

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Public Administration Country Profile

Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM)
Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

[Click here](#) for UN Cartographic Section



Source: [The World Factbook](#) - [United Arab Emirates](#)

Government type

Constitutional federation with specified powers delegated to the UAE federal government and other powers reserved to member emirates

Independence

2 December 1971 (from UK)

Constitution

2 December 1971 (made permanent in 1996)

[\(click here\)](#)

Legal system

Common law tradition with early Roman and modern continental influences; accepts compulsory International Court of Justice jurisdiction, with reservations

Administrative divisions

7 emirates

Source: [The World Factbook](#) - [United Arab Emirates](#) (edited)

Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan was elected as President on 3 November 2004, following the death of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan who held the post from the foundation of the State on 2 December 1971 until his death on 2 November 2004.

The Supreme Council meets at five-year intervals to reaffirm the existing President or elect a new one.

Source: [UAE Interact](#) - [Government](#)

1. General Information

1.1 People	UAE	Oman	Qatar	1
Population				a
Total estimated population (,000), 2003	2,995	2,851	610	
Female estimated population (,000), 2003	1,947	1,213	223	
Male estimated population (,000), 2003	1,048	1,638	387	
Sex ratio (males per 100 females), 2003	186	135	173	
Average annual rate of change of pop. (%), 2000-2005	1.94	2.93	1.54	
Youth and Elderly Population				b
Total population under age 15 (%), 2003	25	37	26	
Female population aged 60+ (%), 2003	3	4	3	
Male population aged 60+ (%), 2003	2	3	3	
Human Settlements				c
Urban population (%), 2001	87	77	93	
Rural population (%), 2001	13	23	7	
Urban average annual rate of change in pop. (%), '00-'05	2.22	3.96	1.72	
Rural average annual rate of change in pop/ (%), '00-'05	-1.89	0.91	-1.5	
Education				d
Total school life expectancy, 1998/1999	10.7	9 ⁱ	13.1	1
Female school life expectancy, 1998/1999	..	8.9 ⁱ	14	1
Male school life expectancy, 1998/1999	..	9.1 ⁱ	12.3	1
Female estimated adult (15+) illiteracy rate (%), 2000	20.9	38.4	16.9 ⁱⁱ	2
Male estimated adult (15+) illiteracy rate (%), 2000	25.2	19.9	19.6 ⁱⁱ	2
Employment				e
Unemployment rate (15+) (%), 2000	2.3 ⁱⁱⁱ	..	..	1
Female adult (+15) economic activity rate (%), 2000	31 ^{iv}	16 ^v	28 ^{vi}	2
Male adult (+15) economic activity rate (%), 2000	92 ^{iv}	84 ^v	93 ^{vi}	2

Notes: ⁱ 2000/2001; ⁱⁱ 1986; ⁱⁱⁱ Based on registered unemployment from employment office records; ^{iv} 1995; ^v 1993; ^{vi} 1986

1.2 Economy	UAE	Oman	Qatar	2
GDP				a
GDP total (millions US\$), 2002	..	20,073	16,454	
GDP per capita (US\$), 2002	..	7,906	26,974	
PPP GDP total (millions int. US\$), 2002	..	32,826 ⁱ	..	
PPP GDP per capita(int. US\$), 2002	..	12,929 ⁱ	..	
Sectors				b
Value added in agriculture (% of GDP), 2003	3.2	2.0	0.4 ⁱⁱ	
Value added in industry (% of GDP), 2003	54.1	54.2	70.7 ⁱⁱ	
Value added in services (% of GDP), 2003	42.7	43.8	28.9 ⁱⁱ	
Miscellaneous				b
GDP implicit price deflator (annual % growth), 2003	4.8	-0.5 ⁱⁱ	2.5	
Private consumption (% of GDP), 2003	48.5	41.2 ⁱⁱ	..	
Government consumption (% of GDP), 2003	14.7	24.6 ⁱⁱ	..	

