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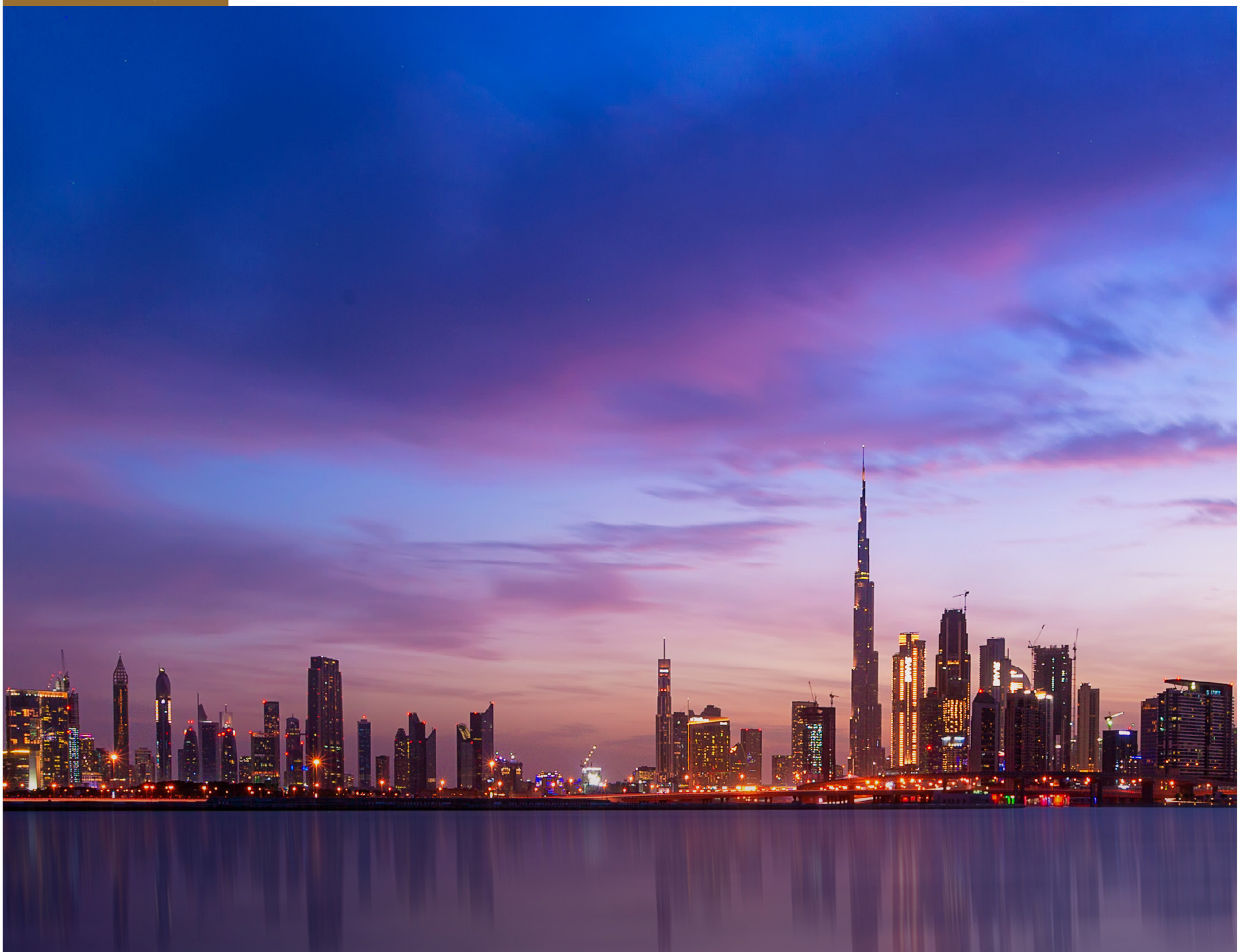


UAE

Advancing Economic and Tourism Diversity

Special Report

UAE bolsters its global tourism status by empowering national talent in the hospitality sector

The UAE has established itself as a premier destination in the global tourism landscape, thanks to significant achievements in the tourism and hospitality sectors. The industry continues its exceptional performance, setting new records across various sectors and indicators. This success embodies the exemplary Emirati model of offering unique, internationally recognized tourism experiences admired by visitors from around the world.

Under the directives of its wise leadership, the UAE attaches significant importance to workforce development in the hospitality industry, recognizing it as the key cornerstone for driving tourism growth and preserving cultural heritage. In line with these efforts, the Ministry of Economy and Tourism launched the 'UAE Hospitality Summer Camp' in collaboration with a range of private tourism and hotel establishments across the country. The programme is designed to engage students of diverse ages and nationalities in activities and fields related to hospitality, through hands-on training at leading tourism and hotel establishments. The latest edition of the programme has attracted over 500 participants from approximately 200 educational institutions across the country, in partnership with more than 40 hotel and tourism entities from across the seven emirates.

The Hospitality Summer Camp aligns with the goals of the UAE Tourism Strategy 2031, which seeks to nurture tourism competencies, encourage participation of citizens in the tourism sector, promote the UAE's tourism identity, increase tourism's contribution to GDP, and reinforce the UAE's standing as a leading global travel destination. The investment in national human capital is a strategic choice that bolsters the sustainability and competitiveness of the country's tourism sector.

The UAE Hospitality Summer Camp also reflects the success of a leading public-private partnership that reinforces the UAE's commitment to equipping and preparing national talent to assume leading roles in the sector, in line with global standards. Through this significant program, the Ministry of Economy and Tourism moves confidently toward achieving the goals of the UAE Tourism Strategy 2031, by investing in national human capital and strengthening the competitiveness of the hotel sector. It reinforces the UAE's position as a global tourism destination capable of attracting visitors and delivering exceptional hospitality experiences that aptly reflect the service excellence and quality of life in the UAE.

UAE economy records 5.3% growth in non-oil activities

UAE Real GDP grows by 3.9% in the first quarter of 2025

- H.E. Bin Touq: Latest results reaffirm the strength of the UAE's national economy and its ability to maintain exceptional growth
- Hanan Ahli: GDP growth demonstrates the efficiency of the UAE's economic model and underscores the success of developing key sectors on sustainable foundations

The UAE's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 3.9 per cent to total AED 455 billion in the first quarter (Q1) of 2025, compared to that of the same period in 2024. Non-oil GDP recorded a 5.3 per cent growth, reaching AED 352 billion, while the contribution of oil-related activities stood at 22.7 per cent in Q1 2025.

His Excellency Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy and Tourism, said: "The preliminary estimates released by the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Centre for the first quarter of 2025 reaffirm the strength and resilience of the UAE economy and its capacity to sustain exceptional growth. They also highlight the success of the nation's comprehensive development model and reflect the confidence of investors and the international community in the country's business and investment environment, which has become a global benchmark for progressive economic policies and a legislative framework that drives sustainable growth."

His Excellency added: "Thanks to the directives of the wise leadership, the contribution of non-oil activities to real GDP reached a record 77.3 per cent in the first quarter - the highest in the country's history. This reflects the strong momentum of the UAE's economic diversification drive and underscores the effectiveness of national policies and strategies aimed at building an economic model based on knowledge and innovation, in line with the objectives of the 'We the UAE 2031' vision, which seeks to raise the country's GDP to AED 3 trillion by the next decade."

Ministry of Economy News

Her Excellency Hanan Mansoor Ahli, Director of the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Centre, emphasized that the UAE's GDP growth in the first quarter of 2025 highlights the efficiency of the country's economic model and demonstrates the government's success in implementing the leadership's directives to develop economic sectors on sustainable foundations, while strengthening diversification efforts to ensure continued GDP growth and long-term economic development.

She added that the growth of the non-oil GDP by more than five per cent reflects the UAE's vision to establish an advanced, diversified economic model, driven by technology and innovation. This model ensures an enabling environment for businesses and creative minds, transforming their ideas into successful companies and projects that contribute to the UAE's evolving economic landscape.

Fastest-growing sectors

Manufacturing activities topped all other economic activities with a 7.7 per cent growth in Q1 2025, followed by the finance and insurance and construction sectors, which achieved growth of 7.0 percent. Real estate activities grew by 6.6 per cent, and trade activities by 3.0 per cent.

In terms of the economic activities that contributed most to non-oil GDP during the first quarter of 2025, the trade sector ranked first, contributing 15.6 per cent. The finance and insurance sector came in second, contributing 14.6 per cent, followed by manufacturing industries at 13.4 per cent, while the construction sector contributed 12.0 per cent, and real estate activities 7.4 per cent.

H.E. Bin Touq participates in the inaugural South African Tourism Investment Summit, calls for leveraging UAE's promising tourism investment opportunities

UAE's unique tourism development model highlighted alongside Africa's vast potential

H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy and Tourism, participated in a panel discussion titled 'G20 & WTTC Public and Private Investor Leaders' Dialogue,' held as part of the inaugural South African Tourism Investment Summit (SATIS 2025) in South Africa 2025. The session brought together several tourism ministers from Arab and African nations, government officials, and global tourism industry leaders, alongside senior representatives from leading global travel and tourism companies.

The panel discussed opportunities to enhance public-private sector collaboration across various tourism fields, highlighting shared priorities for advancing and expanding the industry at both African and global levels. Discussions covered digital innovation, sustainability, stimulating local and foreign investments, and exchanged insights on mechanisms to deliver unique travel experiences across Africa's diverse destinations.

