

BAHRAIN



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BAHRAIN

Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa



The King in 2016

King of Bahrain

Reign	6 March 1999 – present
Coronation	14 February 2002
Predecessor	Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa (as Emir of Bahrain)
Heir apparent	Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa
Prime Minister	Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa

Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa

خليفة بن سلمان آل خليفة



Prime Minister of Bahrain

Incumbent

	Assumed office 16 December 1971
Monarch	Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa
Deputy	Jawad Al-Arayedh Muhammad ibn Mubarak ibn Hamad Al Khalifah Khalid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa
Preceded by	Position established

BAHRAIN

Kingdom of Bahrain

مملكة البحرين (Arabic)
Mamlakat al-Baḥrayn



Flag



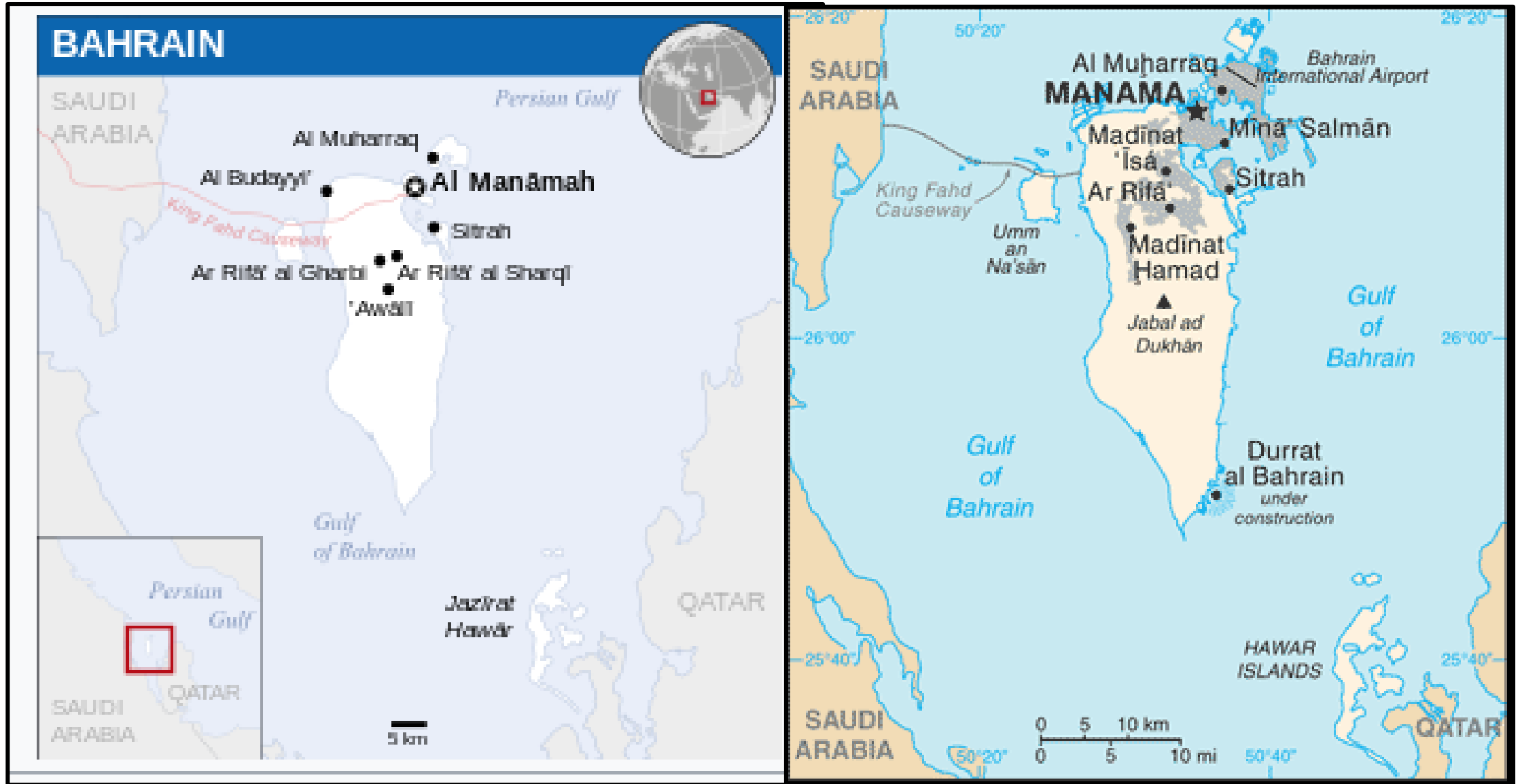
Coat of arms

Anthem: نشيد البحرين الوطني
Baḥraynunā
Our Bahrain




Location of Bahrain (circled in red)

BAHRAIN



BAHRAIN

Capital and largest city	Manama  26°13′N 50°35′E
Official languages	Arabic
Recognised languages	English ^{[1][2]}
Ethnic groups (2010 ^[3])	50.7% Arab (46% Bahraini people, 4.7% other Arabs) 45.5% Asian 1% European 1.2% Others
Religion	Islam
Demonym(s)	Bahraini
Government	Unitary parliamentary Islamic constitutional monarchy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King • Crown Prince • Prime Minister 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa
Legislature	National Assembly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper house • Lower house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultative Council Council of Representatives
Independence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declared Independence^[4] • from United Kingdom^[3] • Admitted to the United Nations • Kingdom of Bahrain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 August 1971 15 August 1971 21 September 1971 14 February 2002

Area	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total • Water (%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 778.3 km² (300.5 sq mi) (172nd) negligible
Population	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016 estimate • 2010 census • Density 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,425,171^[5] (149th) 1,234,571^[6] 1,831.1/km² (4,742.5/sq mi) (4th)
GDP (PPP)	2018 estimate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total • Per capita 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$75.174 billion^[7] (95th) \$50,750^[7] (20th)
GDP (nominal)	2018 estimate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total • Per capita 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$39.300 billion^[7] (95th) \$26,531^[7] (34th)
HDI (2017)	— 0.846 ^[8] very high · 43rd
Currency	Bahraini dinar (BHD)
Time zone	UTC+3 (AST)
Driving side	right
Calling code	+973
ISO 3166 code	BH
Internet TLD	.bh
	Website bahrain.bh
a. Since 17 November 1967. ^[9]	

BAHRAIN



BAHRAIN

Land Area	760 km ²
Total Area	760km ² (#172)
Population	1,378,904 (#154)
Population Density	1,814.35/km ²
Government Type	Constitutional Monarchy
GDP (PPP)	\$66.37 Billion
GDP Per Capita	\$50,300
Currency	Dinar (BHD)
More Information	Bahrain
Largest Cities	
Manama (147,074)	Dar Kulayb (65,466)
Al Muharraq (97,458)	Madinat Hamad (52,718)
Ar Rifa' (79,550)	
View all cities in Bahrain	

What is the capital of Bahrain?



Location of Manama on a map.

BAHRAIN

Bahrain - which name means "two seas" - was one of the first states in the Gulf to discover oil and to build a refinery. It never reached the levels of production enjoyed by Kuwait or Saudi Arabia, and so has had to diversify its economy.



The Muslim country is ruled by a Sunni king, whose family holds the main political and military posts. The divide between the Shia majority and the Sunni rulers has led to long-running tension in the kingdom, which has sporadically boiled over into civil disobedience.

BAHRAIN



LIFE EXPECTANCY
76 (M) 78 (W)



CAPITAL
Manama



LARGEST CITY
Manama



NATIONALITY
Bahraini



RELIGIONS
Islam, Christianity
Hinduism, Buddhism

BAHRAIN OVERVIEW



CURRENCY
Bahraini
Dinar (BHD)



POPULATION
1,400,000



LANGUAGES
Arabic, English
Farsi, Urdu



AGRICULTURE
Fruit, Vegetables, Poultry
Fish, Dairy Products
Shrimp



INDUSTRIES
Petroleum, Aluminum, Iron
Fertilizers, Banking, Tourism
Insurance, Ship Repair

BAHRAIN

Kingdom of Bahrain

Capital: Manama

Population 1.4 million

Area 717 sq km (277 sq miles)

Major language Arabic

Major religion Islam

Life expectancy 75 years
(men), 76 years (women)

