



Transforming our Region: Future Insights – GCC growth and trade, the sustainable consumer and scaling AI



November 18 at 4 PM GST



Welcome

Stephen Anderson

Chief Strategy & Technology Officer
PwC Middle East

Economic Updates – Middle East Economy Watch

Richard Boxshall

Global Economics Leader and ME Chief
Economist

Sustainability housing report

Dr Fatima Koaik

Behavioral Economics & Impact Evaluation
Director, Strategy&

IDC MarketScape: Gulf Countries AI Professional Services 2025

Ahmad Abu Hantash

Partner – Digital and Cyber Leader, PwC Middle
East

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Economic Updates

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Global Economics Leader and ME Chief Economist
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Middle East Economy Watch

Beyond oil: GCC's expanding trade agenda gains momentum

November 2025



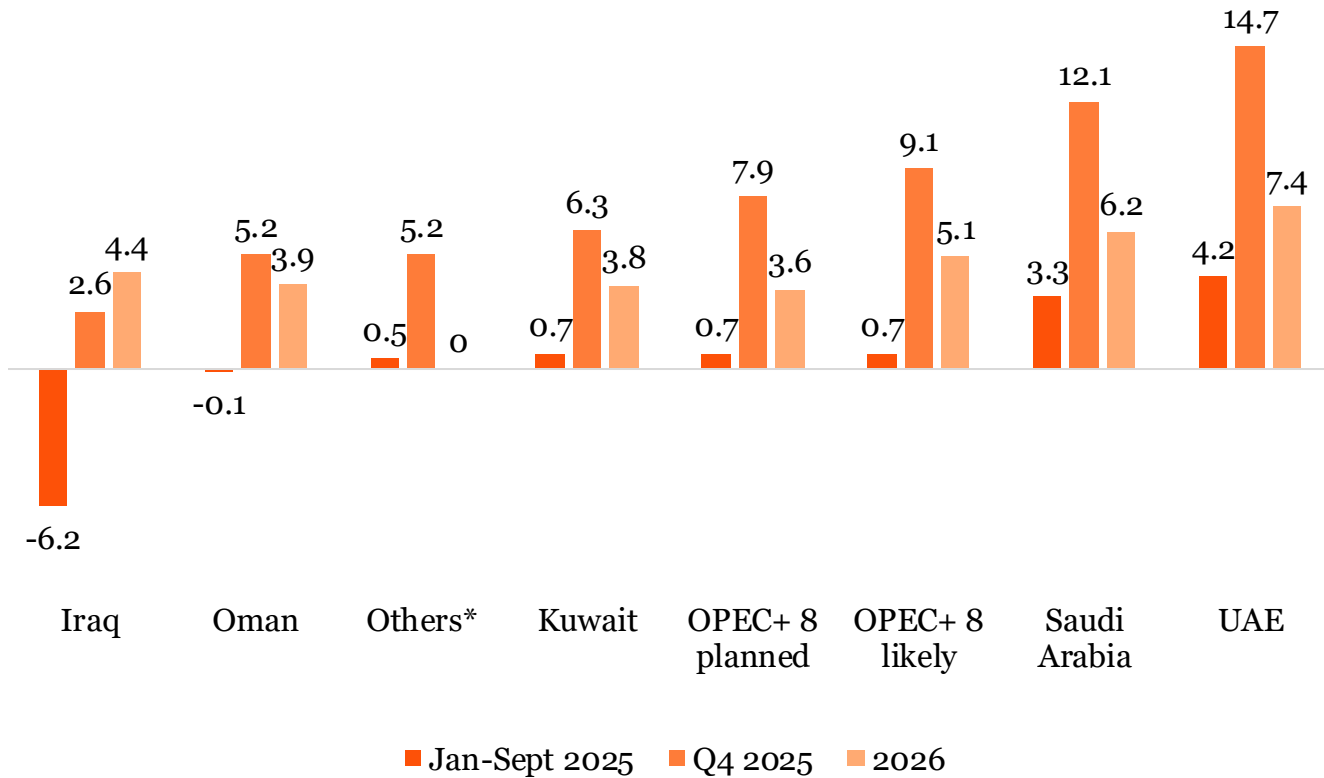
Read our full Middle East Economy Watch report



Economic performance and outlook

OPEC+ boosted oil output faster than expected in 2025, but slowing demand and rising supply pushed the group to halt further increases

Oil production growth (% y/y over the periods shown)



