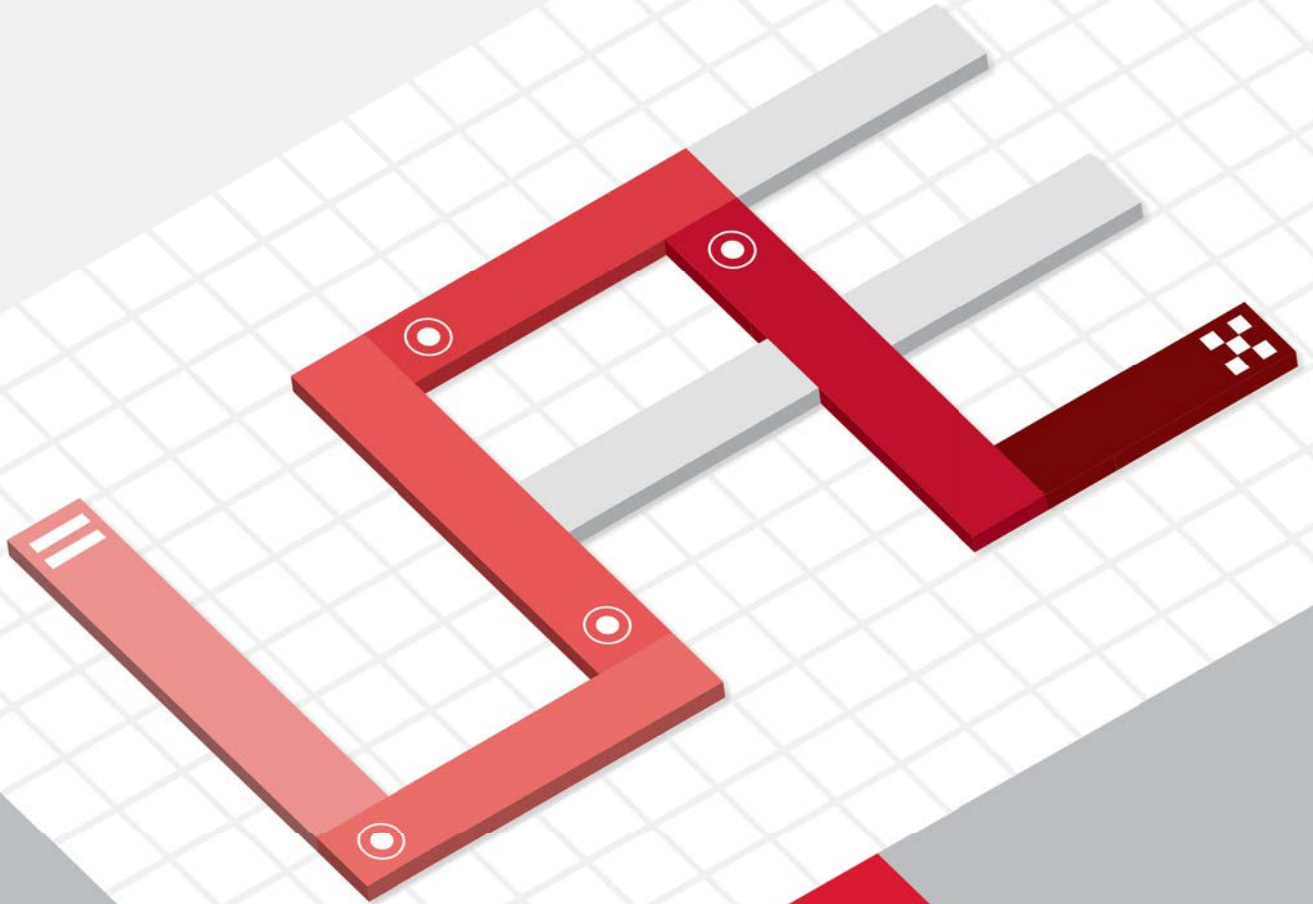


UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY



الإمارات العربية المتحدة  
وزارة الاقتصاد



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

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# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

FIRST EDITION- 2018

**UAE Ministry of Economy**

Foreign Trade Sector  
Investment Department

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## FOREWORD



H.E. Eng. Sultan bin Saeed AlMansouri  
Minister of Economy

The UAE's eloquence in creating thriving businesses and productive investment opportunities takes its roots from our own development success and learning feats. At the helm of these advancements - achieved in just four decades - is the UAE leadership's ever-cognizant anticipation of the needs and dynamics of the future world, with the UAE recognized as one of the world's best, and certainly one of the most inspirational models and leaders, including in the areas of economics, trade and investment.

Consistent throughout this endeavor is the emphasis put forward towards the pre-requisite to maintain a truly inclusive ecosystem, where all members of our society are empowered with opportunities and equipped with knowledge-based tools to be able to optimally contribute to our nation's aspirations.

Guided by such reliable principle, I would like to welcome you to the first edition of the Investor Pathway, a collection of information tailored to assist investors with useful insights, featuring promising sectors of investment opportunities, while also describing the lifecycle of establishing a business in the UAE. We highlight in this edition the unique potentials in every sector and how investments can grow to create meaningful change. Global institutions have reviewed and assessed our capabilities, ranking us among the most promising homes for investments.

We urge you to take a closer look and see how partnering with us can make a world of difference.

Produced by the Investment Department of the UAE Ministry of Economy, this report complements the efforts of each of the seven Emirates of the UAE. Their well-thought-out development strategies continue to enrich our nation's already fertile business environment, attracting investors and entrepreneurs - both domestic and foreign - to invest in the UAE.

The UAE's remarkable resilience amidst global challenges is anchored on our commitment to ensure holistic growth, widening our sectors to include clean energy, real estate, tourism, aviation, manufacturing, technology, retail and leisure, among many others. The Investor Pathway provides ample opportunities to further explore these key areas.

Our programs and policies are governed by a broad vision and determination of our wise leaders to ensure that UAE ranks among the best and leading investment haven in the world.

On behalf of the UAE Government, I encourage innovators, investors and entrepreneurs to join the UAE as we navigate towards our future-centric journey beaming with auspicious economic growth forecasts.

## INTRODUCTION

Ranked number 21st, out of 190 nations, by the World Bank's 2018 Ease of Doing Business, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has made its name in the global investment landscape as an ideal business destination.<sup>1</sup> At the forefront of this recognition – alongside the nation's strong economy and thriving investment opportunities – is the supportive ambience of the UAE's business regulatory environment. Every UAE government entity provides a reliable and comprehensive assistance to investors from across the globe, as they venture into rewarding business undertakings in the UAE.

Along these lines, the UAE government pledged to continually enhance the UAE's competitive advantage to investors, including by offering transparency in business information.

Through this report, **Investor Pathway: To Successful Investment Opportunities in the UAE**, the Investment Department of the Ministry of Economy, mandated to primarily oversee the achievement of the UAE's goal to stimulate investments across the seven Emirates in the UAE, from both local and foreign investors, aims to complement the already rich business information and references made available by a network of UAE government entities of the seven Emirates.

With a special focus on how to navigate a promising investment journey in the UAE, the report is divided into four distinct sections:

### SECTION 1

Illustrates the roadmap to doing business in the UAE – identifying the most fundamental processes, with emphasis on the first few stages of the business lifecycle.

### SECTION 2

Lends a snapshot of the UAE investment landscape, per Emirate. It discusses thriving investment opportunities and projects, consistent with the development plans and strategies of the seven Emirates.

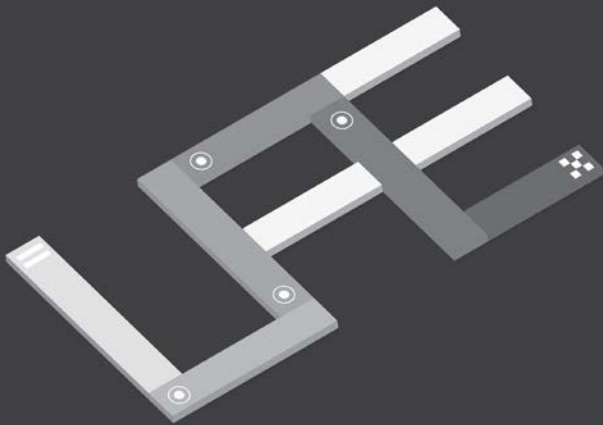
### SECTION 3

Provides an insight into the prevailing, relevant laws and regulations when operating a business in the UAE.

This section Introduces the relevant UAE Government entities, an integrated system enabling a thriving investment climate, while also functioning as an effective support mechanism for investors – domestic and foreign. It also features the network of UAE Free Zones and Ports, a proven magnet for international players, as well as SMEs, in the global economic landscape.

# Section 01

## GUIDE TO INVESTING IN THE UAE



As investing in the UAE is a national priority, the UAE Government has a well-established set of procedures to offer a steady stream of support to entrepreneurs, from deciding the structure of the business and type of investment, to securing the necessary licenses and permits.

This section provides a comprehensive set of guidelines designed to assist businesses and international investors navigate the UAE investment landscape, its applicable regulatory system, while also describing the procedural blueprint of planning, setting up, and running a business.<sup>2</sup>

*According to the World Bank, the time it takes to start a business in the UAE was eight days in 2016 – better than the 8.5 days in OECD high-income countries.*

*In most Emirates and in the UAE Free Zones, this has significantly improved: it takes just 5 minutes to get a Commercial License in Dubai.*

### INVESTING IN THE UAE

#### PLANNING



- Cost of setting up
- Business Structure

#### SETTING UP



- Key Steps
- Relevant Authorities and Centres

#### OPERATING



- Running a Business
- Relevant UAE Laws



## PLANNING AN INVESTMENT IN THE UAE

Investors need to consider a number of things before entering the UAE market. These mainly include:

### COST OF SETTING UP A BUSINESS

- Capital investment the business requires
- Business license fees
- Employee visas

### BUSINESS STRUCTURE

- Nationality of partners for a business in the mainland
- Location of business

## COST OF SETTING UP A BUSINESS

Cost of setting up a business in the UAE is largely determined by three factors:

### 1. CAPITAL INVESTMENT THE BUSINESS REQUIRES

#### MAINLAND

The capital requirements vary according to the legal form of the company as follows:

- Public Shareholding Company: The capital must not be less than AED 30,000,000.
- Private Shareholding Company: with a capital of at least AED 5,000,000.
- For other types of companies, the UAE Companies Law did not specify a minimum capital.

#### FREE ZONE

Depending on the type of business the capital requirement is specified.

Some free zone areas require no minimum capital requirement, while others require up to USD 272,480 (AED 1,000,000).

For further information on the minimum capital requirement:

- [The Federal Law No. 2 of 2015, On Commercial Companies](#)
- [The UAE Free Zones website](#)

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## 2. BUSINESS LICENSE FEES

- Trade name registration fee
- Business / Trade license fee
- Local Service Agent<sup>3</sup> (LSA) fee (if applicable)

## 3. EMPLOYEE VISA FEES

- Entry Permit fee (for prospective employee outside the UAE; to be converted to Residence Permit within 30 days of entry to the UAE)
- Residence Permit fee (for all employees, regardless of nationality)
- For updated information on visa fees, visit the [Ministry of Interior website](#).

### Important Notes

The UAE offers legal advice about business regulations and licensing, through 1) the UAE Ministry of Economy, 2) Emirate-level Department of Economic Development, and 3) UAE Free Zone entities.

For more information, as example, please visit:

- Abu Dhabi Digital Government website - [Business Startup and Operationalisation](#),
- Government of Dubai website - [Cost of setting up in Dubai](#).
- Dubai Department of Economic Development website - [Start your business in Dubai](#).
- Ajman Department of Economic Development website - [New license estimation costs](#)

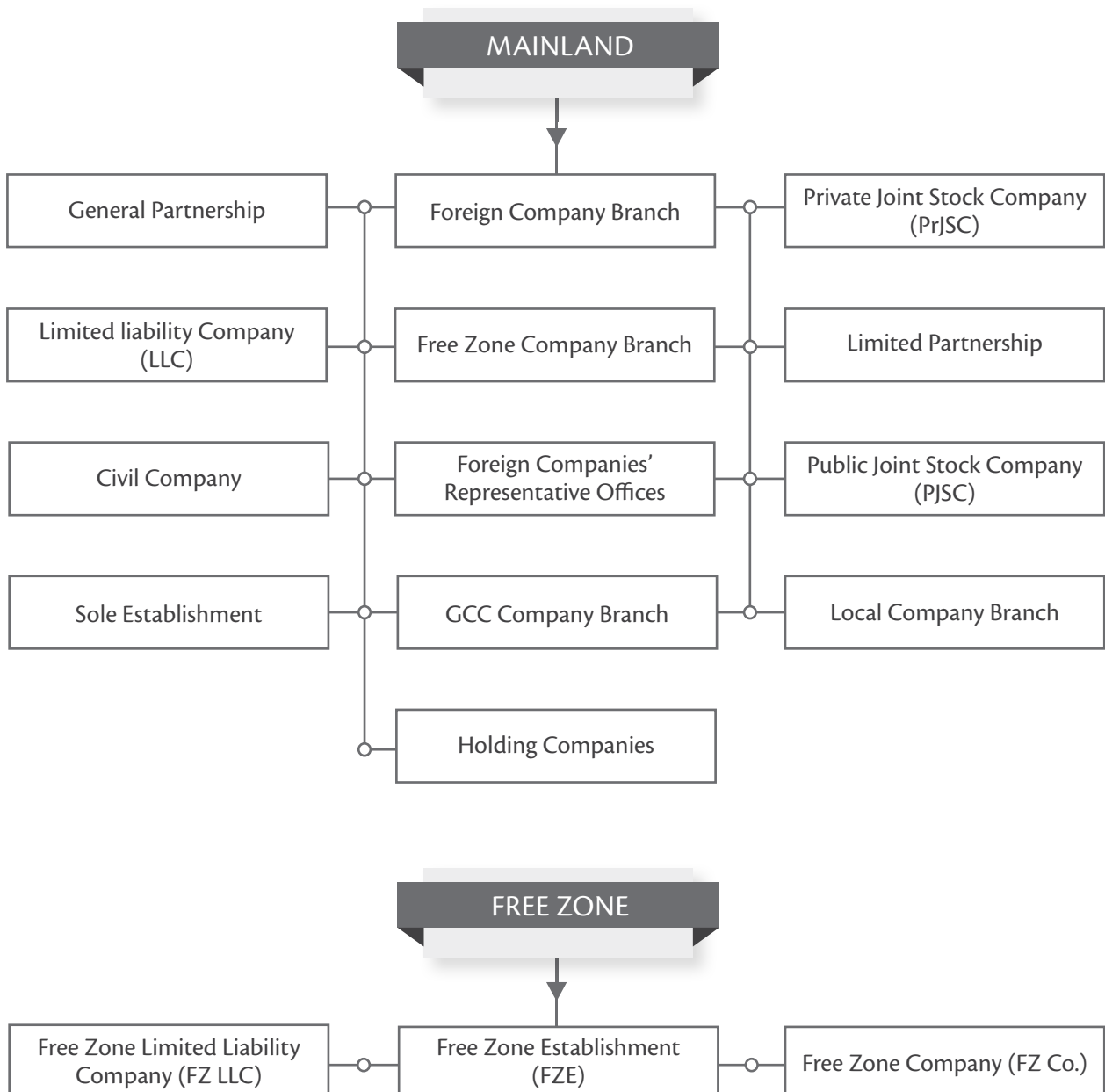


## BUSINESS STRUCTURE

The UAE welcomes investors to set up business on the mainland areas of the seven Emirates, and in any of the Free Zones. However, some types of business structure (also referred to as Legal Form of Business) come with certain requirements, such as UAE national sponsorship.

The illustration below offers a general overview of the types of business structure recognized in the mainland, and in the Free Zones.<sup>4</sup>

Legal Forms of Businesses in the UAE, and their respective location of business:



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## NATIONALITY OF PARTNERS FOR A BUSINESS IN THE MAINLAND

The nationality of partners is important to determine what type of business structure could be set up on the mainland.<sup>5</sup>

### 1. OPEN TO FOREIGN INVESTORS

All types of Business Structure, except those listed under item 4, and requires a UAE National as a sponsor, either:

**A** A representative office.

**B** Simple commandite companies.

GCC Nationals can be a partner in any form of business except:

**A** A partner with at least 51% ownership\* of the business, or

**B** A local service agent (LSA), with the investor having 100% ownership of the business.

\* The new UAE Investment Law, when it comes into effect, will offer more flexibility and benefits to investors.

### 2. REQUIRES A UAE NATIONAL PARTNER

- Limited Liability Companies (LLCs)
- Public Joint Stock Companies (PJSC; must have at least 5 founding members who are UAE nationals, owning between 30% - 70% of the capital shares)
- Private Joint Stock Companies (PrJSC)
- Civil Companies (with activities such as Professional Businesses in recognized fields such as Medicine, Law, Engineering, and Accountancy)

### 3. REQUIRES LOCAL SERVICE AGENT

- A professional type sole establishment
- Other types of civil companies (those not covered under Point 2 above requiring a UAE National Partner) Foreign Company Branch
- Foreign Company Branch

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

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## 4. CAN ONLY BE SET-UP BY A UAE NATIONAL

- General Partnership
- Limited Partnership
- An industrial or commercial type sole proprietorship
- License for home-based businesses
- SME license

### Important Notes

For more information, refer to:

- [Forms of ownership and legal requirements](#) - Abu Dhabi eGovernment portal
- [Select the legal forms of companies](#) - Dubai's Department of Economic Development
- [Permitted company types](#) - Sharjah Investment and Development Authority - Shurooq

## LOCATION OF BUSINESS

Foreign investors operate their business from the UAE mainland or in any of the Free Zones, or both, depending on their business needs. Below are some advantages and differences of setting up a business on the mainland, or in a Free Zone in the UAE:

### MAINLAND

- Flexibility to do business in any part of the UAE
- No limit on number of visas
- More business activities available for licensing
- No personal income tax
- No corporate tax (except for oil companies and foreign banks)
- Requires a UAE National as a partner, or LSA
- 100% ownership of enterprise, if an LSA is contracted

### FREE ZONE

- 100% ownership of enterprise
- 100% import and export tax exemptions
- 100% repatriation of capital and profits
- No corporate tax
- No personal income tax
- No import/export tax
- Easy start-up and licensing procedures.
- Often located in areas strategically located to offer advantages for trade, around sea/airport.
- UAE national sponsorship, LSA requirement waived

### Important Notes

For more information, refer to:

- [Merchandise prohibited to enter Free Zone](#) - Abu Dhabi Customs
- [UAE Free Zone website](#)

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## RELEVANT AUTHORITIES AND AUTHORIZED SERVICE CENTERS

Key steps in setting up a business in the UAE are generally managed by the relevant Emirate's Department of Economic Development. For ease of doing business in the UAE, the following channels are provided:

### CHANNELS



#### Apply electronically

- DED e-services



#### Use an authorized law firm

- Legal Services providers



#### Use an authorized service center

- [TAS-HEEL](#)
- [On-time Government Services](#)



#### Apply in person

- DED Happiness Lounge and counters of all Emirates, Fujairah Municipality

### ENTITIES

The following entities oversee the issuance of the business/trade license:

- Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development
- Dubai Department of Economic Development
- Sharjah Department of Economic Development
- Ras Al Khaimah Department of Economic Development
- Ajman Department of Economic Development
- Umm Al Quwain Department of Economic Development
- Fujairah Municipality

#### Important Notes

- To set up a Private Joint Stock Company (PrJSC), approval of Ministry of Economy is needed before proceeding to Step 3.

