United Arab Emirates - Country Brief
Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) 2025

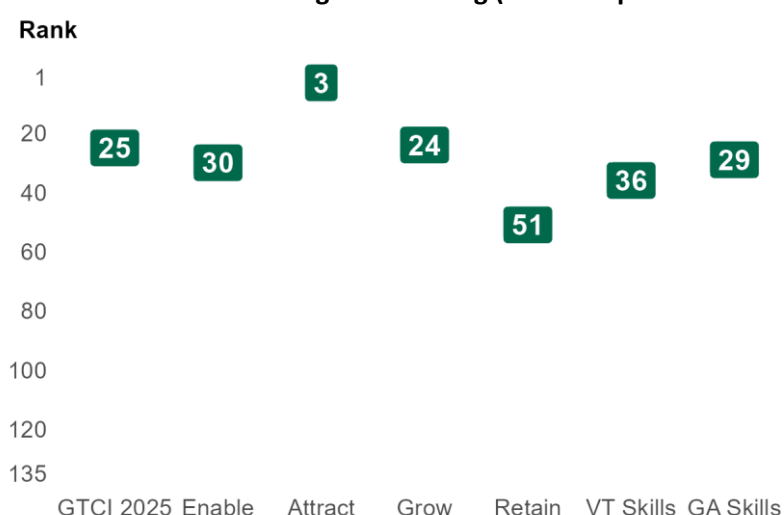|	
Total population:	10.88 million
GDP:	US$ 514.13 billion
GDP (PPP) per capita:	US$ 74,722
	(12 out of 135 countries)
Country income level:	High income
GTCI 2025 ranking:	25 (out of 135)

Global GTCI position

In GTCI 2025, United Arab Emirates is ranked 25th out of a sample of 135 countries (Figure 1). When it comes to sub-pillars, the strongest showings of United Arab Emirates relate to Access to Growth Opportunities, External Openness and Employability, among others. Still, more could be done to improve the economy's performances in the Lifestyle, Mid-level Skills and Business and Labour Landscape sub-pillars.

Figure 1: United Arab Emirates global ranking (GTCI sample of 135 countries)

Note: VT Skills = Vocational and Technical Skills; GA Skills = Generalist Adaptive Skills.

Comparison with different groups of countries

United Arab Emirates is situated in Northern Africa and Western Asia and is classified as High income. Within its region, the country is ranked 2nd out of 19 countries (Table 1).

United Arab Emirates is ranked 25th within the group of High income countries (implying that 52 percent of countries rank lower).

Table 1: United Arab Emirates performance vs. income groups and regions
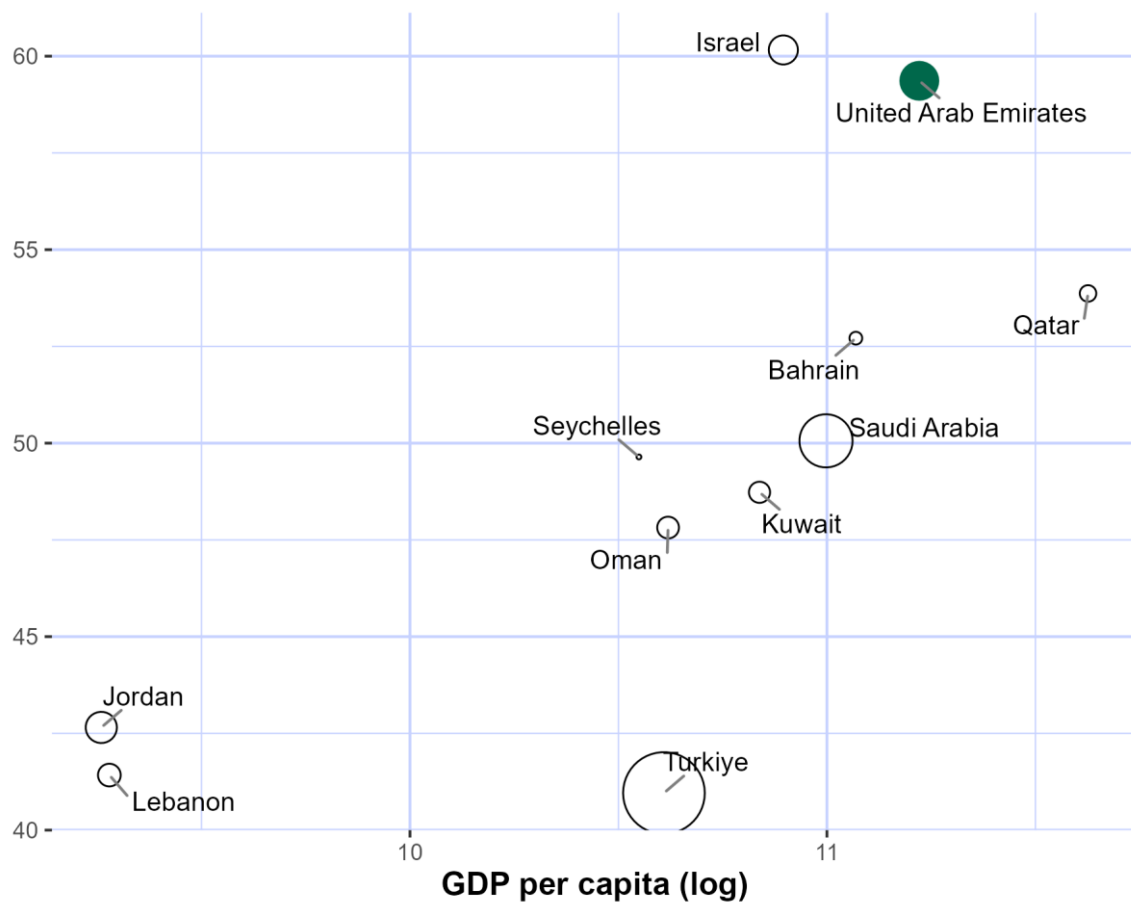
Comparison group	Top 3 scorers of the group	Score GAP: United Arab Emirates score minus group highest score	Share of countries in the group ranked below United Arab Emirates
Region			
Central and Southern Asia	Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan	16.0	100%
Eastern, Southeastern Asia and Oceania	Singapore, Australia, New Zealand	-13.9	81%
Europe	Switzerland, Denmark, Finland	-13.8	54%
Latin America and the Caribbean	Chile, Uruguay, Costa Rica	6.7	100%
Northern Africa and Western Asia	Israel, United Arab Emirates, Cyprus	-0.8	89%
Northern America	United States of America, Canada	-10.0	0%
Sub-Saharan Africa	Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa	9.7	100%
Income group			
High income	Singapore, Switzerland, Denmark	-13.9	52%
Upper-middle income	Georgia, Malaysia, Mauritius	8.4	100%
Lower-middle income	Uzbekistan, Jordan, Philippines	16.0	100%
Low income	Rwanda, Malawi, Gambia	25.4	100%