Source: OPEC, PwC analysis; *Others: Algeria, Russia and Kazakhstan. In the “likely” scenario, Kazakhstan’s production remains at the September level through 2026



OPEC+ restored nearly all of its earlier output cuts in 2025, adding 2.2 mn b/d back to the market and setting the stage for annual average production in 2026 to rise by at least 3.6% y/y



This rapid increase in supply coupled by other factors contributed to a growing global oil surplus, which pushed Brent crude to its lowest level since 2020, falling to USD 60 per barrel in October

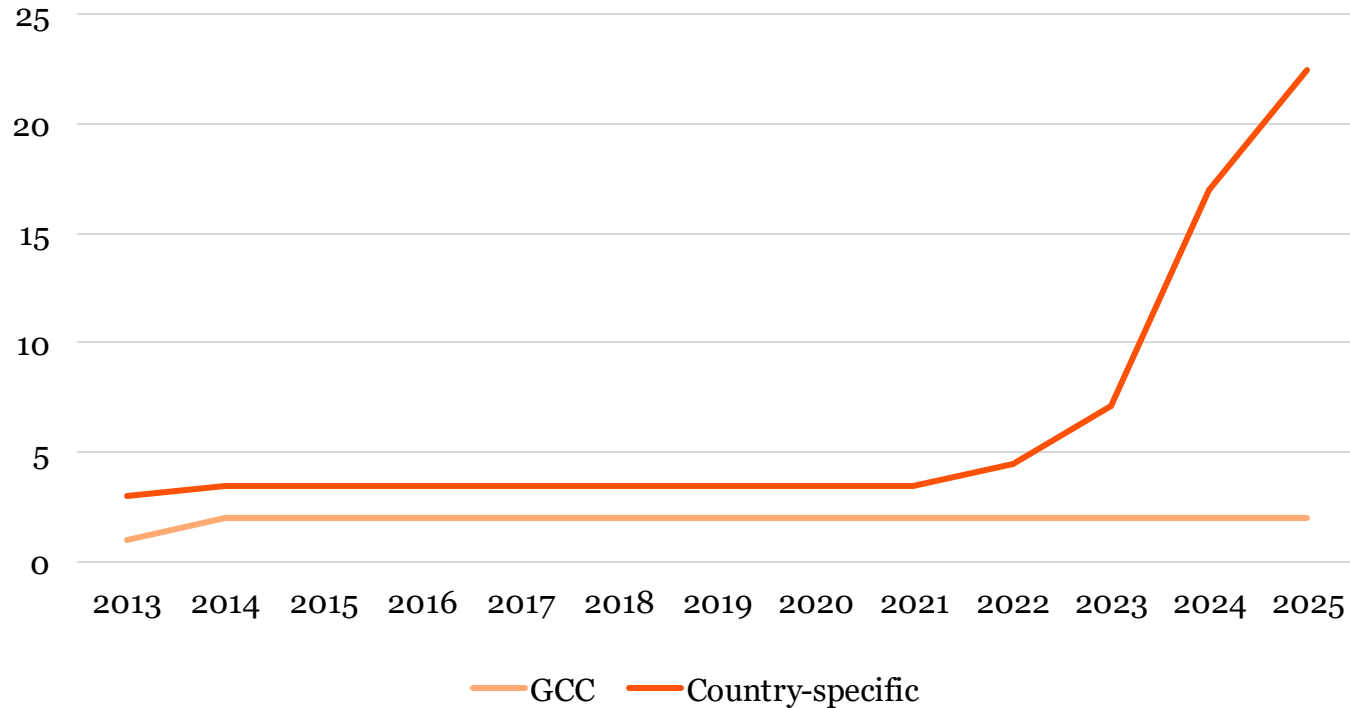


With supply now rising faster than demand, OPEC+ has delayed plans to restore another 1.3 mn b/d and signaled that it will pause more production in early 2026

Beyond oil: the GCC's expanding trade agenda

GCC countries are shifting from an oil-dependent trade model to one built on diversified exports and deeper global trade partnerships

Number of FTAs/CEPAs signed or in force



Source: Observer Research Foundation Middle East (ORF ME), news reports, WTO



The **UAE is leading a wave of new trade agreements** that is reshaping the GCC's global economic relationships, having signed or brought into force **20 CEPAs since 2022**



At the GCC level, negotiations have started or resumed with several partners, including the UK, Pakistan, Indonesia, Japan, Türkiye, and ASEAN



