

United Arab Emirates



Introduction

The United Arab Emirates is considered one of the Gulf countries. The Gulf countries include Bahrain, Kuwait, Sultanate of Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). They are located on the Arabian Gulf – it is important NOT to refer to it as the Persian Gulf.

Fun Fact

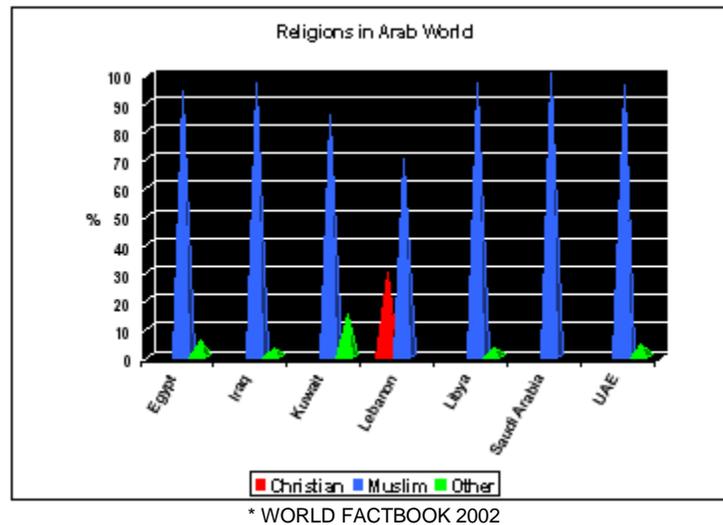
When holding business meetings in the United Arab Emirates, some foreign businesspeople suggest holding the meeting in the lobby of an international hotel rather than in an office. The advantage of this is that there will be fewer people wandering in and out of the meeting. Also, your counterpart's willingness to come to you demonstrates a true interest. You will also have access to refreshments that may be more to your taste.

Geert Hofstede Analysis United Arab Emirates

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The Geert Hofstede analysis for the United Arab Emirates is almost identical to other Arab countries their Muslim faith plays a large role in the people's lives. Large power distance and uncertainty avoidance are the predominant characteristics for this region. This indicates that it is expected and accepted that leaders separate themselves from the group and issue complete and specific directives. [More Details](#)

Religion in the United Arab Emirates



Appearance

- Visitors are expected to abide by local standards of modesty however, do not adopt native clothing. Traditional clothes on foreigners may be offensive.
- Despite the heat, most of the body must always remain covered.
- A jacket and tie are usually required for men at business meetings. Men should wear long pants and a shirt, preferably long-sleeved, buttoned up to the collar. Men should also avoid wearing visible jewelry, particularly around the neck.
- Women should always wear modest clothing in public. High necklines sleeves at least to the elbows are expected. Hemlines, if not ankle-length should at least be well below the knee. A look of baggy concealment should be the goal, pants or pant suits are not recommended. It is a good idea to keep a scarf handy, especially if entering a Mosque.

Behavior

- Avoid admiring an item to an excess, your host may feel obligated to give it to you. When offered a gift, it is impolite to refuse.
- Often shoes are removed before entering a building. Follow the lead of your host.
- Alcohol and pork are not consumed by those that observe the Muslim religion.

- There are several styles of greetings in use, it is best to wait for your counterpart to initiate the greeting. Men shake hands with other men. Some men will shake hands women, however it is advisable for a businesswoman to wait for a man to offer his hand. A more traditional greeting between men involves grasping each other's right hand, placing the left hand on the other's right shoulder and exchanging kisses on each cheek.
- The left hand is considered unclean and reserved for hygiene. Gesture and eat with the right hand. Do not point at another person.
- Men walking hand in hand is a sign a friendship.
- In the Muslim world, Friday is the day of rest.
- Do not cross your legs when sitting, showing the bottom of your shoe or foot is offensive.
- The "thumbs up" gesture can also be considered offensive by some.
- Gifts are not necessary, but appreciated. If you do give a gift, it will be open in private.
- Gifts to avoid giving include:
 - alcohol
 - perfumes containing alcohol
 - pork
 - pigskin products
 - personal items such as underwear
 - knives
 - toy dogs or gifts that picture dogs
 - images of nude or partially clad women (even in paintings or sculptures with artistic merit)

Communications

- Do not discuss the subject of women, not even to inquire about the health of a wife or daughter. The topic of Israel should also be avoided. Sports is an appropriate topic.
- Names are often confusing. It's best to get the names (in English) of those you will meet, speak to, or correspond with. Learn both their full names and how they are to be addressed in person before you meet.
- Communication is slow, do not feel obligated to speak during periods of silence. "Yes" usually means "possibly".

- Meetings are commonly interrupted by phone calls and visits from friends and family.
- The person at a meeting who asks the most questions is likely to be the least important. The decision maker is likely a silent observer.
- A customary greeting is salaam alaykum. Shaking hands and saying kaif halak follows.