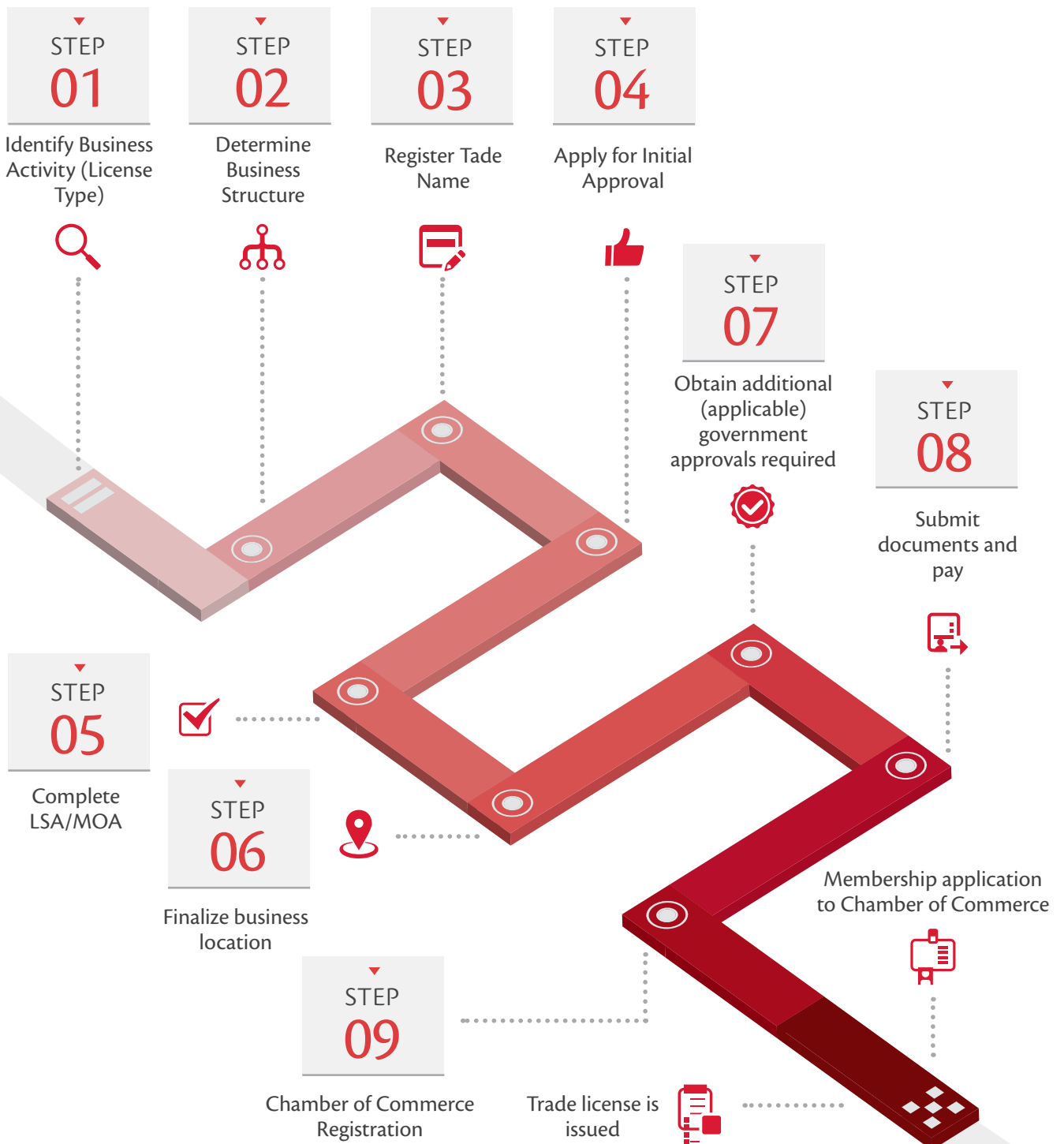
# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

YOUR NAVIGATOR TO INVEST IN THE UAE

## KEY STEPS

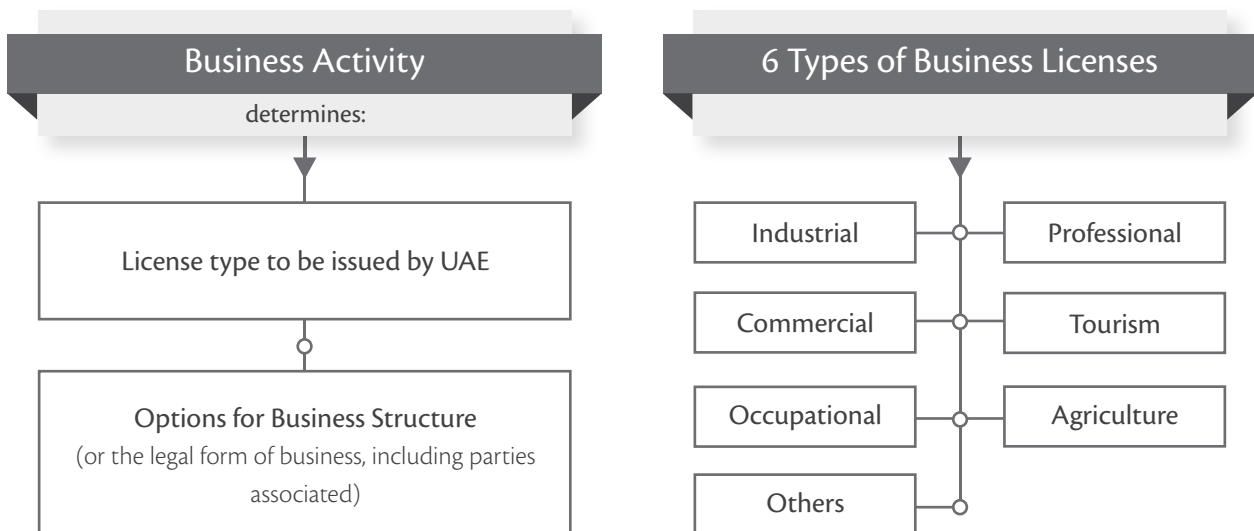
The key steps in setting up a business in the UAE are simple. These are:



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

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## 1. IDENTIFY BUSINESS ACTIVITY (LICENSE TYPE)



- An investment/business can have more than one business activity.
- There are >2,000 business activities to choose from the UAE list.<sup>6</sup>
- The business activities are grouped into six main categories, also called the 'type of business license'

### Important Notes

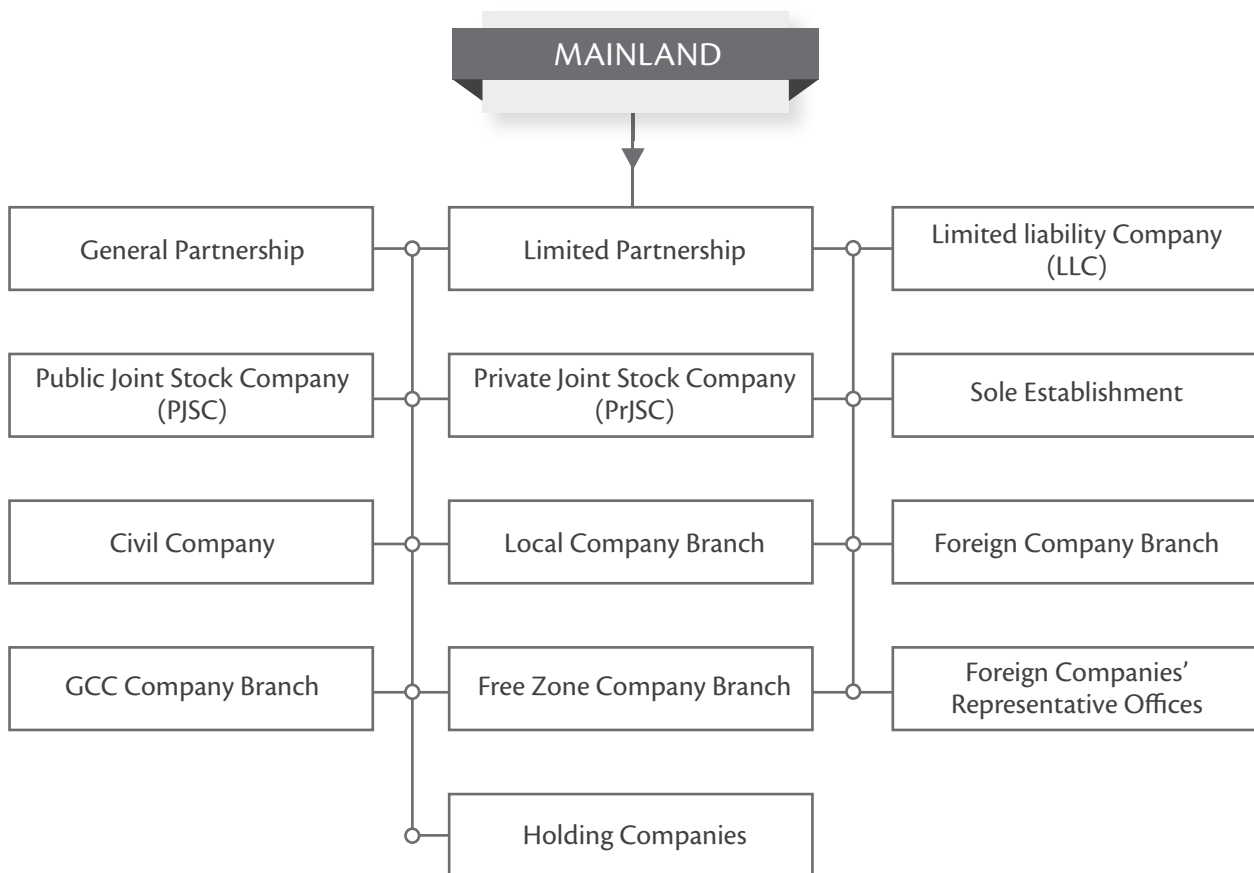
- For more information, refer to:
- [Procedures and fees manual](#) - The UAE Ministry of Economy
- [Starting a business in Abu Dhabi](#) - Abu Dhabi eGovernment Gateway
- [Opening a branch of a foreign company in Abu Dhabi](#) - Abu Dhabi eGovernment Gateway
- [Investing in Abu Dhabi's industrial sector](#) - Abu Dhabi eGovernment Gateway
- [Trade licenses guide](#) - Abu Dhabi Chamber
- [Abu Dhabi Business Center website](#)
- [Services' guide](#) - DED Abu Dhabi
- [Opening a business](#) - The official portal of Dubai Government
- [Managing and expanding your business](#) - The official portal of Dubai Government
- [Selling your business](#) - The official portal of Dubai Government
- [Register your business in Dubai](#) - DED Dubai
- [Process and requirements to start a business in Sharjah](#) - Sharjah Investment and Development Authority
- [Investor Guide](#) - Sharjah

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

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## 2. DETERMINE BUSINESS STRUCTURE

While a business structure is primarily based on the needs of the business, it will also determine applicable laws and regulations to adhere to.



### Important Notes

The Business Structure (or the Legal Form of Business) must match the business activity. For more information, please refer to: [UAE list of some Business activities and respective Business Structure](#)

For Definitions and requirements, per Business Structure, refer to UAE DED websites:

- [Abu Dhabi Chamber: Trade Licence Manual and Business startup and Operationalisation](#)
- [Dubai Department of Economic Development: Start Your Business in Dubai](#)
- [Sharjah Investment and Development Authority: Process and Requirements](#)
- [Ajman Department of Economic Development: FAQ - Issue Business License](#)
- [Ras AlKhaimah Department of Economic Development: Issuing Licences](#)
- [Umm Alquwain Chamber: Licensing Procedures](#)
- [Government of Fujairah: Doing Business in Fujairah](#)

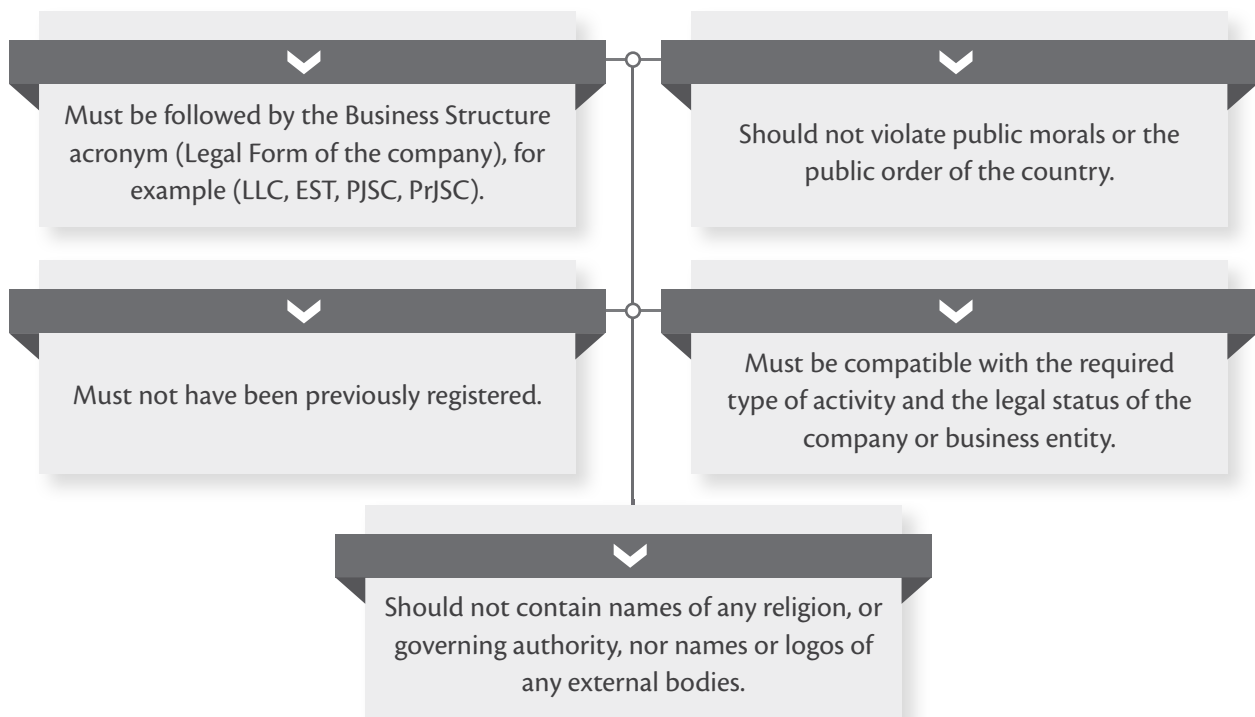
# INVESTOR PATHWAY

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## 3. REGISTER TRADE NAME



To register the name of your business (or its Trade Name), certain guidelines must be followed. In general, Trade Names:



### Important Notes

- The relevant Emirate's Department of Economic Development approves trade names. (The Municipality, in case of Fujairah).
- The Ministry of Economy approves trademarks.
- Trade name certificates are subject to renewal.
- Fees: Trade name reservation fee; additional fees are sometimes charged: for example, for trade names with special characters, regional references, cannot be translated in Arabic, etc.

### Useful Links

- [Registering the trade name](#) - Abu Dhabi portal
- [Trade name search](#) - Abu Dhabi Government portal
- [Search trade name](#) - DED-Dubai
- [Trade Name Guidelines](#) – DED Dubai
- [Trade name inquiry](#) – Sharjah DED
- [Trade name issuance](#) - Sharjah Economic Development Department
- [Search trade name](#) - DED Ras Al Khaimah
- [Search trade name](#) - DED Ajman
- [Umm Al Quwain Chamber](#)
- [Commercial Licensing Section](#) - Fujairah Municipality



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## 4. APPLY FOR INITIAL APPROVAL



An 'initial approval' means that the UAE Government has no objection for a business to be established in the country. It also allows the investor to proceed with the next steps to set up a business. It does not however grant the authority to run the business, or practice the business activity.

### Important Notes

- Foreign investors must obtain the approval of the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners' Affairs before getting the initial approval.
- To apply for an initial approval, external approvals of bodies governing the following activities are required:
  - Legal Department-related activities
  - Securities and Commodities Authority-related activities

### Useful links:

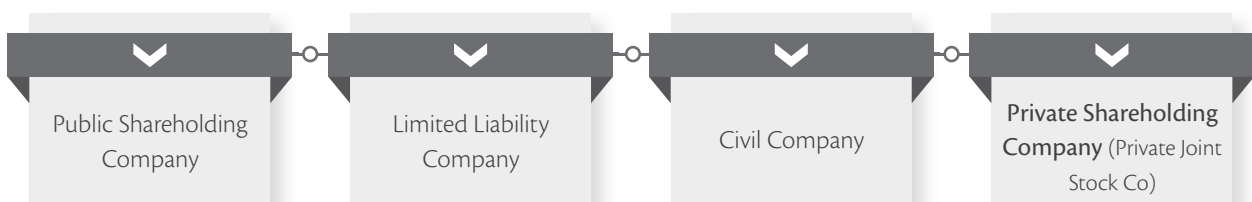
- Business dashboard - DED-Dubai
- Special approvals - Sharjah-Economic Development Department
- Initial approvals - Government of Dubai
- Getting special business licenses - Government of Dubai
- Start a new business in Abu Dhabi - DED-Abu Dhabi
- Process & Requirements - Shurooq
- Start your Business in RAK - Government of RAK
- Licenses in Ajman - Ajman Chamber
- Doing Business in Fujairah - Government of Fujairah
- Laws & regulations - Government of Umm Al Quwain

## 5. COMPLETE LSA / MOA



Depending on the Business Structure (Legal Form of Business), a completed and signed Memorandum of Association (MOA) or a Corporate Agent Agreement with the Local Service Agent (LSA) of the business is required.

In general, a Memorandum of Association (MOA) is required for the following Business Structure types:



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## Important Notes

law firm, notary public prepares these documents. In some cases, the Legal Affairs Department of the Emirate's DED may also provide assistance.

## Useful links:

- [Business Structure requiring MOA/LSA - Dubai DED](#)
- [Start a new business in Abu Dhabi](#) - DED-Abu Dhabi
- [Process & Requirements](#) - Shurooq
- [Start your Business in RAK](#) - Government of RAK
- [Licenses in Ajman](#) - Ajman Chamber
- [Doing Business in Fujairah](#) - Government of Fujairah
- [Laws & regulations](#) - Government of Umm Al Quwain

## 6. FINALIZE BUSINESS LOCATION



All businesses in the UAE must have a physical address to operate. The business premises and location must comply with the requirements defined by the Emirate's Department of Economic Development, as well as the zoning regulations of the local municipalities

## Important Notes

- Office, warehouse rental agreement must be provided. Some Emirates require an attested document. In Dubai, the agreement must be registered with [Ejari](#)
- Multiple trade licenses issued using a single business address, with certain restrictions and conditions. Refer to each Emirate's DED.

## Useful links:

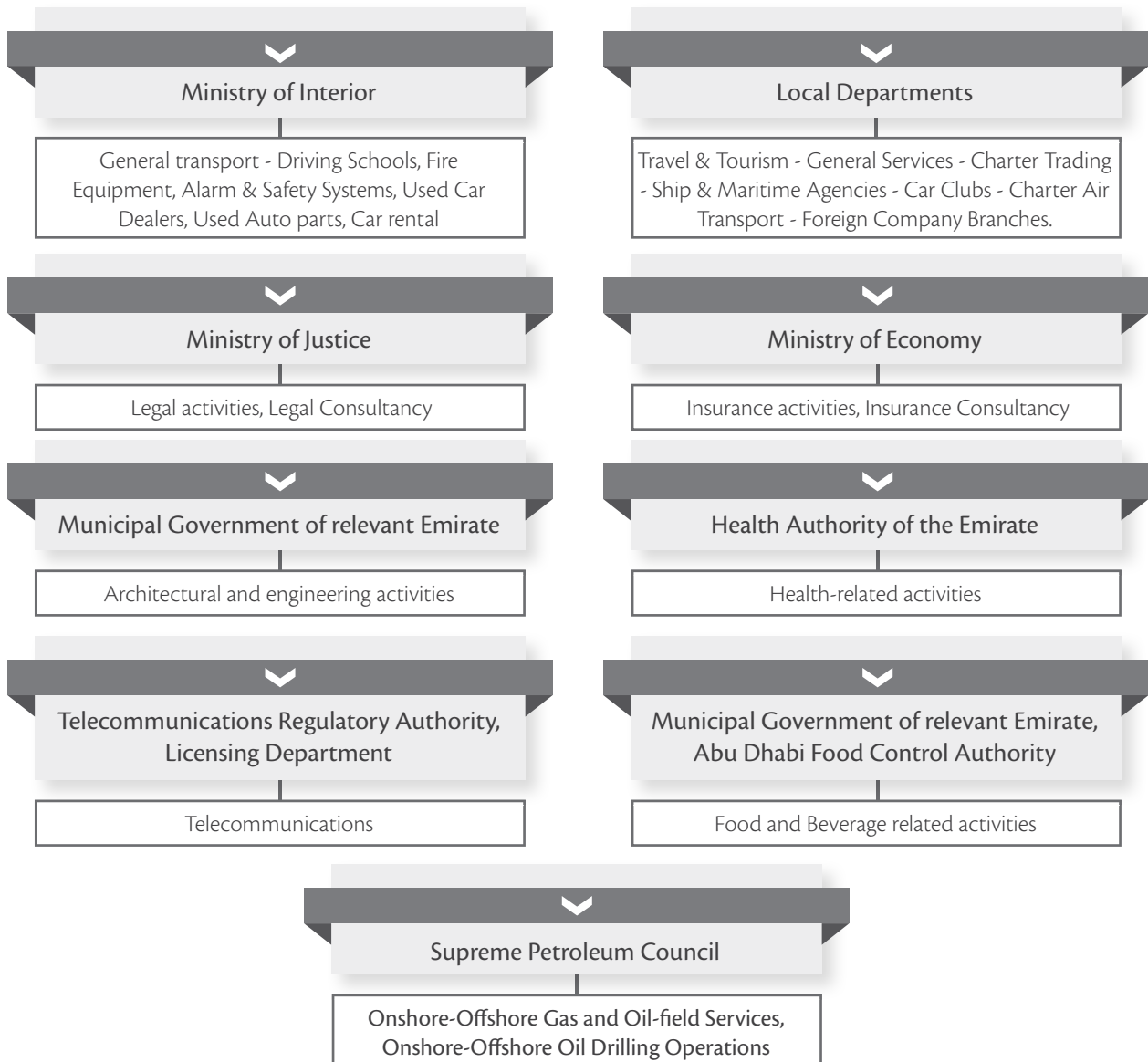
- [Business premises in Abu Dhabi](#)
- [Business Premises in Dubai](#)

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## 7. OBTAIN ADDITIONAL (APPLICABLE) GOVERNMENT APPROVALS REQUIRED

In some cases, additional approvals from government entities governing certain business activities are required. Examples of some activities that require approvals:



### Important Notes

- External approvals of bodies governing the following activities are required:
  - Legal Department-related activities
  - Securities and Commodities Authority-related activities
- Special Approval - AD Chamber of Commerce
- No Approvals Activities - Dubai Department of Economic Development

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## 8. SUBMIT DOCUMENTS AND PAY



Business License (Trade License) will be issued upon submission of all required documents and payment of fees.

In an effort to continually improve “Ease of Doing Business” in the UAE, several Emirates have introduced a fast-track approach in obtaining Business Licenses.

- Dubai DED is leading the move, with its:



**Instant License** initiative, issuing license in just 5 minutes, in a single step without having to register a trade name, legal contract or even a rent contract.<sup>7</sup>



**Start Business** service to speed up Business License issuance for LLC businesses.<sup>8</sup>

### Important Notes

- Associated fees need to be paid within a certain amount of days (usually 30 days) upon issuance of payment voucher. Non-payment will result in the cancellation of the application.
- Payments can be made through authorized banks and service centers.
- The Duration depends on the number of activities to be registered, the nature of the required external approvals, and the Duration difference from emirate to emirate.
- A commercial license can be obtained in Dubai within 5 minutes.