Currency Bahraini dinar

UN, World Bank



Getty Images

BAHRAIN

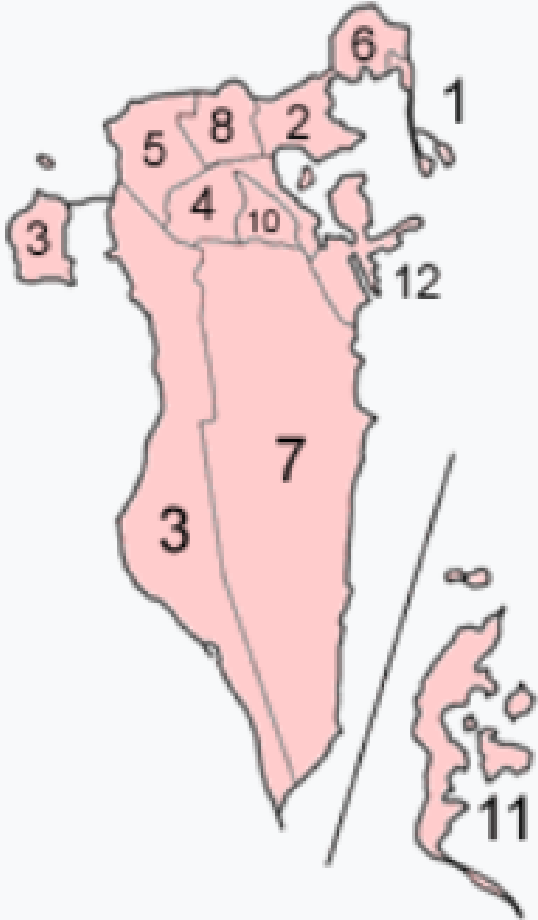

GEOGRAPHY

The Kingdom of Bahrain is a cluster of 33 small islands (an archipelago) in the Gulf of Bahrain. Saudi Arabia is located to the west of Bahrain, and Qatar is just to the east, with a stretch of water separating the countries. The Gulf of Bahrain is connected to the larger Persian Gulf. Since 1986, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia have been connected by the 25 kilometer King Fahd Causeway. Construction plans for the 45 kilometer Qatar Bahrain Causeway, also referred to as the Qatar Bahrain Friendship Bridge, were announced in 2008, but the project has been postponed indefinitely for numerous reasons, principally financial. The capital of Bahrain is Manama, and has a population of roughly 150,000 people. Bahrain has an estimated population of 1.4 million people (2016, World Bank).

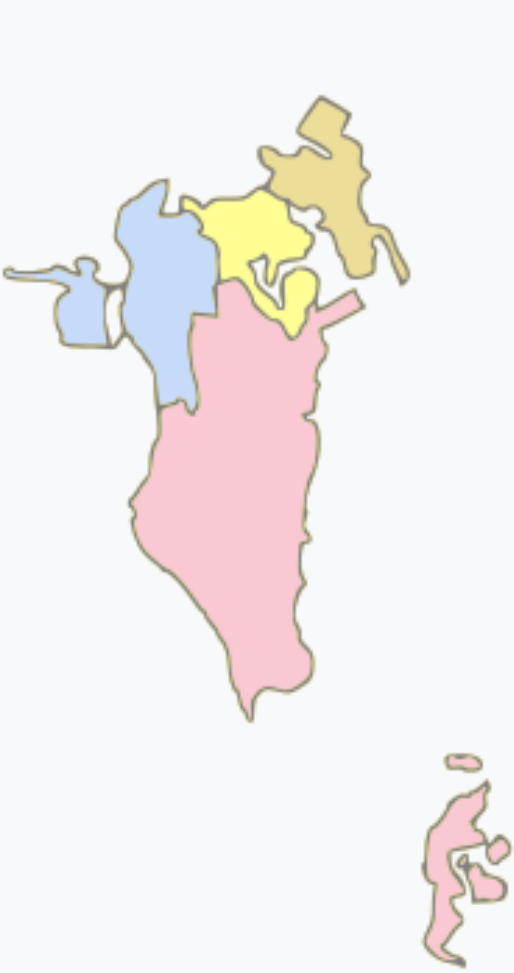
In Arabic, the word Bahrain means "two seas", although which two seas the name was intended to signify is not entirely clear. Today, Bahrain's two seas are generally taken to be the bay east and west of the island, the seas north and south of the island, or the salt and fresh water present above and below the ground. The latter possibility refers to the sweet, fresh water produced from springs, along with the salty water from the sea; in some places, it is possible to dive beneath the layer of saltwater and reach the fresh spring waters underneath. Until the late Middle Ages, Bahrain referred to the region of Eastern Arabia that included Southern Iraq, Kuwait, Al-Hasa, Qatif and Bahrain. Regardless of the name's intended meaning, it is evident from these possibilities just how strong a role water plays in the Bahraini national identity.



BAHRAIN

Map	Former Municipality	Map	Former Governorates
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Al Hidd 2. Manama 3. Western Region 4. Central Region 5. Northern Region 6. Muharraq 7. Rifa and Southern Region 8. Jidd Haffs 9. Hamad Town (not shown) 10. Isa Town 11. Hawar Islands 12. Sitra 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capital Governorate 2. Central Governorate 3. Muharraq Governorate 4. Northern Governorate 5. Southern Governorate

BAHRAIN

Map	Current Governorates
	<p data-bbox="1335 648 1773 686">1 – Capital Governorate</p> <p data-bbox="1335 722 1819 761">2 – Muharraq Governorate</p> <p data-bbox="1335 796 1803 835">3 – Northern Governorate</p> <p data-bbox="1335 871 1814 909">4 – Southern Governorate</p>

BAHRAIN

Despite being surrounded by water, Bahrain has an arid climate, resulting in occasional droughts. Its terrain is mostly a low desert plain and it is not uncommon for sandstorms to occur. To some extent, Bahrain makes up for its size and environmental challenges by its strategic location in the Persian Gulf. Petroleum is Bahrain's largest export at 60%, and the country's banking and financial sectors have benefited from its larger and more resource-rich neighbors.

Currently, Bahrain suffers from desertification and degradation of its limited arable land. Being a desert island surrounded by salt water with no streams, lakes, or rivers for fresh water, Bahrain has an over-reliance on groundwater. Petroleum production has caused coastal degradation from oil spills and other discharges from large tankers and oil refineries.

BAHRAIN



Fort Bahrain with Manama in the background.

BAHRAIN

Most popular cities in Bahrain

Rank	City	Population
#1	Manama	147,074
#2	Al Muharraq	97,458
#3	Ar Rifa'	79,550
#4	Dar Kulayb	65,466
#5	Madinat Hamad	52,718

BAHRAIN

HISTORY & GOVERNMENT

The small country of Bahrain was once the link between trade coming from India and China to Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley. For 3,000 years, this was the major source of income for the people of what would become the Kingdom of Bahrain; when trade with India began to decline, Bahrain suffered. The area has been ruled by Assyrians, Babylonians, Arabs, Persians and Portuguese. For much of this time, it was known by its Greek name, Tylos. The designation "Bahrain" was introduced officially during the 7th century when the country was taken over by Islamic rulers.

In 1783, Bahrain freed itself from the Persian Empire. The al-Khalifa family overthrew the Persians and set up a monarchy which is still in place today. In 1863, it entered into a treaty with the United Kingdom, becoming a protectorate, in order to guarantee its security. Bahrain did not become fully independent until 1971.

Bahrain has opened up its land, air space, and sea space to the U.S. military. For many years now, the Fifth Fleet of the United States Navy has been based at NSA (Naval Support Activity) Bahrain in Manama. Most recently, the U.S. military has used Bahrain as a staging ground during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. Bahrain is a formally designated non-NATO ally of the United States.

SEKILAS BAHRAIN

1602-1783 - Persian rule.

1783 - Rule by sheikhs of the Khalifah family.

1861 - Britain assumes responsibility for the Bahrain's defence and foreign relations.

1913 - Britain and the Ottoman government sign a treaty recognising the independence of Bahrain but the country remains under British administration.

1931 - The Bahrain Petroleum Company (Bapco), a subsidiary of the Standard Oil Company of California (Socal), discovers oil at Jabal al-Dukhan and production begins the following year.

1970 - Iran under the shah renounces claims to Bahrain, but the successor Islamic Republic of Iran does not recognise this renunciation.

1971 - Bahrain declares independence and signs a new treaty of friendship with Britain. Sheikh Isa becomes the first Emir and the Council of State becomes a cabinet.

2001 - February - Referendum on political reform; Bahrainis overwhelmingly back proposals under which Bahrain would become constitutional monarchy with elected lower chamber of parliament and independent judiciary.

2011 - Protesters gather in Manama, inspired by popular revolts that toppled rulers in Tunisia and Egypt. Saudi troops take part in a crackdown.

BAHRAIN

PART ONE - STATE

ARTICLE (1)

(a). Bahrain is an independent, sovereign, Islamic Arab State. Its people is part of the Arab Nation; and territory, part of the large Arab home. And neither shall its sovereignty nor any part of its territory be surrendered.

