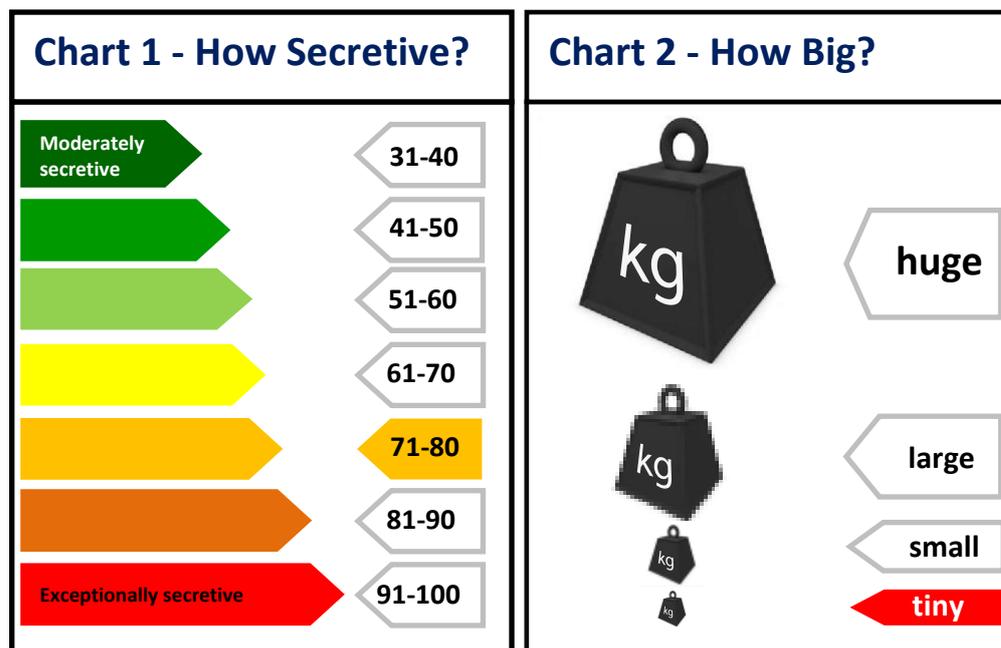


Report on Bahrain

Bahrain is ranked at 10th position on the 2011 Financial Secrecy Index. This ranking is based on a combination of its secrecy score and a scale weighting based on its share of the global market for offshore financial services.

Bahrain has been assessed with 78 secrecy points out of a potential 100, which places it towards the top of the secrecy scale (see chart 1 below).

Bahrain accounts for under 1 per cent of the global market for offshore financial services, making it a tiny player compared with other secrecy jurisdictions (see chart 2 below).



Part 1: Telling the story

Bahrain emerged as a major regional financial centre when it launched Offshore Banking Units in 1973, and [soon benefited](#) from the oil price rise, as well as the Lebanese civil war which displaced a significant part of its banking system to Bahrain, helping it overtake Beirut as the banking and financial hub of the Middle East. It has come to specialise especially in Islamic finance.

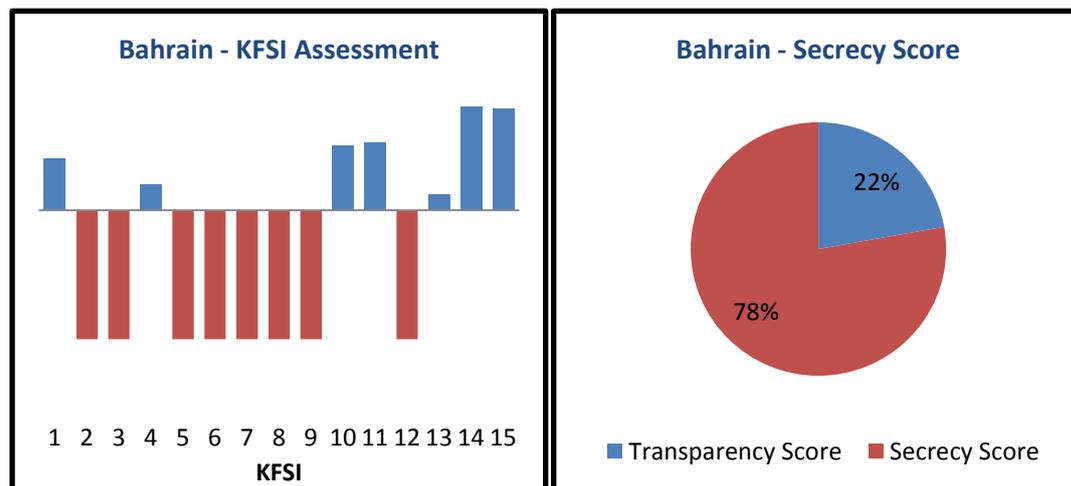
Bahrain constitutes another surprise in the 2011 Financial Secrecy Index, normally overshadowed in the discourse by its better-known regional rival Dubai. However, with a very high secrecy score of 78 and a large financial centre in regional terms, Bahrain is clearly a jurisdiction of great concern. It is assessed with particularly weak scores for knowledge of beneficial ownership, corporate transparency, the efficiency of tax regulation and anti-money laundering. It also suffers from [concerns about financial regulation](#), concerns about [money laundering](#), and [governance](#) more generally.