## 9. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REGISTRATION



Registration of the business in the relevant Emirate's Chamber of Commerce is required to operate a business.

### Useful links

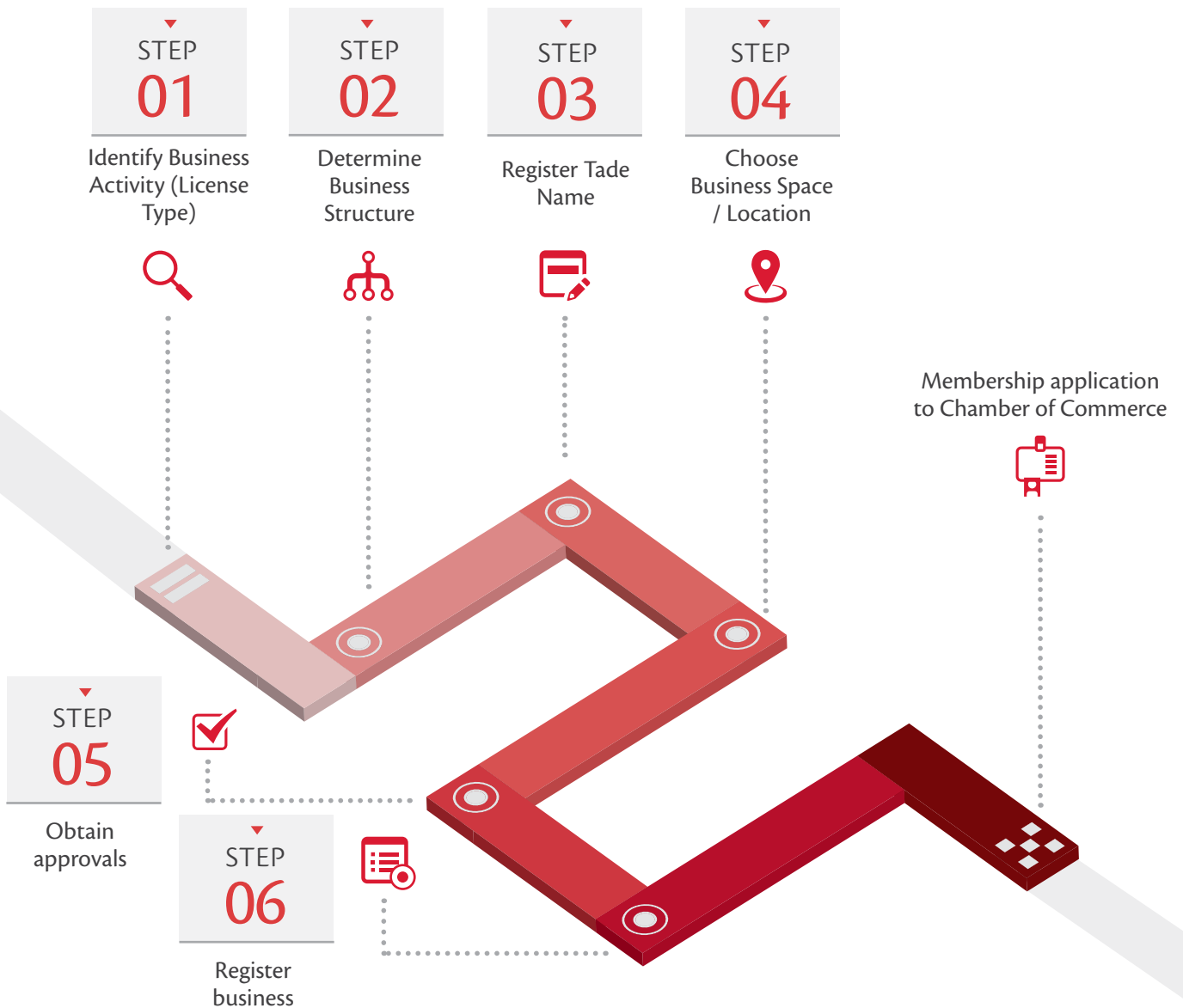
- [Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Ajman Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Ras Al Khimah Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Umm Al Quwain Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Fujairah Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)

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## SETTING UP BUSINESS IN UAE FREE ZONES

Setting up a business in the Free Zone areas in the UAE generally follows the same procedure as those described in the previous section, but often more simple and streamlined, and processed from a centralized location.

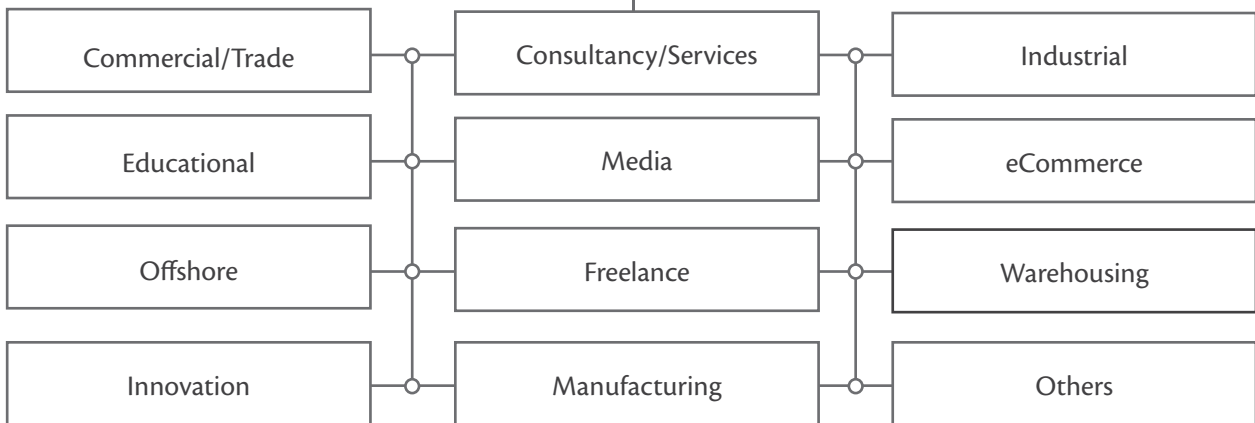


# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## 1. IDENTIFY BUSINESS ACTIVITY (LICENSE TYPE)

### TYPES OF BUSINESS LICENSES IN FREE ZONES



## 2. DETERMINE BUSINESS STRUCTURE

### FREE ZONE



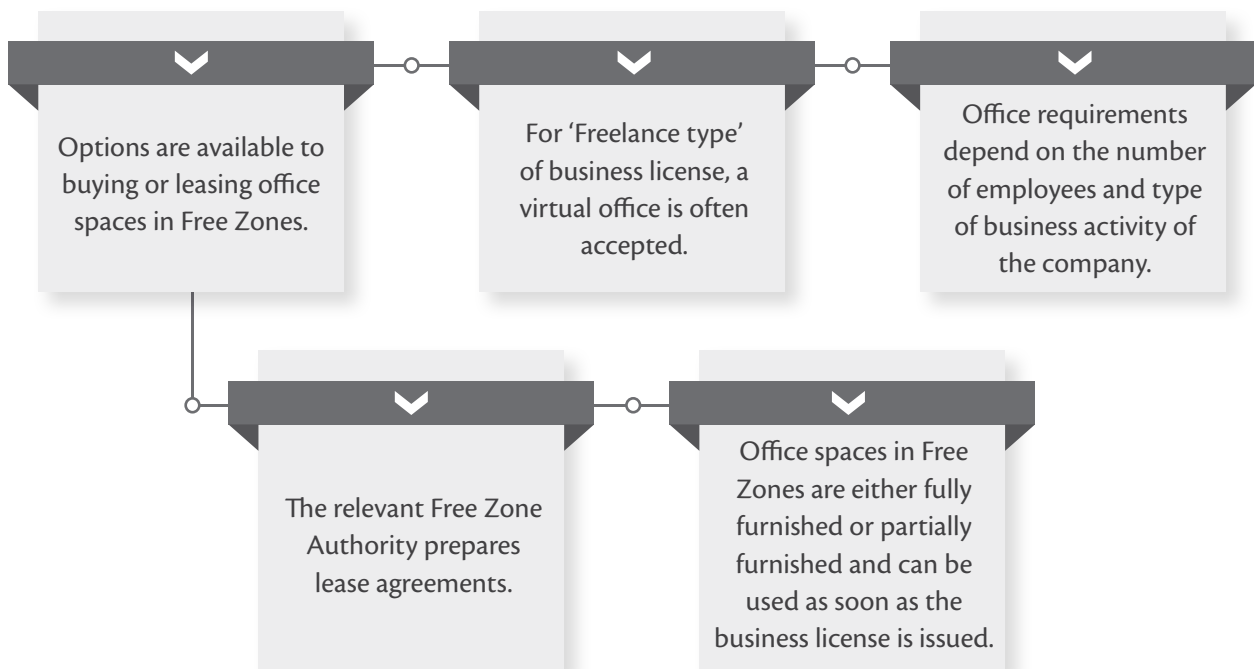
## 3. REGISTER TRADE NAME

- Trade names for businesses in the Free Zone areas also follow the general guidelines set by the Department of Economic Development of the relevant Emirates.
- In some cases, Free Zones also issue their own restrictions and guidelines.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

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## 4. CHOOSE BUSINESS SPACE / LOCATION



**Utilities and telecommunications** are set up by the Free Zone, including

- Full time, in-house IT support
- Telephone devices and connections
- Wireless internet connection
- High-speed internet access
- Data network connection
- IP Telephony

**Services and facilities** vary from one Free Zone to another. In general, Free Zone authorities provide the following services and facilities:

- Enquiring, reserving and applying for trade names
- Getting NOC letters/'To whom it may concern' letters
- Issuing, renewing and cancelling visas
- Investing and funding opportunities
- Credit rating
- Legal advice
- Furnished/semi-furnished offices
- Warehouse
- Telecommunications
- Utilities
- State-of-the-art IT infrastructure
- Secretarial services
- Photocopy and printing services
- Meeting rooms with AV facility
- Transportation
- Labour accommodation
- Assistance with recruitment
- Employee and family housing

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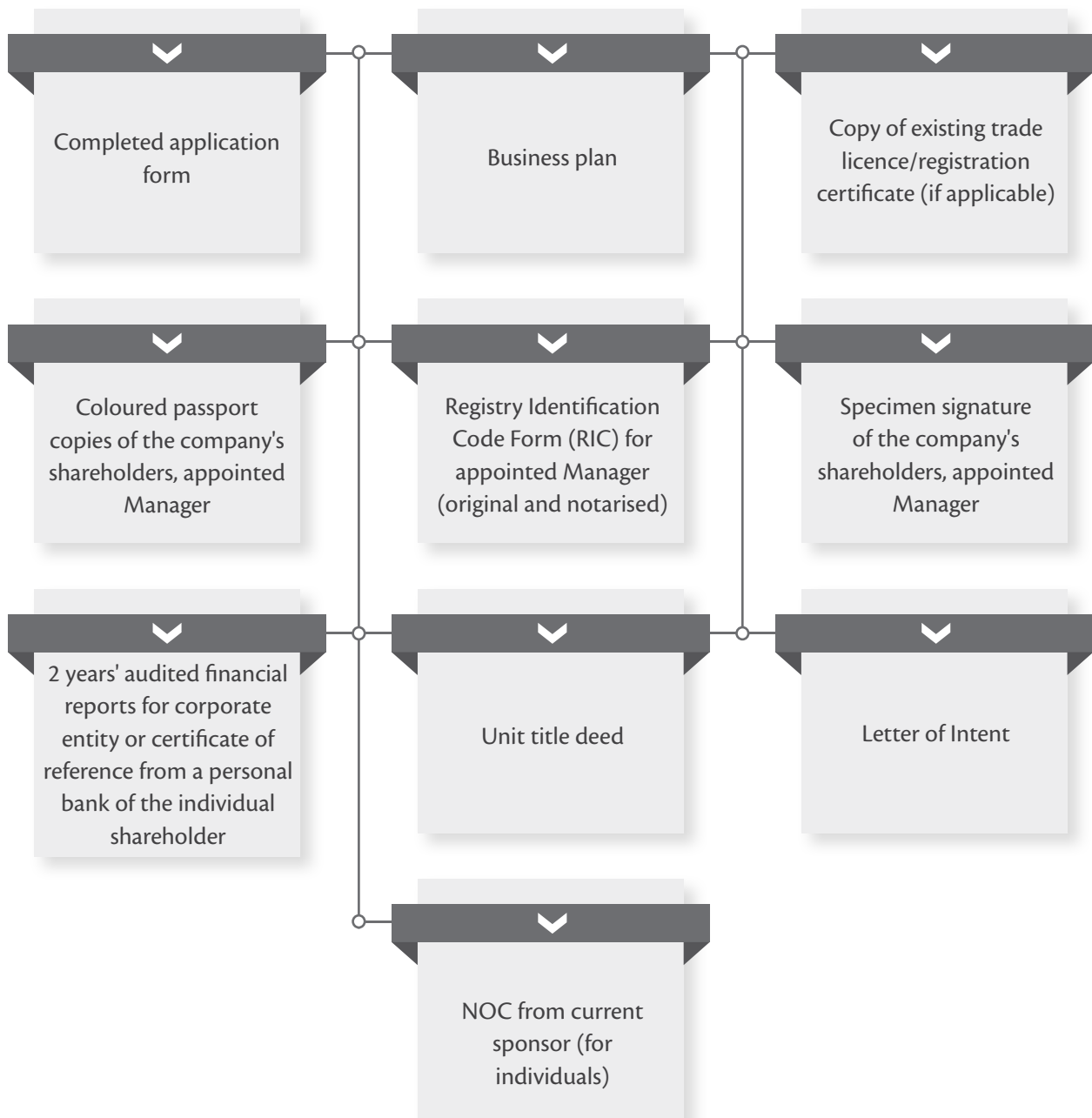
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## 5. OBTAIN APPROVALS



Additional approvals from relevant UAE government entities also apply for select business activities.

**General requirements** to obtain “initial approval” from the Free Zone:



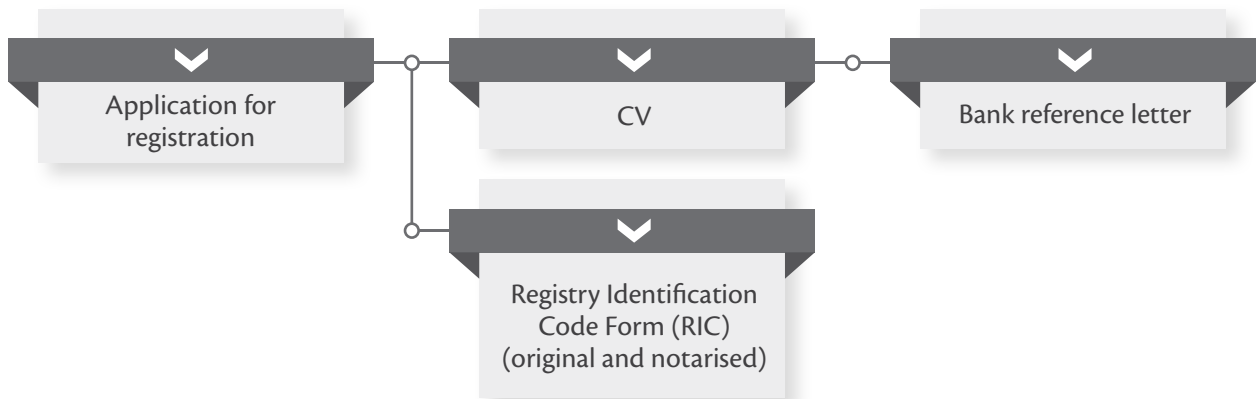


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For 'Freelance business type', general requirements to obtain "initial approval" from the Free Zone:



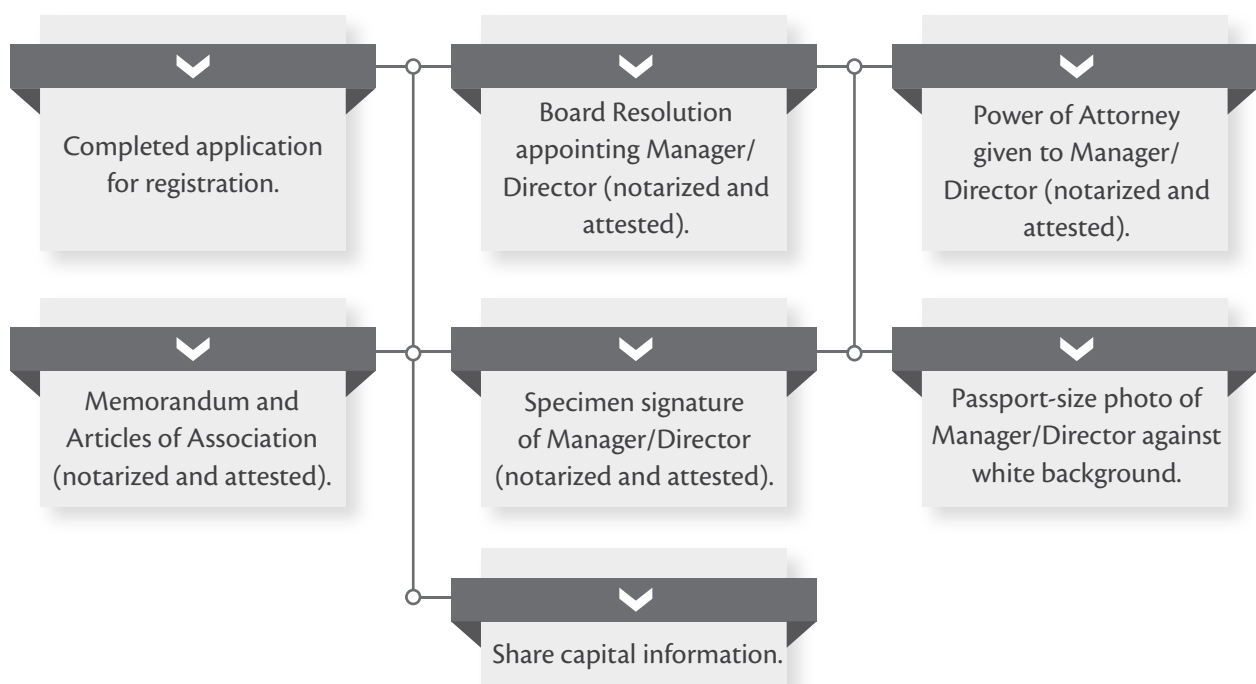
## Important Notes

- The Duration depends on the number of activities to be registered, the nature of the required external approvals, and the Duration difference from emirate to emirate.

## 6. REGISTER BUSINESS



- Registration fees and license fees must be paid to obtain initial approval. The fees depend on the type of license required.
- To register the business with the Free Zone, the following documents must be submitted:

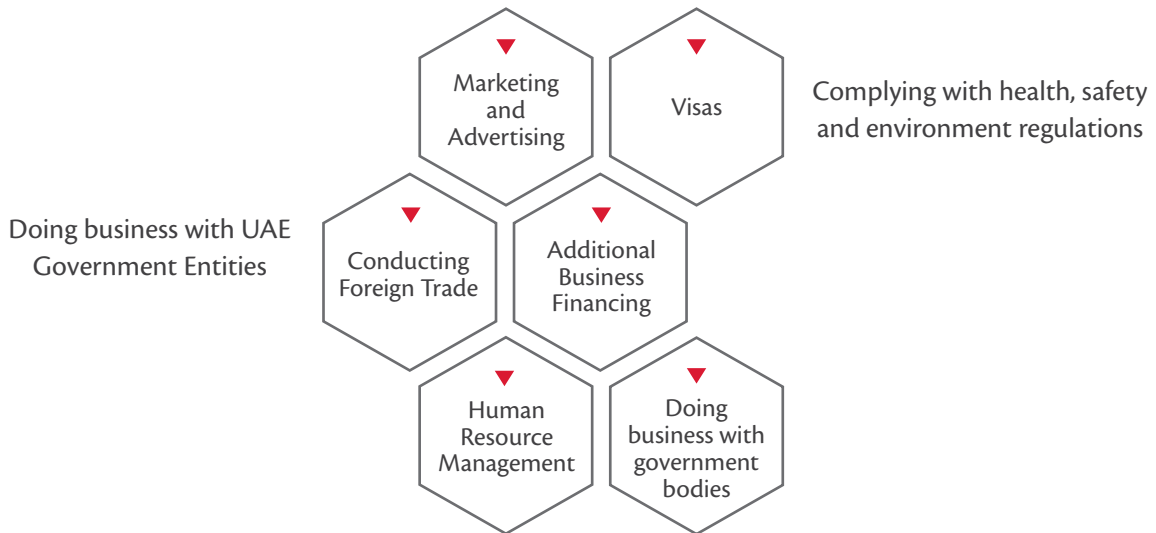


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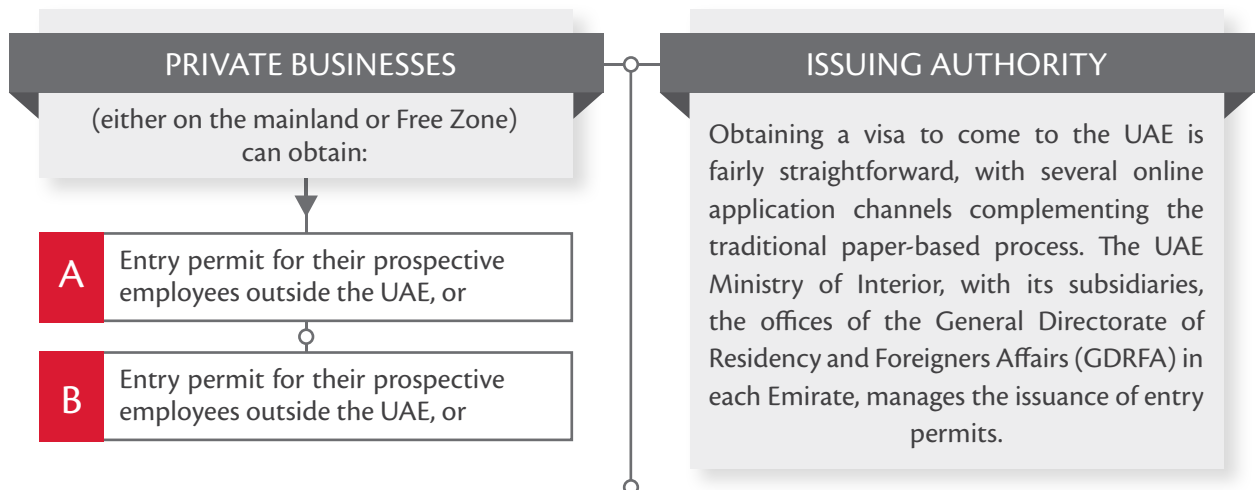
## RUNNING A BUSINESS

The following pages describe some of the key processes to conduct and/or consider when running a business in the UAE, either on the mainland or in the Free Zones.