Beyond oil: the GCC's expanding trade agenda

The GCC's trade geography is shifting east- and south-ward, driven by expanding partnerships with Asia and Africa

GCC investment into Africa reached US\$53 billion in 2023, targeting infrastructure, energy, and technology

Centre of emerging East-South trade corridors

China is now the GCC's largest single trading partner, followed by India, while Asia collectively absorbs > 70% of the bloc's oil and gas exports



Beyond oil: the GCC's expanding trade agenda

The GCC's expanding network of FTAs and CEPAs demonstrates clear momentum, but realising their full value depends on effective coordination, implementation, and utilisation

4 Enablers that can accelerate the benefits of GCC trade agreements

01

Aligning policy priorities and negotiating positions



02

Pursuing GCC-level and bilateral initiatives in parallel



03

Completing the customs union and strengthening implementation

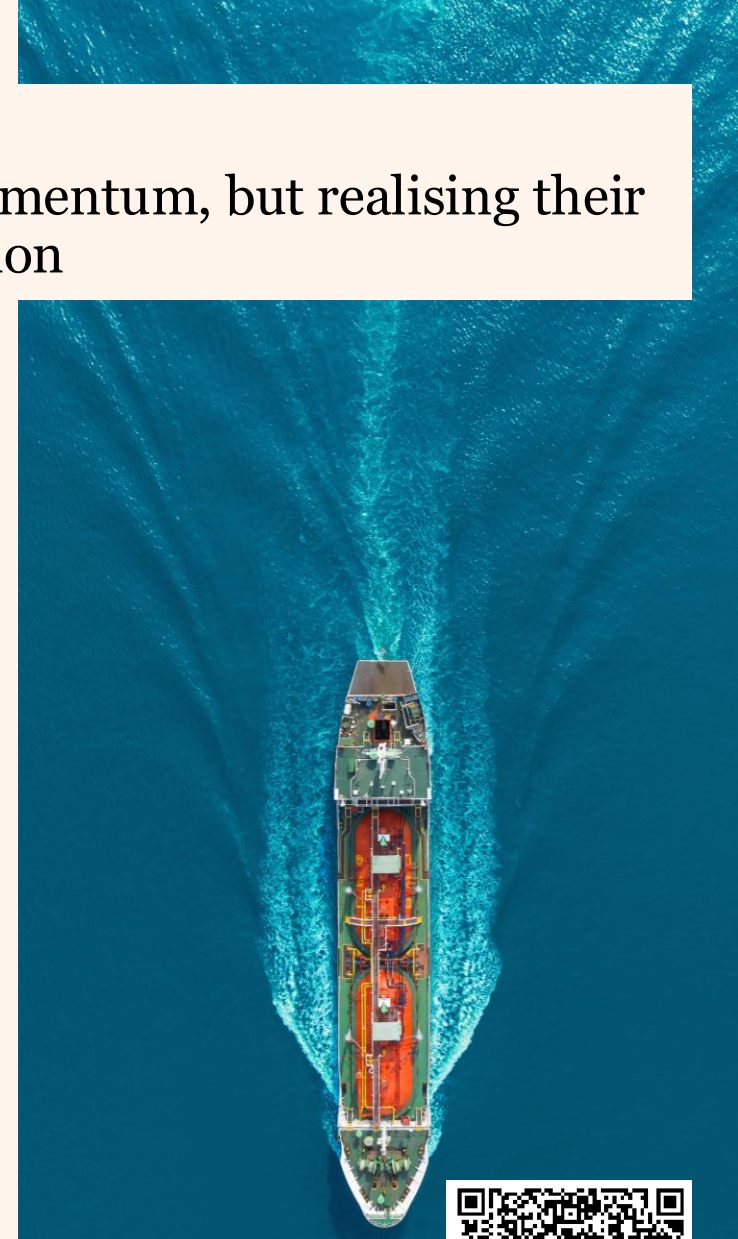


04

Promoting awareness and monitoring utilisation



Please scan the QR to read the report



Sustainability housing report

Dr Fatima Koaik

Behavioural Economics & Impact Evaluation
Director, Strategy&



Green pays: Sustainable homes command a price premium in Saudi Arabia and the UAE



**Consumers are
willing to pay**

+7%

more
for sustainable features



**Green is the new
baseline**

Homes without?
Could lose about

-4%



Most preferred sustainable features

Energy and resource
efficiency

Outdoor green spaces

Resilience against
extreme weather events

+7%

Premium

Motivating factors for sustainable housing

01

**Operational
financial
savings**



02

**Environmental
benefits**



03

**Increased
property value**



04

**Safety against
climate
disasters**



Top barriers – Belief vs. Action

The sustainability adoption gap – what is slowing progress?



