Saudi-led coalition of four fellow Arab states, 2017 was the fastest growth period in the QFC's 13-year history. It recorded a 66% increase in new firms being licenced on the QFC platform in 2017, compared to 2016.

This was in part thanks to a series of economic reforms implemented by the State of Qatar to make it easier for international companies to do business in Qatar. Most important of these reforms was a new law allowing full ownership for foreign investors in specific sectors.

With new reforms in the pipeline that will make Qatar even more attractive to international investors, the QFC is expected to continue to grow in 2018 and into 2019. There is no doubt that it will succeed in its mission to make Doha a leading business and financial capital by 2022.





# *Qatar-Germany bilateral relations: 45 years of partnership*

Qatar's Ambassador to Germany, His Excellency Sheikh Saoud Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, shares his hopes for the Forum.

**C**an you describe your priorities as Qatar's Ambassador to Germany? What has your focus been since you started this role?

It is a great honour for me to represent the State of Qatar to the Federal Republic of Germany, a country of profound civilisation that has the ability and knowledge to influence global economic, political, cultural and humanitarian issues. As Ambassador, I am committed to strengthening the relationship between our two countries, and I am continually exploring new ways to do this. While a lot has already been achieved, there is still plenty of untapped potential.

**Why do you believe it is important for Qatar-Germany trade relations to grow?**

Relations between Qatar and Germany have a successful 45-year history. In this time Qatar became a key partner for Germany in the Middle East. Today, both countries are bearing the fruit of this relationship. Growing numbers of German citizens are living and working in Qatar, and German companies are increasingly opening branches in Qatar. There are over 300 German companies now operating in Doha including Allianz, Audi, Deutsche Bank, BMW, Siemens, Thyssen Krupp, Solar World and

Wintershall. Conversely, Qatari institutions have made considerable investments in German companies. Clearly, this is a relationship that can help to grow the economies of both countries.

**Last year was the Qatar-German Year of Culture. What did this mean to Qatar?**

Culture is a vehicle through which different nationalities and faiths can meet, learn about each other and deepen their understanding of their respective traditions and values. For these reasons, the Qatar-German Year of Culture was a precious opportunity for us. We were excited to show our German friends the rich art scene in Qatar and to engage in a cultural dialogue. I was immensely proud to visit the 'Contemporary Art Qatar' exhibition at Kraftwerk Berlin, which highlighted Qatari artists. It was also great to see German artists exhibited at QM Gallery Al Riwaq and Doha Fire Station in Qatar.

**How do you think Qatar-Germany bilateral relations have grown in the past three years?**

Qatar is working to diversify its economy away from oil. Its ambition is to develop a knowledge-based, sustainable economy and to grow Qatar's tourism industry. In this ambition we have found common ground with Germany, with whom we share a mutual interest in growing the chemical, construction and automotive industries, and developing new technology in the energy, environmental, and medical sectors. We have collaborated with Germany in the meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) sector, building on fruitful exchanges at this year's IMEX conference in Frankfurt.

**How do you believe the Qatar – Germany Business and Investment Forum will expand the trade relations and investment with Germany?**

Trade with German companies is steadily rising and SMEs, as the backbone of the German economy, are particularly encouraged to take a closer look at investment opportunities in Qatar. German know-how is in strong demand and many current projects are already drawing on it. By the end of the year, in many areas of the increasingly diversified Qatari economy there will be additional opportunities for companies offering German technology and services. This Forum will offer an opportunity to explore future opportunities for both Qatar and Germany to offer their skills in areas of expertise according to comparative advantage.

**What do you hope to achieve while you are at the Forum? What are you most excited about?**

I have high expectations for the Forum. My aim is to present Qatar's full potential and facilitate dialogue between Qataris and Germans. I am also interested in finding out from German SMEs how we can best help them secure investment from Qatar, and how to expand into our market. As Qatar continues its journey of economic diversification, we are keen to support innovators from around the world to advance our food, medical, energy and high-tech sectors. There is so much potential for these companies in Qatar right now.





## *A spotlight on: Qatar Rail*

Qatar Rail was mandated with building a rail system in Qatar from scratch, collaborating with German company Deutsche Bahn since the beginning of the project.

For 10 years, Qatar Rail's partnerships with leading German businesses have fostered not only economic ties, but also contributed to knowledge-sharing between the two countries.

Qatar Railways Company (Qatar Rail) is currently leading one of the largest rail projects in the world – designing and developing the country's rail network from scratch – to meet the demands of Qatar's growing population.

The state-of-the-art railway network will consist of Doha Metro, a rapid transit system connecting communities within Doha and its suburbs; Lusail Tram, a service for convenient travel within the new city of Lusail, and Long Distance Rail. Once these projects are complete, Qatar Rail will then have the responsibility to manage, operate, and maintain them.

According to Abdulla Abdulaziz Al Subaie, Managing Director and

CEO of Qatar Rail, once it is in full operation, "Qatar Rail will be a world-class railway company providing safe, reliable and attractive railway transportation services to the cities of Doha and Lusail."

The story of Germany's involvement in the Qatar Rail project is an interesting one. In 2008, three years before Qatar Rail was founded, national development agency Qatari Diar Real Estate Investment (Qatar Diar) appointed the German

national railway company Deutsche Bahn to produce plans for a railway network in the country.

DB International, the international wing of Deutsche Bahn, and Qatari Diar prepared conceptual designs for the consolidated railway network development in Qatar.

Many other German companies have won contracts with Qatar Rail to provide a range of services like installation, design, procurement management and the supply of numerous items, including tunnel boring machines, elevators, and crane cars. Their role in supporting the development of this project is vital.

Mr Al Subaie said: "We are now in the most critical phase of our construction programme. Ongoing works include the installation of trackwork and railway systems, mechanical and electrical plant and equipment and architectural fit-out of stations."

The integrated railway system will be affordable, reliable and convenient. It will also be world-leading. For example, once complete, Doha Metro will be one of the fastest driverless trains in the world and the fastest in the region, reaching speeds of 100 kilometres per hour.

As phase one of the Doha Metro project nears completion, Qatar Rail is excited for the next phase of the project and looks forward to continued partnerships with German businesses.





# About the Government Communications Office

The Government Communications Office (GCO) was established in June 2015 to effectively communicate the priorities of the Government of the State of Qatar.

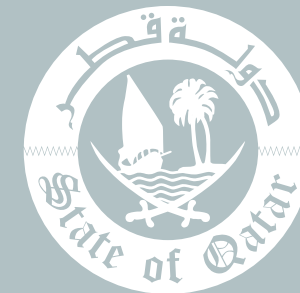
The GCO works with Qatar's ministries and embassies across the world to tell the country's story and showcase its vision for the future.

The GCO falls under the jurisdiction of His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior. His Excellency Sheikh Saif bin Ahmed Al Thani is the Director of the GCO, and is the first point of contact for those looking to learn more about the State of Qatar.

The GCO is committed to transparent engagement with the international community as Qatar continues on its journey of development.

As part of its work, the GCO publishes *Q Magazine* twice a year. Its purpose is to educate a global audience about the State of Qatar and highlight the country's achievements and initiatives in various fields – locally and internationally.

To find out the latest news from the GCO, please visit our website [www.gco.gov.qa](http://www.gco.gov.qa).





Produced by the Government Communications Office of the State of Qatar  
September 2018