



Qatar 2024 CEO Outlook

**Building Resilience.
Inspiring Growth.**

KPMG in Qatar

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Issued in February 2025





Contents

- 03.** Overview
- 04.** Economic Outlook
- 05.** ESG
- 06.** Talent
- 07.** Technology and Generative AI
- 08.** Conclusion
- 09.** Methodology



A Strategic Compass for Growth and Transformation

As we step into 2025, KPMG in Qatar is pleased to present the 2024 Qatar CEO Outlook—a deep dive into the priorities, challenges, and aspirations of business leaders who have steered their organizations through an era of transformation.

This report captures key insights into how Qatar’s CEOs are shaping their growth strategies, responding to economic and geopolitical shifts, integrating ESG into their business models, adapting to talent dynamics, and harnessing the potential of generative AI.

With optimism and resilience at the core of their leadership, CEOs in Qatar are positioning their organizations for long-term success. The findings of this report offer a comprehensive perspective on the evolving business landscape, equipping leaders with the foresight needed to navigate the future with confidence.



Ahmed Abu-Sharkh
Country Senior Partner
KPMG in Qatar

“CEOs in Qatar are exhibiting innovation, endurance and agility as they navigate a constantly changing global landscape.

They are preparing their businesses for long-term success by embracing generative AI and disruptive technologies, prioritizing inclusive talent strategies, and reinventing ESG as a value creation engine.”



Economic Outlook

Confidence amid uncertainty



Venkat Krishnaswamy
Partner, Head of Advisory
KPMG in Qatar

“Qatar’s CEOs remain confident in their growth potential and the strength of the national economy,

yet today’s challenges highlight the critical need for resilience, adaptability, and forward-thinking strategies to navigate an evolving landscape.”

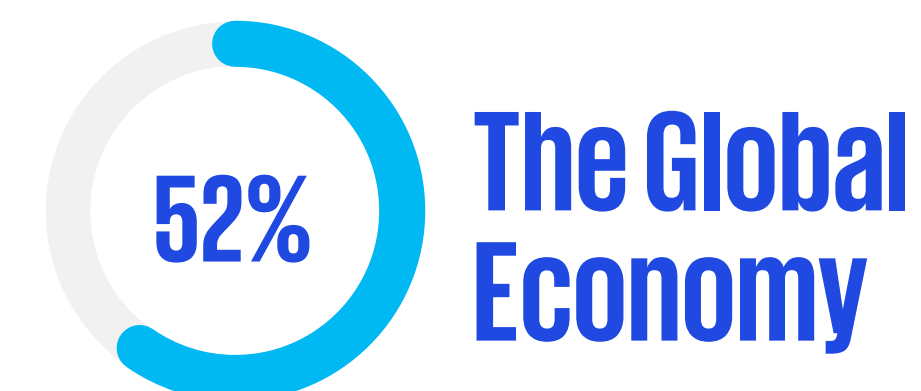
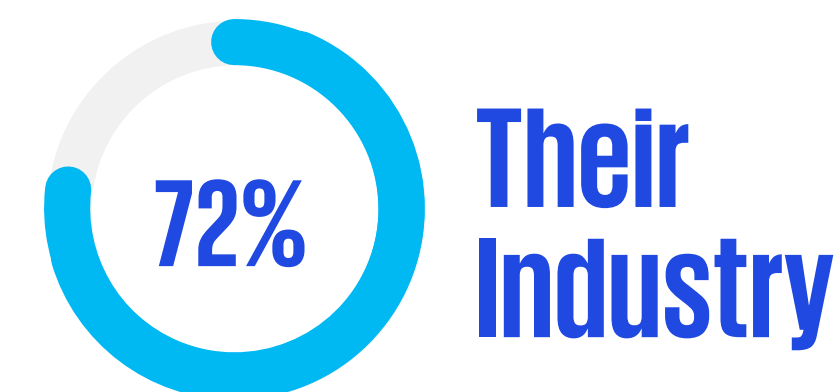
Qatar’s CEOs display strong confidence in growth prospects at both company and national levels, with 96% expressing confidence in their company’s future and 88% feeling assured about the nation’s economic trajectory. Industry-level confidence stands at 72%, although global prospects inspire more cautious optimism (52%).

Economic uncertainty, cited by 76% of CEOs in Qatar, emerges as the top challenge facing organizations, followed by geopolitical complexities (52%) and the need to embrace generative AI and other technologies (44%).

Internal growth barriers (36%), talent competition (12%), and shifting work patterns (8%) also weigh on organizational strategy.