Green financing

Low accessibility to green financing and financial inclusion – low awareness around green mortgage products and low-interest loans for sustainable construction



Awareness and Accessibility

Low awareness around the availability of green houses and **lack of formal green home certifications**



Positive social signaling
increases likelihood to
buy a house

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

So, what does all this mean?



Demand is there and people care and see value

01



Action needed across government, developers, and the ecosystem to make sustainable housing easier to **access**, easier to **understand**, and easier to **choose**

02



strategy&

Out now!



Scaling AI in our region

Ahmad Abu Hantash

Partner – Digital and Cyber Leader, PwC Middle East



What we are seeing in the market

01

AI Product Strategy Framework

Clients now expect AI-infused, intelligent systems.



02

Assets and accelerators must be core to the offering

Clients expect proved assets, frameworks, and templates that reduce implementation time, lower risk, and drive faster outcomes.



03

Customers are expecting us to co-invest in solution development

Shared skin in the game.



04

Outcomes based fee

Customers are expecting business impact, not just implementation. Increasingly, AI engagements are being tied to measurable KPIs, with a focus on ROI, efficiency gains, or innovation outcomes.



The market is increasingly industry focused...

We have built out use cases for all sectors, including:



Government &
Public Services



Cities



Destinations



Energy, Utilities & Resources



Financial Services



Technology, Media & Telecom



Healthcare & Pharma



Industrial Manufacturing &
Automotive



Retail & Consumer

Our AI Strategy in Action: Reinvention, Investment, and Scale

Our growth objectives

R I D E

Rewire the core & grow existing services

Modernising and transforming our traditional services using AI – how we deliver AND the outcomes we deliver to our clients.

Innovate new services

Developing new AI-first offerings and business models (delivering tomorrow what was not possible prior to the advent of AI).

Drive The roadmap

Deliver on our roadmap of custom and third-party apps and tech, meeting our people where they are and integrating AI into their day-to-day experiences.

Equip our people with AI skills

Upskilling our leadership and our workforce with the skills and capabilities they need to thrive in our AI-powered firm.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

PricewaterhouseCoopers to Pour \$1 Billion Into Generative AI

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

PwC Set to Become OpenAI's Largest ChatGPT Enterprise Customer

Khaleej Times

AI, climate resilience could boost Mideast GDP by \$232b: PwC

Middle East
Economy

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By Elias Al Helou



Three scenarios for Middle East in 2035 show \$232 billion AI-driven potential GDP boost: PwC

The Middle East can leverage renewable energy and AI for sustainable economic expansion

BREAKING

OpenAI Inks Deal With PwC To Resell ChatGPT To Businesses—As Firms Race Toward AI



How PwC opened the aperture of upskilling possibilities with AI prompting parties

Business Insider

PwC launches a new platform to help AI agents work together

PwC unveils "agent OS" to integrate agents across platforms.

We imagine, design, and build products and experiences







Imagine

This is where we gain insights and identify new opportunities through various methods such as user research, product research, benchmarking, market research and best practices. We accelerate innovation and get stakeholder alignment for better business outcomes.

-  Research & Innovation
-  Experience Strategy
-  AI Product Strategy
-  Ideation and Concepts
-  Digital Strategy & Assessment
-  Analytics & AI Strategy







Design

This is where we bring people together to ideate and develop innovative concepts. We leverage our Business, Experience and Technology experts to bring different views and accelerate the design of product and services, propositions and business models.

-  AI Product Design
-  Operating Model
-  Service Design
-  Technology Architecture
-  Solutions & Prototyping
-  KPIs and SLAs

Build

This is where we can demonstrate our end-to-end capabilities, from strategy to execution. We develop products and services that answer customers' needs and can rapidly go-to market to bring value.