Notes: ⁱ Most recent estimate from 2001 or 2000; ⁱⁱ 2002

¹ [United Nations Statistics Division](#):

^a [Statistics Division and Population Division of the UN Secretariat](#); ^b [Statistics Division and Population Division of the UN Secretariat](#); ^c [Population Division of the UN Secretariat](#); ^{d1} [UNESCO](#); ^{d2} [UNESCO](#); ^{e1} [ILO](#); ^{e2} [ILO/OECD](#)

² [World Bank - Data and Statistics](#):

^a [Quick Reference Tables](#); ^b [Country at a Glance](#)

1.3 Public Spending	UAE	Oman	Qatar	
Public expenditures				3
Education (% of GNP), 1985-1987	2.1	4.1	4.7	a
Education (% of GNP), 1995-1997	1.7	4.5	3.4 ⁱⁱ	a
Health (% of GDP), 1990	0.8	2	..	
Health (% of GDP), 1998	0.8	2.9	..	
Military (% of GDP), 1990	..	18.3	..	b
Military (% of GDP), 2000	..	9.7	..	b
Total debt service (% of GDP), 1990	..	7	..	
Total debt service (% of GDP), 2000	..	7.7 ⁱ	..	

Notes: ⁱ 1998; ⁱⁱ Data refer to a year or period other than that specified

1.4 Public Sector Employment and Wages						
<i>Data from the latest year available</i>		UAE 1991-1995	UAE 1996-2000	Other high- income average ⁴ 1996-2000	Gulf States average ⁴ 1996-2000	High income group average ⁴ 1996-2000
Employment						
Civilian Central Government ⁵	(,000)	..	..	
	(% pop.)	..	..	..	0.68	2.80
Sub-national Government ⁵	(,000)	..	..	
	(% pop.)	..	..	..	0.68	2.80
Education employees	(,000)	..	20.33			
	(% pop.)	..	0.83	..	1.63	1.32
Health employees	(,000)	..	9.69			
	(% pop.)	..	0.38	..	0.31	1.08
Police	(,000)	..	..	
	(% pop.)	..	..	..	0.76	..
Armed forces	(,000)	..	64.5			
	(% pop.)	..	2.37	..	1.73	0.53
SOE Employees	(,000)	26.84	..			
	(% pop.)	1.15	..	..	..	..
Total Public Employment	(,000)	..	..	
	(% pop.)	..	..	..	..	..
Wages						
Total Central gov't wage bill	(% of GDP)	3.8	3.7	..	11.2	4.2
Total Central gov't wage bill	(% of exp)	32.4	34.5	..	40.6	16.4
Average gov't wage	(,000 LCU)	..	108			
Real ave. gov't wage ('97 price)	(,000 LCU)	..	..	
Average gov't wage to per capita GDP ratio		..	1.5	..	1.7	..

Source: [World Bank](#) - [Public Sector Employment and Wages](#)

³ [UNDP - Human Development Report 2002](#)

^a Data refer to total public expenditure on education, including current and capital expenditures.

^b As a result of a number of limitations in the data, comparisons of military expenditure data over time and across countries should be made with caution. For detailed notes on the data see SIPRI (2001).

⁴ Averages for regions and sub regions are only generated if data is available for at least 35% of the countries in that region or sub region.

⁵ Excluding education, health and police – if available (view [Country Sources](#) for further explanations).

2. Legal Structure

The Federal National Council (FNC) and the Federal Supreme Council (FSC) amended the 1971 interim constitution of the United Arab Emirates, drafted with the establishment of the federation, to make it permanent in 1996.

The constitution describes five federal institutions: the Federal Supreme Council (FSC-executive), the President of the Union and the vice president, the Council of Ministers of the Union, the Federal National Council (FNC-legislative), and the Judiciary of the Union.

Source: [UNDP \(Programme on Governance in the Arab Region\)](#) - [UAE: Constitution](#)

2.1 Legislative Branch

Unicameral Federal National Council or Majlis al-Ittihad al-Watani (40 seats; members appointed by the rulers of the constituent states to serve two-year terms).⁶

women in parliament: 0 out of 40 seats: (0%).⁷

The United Arab Emirates is a federation of seven emirates. The legislative branch is the unicameral Al-Majlis Al-Watani Al-Itihadi, or Federal National Council (FNC). The FNC's 40 members are appointed by the rulers of the emirates to serve a two-year term of office, with the possibility of re-election. The selection process of the FNC members is left by the constitution to the emirates' discretion.