Comparison with group of competitors

United Arab Emirates's group of competitors is defined as high-income countries located in Western Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa plus Jordan, Lebanon, and Türkiye. It comprises a group of 11 economies. Figure 2 plots how the United Arab Emirates fares against each competitor in terms of GTCI score and GDP per capita.

As can be seen, the United Arab Emirates's GTCI score and GDP per capita are both greater than the corresponding medians of its group of competitors. Thus, the country's talent competitiveness is in line with what would be expected given its income level.

Figure 2: GTCI score and GDP per capita (log) of United Arab Emirates and its identified competitors

Note: Bubble size indicates country population.
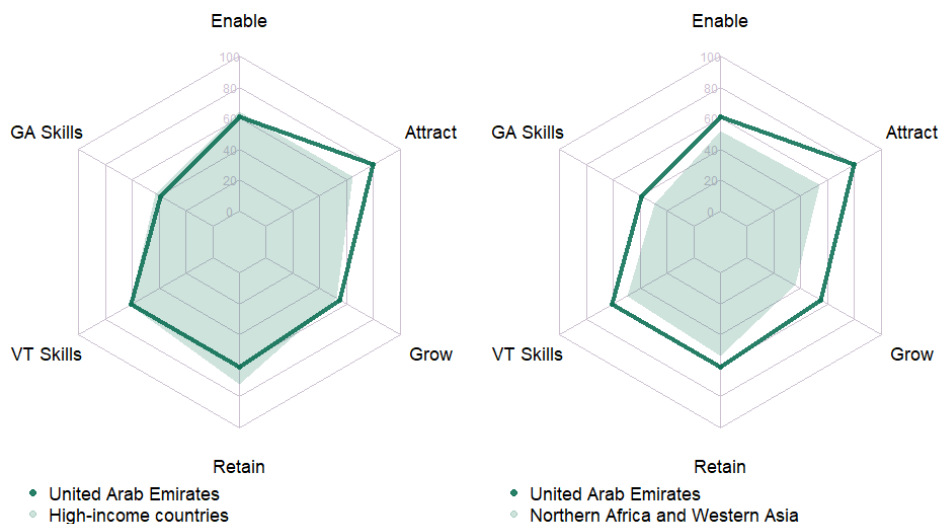
Performance against its income group and region

High-income countries
United Arab Emirates is ranked 25th in the group of high-income countries (Figure 3, left panel). In terms of pillar performance, it has a higher score than the income group average in two of the six pillars: Attract and Grow. At the sub-pillar level, it outperforms high-income countries in six of the fourteen sub-pillars: Regulatory Landscape, Market Landscape, External Openness, Access Growth Opportunities, Employability and Highlevel Skills.

Northern Africa and Western Asia
United Arab Emirates is ranked 2nd within Northern Africa and Western Asia (Figure 3, right panel). It outperforms its region in each of the six pillars. With regard to sub-pillars, it outperforms the average in Northern Africa and Western Asia in thirteen of the fourteen sub-pillars: Regulatory Landscape, Market Landscape, External Openness, Internal Openness, Formal Education, Lifelong Learning, Access Growth Opportunities, Sustainability, Lifestyle, Midlevel Skills, Employability, Highlevel Skills and Talent Impact.

Figure 3: United Arab Emirates pillar scores vs. averages of relevant income group and region

Note: VT Skills = Vocational and Technical Skills; GA Skills = Generalist Adaptive Skills.

Longer-term trends in talent competitiveness

Across all GTCI editions from 2015 to 2025, the United Arab Emirates's ranking ranges from 17th to 25th place (see Figure 4).

During GTCI 2020-GTCI 2025, United Arab Emirates ranks 24 out of a total 134 countries (on average), which is a decline from the average rank of 20 in GTCI 2015-GTCI 2019.

Figure 4: Evolution of GTCI rank for United Arab Emirates, 2015-2025

| 22 (out of 93) | 23 (out of 109) | 19 (out of 118) | 17 (out of 119) | 19 (out of 125) |
| GTCI 2014 | GTCI 2015-16 | GTCI 2017 | GTCI 2018 | GTCI 2019 |

| 22 (out of 132) | 25 (out of 134) | 25 (out of 133) | 22 (out of 134) | 25 (out of 135) |
| GTCI 2020 | GTCI 2021 | GTCI 2022 | GTCI 2023 | GTCI 2025 |

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