

# MENA WEEKLY MONITOR



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MENA MARKETS: April 20 - April 26, 2025			
Stock market weekly trend	↑	Bond market weekly trend	↑
Weekly stock price performance	+1.7%	Average weekly bond price change	+0.52 pt
Stock market year-to-date trend	↑	Bond market year-to-date trend	↑
YTD stock price performance	+0.3%	Average yearly bond price change	+0.86 pt

## ECONOMY

### ESCWA HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF REGIONAL COOPERATION IN ADDRESSING MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

A new report on International Migration in the Arab Region 2025 has been issued by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

Migration has always been a powerful force in shaping the Arab region, influencing its culture, economy and society in profound ways according to the report. From the ancient trade routes that brought people, goods and ideas across vast deserts and seas, to the modern movements of people driven by opportunities, conflicts and environmental changes, migration has had a profound impact on the development of the Arab region. Today, the region stands at a critical juncture where the dynamics of migration intersect with the imperatives of development, creating both challenges and opportunities that demand urgent and thoughtful policy responses.

The report comes at a time when the region is undergoing significant demographic, economic, social and technological transformations. It provides a comprehensive analysis of current trends, challenges and opportunities associated with migration, and offers insights into how development can shape and be shaped by migration.

One of the key messages of the report is the need to view migration not as a challenge, but as an opportunity for development. Migrants bring skills, knowledge and cultural diversity that enrich host societies. Remittances sent by migrants support millions of families in their countries of origin, contributing to poverty reduction and economic growth. The report also underscores the need for policies that ensure the protection and well-being of migrants, and amplify their contribution to development.

The ESCWA report highlights the importance of regional cooperation in addressing migration and development challenges. The interconnectedness of the Arab region means that the actions of one country can have significant implications for its neighbours. By working together, Arab States can develop more effective and coherent migration policies that benefit the whole region.

In conclusion, migration is not just a movement of people; it is a transformative force that reshapes societies, economies and cultures. In the future, migration will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the Arab region. The findings and recommendations presented in the report provide a road map for policymakers, scholars and stakeholders to harness the potential of migration for the benefit of all. By adopting a holistic and forward-looking approach to migration and development, it is possible to create a future where the movement of people is a source of strength and resilience for the Arab region as per the ESCWA report.

## SAUDI ARABIA RECORDS A 10% DECREASE IN BOT SURPLUS IN THE FIRST 2 MONTHS

According to data from the Saudi General Authority for Statistics (GASTAT), Saudi Arabia's Balance of Trade (BoT) recorded SAR 51.7 billion (US\$ 13.8 billion) in the first two months (2M) of 2025, registering a year-on-year decrease of 10.0% from SAR 57.5 billion (US\$ 15.3 billion) in 2M-2024. This decrease was due to a 0.1% decrease in exports and a 4.2% increase in imports during the period.

It is worth noting that this decrease in BoT surplus follows a drop of 28.3% year-on-year in BoT surplus between 2M-2023 and 2M-2024.

In details, Saudi Arabia's exports during 2M-2025 recorded SAR 191.1 billion (US\$ 51.0 billion), noting a year-on-year marginal decrease of 0.1% from QAR 191.2 billion (US\$ 51.0 billion) during the same period of the year prior. This decrease was mainly due to a decrease in oil exports by 4.2% during the period to reach SAR 138.3 billion (US\$ 36.9 billion) in 2M-2025, down from SAR 144.4 billion (US\$ 38.5 billion) in the same period of the year prior. Oil exports held a weight of 72.4% in 2M-2025 against a weight of 75.5% in 2M-2024.

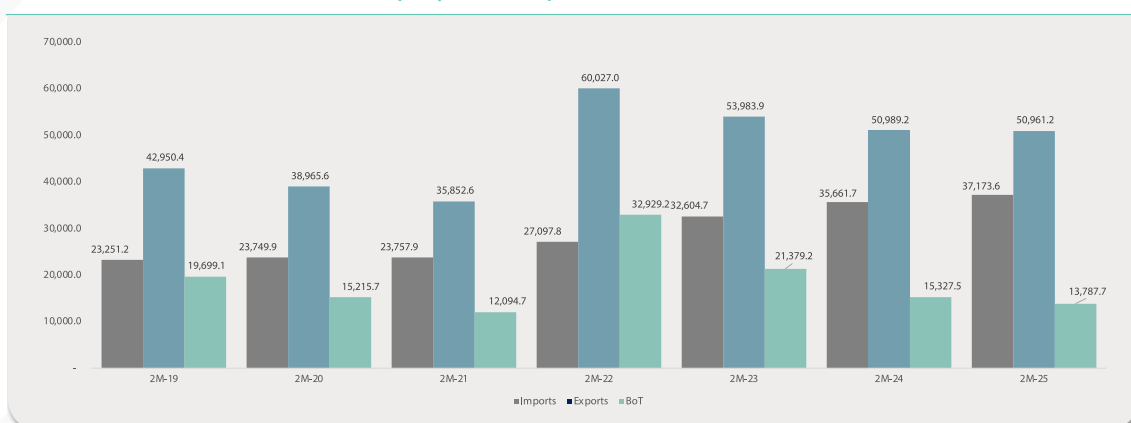
However, this decrease in oil exports was almost completely offset by a year-on-year increase of 7.5% in non-oil exports during the period reaching SAR 34.6 billion (US\$ 9.2 billion) in 2M-2025, up from SAR 32.2 billion (US\$ 8.6 billion) in 2M-2024. Additionally, a 24.8% increase in re-exports also contributed to offsetting the decrease in exports between 2M-2024 and 2M-2025.