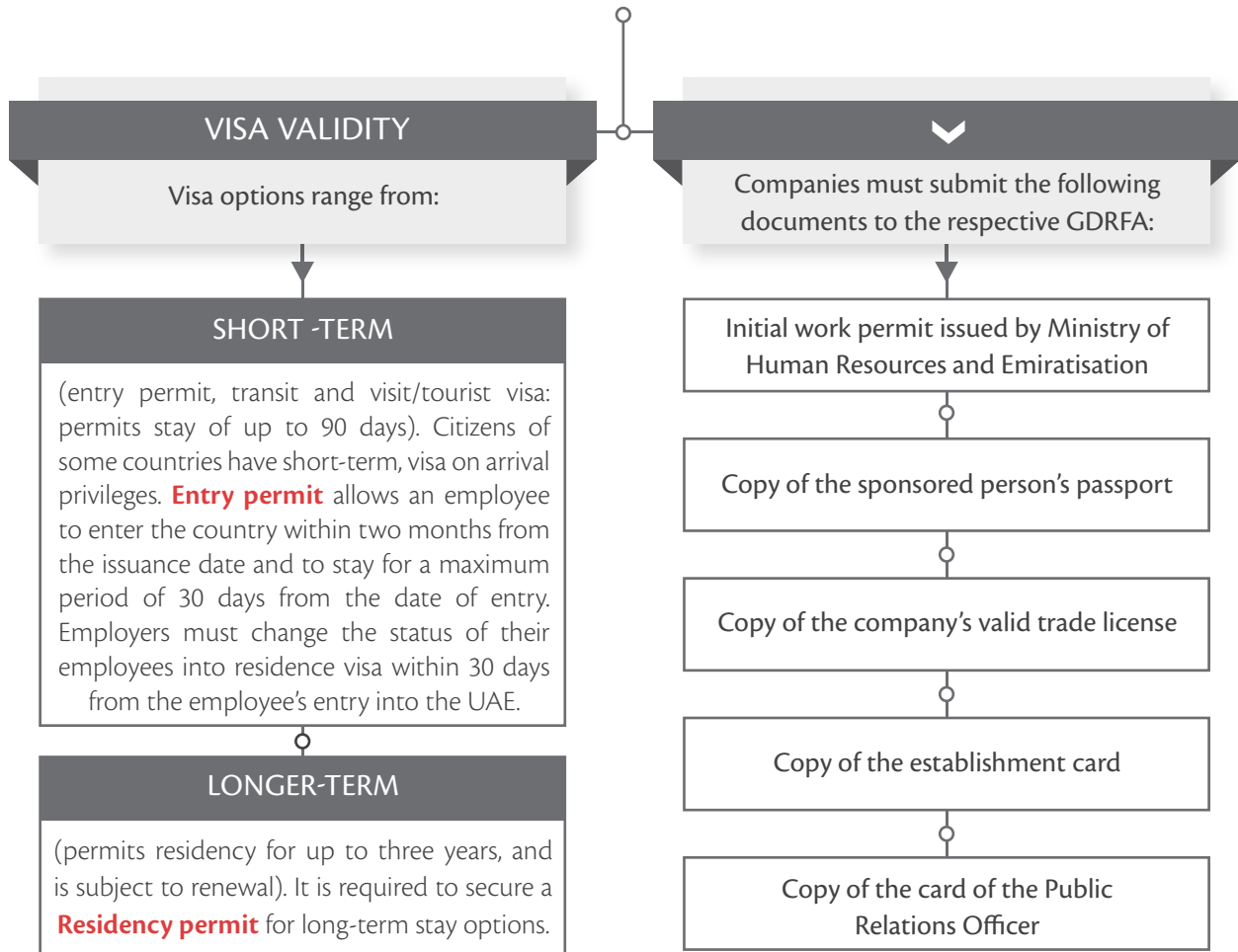
## VISAS

Visas are generally required to enter and/or stay in the UAE.



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE



## HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### LABOR RIGHTS

Federal Law No. 8 of 1980 also known as the Labour Law as amended governs the labour rights of employees in the private sector.

The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization is responsible for overseeing the employer-employee relations and maintaining labour rights for the private sector.

Key provisions of the Labour Law:

- Working hours
- Official leaves and vacations
- Wages Protection System (WPS)
- End of service benefits
- Safety at work place
- Accommodation
- Insurance

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE



## PENSIONS

UAE National Employees are legally entitled to receive pensions.

Federal pension laws for Emirati citizens: [Federal Law No. 7 of 1999 Concerning the Issuance of the Law on Pensions and Social Security](#)

Abu Dhabi pension law for the local government of Abu Dhabi: [Law No. 2 of 2000 regarding Civil Retirement Pensions and Benefits in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi](#)

### Useful links:

- Laws and regulations that govern the private sector employment in the UAE: [The Labour Law; Resolutions and Circulars](#)
- [Ministerial Resolution No. 788 for 2009 on Wages Protection System](#) – MoHRE
- [Ministerial Decree No. 739 of 2016 Concerning the Protection of Wages](#)
- [WPS Guideline](#) - Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation
- [Wages Protection System](#) - the official portal of Abu Dhabi Government
- [Pensions and end of service benefits](#)
- [Health Insurance](#)

## ADDITIONAL BUSINESS FINANCING



Depending on the business activity, banks in the UAE generally offer several financing options.

### Useful links:

- [List of local banks and their branches by Emirate](#)
- [List of foreign banks and their branches by Emirate](#)

## DOING BUSINESS WITH GOVERNMENT BODIES



- UAE Federal Government entities employ a central Procurement System, through the Ministry of Finance portal, and follow a fair and transparent procedure when issuing procurement contracts.
- [Supplier registration](#) - Ministry of Finance.

Several government bodies also publish their procurement requirements.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## Useful links:

- [Doing business with Abu Dhabi Government](#) - the official portal of Abu Dhabi Government
- [Guidelines, laws, manuals and specifications for tenders](#) - the official portal of Abu Dhabi Government
- [Doing business with Dubai Government](#) - the official portal of Dubai Government
- [The official Procurement Portal for the Dubai Government \( eSupply\)](#)
- [Doing business with Sharjah Government](#) - the official portal of Sharjah Government

## CONDUCTING INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Conducting foreign trade in the UAE is made easier through its strategic location, world-class multi-modal infrastructure, as well as explicit law and regulations.

Merchandise that is prohibited within the Free Zones and duty-free include:

Flammable merchandise, excluding fuels necessary for operations as permitted by the supervisory authorities of the area (Free Zone Authority) under the conditions prescribed by the competent authority

Radioactive materials

Weapons, ammunitions and explosives of whatever kind except by permit from the competent authorities

Merchandise that violate the regulations concerning the protection of the commercial, industrial, and intellectual property rights and copyright protection

All types of narcotics and derivatives thereof

Merchandise originated in an economically boycotted country

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## Useful links:

### Customs authorities in the UAE

- [Federal Customs Authority](#)
- [Abu Dhabi Customs , Department of Finance](#)
- [Dubai Customs](#)
- [Sharjah Customs , Department of Seaport and Customs](#)
- [Ras Al Khaimah Customs](#)

### Importing into the UAE

- [Importing through Abu Dhabi - Abu Dhabi government portal](#)
- [Importing through Dubai - Dubai Customs](#)

### Exporting from the UAE

- [Exporting and Re-exporting from Abu Dhabi - Abu Dhabi government portal](#)
- [Exporting from Dubai - Dubai Customs](#)

### Customs' procedures

- [Clearance mechanism - Federal Customs Authority](#)
- [GCC Customs Procedures Guide - Federal Customs Authority \(PDF, 753 KB\)](#)
- [Clearance procedure - Abu Dhabi government portal](#)
- [Customs Procedures Manual - Abu Dhabi Customs \(PDF, 4.8 MB\)](#)
- [Import procedures - Sharjah Customs](#)
- [Export procedures - Sharjah Customs](#)
- [Re-export procedures - Sharjah Customs](#)
- [Temporary entry procedures - Sharjah Customs](#)
- [Transit entry procedures - Sharjah Customs](#)
- [Customs Procedures Guide - Ras Al Khaimah Customs \(PDF, 797 KB\)](#)

### Tariff

- [Unified customs tariff - Federal Customs Authority](#)
- [Customs tariff - Sharjah Customs](#)

### Cargo and freight services

- [Etihad Cargo](#)
- [Emirates Sky Cargo](#)
- [FlyDubai Cargo](#)
- [Air Arabia Cargo](#)
- [Dubai Airports cargo services](#)
- [Sharjah International Airport's cargo services](#)
- [Cargo facilities at Ras Al Khaimah International Airport](#)
- [Cargo services at Fujairah International Airport](#)

### Others:

- [Import and export - Abu Dhabi government portal](#)
- [International trade - Abu Dhabi government portal](#)
- [Conducting international trade - Dubai government portal](#)
- [Import and re-export requirements for foodstuff - Dubai Municipality \(PDF, 3 MB\)](#)
- [Food import requirements - Sharjah International Airport](#)
- [Common Customs Law of the GCC States \(PDF, 567 KB\)](#)

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## MARKETING AND ADVERTISING



There are applicable UAE procedures and regulations needed for each type of marketing.

### As Example:

- [Marketing your business](#) - Abu Dhabi eGovernment gateway
- [Advertising your business](#) - The Official Portal of Dubai Government

## COMPLYING WITH HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT REGULATIONS



The UAE has put in place law and regulations towards health, safety and environment. In some cases, DED approval is required.

### As Example:

- [Complying with health, environment and safety](#) regulations.
- [Managing and expanding your business](#) - The official portal of Dubai Government
- [Advertising your business](#) - the official portal of Dubai Government
- [Marketing your business](#) - the official portal of Abu Dhabi Government
- [Signs and advertisements permits](#) - the official portal of Abu Dhabi Government



## ACCESSING SERVICES AND UTILITIES

For businesses inside the Free Zone areas, the relevant Free Zone Authority facilitates most of services and utilities. For businesses in the mainland, below are useful information and links.

### OPENING A UAE BANK ACCOUNT

Personal or company bank accounts can be opened in any local or foreign bank operating in the UAE. Use of International Bank Account Number (IBAN) is mandatory for all transactions and wire transfers from and to the UAE.

**Related links:**

- [UAE Central Bank](#)
- [List of banks in the UAE](#)
- [List of investment banks in the UAE](#)
- [Federal Law No. 10 of 1980 regarding the Central Bank, the monetary system and organisation of banking](#)
- [Federal law No. 6 of 1985 regarding Islamic banks, financial institutions and investment companies](#)

### WATER AND ELECTRICITY

Water and electricity services are both provided under the same roof of the relevant Emirate overseeing these services.

**Related links:**

- [Federal Electricity & Water Authority](#) (for the Emirates of Ajman, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah and Umm Al Quwain)
- [Abu Dhabi Distribution Company](#)
- [Al Ain Distribution Company](#) (for Al Ain city in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi)
- [Dubai Electricity & Water Authority](#)
- [Sharjah Electricity & Water Authority](#)

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS

There are only two telecommunications providers in the UAE: Etisalat and Du. To apply for telecom service, the following documents are required:

- Sponsor's passport copy, UAE visa copy, Emirates ID copy
- Trade license copy
- Business' Rent agreement copy

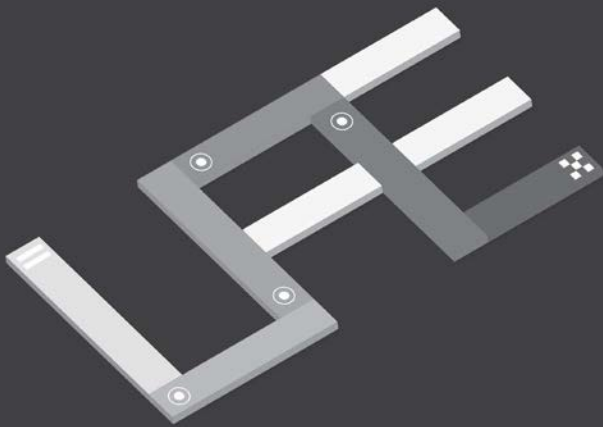
**Useful links:**

- [Etisalat for businesses](#)
- [Du for businesses](#)



## Section 02

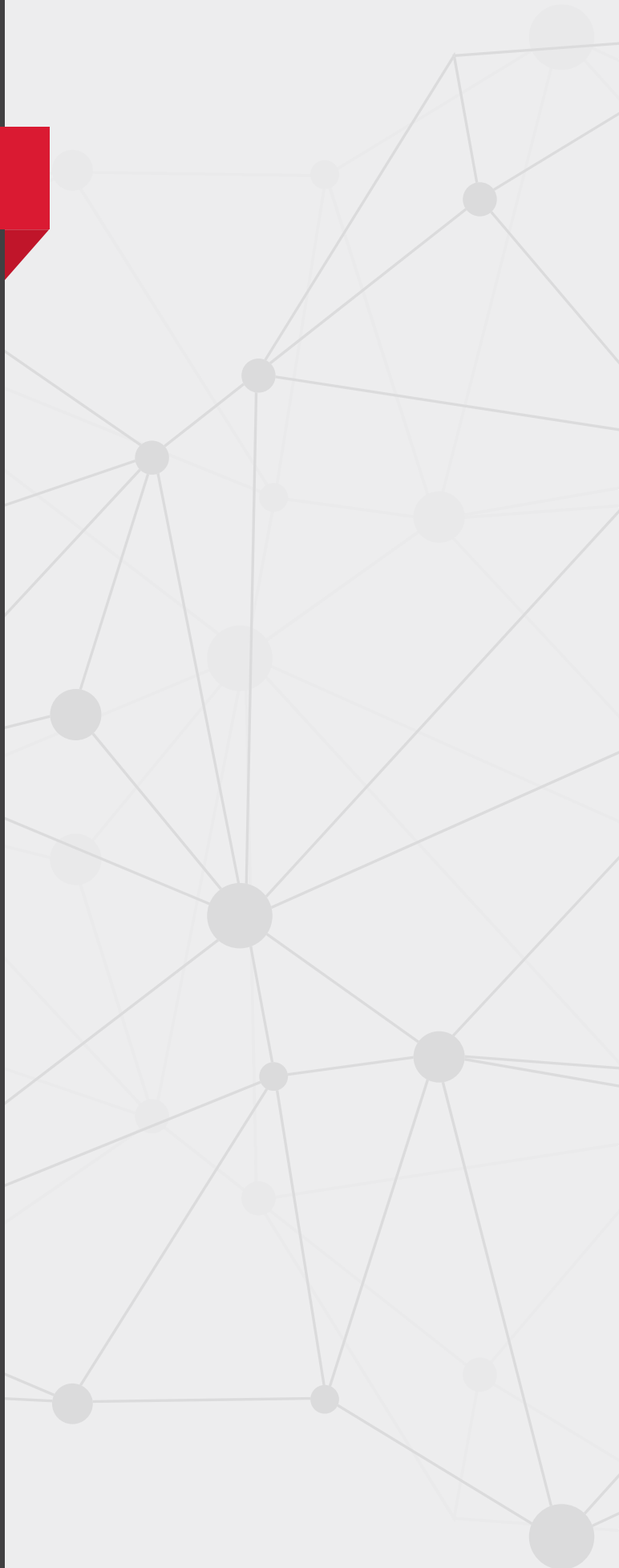
# INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE EMIRATES



Enriching the investment ecosystem of the UAE is truly a national priority. As a result, investment opportunities across the seven Emirates of the UAE continue to grow, and are within reach to interested entrepreneurs and investors.

Led by the UAE leaders, and guided by the UAE Visions 2021 and 2071, the entire country comes together as a leading global hub for entrepreneurship, offering a rich plethora of investment options, from thriving traditional economic sectors to technologically fuelled opportunities.

This section sheds light into some of the most exciting investment opportunities offered by each of the seven Emirates of the UAE. It also shares the featured Emirate's priority objectives and strategic enablers that inspire a healthy proliferation of investment growth and entrepreneurial opportunities.



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## ABU DHABI



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

**Abu Dhabi** is the largest of the seven Emirates. As the nation's capital, the country's Presidential Place, the UAE Cabinet, UAE federal ministries and authorities as well as embassies of more than a hundred foreign nations are based in the city. Home to more than 2.8 million residents<sup>9</sup> thriving in the city's solid economy, impressive infrastructure and business-friendly environment as well as a carefully planned future guided by economic growth, innovation and prosperity, Abu Dhabi is also a famous destination to investors and entrepreneurs.

The city's grandeur, nestled across its 200 islands that offer a rich and pristine coastline stretching to 700 kilometers, its iconic landmarks, cultural sites and internationally acclaimed events in the city, Abu Dhabi is a natural spectacle for the growing millions of tourists that visit the city annually.

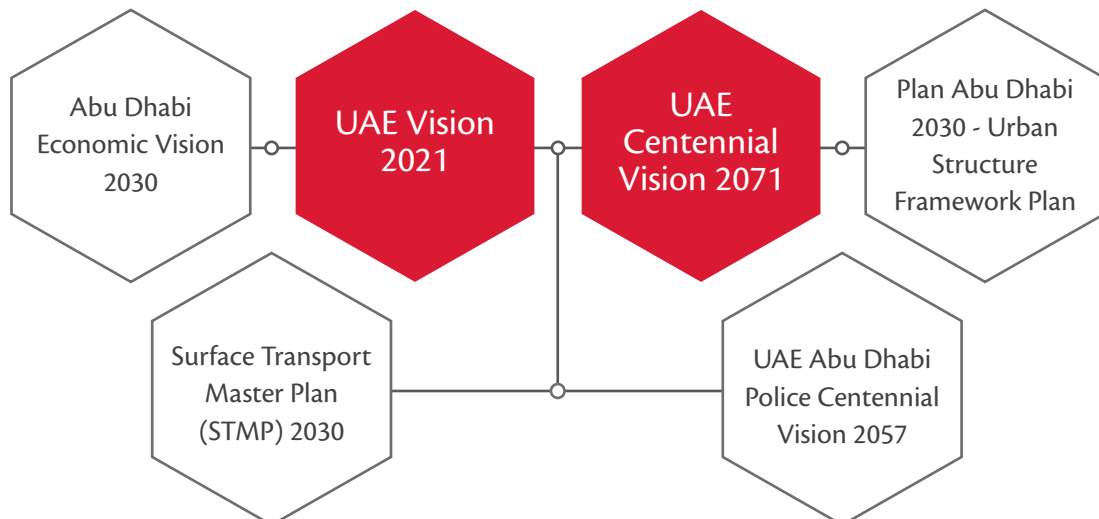
Building on Abu Dhabi's hydrocarbon-centered progress over the decades, the city has a clear roadmap

towards a more diversified economy. The Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030, honed by the UAE Centennial Vision 2071, articulates the city's development plans for the future. This vision has offered inspiration to the introduction of several other strategies - all of which are driving growth and demand in investment opportunities in Abu Dhabi.