(b). Rule, in Bahrain, being hereditary, shall pass from his Highness Sheikh Isa Bin Sulman Al-Khalifa to his eldest son and from him to eldest son again and so forth generation after generation, except when the Amir has appointed, during his lifetime, as succession a son other than the eldest according to the rules of the special Amiri Succession Decree provided for in the next clause.

(c). The generality of the rules of succession shall be regulated by a special Amiri decree that shall be constitutional in character and that shall not be amended except in accordance with the rules of Article (104) of the Constitution.

And in case the heir-apparent be appointed minister, he shall be exempted from the conditions of age and registration in the election rolls prescribed in Article (44) of this Constitution.

(d). Bahrain shall have a democratic form of government with the supremacy vested in the people, source of all powers, and the exercise whereof as laid down in this Constitution.

(e). All the citizens shall have the right to participate in the public affairs of the State and enjoy all political rights starting the right to vote in accordance with this constitution and the conditions and situations prescribed by law.

(f). This constitution shall not be amended except in part and in the manner prescribed therein, and no proposed amendment shall be carried out except after it shall have been in operation for five years.

BAHRAIN

ARTICLE (2)

Islam shall be the religion of the State; Islamic Sharia (Islamic Law) 'a main source' of legislation; and Arabic the official language.

BAHRAIN

King: Sheikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifah



Sheikh Hamad, who has led the country since 1999, changed his title from emir to king when Bahrain became a kingdom in February 2002.

Born in 1950, he was educated at a public school in Cambridge, England, and went on to study at Mons Officer Cadet School in Aldershot, England, and at the US Army Command and Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14540571>

BAHRAIN



HH Shaikh Khalifa bin
Salman Al Khalifa

Prime Minister



HM King Hamad bin
Isa Al Khalifa

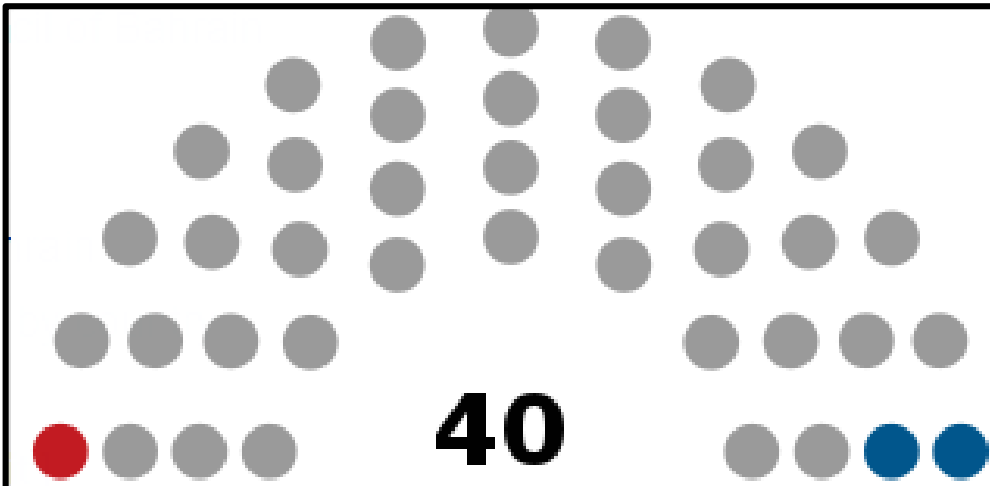
King of Bahrain



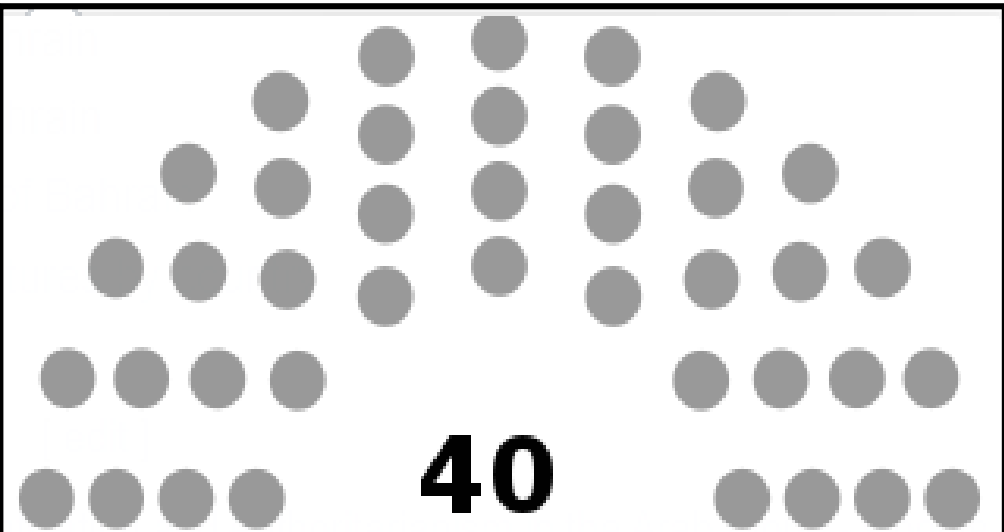
HH Shaikh Salman bin
Hamad Al Khalifa

*Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme
Commander*

BAHRAIN



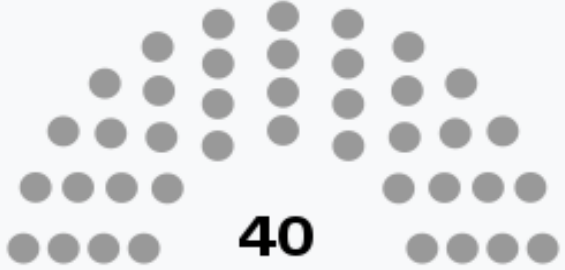
The **Council of Representatives**, sometimes translated as the "Chamber of Deputies", is the name given to the lower house of the Bahraini National Assembly, the national legislative body of Bahrain.

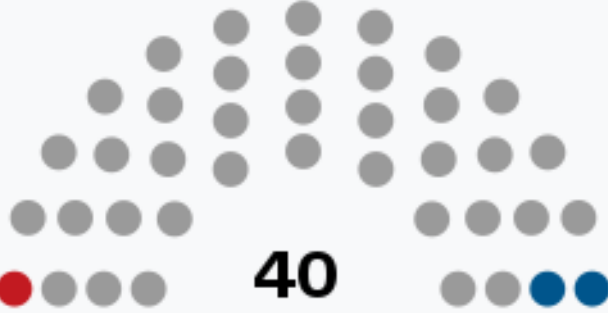


The **Consultative Council**, also known as the Shura Council, is the upper house of the National Assembly, the main legislative body of Bahrain.



BAHRAIN









National Assembly المجلس الوطني البحريني	
Type	
Type	Bicameral
Houses	Consultative Council Council of Representatives
Leadership	
Chairman of the Consultative Council	Ali Bin Saleh Al-Saleh since 15 December 2008
Speaker of the Council of Representatives	Fawzia Zainal since 13 December 2018
Structure	
Seats	80 40 in the Consultative Council 40 Representatives
	
Council of Representatives political groups	Independent (40)

	
40	
Council of Representatives political groups	Al Asalah (2) Progressive Democratic Tribune (1) Independent (37)
Elections	
Consultative Council voting system	Appointed by the King
Council of Representatives voting system	Two-round system
Council of Representatives last election	22 November 2014
Meeting place	
Manama	

BAHRAIN





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Summary of the 25 November and 2 December 2006 Bahraini parliamentary election results

Candidates/Parties	Votes	%	Seats	Change
 Al-Wafaq National Islamic Society (<i>Jam'iyyat al-Wifaq al-watani al-islamiyya</i>)			17	▲17
 Al Asalah			8	
 Al-Menbar Islamic Society			7	
 Future Bloc			4	
 Independents			4	
 National Democratic Action			0	
 National Unity Bloc			0	
 Nationalist Democratic Assembly			0	
Total			40	

BAHRAIN

e • d [Summary of the 23 October and 30 October 2010 Council of Representatives of Bahrain elections results](#)

Party	Ideology	Seats
 Al Wefaq	Shia Islamist	18
 Al Asalah	Sunni Salafist	3
 Al-Menbar Islamic Society	Sunni Islamist	2
 Independents	Various	17
Total		40

Source: "Independents the biggest winners" [↗](#). *Gulf Daily News*. 1 November 2010. Archived from the original [↗](#) on 19 October 2017.