Looking at the geographic distribution of exports from Saudi Arabia in 2M-2025, China took the lion's share with 15.7% of total exports. India, South Korea and Japan followed with 10.1%, 9.7% and 9.6% of the total respectively during the period. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Egypt followed with shares of 9.2% and 3.6% of total exports respectively during 2M-2025. The United States of America (USA), Poland and Bahrain came next with contributions of 3.1%, 2.9% and 2.7% of the total respectively during the period. Taiwan followed with a contribution of 2.7% of total exports during 2M-2025. Other countries were responsible for 30.7% of total exports from Saudi Arabia during the aforementioned period.

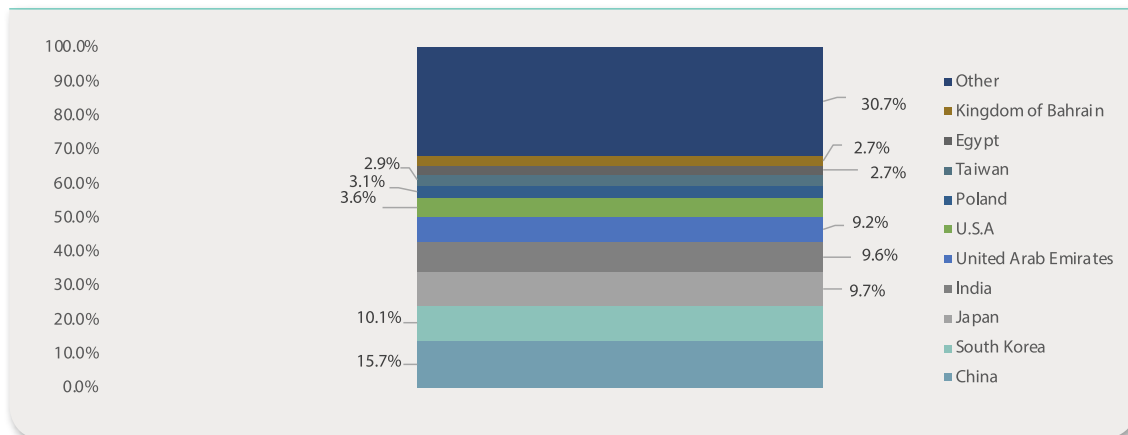
On the other hand, Saudi Arabia's imports during 2M-2025 recorded SAR 139.4 billion (US\$ 37.2 billion) noting a year-on-year increase of 4.2% against SAR 133.7 billion (US\$ 32.6 billion) in 2M-2024, as per data from the Saudi GASTAT.

Looking at the geographic distribution of imports into Saudi Arabia during the period, China took the lion's share with 26.1% of total imports. The USA and India followed with 7.9% and 5.8% of the total respectively during 2M-2025. The UAE and Germany followed with shares of 5.2% and 4.1% of total imports respectively during the period. Egypt, Japan and Italy came next with contributions of 3.9%, 3.6% and 3.3% of the total respectively during 2M-2025. France and the United Kingdom followed with contributions of 2.4% and 2.2% of total imports respectively during the period. Other countries were responsible for 35.6% of total imports to Saudi Arabia during 2M-2025.

## FOREIGN TRADE IN SAUDI ARABIA (US\$ MILLION)



## EXPORT BY RECIPIENT COUNTRY IN 2M-2025



Sources: GASTAT, Bank Audi Group's Research Department

## QATAR RECORDS YEAR-ON-YEAR CPI INFLATION OF 0.1% IN MARCH

According to data from the Qatari Planning and Statistics Authority (PSA), the country has registered a year-on-year inflation in prices of 0.1% in March 2025 against prices in March 2024. This inflation was mostly due to inflations in the prices of Food & Beverage and Miscellaneous Goods & Services. The inflation was almost completely offset by deflations in the prices of Housing, Water, Electricity & Other Fuel and Transport during the month.

In details, year-on-year inflations were recorded in the prices of Food & Beverages (weight of 13.5%) and Miscellaneous Goods & Services (weight of 5.7%) of 0.6% and 10.1% respectively during March 2025 against the same month of the year prior. Year-on-year price inflations during the period were also recorded in Restaurants & Hotels (with a weight of 6.6%) and Education (with a weight of 5.8%) of 1.1% and 1.7% respectively during the period. Additionally, the price of Communication (weight of 5.2%) noted a year-on-year inflation during March 2025 of 12.9%. On the other hand, year-on-year deflations were noted in the prices of Housing, Water, Electricity & Other Fuel (with a weight of 21.2%) of 5.0% in March 2025 against prices in March 2024. Prices of Transport (with a weight of 14.6%), Recreation & Culture (weight of 11.1%) and Furniture & Household Equipment (with a weight of 7.9%) reported year-on-year decreases of 0.8%, 0.7% and 1.7% respectively during the aforementioned period. Additionally, the price of Clothing & Footwear (weight of 5.6%) recorded year-on-year decreases of 0.4% in March 2025 against the same month of the year prior, as per data from PSA.