Seats are apportioned in the following manner: Abu Dhabi and Dubai each appoint eight members, Sharjah and Ras Al-Khaima each appoint six members, and Ajman, Umm Al-Quwain, and Fujairah each appoint four members.⁸

The FNC reviews legislation and proposes amendments to it, but it does not have the power to veto laws or to initiate new laws. As such, the parliament is largely a consultative body. The Council, however, does have the power to examine and amend proposed legislation and the power to summon and question any federal minister as well as its own members. One of the main duties of the FNC is to discuss the annual budget. The beginning and termination of legislative sessions are determined by presidential decree.

The FNC elects a secretary general, a chairman, two deputies and two elected observers as the president's aides. The chairman, the council's undersecretary, the secretary general, and four elected members also make up the parliamentary Executive Committee. The chairman, inter alia, controls the Council's Bureau and its committees, supervises the General Secretariat, prepares the Council's budget, heads sessions, organizes discussions, takes votes, and announces resolutions.

Federal laws are drafted by the Council of Ministers and are then submitted to the FNC, where they are first sent to the proper committee. If a committee makes amendments to the proposed draft by the executive, the amended draft goes to the Legal and Legislative Committee, before the floor debate, for consultation and formulation of its provisions. Finally, the draft is presented to the president of the federation.

Source: [UNDP \(Programme on Governance in the Arab Region\)](#) - [UAE: Legislature](#)

⁶ Source of fact boxes if nothing else stated: [The World Factbook](#) - [United Arab Emirates](#)

⁷ [Inter-Parliamentary Union - Women in National Parliaments](#)

⁸ [UNDP \(Programme on Governance in the Arab Region\)](#) - [UAE: Elections](#)

2.2 Executive Branch

cabinet: Council of Ministers appointed by the president

elections: President and vice president elected by the Federal Supreme Council (a group of seven electors) for five-year terms; election last held 3 November 2004 upon the death of the UAE's Founding Father and first President ZAYID bin Sultan Al Nuhayyan (next to be held 2009); prime minister and deputy prime minister appointed by the president

The Federal Supreme Council (FSC) is the highest constitutional authority in the UAE. It is also the highest legislative and executive body. The FSC is composed of the rulers of the seven emirates. Each of the emirs is a hereditary position. The seven members of the Supreme Council elect the president and vice president. The ruler of Abu Dhabi has been the president since the federation was formally established in 1971.

The president appoints a prime minister, a deputy prime minister, and a Council of Ministers to serve as a cabinet body. The ruler of Dubai, Maktum bin Rashid al-Maktum, has held the vice-presidency since 1990.

It establishes general policies and sanctions federal legislation. The rulers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai have veto power. The FSC meets four times a year, usually informally.

The Council of Ministers drafts decrees and various decisions. The prime minister and the members of the cabinet are responsible to the president and to the FSC made up of the rulers of the seven emirates.

Source: [UNDP \(Programme on Governance in the Arab Region\)](#) –

Fact box:

chief of state: President Sheikh KHALIFA bin Zayid Al Nuhayyan (since 3 November 2004), ruler of Abu Dhabi (Abu Dhabi) (since 4 November 2004) and Vice President MAKTUM bin Rashid al-Maktum (since 8 October 1990), ruler of Dubai (Dubai)

head of government: Prime Minister MAKTUM bin Rashid al-Maktum (since 8 October 1990), ruler of Dubai (Dubai); Deputy Prime Minister SULTAN bin Zayid Al Nuhayyan (since 20 November 1990); Deputy Prime Minister HAMDAN bin Zayid Al Nuhayyan (since 20 October 2003)

[UAE: Constitution](#) & [UAE: Elections](#)

2.3 Judiciary Branch

Union Supreme Court (judges are appointed by the president).

The Constitution, first written in 1971 and reaffirmed several times since then, declares Shari'a to be a principle source for law in the United Arab Emirates. Additional influences on the UAE legal system are the Common Law and Egyptian legal traditions. Custom and tradition are also considered in judicial decision-making.

