A Webinar by the AACC on the Reality of Multinational Companies in Qatar and the UAE

The Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC) organized a virtual seminar entitled: “United Arab Emirates & Qatar: New Opportunities and considerations for Multinational Companies”.

At the beginning of the webinar, the Chamber’s Secretary General, Mouddar Khouja, presented an overview of the historical, economic and commercial relations between the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council before 2017, the demographic and economic characteristics of the UAE and Qatar, and the bilateral trade relations between the two countries. All the way to reconciliation and the signing of the Gulf Cooperation Council states and Egypt of the Al-Ula Declaration in early January 2021, and the expectations regarding business and mutual economic benefits to revive the Gulf relations.

Khouja highlighted Qatar's hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup and Expo 2020 Dubai in the UAE, and their role in accelerating the tourism activity in both countries. The Qatari and Emirati sides presented an overview of the reality of the multinational companies in the UAE and Qatar and the tax implications for these companies. The main considerations for taxation in Qatar were also highlighted with a presentation of the different Qatari tax systems. During the presentation, examples were presented on the reality of Qatari companies operating in the UAE, as well as the reality of Emirati companies operating in Qatar.

Source (AACC Website, Edited)
The Assets of the Central Bank of Lebanon Rose by 2.4%

The value of gold reserves in the Central Bank of Lebanon reached 15.5 billion dollars at the end of March 2021, which represents a decrease of 10.3 percent in the first quarter of 2021, and an increase of 4.9 percent from 14.8 billion dollars at the end of March 2020. While the value of gold reserves reached a peak at the end of September 2020, approximately $18.1 billion. The total financial portfolio at the Lebanese Central Bank reached 40.8 billion dollars at the end of March 2021, an increase of 1.9 percent from 40 billion dollars at the end of 2020, and 6.3 percent from 38.4 billion dollars at the end of 2020. The assets in foreign currencies include Lebanese Euro bonds worth 5.03 billion dollars, without any change from the end of March 2020.

The budget of the Central Bank of Lebanon showed that its total assets reached $152.2 billion on March 31, 2021, which means an increase of 2.4 percent compared to $148.6 billion at the end of 2020, and by 4.1 percent from $146.3 billion at the end of 2020 registered by the end of March 2020. The foreign currency assets amounted to 22.2 billion dollars at the end of March 2021, which means a decrease of 1.9 billion dollars, or 8 percent, from 24.1 billion dollars at the end of 2020, and a decline of 13.1 billion dollars, or 37.1 percent, from 38.4 billion dollars at the end of 2020. The assets in foreign currencies include Lebanese Euro bonds worth 5.03 billion dollars, without any change from the end of March 2020.

The report showed that allocations for loss provisions for the fiscal year 2020. The report showed that allocations for losses of loans to listed banks in the GCC countries reached $20.3 billion during 2020. The UAE banks witnessed the largest increase in loss provisions, with an increase of $3.4 billion, or 72 percent, to reach $8.2 billion. The Saudi banks recorded the lowest percentage of increase in losses, which amounted to 37.6 percent, or 1.3 billion dollars, to reach 4.6 billion dollars during 2020. On the other hand, the net foreign direct investment in Saudi Arabia jumped by 20.2 percent, to about 5.5 billion dollars during 2020, compared to about $4.6 billion in the previous year.

A report issued by "KAMCO Invest" showed that the "Covid-19" epidemic had profound effects on the banking sector in the GCC countries, which led to record allocations for the fiscal year 2020. The report showed that allocations for losses of loans to listed banks in the GCC countries reached $20.3 billion during 2020. The UAE banks witnessed the largest increase in loss provisions, with an increase of $3.4 billion, or 72 percent, to reach $8.2 billion. The Saudi banks recorded the lowest percentage of increase in losses, which amounted to 37.6 percent, or 1.3 billion dollars, to reach 4.6 billion dollars during 2020. On the other hand, the net foreign direct investment in Saudi Arabia jumped by 20.2 percent, to about 5.5 billion dollars during 2020, compared to about $4.6 billion in the previous year.

In parallel, the government employment in Kuwait grew by 11.4 percent, and the number of employees in ministries and government departments reached 334 thousand people by the end of June 2020, 77.5 percent of them are Kuwaitis. The number of employees in the government departments reached 334 thousand people by the end of June 2020, 77.5 percent of them are Kuwaitis. The number of employees in the government departments reached 334 thousand people by the end of June 2020, 77.5 percent of them are Kuwaitis. The number of employees in the government departments reached 334 thousand people by the end of June 2020, 77.5 percent of them are Kuwaitis.