It is worth noting that the prices of Health (weight of 2.7%) and Tobacco (weight of 0.3%) remained relatively stable between March 2024 and March 2025.

## YEAR-ON-YEAR VARIATION IN CPI COMPONENTS IN QATAR DURING MARCH 2025 (%)



Sources: PSA, Bank Audi Group's Research Department

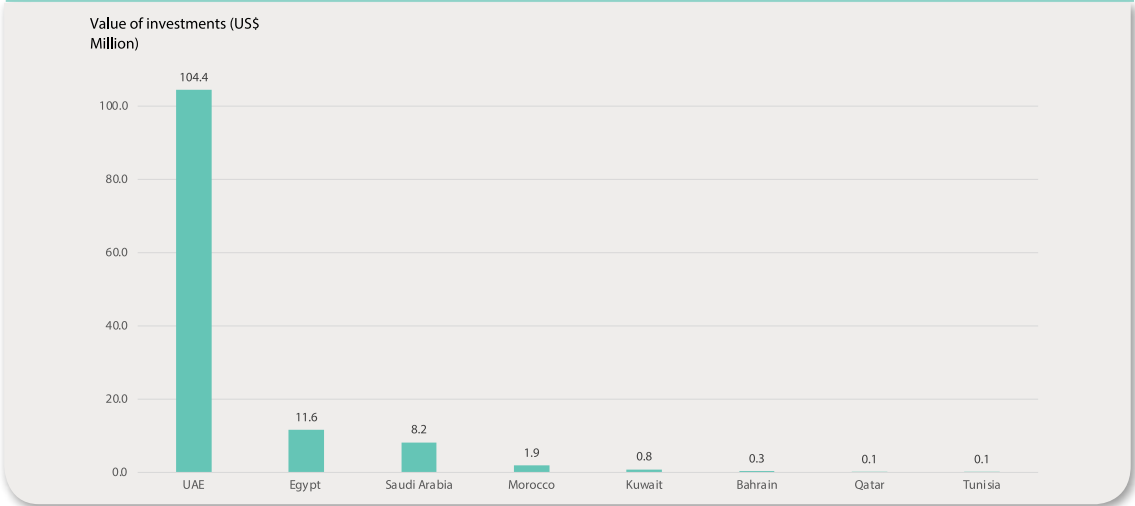
SURVEYS / REPORTS

MENA STARTUPS RAISE US\$ 127 MILLION IN MARCH 2025, BRINGING Q1 TOTAL TO US\$ 1.5 BILLION

The MENA startup ecosystem saw a sharp decline in investment in March 2025, according to a report issued by Wamda and Digital Digest. Funding fell by 76% to US\$ 127.5 million across 28 deals, compared to US\$ 530 million in February, even after excluding debt financing from both months.

The US trade war against its global trade partners has hurtfully impacted the MENA region, causing significant economic damage to key countries like Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The shaking global economy has resulted in a 50% drop in both the value and volume of investments year-on-year.

THE TOP FUNDED COUNTRIES IN MENA REGION IN MARCH 2025



Sources: Wamda, Digital Digest, Bank Audi's Group Research Department

In details, the startup ecosystem in the UAE secured a total of US\$ 104.4 million across 14 transactions, claiming the position of the most funded ecosystem in the region.

While Egypt's startup scene displayed a relatively subdued performance last month, it still managed to secure a commendable second place in terms of funding. Four Egyptian startups raised a modest US\$ 11.6 million. Additionally, Egypt's funding activity surpassed that of Saudi Arabia, which ranked third, with five of its startups raising a combined investment of US\$ 8.2 million.

Fintech led the funding landscape as usual, securing US\$ 82.5 million across 10 deals. Healthtech followed in a distant second with US\$ 16 million invested in two deals, while AI attracted US\$ 14 million through four startups.

Notably, startups providing software-as-a-service (SaaS) have been absent from investors' radar for the second month in a row, losing the traction they gained last year.

Additionally, the landscape of startup investment reveals a clear tendency towards business-to-business (B2B) ventures, which amassed a total of US\$ 97 million across 16 startups. The business-to-consumer (B2C) sector lagged significantly behind, securing a mere US\$ 24 million through only six deals. The remaining portion of the investment capital was allocated to startups that adopt a dual mode.

Despite the overall slowdown in ecosystem activity in March across the MENA region, the first quarter of 2025 showed a remarkable Quarter-on-Quarter (QoQ) growth in venture capital funding. MENA-based startups raised a substantial US\$ 1.5 billion in Q1 2025, marking a significant 244% increase compared to the US\$ 442 million raised during the same period in the previous year.