H.E. Bin Touq emphasized that, thanks to the guidance of its wise leadership, the UAE has succeeded in establishing a unique model for the development of tourism policies and infrastructure in line with global best practices. He explained that the country has adopted several initiatives and strategies to drive the sector's growth, strengthen its competitiveness regionally and globally, channel investments into various tourism fields, and establish world-class tourism projects across all emirates. These efforts include the launch of new airports, expansion of airline networks in collaboration with global strategic partners, enhancing domestic connectivity, and the delivery of high-quality tourism services - all of which have consolidated the UAE's position as a leading global tourism destination.

Speaking at the session, His Excellency said: "The UAE continues to strengthen its presence in Africa as a key development partner by supporting sustainable tourism projects and forging strategic partnerships that create jobs, drive economic growth, and foster cultural, economic, and tourism cooperation across continents - reflecting its commitment to driving sustainable development at regional and global levels."

His Excellency added: "Tourism is one of Africa's most vital sectors, contributing significantly to the continent's economic growth. Africa enjoys rich and diverse tourism resources, including coastal resorts, pristine beaches, and cultural and historical heritage sites. These assets present abundant opportunities for investors and business leaders from both public and private sectors to enter African markets and invest in its diverse tourism activities."

H.E. added: "The impact of tourism investment extends well beyond its contribution to GDP. Its true value lies in empowering local communities through job creation, building national talents, and advancing sustainability initiatives." He stressed that international collaboration, particularly within the G20 framework, remains vital for fostering a more inclusive and resilient global tourism sector capable of adapting to economic and geopolitical shifts across regional and international landscapes. H.E. highlighted the UAE's most promising tourism investment opportunities, including the expansion of hospitality infrastructure, eco-tourism and sustainable tourism investments, particularly within the country's natural reserves, family entertainment projects, theme parks, and cultural centers.

The UAE market, he added, has strong potential for investments in tourism's digital transformation, through smart platforms and virtual experiences, in addition to strengthening the country's status as a premier destination for meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) tourism. Tourism investments have shown remarkable growth, rising from AED 28.8 billion in 2023 to AED 32.2 billion in 2024, with projections reaching AED 35.2 billion in 2025, a testament to the UAE's commitment to holistic and sustainable tourism development.

In this regard, H.E. urged investors to capitalize on the vast opportunities offered by the UAE's tourism destinations and resorts, as well as its flexible investment environment and streamlined procedures that make it easy for investors to set up businesses and launch diverse economic activities.

Furthermore, H.E. highlighted the remarkable performance of the UAE's tourism and travel sector in 2024, with its contribution to the GDP rising to AED 257.3 billion (USD 70.1 billion), accounting for 13 per cent of the national economy. This marks a 3.2 per cent increase compared to that of 2023, and an impressive 26 per cent surge from pre-pandemic levels in 2019 and one of the highest growth rates regionally and globally.

With regard to the UAE's efforts to strengthen international relations in the tourism sector, H.E. Bin Touq noted that the Ministry of Economy and Tourism has signed 38 Memoranda of Understanding and three executive work programs to foster international cooperation with leading tourism markets around the world. These agreements are focused on boosting tourism exchange, attracting investments to the sector, and sharing expertise in key areas such as training, vocational education, and tourism marketing.

Ministry of Economy and Tourism and Government Development Office launch the third edition of 'Future100' initiative

• Applications are open for the 2025 'Future100' list, recognizing the fastest-growing, most innovative companies in new economy sectors like space, edtech, and AI

• Interested projects can check eligibility and apply by visiting www.future100.ae

• Selected companies gain financing, market expansion support, and access to a global investor network

The Ministry of Economy and Tourism and The Government Development and the Future Office announced the launch of the third edition of the 'Future100' initiative, in the presence of H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy and Tourism; and H.E. Ohood Al Roumi, Minister of State for Government Development and the Future. The latest edition will, for the year 2025, honor the 100 fastest-growing and most innovative companies and projects in the new economy sectors, either headquartered in the UAE or conducting operations from it. To qualify for the list, these companies must successfully pass the evaluation process and meet the required conditions and standards. Applications are currently open through the initiative's website www.future100.ae.

H.E. Bin Touq said: "Thanks to the directives of its wise leadership, the UAE has made significant strides in transitioning toward a future economy driven by knowledge and innovation. The country has adopted forward-looking strategies and initiatives to support the growth of innovative projects and encourage the adoption of modern technologies across vital economic sectors. The launch of the third edition of the 'Future100' initiative affirms the continued commitment to national efforts and collaboration in this regard. It aims to enhance the competitiveness of the entrepreneurial environment, solidifying the UAE's position as an attractive destination for future projects and a leading hub for creativity and innovation."

His Excellency added: "The initiative aims to provide all the opportunities and support that talents and entrepreneurial projects need to develop successful ideas and expand into new economy sectors. It facilitates effective dialogue with a broad network of investment funds and global investors. Additionally, it enables talents to stay informed about the latest practices and trends in financing mechanisms for small and medium enterprises."

Her Excellency Ohood bint Khalfan Al Roumi, Minister of State for Government Development and the Future, emphasized that the UAE continues to strengthen its position as a global platform for developing government work methodologies and shaping the future. This progress is driven by the vision of its proactive leadership and a comprehensive innovation ecosystem that nurtures talents and ideas, transforming them into pioneering economic solutions. She noted that empowering startups is key to the future development framework and ensuring full readiness to navigate global market shifts.

Her Excellency added that the 'Future100' list for the year 2025 goes beyond highlighting inspiring national success stories. It serves as a strategic tool to empower entrepreneurs who possess the passion and ability to drive change. This contributes to supporting efforts to diversify the economy while enhancing its flexibility and readiness for the future.

Now in its third edition, the initiative is accepting nominations from companies and projects operating in new economy sectors. These include advanced industries, agri-tech, biotechnology, creative industries, cybersecurity, edtech, food technology, fintech, health technology, HR technology, smart mobility, legal tech, property technology, renewable energy, space, and other fields related to sustainability and the environment.

The Future100 initiative continues to strengthen its ecosystem through strategic partnerships across multiple sectors. With 38 partners now on board, the program has built an impressive network spanning government entities, innovation funds, technology firms, financial and banking institutions, business accelerators and incubators, and venture capital funds. Key partners include strategic ally Majra-National CSR Fund; the business accelerator partners at Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development; the Dubai Future District Fund; Emirates NBD; the Mohammed bin Rashid Innovation Fund; Investopia; Microsoft; MEVP; Careem; EY; Eurasia Capital; In5; Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence; FTI Consulting; and the DIFC Innovation Hub.

Companies that make it to the 'Future100' list for 2025 will enjoy a range of competitive advantages. Beyond receiving the initiative›s coveted brand recognition, selected companies will gain access to funding opportunities, market expansion support, specialized workforce development training programs, and a suite of services designed to accelerate growth. The program also offers exclusive participation in international trade missions, providing invaluable exposure to regional and global investor networks and capital markets.

Ministry of Economy and Tourism organises second Zero Bureaucracy Forum highlighting efforts to advance digital services ecosystem and enhance efficiency

- **Forum witnesses extensive participation from federal and local government entities and ministries**
- **H.E. Bin Touq: "The UAE has embraced a comprehensive vision for advancing government services under the Zero Government Bureaucracy Programme."**

The Ministry of Economy and Tourism organized the second Zero Bureaucracy Forum in Dubai, showcasing its efforts to advance the digital services ecosystem and improve operational efficiency through the integration of advanced technologies and artificial intelligence (AI). The Ministry also seeks to simplify procedures for business owners and individuals and strengthen communication with public and private sector partners to achieve the objectives of the Zero Government Bureaucracy Programme. The event was attended by H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy and Tourism; and H.E. Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Foreign Trade.

Extensive participation from federal and local government entities and ministries

The forum witnessed extensive participation from representatives of ministries and federal and local entities in the country, including H.E. Mohamed Bin Taliah, Chief of Government Services in the UAE Government; H.E. Eng. Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Muwaiji, Chairman of the Ajman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI); H.E. Badreya Al Maidoor, Assistant Undersecretary of Support Services Sector at the Ministry of Economy and Tourism; H.E. Marwan Al Zaabi, Assistant Undersecretary for Regions Sector at the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment; and H.E. Fatima Al Naqbi, Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Support Services Sector at the Ministry of Finance.

A proactive approach to reinforcing government services competitiveness

H.E. Bin Touq said that the launch of the Zero Government Bureaucracy Programme reflects the UAE government's comprehensive vision to shape the future and simplify the lives of citizens, residents, and visitors. This is being achieved through the development of advanced government services and a national competitive model that delivers simpler, faster, and more efficient procedures by global standards. These efforts support the growth of economic sectors, create a dynamic business environment, and enhance the quality of life across society.

Streamlining procedures for conducting business

H.E. said: "The Ministry of Economy and Tourism has made significant progress in achieving the objectives of this leading national programme. This has been realised through an integrated framework focused on delivering fast, user-friendly digital services, stimulating the business environment, supporting private sector growth, and boosting economic activity across the UAE. At the same time, we remain committed to removing unnecessary obstacles and procedures that may hinder business operations, ensuring the programme delivers a comprehensive and sustainable impact."

In his opening speech, H.E. added: "The Ministry was one of the first government entities to streamline procedures and facilitate services and transactions digitally, particularly during the pandemic in 2020. The Ministry took unprecedented steps to advance full digital transformation, guided by a comprehensive vision for the shift to the digital sphere at that time. Just three years after the pandemic, all services became accessible through the Ministry's website and smart application, marking a significant move to reduce bureaucratic complexities and enhance the efficiency of various business and economic activities."

Building a unique government services ecosystem

H.E. continued: "Guided by the directives of our wise leadership, we are continuing our concerted efforts with a spirit of teamwork to make zero bureaucracy a national priority. This will enhance government performance and help deliver world›s best services marked by flexibility and competitiveness. It also aligns with the objectives of the 'We the UAE 2031' vision, which seeks to position the UAE as the most leading and distinctive nation by the next decade."