## Economic Vision 2030

*Abu Dhabi as a sustainable, diversified, high value-added economy that encourages enterprises and entrepreneurship and well integrated in the global economy leading to better opportunities for all.*

The multi-faceted strategies of Abu Dhabi are powerful engines of growth, attracting investments in various sectors and industries:



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

Priority Sectors to boost economic growth in Abu Dhabi, as per the Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030:<sup>10</sup>



The Abu Dhabi Urban Structure Framework Plan 2030 lends a picture of what the city is preparing to offer its residents and visitors, as well as to the environment and Abu Dhabi's cultural heritage. It

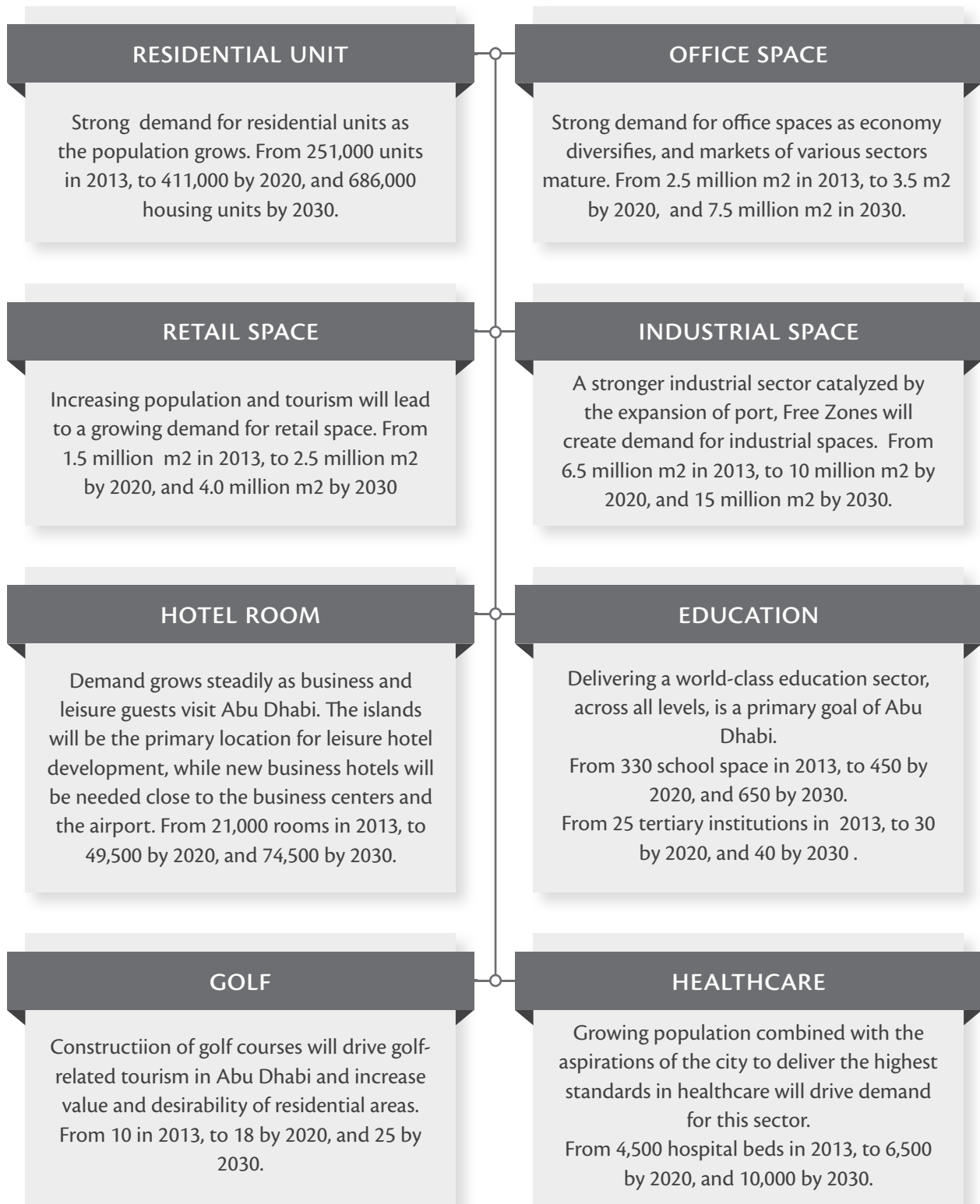
is a comprehensive conceptualization of the city's long-term urban development plans and includes investment opportunities to meet the projected demand in various sectors.



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

Per Sector Demand, as outlined by the Abu Dhabi Urban Structure Framework Plan 2030:<sup>11</sup>



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

**The Abu Dhabi Surface Transport Master Plan (STMP):** Connecting Abu Dhabi in 2030 is an elaborate plan to ensure the city's sustainable improvements in both its urban and natural environments.<sup>12</sup> Designed to attract socio-economic groups, the SMTP will aim to deliver a world-class sustainable transport system

that fully supports Abu Dhabi's economic, social and cultural and environmental goals. Included in the master plan are the introduction and improvements of major transport modes such as:

## ROADWAYS

to reduce traffic congestion and facilitate enhanced connections from private cars to public transport network.



## HIGH-SPEED REGIONAL RAIL NETWORK

will feature the world's fastest trains, travelling up to 400 km/hr to provide high-quality intercity service and will connect to interchange facilities that provide efficient links to metro, tram, bus, and taxi services.



## METRO TRAIN SYSTEM

will provide attractive travel time within the capital city with its 130 kilometers of two-way track.



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## LARGE-SCALE TRAM NETWORK

in the city's high-density development areas will make public transport travel experience truly easy: walks between stations will be within a mere 300-meter range.



## FERRY AND WATER TAXI SERVICE

will be fully integrated with the land-based transport system, and will serve both sides of Abu Dhabi Island as well as off-shore business, residential, leisure, and tourism destinations.



## SOLAR-POWERED PROGRAMMABLE VEHICLES

will run underground and free the primary ground-plane to be a pedestrian-only environment. This Personal Rapid Transit system will be deployed by Masdar City.



## FREIGHT RAIL TRANSPORT SYSTEM

is key to the economic diversification strategy of Abu Dhabi. Connected to industrial zones, seaports and the Abu Dhabi International airport, it will offer road-based haulage to alternative rail and shipping services on key routes.



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

The UAE Abu Dhabi Police Centennial Vision 2057 is set to conquer the unknown, using technological breakthroughs and artificial intelligence.

The defense and security sectors are witnessing an overhaul that will reshape police and security work, in Abu Dhabi - and will transcend to the outer space

- through the more than 50 initiatives over a four-decade milestone.<sup>13</sup>

In turn, these initiatives are already attracting the most brilliant minds and future-oriented businesses to take part in the realization of the vision of the Abu Dhabi Police.

## 2022

- An integrated 3D-printed police centre launched
- First batch of astronaut police officers
- International academy for foresight future policing
- First 3D-printed police patrol vehicles
- Set-up outer space Abu Dhabi Police administration
- Set up air traffic police
- 50% of training courses provided online; 35% through virtual reality; 15% using hologram technology
- First robot cop speaking all known languages in service
- Virtual police centre that can reach every home
- Database of robots in Abu Dhabi
- Police laboratory for space science
- Virtual training for living in outer space



## 2030-2040

- Digital travel permits to travel to outer space issued
- Small, medium-size satellites to record high precision maps, to establish sustainable smart cities
- Design sample of first police centre on Mars
- Police officers sent to Mars on Emirati spaceships
- 50% of policing decisions based on data mining and analysis
- 25% training courses via hologram technology
- 25% prisons converted to innovation centres
- 100% UAE-built satellite for Abu Dhabi police
- Detecting crimes and violations using the satellites' data
- 50% police centres converted to power-generating stations
- 10% autonomous police patrol cars
- 30% police administration work uses AI



## 2057

- 100% hydrogen-fuelled police vehicles; 10% autonomous
- 50% of police officers are robots
- Patrols are in place to monitor security in space
- A Police Station in the UAE Mars Colony, by 2117

\*14 \*15



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE



Why choose

Abu Dhabi



as an ideal Investment Destination

## POLITICAL & ECONOMIC STABILITY

- Long-term political stability, open diplomatic policy worldwide
- 44 years of growth and a strong resilience to economic crises

## STRATEGIC LOCATION

- Strategically located between Europe, Africa and Asia
- Five hours from 25% of the world's population
- Access to GCC and Middle East markets

## INFRASTRUCTURE

- Airport passenger traffic of 12.4 million passengers
- Enhanced port capacity in Al Taweelah Khalifa Port serving regional trade
- 100 sq. km Khalifa Industrial Zone, upgradable to 480 sq. km

## INVESTMENT INCENTIVES

- Up to 100% profit repatriation in Special Economic Zones
- Up to 100% foreign ownership in Free Zones
- No minimum requirement for company set-up.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## STRONG HEALTHCARE AND EDUCATION POLICY

- 92.5% literacy rate
- Local and international universities such as Sorbonne, INSEAD, NYU and MIT
- Local and international healthcare facilities such as Cleveland Clinic and Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Compulsory health insurance for all family members

## UNIQUE LIFESTYLE

- 400km of coastline, 200 islands, mountains, oasis, and desert, 365 days of sun a year
- Sheikh Zayed, Louvre and Guggenheim museums
- International golf and tennis tournaments, Formula One Grand Prix and many concerts
- One of the safest cities worldwide

## SME DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

The Abu Dhabi Government established the USD 272.3 million (AED 1 billion) Khalifa Fund, which provides financial and professional assistance to local entrepreneurs. UAE Nationals may apply for low-interest loans or venture capital of up to USD 0.8 million (AED 3 million) for new businesses, and up to USD 1.4 million (AED 5 million) for established businesses that wish to expand. In addition, the Khalifa Fund provides a range of other assistance to entrepreneurs, including training programmes, business consultancy and physical facilities to incubate new businesses, shared services – accounting, HR and administrative support – to reduce costs.

The private sector is also supporting SME development through various training programmes, development initiatives and products and services designed for entrepreneurs, including special banking products and business assistance. The Abu Dhabi Businesswomen Council's (Mubdiaa) programme also supports home-based businesses for women, providing loans, guarantees or equity investments as well as training, marketing and technical assistance.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## DUBAI



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

**Dubai** is the second largest Emirate, and plays host to the mega event, World Expo 2020 – the first ever in the region. This vibrant metropolitan city is home to more than 2.5 million people, and is certainly the birthplace of a number of the ‘world’s first, best and many other superlative classifications’, such as the world’s busiest airport, world’s tallest building, the

world’s first state cryptocurrency, Emcash launched, the world’s first fully 3D-printed office building, the world’s first Smart Police Station (SPS) – to name a few global distinctions received. And with its reputation as the city of the future, Dubai is set to conquering more international laurels.<sup>16</sup>

As well as attracting over USD 3 billion (AED 11 billion) in foreign direct investments during the first six months of 2017 alone, four sectors make up nearly 74% percent of Dubai’s non-oil GDP : <sup>17,18</sup>

## SERVICES SECTOR

- Makes up the largest percentage of Dubai GDP.
- Includes hospitality, transport, storage, real estate and personal and business services.



## CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

- Contributed 7.4% of Dubai GDP in 2016
- Dubai’s Infrastructure spending in 2017 increased by 27%, owing to the Emirate’s intent to continue providing world-class infrastructure, including the soon-to-be-launched Dubai Harbour, a new multi-billion dollar tourism project.



## MANUFACTURING SECTOR

- Contributed 9.4% of Dubai GDP in 2016
- The Dubai Industrial Strategy 2030, positions the city as an “international hub for industrial activities, the preferred manufacturing platform for global businesses, and last but not least, a center for the global Islamic products market”.



## TRADE AND REPAIRING SECTOR

- Contributed 25.3% of Dubai GDP in 2016
- Dubai is home to the world’ largest wholesale hub, the Dubai Wholesale City

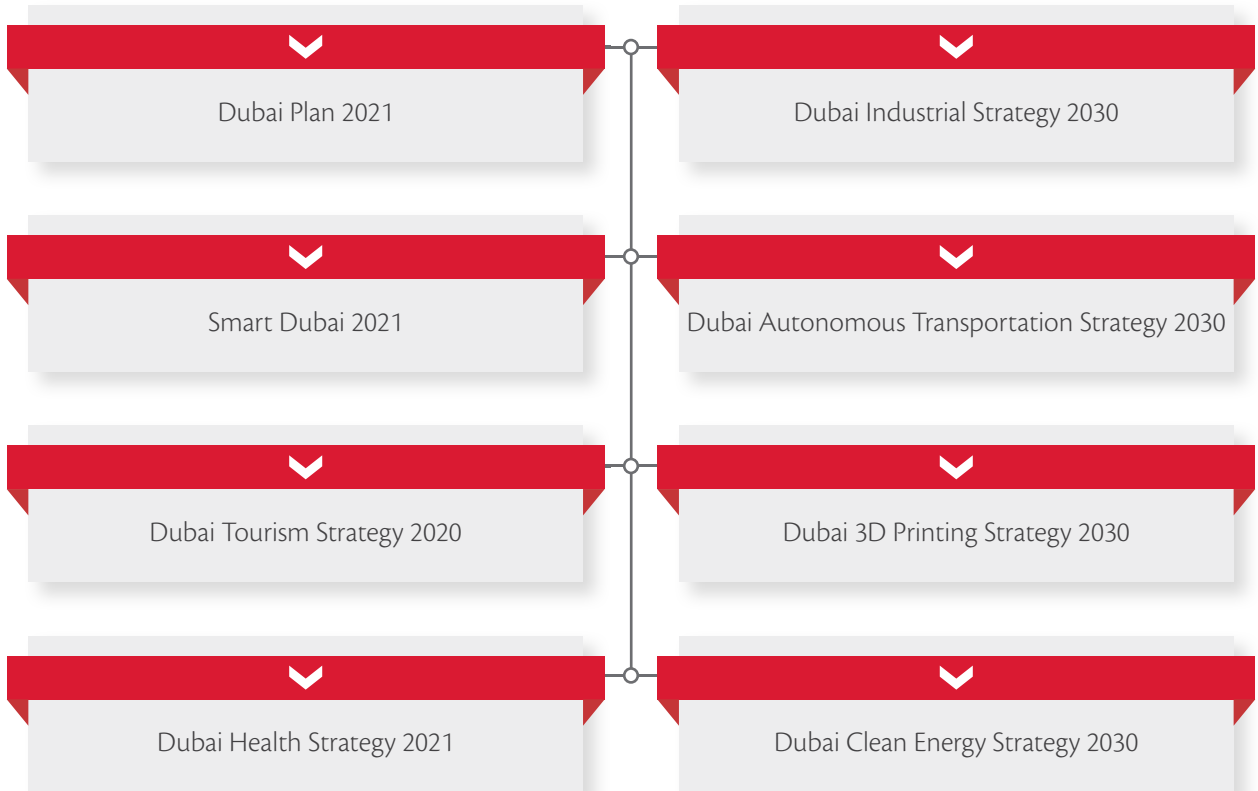


# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

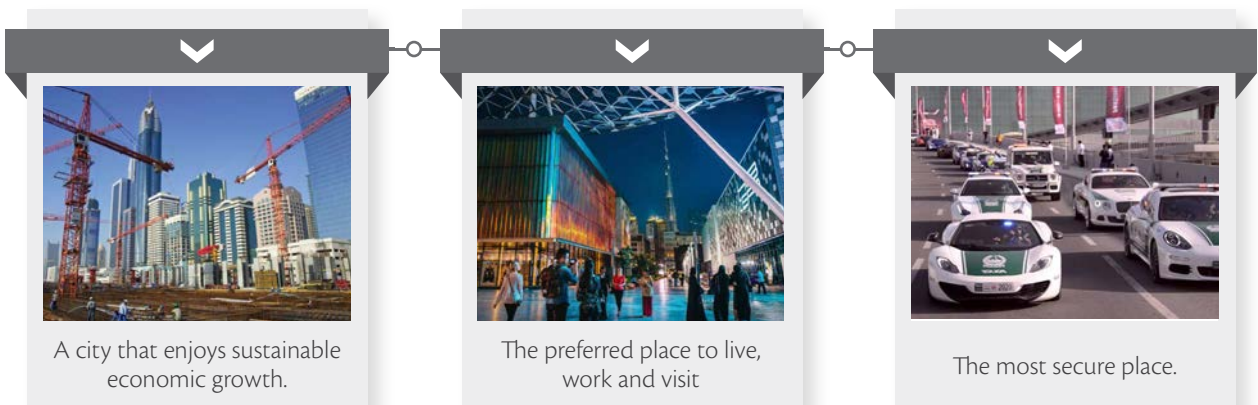
In its journey to position the city as a key player in the global economy and one of the top five centers for trade, logistics, finance and tourism, Dubai is known for spearheading domestic initiatives and strategies with

global recognition and impact. These internationally acclaimed strategies are bound to shape the future, drive innovation, strengthen the country's economy, and stimulate new business opportunities.



The **Dubai Plan 2021** outlines the city's goal for Dubai to be one of the best cities in the world. Specifically,

the plan will help ensure that Dubai becomes:



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE



A city with the best educational, healthcare and housing services.



The most business friendly city and a preferred investment destination.



One of the world's leading business centers: Consistently ranked as one of the top five global centers for trade, logistics, tourism and finance as well as internationally recognized as the leading financial and trading center at the heart of the Islamic economy.

Another investment driver for the digital and innovative technologies sector, **Smart Dubai 2021** prepares Dubai to embrace the future. It is guided by a revolutionary new vision for a smart city: to be the happiest city on earth.<sup>19</sup>

It also provides impetus to a 'smart economy', harnessing digital innovation, rendering an even stronger global competitiveness reputation for Dubai, as it allows the private sector and businesses to enhance their processes, products and services by capitalizing on global digital innovation trends.

The city of Dubai powers the country's travel and tourism sector, with more than 16 million visitors in 2016 alone. Raising this bar even higher, **The Dubai Tourism Strategy 2020** focuses on making Dubai

as the 'first choice' for the international leisure and business traveller. Its key objective is to attract 20 million visitors per year, by 2020.

To do so, several projects are lined up, making the already remarkable long list of unparalleled events, attractions, services and packages more impressive and appealing to a wider audience.

The travel and tourism sector of Dubai, one of the city's main GDP drivers, also provide a healthy boost to other sectors, such as hospitality and food and beverage sectors, wellness and medical tourism, retail trade and many others. The hospitality and restaurants sector was the fastest growing sector in 2016, at 10.6% percent, contributing 5.1% of Dubai's real GDP.<sup>20</sup>

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

In the lead up to the World Expo 2020, a strong pipeline of projects is making investors busy, including on projects such as the construction of new hotel rooms to be added to the current supply, as well as development for business, leisure and recreational facilities.

**Dubai Health Strategy 2021** outlines the city's aspiration towards delivering a healthier and happier community, with Dubai as a global model in the field of health. It is also working towards making Dubai a global medical tourism hub, attracting half a million medical tourists a year by 2020, with revenues worth USD 194 million (AED 713 million).<sup>21</sup>

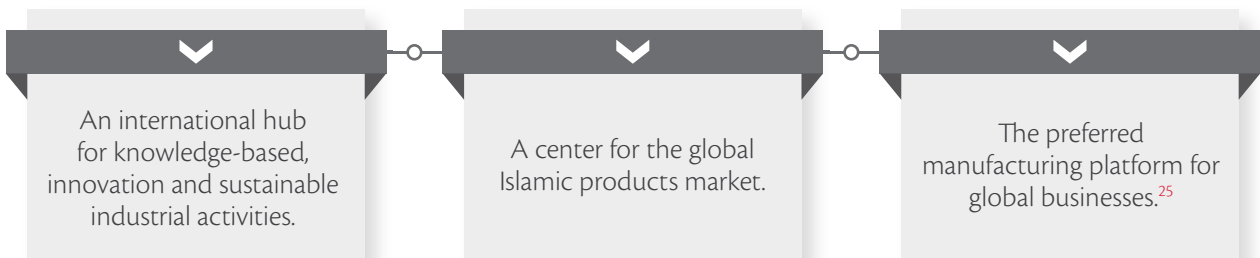
As well as offering investment opportunities for the construction of dozens of hospitals and medical facilities in Dubai by 2025, the strategy is also pioneering several technological advancements in the region in 3D printing in the field of medicine. Clearly, this initiative is a positive catalyst for growth and investment.<sup>22</sup>

**Dubai Autonomous Transportation Strategy 2030** will make 25% of the main transportation channels in Dubai in autonomous mode by 2030, yielding several benefits for the environment, people and businesses. The strategy is already fast-tracking investments and opportunities shaped by its main pillars, such as:<sup>23</sup>



As the Emirate's third largest sector, yielding an impressive growth rate of 3.4% in 2016, on top of its projection to grow by additional USD 4.9 billion (AED

18 billion) by 2030, the industrial sector is a natural focus area for Dubai. The **Dubai Industrial Strategy 2030**<sup>24</sup> aims at making Dubai:



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

Reports indicate that the Dubai Industrial Strategy 2030 will pave the way for the industrial sector to grow by an additional USD 4.9 billion (AED18 billion)

by 2030, creating 27,000 jobs, with exports forecast to increase by USD 4.4 billion (AED 16 billion).

Six focus sub-sectors of the industrial strategy in Dubai :<sup>26</sup>

## AEROSPACE

localization of manufacturing capabilities and in providing maintenance and repair services in certain aerospace sub-industries; R&D in aerospace.



## MARITIME

the localization of manufacturing capabilities in certain maritime sub-industries, including yachts and boats to meet domestic demand; expand port activities to attract more traffic to its facilities, especially larger ships and offshore structures.



## PHARMACEUTICALS AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

address current trend in the GCC (importing 80% of pharmaceutical needs), including localization of manufacturing capabilities, such as “cosmeceuticals” (cosmetics that are claimed to have medicinal properties), particularly halal “cosmeceuticals”; R&D, infrastructure development and capacity-building in this sector.





# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## FAST MOVING CONSUMABLE GOODS (FMCG)

The selection of this sector will directly feed into and support the vision of Dubai being the 'Capital of Islamic Economy' especially since Halal Industries is one of the key seven targeted sectors in that vision.



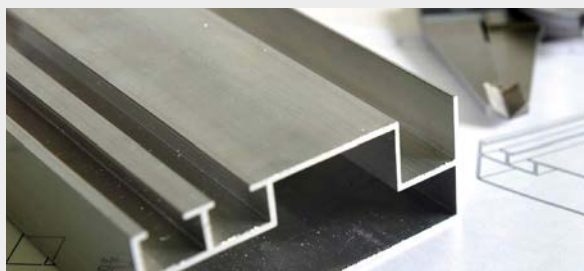
## MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT

This sector represents 25% of the overall industrial sector in Dubai. The global market for Machinery and Equipment is estimated at USD3.5 trillion (AED 12.9 trillion). The sector is highly significant and its competitiveness must be maintained given its lucrative investment and profitability opportunities.



## ALUMINUM AND FABRICATED METALS

Dubai is one of the leading world producers of fabricated metals, particularly Aluminum. While this leading position is based on the manufacturing of (upstream) primary products, the strategy will aim to enhance the Emirate's competitiveness and expand its production base to include (downstream) finished products.