Even when discounting the debt financing from the total amount raised in Q1 2025, the growth remains substantial at 44%, a positive sign for the long-term sustainability of the MENA startup ecosystem.

With more than US\$ 1 billion in investments raised by 36 fintech startups in the first quarter, fintech still proves an unwavering appeal to investors since 2021, emerging as the golden sector of all time. Fintech has grown regionally, exploring untapped areas like cryptocurrency and virtual assets. There's no indication that fintech's appeal would diminish anytime soon.

As the MENA startups navigate an increasingly shifting global economic landscape, shaped by geopolitical tensions and the emergence of new trade alliances, the upcoming quarter would require more resilience and adaptability from both startups and venture capitalists. The possibility of reintegrating sanctioned oil into global markets and China's pivot toward new trade partners are not isolated events; they signal a broader reordering of the global economic map. Sectors like logistics, mobility, and e-commerce are particularly vulnerable to these shifts, given their sensitivity to trade routes, supply chains and fuel prices.

In parallel, investors would also likely pause and reassess, leaning toward safer bets and focusing on later-stage startups that have already demonstrated resilience and the ability to weather volatility. Early-stage ventures may face a tougher environment due to increased risk aversion. However, startups that quickly adapt and align their strategies with the current global landscape could emerge as leaders in the reshaped market.

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#### FITCH RATINGS AFFIRMS QATAR AT "AA" WITH "STABLE" OUTLOOK

Fitch Ratings affirmed Qatar's Long-Term Foreign-Currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at "AA" with a "stable" outlook.

The "AA" rating reflects one of the world's highest GDP per capita, as Fitch's expectation that additional gas production would strengthen public finances and a flexible public finance structure. On the other hand, rating weaknesses include heavy hydrocarbon dependence and below average scores on some measures of governance, higher government debt/GDP than oil-dependent highly-rated peers and substantial contingent liabilities.

In details, Qatar Energy (QE) plans to expand liquefied natural gas (LNG) production capacity from 77 million tons per year (mtpa) to 110 mtpa in 2026, 126 mtpa by end-2027 and has announced further expansion to 142 mtpa by end-2030. Fitch assumes QE would cover US\$ 12.5 billion of core project costs out of its 2021 bond issuance and a similar amount from its cash flow, spread until 2028, in addition to contributions by partners. Funding plans for the 2030 phase would depend on hydrocarbon prices at that time, but Fitch expects it is likely that most of the project would be funded with internal resources. North Field projects would support both hydrocarbon and non-hydrocarbon growth over 2025-2030.

In parallel, Fitch forecasts Qatar's General Government (GG) budget surplus at 3.9% of GDP in 2025 (2024: 4.8% of GDP), including our estimates of investment income on Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) external assets (0.9% without investment income in 2025). However, oil and gas revenue would drop under Fitch's assumption that the Brent oil price would average US\$ 70/bl in 2025 (2024: US\$ 80/bl). Hence, the budget surplus is expected to narrow further in 2026 at 3.3% due to lower hydrocarbon prices and a moderate rise in current spending.

Additionally, the credit rating agency projects debt/GDP to fall to about 43% of GDP by 2027 from 49% in 2024 and a peak of 85% in 2020. This reflects Fitch's expectation that the government would refinance most upcoming external market debt maturities and pay down external loans with moderate budget surplus excluding QIA investment income. The subsequent debt path would depend on how the government chooses to deploy its fiscal surpluses. Persistent high global yields could encourage Qatar to continue to allocate a share of its surpluses to deleveraging after 2025, although Fitch's baseline assumes that external market debt is rolled over. Fitch debt metrics include government overdrafts with local banks (QR 52 billion at end-2024), which the government does not include in its official debt figure.

## CORPORATE NEWS

### PIF-OWNED AVILEASE SECURES US\$ 1.5 BILLION CREDIT FACILITY TO BOOST GLOBAL EXPANSION

Saudi-based AviLease, an aircraft leasing company, closed a US\$ 1.5 billion unsecured revolving credit facility to support its international expansion and investment in next-generation, fuel-efficient aircraft, as mentioned in a company statement.

The conventional three-year facility was oversubscribed, attracting commitments from 20 global banks, including eight new lenders from Europe, Asia and North America.

This enhanced liquidity would position the company to expand further, by investing in fuel-efficient aircraft, while maintaining the conservative financial policy.

Owned by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund, AviLease is central to Saudi Arabia's push to diversify its economy and develop a globally competitive aviation industry under its Vision 2030 strategy.

### ACWA POWER SECURES US\$ 200 MILLION FUNDING FOR NEW SAUDI HQ

Saudi-based ACWA Power, one of the world's largest private water desalination company, secured a US\$ 200 million (SR 750 million) shariah-compliant term loan facility from Saudi bank Alinma Bank, as revealed in a company statement.

The seven-year facility would be used to fund the development of its new corporate headquarters coming up in Riyadh. The upcoming state-of-the-art facility would be specifically designed to unify the company's operations and enhance collaboration and innovation among teams.