-  Agile Delivery
-  Front Office Technology
-  Product Management
-  Middle Office Technology
-  Analytics and AI
-  Operate & Transfer



How we are pioneering the future of AI

Regional GenAI Factory

20

Dedicated AI Partners based in the region

150+

Dedicated and scaled AI architects, engineering and product capabilities

4

Centres in Riyadh, Dubai, Amman and Cairo

Dedicated

CoE to drive our AI roadmap and to equip our people

"Client Zero" Approach

Largest enterprise customer for OpenAI ChatGPT Enterprise

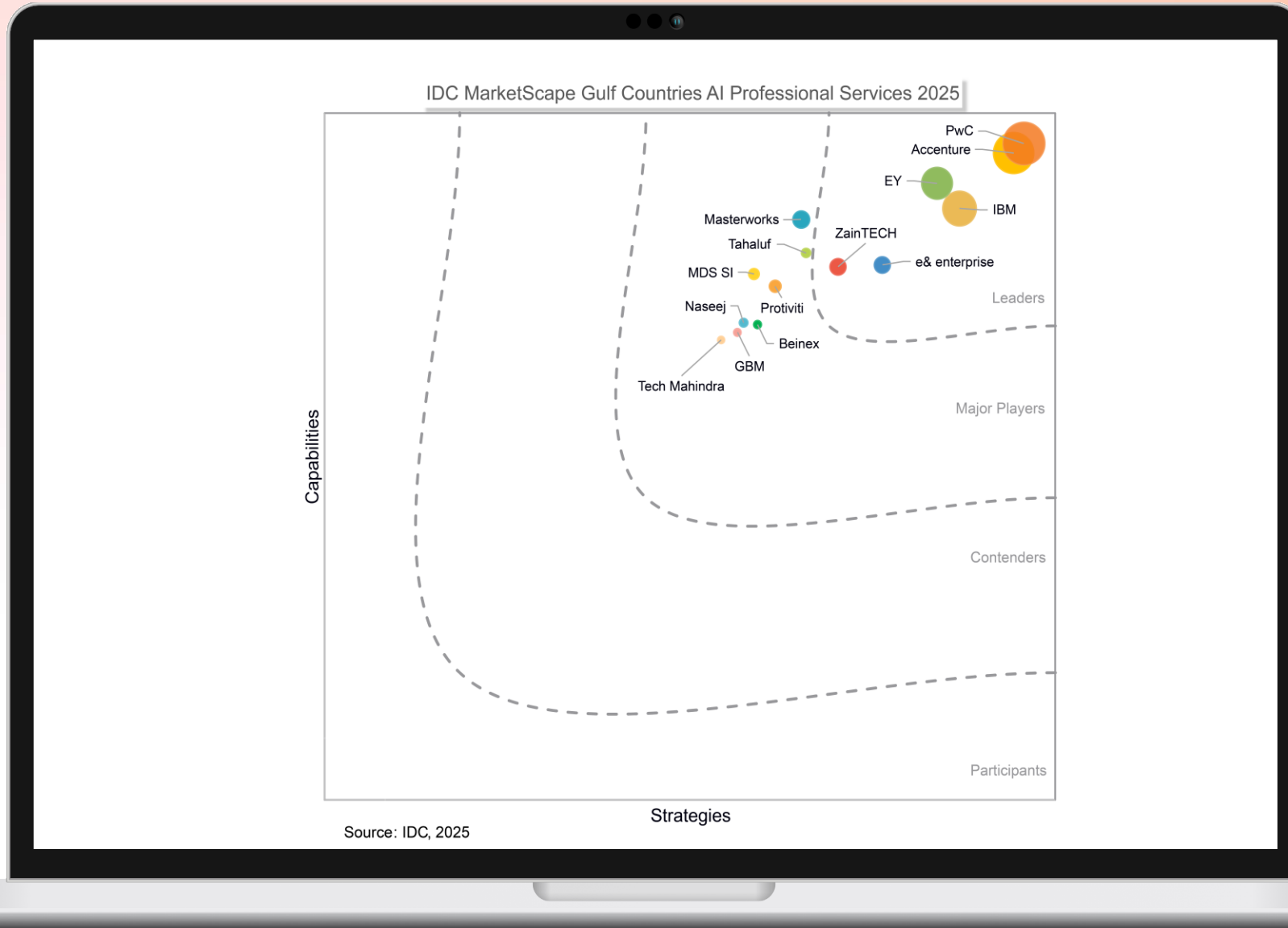
Roll out of ChatGPT enterprise (5), Co-pilot and Chat PwC across **10,000** employees in the region

First ChatGPT enterprise re-seller

Agent OS - orchestrate AI agents into the solutions

Significant practical **insight** and **experience**

PwC is a Leader in the IDC MarketScape: Gulf Countries AI Professional Services 2025



Q&A

Thank you