BAHRAIN

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Summary of the 22 and 29 November 2014 Council of Representatives of Bahrain elections results

Party	Ideology	Candidates	Elected - 1st round	Run off	Elected - 2nd round	Elected - Total	Elected - Previous	Elected - Change
Al Asalah	Sunni Salafist	6	1	3	1	2	3	-1
Al-Menbar Islamic Society	Sunni Islamist	5	-	4	1	1	2	-1
Al Meethaq	Liberal	3	-	2	-	-	-	-
Al Wasat		4	-	2	-	-	-	-
Al Watan		10	-	2	-	-	-	-
Al Wasat al Arabi		1	-	1	-	-	-	-
National Unity Gathering		7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Al Wafaq	Shia Islamist	-	-	-	-	-	18	-18
Independents	Various	230	5	54	32	37	17	+20
Total		266	6	68	34	40	40	

Source: "Bahrain's political societies lose big in polls" [↗](#). *Gulf Daily News*. 30 November 2014.

BAHRAIN

List of Al Khalifa rulers of Bahrain [edit]

Since 1783, the al-Khalifa have been rulers of Bahrain:

Name	Years as ruler	Title
Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Khalifa	1783–1796	Hakim
Shaikh Abdullah ibn Ahmad Al Khalifa, ruling jointly with Shaikh Salman bin Ahmad Al Khalifa	1796–1834	Hakim
Shaikh Khalifah bin Sulman Al Khalifa	1796–1825	Hakim
	1825–1834	Hakim
	1834–1842	
Shaikh Muhammad bin Khalifah Al Khalifa	1849–1868	Hakim
	1869–1869	
Shaikh Ali ibn Khalifah Al Khalifa	1868–1869	Hakim
Shaikh Muhammad ibn Abdullah Al Khalifa	1869–1869	Hakim
Shaikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa	1869–1932	Hakim
Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa	1932–1942	Hakim
Shaikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa	1942–1961	Hakim
	1961–1971	Hakim
Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa	1971–1999	Amir
	1999–2002	Amir
King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa	2002–	King

BAHRAIN

Bahrain practices a form of governance known as a constitutional monarchy. The Sunni Muslim al-Khalifa family that came to power in 1783 has ruled since then. The current ruler, King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa, allowed Shia political parties to participate in parliamentary and local elections in 2006 in order to give the majority Shia population a voice in government; however, Shia political parties, notably the al-Wefaq party, boycotted both the 2011 and 2014 elections. While Bahrain has a parliament, the prime minister (and the cabinet) is appointed by the monarchy. Its judicial system, headed by a High Civil Appeals Court, has its foundation in Shari'a and English Law.

Bahrain experienced large-scale, organized demonstrations during the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings. The protests in Bahrain were at first peaceful and non-sectarian. They began on February 14th when people took to a central landmark, the Pearl Roundabout, in pursuit of reforms primarily related to obtaining greater political freedom for the majority Shia population.

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On February 17th, in the early hours of the morning, Bahraini security forces attempted to clear the encampment of 1,500-3,000 people. Clashes soon erupted between the opposition groups gathered there and security forces; four protesters died and 300 were injured that day. The demonstrators began calling for the end of the monarchy, in addition to their original demands for reforms. Consequently, King Hamid bin Isa al-Khalifa declared a state of emergency in the country, allowing for the implementation of greater security measures throughout the country. The government requested further troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, and installed martial law, in attempts to restore calm and order. These measures were taken because of government concern that Iranian influence would further incite Shia and opposition protesters.

Bahrain's opposition groups continued to organize rallies and demonstrations. The Bahraini security forces often met with aggressive, armed resistance by the protesters. The demonstrations and government response received international attention; the UN, along with several countries, was troubled by reports of the use of excessive force towards protesters, emergency responders and the media. The Gulf Cooperation Council's Ministers of Foreign Affairs expressed their solidarity with the government of Bahrain and its actions.

BAHRAIN

In the wake of the protests, King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa established the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) on June 29, 2011. The Commission functioned independently of the government, and was tasked with investigating and reporting on the events that took place from February 2011 onward. The investigation resulted in the submission to the king of the **Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry** which is available in its entirety for view by the public. The report documented 46 deaths, 559 allegations of torture, and more than 4,000 cases of employees dismissed for participating in protests. It also stated that the violence in Bahrain "was the result of an escalating process in which both the Government and the opposition have their share of responsibility in allowing events to unfold as they did". King Hamad has implemented key economic and political reforms recommended by the BICI.

The unrest of 2011 has largely subsided, but divisions remain between and within the Sunni and Shia populations and the government. In the era of radical Sunni movements like the Islamic State, Bahrain has also experienced a growth in the number of extremists opposed to the government's concessions to the Shia majority. The situation in Bahrain is much more complicated than the media portrayal of an oppressive Sunni monarchy denying rights to its Shia majority. We recommend you review the articles below (*Bahrain: A Very Complicated Little Island* and *Bahrain Revisited*) in the Resources Section to gain a more balanced understanding of the reality on the ground in Bahrain.

A chronology of key events:

1783 - Khalifah family seizes power from Persia.

1861 - Britain assumes responsibility for Bahrain's defence and foreign relations.

1913 - Britain and the Ottoman government sign a treaty recognising the independence of Bahrain, but the country remains under British administration.

1931 - The Bahrain Petroleum Company, a subsidiary of Standard Oil, discovers oil and production begins the following year.

1939 - Britain decides that the Hawar Islands that lie between Bahrain and Qatar belong to Bahrain.

1961 - Sheikh Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah becomes ruler.

1967 - Britain moves its main regional naval base from Aden to Bahrain, a year before deciding to close all its bases east of Suez by 1971.

1970 May - The Shah of Iran renounces his country's claim to sovereignty over Bahrain after a United Nations report says that Bahrainis favour independence over rule by Britain or Iran. After the Shah flees in 1979, the Islamic government of Iran refuses to recognise this renunciation.

Capital



Manama is a major port city, commercial centre

- Lies on the north-east tip of Bahrain island
- Declared a free port in 1958
- Population: 135,000

BAHRAIN

Independence

1971 - Bahrain declares independence and signs a new treaty of friendship with Britain. Sheikh Isa becomes the first Emir and the Council of State becomes a cabinet.

1971 - Bahrain and the US sign an agreement which permits the US to rent naval and military facilities.

1973 December - Elections are held for a National Assembly advisory body, which consists of the 14 cabinet members plus 30 MPs elected by male voters over the age of 20.

Rule by decree

1975 August - Following claims by prime minister Sheikh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah that the National Assembly is impeding the work of the government, the Emir dissolves the assembly and rules by decree.



The US 5th Fleet is based in Manama

BAHRAIN

1981 May - Bahrain joins the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which also includes Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

1981 December - Seventy-three people, said to be members of the Iran-based Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, headed by Iranian cleric, Hojjat ol-Eslam Hadi al-Mudarrisi, are arrested and accused of conspiring to overthrow the government.

1986 - In April, Qatari troops occupy Fasht al-Dibal Island, but withdraw in June after mediation by Saudi Arabia.

1986 November - Opening of the King Fahd causeway which links Bahrain to the mainland of Saudi Arabia.

BAHRAIN

Operation Desert Storm

1991 January/February - As part of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Peninsula Shield Force, Bahrain participates in the US-led Operation Desert Storm against Iraq.

1991 October - Bahrain signs a defence cooperation agreement with the United States, providing for port facilities and joint military exercises.

1992 December - A 30-member Consultative Council, appointed by the emir for a four-year term, is set up.

1994 December - Demonstrations follow the arrest of Shia cleric Sheikh Ali Salman, who called for the restoration of the National Assembly and criticises the ruling family. He is deported and seeks asylum in Britain.

1995 June - The cabinet is reshuffled to include five Shia ministers.

1996 January/February - After bomb explosions in Manama's business quarter, Shia cleric Sheikh Abd-al-Amir al-Jamri is arrested.

BAHRAIN

'Coup plot' uncovered

1996 June - The government says it has uncovered a coup plot by an Iranian-backed group, Hezbollah-Bahrain. Bahrain recalls its ambassador.

1996 September - The Consultative Council members are increased from 30 to 40.

1997 April - Bahrain acquires sole ownership of the Bahrain Petroleum Company (Bapco).

1998 December - Bahrain provides military facilities for "Operation Desert Fox", the US-British bombing campaign against Iraq.

1999 March - Emir Sheikh Isa dies and is succeeded by his eldest son, Sheikh Hamad.

1999 July - Sheikh Abd-al-Amir al-Jamri is sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment but is pardoned by the new Emir.

1999 December - The emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, visits. Countries establish committee to settle territorial disputes.

Pro-democracy cleric



Abdul Amir al-Jamri led protests demanding return of parliament

Bahrain pro-democracy cleric dies

BAHRAIN

1999 December - The emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, visits. Countries establish committee to settle territorial disputes.