The sizeable financing underscores Alinma Bank's confidence in ACWA Power's robust financial standing and its strategic role in Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 and energy transition goals.

### ADQ, IHC AND MODON FORM NEW INFRASTRUCTURE JV

Abu Dhabi-based global entities ADQ, IHC and Modon Holding entered into a joint venture to form an infrastructure platform that would actively drive infrastructure development for private and public-private partnerships, as revealed in a company statement.

Operating under Modon Holding, Gridora would serve as a strategic platform for collaboration with specialist partners and capital providers, enabling the delivery of large-scale, high-impact infrastructure projects.

Gridora would be structured around two complementary business lines, Infrastructure Projects and Infrastructure Investments, which reflect the project origination and asset management capabilities of its founding partners. This dual-focus model is designed to generate returns, while addressing the transformative shift required to scale infrastructure implementation nationally, regionally and internationally.

The new entity would accelerate the delivery of major projects across the UAE and globally. It would also enhance capacity for deployment, streamlining the procurement and implementation of key infrastructure contracts.



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#### PAYPAL EXPANDS IN MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA WITH NEW DUBAI HUB

US-based PayPal, the global digital commerce platform, opened a new regional hub in Dubai, which serves as the company's first ever location in the Middle East and Africa, as reported in a company statement.

PayPal's expanded presence would bring global commerce capabilities to the region, including frictionless payments, robust security and broader access to international payment networks to help large enterprises and small businesses sell across borders.

The Dubai Internet City site also strengthens PayPal's commitment to its customers and partners in the region and commitment to enabling millions more consumers and businesses to access the global digital economy.

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#### BAIN & COMPANY STRENGTHENS MIDDLE EAST PRESENCE WITH REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS IN RIYADH

US-based Bain & Company, one of the leading global management consultancy, announced the opening of its new regional headquarters in Riyadh, as indicated in a company statement.

The new Riyadh office marks Bain's third successive location in the city, a move that reinforces the firm's long-standing commitment to Saudi Arabia and the wider Middle East.

Bain & Company's new Riyadh office in King Abdullah Financial District (KAFD) more than doubles the footprint of its previous space, reflecting a significant upgrade in both scale and functionality. It incorporates the latest workplace technologies, including flexible hybrid workspaces, high-tech collaboration tools and enhanced facilities to support both in-person and remote engagements.

The new space also reflects the company's continued investment in cultivating talent, supporting national transformation and building even closer partnerships with clients across the region.

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#### US GROUP EXPEDITORS OPENS NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITY AT DUBAI SOUTH

Dubai South, the largest single-urban master development focusing on aviation, logistics and real estate, announced the inauguration of a new facility at the Logistics District in Dubai South for Expeditors International of Washington, an American global logistics company, as indicated in a company statement. Spanning approximately 23,200 square meters, the facility is designed to provide comprehensive warehousing and fulfilment services, including container freight station operations. Additional offerings include inventory management, kitting, labelling, order management, compliance inspections, return programs, transportation management, pick-and-pack services and quality control inspections.

The new facility would deliver innovative logistics solutions to meet the region's growing demand for advanced supply chain services, while enhancing operational efficiency.

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#### AIQ AND WEATHERFORD PARTNER TO BOOST ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Abu Dhabi-based AI company AIQ and Weatherford, an American multinational oilfield service company, signed a strategic collaboration agreement to enhance energy production efficiency, as mentioned in a company statement.

The partnership would combine AIQ's AI technology with Weatherford's Modern Edge, providing operators with the ability to scale their work processes efficiently while ensuring an economic return.

This integration would also empower customers to modernize their edge operations, facilitate autonomous production and offer the flexibility to expand operations, all while optimizing resource usage and reducing costs.



## CAPITAL MARKETS

### EQUITY MARKETS: ACTIVITY IN MENA EQUITY MARKETS REMAINS TILTED TO UPSIDE, MAINLY TRACKING GLOBAL EQUITY STRENGTH AND ON UPBEAT CORPORATE EARNINGS

Activity in MENA equity markets remained skewed to the upside this week, as reflected by a 1.7% expansion in the S&P Pan Arab Composite index, mainly tracking global equity strength (+3.8%) after the US President signaled a major U-turn on his trade war with China, while also helped by some upbeat corporate earnings.

The heavyweight Saudi Exchange continued to register upward price movements (+1.9%) this week, despite falling Brent oil prices (-1.6% to reach US\$ 66.87 per barrel on Friday), mainly tracking a global risk-on mood after the US President floated substantial China's tariff cuts in trade deal, and supported by some upbeat corporate earnings.

