

Agenda

- Introduction
- GCC Population
- GCC Identity
- National Identity System
- Conclusion

Agenda

- Introduction
- GCC Population
- GCC Identity
- National Identity System
- Conclusion

2010 Exeter Conference

The Question of Identity in GCC?

Developing a Cohesive National Identity Management System

Conference: 'The 21st-Century Gulf: The Challenge of Identity'
University of Exeter, U.K.
Date: 30 June - 3 July 2010

GCC Countries

GCC Countries

Introduction

- **Globalisation:** distance became irrelevant
- **Modernisation:** socio-cultural implications
- **National Identity:** restoration of rooted tradition, religious fervour

Agenda

- Introduction
- **GCC Population**
- GCC Identity
- National Identity System
- Conclusion

Background information ...

- Area: 2.55 Million Km²
- **Population: 46.5 million** (growth rate: 3.73%).
- **Economy: Oil** since 1970s (75% of the annual government revenues. Has around 45% of the world's proven oil reserves and 25% of crude oil exports).

GCC Population

Foreigners Constitute majority in 4 states

Country	Population	Citizens	%	Foreigners	%
UAE	8,190,000	950,000	12%	7,240,000	88%
Qatar	1,678,568	218,214	13%	1,460,354	87%
Kuwait	3,480,000	1,044,000	30%	2,436,000	70%
Bahrain	1,050,000	507,150	48%	542,850	52%
Oman	3,418,085	2,392,660	70%	1,025,426	30%
Saudi Arabia	28,686,633	20,941,242	73%	7,745,391	27%
GCC (Total)	46,503,286	19,058,559	41%	27,413,687	59%

- Population **Forecast: 60 million by 2020**

GCC Population (2010)

Country	Population	Citizens	%	Foreigners	%
UAE	8,190,000	950,000	12%	7,240,000	88%
Qatar	1,678,568	218,214	13%	1,460,354	87%
Kuwait	3,480,000	1,044,000	30%	2,436,000	70%
Bahrain	1,050,000	507,150	48%	542,850	52%
Oman	3,418,085	2,392,660	70%	1,025,426	30%
Saudi Arabia	28,686,633	20,941,242	73%	7,745,391	27%
GCC (Total)	46,503,286	19,058,559	41%	27,413,687	59%

- 2010: 27 million foreigners (59% of population)**

GCC Population

- Grown > 10 times during the last 50 years (from 4 million in 1950 to > 46 million in 2010.)

Workforce and Employment

- Employment:** 1% in oil and gas sector which produces 47% of GCC GDP.
- Foreign workforce:** 60% of working population
- Large number employed in **construction, utilities, government (20%),** and other service sectors.
- Labour policies:** evolved to meet labour market conditions.

Workforce Pattern ...

World War II | 1973 | 1990-1991 Gulf War | 2006-mid 2008 | 2010

Oil Wealth Accumulation | Building Post-Oil Economy | Global Economic Crisis | Building Society & Political Environment

Foreign Labour to transform oil income (Arab Middle East) | Large short term labour (Asians) | growth-driven workforce models (Skilled & Nationalisation)

Vision and population demographics

- Vision:** economic development, and cosmopolitan culture
- Population demographics**
- highest proportion of migrant workers in the world (3rd world largest after EU and North America)

GCC Identity

- Individual and Societal perspectives**
- Individual:** observed as the central 'project' of humanity (Erikson 1963)
- Societal:** primary driving forces of the information or network era (Castells 1997)

Agenda

- Introduction
- GCC Population
- GCC Identity**
- National Identity System
- Conclusion

GCC Countries: Formed in 1981

Co-operation Council between 6 Arab States of the Southern Gulf in ME

- geographical proximity, common religion, language, culture,** similarity of regulations, economic and social conditions.
- Establishment:** based on the need to reconstruct identity, and the principle of single culture and nation. **strengthen the collective sense of uniqueness**

GCC National Identity

- National Identity (Gulf Society):**
 - most important component of the **collective identity** structure;
- Collective Identity:**
 - typology** to understand collective identities;

Societal Identity: Collective National Identity

common identity elements shaped the '**Gulf Society**'

Tribalism	People sharing common ancestry and kinship, and use their tribal affiliation as their last names.
Religion	Islam
Language	Arabic; created a linguistic culture that is specific to the Gulf population.
Dress Code	Gulf citizens wear traditional attire.
Political System	the GCC formation led to cooperation and integration, in the fields of health, education, labour and social affairs, tourism, sports, etc.
Economy	Oil based, custom union, common exchange rate.

Individual Identity

- Since their independence, the issue of identity in GCC countries has featured **prominently** and has been an **integral part of the psyche of the citizens**.
- The **sense of national identity** in the Gulf countries is **very strong**.