Bahrain pro-democracy cleric dies

2000 September - Emir appoints the first non-Muslims and women to the Consultative Council - four women - one of whom is a Christian - and a Jewish businessman.

Political reform

2001 February - Referendum on political reform overwhelmingly backs constitutional monarchy with elected lower chamber of parliament and independent judiciary.

2001 November - Al-Wefaq opposition movement founded.

2002 February - Bahrain becomes a constitutional monarchy, and allows women to stand for office in a package of reforms. Emir Hamad proclaims himself king.

2002 May - Local elections are held, Bahrain's first poll for almost 30 years. For the first time women vote and stand as candidates, but fail to win a seat.

BAHRAIN

2002 October - Parliamentary elections held, the first for nearly 30 years. Authorities say the turnout was more than 50% despite a call by Islamists for a boycott.

2003 May - Thousands of victims of alleged torture petition King Hamad to cancel law that prevents them from suing suspected torturers.

2004 April - Nada Haffadh is made health minister - the first woman to head a government ministry.

2004 May - Protests in Manama against fighting in the Iraqi Shia holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. The king sacks the interior minister after police try to prevent the protest.

2005 March-June - Thousands of protest marchers demand a fully-elected parliament.

Shia political opposition

2006 November - The Shia opposition wins 40% of the vote in a general election. A Shia Muslim, Jawad bin Salem al-Oraied, is named deputy prime minister.

2007 September - Thousands of illegal foreign workers rush to take advantage of a government-sanctioned amnesty.

2008 May - A Jewish woman, Houda Nonoo, is appointed Bahrain's ambassador to the USA. She is believed to be the Arab world's first Jewish ambassador.

2009 April - King Hamad pardons more than 170 prisoners charged with endangering national security, including 35 Shias being tried on charges of trying to overthrow the state.

2010 September - 20 Shia opposition leaders - accused of plotting to overthrow monarchy by promoting violent protests and sabotage - arrested in run-up to elections.

2010 October - Parliamentary elections. The main Shia opposition group, Islamic National Accord Association, makes a slender gain.

2011 protests



The 2011 pro-democracy protests were brutally suppressed by the kingdom's security forces

Clampdown divides kingdom

Bahrain awaits key unrest report

BAHRAIN

Protests

2011 February - Thousands of protesters gather in Manama, inspired by popular revolts that toppled rulers in Tunisia and Egypt. A security crackdown results in the death of several protestors.

2011 March - Saudi troops are called in following further unrest. Authorities declare martial law and clamp down hard on pro-democracy activists. Protests continue, despite ban on demonstrations.

Focal point of demonstrations - the Pearl monument - is demolished.

2011 April - Government moves to ban two main political parties which represent the Shia majority.

2011 November - Government concedes that "excessive force" was used by security forces in Bahrain against pro-democracy protesters.

BAHRAIN

Bahraini protests (2011-2014)







Part of the Arab Spring




Clockwise from top-left: Protesters raising their hands towards the Pearl Roundabout on 19 February 2011; Teargas usage by security forces and clashes with protesters on 13 March; Over 100,000 Bahrainis taking part in the "March of loyalty to martyrs", on 22 February; clashes between security forces and protesters on 13 March; Bahraini armed forces blocking an entrance to a Bahraini village.

Date	14 February 2011 – 18 March 2011 (1 month and 4 days) (Occasional protests until 3 March 2014)
Location	Bahrain 26°01′39″N 50°33′00″E﻿ / ﻿26.02750°N 50.55000°E﻿ / 26.02750; 50.55000
Caused by	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anti-Shi'ism of the regime• Dictatorship• Government corruption• Unemployment• Slow pace of democratisation^{[1][2]}• Inspiration from concurrent regional protests• Poverty• Censorship of media
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abdication of King Hamad^[3]• Democracy• Constitutional monarchy• Deportation of foreign mercenaries^[4]• Rewrite the Constitution• Ending economic and human rights violations^[1]• Fair elections and freedom^[5]
Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil resistance• Nonviolent revolutions• Demonstrations• General strikes• Self-immolation^[6]
Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decisive Cabinet of Bahrain victory and suppression of the Bahraini opposition.
Concessions given	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry and the National Dialogue• 1000 Bahraini dinar (approx. US\$2,667) per family^[7]• Increased social spending^[8]

BAHRAIN

Parties to the civil conflict	
 Bahraini opposition	 Bahrain government
Allegedly supported by:	Supported by:
 Iran	 Gulf Cooperation Council
 Hezbollah	 Jordan ^{[9][10]}
	 Pakistan ^{[11][12]}
Lead figures	
Leaders of Bahrain opposition parties	 House of Khalifa
8 [show]	8 [show]
Human rights defenders	 Gulf Cooperation Council
2 [show]	2 [show]
Independent opposition leaders	
1 [show]	

Number	
150,000 ^[13] p. 97 – 300,000 protesters ^[14]	26,000–46,000
	Details [show]
Casualties	
93 civilians killed	 846 policemen injured; 11 killed (government claim) ^{[22][23]}
2,900+ wounded ^[18]	 Peninsula Shield Force 2 policemen killed
2,929 arrested ^[19]	show all (2) [show]
4,539 job layoffs ^[13]	
1,866+ tortured ^[20]	
500+ exiled ^[20]	
534 students expelled ^[13]	
11 stripped of their citizenship ^[21]	

2012 October - Protesters clash with riot police in Manama at funeral of Ali Ahmed Mushaima, who died in prison after being jailed for taking part in pro-democracy demonstrations. The authorities indefinitely ban all protests and gatherings.

2013 February - National dialogue talks begin in effort to end unrest.

2013 March - King Hamad appoints his son, Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa, as deputy prime minister. He is widely viewed as a moderate, who previously occupied an influential position until he was sidelined by hardliners in the ruling family after the 2011 clampdown on unrest.

2013 September - Bahrain's main Shia opposition groups pull out of talks with the government in protest at the arrest of a leading member of Wefaq, the main Shia opposition society.

2014 October - Main Shia opposition group Al-Wefaq banned for three months.

2014 November - Parliamentary elections, boycotted and dismissed by the Shia opposition as a farce.

Jailed activist



Prominent activist Abdulhadi al-Khawaja was jailed for life in 2011

Profile: Abdulhadi al-Khawaja

BAHRAIN

2014 December - Leader of Al-Wefaq opposition movement Sheikh Ali Salman is arrested. Protests and clashes between his supporters and security forces ensue.

2015 March - Bahrain and four other GCC states take part in Saudi-led air strikes on Houthi rebels in Yemen.

2016 August - A UN-appointed panel accused the authorities of carrying out a systematic campaign of harassment against the country's Shia Muslim population.

2017 January - Bahrain executes three Shia activists convicted of killing three policemen in a bomb attack in 2014 - the country's first execution in six years.

2017 May - The country's most prominent Shia cleric - Isa Qassim - is found guilty of illegal fundraising and money laundering and given a suspended sentence.

2018 April - Bahrain reports discovery of the kingdom's largest oilfield in more than 80 years.

2018 November - Opposition leader Sheikh Ali Salman of the banned Al-Wefaq party is sentenced to life in jail on charges of spying for Bahrain's arch-rival, Qatar.

Rights organisations denounce the trial as politically-motivated.

BAHRAIN

INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL ISSUES

Due to Bahrain's history of being part of the Persian Empire, Iran has long laid claims to the islands. The ruling Al Khalifa family of Bahrain has been fairly friendly toward Iran and shown them loyalty in issues with Britain, for instance. Towards the end of the 19th century, the Iranian flag was raised on official buildings in Bahrain as a protest against the British colonialists. In a show of good faith, Iran reserved two seats for Bahrain in its national parliament, from 1906 to 1971, dubbing Bahrain its "14th province". When the British withdrew from "east of Suez" in 1971, the last shah of Iran raised the issue of Bahrain's governance with the British, hoping it would fall under Iranian control. Shah Pahlavi agreed to a limited UN-sponsored opinion poll of the Bahraini people to decide the future of the nation. Although the poll could not be called a referendum due to its limited scope (it was mainly the political elite who were asked) it did grant Bahrain its independence. Iran has accepted Bahrain's independence since it was declared, but there are still some in Iran who view the Bahraini territory as rightfully belonging to Iran, and occasionally there are territorial or water disputes.