Mohamed bin Taliah: Zero digital bureaucracy and enhanced integration among government entities to streamline procedures

H.E. Eng. Mohamed bin Taliah, Chief of Government Services in the UAE Government, emphasised that the second phase of the Zero Bureaucracy Programme focuses on achieving zero digital bureaucracy, enhancing integration among government entities to streamline procedures, accelerate information exchange, and reduce routine in service delivery. He noted that the UAE Government continues to advance the zero-bureaucracy approach and drive innovation, placing people at the centre of policies, initiatives, projects, and services to ensure a sustainable quality of life and build a society that is better prepared and more adaptable for the future.

H.E. said that the second Zero Bureaucracy Forum, organised by the Ministry of Economy and Tourism, reflects the government's commitment to sustaining the momentum in the development of innovative solutions as well as elevating and designing services according to the evolving needs of customers. This contributes to creating more seamless and efficient experiences, thus supporting the efforts to streamline procedures and ensure zero bureaucracy across different areas of work.

Updates on Zero Bureaucracy Programme

The forum featured presentations on digital services being developed and re-engineered by the Ministry of Economy and Tourism in the upcoming phase, aimed at enhancing beneficiaries' experiences. Discussions highlighted the latest updates on the Zero Bureaucracy Programme, its tangible achievements to date, and their role in strengthening the competitiveness of government services in the UAE. The forum also examined future visions and innovative practices designed to improve government service effectiveness and streamline procedures for citizens, residents, and visitors.

Launch of 'Excellence in Leadership' initiative

During the event, the Ministry of Economy and Tourism launched a new initiative in support of the Zero Bureaucracy Programme, titled "Excellence in Leadership." The initiative aligns with the Ministry's vision of placing people at the centre of its priorities and aims to enhance the quality of life for all citizens and residents in the UAE. It empowers individuals to fully leverage available opportunities while strengthening their capacity for productivity and creativity. The initiative also complements the second phase of the Zero Bureaucracy Programme, which focuses on individuals and institutions, particularly SMEs. Furthermore, it contributes to building a more prosperous and advanced society and underscores the UAE's commitment to supporting and empowering people across all aspects of life.

Graduation of new cohort in digital service design course

The forum also marked the graduation of a new cohort from the Digital Service Design Course, which equips participants with essential principles and fundamentals for designing innovative digital services. The course is based on the UAE Government's Government Services Development Methodology 2.0 and is designed to deliver seamless experiences that save time and effort for customers. Additionally, it contributes to preparing qualified national professionals capable of effectively supporting the UAE's zero-bureaucracy initiatives.

Investopia Global–Alberta launched to strengthen UAE–Canada partnerships in new economy sectors, aviation, food security, and clean energy

With the participation of more than 150 business and senior government leaders, investors, and decision-makers from both sides

H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy and Tourism and Chairman of Investopia, led the UAE delegation to Canada to participate in the latest edition of Investopia Global Talks, hosted by the Province of Alberta. The event was aimed at strengthening economic and investment partnerships and exploring collaboration opportunities in vital sectors including the new economy, clean energy, food security, artificial intelligence (AI), space, and advanced technologies in air transport and aviation, supporting sustainable economic growth and expanding UAE–Canada collaboration in future economy sectors.

H.E. Bin Touq reaffirmed that the UAE and Canada share strong and expanding economic relations, reinforced in recent years through high-level visits and bilateral engagements. These efforts reflect the mutual trust and shared aspirations of both leaderships to build on past achievements, enhance economic and investment cooperation, and forge impactful partnerships. They further underscore the pivotal role of both the government and private sectors in advancing sustainable growth and fostering economic innovation in the two countries.

H.E. further highlighted that the selection of Alberta to hold the first edition of Investopia Global Talks in Canada marks a major step in strengthening collaboration in energy, advanced technologies, tourism, aviation, and advanced space technology. This aligns with Investopia's vision to expand globally and connect the international investment community with new opportunities in the world's fastest-growing markets.

H.E. added: "Investopia Global-Alberta reflects the shared commitment of the UAE and Canada to developing diverse partnerships that advance sustainable development and economic innovation. The initiative comes at a time when bilateral economic relations are witnessing continued growth, as the number of Canadian business licenses in the UAE grew to reach 14,719 by the end of August 2025, compared to 12,374 in August 2024, reflecting a remarkable growth of 19 per cent. Additionally, Canadian commercial agencies in the UAE grew by 8.57 per cent during the same period, underscoring the attractiveness of the UAE's business and investment environment and reaffirming its growing status as a primary gateway for Canadian companies to expand into the region."

The Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta, said: «On behalf of all Albertans, I am thrilled to welcome partners and investors from the United Arab Emirates to our province for Canada's first-ever Investopia. Alberta and the United Arab Emirates have a lot in common, including significant strengths in energy, emissions reduction, technology, and more. Alberta also boasts a competitive tax environment, business-friendly policies, highly educated and skilled workforce, abundance of natural resources, and incentives to attract investment and accelerate growth in key sectors across our economy. For our partners in the United Arab Emirates looking to make investments that see returns – Alberta is the answer."

UAE and Canadian ministers discuss global economic shifts

H.E. Bin Touq took part in a ministerial session along with the Honourable Jean Charest, former Deputy Prime Minister of Canada and former Premier of Quebec; and the Honourable Joseph Schow, Minister of Jobs, Economy, Trade, and Immigration of Alberta.

The session explored key shifts in the global economy and the role of international cooperation in forging sustainable investment partnerships. It also highlighted prospects for integration between the innovation ecosystems of the UAE and Canada, and the importance of leveraging advanced technology, AI, and clean energy to support future growth.

During the session, H.E. Bin Touq reviewed the UAE's vision to strengthen its position as a global hub for the new economy, as well as the achievements of the national economy in recent years. H.E. also underscored that the UAE–Canada partnership, with its promising investment opportunities in energy, food security, and advanced technologies, represents a model of collaboration that keeps pace with global economic shifts, supporting sustainable economic growth in both countries.

Canada-UAE Business Council Roundtable

As part of the event, a roundtable meeting of the UAE–Canada Business Council was held in the presence of H.E. Bin Touq and several representatives from both public and private sectors in the UAE and Canada. The meeting explored ways to strengthen investment partnerships between the two sides and expand collaboration in new economy sectors. Discussions focused on facilitating investment flows and developing joint ventures that support sustainable growth, while empowering entrepreneurs from both countries to scale globally.

H.E. Bin Touq said: "The Canada-UAE Business Council serves as a strategic platform to deepen economic ties between the two countries and transform promising opportunities into investment partnerships. Through this open dialogue, we aim to explore avenues for cooperation and expand channels for the exchange of insights and ideas between business leaders in Canada and the UAE—delivering added value for our economies and reinforcing the two countries' role in driving the growth and sustainability of the global economy."

Investopia – Alberta brings together decision-makers and business leaders from UAE and Canada

The event featured a series of panel discussions that brought together decision-makers and business leaders from the UAE and Canada to address key priority topics aimed at strengthening bilateral cooperation. The first session, titled 'Energy Transition & Clean Tech: Investing in the Future of Energy' explored opportunities for collaboration in hydrogen and carbon capture and solar energy, in addition to innovative policies that support the transition to more sustainable energy systems, enhancing the economic competitiveness of both countries.

In the second session, 'Agriculture at a Crossroads: Alberta's Vision for Global Food Security', participants discussed ways to link UAE investments in climate-resilient food systems and smart agriculture with Canada's capabilities as a leading global source of food products. The session also highlighted key innovations in controlled-environment agriculture, sustainable irrigation, and AI-powered farming, paving the way for broader collaboration in this vital sector.

The third session, titled 'Artificial Intelligence, Automation & Digital Twins in Industry' focused on the growing role of these technologies in logistics, advanced manufacturing, and clean energy. Discussions explored opportunities for collaboration in developing regulatory frameworks and creating innovative financing mechanisms to support industrial transformation.

The fourth session, 'Capital Flows & Cross-Border Investment: Building the UAE–Canada Corridor,' addressed the importance of deepening investment ties between the two countries by strengthening the role of sovereign wealth funds and innovation hubs, and scaling up venture capital ecosystems. This, in turn, would enable Canadian businesses to access Gulf markets and open opportunities for UAE investments in Canada.

The final session, 'Airports of the Future: Co-Innovating the Next Era of Air Mobility,' explored opportunities for collaboration between Alberta's and the UAE's aviation sectors, including digital transformation of airports, drone system development, and the creation of more advanced and sustainable travel experiences.

During the event, Jay Sadiq, Founder and CEO of FortyGuard, delivered a presentation titled 'Smarter Cities, Cooler Futures: Innovation from the UAE,' emphasizing the role of urban climate intelligence in creating more sustainable and livable cities. He shared the story of FortyGuard's journey from a UAE-born startup to a global innovator, showcasing how its pioneering solutions are enhancing urban quality of life around the world.

The UAE delegation participating in the event included representatives from the public and private sectors. The event brought together over 150 business leaders, investors, entrepreneurs, and policymakers from the UAE and Canada. It was organized in partnership with the Government of Alberta and in collaboration with Edmonton Global, an international business development agency, and DMG Events.

Investopia – Alberta, the 19th edition of Investopia Global Talks, reflects the UAE's vision to reinforce its position as a globally attractive investment hub and connect with the world's fastest-growing markets. Since its inception, Investopia has welcomed over 16,000 participants from 71 countries and organized 18 global events in major cities, including New York, Geneva, London, Milan, Monaco, Rabat, Hong Kong, and Beijing.