GCC Identity: serious challenges

- Project:**
 - Coexistence of multiple identities representing different groups in the society
 - Foreign labour building/bringing their own project identities
- Resistance:**
 - 'invasion' of modernisation and globalisation (language)
 - influx of foreign workers
 - increasing International pressures and circumstances
- Legitimising:**
 - new forms of identity and democracy
 - formulate independent economic policies (currency)

GCC Identity Evolution

World War II - 1973

1973 - now

- Resistance:**
 - Social movements against territorial domination;
 - Cultural survival
- Project:**
 - Build identity: people with shared conditions of belonging
 - Development of a monarchy social structure.
- Legitimising:**
 - International correlation - global acceptance (generation of civil society)
 - Formation of GCC Council
 - Strong political Gulf-wide identity

GCC National Identity

Principal forms of **collective identities** into three types:

- Legitimizing Identities:** Constructed to sustain social order. A set of logic and meaning introduced and propagated by the ruling powers, in order to rationalize, reproduce, and expand existing rule;
- Resistance identities:** Constructed in response to devaluation generated by those who are being marginalized, devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination and in opposition to the ruling norm;
- Project identities:** Construction of 'new identity' attempts to redefine their position in society and, by doing so, seek the transformation of overall social structure.

Population Growth: Economy-driven

information on the various community groups to identify social problems.

- Foreign workforce:**
 - Skilled
 - Unskilled workers: Construction & household personnel
- Living standards:** modernization
- Economic & Domestic growth:**

Factors: Rapid growth, Relative youth of population, Socio-economic & demographic policies, Legislations & systems, Growth strategies, Security requirements.

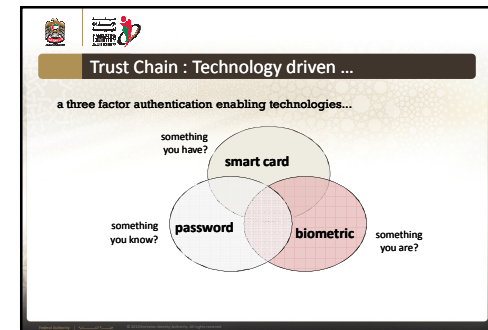
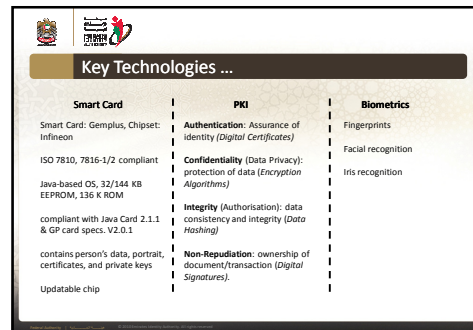
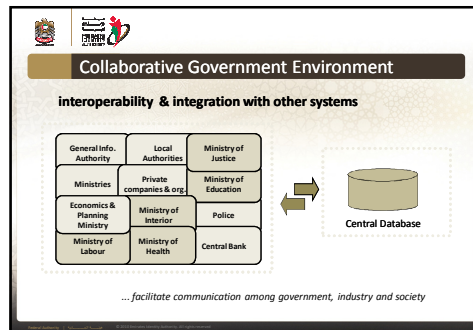
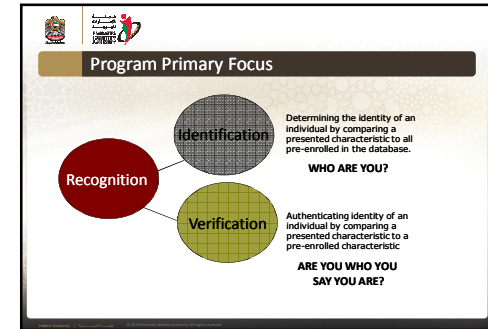
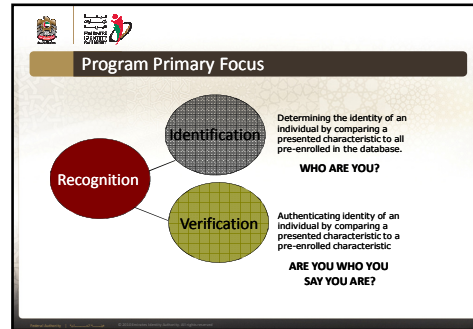
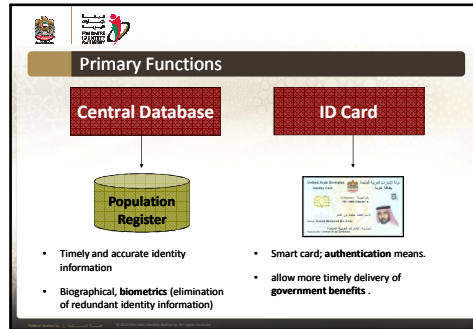
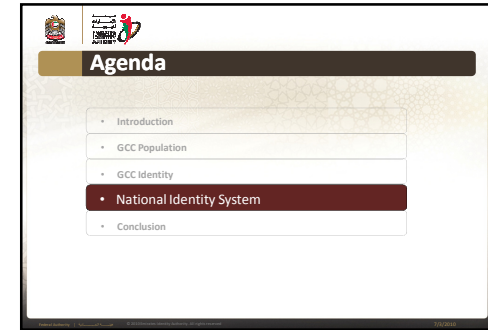
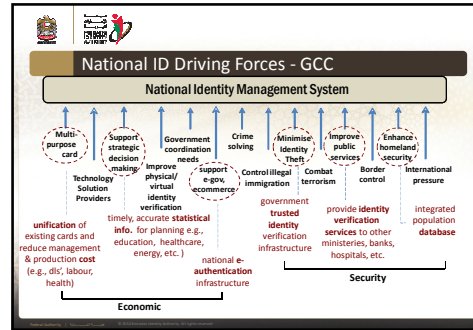
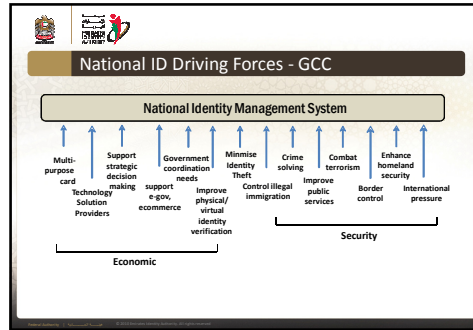
Foreign Labour