BAHRAIN

Bahrain and Qatar have had many territorial disputes. Since 1936 the nations have been involved in disputes over the Hawar Islands, Fasht Al Azm, Fasht Dibal, al-Jaradah, and Zubarah. Tensions have risen on several occasions over Fasht Dibal in particular, and the countries have come close to military action against one another. After Bahrain was accused of building on the island, Qatari troops arrived on the island in 1986 via helicopter and declared it a 'restricted zone'. They seized several Bahraini officials and 29 construction workers. On the 12th of May 1986, following mediation by several GCC member states, Bahrain and Qatar reached a settlement and the foreign workers were released. In 1991 the dispute flared up again after Qatar instituted proceedings to let the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague decide whether it had jurisdiction. The two countries laid out their claims to the islands and exchanged complaints over the other's incursion on their vessels and territories. The disputes were resolved by the **International Court of Justice on 16 March 2001**, awarding both sides equal amounts of land. Bahrain was granted control of the Hawar Islands (excluding the Janan Island), al-Jaradah, and Fasht Al Azm, with Qatar receiving Zubarah, Fasht Dibal, and the Janan Island.

Because of its small size and its proximity to Saudi Arabia, Bahrain tends to follow Saudi policy and opinion in most international situations.

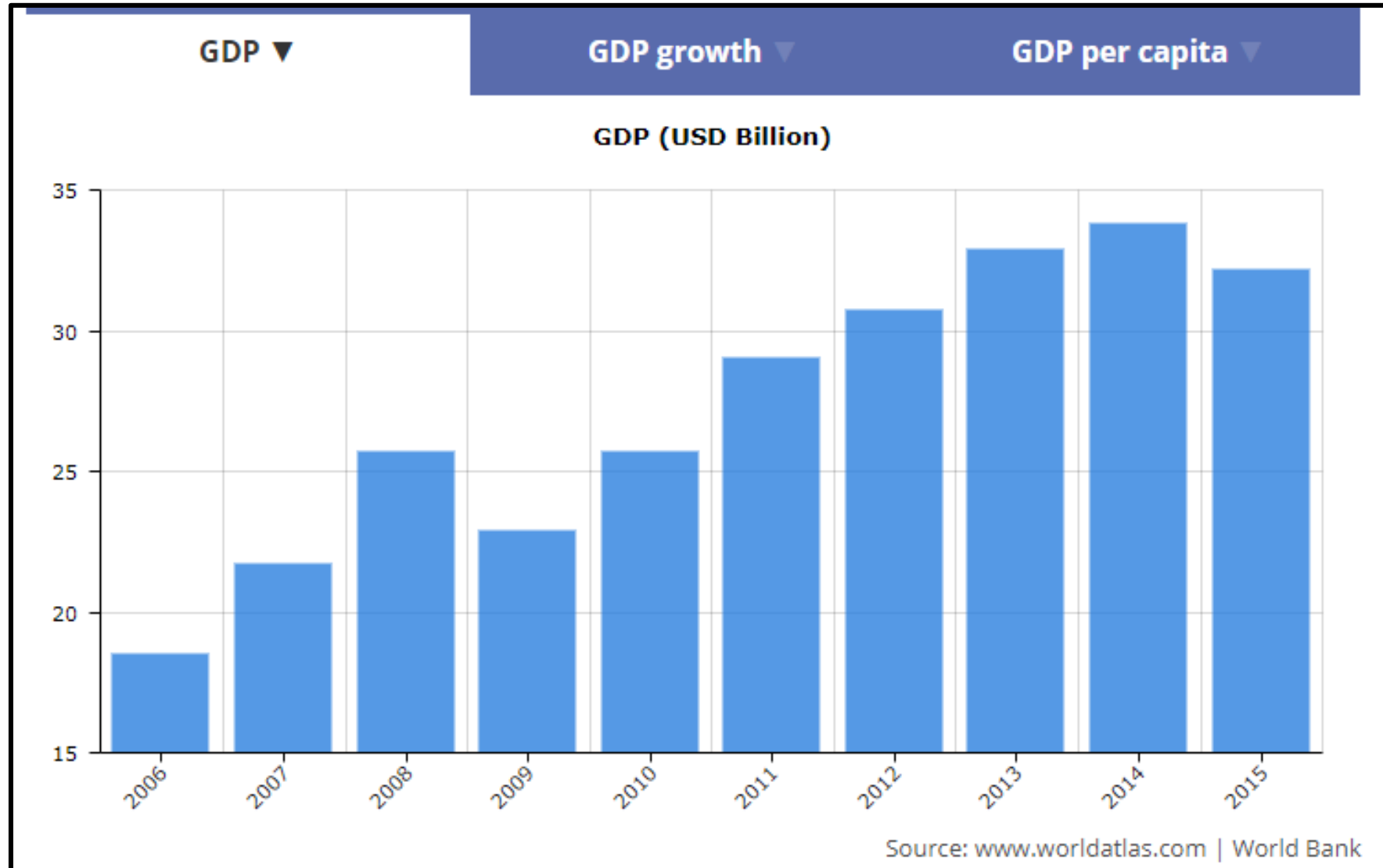
BAHRAIN

ECONOMY

Bahrain is considered the most-free economy in the Middle East and North Africa region. Refined petroleum remains Bahrain's top export, representing 44% of its total exports, but the country has actively diversified its economy in order to prosper in this energy rich area. Bahrain has the first post-oil economy in the Persian Gulf and is now renowned for its banking, finance, and tourism sectors which have been active since the late 20th century. 79% percent of the workforce is in industry, commerce, and services; 20 percent is in the government; and 1 percent in agriculture. Because very little of Bahrain's land is arable (roughly 1 percent), the Kingdom has to rely on food imports, which makes the country vulnerable to food insecurity. Many jobs are held by foreign temporary workers, who account for over 60 percent of the labor force. Expatriates work in every field from manual labor to investment banking.

Imports and exports are roughly equal in value for Bahrain. Their main export partners are India, Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and the United Arab Emirates, whilst they import from Saudi Arabia, the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, and Germany.

BAHRAIN



BAHRAIN

Bahrain's GDP & Other Economic Statistics

Bahrain GDP	Current	Previous	Highest	Unit
GNI per capita, PPP	39,140.00	38,020.00	40,420.00	International \$
GNI, PPP	53.91	51.79	53.91	International \$ Billion
GNI	26.87	28.19	28.61	USD Billion
GDP per capita, PPP	46,946.34	45,666.49	46,946.34	International \$
GDP per capita growth	1.78	3.52	4.17	%
GDP per capita	23,395.75	24,855.21	24,855.21	USD
GDP growth	2.93	4.48	8.29	%
GDP	32.22	33.85	33.85	USD Billion
Services, etc., value added	18.79	17.86	18.79	USD Billion
Industry, value added	13.33	15.89	15.93	USD Billion
Manufacturing, value added	5.41	4.98	5.41	USD Billion
Agriculture, value added	96.81	93.86	96.81	USD Million
Gross domestic savings	14.67	14.58	14.67	USD Billion
Gross fixed capital formation	5.17	5.12	8.88	USD Billion
Tax revenue	1.06	1.10	1.36	% of GDP

Source: www.worldatlas.com | World Bank

<https://www.worldatlas.com/finance/bahrain/gdp.html>

BAHRAIN

Dramatic population growth due to a high birth rate has resulted in a deficit of jobs for the large and highly qualified young population. Currently, unemployment stands at 28% for those under 25, a contributing factor to the unrest in Bahrain during the Arab Spring of 2011. Further complicating the country's economic outlook, Bahrain's labor force is up to 60% non-native. The rapid depletion of its oil reserves and underground water resources have been offset by Bahrain's economic diversification efforts in banking and finance, but the government will need to make ongoing economic, developmental, and infrastructural adjustments to accommodate the next generations of Bahrainis.

BAHRAIN

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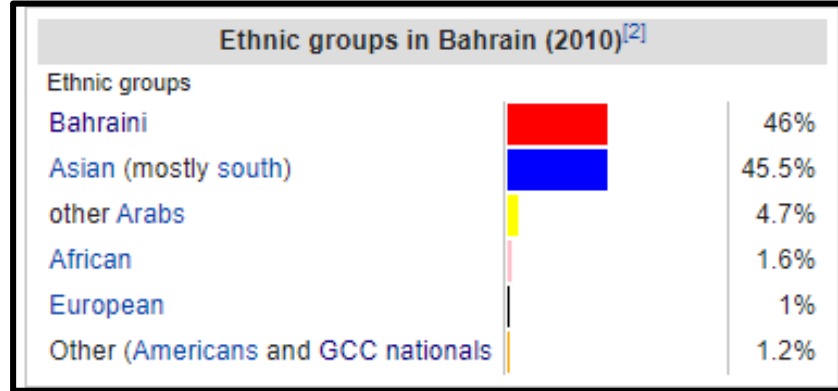
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Bahrain has a relatively small population, consisting of 1,418,895 people as of June 2017. Nearly 90% of the population lives in either one of the two urban areas, Manama and Al Muharraq. Of the one and a half million people living in Bahrain, estimates are that up to 55% of the population consists of non-nationals working in the kingdom, according to the United Nations. Most of Bahrain's foreign workers live in the capital.