Investopia Global launches first dialogue session in Hong Kong to highlight modern financing and investment trends and strengthen UAE companies' presence in Asia

• H.E. Bin Touq: 607 Hong Kong companies operate in the UAE markets as of the end of July 2025, with their number growing by more than 20 per cent compared to last year

• H.E. Mohamed Al Hawi: Event a key platform for expanding the scope of UAE's trade and investment cooperation with Hong Kong

Under the chairmanship of H.E. Mohamed Abdulrahman Al Hawi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Investment; and H.E. Paul Chan Mo-po, Financial Secretary of Hong Kong, Investopia launched its first Global Dialogues session in Hong Kong. The event shed light on modern global investment and finance trends and their role in enhancing the growth and sustainability of economies, in addition to exploring the means to strengthen the presence of UAE companies in Asian markets. Other key themes included the driving forces reshaping the global economy, the fastest-growing markets in Asia and the Middle East, and the impact of economic and geopolitical challenges on regional and international economic growth.

The event, organised by Investopia in partnership with HSBC bank and in cooperation with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), highlighted the importance of enhancing economic cooperation between the UAE and Hong Kong in sectors of new economy, tourism and travel, entrepreneurship, transport, technology and innovation, logistics, and financial services. It also focused on creating new opportunities for companies from both sides and supporting their expansion into foreign markets.

H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, UAE Minister of Economy and Tourism, said: “Economic and investment cooperation between the UAE and Hong Kong is witnessing continuous growth, within the broader framework of the thriving UAE-Chinese economic partnership, especially as the UAE is an important strategic gateway facilitating the expansion of Chinese and Asian companies into the Middle East and Africa. Our country’s strategic geographical location connecting East and West, its advanced infrastructure, its economic status as a leading global hub for business and investment, and its extensive network of economic and investment agreements with prominent regional and global markets are all factors supporting this growth. Consequently, the number of companies operating in the UAE exceeded 1.355 million by the end of the first half of 2025.”

H.E. Bin Touq added: “This event is an important opportunity to discover new investment pathways with our partners in Hong Kong and China at both government and private sector levels, and to develop diverse economic partnerships in areas of mutual interest, including the new economy. It also enables investors and businesspeople in the UAE to seize promising investment opportunities in Asian markets, building on the existing economic partnership between the two sides.” His Excellency explained that the number of companies from Hong Kong operating in the UAE markets reached 607 by the end of July 2025, up 20 per cent compared to the end of July last year.

H.E. Paul Chan Mo-po emphasised the importance of enhancing economic and trade partnerships between Hong Kong and the UAE and expanding areas of joint investment. This enhances cooperation opportunities between the business communities of both sides and cements their positions as key hubs for global economic growth.

H.E. Mohamed Abdulrahman Al Hawi said: “Investopia Global - Hong Kong is an important platform for expanding the scope of trade and investment cooperation between the UAE and Hong Kong, particularly in promising future sectors. The UAE remains committed to building strategic partnerships at both governmental and private sector levels, and expanding areas of knowledge exchange and best practices, which enhances innovation and supports sustainable economic growth."

"Asian markets represent one of the most promising economic destinations, characterised by their rapid growth potential and diverse investment opportunities. They present opportunities for increased mutual investments with the UAE and building long-term economic relationships that generate sustainable value," he added.

Dr. Jean Fares, CEO of Investopia, thanked HKSAR for hosting the latest Investopia Global Dialogues session, and HSBC for their cooperation in organising the high-level gathering. In his opening speech, he also outlined the key themes of this edition, which are, enhancing the economic partnership between the UAE and China in general, and with Hong Kong in particular, opening new horizons for cooperation and economic integration. The second theme addressed the rapid economic transformations regionally and internationally and the opportunities and challenges they present before nations around the world. The third theme highlighted investment and trade opportunities in promising economic sectors, foremost among them the new economy. The fourth theme focused on enhancing the presence of Emirati companies in Asian markets and enabling them to leverage the advantages to boost their global competitiveness. Finally, the fifth theme discussed investment and trade opportunities in promising economic sectors, particularly the new economy, as a fundamental pillar for sustainable growth and innovation.

Mohamed Al Marzooqi, Chief Executive Officer, HSBC Bank Middle East – UAE, said: "Investopia is important because it highlights the role of economic corridors in driving trade beyond geographical boundaries. The corridors connecting Asia and the UAE are no longer just about moving goods—they now enable flows of trade, capital, talents, and innovation. From securities services to digital trade and payments, HSBC helps its clients make the most of these exchanges. This is a real chance for economic corridors to turn connectivity into integrated and sustainable growth."

Alpha Lau, Director-General of Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK), said: "Invest Hong Kong's mission is to connect global companies with opportunities in Hong Kong and to facilitate investment. Both Hong Kong and the UAE are key hubs in the Belt and Road Initiative, each playing a unique yet complementary role as major international economic centers. With shared strengths in finance, technology, and entrepreneurship, there is strong potential to deepen collaboration in areas such as green finance, fintech, family offices, and cross-border investment. InvestHK is dedicated to supporting Emirati companies on their growth journey, providing the resources and expertise they need to succeed and thrive in this dynamic region."

Investopia Global – Hong Kong featured a series of panel discussions exploring the impact of global economic shifts on growth in Asia and the Middle East, while encouraging Emirati and Chinese business communities to forge new cross-border partnerships. The sessions highlighted inspiring stories of business leaders and companies that successfully transformed innovative ideas into pioneering economic ventures, showcasing the key strategies and factors behind their success in dynamic and fast-evolving economic environments like the UAE and Hong Kong.

The discussions highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration to expand innovation horizons and provide talents with all necessary resources, fostering an integrated business ecosystem that nurtures the next generation of startups on both sides. They also explored building strong partnerships between entrepreneurs, investors, incubators, and accelerators, while examining the latest global trends in finance, investment, technology, and entrepreneurship. The panelists explained how these developments can be leveraged to drive economic growth in emerging markets, in addition to effective strategies and mechanisms to navigate current geopolitical and economic challenges.

The sessions also delved into major transformations reshaping the global tourism sector, from immersive experiences to tech-driven travel, highlighting the significant opportunities these shifts present for premier destinations such as the UAE and Hong Kong. These developments allow such destinations to enhance their competitiveness both regionally and internationally, while offering tourists from around the world unique experiences that seamlessly combine culture, innovation, heritage, and advanced technology. The sessions also underscored the strengths of the financial markets in the UAE and Hong Kong - including advanced infrastructure, flexible regulatory frameworks, and strong investment expertise - and examined how these advantages can be leveraged to drive cross-border capital flows and make both financial ecosystems more attractive to quality investors.

Seven MoUs signed between government entities and private companies

During the event, seven memorandums of understanding (MoUs) were signed between representatives of government entities and private companies from both sides. These included an MoU between Investopia and Klickl; two MoUs between the Emirates Securities and Commodities Authority and its counterpart, the Securities & Futures Commission of Hong Kong; three MoUs between Abu Dhabi's global tech ecosystem Hub71 and three Hong Kong-based entrepreneurship, technology, and innovation institutions; and an MoU between P4ML and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Park. These agreements aim to strengthen collaboration in the fields of financial markets, investment, entrepreneurship, digital assets, research, innovation, and startups.

Investopia – Hong Kong, part of the 18th edition of Investopia global talks, was attended by an expanded UAE delegation, including senior officials from both federal and local governments, alongside representatives from the private sector. The event brought together more than 300 participants, comprising business leaders, investors, innovators, and policymakers from both sides. Key attendees included H.E. John Lee Ka-chiu, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region; Marwan Al Marri, Regional Director of Asia at Dubai Chambers; H.E. Salah Sharaf, Vice-President Sharaf Group; Rabea Ataya, Founder and CEO of Bayt.com; Adeeb Ahamed, Managing Director of Lulu Financial Group; Abdulla Habib Al Mulla, Owner and CEO of Home Bakery; and Stuart Oda, Founder of Alesca Technologies.

H.E. Bin Touq inspects tourism facilities, underscores human capital development in hospitality sector

As part of 'UAE Hospitality Summer Camp' that was recently launched by the Ministry of Economy and Tourism

Ministry of Economy News

His Excellency Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy and Tourism and Chairman of the UAE Tourism Council, conducted an inspection tour of prominent hotel establishments to assess the progress of the newly launched 'UAE Hospitality Summer Camp' program. The ministerial initiative, developed in partnership with leading private-sector tourism and hospitality operators, aims to cultivate national talent and enhance industry capabilities. During visits to The First Collection and Anantara The Palm hotels, H.E. reviewed the ongoing summer training initiatives and reaffirmed the government's commitment to promoting public-private sector collaboration in advancing the UAE's tourism sector.

During the tour, H.E. Bin Touq engaged with participating students, gaining firsthand insights into their immersive experiences in the hospitality working environment. He actively sought their feedback on the practical components of the program, evaluating how it contributed to their knowledge and skill development. In meetings with hotel management representatives, H.E. discussed innovative ways to enhance industry–academia collaboration, with a focus on expanding the initiative's reach and deepening its impact on the competencies of the UAE hospitality sector.

The Minister of Economy and Tourism emphasized that the tourism sector is a fundamental pillar of the national economy, receiving increasing attention under the wise leadership's vision of economic diversification and sustainable growth. His Excellency noted that the visit reflects the ministry's commitment to supporting tourism and hospitality establishments, while strengthening communication and cooperation with private-sector partners. This is achieved by fostering on-the-ground partnerships, monitoring the progress of initiatives, and assessing their impact on both national competencies and the sector as a whole.