- some see this diversity as a **threat to traditional values and customs**.
- exposed it to often **contradictorily opinions and viewpoints** that is hardly reconcilable.
- Nationals find it **difficult to accept** that they are now **national minorities**.

Such population demographics have long-term political, economic and social consequences

GCC Identity and foreign workforce

- The **impact of foreign labor** in the GCC countries is considered enormous.
- Traditional cultures undergone **dramatic changes**.
- > 200 nationalities:** brought various **cultural backgrounds**, articulated **values and norms** that constituted their identities.
- GCC countries **become more vulnerable** and have had a **pervasive influence on its identity**.



Agenda

- Introduction
- GCC Population
- GCC Identity
- National Identity System
- **Conclusion**

Biometrics Systems ...

The diagram shows a 'Biometric System' represented by two stacked cylinders: 'Civil Biometrics' (top) and 'Forensic Biometrics' (bottom). An arrow points from the 'Forensic Biometrics' cylinder to the 'Law Enforcement' logo, which is the emblem of the United Arab Emirates.

Stored Data in Chip ...

Readable data
e.g., Name, Nationality, DoB, 2 fingerprints data, etc.

Pin Protected Info.
e.g., digital image, other personal info., etc.

Restricted Info.
e.g., fingerprints, validation data, etc.

The image shows an Emirates ID card with a photo of a man and Arabic text. The card is labeled as 'United Arab Emirates Identity Card' and 'بطاقة هوية دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة'.

Conclusion: Identity Management

Strong leadership with focus to achieve two prevailing objectives:

- Security enhancement and reinforcing immigration control and increasing **national security**.
- Enhanced and expedited **service delivery** (*'identity-dependent'* initiatives) and support e-government.

Conclusion

- GCC governments tend to focus more on **meeting expectation of population** in the services they provide;

'If you cannot measure it, you cannot manage it.'
OR You cannot manage, what you can't measure ...

- Authorities generally believe the ***more they know about you, the better they can serve you.***

Conclusion

- Balancing the **growth**, increasing demands of **globalisation**.
- Continued rapid economic growth, requires government to develop **long-term, comprehensive policies** to address sources of *economic, cultural, and political* instability;

Conclusion

- Increasing interest for **permanent residence** in GCC .
- **Employment** of the nationals and **labour migration** will remain politically sensitive and highly debated subject .
- Will Cause further tensions for the **economy-driven GCC**, from **national identity** standpoint (a threat to traditional values and customs).

Conclusion: Identity Management

.... **fundamental planning requirement** to allow governments and policy makers develop and regulate their national identity strategies ...

Conclusion: Identity Management

- Key to **enable timely and accurate identity information**.
- ascertaining the **true identities** and legitimacy of their population.
- **elimination of redundant** identity information and more timely delivery of government benefits.
- explore ways to **facilitate communication and collaboration** among government, industry and society.



Conclusion

- Foreigners will continue to **dominate the workforce / population**.
- foreigners residing in GCC countries will continue bringing new **social and cultural changes**; a challenge of consequences difficult to estimate .
- It would be interesting to figure out how the GCC will look like in another **10 years** from a **National Identity** perspective.

Who are **We?**