In light of these challenges, 84% of CEOs report heightened pressure to ensure their organizations’ long-term prosperity, signaling a clear focus on resilience and adaptability in the face of uncertainty.

CEO confidence in the growth prospects of:



ESG

Balancing ambition with impact

36%

of Qatar's CEOs expect ESG to be the key driver in attracting the next-generation of top talent over the next three years.

...and they expect to see returns from their investments in:

52%

3 to 5 years

36%

5 to 7 years

Qatari CEOs are committed to embedding Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles into their strategies, with 52% expecting measurable returns on ESG investments within three to five years. Another 36% foresee benefits in five to seven years, reflecting a medium-term view of ESG as a growth enabler. A smaller group (12%) expects returns within one to three years, indicating confidence in shorter-term outcomes for some.

Over the next three years, ESG efforts are anticipated to have the greatest impact on attracting the next generation of top talent (36%). Inclusion, diversity, and equity (IDE) are also taking center stage, with 76% of CEOs expecting increased scrutiny on diversity performance. While 80% believe gender equity and senior-level diversity are vital for growth, only 28% are satisfied with the progress so far. Interestingly, 76% of CEOs recognize their role in driving social mobility, aligning corporate goals with societal priorities. However, concerns persist, with 40% expressing reservations about using mandated quotas to achieve sustainable diversity.



Imad Dakik
Partner, Advisory
Head of ESG
KPMG in Qatar

“As we look to the future, ESG will be a cornerstone of sustainable growth.

Investing in renewable energy, socially inclusive policies, and responsible business practices not only drives long-term value but also attracts the next generation of talent, positioning organizations for enduring success.”



Talent

Bridging generations, driving growth

Qatari CEOs overwhelmingly envision a return to traditional office setups, with 100% predicting fully in-office roles for corporate employees within three years. This approach underscores a preference for structured work environments over hybrid or remote models.

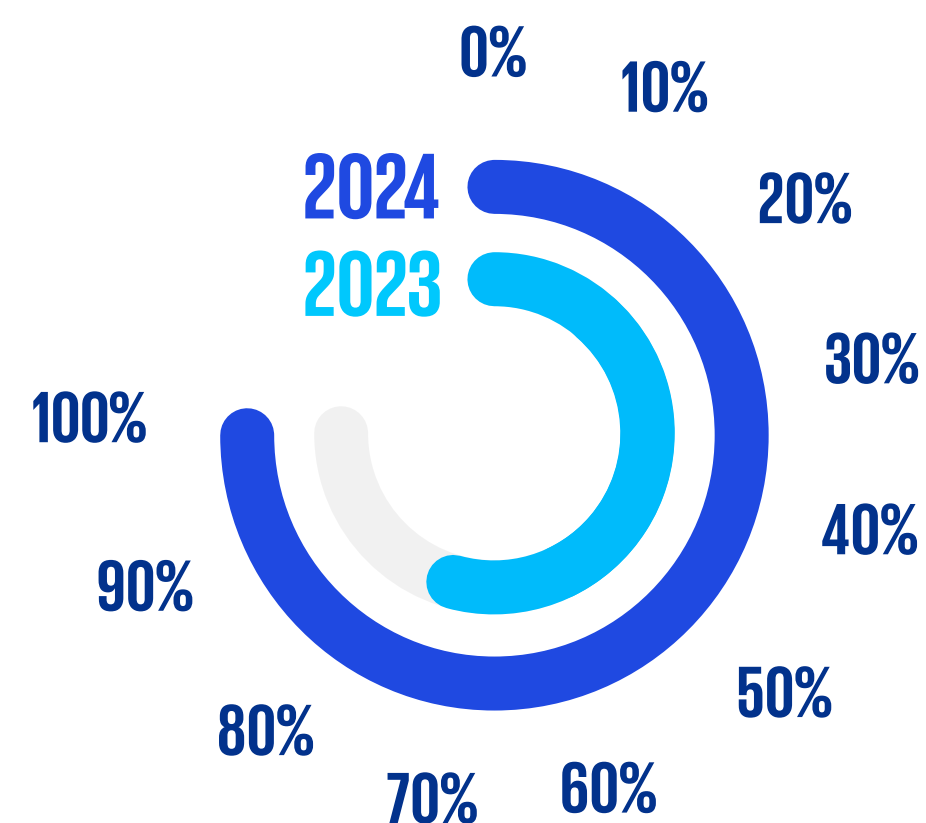
Technology emerges as the cornerstone of transformation, with 80% prioritizing capital investment in new technologies compared to only 20% focusing on workforce skills. While this highlights a strong push for digital advancement, it also points to an underinvestment in human capital development.