A glance on individual stocks shows that Saudi National Bank's share price surged by 5.1% week-on-week to SR 35.80. Saudi National Bank reported a 19% year-on-year expansion in its 2025 first quarter net profits to reach SR 6.0 billion. Almarai's share price rose by 2.5% to SR 53.80. Almarai reported 2025 first quarter net profits of SR 731 million, up by 5.6% year-on-year. FAB Securities raised its recommendation on Almarai's stock to "Buy" from "Accumulate", with a price target of SR 65, which implies a 23% increase from last price. Riyadh Bank's share price jumped by 3.3% to SR 31.30. Riyadh Bank posted a 20% year-on-year expansion in its 2025 first quarter net profits to reach SR 2.5 billion. Banque Saudi Fransi's share price climbed by 6.0% to SR 18.46. Banque Saudi Fransi reported a 16% year-on-year rise in its 2025 first quarter net profits to reach SR 1.3 billion.

Concurrently, Etihad Etisalat's share price increased by 1.0% over the week to SR 62.70. Etihad Etisalat reported a 20% year-on-year rise in its 2025 first quarter net profits to reach SR 767 million. Aldrees Petroleum's share price increased by 1.8% to SR 134.20. Aldrees Petroleum reported 2025 first quarter net profits of SR 100 million against net profits of SR 77 million. Yamama Cement's share price went up by 6.3% to SR 37.40. Yamama Cement reported 2025 first quarter net profits of SR 142 million, up by 24% year-on-year. As to petrochemicals, Saudi Aramco's share price closed 1.4% higher at SR 25.80. SABIC's share price rose by 1.1% to SR 62.00. Yansab's share price went up by 1.8% to SR 33.95.

### EQUITY MARKETS INDICATORS (APRIL 20 - APRIL 26, 2025)

Market	Price Index	week-on-week	Year-to-Date	Trading Value	week-on-week	Volume Traded	Market Capitalization	Turnover ratio	P/E*	P/BV*
Lebanon	184.2	-1.1%	-19.0%	0.9	-18.1%	0.0	20,810.6	0.2%	-	0.54
Jordan	394.0	-1.6%	0.8%	34.5	-17.8%	13.9	24,828.2	7.2%	9.2	1.20
Egypt	254.6	2.2%	5.3%	131.4	-55.2%	2,721.2	44,794.8	15.3%	2.2	7.95
Saudi Arabia	512.0	1.9%	-1.5%	5,849.8	-3.9%	1,003.8	2,580,116.2	11.8%	16.2	3.90
Qatar	167.9	1.5%	-3.1%	549.0	52.7%	920.3	166,455.2	17.2%	12.6	1.52
UAE	151.4	2.7%	-0.6%	2,712.3	-7.4%	3,335.2	1,028,082.8	13.7%	12.2	2.20
Oman	240.9	-0.9%	-5.2%	28.9	-32.6%	64.3	32,046.4	4.7%	9.7	0.87
Bahrain	224.8	0.1%	-2.6%	4.9	39.0%	9.7	17,889.6	1.4%	10.3	1.23
Kuwait	146.0	0.1%	8.2%	1,455.6	50.5%	1,864.0	151,158.3	50.1%	18.2	2.07
Morocco	393.2	0.6%	28.0%	348.8	30.2%	9.6	97,214.2	18.7%	18.8	2.70
Tunisia	78.5	0.9%	18.4%	27.8	91.6%	7.9	9,840.7	14.7%	12.7	2.18
<b>Arab Markets</b>	<b>995.5</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>11,143.9</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>9,949.9</b>	<b>4,173,236.9</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>3.26</b>

Values in US\$ million; volumes in millions

\* markets cap-weighted averages

Sources: S&P, Bloomberg, Bank Audi's Group Research Department.

The Qatar Stock Exchange continued to operate on a positive territory this week, as reflected by a 1.5% increase in the S&P Qatar index, mainly tracking global equity strength after the US President said that he plans to be “very nice” to China in any trade talks and that tariffs would drop if the two countries can reach a deal. This compounded with some robust first quarter financial results. 43 out of 53 traded stocks posted price gains, while nine stocks registered price falls, and one stock saw no price change week-on-week. A closer look at individual stocks shows that Ahli Bank of Qatar’s share price edged up by 0.6% to QR 3.600. Ahli Bank of Qatar reported a 5.1% year-on-year rise in its 2025 first quarter net profits to reach QR 229 million. Ezdan Holding Group’s share price expanded by 5.1% to QR 1.011. Ezdan Holding Group reported 2025 first quarter net profits of QR 153 million against net profits of QR 96 million a year earlier.

Also, Barwa Real Estate’s share price went up by 1.3% week-on-week to QR 2.811. Vodafone Qatar’s share price jumped by 6.4% to QR 2.290. Mazaya Real Estate Development’s share price surged by 4.7% to QR 0.602. Ooredoo’s share price moved 2.5% higher to reach QR 12.880. Qatar Navigation’s share price rose by 1.8% to QR 11.000. Gulf International Services’ share price expanded by 2.5% to reach QR 3.000. United Development Company’s share price closed 2.0% higher at QR 1.059. United Development reported flat net profits of QR 72 million during the first quarter of 2025.