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

**Dubai 3D Printing Strategy 2030** will introduce new heights of developments in various fields, making Dubai a leading hub of 3D printing technology by

the year 2030. The strategy will reshape demand and efficiency in three initial sectors<sup>27</sup>:

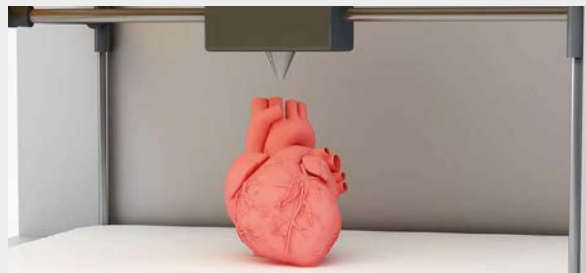
## CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

with specific focus on lighting products, bases and foundations, construction joints, facilities and parks, buildings for humanitarian causes and mobile homes. Dubai has announced its goal to have every new building in Dubai to be 25% 3D printed, by 2025. This move will be initiated in 2019, with a 2% target.



## MEDICAL PRODUCTS SECTOR

focus will be on developing 3D printed teeth, bones, prosthetic limbs, artificial organs and medical and surgical devices and hearing aids.



## CONSUMER PRODUCTS SECTOR

with frontrunner products such as household items, optics, fashion jewelry, children's games - altogether expecting a USD 272 million (AED 2.8 billion) market by 2025.

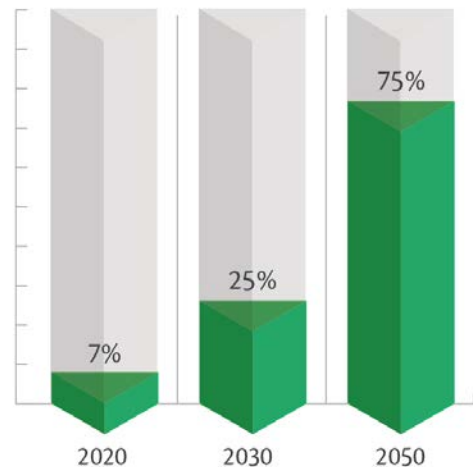


# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

**Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050** articulates the commitment of Dubai to a truly sustainable future. It aims to transform Dubai into a city with the smallest carbon footprint in the world, and a leading global reference in clean energy technologies and sustainable energy practices. To achieve this, as well as on-gong investments in the sector, Dubai continues to introduce policies and technologies to increase efficiency of energy consumption of individuals and businesses by 40%.

The milestones of Dubai Clean Energy Strategy: <sup>28</sup> Dubai will meet its energy needs through clean energy sources, up to 75% by 2050.



The milestones of Dubai Clean Energy Strategy are:

## USD 650 MILLION (AED 2.4 BILLION) DUBAI GREEN FUND

offering loans to companies in the clean energy sector, while also investing directly into green projects acting like a traditional fund.<sup>29</sup>

## DEWA INNOVATION CENTER

which features R&D centers specialized in the next generation of clean energy technologies such as solar energy technology test center, drones research center, 3D printing technology, and solar energy based desalination tests center.

## DUBAI GREEN ZONE


a Free Zone to be established, dedicated to attracting R&D centers and emerging companies in the field of clean energy.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE



Why choose

as an ideal Investment Destination

## A VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

### CONFIDENCE AND 'CAN' DO ATTITUDE

- The extraordinary perception and vision of Dubai's leaders have created one of the world's most successful and vibrant cities.
- A belief in the potential and possibilities of the future has lifted this previously obscure trading town into a major player on a global stage. This vision continues, and with it, Dubai's ambition expands.

## BEST PLACE TO LIVE

### LIFESTYLE

- With over 200 nationalities represented in Dubai, the city offers a highly attractive social and multicultural environment with a safe, family-friendly lifestyle.

### BEST RETAIL

- Dubai is a shopper's paradise, with many international retail brands having a large presence in the city. Dubai was ranked number one in the CB Richard Elis' 2011 report "Top 20 Cities for Retail"

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## DUBAI AS A PREFERRED BUSINESS LOCATION

### PRO-BUSINESS GOVERNMENT

- Dubai has a highly proactive pro-business government, with the most transparent business regulations in the region.

### GLOBAL HEADQUARTERS

- Dubai plays an essential role as the main base of multinational companies operating out of the Middle East.

### CONNECTED

- Dubai offers a world-class transport infrastructure providing easy access to key international markets.

### LOGISTICS INFRASTRUCTURE

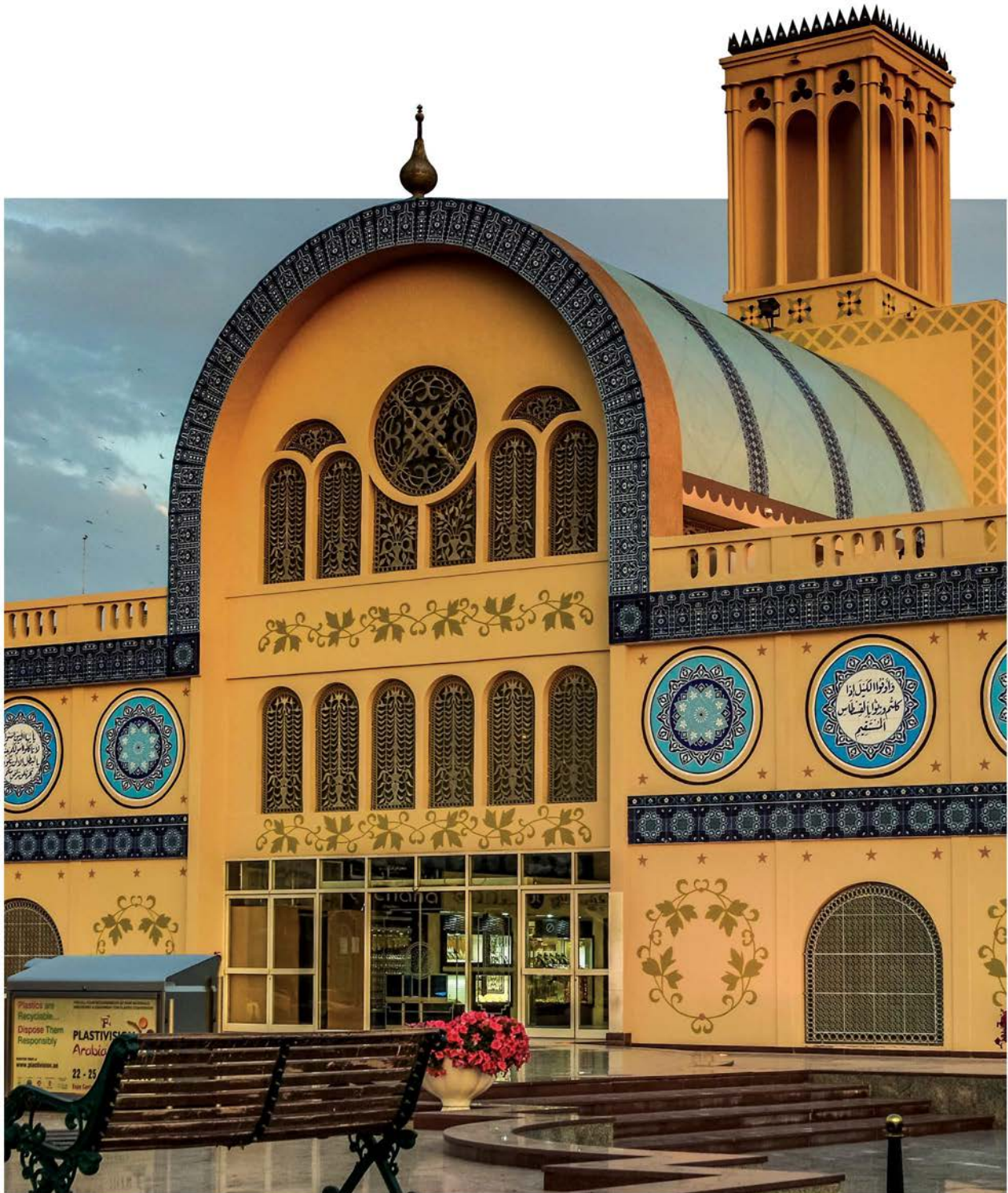
- With its best-in-class logistics infrastructure, Dubai is the world's third largest re-export hub and has the world's busiest international airport.

### ICT LEADER

- Dubai is the regional leader in ICT and telecoms. Mobile phone penetration rate in Dubai is the highest in the world.



# SHARJAH

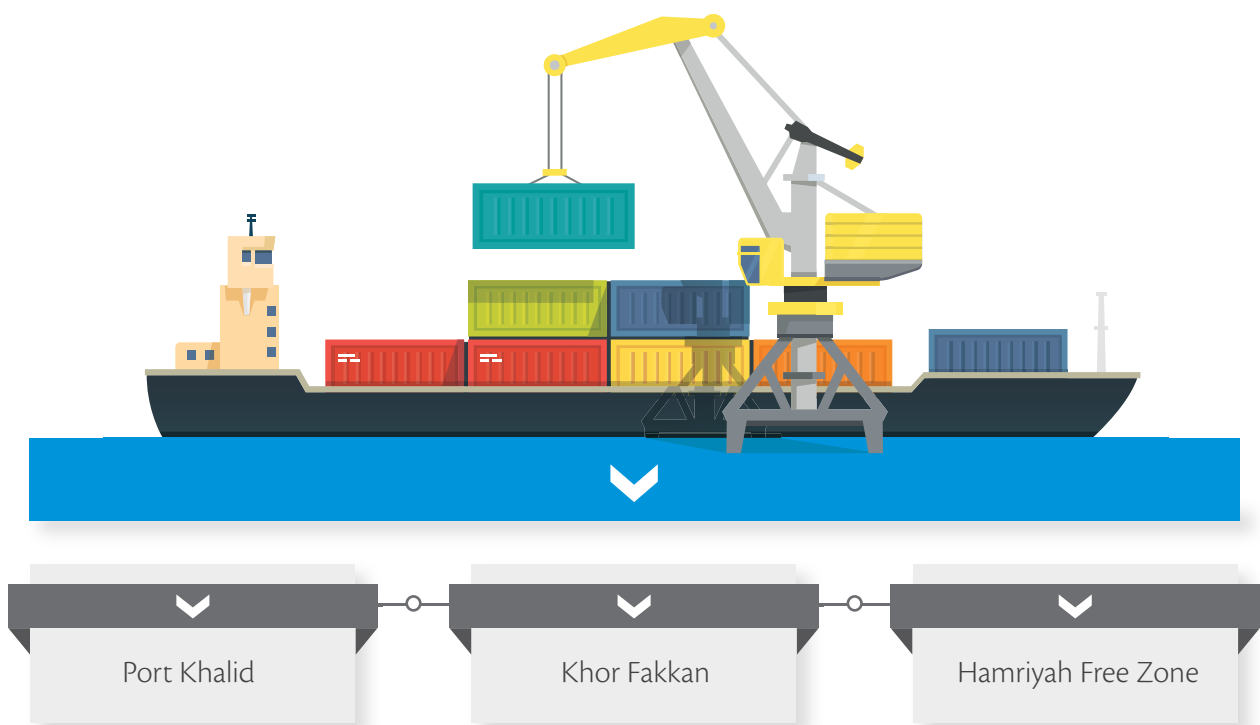


# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

**Sharjah** is the third largest of the Emirates, in terms of both its geographical area and contribution to the UAE GDP. The city is deeply rooted in the teachings and philosophy of Islam, where the traditional Arab heritage and culture are highly valued. Renowned for preserving its rich cultural heritage and Islamic values, while also prominently seizing opportunities the future reveals, Sharjah is a global icon for exemplifying the best possible nexus of both the purity of the past and the ambitions of the future.

A strategic location for investors, Sharjah is the only Emirate that lies on both coasts: the Arabian Gulf in the west and the Gulf of Oman (Indian Ocean) in the east. Three of the best deep-water harbours in the UAE are located in Sharjah:<sup>31</sup>



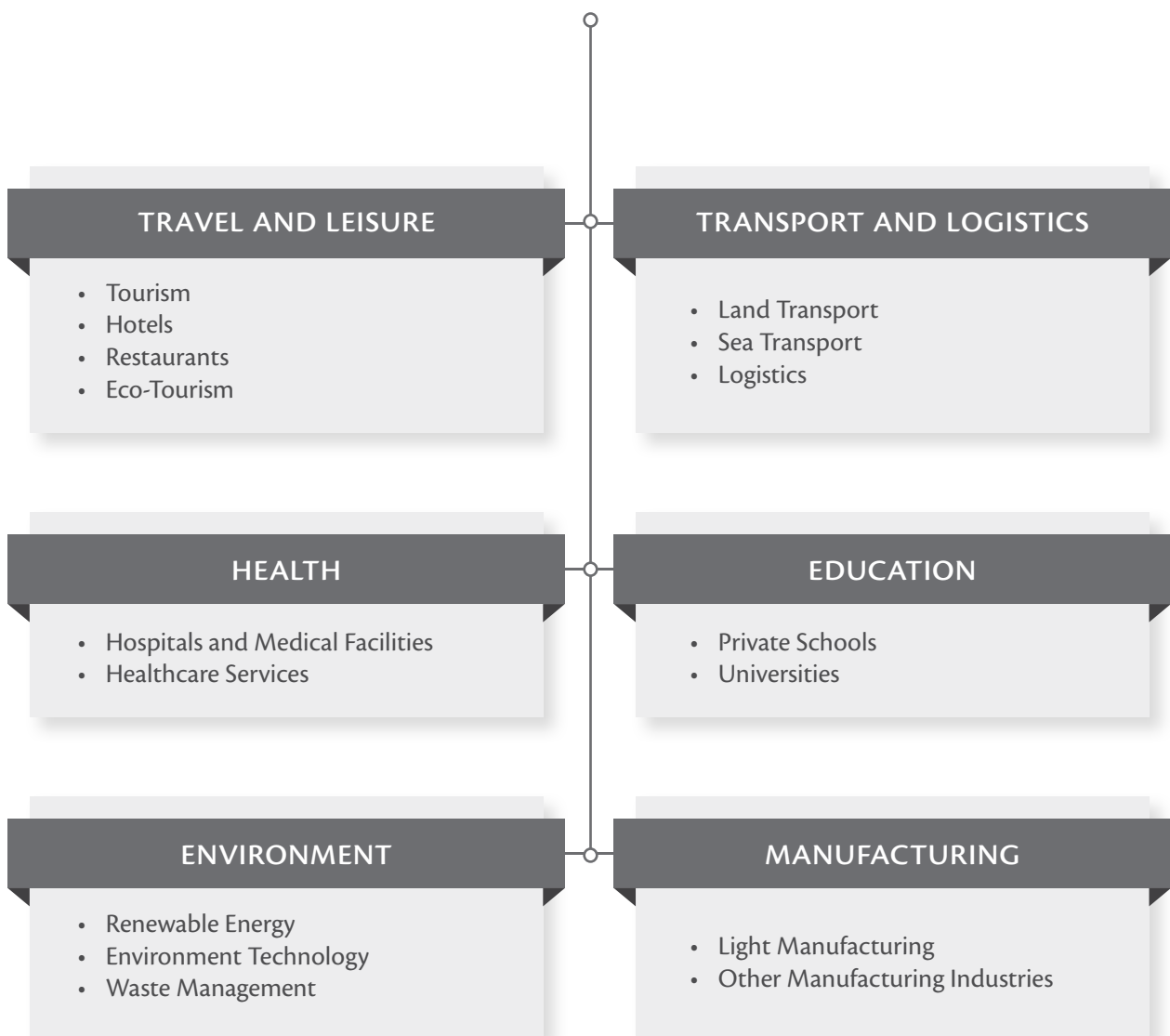
Home to the second largest airfreight hub in the Middle East and located between Dubai and Ajman, Sharjah has a rich ecosystem of businesses and thriving entrepreneurs. As well as large, multinational corporations, the city hosts more than 55,000 SMEs – small and medium-sized enterprises enriching the manufacturing, real estate, tourism, energy, gas, education, healthcare, logistics and business services sector of the Emirate. The city's three Free Zones are also home to more than 13,000 companies, with investors from more than 150 nationalities.<sup>32</sup>

True to its resolve to keep the economy of Sharjah flourishing and more diversified, the Sharjah Government had announced a significant budget allocation for economic development-related programmes and infrastructure development in its 2018 budget of USD 6 billion (AED 22.1 billion). As in previous years, economic development received the largest share of the budget, at 44% in 2018, amounting to USD 2.64 billion (AED 9.7 billion), and an increase of 7% over 2017 budget. Infrastructure development took almost a quarter of the 2018 budget.<sup>33</sup>

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

The city of Sharjah promotes investment opportunities in various sectors. **Invest in Sharjah**, the Investment Promotion Agency of Sharjah identified the following key sectors for investment: <sup>34</sup>



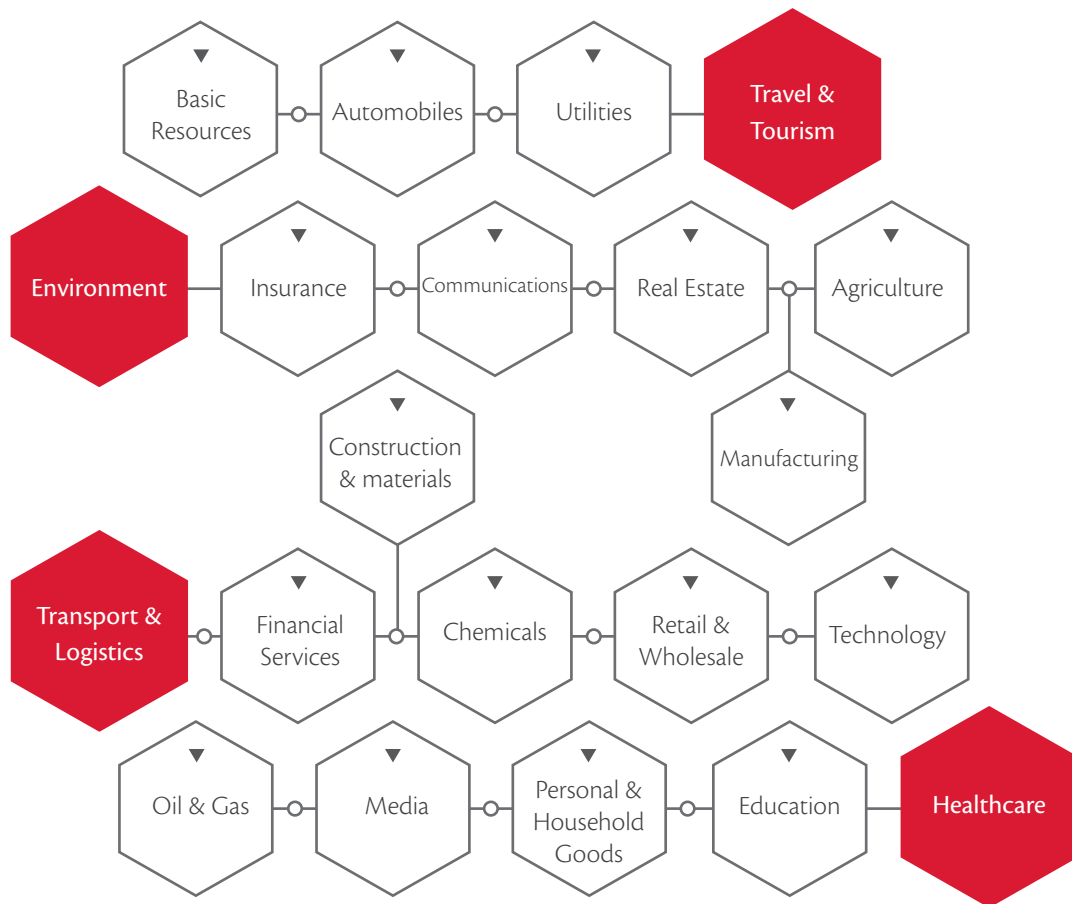
Recognizing the highly diverse economy of Sharjah, and the needs of the growing population and the city's road to progress, the **Sharjah Investment and Development Authority (Shurooq)** also welcomes investments in many sectors. It has identified **4 top**

**sectors** that address the immediate needs of the Emirate, while also yielding great potential return on investment.



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

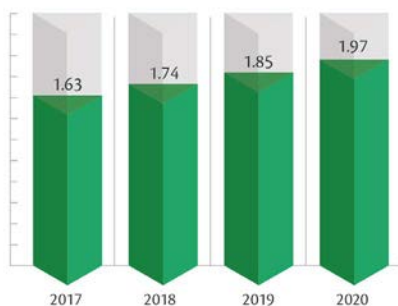


## SHARJAH TOURISM STRATEGY

The Sharjah Tourism Strategy aims to attract 10 million tourists annually, by 2021. Renowned for its title, the Capital of Islamic Culture<sup>35</sup>, the city is a

favourite destination for family and cultural tourism.

### SHARJAH TRAVEL & TOURISM MARKET POTENTIAL (IN AED BILLIONS)



Sharjah's Travel & Tourism sector benefits from the UAE's international profile as an established tourism destination. Tourists' and residents' continuing demand for different experiences provides new opportunities for Sharjah. Additionally, the growing expatriate population, government investment in tourism infrastructure, and rising disposable income all point to a positive sector outlook.