The major codifications of the law are the Civil Code, contained in Law No. 5 of 1985; Federal Penal Code, contained in Law No. 3 of 1987; the Law of Evidence in Civil and Commercial Matters, contained in Law No. 10 of 1992; the Code of Civil Procedure, contained in Law No. 11 of 1992; and the Code of Criminal Procedure, contained in Law No. 35 of 1992. The official language of the courts is Arabic.

Civil matters are dealt with by the federal judiciary structure of UAE, although two emirates, Dubai and Ras Al Khaimah, remain outside of this structure. The lowest courts in the system are the Courts of First Instance, located in each of the emirates. There is a two-tiered appellate system beyond the Courts of First Instance: the Federal Appeal Court, located in each of the emirates, and the highest court in the structure, the Court of Cassation. This Court, located in Abu Dhabi, serves as the

final court of appeal for all cases heard in the lower courts and is also empowered to adjudicate any disputes between courts in the individual emirates. In addition, the Court of Cassation is the body empowered to determine the constitutionality of laws, including statutes promulgated at both the local and federal levels. The Court of Cassation has jurisdiction to investigate misconduct by high government officials and to try offenses against the Federation.

The Federal Supreme Court consists of five judges appointed by the Supreme Council of Rulers. The judges decide on the constitutionality of federal laws and arbitrate on intra-emirate disputes and disputes between the federal government and the emirates.⁹

There are separate criminal and Shari'a courts. While the criminal courts have a separate appeal system, cases heard in the Shari'a Courts of First Instance may be appealed to the Civil Courts of Appeal and the Court of Cassation in Abu Dhabi.

The legal profession is governed by Federal Law No. 23 of 1991, which states that only nationals of the United Arab Emirates with appropriate legal qualifications are entitled to appear before the courts as lawyers.

Source: [UNDP \(Programme on Governance in the Arab Region POGAR\) - UAE: Judiciary](#)

2.4 Local Government

The national constitution delineates a division of power between the federal government and the governments of each of the seven emirates. The central government is responsible for foreign policy, defense, education, public health, the communications infrastructure, and immigration and territorial issues. Powers not given to the federal government are reserved in the constitution for the individual states of the UAE. In practice over the past 30 years, the federal government has assumed additional responsibilities such as water and the judiciary system where local governments have been willing to relinquish power.

The degree of local governance varies in accordance with the size of the emirate and the size of the local community. In Abu Dhabi, the largest emirate, there is a parallel government to the federal structure including a consultative council and public administration. The city of Abu Dhabi is divided into two municipalities that provide a variety of services including water, electricity, public works, finance, and customs. The municipality of Al-Ain within the emirate of Abu Dhabi also has a strong local government. In rural areas, the smaller and less developed emirates, the federal government tends to take a larger role in the provision of public services.

Although political leaders in the emirates are not elected, citizens may express their concerns directly to their leaders via traditional mechanisms, such as the open majlis, or informal assembly.¹⁰

Source: [UNDP \(Programme on Governance in the Arab Region\) - UAE: Decentralization](#)

⁹ [Government of United Arab Emirates - Political System](#)

¹⁰ [UNDP \(Programme on Governance in the Arab Region\) - UAE: Constitution](#)

3. The State and Civil Society

3.1 Ombudsperson

Source: [Institution](#) - [Source](#)

3.2 NGOs

Source: [Institution](#) - [Source](#)

3.1 Civil Society

Public assembly and association are subject to government approval. All private associations must be licensed by local authorities. However, this requirement is enforced only loosely in some emirates.

Although trade unions are banned, the Federation of UAE Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the UAE Women's Federation are officially recognized umbrella organizations. The latter federation of women's associations has been effective in teaching local women to organize themselves, set up literacy campaigns, establish craft and vocational centers, and thus, prepare women to play an active role in social development.

Although the constitution provides for freedom of speech, the press continues to avoid direct criticism of the government and exercises self-censorship. All published material is subject to Federal Law 15 of 1988, which stipulates that all publications should be licensed by the Ministry of Information. The law also governs content and contains a list of restricted subjects.

Many of the local English and Arabic language newspapers are privately owned but receive government subsidies. The Ministry of Information and Culture reviews imported publications routinely before their distribution.

All television and radio stations are government owned and conform to government reporting guidelines. Satellite receiving dishes are widespread and provide access to international broadcasts without apparent censorship.