The UAE equity markets extended their upward trajectory this week, as reflected by a 2.7% expansion in the S&P UAE index, mainly tracking global equity price rises and driven by some favorable company-specific factors. In Dubai, Emirates NBD’s share price surged by 4.9% to AED 20.15. Emirates NBD reported 2025 first quarter net profits of AED 6.2 billion, down by 7.5% year-on-year, yet still exceeding average analysts’ estimate. Also, Emirates NBD posted an 11% year-on-year rise in its 2025 first quarter operating income to reach AED 12 billion, beating average analysts’ estimate. Union Properties’ share price increased by 1.4% to AED 0.578. Emaar Properties’ share price jumped by 6.6% to AED 12.95. Emaar Development’s share price closed 7.4% higher at AED 12.4. Dubai Financial Market’s share price rose by 2.3% to AED 1.36.

In Abu Dhabi, ADIB’s share price jumped by 8.0% to AED 17.64. ADIB reported 2025 first quarter net profits of AED 1.7 billion against net profits of AED 1.4 billion a year earlier. ADCB’s share price surged by 4.7% to AED 11.10. FAB’s share price increased by 2.1% to AED 13.90. ADNOC Gas’ share price closed 2.6% higher at AED 3.17. Aldar Properties’ share price rose by 1.2% to AED 8.20. Agthia’s share price went up by 5.0% to AED 4.42. Modon Holding’s share price climbed by 7.4% to AED 3.04.

## FIXED INCOME MARKETS: ACROSS-THE-BOARD UPWARD PRICE MOVEMENTS IN MENA BOND MARKETS THIS WEEK

MENA fixed income markets saw across-the-board price gains this week, mainly tracking US Treasuries move after a US Federal Reserve official warned that aggressive tariff levels by the US administration would lead to some serious deterioration in the US labor market, bolstering odds that the Fed would cut interest rates as early as June this year.

In the Saudi credit space, sovereigns maturing in 2028, 2030, 2034, 2050 and 2060 recorded price rises ranging between 0.33 pt and 1.45 pt this week. Prices of Aramco’30, ’34 and ’50 went up by 0.34 pt, 0.70 pt and 1.43 pt respectively. STC’29 closed up by 0.15 pt. SEC’30 and ’44 traded up by 0.21 pt and 0.71 pt respectively. Prices of SABIC’28 expanded by 0.42 pt. Amongst financials, Banque Saudi Fransi’29 was up by 0.04 pt. SNB’29 traded up by 0.12 pt. Prices of Al Rajhi Bank’29 increased by 0.14 pt.

In the Bahraini credit space, sovereigns maturing in 2028, 2030, 2035 and 2051 recorded weekly price gains ranging between 0.36 pt and 1.81 pt. S&P Global Ratings revised this week its outlook on Bahrain to “Negative” from “Stable”. At the same time, S&P affirmed the “B+/B” long-term and short-term foreign and local currency sovereign credit ratings. The “Negative” outlook reflects, according to S&P, increasing risks to the fiscal position and the government’s ability to service and refinance debt. In S&P’s view, fiscal reform measures may prove insufficient to put debt to GDP on a downward path, while Bahrain’s foreign currency reserve position remains weak.

In the Qatari credit space, sovereigns maturing in 2028, 2030, 2034, 2040 and 2050 saw price expansions of up to 0.58 pt week-on-week. Prices of Ooredoo’28, ’31 and ’43 expanded by up to 0.41 pt. Amongst financials, Qatar International Islamic Bank’29 traded up by 0.13 pt. Prices of QNB’29 increased by 0.29 pt. Prices of Doha Finance’29 rose by 0.16 pt.

In the UAE credit space, sovereigns maturing in 2031, 2033, 2041 and 2052 recorded price gains of up to 0.88 pt week-on-week. In the Dubai credit space, sovereigns maturing in 2030 and 2050 posted weekly price rises of 0.09 pt and 0.82 pt respectively. Prices of Majid Al Futtaim'29 went up by 0.21 pt. DP World'30 and '49 were up by 0.49 pt and 0.69 pt respectively. Amongst financials, prices of Emirates Islamic Bank'27 and '29 increased by 0.07 pt and 0.09 pt respectively. In the Sharjah credit space, sovereigns maturing in 2030 posted price increases of 0.52 pt week-on-week.

In the Abu Dhabi credit space, sovereigns maturing in 2027, 2030, 2034 and 2050 saw weekly price gains of up to 0.93 pt. ADNOC Murban'29 was up by 0.31 pt. Prices of Mubadala'28, '30, '34, '41 and '50 expanded by up to 0.79 pt. Prices of Taqa'28, '30 and '36 rose by 0.27 pt, 0.34 pt and 0.32 pt respectively. Prices of Aldar Investment Properties'33 increased by 0.31 pt. Amongst financials, ADCB'27 and '29 were up by 0.06 pt and 0.07 pt respectively. Prices of FAB'28, '29 and '35 rose by up to 0.28 pt.

Regarding new issues in the UAE, Ajman Bank raised US\$ 500 million this week from the sale of a five-year Reg S Sukuk, under Ajman Senior Sukuk Ltd.'s US\$ 1.5 billion Trust Certificate Issuance Program, at 130 bps over US Treasuries against an initial price guidance of 165 bps over UST.