Source: Shurooq (<http://shurooq.gov.ae/business-opportunities/travel-tourism/>)

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

Identified as one of the top four investment opportunities in the Emirate, Sharjah continues to welcome investors in the Travel and Tourism Sector. This thriving sector is creating market demand that

continue to exceed current supply, despite on-going developments in the city. Some of the investment opportunities driven by the travel and tourism sector include<sup>36</sup>:

## HOTEL ROOMS

- Investment opportunities to meet demand: (\* based on 2014 - 2020 Projection)
- Supply: 4,116 hotel rooms
- Demand: 5,800 hotel rooms

## ECO-TOURISM

- Investment opportunities for the hospitality and service companies to develop a range of eco-tourism products for different customer segments.
- (3 eco-tourism projects are being developed)

## FIVE-STAR RESORTS

- This sector is underserved, owing to lack of deluxe luxury resorts within the Emirate.
- Opportunity to customize hospitality offerings to meet the needs of the large number of GCC families and visitors.

## CRUISE LINES

- This is a growing line of business, with 2 cruise liners operating through Khor Fakkan.
- Additional cruise liners have expressed interest; there is an opportunity to develop specific tour packages and experiences targeted to this customer segment.

## RESTAURANTS

- The sector is still underserved, and there is a strong demand for new food and beverage outlets, from fast-food facilities and coffee shops to fine dining, luxury restaurants, throughout Sharjah.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## TOURIST PACKAGES

- Hotels have succeeded in attracting the Eastern European segment of tourists to Sharjah by offering customized packages. Establishing restaurants with a specific value proposition for this and other niche segments is another way to take advantage of this sub-sector.

## FRANCHISES

- The Middle East is a popular and lucrative destination for international franchises, and Sharjah is no exception. The introduction of successful brands in key locations throughout the Emirate is a proven method of success.

## PASSENGER CARRIERS

- Medium- to Long-haul Itineraries: with some of the most competitive rates in the region, this aviation hub offers opportunities for companies to develop short- and medium-haul itineraries.

## AIRPORT SUPPORT SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT

- The expected growth in passenger traffic will create a need for additional support services and equipment, such as airport and airlines maintenance and repair services, airport terminal services, food and beverage outlets, and car rental companies.

## ENVIRONMENT SECTOR

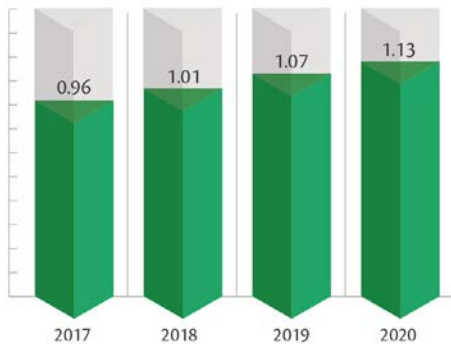
The Emirate of Sharjah aims to become one of the global leaders in pursuing the environment dimension of global sustainability, introducing strong carbon emission reduction programmes and zero-waste strategy.

With federal-level policies backing environment protection, energy efficiency and sustainability, as well as improved practices, investment opportunities in the environment sector, within Sharjah and the whole of the UAE, continue to gain a lot of traction.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## SHARJAH ENVIRONMENT MARKET POTENTIAL (IN AED BILLIONS)



The UAE federal government is implementing stricter environmental legislations and setting targets for renewable energy. This is spurring both public and private sectors to explore ways to achieve compliance and generate demand for environmental services.

Source: Shurooq (<http://dev.shurooq.gov.ae/business-opportunities/environment-renewable-energy/>)

Some of the investment opportunities driven by the environment sector include<sup>37</sup> :

### RENEWABLE ENERGY

- Energy manufacturing
- Privatization of power generation sectors and the entrance of independent power and water producers.

### SOLAR ENERGY

- Developing solar power technologies.
- Water desalination (solar thermal energy plants)
- Solar energy-generation plants
- Solar heating and cooling
- Public lighting

### GREEN BUILDINGS CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPMENT

- Backed by UAE government regulated building code, the green building construction and equipment sectors are driving a steep demand in the UAE, including for retrofitting and for introducing energy-efficient building construction.

### BIOFUELS

- There is also long-term potential for producing biofuels from saltwater crops.

## HEALTHCARE SECTOR

Another first of its kind under the Emirate's belt, Sharjah was named as the First Healthy City in the Middle East by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Accordingly, the healthcare sector's market value in Sharjah was about USD 2 billion (AED 7.3 billion) in 2016. And with the overall UAE healthcare sector estimated to grow at 7% annually to 2020, the city of Sharjah is well positioned to seize the health sector's many offerings.<sup>38</sup>

Driven by the Emirate's rising population, its aging demographics, increasing emergence of lifestyle-associated medical conditions such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, and a growing health

awareness among its residents, the health sector of Sharjah is experiencing a steep demand, rapidly outpacing supply. In response, the Government has allocated resources to expand its health services, including by developing the Sharjah Healthcare City.

Once fully completed by 2020, the **Sharjah Healthcare City** will be one of the region's largest healthcare free zones, and certainly a medical tourism icon. Operating as a Free Zone, the Sharjah Healthcare City is already welcoming international investors across various health segments, including in healthcare facilities, wellness and rehabilitation centers, and assembly of healthcare equipment.<sup>39</sup>

As current supply is only able to cater to 50% of demand, some of the investment opportunities in Sharjah's Health Sector include<sup>40</sup>:

### SPECIALIZED MEDICAL CENTERS

- Opportunities exist for highly specialized oncology hospitals, specialty clinics for diabetes treatment and paediatrics.

### LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES

- There are plenty of investment opportunities for long-term care facilities for the elderly, accident victims, patients affected by neurological disorders, and children born with birth defects.

### AFFILIATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- There is potential for international firms and specialists to partner with local hospitals and service providers in the delivery of high-quality services, state-of-the-art technologies, and sharing of best practices.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

As part of the city's focus in the Health Sector, several investment opportunities in the **Pharmaceutical Sector** continue to attract investors:<sup>41</sup>

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

- Investment opportunities are offered to regional and international companies to initiate strategic partnerships with regional institutions for R&D activities to tap potential of the underdeveloped pharmaceuticals market.

## SET-UP OF MANUFACTURING UNITS BY PRIVATE PLAYERS

- With the federal government's encouragement for local generic brand manufacturing, there are opportunities for private entities to set up local facilities to meet the growing domestic and regional drug demand.

## JOINT VENTURES, LICENSING DEALS

- Opportunities exist for local and international players to enter joint ventures and licensing deals with multinational pharmaceutical companies to boost domestic drug manufacturing.

## TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS

The fourth top sector identified by the Sharjah Investment Authority, the transport and logistics sector continues to grow.<sup>42</sup> Primed by the strategic location of the Emirate of Sharjah with the Arabian Gulf in the west and the Gulf of Oman in the East,

its three deep-water ports, and the strong trade and manufacturing sectors of the Emirate, consistently high demand in the trade and logistics sector is well expected.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

Some of the investment opportunities driven by the Trade and Logistics Sector include<sup>43</sup>:

## FREIGHT FORWARDING

- Despite Sharjah-based companies contributing to more than 9% of the UAE foreign trade, only 6% of freight forwarding services for SMEs are based in Sharjah.

## F&B REEFER SHIPPING

- There is an opportunity for new reefer forwarders to enter the market, as a large majority of the competition is located outside the Emirate.

## OTHER PROMISING SECTORS:

### INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Another major economic engine of Sharjah, the Industrial Sector is witnessing continued and impressive growth, from contributing 14% to the GDP of Sharjah in 2015, to as much as 25% by 2025.<sup>44</sup> This is a direct result of the careful planning of the city, designating 22 industrial zones across the city. The most recent of which is the **Al Saja'a Industrial**

**Oasis**, a 14 million square foot industrial city, in close proximity to the Sharjah International Airport. The 353 prime plots (industrial, mixed-use, and commercial land plots, retail) at the Al Saja'a Industrial Oasis are available for sale as a freehold investment, or leasehold.<sup>45</sup>

### PUBLISHING AND BOOK INDUSTRY

A new development in the city, the **Sharjah Publishing City (SPC)**<sup>46</sup>, is the world's first free publishing zone dedicated to providing services to the book industry. Recognizing the potential of this sector, and consistent with the recognition bestowed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) to the Emirate of Sharjah as


the World Book Capital for 2019, the city is mobilizing its resources to strengthen this industry.<sup>47</sup> Already attracting many leading international publishing houses that seek to expand their business or enter the region's book market, Sharjah is set to welcome more investors to its Publishing and Book Industry.<sup>48</sup>

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE



Why choose

as an ideal Investment Destination



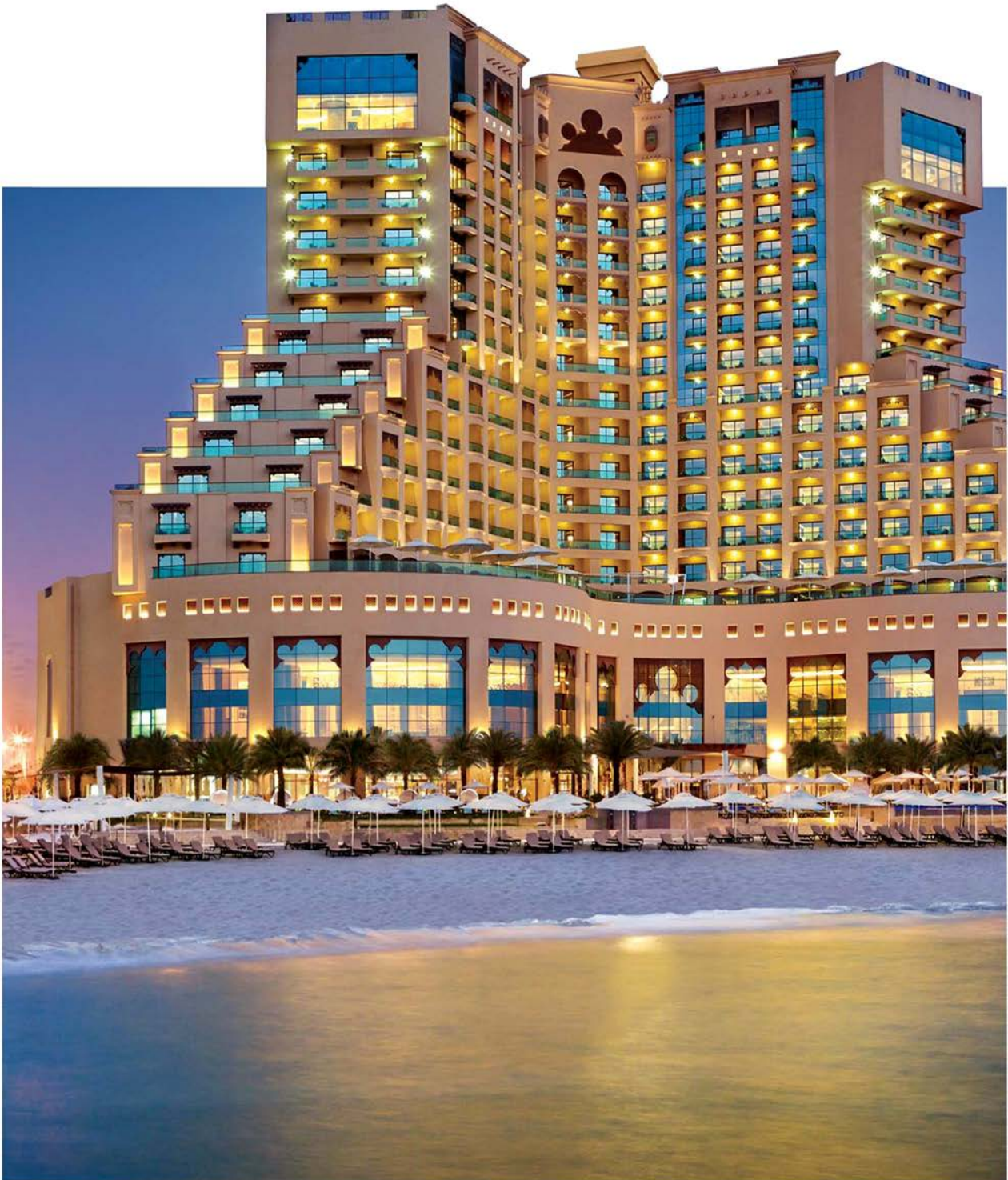
- Two coastlines – Indian Ocean, Arabian Gulf
- Naturally diverse – Striking landscape and wildlife
- Modern city
- 3 Free Zones, >20 designated industrial areas
- World-class infrastructure
- Political stability and government investment
- Intra Arab tourism destination and thriving cultural hub
- Growing population. Third largest in the UAE (1.4 million – 2015)
- USD 25+ billion GDP (AED >6.8 billion, 2016)
- 55,000+ strong SME business
- One of the most diversified economies in the region, with no sector contributing for more than 20% of GDP.
- Capital of Arab Culture 1998
- Capital of Islamic Culture 2014
- Sharjah Arab Tourism Capital 2015
- Capital of Arab Press 2016
- World Book Capital 2019



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## AJMAN



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

**Ajman** is the smallest of the seven Emirates, and is comprised of a mainland located on the coast of the Arabian Gulf, the Al Manama area in the east known for its fresh water and landforms rich in chromate and magnesium, and last, but certainly not the least, is the very scenic Masfout district nestled in the south of the UAE. As with other Emirates, Ajman is proud of its rich culture and heritage, and its warm Arabian hospitality.

The size of Ajman was never a hindrance to its own development: the city's economic growth over the past few years is largely credited to the city's leadership and planning, as well as to its open economy approach, ensuring economic resilience through well-diversified sectors of business activities. Ajman's strategic location and the accomplishments of its two main economic drivers – the Ajman Port and the Ajman Free Zone – remain the most important elements of Ajman's notable milestones of achievements.

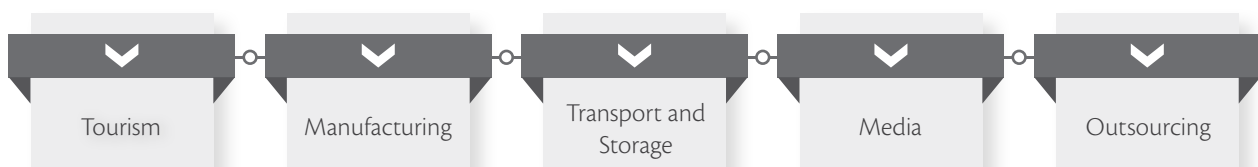
The Emirate of Ajman's business ecosystem is a haven for many investors: as well as featuring well-facilitated mechanisms that offer ease of doing business, and tailor-made solutions for SMEs, the city has low initial

investment thresholds, and instalment-based flexible payment mechanism. Known for its relatively low of cost living (including property rents), an impressive quality of life, and modern infrastructure, Ajman continues to fascinate tourists and investors.

The economy of the Emirate has consistently posted notable growth over the years. While mining and quarrying remains Ajman's largest economic activity, non-oil sectors contribute, on an average, more than 65% to Ajman's GDP, demonstrating the city's diversified economy.<sup>49</sup>

**The Ajman Vision 2021** champions the indispensable elements of happiness and a sustainable future, where citizens stay connected with the culture and heritage of Ajman and the UAE, as well as that of the environment – all in unison with the UAE Vision 2021. It also outlines the city's top five investment activities leading up to the realization of the Vision in 2021.

## TOP 5 INVESTMENT SECTORS IN AJMAN

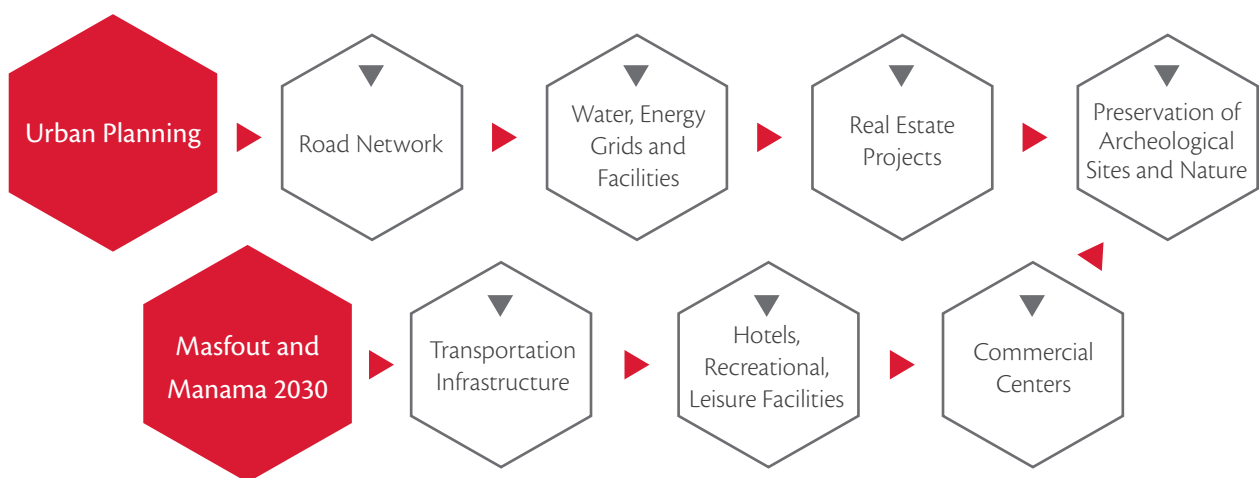


# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

**Urban Planning Project for Masfout and Manama 2030** is another major development in Ajman. Still in the conceptualization phase, the development of the Masfout and Al Manama districts of Ajman is

already highly anticipated to flourish the market with rich investment opportunities. Projects discussed by Ajman government officials include:<sup>50</sup>



## TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

By 2020, Ajman is keen to welcome five million tourists.<sup>51</sup> Complementing Ajman's picturesque tourist attractions, breath-taking landscape, its pristine white sandy beaches, tranquil hiking trails and the city's offerings including its museums, the Ajman Government has rolled out several large projects – all of which are bound to attract not only visitors, but also investors from across the globe.

The most recent announcement is the development of the Masfout Heights Resort Project. The construction will include a network of grandiose hotels, villas and a natural reserve – all of which will be situated against the backdrop of nature's pure beauty and exquisite charm. Keen to attract foreign investors, the Ajman Government indicated their readiness in offering wide-ranging support to investors, from business set-up assistance to incentives.<sup>52</sup>

The growth trend of Ajman's travel and tourism sector illustrates an impressive upward trajectory, enriching other sectors such as retail trade, food and beverages and transportation and logistics, among others.

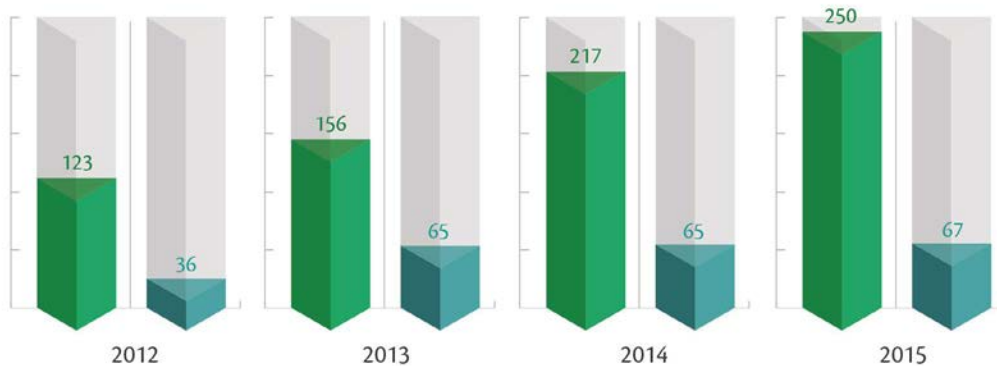
As show below, Ajman's increasing revenue of its hotel industry is a testament to the success of this industry, and yields a reliable confidence level in the many opportunities that lie ahead. Interestingly, the statistics also offer an indication of the landscape of the hotel accommodation sector in Ajman: where hotels take a larger piece of the market, validating the growing demand, across the seven Emirates, including Ajman, for world-class leisure facilities and all-inclusive resorts.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## HOTELS & HOTEL APARTMENTS REVENUE

Hotels Hotel Apartments



## EXPORTS, TRADING AND E-COMMERCE

Recognizing the potential of SMEs as key drivers of economic growth in any economy globally, Ajman, through its government entities and the Ajman Free Zone, is launching initiatives and conducting events to promote the city's rewarding investment landscape.

As well as housing in excess of 15,000 SMEs, the Ajman Free Zone focuses its efforts in pursuing companies in varied sectors, with special focus on the exports, trading and e-commerce space.<sup>53</sup>



Why choose

Ajman



as an ideal Investment Destination



- World class infrastructure
- Inexpensive energy
- Low labour costs
- Lowest lease prices
- Profitable strategic location
- State of the art international shipping and port facilities



# UMM AL QUWAIN



**Umm Al Quwain** is the least populated Emirate in the UAE. The second smallest of the seven Emirates, and located between Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah, the Emirate of Umm Al Quwain is truly a gem characterized by raw facets of nature, culture and heritage.

Amidst the rapid modernization of the UAE and the diversification of the nation's economy, Umm Al Quwain has kept a fascinating harmony between globalization and staying true to its roots: to this day, the Emirate remains the main fishing hub of the country, while also opening its doors to foreign investors interested in accelerating the development

growth of the Emirate, and in helping shape the future of Umm Al Quwain, as partners.