Next steps for Bahrain

Bahrain's 78 per cent secrecy score shows that it must still make major progress in offering satisfactory financial transparency¹. If it wishes to play a full part in the modern financial community and to impede and deter illicit financial flows, including flows originating from tax evasion, aggressive tax avoidance practices, corrupt practices and criminal activities, it should take action on the points noted where it falls short of acceptable international standards. See part 2 below for details of Bahrain's shortcomings on transparency. See this link <http://www.secrecyjurisdictions.com/kfsi> for an overview of how each of these shortcomings can be fixed.

Part 2: Secrecy Scores

The secrecy score of 78 per cent for Bahrain has been computed by assessing the jurisdiction's performance on the 15 Key Financial Secrecy Indicators, listed below.



The numbers on the horizontal axis of the bar chart on the left refer to the Key Financial Secrecy Indicators (KFSI). The presence of a blue bar indicates a positive answer, as does blue text in the KFSI list below. The presence of a red bar indicates a negative answer as does red text in the KFSI list. Where the jurisdiction's performance partly, but not fully complies with a Key Financial Secrecy Indicator, the text is coloured violet in the list below (combination of red and blue).

This paper draws on key data collected on Bahrain. Our data sources include regulatory reports, legislation, regulation and news available at 31.12.2010². The full data set is available [here](#)³. Our assessment is based on the 15 Key Financial Secrecy Indicators (KFSIs, below), reflecting the legal and financial arrangements of Bahrain. Details of these indicators are noted in the following table and all background data can be found on the [Mapping Financial Secrecy web site](#)⁴. This data is the basis on which the [Financial Secrecy Index](#)⁵ is compiled.

The Key Financial Secrecy Indicators and the performance of Bahrain are:

TRANSPARENCY OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP – Bahrain	
1.	Banking secrecy: Does the jurisdiction have banking secrecy? Bahrain does not adequately curtail banking secrecy
2.	Trust and Foundations Register: Is there a public register of Trusts and Foundations? Bahrain does not put details of trusts on public record
3.	Recorded Company Ownership: Does the relevant authority obtain and keep updated details of the beneficial ownership of companies? Bahrain does not maintain company ownership details in official records
KEY ASPECTS OF CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY REGULATION – Bahrain	
4.	Public Company Ownership: Does the relevant authority make details of ownership of companies available on public record online for less than US\$10? Bahrain partly requires that ownership of companies is put on public record
5.	Public Company Accounts: Does the relevant authority require that company accounts are made available for inspection by anyone for a fee of less than US\$10? Bahrain does not require that company accounts be available on public record
6.	Country-by-Country Reporting: Are companies listed on a national stock exchange required to comply with country-by-country financial reporting? Bahrain does not require country-by-country financial reporting by companies
EFFICIENCY OF TAX AND FINANCIAL REGULATION – Bahrain	
7.	Fit for Information Exchange: Are resident paying agents required to report to the domestic tax administration information on payments to non-residents? Bahrain does not require resident paying agents to tell the domestic tax authorities about payments to non-residents
8.	Efficiency of Tax Administration: Does the tax administration use taxpayer identifiers for analysing information effectively, and is there a large taxpayer unit? Bahrain does not use appropriate tools for effectively analysing tax related information
9.	Avoids Promoting Tax Evasion: Does the jurisdiction grant unilateral tax credits for

	foreign tax payments? Bahrain does not avoid promoting tax evasion via a tax credit system
10.	Harmful Legal Vehicles: Does the jurisdiction allow cell companies and trusts with flee clauses? Bahrain partly allows harmful legal vehicles
INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND COOPERATION – Bahrain	
11.	Anti-Money Laundering: Does the jurisdiction comply with the FATF recommendations? Bahrain partly complies with international anti-money laundering standards
12.	Automatic Information Exchange: Does the jurisdiction participate fully in Automatic Information Exchange such as the European Savings Tax Directive? Bahrain does not participate fully in Automatic Information Exchange
13.	Bilateral Treaties: Does the jurisdiction have at least 60 bilateral treaties providing for broad information exchange, covering all tax matters, or is it part of the European Council/OECD convention? As of June 30, 2010, Bahrain had few tax information sharing agreements complying with basic OECD requirements
14.	International Transparency Commitments: Has the jurisdiction ratified the five most relevant international treaties relating to financial transparency? Bahrain has partly ratified relevant international treaties relating to financial transparency
15.	International Judicial Cooperation: Does the jurisdiction cooperate with other states on money laundering and other criminal issues? Bahrain partly cooperates with other states on money laundering and other criminal issues

¹ Our definition of financial transparency can be found here:
<http://www.secrecyjurisdictions.com/PDF/FinancialTransparency.pdf>.

² With the exception of KFSI 13 for which the cut-off date is 30.6.2010. For more details, look at the endnote number 2 in the corresponding KFSI-paper here:

<http://www.secrecyjurisdictions.com/PDF/13-Bilateral-Treaties.pdf>.

³ That data is available here: http://www.secrecyjurisdictions.com/sj_database/menu.xml.

⁴ <http://www.secrecyjurisdictions.com>.

⁵ <http://www.financialsecrecyindex.com/>.