In the Kuwaiti credit space, prices of sovereigns maturing in 2027 rose by 0.21 pt week-on-week. KIPCO'27 traded up by 0.68 pt. In the Iraqi credit space, sovereigns maturing in 2028 posted weekly price gains of 0.73 pt. In the Omani credit space, sovereigns maturing in 2028, 2031 and 2051 saw price gains of 0.66 pt, 1.60 pt and 2.73 pts respectively this week. Omantel'28 traded up by 0.07 pt.

In the Egyptian credit space, sovereigns maturing in 2028, 2030, 2033, 2040 and 2050 posted price expansions of up to 2.88 pts this week.

All in all, activity in regional bond markets was tilted to the upside this week, mainly tracking increases in US Treasuries after comments by a US Federal Reserve official cemented bets about sooner-than-previously expected interest rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve. Within this context, traders priced in a 60% chance for an interest rate cut in June 2025.

#### MIDDLE EAST 5Y CDS SPREADS V/S INTL BENCHMARKS

in basis points	25-Apr-25	18-Apr-25	31-Dec-24	Week-on-week	Year-to-date
Abu Dhabi	39	45	43	-6	-4
Dubai	60	59	64	1	-4
Kuwait	65	64	64	1	1
Qatar	37	42	44	-5	-7
Saudi Arabia	82	86	65	-4	17
Bahrain	226	236	187	-10	39
Morocco	125	134	94	-9	31
Egypt	653	710	591	-57	62
Iraq	397	502	301	-105	96
Middle East	187	209	162	-22	25
Emerging Markets	174	188	174	-14	0
Global	270	280	277	-10	-7

Sources: Bloomberg, Bank Audi's Group Research Department

## SOVEREIGN RATINGS & FX RATES

SOVEREIGN RATINGS	Standard & Poor's	Moody's	Fitch
<b>LEVANT</b>			
Lebanon	SD/-/SD	C/Stable	RD/-/C
Syria	NR	NR	NR
Jordan	BB-/Stable/B	Ba3/Stable	BB-/Stable/B
Egypt	B-/Stable/B	Caa1/Positive	B/Stable/B
Iraq	B-/Stable/B	Caa1/Stable	B-/Stable/B
<b>GULF</b>			
Saudi Arabia	A+/Stable/A-1	Aa3/Stable	A+/Stable/F1+
United Arab Emirates	AA/Stable/A-1+	Aa2/Stable	AA-/Stable/F1+
Qatar	AA/Stable/A-1+	Aa2/Stable	AA/Positive/F1+
Kuwait	A+/Stable/A-1+	A1/Stable	AA-/Stable/F1+
Bahrain	B+/Negative/B	B2/Stable	B+/Negative/B
Oman	BBB-/Stable/B	Ba1/Positive	BB+/Positive/B
Yemen	NR	NR	NR
<b>NORTH AFRICA</b>			
Algeria	NR	NR	NR
Morocco	BB+/Positive/A-3	Ba1/Stable	BB+/Stable/B
Tunisia	NR	Caa1/Stable	CCC+/C
Libya	NR	NR	NR
Sudan	NR	NR	NR

NR= Not Rated

RWN= Rating Watch Negative

RUR= Ratings Under Review

\* Emirate of Abu Dhabi Ratings

FX RATES (per US\$)	25-Apr-25	18-Apr-25	31-Dec-24	Weekly change	Year-to-date
<b>LEVANT</b>					
Lebanese Pound (LBP)	89,500.00	89,500.00	89,500.00	0.0%	0.0%
Jordanian Dinar (JOD)	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.0%	0.0%
Egyptian Pound (EGP)	50.96	51.12	50.84	-0.3%	0.2%
Iraqi Dinar (IQD)	1,310.00	1,310.00	1,310.00	0.0%	0.0%
<b>GULF</b>					
Saudi Riyal (SAR)	3.75	3.75	3.76	0.0%	-0.1%
UAE Dirham (AED)	3.67	3.67	3.67	0.0%	0.0%
Qatari Riyal (QAR)	3.64	3.64	3.64	0.0%	0.0%
Kuwaiti Dinar (KWD)	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.0%	0.0%
Bahraini Dinar (BHD)	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.0%	-0.1%
Omani Riyal (OMR)	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.0%	0.0%
Yemeni Riyal (YER)	245.08	245.20	249.57	0.0%	-1.8%
<b>NORTH AFRICA</b>					
Algerian Dinar (DZD)	132.45	132.20	135.56	0.2%	-2.3%
Moroccan Dirham (MAD)	9.26	9.27	10.13	-0.1%	-8.6%
Tunisian Dinar (TND)	2.99	2.99	3.19	0.2%	-6.1%
Libyan Dinar (LYD)	5.47	5.47	4.91	-0.1%	11.3%
Sudanese Pound (SDG)	647.81	647.81	647.81	0.0%	0.0%

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\*Emirate of Abu Dhabi Ratings

Sources: S&P, Bloomberg, Bank Audi's Group Research Departement.

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