H.E. Bin Touq said: "The UAE Summer Hospitality Camp is an innovative national program designed to cultivate future-ready talent for our thriving tourism industry. Through this hands-on initiative, we equip our youths with both the technical skills and practical knowledge needed to excel in this dynamic sector. Its immersive approach transforms students into capable professionals while supporting our nation's economic diversification goals. We deeply value our private-sector partners as indispensable allies in this endeavor; their active role in creating authentic training environments has been instrumental in bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world hospitality demands, ensuring participants gain meaningful experience that advances both their careers and the sector's continued growth."

H.E. reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to advancing similar training initiatives aimed at building an integrated system for human resource development in the tourism sector. These efforts align with the objectives of the National Tourism Strategy 2031, which seeks to drive sustainable growth and achieve sectoral excellence. Key priorities include enhancing tourism competencies, encouraging greater participation of national talent, preserving the UAE's unique tourism identity, and increasing the sector's contribution to GDP. Highlighting the strategic importance of investing in human capital, H.E. Bin Touq emphasized its critical role in ensuring the long-term sustainability and global competitiveness of the country's tourism industry.

The UAE Hospitality Summer Camp is designed to equip students of diverse ages and nationalities with hands-on experience in the hospitality sector through immersive training at leading tourism and hotel establishments. This year's edition has attracted over 500 participants from nearly 200 educational institutions across the country, in partnership with more than 40 premier hospitality service providers across the UAE.

The UAE's hospitality sector demonstrated robust growth in the first quarter of 2025, with hotel revenues surging to AED 13.5 billion, driven by an influx of over 8.4 million visitors - a 2 per cent increase compared to the same period in 2024. The sector also saw a strong demand for accommodations, with more than 29.3 million hotel nights booked and an impressive average occupancy rate of 81.3 per cent, underscoring the industry's sustained growth.

Shaikha Al Nowais meets with President of Congo to explore future partnerships in culture, tourism, and sustainable development

'Musical Villages Across Continents' initiative, set to officially launch in 2026, to establish creative community centers in Africa and Latin America

H.E. Shaikha Nasser Al Nowais, Secretary-General-elect of UN Tourism for the 2029–2026 term, met with H.E. Félix Tshisekedi, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, to discuss avenues for future cooperation between UN Tourism and the Congolese government in the areas of culture, tourism, and sustainable development. The meeting focused on strengthening partnerships to advance shared priorities, while addressing the challenges facing the cultural sector. Discussions also explored opportunities to elevate the Democratic Republic of Congo's status as a leading cultural and tourism hub in Africa.

Her Excellency also held a bilateral meeting with H.E. Yolande Elebe Ma Ndembo, Congolese Minister of Culture, Arts, and Heritage, during which both sides explored prospects for collaboration aimed at enhancing cultural infrastructure and developing public policies to safeguard intellectual property and promote the rights of artists. The meeting underscored the vital role of culture and tourism in rebuilding national identity and empowering local communities, highlighting the need for inclusive and forward-looking policies in both sectors.

World Music and Tourism Festival

The meetings took place on the sidelines of H.E. Shaikha Al Nowais's participation in the inaugural edition of the World Music and Tourism Festival, organised by the Congolese Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the UN Tourism in Kinshasa. The Festival's aim is to support sustainable cultural and tourism policies and highlight the role of music and the arts in promoting intercultural dialogue through diverse tourism and cultural activities.

Held under the theme "The Rumba Route for Peace," the Festival brought together prominent cultural leaders and tourism policymakers from around the globe, along with African artists and creative institutions. It featured live musical performances, high-level institutional dialogues, and field visits, serving as an unprecedented international platform that blends culture, tourism, and community development.

Significance of culture and music in creating tourism opportunities

H.E. Shaikha Al Nowais emphasized that music serves as a universal language that fosters understanding, tolerance, and solidarity among cultures. She underscored the vital role of investment in cultural and creative industries as powerful drivers of social and economic empowerment, particularly for youth. Her Excellency also noted that music transcends borders and reflects shared human values, making it a powerful tool for promoting cultural awareness and unlocking sustainable tourism opportunities across continents.

'Musical Villages Across Continents' initiative

During her participation in the festival, H.E. Shaikha Al Nowais announced an international initiative titled "Musical Villages Across Continents," set to officially launch in 2026. The initiative aims to establish creative community centres in both Africa and Latin America to nurture local musical talent, promote cultural exchange, and encourage the creative economy in both rural and urban communities, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Roundtable on tourism as a tool for cultural diplomacy

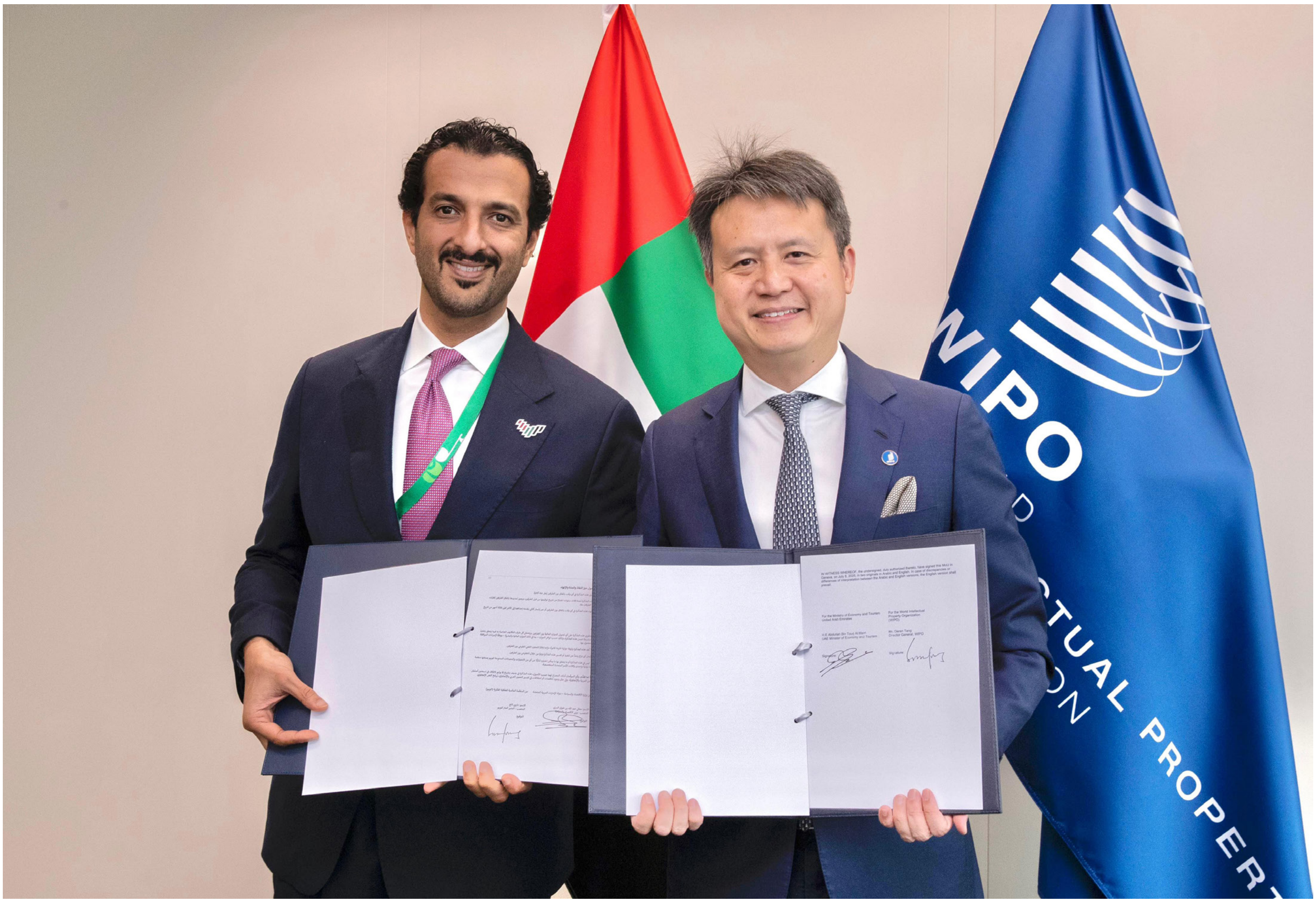
H.E. participated in a high-level roundtable discussion titled 'Transatlantic Rhythms for Peace: Advancing Advocacy and Policy Strategies for International Connections.' It brought together ministers and international policymakers from Africa, Latin America, and Asia to discuss the growing role of music tourism as a tool for cultural diplomacy, peace-building, and equitable development. Participants included H.E. M›pambia Musanga Didier, Minister of Tourism of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and H.E. Yussif Issaka Jajah, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts of the Republic of Ghana.

Visit to the Symphony Orchestra School

On the sidelines of her participation in the festival, H.E. Shaikha Al Nowais visited the Kimbanguist Symphony Orchestra School, where she met with young musicians and learned about the school's training and arts academic programs.

UAE signs MoU with WIPO to advance intellectual property ecosystem and strengthen policy integration across innovation, education, and industry

Ministry of Economy and Tourism continues its efforts to develop the national IP ecosystem through forging global partnerships



The Ministry of Economy and Tourism signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to strengthen cooperation in developing the UAE’s intellectual property ecosystem in line with global best practices, and to exchange expertise in national policy and legislative development. The MoU was signed on the sidelines of the UAE delegation’s participation in the 66th meeting of WIPO member states in Geneva.