Qatari CEOs report that talent market shifts, particularly an aging workforce, have a moderate impact on employee recruitment, retention, and overall culture, with 72% citing this as a concern. However, only 20% view it as having a high impact, and 8% report a low impact, indicating the issue is significant but not critical. The most pressing workforce challenge, highlighted by 52%, is the widening expectation gap between older employees and the next generation, followed by 32% who are concerned about the retirement of skilled workers without adequate replacements. Other factors, such as knowledge transfer between employees (12%) and corporate responses to social issues (4%), are less impactful but still relevant.



Barbara Henzen
Partner, Head of Tax
KPMG in Qatar

Overall percentage of CEOs predicting a full return to office over the next three years



“Talent challenges, from an aging workforce to generational shifts, present strategic opportunities for growth.

By leveraging AI-driven learning, fostering cross-generational mentorship, and prioritizing upskilling, Qatar’s companies can build a future-ready workforce that drives long-term, sustainable development in alignment with the nation’s vision.”



Technology and Generative AI

A measured leap forward



Ahmed Ben Abdallah

Partner, Advisory

Head of Digital and Innovation

KPMG in Qatar

“Generative AI offers a transformative pathway for innovation and growth in Qatar.

By establishing strong ethical frameworks, investing in training, and implementing robust AI governance, Qatar’s companies can harness its potential while aligning with the nation’s ambitious vision for the future.”

Generative AI is both an opportunity and a challenge for Qatari CEOs. While 48% see it as a top priority (24% strongly agreeing), 40% remain hesitant due to competing priorities. Ethical challenges (60%), technical skills (56%), and regulatory gaps (36%) are the top barriers to implementation, while concerns like misinformation (20%) and environmental sustainability (12%) are less pressing. Despite this, 64% anticipate returns on generative AI investments within three to five years, and 80% believe it will serve as both a disruptor and a competitive advantage.

However, only 32% of CEOs feel confident in their organization’s data readiness, and just 28% believe their workforce is equipped to maximize the technology’s potential. On the workforce front, 80% foresee no drastic job cuts but expect significant upskilling and resource redeployment, with 20% predicting job creation.

In cybersecurity, Qatari CEOs are proactive but cautious. 64% of CEOs feel well-prepared for cyber-attacks, though 16% acknowledge vulnerabilities. While 68% report increased investments to safeguard operations, only 40% feel confident in adapting cybersecurity to AI advancements. Notably, 60% emphasize the need for a cybersecurity-focused culture, reflecting a proactive yet measured approach to integrating generative AI and technology in Qatar.

Qatar’s CEOs on Generative AI:

64% anticipate ROI within 3–5 years

80% view it as a disruptor & competitive advantage



Conclusion

Qatar's CEOs are steering their organizations through a period of profound transformation, demonstrating confidence in the country's economic resilience while addressing emerging challenges with strategic foresight. Economic uncertainty, geopolitical complexities, and rapid technological advancements are reshaping the business landscape, prompting leaders to adopt agile and forward-thinking approaches. ESG is increasingly recognized as a long-term value driver, with CEOs prioritizing sustainability initiatives, diversity, and social impact to attract talent and align with evolving stakeholder expectations. Meanwhile, technology—particularly generative AI—is seen as both a disruptor and a competitive advantage, with leaders focusing on ethical implementation, workforce readiness, and cybersecurity resilience to unlock its full potential.

Despite talent-related challenges, Qatar's business leaders view workforce transformation as a strategic opportunity. By embracing innovation, upskilling employees, and fostering adaptability, they are positioning their organizations for sustained growth. As the pace of change accelerates, the ability to integrate new technologies, build resilient business models, and drive sustainable progress will define the next era of success. At KPMG in Qatar, we remain committed to supporting Qatar's businesses and organizations in navigating this evolving landscape. Through our expertise in strategy, technology, and ESG, we empower organizations to seize opportunities, mitigate risks, and achieve their long-term ambitions. Together, we are shaping a future of resilience, innovation, and sustainable growth.



Methodology

The 10th edition of the KPMG CEO Outlook, conducted with 1,325 global CEOs, including 25 of Qatar’s CEOs between 25 July and 29 August 2024. The KPMG in Qatar CEO Outlook provides unique insights into the mindset, strategies and planning tactics of Qatar’s CEOs. All respondent’s organizations have annual revenues over US\$500M. The Qatar CEOs surveyed included leaders from various industry sectors (e.g. banking, consumer and retail, energy, infrastructure, insurance, technology, and telecommunications).

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