Traditional and modern forms of government coexist in the United Arab Emirates. Over the years a higher rate of institutionalization, both at the federal and emirate level, could be observed. Despite some erosion of traditional politics as a tool of problem solving, traditional institutions proved to be resilient and adaptive to new forms.

The political system in the United Arab Emirates is often described as direct democracy without suffrage. The rulers derive their power and legitimacy from their dynasties and their positions in their respective tribes. But, in accordance with tradition, in order to maintain their authority, they need to retain the loyalty and support of their people. This was done by a strong adherence to the principle that the people should have free access to their ruler and that he should hold a frequent and open majlis, or informal assembly, in which his fellow tribesmen could voice their opinions.

This tradition continues today. Particularly in smaller emirates citizens and tribesmen prefer to wait for their ruler to hold an open majlis to discuss their grievances rather

than going through the institutions of modern government. Debates in the majlis, especially in cases where a consensus is formed, have the potential of affecting government policy. On the other hand, the institutions of modern government, with its ministries, departments and municipalities, are better equipped to deal with a broad range of more complicated issues. These institutions have taken over responsibility for a number of tasks with which, traditionally, a ruler would have dealt on a personal basis.

Source: UNDP (Programme on Governance in the Arab Region) - UAE: Civil Society

4. Civil Service

The federal government structure comprises a set of ministries, public corporations, authorities and agencies. The Civil Service Council (CSC) is the technical arm of the Cabinet that caters for the development of the civil service, productivity within governmental organizations and follow-up the executive units in carrying out their stipulated duties. Also, the CSC ensures that the Civil Service Law is adhered to by the different governmental units.

Source: [International Institute of Administrative Sciences & UNDESA - Profiles of National Public Administration \(2000\)](#)

4.1 Legal basis

Federal Law No. 21 of 2001 introduces new rules governing employment by the Federal government and repeals its predecessor statute, Federal Law No. 8 of 1973.

The new Law sets forth comprehensive rules on the appointment, evaluation, promotion, terms and conditions of employment, obligations, investigation, discipline and discharge of employees of the Federal government. The system of Civil Service grades will be determined by resolution of the Cabinet, and the Civil Service Council will have a general role in governing affairs related to the Civil Service.

Source: [The International Centre for Commercial Law - New Federal Civil Service Law](#)

4.2 Recruitment

Source: [Institution - Title](#)

4.3 Promotion

Source: [Institution - Title](#)

4.4 Remuneration

Source: [Institution - Title](#)

4.5 Training

[Click here](#) for the Institute of Administrative Development¹¹

Source: [Institution - Title](#)

4.6 Gender

In 1998, the number of women in the civil service was 27,302 (47%) compared to 31,378 (53%) men.

Source: [International Institute of Administrative Sciences & UNDESA - Profiles of National Public Administration \(2000\)](#)

¹¹ In Arabic.

5. Ethics and Civil Service

5.1 Corruption

2003 CPI Score relates to perceptions of the degree of corruption as seen by business people and country analysts and ranges between 10 (highly clean) and 0 (highly corrupt).

Corruption Perceptions Index							
		2003 CPI Score	Surveys Used	Standard Deviation	High-Low Range	Number Inst.	90 percent confidence range
Rank	Country						
1	Highly clean	9.7	8	0.3	9.2 - 10.0	4	9.5 - 9.9
37	United Arab Emirates	5.2	3	0.5	4.6 - 5.6	3	4.6 - 5.5
133	Highly corrupt	1.3	8	0.7	0.3 - 2.2	6	0.9 - 1.7

Source: [Transparency International - Corruption Perceptions Index 2003](#)

Surveys Used: Refers to the number of surveys that were used to assess a country's performance. 17 surveys were used and at least 3 surveys were required for a country to be included in the CPI.

Standard Deviation: Indicates differences in the values of the sources. Values below 0.5 indicate agreement, values between 0.5 and c. 0.9 indicate some agreement, while values equal or larger than 1 indicate disagreement.

High-Low Range: Provides the highest and lowest values of the sources.

Number Institutions: Refers to the number of independent institutions that assessed a country's performance. Since some institutions provided more than one survey.

