

Services and tourism drive Bahrain GDP in 2025

Economy grows 3.5pc, led by services and tourism

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Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's economy expanded by 3.5% in 2025 at constant prices, with non-oil sectors driving growth as services and tourism-related industries led the gains. Gross domestic product reached BD15.7 billion at constant prices and BD18.4 billion at current prices.

Non-oil activity grew 4.1% to BD13.5 billion at constant prices, accounting for 85.8% of total GDP, underscoring the kingdom's continued shift away from hydrocarbons. Oil activity, by contrast, edged down 0.3% to BD2.2 billion.

Among the fastest-growing segments were professional, scientific and technical activities and accommodation and food services, each expanding 6.4% over the year. Together,



the two sectors contributed 3.9% of non-oil GDP, worth BD612.3 million, and supported 105,100 private-sector jobs, including 12,600 held by Bahrainis.

Professional services led the

growth table despite accounting for just 2.2% of non-oil GDP, or BD345.4 million. Expansion was driven by head office and management consultancy work, legal and accountancy services,

as well as advertising and market research. The sector employed 37,500 people in the private sector, including 6,300 Bahrainis, with a median monthly wage of BD550 for nationals.

Accommodation and food services matched that pace, supported by stronger tourism performance. Overnight visitors rose 10.9% to 7.3 million, while tourist nights increased 5.2% to 20.2 million. Average daily visitor spending climbed 5% to BD72.6, helping push inbound tourism receipts up 7.2% to BD2 billion. The sector accounted for 1.7% of non-oil GDP, valued at BD266.9 million.

The accommodation and food segment employed 67,600 people in the private sector, including 6,300 Bahrainis, with a median monthly wage of BD350 for nationals.

Tourism momentum was further supported by new projects and partnerships during the year. Bahrain Marina Development signed a strategic agreement with NAD Holding Group to develop retail and restaurant space at Marina Walk within the Bahrain Marina project. Terminal 4 by Beyon was also announced at Exhibition World Bahrain, with capacity to host around 3,500 visitors for arts and entertainment events.

The latest figures highlight



GDP at constant prices measures economic growth after removing the effect of inflation, giving a clearer picture of real expansion in output. In contrast, GDP at current prices (also called nominal GDP) reflects the value of goods and services at prevailing market prices, meaning it includes the impact of inflation. As a result, current-price figures are typically higher in periods of rising prices, while constant-price data is used to assess the true pace of economic growth over time.

the growing role of non-oil sectors in sustaining Bahrain's economic expansion, with services and tourism continuing to anchor growth.

Seef Properties launches Smart Assistant "Sara" via WhatsApp to enhance operational efficiency

Manama

Seef Properties has announced the launch of its automated robotic assistant "Sara" via WhatsApp. This step underscores the company's accelerated digital transformation and commitment to adopting innovative solutions to streamline operational processes and enhance the quality of services provided to tenants and partners across its various projects.

This initiative is among the first of its kind in Bahrain's real estate sector. Coming as part of a strategic vision to enhance daily operations through artificial intelligence, it aims to deliver faster, more flexible, and efficient services.

Sara was designed and developed by a Bahraini team within Seef Properties to support the



Yusuf Rashdan, Head of IT at Seef Properties



Ahmed Yusuf, CEO of Seef Properties



Smart Assistant "Sara"

facilities management system and operational processes. It expedites work permit processing and automates data collection and input into approved systems, thus reducing application processing time, improving execution accuracy, and minimising reliance on traditional procedures. Consequently, this enhances team productivity and improves operational efficiency.

Accessible via WhatsApp,

Sara provides a user-friendly digital communication channel, allowing tenants and partners to submit, track, and manage applications around the clock. It responds instantly to operational inquiries, enhancing the user experience and ensuring continuous, high-quality service. Seamlessly integrated with existing systems, it supports information flow and accelerates decision-making.

Furthermore, Sara redefines daily work processes by systematically organising, directing and processing applications, fostering the development of a comprehensive operational database that improves the quality of outputs. The company's team is continuously developing Sara to expand its applications and smart features to keep pace with evolving business needs.

Commenting on this mile-

stone, Mr. Ahmed Yusuf, CEO of Seef Properties, stated, "The launch of the automated robotic assistant 'Sara' marks a significant advancement in our digital transformation journey. It reflects our dedication to leveraging artificial intelligence technologies to optimise operational efficiency and improve service quality. This is paired with our investment in national talent, who have proven their capability to develop and implement advanced technological solutions, demonstrating their readiness to lead the company's digital transformation."

He added, "Sara is the starting point for building a more integrated, flexible digital ecosystem. We plan to enhance its capabilities and expand its applications to support our teams, enhance response times, and

elevate the experience of our tenants and partners."

For his part, Mr. Yusuf Rashdan, Head of IT at Seef Properties, commented, "Sara was developed based on a comprehensive understanding of our teams' operational needs. We focused on simplifying and transforming procedures into seamless digital workflows that reduce reliance on manual processing, ensuring faster handling of requests and clear implementation stages."

He added, "We ensured Sara's full integration with existing systems to enable real-time, accurate data flow. This improves the quality of operational outputs and supports decision-making while continuously developing to keep pace with expanding business needs and enhance daily performance efficiency."

RCSI Medical University of Bahrain pioneers introduction of Casper Test to strengthen Admissions' Global benchmarking

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The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) - Medical University of Bahrain has announced the introduction of the Casper Test for North American applicants seeking entry to its undergraduate medical programme for the 2026-27 academic year, making it the first university in the Middle East to lead such an initiative.

The Casper Test is a situational judgment assessment designed to evaluate applicants'



Dr Declan Gaynor, Academic Director of Admissions and Senior Lecturer in Chemistry

non-academic attributes essential for success in healthcare

professions, including ethical reasoning, communication, empathy and professionalism. Developed through rigorous academic research at the renowned McMaster University (Canada) and delivered in partnership with Acuity Insights, the test provides valuable insights into candidates' personal and professional qualities.

The introduction of Casper aims to complement the University's existing admissions framework, forming part of a holistic evaluation alongside academic performance, extra-

curricular activities and interviews. The initiative supports a balanced, comprehensive review while serving as a differentiating factor, helping to identify candidates whose values and attributes closely align with the demands of modern healthcare practice.

As one of the regional leaders in medical and health sciences education, RCSI Medical University of Bahrain is also advancing a strategic collaboration with regional and international partners to adapt this evidence-based assessment for the

Gulf Cooperation Council and wider Middle East, strengthening its position at the forefront of innovative, globally aligned admissions practices.

Commenting on the initiative, Dr Declan Gaynor, Academic Director of Admissions and Senior Lecturer in Chemistry, said: "By introducing Casper in the admissions process, RCSI Medical University of Bahrain aims to offer North American applicants an additional opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for the medical undergraduate programme

beyond traditional academic metrics. This marks a significant step forward in advancing evidence-based and globally benchmarked admissions practices for future healthcare professionals."

This initiative further underscores RCSI Medical University of Bahrain's steadfast commitment to international recognition of quality benchmarks, reflecting its positive global outlook toward leading North American and other internationally renowned universities.