

Qatar Crisis – Report (August 2017)

1. Qatar Crisis - what is it all about?

In early June 2017, several middle eastern countries severed diplomatic ties with Qatar in a statement against Qatar’s “support for terrorist organisations” and “interference in the domestic politics of neighbouring states”.

While certain countries demoted their relationship with Qatar, others took a stronger approach and imposed travel and entry bans.

There have been numerous developments over the past two months with both businesses and individuals feeling the effects of the change. One of the key implications includes the restrictions on mobility of people within the Gulf, primarily to and from Qatar, due to the closure of immigration borders as well as the embassies withdrawing their staff. The crisis is now a concern to other countries too, with numerous mediation attempts by diplomats from Kuwait and Turkey, amongst others. However, the situation remains unresolved.

2. What countries are involved?

A total of 14 countries have been involved in the crisis in one way or another, with the key players being: Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt.

Other countries include: the Comoros, Djibouti, Jordan, Libya, Maldives, Mauretania, Mauritius, Niger, Senegal and Yemen.



3. What we know



Diplomatic ties have been severed



Land and marine borders with Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have been closed



Airspaces of Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have been closed for aircrafts originating from Qatar, although nine emergency corridors exist



Key embassies in the region have been shut down, including the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Doha



Travel restrictions have impacted citizens and residents of the countries involved in the crisis and beyond



Relationship between Kuwait, Oman and Qatar remains unchanged

4. What we don't know



When and if the crisis will be resolved



Possible long-term implications of the crisis



Whether there are any implications on Qatar remaining within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

5. What are the current travel restrictions?



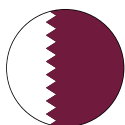
Travelling to Bahrain:

- Qatari citizens are banned from entry to Bahrain
- Holders of residency permits issued in Qatar are not eligible for visitor visas for GCC residents in Bahrain but can travel without restrictions based on other categories of visas
- Foreign nationals and Bahraini residents who have visited Qatar before can travel / return to Bahrain without restrictions



Travelling to Egypt:

- Qatari citizens are not eligible for visas on-arrival to Egypt and must apply for a pre-arranged visa in advance
- There is no change to immigration requirements for holders of residency permits issued in Qatar
- Foreign nationals, Egyptian residents and citizens who have visited Qatar before can travel / return to Egypt without restrictions



Travelling to Qatar:

- There is no entry ban imposed by the Qatari authorities on citizens of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia or the UAE. There is no change to immigration requirements for holders of residency permits issued in Qatar
- Holders of residency permits issued in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia or the UAE are eligible for visitor visas for GCC residents in Qatar, they can also travel without restrictions based on other categories of visas
- Foreign nationals and Qatari residents who have visited Bahrain, Saudi Arabia or the UAE before can travel / return to Qatar without restrictions
- Egyptian nationals are in practice facing heightened scrutiny and increased rejection rates for any category of visas for Qatar



Travelling to Saudi Arabia:

- Qatari citizens are banned from entry to Saudi Arabia
- Holders of residency permits issued in Qatar can travel without restrictions based on the respective categories of visas
- Due to the closure of the embassy in Doha, foreign nationals must apply for visas to Saudi Arabia from their home countries (Saudi Arabian diplomatic missions in the third countries do not accept visa applications to non-residents or citizens of those countries)
- Foreign nationals and Saudi residents who have visited Qatar before can travel / return to Saudi Arabia without restrictions



Travelling to the United Arab Emirates:

- Qatari citizens are banned from entry to the UAE
- Holders of residency permits issued in Qatar are not eligible for visitor visas for GCC residents in the UAE but can travel without restrictions based on other categories of visas
- Foreign nationals and UAE residents who have visited Qatar before can travel / return to the UAE without restrictions

6. Are there any exceptions?

- Governments of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have issued directives to take into consideration the humanitarian situation of families with Qatari ties and may lift the travel ban at their own discretion
- The following telephone numbers have been announced for the affected individuals, who may contact the authorities and discuss their cases:
 - **(+973) 173-99-821 – Bahrain**
 - **(+966) 112-409-111 – Saudi Arabia**
 - **(+971) 800-26-26 – UAE**

7. What is the impact on businesses operating in the region?

- Employment of Qatari citizens in Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE is currently restricted
- Qatari businessmen and investors, including property owners, are restricted from operating in the blocking countries
- Business travels must be planned ahead of time taking into account the potential need of pre-arranged visas, including the home-country application process for countries with embassies being closed
- Travel time between Qatar and the blocking countries has increased as a result of lack of direct flights; visitors are required to travel through a third-country e.g. Oman or Kuwait
- Financial transactions between the UAE and Qatar have been undergoing additional checks by banks, although with no delays to the service
- Closure of borders has caused difficulty in the import and export of goods and produce to and from Qatar, including food, construction supplies and courier parcels

8. What can you do now?

- Identify nationalities among your employee population that may be subject to potential entry or residency restrictions in Qatar. This should include the nationals of countries which have severed diplomatic relations with Qatar, mainly Egyptians and their dependents
- Prepare a strategy for re-deployment, should there be any additional restrictions or sanctions imposed by the countries involved
- Consider amending your corporate documents, including business licenses, in order to avoid potential problems with the availability of authorised signatories
- Constantly monitor the situation with the support of Fragomen

9. Fragomen newsflashes and knowledge tools

Please check the [Fragomen website](#) for more information on the Qatar crisis

The screenshot displays the Fragomen Knowledge Center interface. On the left, a dark navigation menu features the Fragomen logo and 'WORLDWIDE IMMIGRATION SOLUTIONS'. The main content area includes a date '2017-06-14' and an article titled 'Diplomatic Crisis: What are Your Options for UAE/Qatar Movement?' by Orlagh Mailey. The article text discusses the diplomatic crisis with Qatar, mentioning that 13 countries have downgraded relations and imposed entry bans. It notes that Qatar's borders remain shut to travel from participating countries, and that mobility within the Gulf is limited, especially for Qatari nationals with mixed families.

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2017-06-14

Diplomatic Crisis: What are Your Options for UAE/Qatar Movement?

Orlagh Mailey

The diplomatic crisis with Qatar has become a talking point for many in recent days as the number of participating countries has risen to thirteen. While some countries have downgraded their relationship with Qatar, others have taken a more serious approach and have imposed an entry ban against Qatari citizens. Both businesses and individuals alike have been expressing their concerns over how to best accommodate those affected as the consequences are felt globally.

Qatar's land, sea and air borders remain shut to travel to and from countries participating in the travel ban, and the embassies of countries involved have been gradually removing their staff from Qatar. This has resulted in limited mobility within the Gulf, especially when travelling to and from Qatar. Although there is no flexibility available for Qatari nationals (with the exception of those with mixed families), who are currently prohibited from travelling to the