90 percent confidence range: Provides a range of possible values of the CPI score. With 5 percent probability the score is above this range and with another 5 percent it is below.

With the new Federal Law No. 21 of 2001 governing employment by the Federal government, the anti-bribery and anti-conflict of interest provisions that were contained in the repealed Federal Law No. 8 of 1973 are expanded.

The new Law continues to provide that a civil servant may not perform any acts for another person for a salary or without a salary, even if outside official hours of work, except upon permission of the concerned Minister; that a civil servant may not have any direct or indirect interest in any business, contracting agreement or contracts related to the task of the Ministry to which he belongs; and that a civil servant may not take as lessee any real property, lands, or other property with the intent of exploiting the same at the same time that the tasks of his office are performed therein. The new Law also contains express provisions that no civil servant may combine his office with any other office, although as an exception a civil servant may serve on the Board of Directors of a society of public benefit or a corporation having state shareholding; and that no civil servant may conduct any professional, commercial or financial activity related to the authority for which he works, either by himself or through an intermediary.

Source: [The International Centre for Commercial Law - New Federal Civil Service Law](#)

5.2 Ethics

Source: [Institution](#) - [Source](#)

6. e-Government

e-Government Readiness Index:

The index refers to the generic capacity or aptitude of the public sector to use ICT for encapsulating in public services and deploying to the public, high quality information (explicit knowledge) and effective communication tools that support human development.

The index is comprised of three sub-indices: Web Measure Index, Telecommunications Infrastructure Index and Human Capital Index.

Web Measure Index:

A scale based on progressively sophisticated web services present. Coverage and sophistication of state-provided e-service and e-product availability correspond to a numerical classification.

Telecommunications Infrastructure Index:

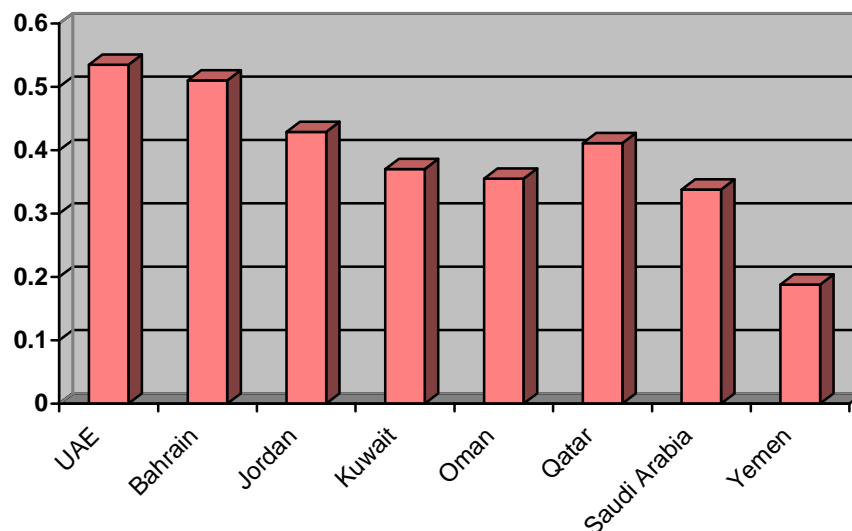
A composite, weighted average index of six primary indices, based on basic infrastructural indicators that define a country's ICT infrastructure capacity.

Primary indicators are: PC's, Internet users, online population and Mobile phones. Secondary indicators are TVs and telephone lines.

Human Capital Index:

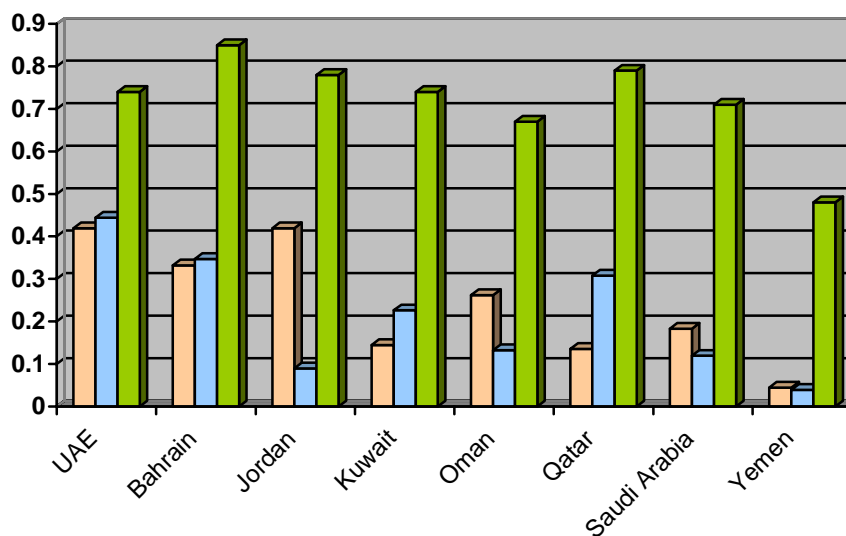
A composite of the adult literacy rate and the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio, with two thirds of the weight given to adult literacy and one third to the gross enrolment ratio.

e-Government Readiness Index



Source: HUnited Nations – World Public Sector Report 2003H

Web Measure Index, Telecom. Infrastructure Index, Human Capital Index



Source: HUnited Nations – World Public Sector Report 2003H

e-Participation Index:

Refers to the willingness, on the part of the government, to use ICT to provide high quality information (explicit knowledge) and effective communication tools for the specific purpose of empowering people for able participation in consultations and decision-making both in their capacity as consumers of public services and as citizens.

e-information:

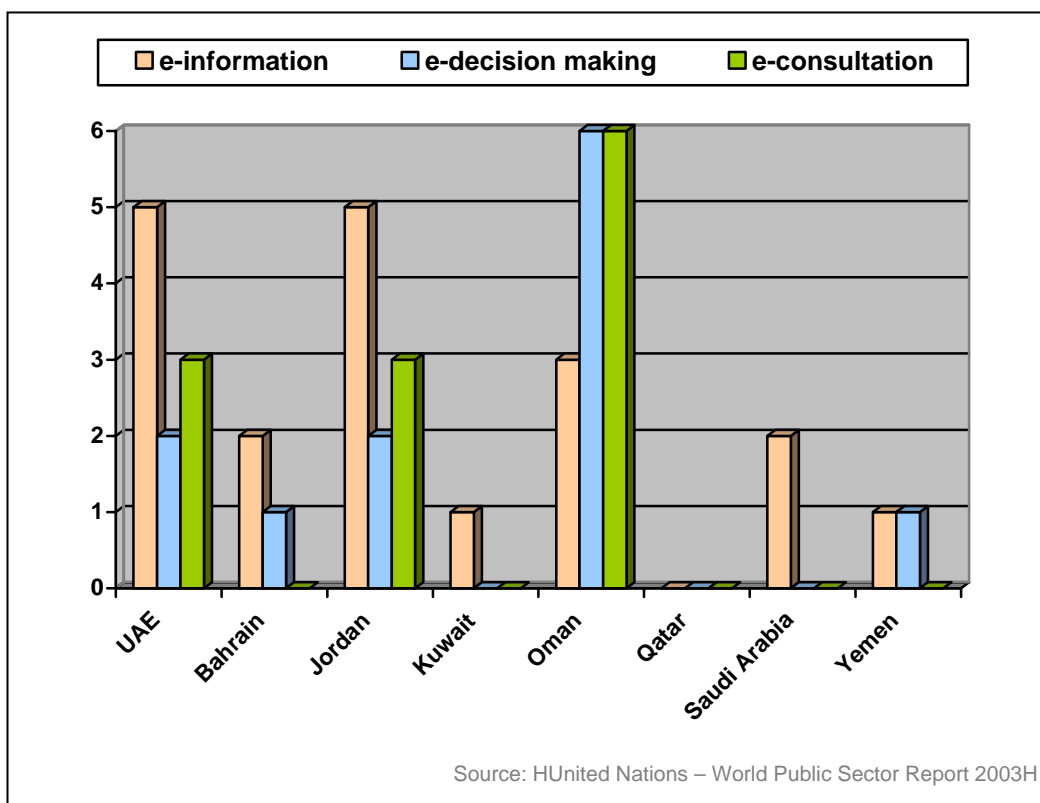
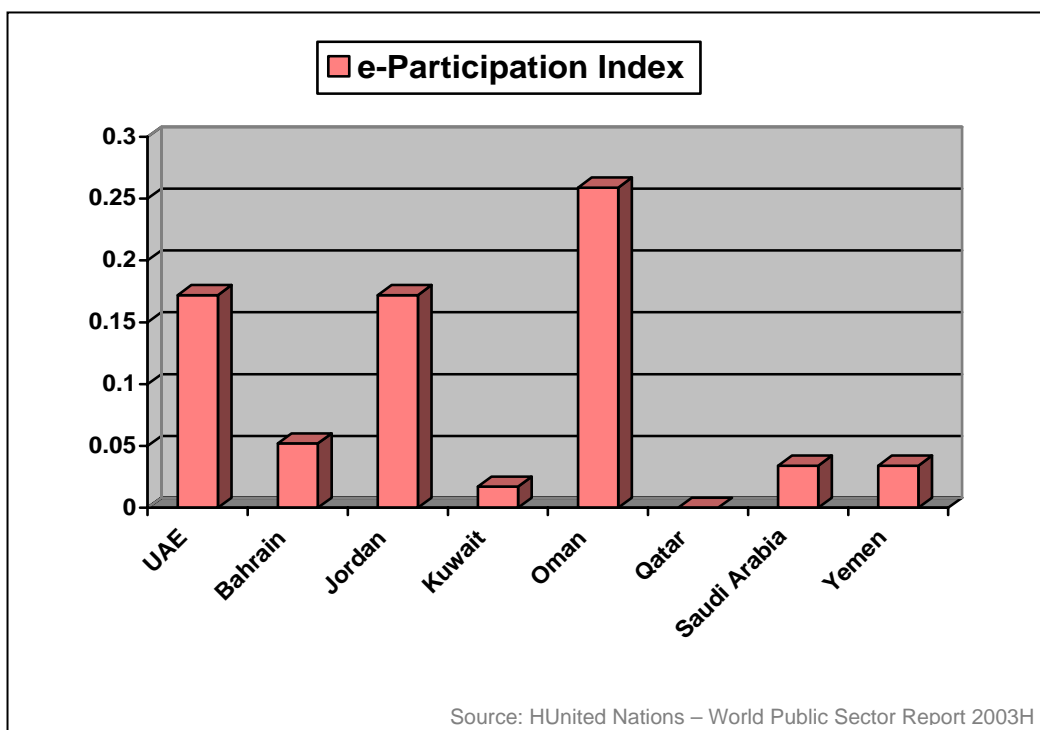
The government websites offer information on policies and programs, budgets, laws and regulations, and other briefs of key public interest. Tools for disseminating of information exist for timely access and use of public information, including web forums, e-mail lists, newsgroups and chat rooms.

e-decision making:

The government indicates that it will take citizens input into account in decision making and provides actual feedback on the outcome of specific issues.

e-consultation:

The government website explains e-consultation mechanisms and tools. It offers a choice of public policy topics online for discussion with real time and archived access to audios and videos of public meetings. The government encourages citizens to participate in discussions.



7. Links

7.1 National sites	
Authority	Topic
Federal e-Government Portal	http://www.uae.gov.ae/
Ministries	http://www.government.ae/gov/en/gov/federal/index.jsp
Federal National Council	http://www.almajles.gov.ae/

7.2 Miscellaneous sites	
Institution	Topic
Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO)	http://www.arado.org.eg/
Arab Election Law Compendium	http://www.arabelectionlaw.net
Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development	http://www.arabfund.org/
Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations	http://www.agfund.org/
Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union	http://www.arab-ipu.org/
Arab Social Science Research	http://www.assr.org/countries/uae/index.html
Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf	http://www.gcc-sg.org/
International Labour Organization (ILO)	http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.home
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	http://www.undp.org.ae/
UNDP - Programme on Governance in the Arab Region (POGAR)	http://www.undp-pogar.org/countries/uae/index.html
UNPAN	http://www.unpan.org/virtual_library-byregion.asp
World Bank (WB)	http://www.worldbank.org/ae