Those Bahrainis who do not live in the two cities are mainly found in the few villages and towns. These localities survive mostly by cultivating palm groves, which have several practical uses including medicine.

BAHRAIN



Community ↕	Description ↕
Afro-Arabs	Descendants of Africans, primarily from East Africa and of mostly Sunni faith
Ajam of Bahrain	Persians of Shia faith, a minority are from the Bahai faith.
Baharna	Putative indigenous inhabitants of Bahrain. The overwhelming majority are Shia Arabs.
Banyan (Bania)	Indians who traded with Bahrain and settled before the age of oil (formerly known as the <i>Hunood</i> or <i>Banyan</i> , Arabic : البونيان), of mostly Hindu faith
Bahraini Jews	Jews have inhabited Bahrain for centuries. Most native Bahraini Jews are of Mesopotamian and Persian descent.
Hola	Sunni Arabs from Persia
Tribal	Urbanized Sunni Bahrainis of Bedouin ancestry, such as the Utoob , Dawasir etc.

BAHRAIN

Population of Bahrain according to nationality 1941-2010

census year	Bahraini		non-Bahraini		Total population
	Number	%	Number	%	Number
1941	74,040	82.3	15,930	17.7	89,970
1950	91,179	83.2	18,471	16.8	109,650
1959	118,734	83.0	24,401	17.0	143,135
1965	143,814	78.9	38,389	21.1	182,203
1971	178,193	82.5	37,885	17.5	216,078
1981	238,420	68.0	112,378	32.0	350,798
1991	323,305	63.6	184,732	36.4	508,037
2001	405,667	62.4	244,937	37.6	650,604
2010	568,399	46.0	666,172	54.0	1,234,571

Population estimates on July 1^[11] [edit]

	Bahraini	Non-Bahraini	Total	% Non-Bahraini
2001	409,619	251,698	661,317	38.1%
2002	427,246	283,307	710,554	39.9%
2003	445,634	318,888	764,519	41.7%
2004	464,808	358,936	823,744	43.6%
2005	484,810	404,013	888,824	45.5%
2006	505,673	454,752	960,425	47.3%
2007	527,433	511,864	1,039,297	49.3%
2008	541,587	561,909	1,103,496	50.9%
2009	558,011	620,404	1,178,415	52.6%
2010	570,687	657,856	1,228,543	53.5%
2011	584,688	610,332	1,195,020	51.1%
2012	599,629	609,335	1,208,964	50.4%
2013	614,830	638,361	1,253,191	50.9%
2014	630,744	683,818	1,314,562	52.0%
2015	647,835	722,487	1,370,322	52.7%
2016	664,707	759,019	1,423,726	53.3%
2017	677,506	823,610	1,501,116	54.9%

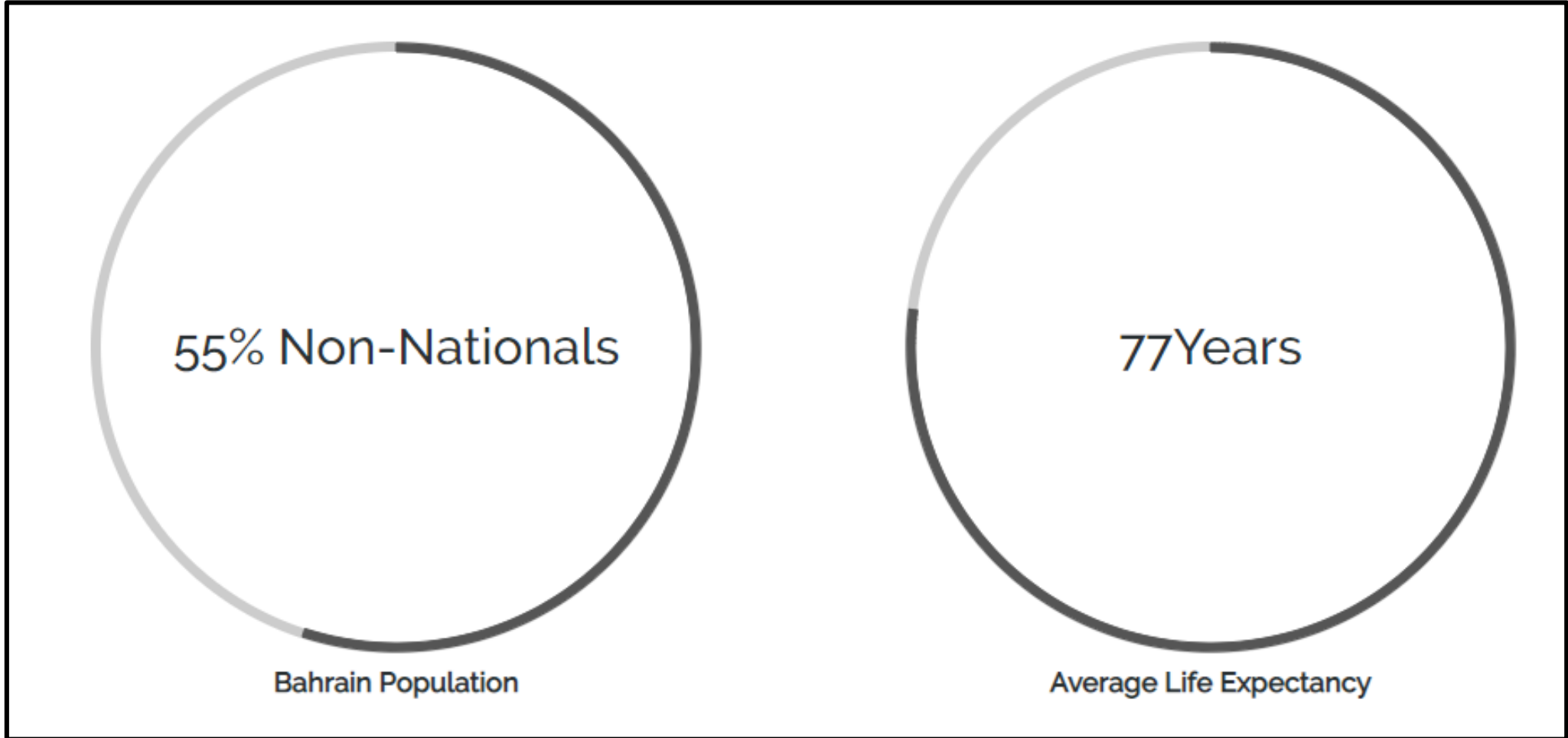
BAHRAIN

According to the **World Health Organization**, in 2015 Bahraini men lived to be about 76 years old, and the female life expectancy was 78 years old. The UNDP's Human Development Index ranks Bahrain 47th on its index for all nations in the world. The HDI measures life expectancy, education, and per capita income. The placement is consistent with its neighboring GCC states.

The **obesity rate** in Bahrain is 38.2% among those aged over 20, higher than the average for the region (24.5). The population is young, with only 2% **over the age of 65**. In contrast, **21% are under 15 years old**. The per capita expenditure on healthcare is much higher than the region's average, and 100% of births are attended by skilled personnel. Over the past 15 years the **under-5 mortality rate** has gone down to 6 out of 1000, slightly less than the American rate of 6.6%.

Government **expenditure for education** in Bahrain was at 7.7% of the overall GDP in 2015. In Bahrain the majority of men and women can read and write. Around 5% of the population is illiterate, and there is a gender gap in the literacy rate for women. This suggests that more boys are enrolled in primary and secondary school than girls; however, the girls who do go to school are more likely to continue their education than boys. In tertiary education the women outnumber the men with a female enrollment at 56.5% of the total number of eligible women, whereas the male enrollment is at 24.2% out of the total. There is, however, a gender gap when it comes to the labor force and representation. In 2015, only 7.5% of the seats in Bahrain's national parliament are **held by women**.

BAHRAIN



BAHRAIN

RELIGION

Islam is by far the predominant religion of Bahrain. An estimated 99.8% of the national Bahraini population is Muslim, with the figure shrinking to 70.2% if non-nationals are included. Shia Muslims make up the majority of the population at around 70%, with a large minority (30%) of Sunni Muslims. It is one of the more open and religiously tolerant societies with small populations of Christians, Hindus, and others – mainly due to the large population of foreign workers. Bahrain is the only Arab Persian Gulf state with a synagogue; a very small but influential Jewish minority has been involved in Bahraini business and politics.