H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy and Tourism, stated that the agreement with WIPO marks a significant step forward in enhancing the institutional framework of the UAE's IP ecosystem. He emphasized that it reflects the leadership's vision of establishing a comprehensive legislative and service environment that protects the rights of innovators and creators, and fosters a competitive, knowledge-based, and innovation-driven economy. H.E. added that collaboration with WIPO will accelerate the adoption of global tools and policies in digital transformation, capacity-building, and knowledge policy integration, further cementing the UAE's position as a global hub for the new economy and creative industries.

H.E. said: «Intellectual property is a key enabler of our country's knowledge-based economic model, fostering innovation and supporting entrepreneurship in scientific, technological, and cultural fields. Therefore, the Ministry of Economy and Tourism continues to enhance the UAE's IP ecosystem in line with international best practices. To this end, we are forging partnerships with our global partners and relevant global organisations and keeping pace with global technical and legislative developments in this regard, aligned with the objectives of ‹We the UAE 2031› to solidify the UAE's position as a global hub for the new economy.»

The agreement was signed by H.E. Bin Touq and Daren Tang, Director General of WIPO. Under the terms of the agreement, both parties will collaborate on supporting digital transformation, developing joint projects, and building institutional and human capacities. They will also strengthen policy integration across innovation, education, industry, and intellectual property through leveraging WIPO's expertise. A joint working group will be formed to follow up the implementation, assess progress, update the action plan, and share technical reports and information, thereby reinforcing the competitiveness of the UAE's innovation and creativity sectors at regional and global levels.

This collaboration reaffirms the UAE's position as a key partner in shaping the global intellectual property landscape and highlights its leading role in supporting initiatives that foster a resilient, innovation-driven, and technology-based economy, while safeguarding the intellectual property rights of creators and inventors across vital sectors.

UAE joins BRICS Memorandum of Understanding on Competition to enhance international cooperation in competition and combating monopolistic practices

Cooperation to facilitate the exchange of expertise and best practices in the enforcement of competition laws, fostering more transparent and dynamic markets

The UAE joined the BRICS Memorandum of Understanding on Competition during its participation in the meeting of BRICS competition authorities hosted by South Africa. The MoU aims to strengthen international cooperation in the field of competition, enhance mechanisms to combat monopolistic practices, facilitate the exchange of expertise and knowledge, and develop effective policies in this vital area.

The move is part of the UAE's ongoing efforts to cement its role as an active strategic partner in driving global growth. It also expands opportunities to forge advanced partnerships with counterparts in major economies and emerging markets, while supporting knowledge transfer and the development of national capabilities in the field of competition.

In this context, H.E. Safia Al Safi, Assistant Undersecretary for Control and Commercial Governance Sector at the Ministry of Economy and Tourism, emphasized that joining the Memorandum of Understanding, signed by the competition authorities of the BRICS countries, is an important step toward enhancing international cooperation in this vital field, facilitating the exchange of expertise and best practices in applying and enforcing competition laws, and fostering more transparent and dynamic markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development among nations.
H.E. Safia Al Safi explained that this move reflects the Ministry›s commitment to developing a business environment on the foundations of transparency and fair competitiveness, supporting the UAE›s position as a leading global destination for investment and business, and enhancing its contribution to shaping global economic policies.

Participation in BRICS Competition Conferences

The UAE participated in the 9th International BRICS Competition Conference 2025 and the 19th Annual Conference on Competition Law, Economics, and Policy, which drew extensive participation from heads and representatives of competition authorities from across member states, alongside a number of experts, specialists, and academics.

The UAE's participation underscores its commitment to strengthening its presence in international economic forums and supporting global efforts to develop competition policies and combat monopolistic practices. These efforts contribute to sustainable economic growth and enable the UAE to keep pace with transformations in the global economy.

The events featured extensive discussions on the most pressing economic challenges related to competition in BRICS countries. Participants examined the interplay between competition, sustainability, trade, and investment, and explored the implications of rapid developments in digital markets and AI technologies. Sessions also highlighted the need to develop legislation capable of keeping pace with these changes while ensuring fair competition.

UAE participates in the inaugural Global SME Ministerial Meeting in South Africa

H.E. Al Saleh highlights national initiatives and projects developed by the Ministry of Economy and Tourism to strengthen the country's position as a leading destination for SMEs

The UAE participated in the inaugural Global SME Ministerial Meeting, held in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa. The event was jointly organized by the UN-affiliated International Trade Centre (ITC) and South Africa's Department of Small Business Development. The UAE delegation was represented by H.E. Abdullah Ahmed Al Saleh, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Economy and Tourism.
The UAE's participation aimed to strengthen collaboration and knowledge exchange in key areas such as entrepreneurship, SMEs, the green economy, finance, and digital transformation. This aligns with the country's broader vision to enhance international partnerships and promote joint efforts with regional and global stakeholders to support SME growth, address sector challenges, and advance long-term sustainability.

In his speech, H.E. Abdullah Al Saleh stated: "Today, SMEs form the cornerstone of global economic growth, representing over 90 percent of companies worldwide. They play a vital role in creating job opportunities across all segments of society, driving economic diversification, and fostering innovation and creativity."

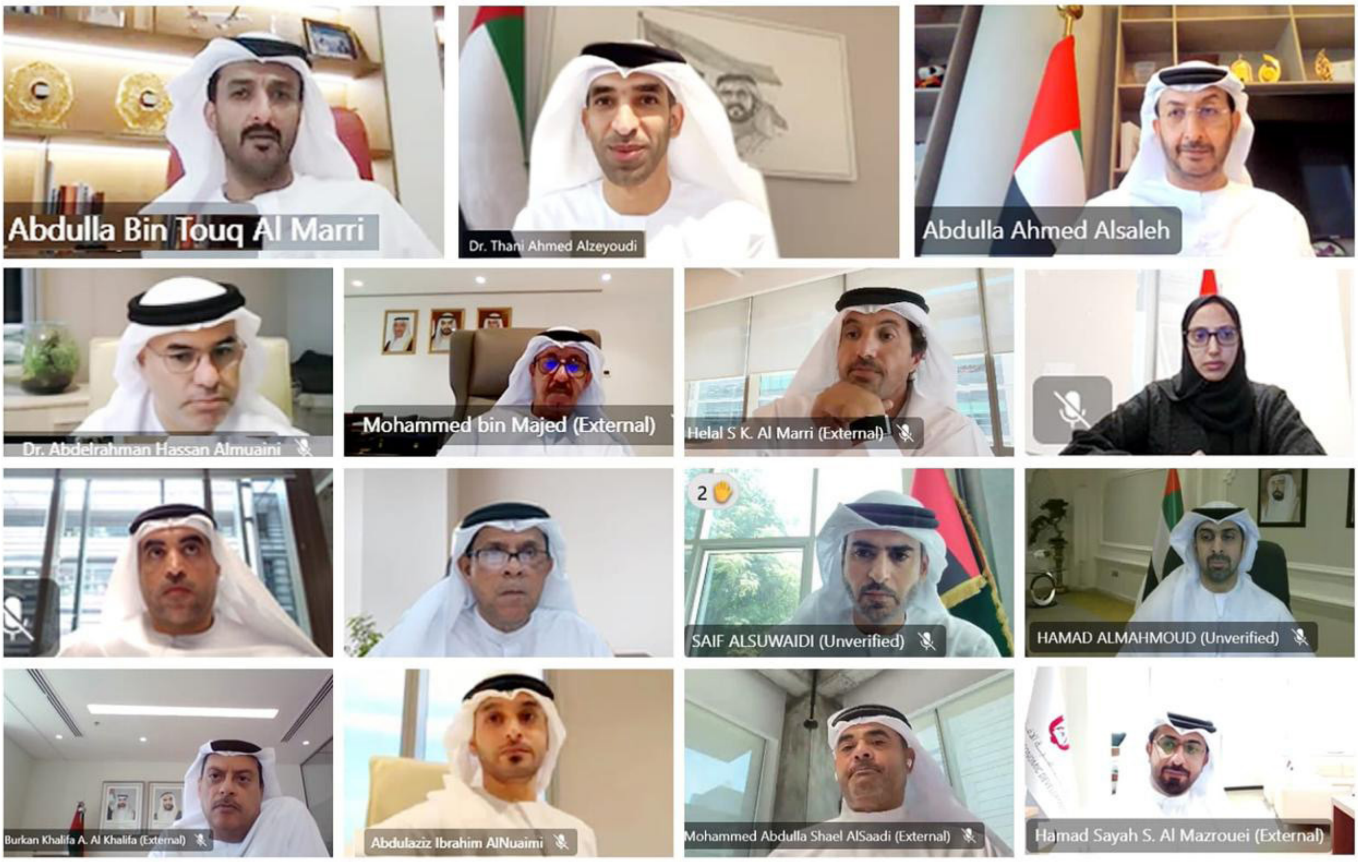
Furthermore, His Excellency emphasized that the meeting represents a new milestone in advancing discussions around economic policies and initiatives that support the growth and prosperity of SMEs. He noted the importance of developing effective solutions to the challenges SMEs face - particularly in accessing the financing required to scale their operations and ensure long-term sustainability. Addressing these issues, he said, calls for collective efforts to design practical, enabling frameworks that empower SMEs to grow and compete in both local and global markets.

H.E. Al Saleh added: "Guided by the vision of its wise leadership, the UAE has prioritised the development of a legislative and regulatory framework for SMEs in line with global best practices. Today, SMEs make up 95 per cent of businesses in the UAE and account for nearly 86 per cent of private sector employment. The UAE is home to more than 50 public and private incubators and accelerators, providing vital support to startups and entrepreneurs. Notably, the country ranked first globally for the fourth consecutive year in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2025/2024 report, reaffirming its position as the world's leading destination for entrepreneurship and SME activity among the 56 economies assessed.

