The UAE has highest number of expats in GCC

The UAE has the highest percentage of expatriates relative to their population in the oil-rich Gulf, although Saudi Arabia has the largest number of foreigners overall, according to a regional study.

At the start of 2011, expatriates accounted for as high as 87 per cent of the total population in Qatar and nearly 89 per cent in the UAE. Foreigners in Kuwait were estimated at 68 per cent, while they stood at around 51 per cent in Bahrain and 39 per cent in Oman. Saudi Arabia, the largest member of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), had the lowest ratio of expatriates at around 32 per cent, but it had the highest number overall, estimated at nearly eight million.

The report showed that expatriates, mostly from Asia, Africa and the Middle East, were estimated at nearly 48 per cent of the GCC's total population of 43 million at the start of 2011. At the end of the year, the total GCC population stood at around 46.9 million.

'Expatriates are a majority in some GCC member countries. GCC countries need to encourage the local population into a variety of professions to limit the dependence on expatriates. This is because the expatriate population is growing by six to eight per cent, while the local population is growing by only two to three per cent,' the report said. It showed the population in the GCC, which controls 40 per cent of the world's oil deposits, has recorded the highest growth rate over the past decades.

It said the GCC's total population has surged by more than 10 times since 1950, when it was estimated at around 3.9 million. A breakdown showed Saudi Arabia held more than half the GCC's population, with around 28.5 million at the start of 2012. The population was put at 8.5 million in the UAE, 3.7 million in Kuwait, 3.1 million in Oman, 1.8 million in Qatar and 1.3 million in Bahrain.

1. In 2011, what percentage of Qatar's population was expatriates? a. 87 b. 89 c. 51	4. Saudi Arabia has _____ of the GCC's population. a. less than 50% b. exactly half c. more than 50%
2. In 2011, 89% of the population of the UAE were ... a. foreigners b. nationals c. children	5. The GCC's population has increased by how much in the past 70 years? a. 6-8 percent b. 2-3 percent c. 10 times
3. The GCC expat population is growing _____ than the local population. a. faster b. slower c. at the same speed	6. Which country had the highest population in 2012? a. the UAE b. Oman c. Kuwait