The constitution of Bahrain states that Islam is the official religion and that *Sharia* (Islamic law) is a principal source for legislation. There are continuous tensions between the ruling minority of Sunni Muslims and the Shia majority of the population. As mentioned above in the Government & History section, in February 2011, the tensions between the Sunni ruling minority and the Shia majority spilled over into street protests that were suppressed by authorities and followed by an independent commission inquiry.

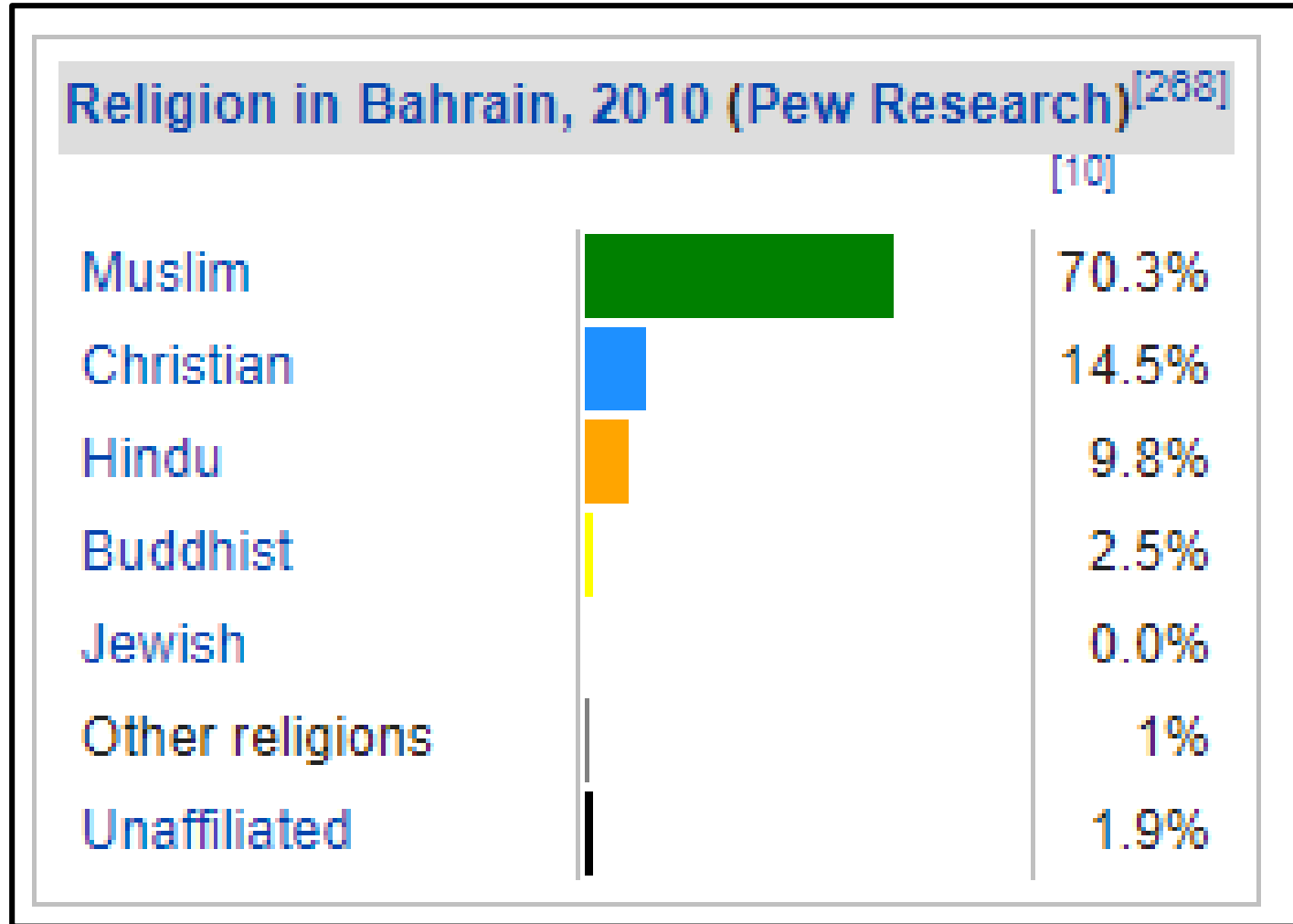


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BAHRAIN



BAHRAIN

CULTURE

Food

Staple foods in Bahrain include bread, hummus, and tabbouleh (salad with parsley, bulgur, tomatoes, garlic, and lemon). The latter two dishes were brought to Bahrain from other Arab cultures when Bahrain became an important trade post. During this time Bahraini cuisine became influenced by Europeans as well, and rice among other things was introduced to the islands. Most prevalent in the historic diet of Bahrain is seafood, due to its geographic location. Bahrainis have traditionally enjoyed mackerel, nagroor, shrimp, crab, and lobster among other sea food. Dates are also highly popular.

Clothing

Women dress in the *abaya*, a long and loose-fitting black gown. It is worn along with a *hijab*, also black. Red is Bahrain's national color, and on important days or national holidays women will often accessorize with these colors. Men's traditional dress is the *thobe*, or *dishdasha*. It is a loose, long-sleeved, ankle-length garment which is white and made from cotton in summer and black made out of wool in winter. The male headwear includes the *keffiyeh*, *ghutra* and *agal*. The *ghutra* is a square scarf that is folded in a triangle and worn over the keffiyeh. In Bahrain, it is usually red and white checked or all white. There is no significance placed on which kind of ghutra a man wears in Bahrain, although the selection does matter in some other Gulf countries. The keffiyeh is a white knitted skull cap worn under the ghutra, and the agal is a thick, black cord that is worn on the top of the ghutra to hold it in place. The keffiyeh skullcap used in the Arabian Gulf must be differentiated from the black and white keffiyah scarf (also known as ghutra and *shemagh* across the Middle East) worn in Palestine.

BAHRAIN

Music

Sawt, literally "voice" in Arabic, is the most popular type of music in Bahrain. Heavily influenced by African, Indian and Persian music, sawt music is played using the *Oud*, a traditional Arab stringed instrument that is an antecedent of the lute, and *Rebaba*, a stringed instrument that looks similar to a guitar. Other musical traditions in Bahrain include *Khaleeji*, a style of Persian Gulf-area folk music and *Fidgeri*, songs performed by the male-only pearl diving community.

There is a growing popularity of hard rock and heavy metal music among the younger generations. Music groups are writing original content as well as covering songs that have been done by European and American bands. Osiris is the most popular rock band in Bahrain currently.

Click the link below to listen to Al Ekhwa band which translates to "the brothers". Al Ekhwa is a Bahraini musical band that was formed by the widely-known Bahraini performer, Ali Bahar, in 1986.

BAHRAIN

Sites



Small in size, Bahrain still has a variety of places of historical, religious, and cultural prominence. Included among them are an ancient fortress and a top regional museum. The Bahrain National Museum covers 4,000 years of the country's history and heritage, and is located in Manama near the King Faisal Highway.

The Al-Fatih Mosque is the largest building in Bahrain and tours are given to non-Muslims that highlight the structure's unique architecture details featuring marble from Italy, glass from Austria, and teak wood from India. Guides will share the fundamental tenets of Islam with visitors.

BAHRAIN

To date, the Bahrain Fort (**Qal'at Al Bahrain**) is the country's sole World Heritage Site. The fort is of Portuguese architecture and sits on top of a tell, an artificial mound that has been created by several layers of human occupation. About 25% of the site has been excavated, and it is clear that the area has been occupied continuously since about 2300 BCE. The structures found range from residential homes and public and commercial buildings, to religious and military ones. The site used to be the capital of Dilmun, one of the most important ancient civilizations of the region. The Bahrain Fort sits right on an old trading port on the northern coast of Bahrain, about 5.5 km west of Manama.

Bahrain also hosts the densest concentrations of **burial mounds** found anywhere in the world from any period. The sites display the burial practices of the Dilmun and Tylos eras that were prominent periods of trade between Mesopotamia, South Arabia and the Indian subcontinent. Although the sites have been subject to several archaeological digs over the past decades, there is still a lot that has not been uncovered. The grounds have not yet been made into World Heritage sites due to disputes between UNESCO and Bahrain. The government has not done enough to preserve the sites, according to UNESCO, and many burial mounds have been destroyed in the process of urbanization. Much of what has been preserved, such as vases, glasses, weapons and bones, is stored in the National Museum.

BAHRAIN



Tree of Life, Photo by: Harold Laudeus - Flickr

One of the most famous sites in Bahrain is the Tree of Life. The tree is a 400-year old mesquite tree. It stands alone in the desert, surrounded by miles of sand. The area is supposedly free of any water supply, which is why the tree has been given its dramatic name. The Tree of Life is located in the desert about two kilometers from Jebel Dukhan.

Site Resources