His Excellency also highlighted the funding opportunities and enablers offered by the public and private sectors. They also provide SMEs across the UAE with access to training and financing.

Additionally, the Undersecretary reviewed national initiatives and projects developed by the Ministry of Economy and Tourism to enhance the competitiveness of the entrepreneurship environment and strengthen the UAE's position as a leading destination for SMEs. Among these initiatives are the launch of the national entrepreneurship framework, the 'Riyada' Fund, and The Entrepreneurial Nation digital platform, which has played a key role in connecting entrepreneurs with funding and training opportunities. In addition, the share of SMEs in federal government procurement tenders and contracts has been increased to 10 per cent, alongside the provision of technical and training support to enhance their ability to compete in such tenders.

The inaugural Global SME Ministerial Meeting attracted over 700 participants, including ministers, officials, private sector leaders, and entrepreneurs representing more than 60 countries. The discussions focused on ways to support and empower SMEs on a global scale.



Economic Integration Committee reviews digital integration of National Economic Register and strengthening of UAE's financial and legislative compliance framework

Removal from the European Parliament's high risk list reflects the effectiveness of UAE's regulatory systems and full compliance with international AML/CFT standards

The Economic Integration Committee held its fifth meeting of 2025, chaired by H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy and Tourism, along with H.E. Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade, and directors general of economic development departments from all seven emirates.

The meeting reviewed progress on enhancing the UAE's regulatory and legislative environment, including the digital integration of the National Economic Register (NER), strengthening compliance among registration authorities, advancing collective management of music copyright, and implementing priority initiatives to prepare for the 2027 FATF mutual evaluation.

H.E. Bin Touq emphasized that the Economic Integration Committee holds regular meetings to coordinate efforts and strengthen institutional integration among the UAE's economic entities. These efforts support the development of compliance and control tools, safeguard the nation's economic reputation and international standing, enhance competitiveness, and position the UAE as a global leader in proactive legislation for emerging economic sectors, in line with the 'We the UAE 2031' vision.

H.E. said: "The UAE achieved a significant milestone by being removed from the European Parliament's high-risk third country list, reflecting the efficiency of its regulatory ecosystem and its full adherence to the highest international standards of anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT). This achievement further strengthens the UAE's reputation as a trusted and reliable global economic hub."

H.E. added: "This achievement is the result of sustained institutional efforts by all federal and local entities, enhancing confidence in the national business environment, facilitating financial and commercial transactions with European institutions, and opening up greater partnership and investment opportunities with major global markets."

Enhancing digital integration of National Economic Register

The Committee reviewed progress on the full digital integration between local licensing authorities and the National Economic Register. A significant number of registrants across the UAE are already integrated, with accurate beneficial ownership data captured, including for complex structures in line with FATF requirements. The system has also been enhanced to cover additional legal arrangements and provide regulatory entities with real-time, accurate data access.

Development of the regulatory and legislative framework for music copyright
The meeting also reviewed progress on strengthening the regulatory framework for collective management of music copyrights, in cooperation with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). This includes establishing a national task force with representatives from economic, cultural, and media entities, and engaging with local economic development departments to incorporate compliance standards into licensing conditions, thereby protecting authors' rights and promoting fair-use practices.

The Committee further reaffirmed its commitment to monitoring national efforts to enhance the financial and legislative compliance framework. These efforts aim to foster a safe, transparent, and investment-friendly economic environment, support national entrepreneurship, and improve the UAE's standing in international indices, aligned with the 'We the UAE 2031' vision for global leadership in economic legislation.

UAE reaffirms commitment to expanding international partnerships to develop IP and support its contribution to innovation

During its participation in 66th Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the WIPO in Switzerland

H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy and Tourism, led the UAE delegation at the 66th series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The meetings commenced at the Organization's headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

H.E. Bin Touq emphasized that, under the visionary leadership of the UAE, the country has established a world-class intellectual property (IP) protection system, which serves as a cornerstone of its knowledge-based, innovation-driven economy. He highlighted the UAE's comprehensive strategy to modernize IP legislation and policies, ensuring robust frameworks for trademarks, creative works, and innovations that not only safeguard intellectual property but also actively promote its development and growth.

H.E. said: "Over recent years, the Ministry of Economy and Tourism has spearheaded strategic initiatives to foster innovation and safeguard creative ideas, most notably through our comprehensive national IP system. This pioneering framework streamlines procedures, accelerates service delivery across all IP applications, raises awareness about creators' rights protection, and delivers a seamless stakeholder experience in line with international best practices."

Furthermore, H.E. highlighted the launch of the Green IP initiative - a national program aimed at fast-tracking patent examinations for sustainable technologies, underscoring the UAE's commitment to circular economy principles and eco-innovation. He also emphasized ongoing efforts to develop domestic expertise, including the trademark registration agent accreditation program conducted in partnership with the Emirates Intellectual Property Association (EIPA). Additionally, H.E. announced a pioneering initiative to establish an intangible assets financing framework, creating a standardized IP valuation system to improve funding access and liquidity for selected SMEs and startups in the digital and technology sectors.

"The UAE has also introduced a pioneering collective license management system for music rights — a landmark regulatory advancement that brings structure to the entire music value chain, including composition, songwriting, performance, production, and publishing. The Emirates Music Rights Association was awarded the first license, followed by Music

Nation. This strategic move aims to foster the sector’s growth and develop a knowledge-based creative economy driven by innovation,” H.E. Bin Touq added.

In addition, H.E. Bin Touq highlighted the UAE’s launch of its first Geographical Indications system — a historic initiative that formally protects distinctive national products tied to specific regions in the country. The inaugural registration phase recognizes four iconic products embodying the UAE’s cultural and geographical identity: honey from the Hatta region; ceramics from the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah; Dabbas dates from the Al Dhafra region; and traditional palm frond products crafted across various emirates, reflecting the nation’s rich artisanal heritage.

His Excellency added: “We firmly believe that intellectual property serves as a fundamental catalyst for enhancing the UAE’s competitiveness and sustaining its long-term growth. Therefore, we are actively expanding our international partnerships by joining key global treaties and agreements related to intellectual property. Notable among these are the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration, the Budapest Treaty, which fosters a supportive research environment in the field of microorganisms, and the Strasbourg Agreement concerning the International Patent Classification. These steps have contributed to improving the efficiency of the national intellectual property system, expanding the scope of international protection it offers.”

His Excellency emphasized the importance of concluding negotiations on the adoption of the Protection of Broadcasting Organizations Treaty and the treaties on Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions, following the successful adoption of the Genetic Resources Treaty and the Riyadh Design Law Treaty. He reaffirmed the UAE’s full support for the organization’s ongoing efforts in this regard.

The UAE is actively considering the proposal to host an external office of WIPO in the country, in line with its status as a regional and global hub for innovation and technology. His Excellency further underscored the importance of advancing dialogue on the inclusion of the Arabic language within the Madrid System, as this would foster greater linguistic diversity and empower Arabic-speaking communities to fully access and benefit from the Organization’s services.

The Minister of Economy and Tourism concluded his remarks by reaffirming the UAE’s commitment to continuing constructive cooperation with the Organization and its member states to strengthen international IP protection, support the growth of creative economies around the world, and keep pace with the digital transformations in this vital sector.

UAE›s IP sector continues to achieve record-breaking results

His Excellency reviewed key indicators demonstrating the continued growth of the UAE’s national IP system. He highlighted that by the end of May 2025, the total number of registered national and international trademarks exceeded 385,774. In addition, registered IP works recorded a growth of 33.23 per cent during the first five months of this year compared to the same period in 2024.

In 2024, the Ministry recorded an increase in the total number of national and international trademark registration applications, which reached 33,874 from 31,288 in 2023, representing an 8 per cent growth. Furthermore, the number of registered trademarks nearly doubled during the same year, rising to 31,535 from 16,712 in 2023, achieving an impressive 89 per cent growth. Between January and May 2025, a total of 15,179 new trademarks were registered.

Regarding copyrights, the UAE recorded a 28.93 per cent increase in IP registrations in 2024, reaching a total of 2,763 IP works compared to 2,143 in 2023. This growth highlights the rising public awareness on the importance of protecting authors' rights, as well as the increasing confidence of creators and innovators in the country's legislative framework.

Recent indicators also show sustained growth in the industrial property sector, driven by enhanced legislations and streamlined procedures. The number of patent and utility certificate applications increased to 3,622 in 2024, compared to 3,415 in 2023, reflecting a 6 per cent growth. From January to May 2025, applications saw a further increase of 19.43 per cent compared to the same period in 2024.

As for industrial designs, the number of applications grew from 1,134 in 2023 to 1,252 in 2024, reflecting an annual growth of 10.41 per cent. The sector witnessed a remarkable 70 per cent surge in design applications during the first five months of 2025 compared to the same period last year, highlighting the UAE's attractive investment environment and the growing interest of companies and inventors in protecting their innovations.

Ministry of Economy & Tourism participates in “Women’s Economic Dialogue” in China to enhance the global presence of Emirati women

Event held as part of the UAE’s celebrations of Emirati Women’s Day 2025

As part of the UAE’s celebrations of Emirati Women’s Day 2025, held under the theme ‘Hand in Hand, We Celebrate 50 Years,’ the Ministry of Economy and Tourism took part in the ‘Women’s Economy Dialogue’ in Guangzhou, People’s Republic of China. The event was aimed at strengthening the global presence of Emirati women, highlighting their remarkable achievements, and fostering international partnerships between successful women leaders in the economic sector in both the UAE and China. These efforts align with the UAE wise leadership’s vision to support and empower women and to reinforce their role in shaping the future.

The UAE delegation participating in the event - organized by the Consulate General of the UAE in Guangzhou - was led by H.E. Badreya Al Maidoor, Assistant Undersecretary for the Support Services Sector at the Ministry of Economy and Tourism, and included H.E. Mariam Alshamsi, Consul General of the UAE in Guangzhou; Emirati entrepreneur Maryam Al Mansoori, General Manager of Rebound; as well as representatives from Sky River and Esaal.

H.E. Badreya Al Maidoor affirmed that the empowerment of women remains one of the UAE's strategic priorities, in line with the wise leadership's vision to support Emirati women and enhance their role in shaping the nation's economic future. She emphasized that since its founding, the UAE has adopted a pioneering approach to positioning women as active partners in the country's development journey, through supportive policies, legislation, and initiatives across both the public and private sectors - making women's participation in national development a key driver of the UAE's regional and global competitiveness.
Her Excellency said: "We take pride in the remarkable achievements of Emirati women across all sectors. Through this dialogue, we aim to expand cooperation with women entrepreneurs in China by fostering economic partnerships built on diversity and innovation, while sharing success stories that inspire the next generation of women leaders in both countries."

The event featured a series of panel discussions highlighting women's roles in vital sectors such as sustainable finance, investment, fintech, green building, and the localization of foreign companies in the UAE. Women leaders from both countries shared their professional experiences and the opportunities that empowered them.

The event marks a significant milestone in the UAE's ongoing efforts to reinforce the pioneering role of Emirati women in sustainable development, in line with the objectives of the "We the UAE 2031" vision and several other national goals.

Ministry of Economy and Tourism wins three awards at GOVMedia Conference 2025 in Singapore

Recognition for national initiatives in entrepreneurship, digital transformation, and streamlining government procedures

The UAE Ministry of Economy and Tourism won three prestigious awards at the GOVMedia Conference 2025 held in Singapore. The Ministry was recognized in the Trade and Industry category for three flagship national initiatives that embody the UAE's strategic vision to support the new economy, enhance government work systems, and accelerate digital transformation. The Ministry received the award for the Digital Initiative of the Year for the National Economic Register (NER) – Growth; Government Initiative of the Year for Future100; and Administrative Reform Program award for its efforts in enhancing services through the Zero Government Bureaucracy (ZGB) programme.

The Ministry emphasized that these achievements reflect the UAE's success in building a world-class work ecosystem across all economic and development sectors. The awards underscore the Ministry's efforts to foster innovation, empower entrepreneurs, enhance government performance, and strengthen digital governance in line with the goals of the 'We the UAE 2031' vision to establish the world's most advanced and competitive system in the coming decade.

National Economic Register (NER) – Growth

The Ministry received the Digital Initiative of the Year award in the Trade and Industry category for the National Economic Register – 'Growth,' a national platform that serves as a unified and reliable database of all commercial licenses held by establishments and companies across the seven emirates. The platform has streamlined procedures and unified requirements for business establishment and economic activities across the UAE under a single window, enhancing the economic impact of government initiatives.

The Growth platform leverages advanced technologies including artificial intelligence (AI) to analyse big data, provide accurate and reliable information, and offer proactive services to the country›s business community, including decision-makers, entrepreneurs, investors, and business owners. It enables users to access data and information on any commercial license in the country across more than 2,000 economic activities in the seven emirates. The register also features the national identity of Economic Registration Number (ERN), which is a unified digital reference for the national economy, enhancing the UAE's data-driven governance capabilities. This enables the design of programs that address the needs of entrepreneurs and investors, keep pace with the latest technologies in economic governance, and open new avenues for development in priority sectors.

Future100 initiative

Furthermore, the Ministry received the Government Initiative of the Year award for Future100, underscoring the initiative's role in empowering startups and promoting innovation in future economy sectors. The initiative supports the growth of 100 startups operating in future economy sectors every year by providing them with integrated support, assisting them in connecting with investors and expanding into global markets.

The initiative receives over 1,100 applications every year and has recorded a 30 per cent increase in participation by women entrepreneurs and citizens in 2024, highlighting its active role in promoting diversity and inclusion within the startup environment. The Future100 list is published annually and features fast-growing UAE-based startups that contribute to shaping the new economy.

Zero Government Bureaucracy (ZGB) Initiative

The Ministry of Economy and Tourism also received the Administrative Reform Program award for its efforts to enhance and accelerate service and transaction processing under the Zero Government Bureaucracy (ZGB) programme. Through this initiative, the Ministry successfully simplified and streamlined procedures for its wide range of services to entrepreneurs and investors. Notable achievements include redesigning 36 key government services, reducing required documents by 52 per cent, cutting transaction processing times by 70 - 50 per cent, and decreasing the number of fields in government forms by 64 per cent. These improvements have supported the development of new economy sectors, modernized government work systems, and accelerated digital transformation, reinforcing the UAE's business environment competitiveness both regionally and globally.

Launched in November 2023 by the UAE government, the Zero Government Bureaucracy (ZGB) programme aims to simplify procedures and eliminate unnecessary requirements, in line with the leadership's vision to create a pioneering future experience that enhances quality of life and fosters a business-friendly environment.

The GOVMedia Conference is an international, high-level platform that celebrates outstanding government initiatives and projects across the Asia-Pacific region. The Conference showcases exemplary experiences in advancing government performance and promoting a culture of innovation and excellence in public services.

UAE consolidates its position as the prime destination for major corporate headquarters in 2025

The UAE has solidified its position as a major destination for global companies seeking to set up regional or global headquarters, thanks to a sophisticated legislative system, advanced digital and financial infrastructure, and its geographic location linking Asian, African, and European markets.

In 2025, major corporations continued to expand and position themselves in the UAE, strengthening the country›s position as a leading global business platform.

Global economic reports released this year confirmed that the UAE is one of the most attractive markets for foreign direct investment. The country ranked second among emerging markets in the Kearney Foundation›s «FDI Confidence Index 2025» report, and was also ranked among the most competitive countries in the «World Competitiveness Yearbook 2025» issued by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD).

The year 2025 witnessed the announcement of several major companies establishing new headquarters in the UAE, or the completion of the process of relocating their headquarters, including PayPal, which in April 2025 opened its regional headquarters in Dubai, its first in the Middle East and Africa, serving more than 80 markets in the region and Veon, the Nasdaq-listed global telecommunications company, moved its global headquarters to Dubai, becoming one of the largest global companies headquartered in Dubai. Partners Group, a global private equity firm, opened a regional office in Abu Dhabi in June 2025.

Newcomers also included Bitcoin.com, which the Dubai Multi Commodities Centre announced had joined the DMCC Crypto Centre, and the American Fortress Investment Group, which announced in May 2025 the establishment of an office in Abu Dhabi to advance global strategy.

The UAE's attractiveness is not limited to newly announced ventures as many of the world's largest and most renowned companies had already chosen the country as their regional base, including Meta, Google, Oracle, Microsoft, Amazon, Cisco, Visa, Mastercard, and many more.

Mohamed Karam, Regional Manager at InSinkErator – a Whirlpool company, affirmed that the UAE has solidified its position as a preferred investment destination for multinational companies, thanks to its dynamic and advanced business environment marked by flexibility and high competitiveness.

He explained that the forward-looking economic policies of the UAE's wise leadership, combined with advanced infrastructure and investment-friendly legislation, have made the country a global hub for companies seeking sustainable growth opportunities in the region.

He added that the UAE market is a strategic platform for innovation and expansion, providing an ideal climate for business development and fostering long-term partnerships. He also highlighted that the UAE's commitment to sustainability and the transition toward a circular economy adds further appeal for companies operating in technology, industry, and services.

Karam said the UAE will remain a key player on the global investment map, due to its ability to combine innovation with promising opportunities, thereby strengthening investor confidence and confirming its position as an ideal destination for business.

Meanwhile, Vinay Surana, Regional CEO for Asia-Pacific, Middle East, and Africa at Allianz Partners, said the UAE market is distinguished by economic strength and advanced infrastructure, enabling it to create an integrated environment that values people while embracing innovation.

He stated that the UAE provides multinational companies with ideal growth opportunities, supported by a comprehensive system of investment-friendly legislation, digital innovation, and high-quality services that help businesses deliver true added value to their customers.

Similarly, Hasan Onder, President of Daikin Middle East, Turkey, and Africa, emphasised that the UAE has become one of the most attractive global investment destinations, thanks to its outstanding business environment that combines flexibility, innovation, and advanced infrastructure.

He said that the UAE's open economic policies and advanced regulations enhance the confidence of global companies seeking expansion in the region. The country not only offers a promising market but also serves as a strategic platform for expansion into the Middle East and Africa.

Onder stressed that what distinguishes the UAE market is its ability to combine rapid economic growth with the adoption of the latest technologies, making it a preferred destination for global companies looking for long-term opportunities.

UAE airports surpass 1 billion passengers in 10 years

H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy and Tourism and Chairman of the General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA), attributed the exceptional achievements of the civil aviation sector over the past decade to the success of national strategies and initiatives adopted under the wise leadership's guidance. He noted that the sector continues to shape the future while delivering significant accomplishments.

He added that these outcomes reinforce the UAE's standing on the global aviation and travel map, underlining the sector's active role in driving national economic growth and competitiveness. They also highlight the country's pioneering model in building a more efficient and sustainable aviation system, integrating technological innovations with the highest standards of safety and service quality.

According to the Centre's data, passenger traffic across UAE airports rose from 114.8 million in 2015 to 147.8 million in 2024. Total passenger numbers, including arrivals, departures and transit travellers, exceeded one billion between 2015 and 2024.

Aircraft movements also grew, reaching more than 800,000 by the end of 2024, bringing the total number of arriving and departing flights during the decade to over 6.4 million.

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