As well as generating a significant portion of its GDP from fishing, including by exporting seafood throughout Europe and the Middle East, the Government of Umm Quwain introduced several policies to improve its trade and investment ecosystem, incentivizing entrepreneurs and investors to join the Emirate in its bid to acquiring a stronger and more diversified economy.<sup>62</sup>

## PORTS AND FREE ZONE

In response to the growing demand for terminal facilities in the northern part of the UAE, with the Umm Al Quwain Port, the Ahmed Bin Rashid Port in Umm Al Quwain, soon to be operated by the Hutchison Ports, also offers another distinct advantage for the Emirate, including attracting future investment into the Emirate of Umm Al Quwain.<sup>63</sup>

The Umm Al Quwain Free Trade Zone (UAQ FTZ) is another pioneering initiative of the Government mandated to offer a world-class service with unparalleled facilities to investors and entrepreneurs worldwide. Its door is open to a wide range of

businesses, offering 'freelance and consultancy type of license to individuals and professionals', as well as service, commercial and industrial licenses to cater to other business types, in all sizes.<sup>64</sup>

The new phase of expansion in the Free Zone in 2018 will feature an independent industrial city, complete with amenities for its employees such as a housing complex, a hospital and school, shopping centers, hotel and an exhibition and convention center. When completed, the Free Zone will also be an ideal location for IT companies, back offices, call centers and R&D centers.<sup>65</sup>

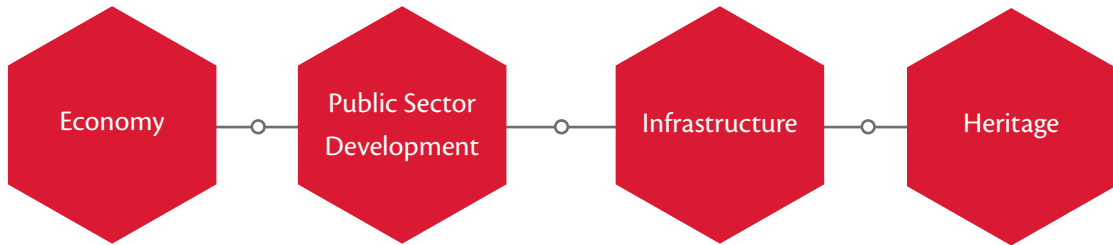
## UMM AL QUWAIN AND UAE VISION 2021

The Government of Umm Al Quwain was quick to devise its own strategy, aligning the development of the Emirate with the overarching objectives of the UAE Vision 2021. Building on its own strength and legacy, and recognizing the needs of Umm Al Quwain

to a more sustainable future, the following areas of development serve as the Emirate's roadmap and priorities for investment, until 2021.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE



## CONSTRUCTION AND REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT SECTORS

Umm Al Quwain thrives well with the contemporary growth of the UAE, and is set to conquer its own milestones of development in the new era, with world-class infrastructure as one of its building blocks. As a natural catalyst of domestic development, the construction and real estate development sectors of Umm Al Quwain are perhaps two of the most fertile grounds for investment.

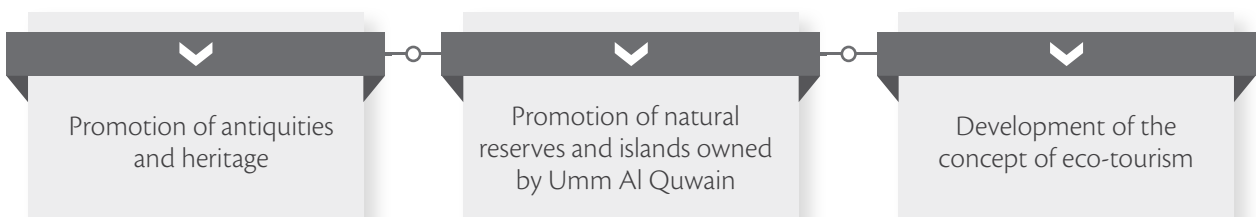
With businesses looking to the Emirate as an ideal destination, and the increasing popularity of Umm Al Quwain among travellers as a cultural oasis with a well-preserved natural environment, demand for commercial and residential buildings, hotels, restaurants and all-inclusive recreation and leisure facilities remains evident.

## TOURISM SECTOR

Proud of its heritage, Umm Al Quwain has identified heritage promotion as one of its main niches to prominently position Umm Al Quwain in the global destination map for tourists. Less than 45 kilometers from Dubai, intercity tourism conveniently leads many visitors to Umm Al Quwain.

Umm Al Quwain offers an authentic immersion to its rich culture, and that of the UAE. Its landscape-defining coastal mangroves and the many captivating islands on the east of the city are also constant drivers of the Emirate's tourism industry.

To continue enriching this space, and attract further investment from across the globe, allocations for government spending have been directed to develop and improve infrastructure and facilities, including in the:





## WATER SECTOR

The UAE Vision 2021 outlines the nation's intention to ensure water security and sustainability. Aligned with the national plan of the UAE, and in an effort to preserve underground water, the UAE Federal Electricity and Water Authority (FEWA) and the Government of Umm Al Quwain are building a new water desalination plant in the Emirate. In

addition, in order to meet the steadily increasing water consumption demand in the whole of the UAE, fuelled by the country's fast growing economic sectors and rising population, Umm Al Quwain is planning to build reverse osmosis plants. This new project in the pipeline is sure to drive investment opportunities.<sup>66</sup>



Why choose

Umm Al Quwain



as an ideal Investment Destination



- Stable economy
- Open investment climate
- Modern infrastructure
- World-class Free Zones
- Low cost of living
- Competitive labour market
- Strategic business base with the MENA region, Subcontinent, Far East and European markets<sup>67</sup>

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## RAS AL KHAIMAH



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

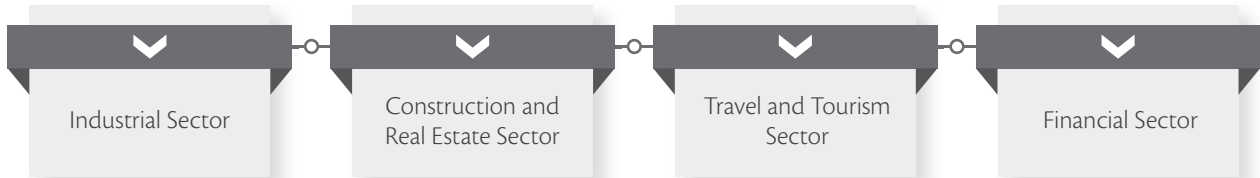
The Emirate of **Ras Al Khaimah** is the fourth largest Emirate and another splendor for business and quality of life. Located at the northern part of the country, Ras Al Khaimah has an impressive landscape matched by world-class facilities enticing tourists and nature enthusiasts from around the world.

As well as its geographical share, Ras Al Khaimah is the fourth among the seven Emirates in terms of its contribution to the GDP of the UAE. With a growth rate of 3.1% in 2016, the GDP of Ras Al Khaimah reached USD 9.6 billion (AED 35.1 billion) in 2016.

Exemplifying the national economic diversification of the UAE, the contribution of non-oil sectors to the GDP of Ras Al Khaimah stood remarkably at 97.1% in 2015, steering nearly 8% increase in investment volume during the same period.<sup>54</sup>

As with other Emirates, the main GDP contributors of Ras Al Khaimah also constitute its main drivers of immediate and long-term investment opportunities.

## MAIN GDP CONTRIBUTORS



## INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Ras Al Khaimah has successfully established itself as a leading industrial hub, supported by its network of ports and Free Zones. Its rich natural resources - including clay, rock, best in class limestone deposits and other minerals - nurture the Emirate's construction, cement and ceramic industries.

With a combined land area of 40.3 million m<sup>2</sup>, the three specialized industrial zones in Ras Al Kaimah provide an ideal destination for manufacturing, industrial projects, trading, assembly and logistics. Made prominent by their distinct advantages such as state-of-the-art warehouses available in different sizes, accommodating every business' needs, world-

class infrastructure and utilities, dedicated area for staff accommodation, and efficient business set up support, these industrial zones have been serving major players in the global manufacturing field, operating in more than 50 sectors.<sup>55</sup>

Correspondingly, the industrial sector continues to outperform other economic activities, contributing 33.1% of Ras Al Khaimah's GDP in 2015, with the non-hydrocarbon industries accounting for 30.2%.<sup>56</sup>

## TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Ras Al Khaimah provides a serene ambiance yet exciting experience to its visitors. As such, the Emirate is enthusiastically developing its own brand as a leading family, adventure and heritage destination.

Its booming hotel and restaurants businesses—recording a growth rate of 68% over the last five years, and showing no signs of slowing down<sup>57</sup>—also push the travel and tourism sector of Ras Al Khaimah to even greater heights, accommodating nearly 400,000 visitors during the first half of 2017 alone.<sup>58</sup> By 2018, the city aims to welcome a million tourists, and up to three million visitors annually, by 2025.<sup>59</sup> This projection comes with a high demand of adding 25,000 hotel rooms to the current supply of just 3,600.

To accelerate growth in this already vibrant sector, as well as reach the Government of Ras Al Khaimah’s goal to increase the GDP contribution of the tourism

sector of the Emirate from 3% in 2016 to 10% per year in the coming years, the Emirate is preparing to launch new attractions for its visitors, including by placing its magnificent landscape at the center stage.<sup>60</sup> Jebel Jais, the UAE’s tallest peak, is soon to be a must-see place in all of the Emirates. Development projects around this area are indeed becoming one of the most popular investment choices.

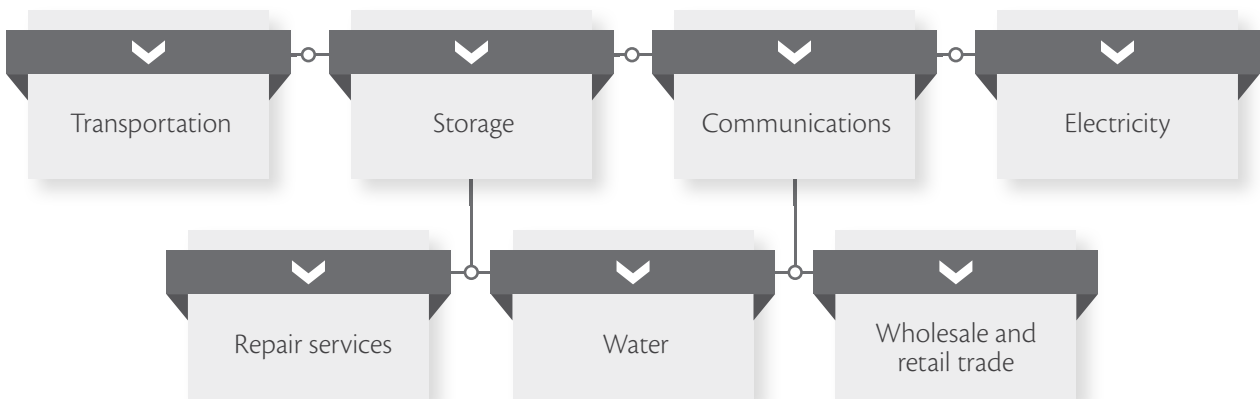
The Emirate also listed several investment opportunities in building and operating world-class resort properties, including hotels, convention facilities, entertainment arenas, luxury retail and fine dining.<sup>61</sup>

## OTHER SECTORS

The growth momentum of the industrial sector as well as the travel and tourism sector, complemented by the rich network of businesses in the Emirate and its growing population will most certainly give

way to new businesses and opportunities, while also strengthening existing ventures and industries.

These include:



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE



Why choose

Ras Al Khaimah



as an ideal Investment Destination



- Diversified industry sectors
- Over 26% of RAK's GDP comes from manufacturing.
- Five major seaports and an international airport.
- Easy access to supply chain of raw materials.
- 20-50% lower cost of living and operating a business than other regions.
- Freedom to source cost-effective labour.



# FUJAIRAH



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

**Fujairah** is located on the east coast of the UAE, and is the country's solitary gateway to the Indian Ocean. The strategic location of Fujairah makes it a prominent choice for trade and investment, given its direct access to and facilitation of the buoyant maritime trade and navigation in the Indian Ocean.

Its position, just about 70 nautical miles south of the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important

chokepoints deemed critical to global energy security, also provides Fujairah a strategic advantage.

It is no wonder then that the establishment of the Port of Fujairah - one of the few natural deep water ports - and the reputation it has built in just over three decades are of paramount significance to the economic growth of Fujairah, transforming the Emirate into a strategic energy hub.

## FUJAIRAH 2040 PLAN

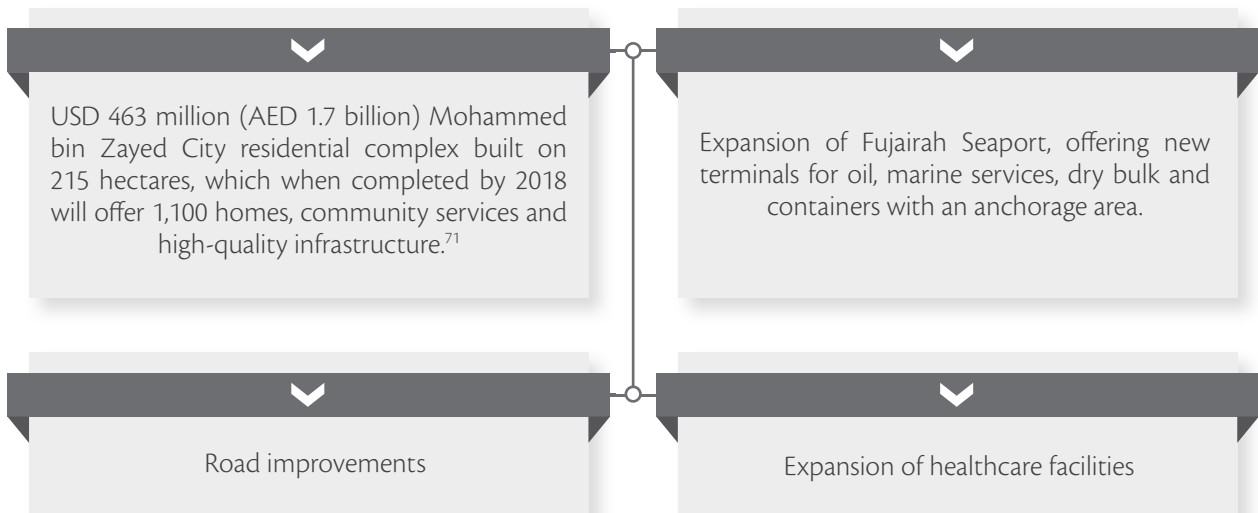
Launched in 2015, the Fujairah Plan 2040 sets out the vision and blueprint of the Emirate of Fujairah over the next two decades, preparing Fujairah for the future. The master plan centers on improving the most important elements of sustainable development. As well as the need to ensure economic growth and securing a distinct place for Fujairah in the global world, the plan takes into consideration meeting the

needs of the exponential domestic population growth the Emirate of Fujairah anticipates: from 225,360 in 2016, to half a million by 2040.<sup>69</sup>

With a generous multi-year funding allocated by the Government, these major projects are stimulating investment opportunities in the already fertile investment landscape of Fujairah.<sup>70</sup>



To name a few, these projects constitute the implementation of the master plan's immediate goals:



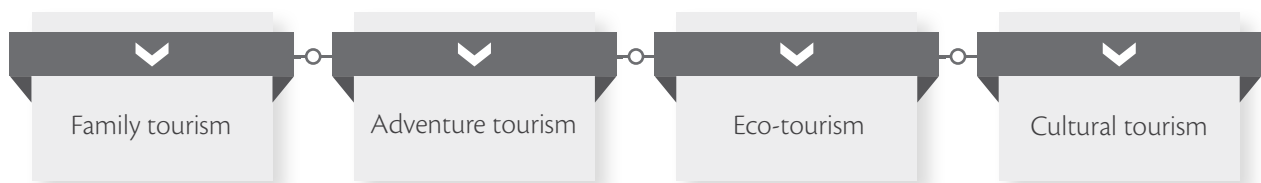


## TOURISM

Nature has bestowed Fujairah with enviable, picturesque topography: 75% of its terrain is made up of mountainous range, while valleys, hot water springs and white sandy beaches of the Gulf of Oman add to the already perfect panorama. These, and the well-

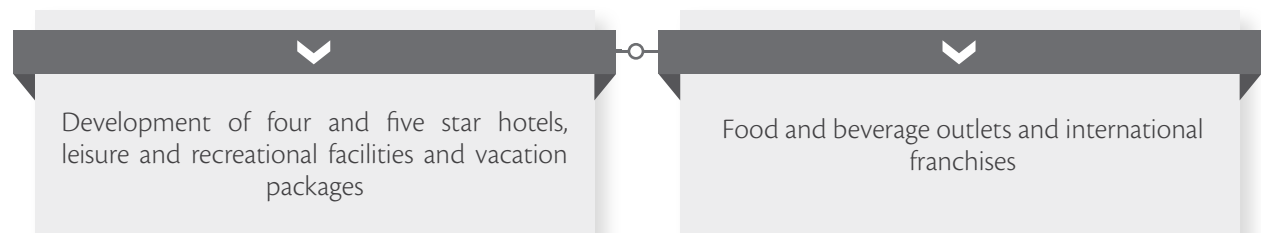
preserved cultural heritage and tranquil character of Fujairah, make the Emirate a coveted paradise for both its residents and guests from distant lands.

These unique characters continue to nourish various types of tourism in Fujairah, and are creating impressive demand:



As a result, the hotel industry in the Emirate is growing stronger, with more than 1 million guests in 2017<sup>72</sup>, and total revenues in 2016 soaring to USD 124.7 million (AED 458.2 million).<sup>73</sup> To cater to the

industry's growing appetite, tourism developments – including those in the pipeline and projects that are essential to deliver the Fujairah Plan 2040 – include:



## MANUFACTURING

Adding to the long list of nature's favours to Fujairah, the Emirate has abundant natural and mineral resources, such as rocks, marbles, gypsum, and limestones, among others.

Accordingly, mining and quarrying make up a large proportion of the GDP of Fujairah, yielding 18% of the total in 2016. These minerals drive the country's production of exported products, and are also used domestically, largely to supply the insatiable

construction industry of the seven Emirates of the UAE.


Posting year on year strong growth, investment opportunities still abound in the manufacturing sector, including in block factories, ceramic and tile industries and cement production plants.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE



Why choose

Fujairah 

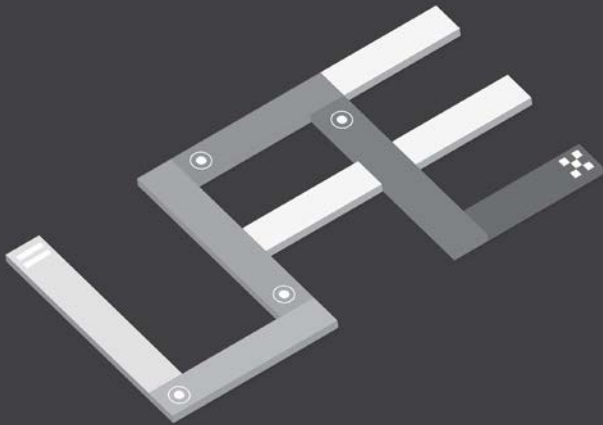
as an ideal Investment Destination



- Strategic Location - the only Emirate out of Hormuz Strait.
- A global business focal-point.
- Modern sea port (Fujairah Port is the second largest bunkering port in the world).
- Opportunity for investment in earth and geological projects (rocks, minerals and oil).
- Opportunity for investment in tourism sector.
- Opportunity for investment in agriculture.
- A highly business-friendly government.
- State policies permit full repatriation of profit and capital.
- Free trade zones.
- Modern, efficient and sophisticated communication system.
- Stable currency.
- Fujairah International airport-The only airport serving the UAE East Coast as well as Northern Oman.

## Section 03

# AN INTEGRATED ENABLER AND SUPPORT MECHANISM FOR INVESTORS



Support where it is needed is readily available for investors. The UAE Government, its local and federal entities, including the Ministry of Economy, provide entrepreneurs and investors looking at investing, starting and operating a business in the UAE with comprehensive, unabridged support.

The UAE has laws and regulations in place that govern the entire life-cycle of a business, while also ensuring fair practices, including in the areas of labour and employment, environment, among others.

In addition to these, the UAE has several agreements in place with nearly a hundred countries across the globe to continually improve its trade and investment landscape, specifically in the field of Double Taxation, adopting international best practices.

### THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMY

At the helm of the country's efforts to ensure economic growth is the UAE Ministry of Economy. As well as developing the nation's economic plans and policies, introducing laws and regulations for UAE Cabinet approval, and among others, producing informative publications, the ministry seeks to accelerate trade and investment, continually seeking ways to improve the UAE's trade and investment climate.

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## INVESTMENT LAW

- Planned to be introduced in 2018.
- Includes provisions for foreign direct investments (FDIs)
- Will offer more flexibility and benefits to investors.



## COMMERCIAL COMPANIES LAW

- Has provisions regulating companies according to various international norms related to governance, protection of shareholders, supporting foreign investment and promoting the corporate social responsibility of companies.
- Federal Law No. 2 of 2015  
[http://ejjustice.gov.ae/downloads/latest\\_laws2015/federal\\_law\\_2\\_2015\\_commercial\\_companies\\_en.pdf](http://ejjustice.gov.ae/downloads/latest_laws2015/federal_law_2_2015_commercial_companies_en.pdf)



## TAXATION AND VAT

- Covers VAT and application of VAT and excise tax
- Federal Law No. 7 of 2017: [Excise Tax](#)
- Federal Law No. 8 of 2017: [Value Added Tax](#)



## COMMODITIES IMPORT AND EXPORT LAW

- Stipulates regulations on import and exports, including provisions that permit the UAE to ban or restrict the exporting, importing, re-exporting, transiting or transshipping of commodities, under specific circumstances.
- Federal Law 13 of 2007



## THE FEDERAL BANKRUPTCY LAW

- Is a comprehensive legal framework to help distressed companies in the UAE avoid bankruptcy and liquidation.
- Sets out regulations for financial reorganization and restructuring, pre-emptive settlement, and raising of new funds.
- Issued under Federal Decree No. 9 of 2016



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## REGULATION OF COMPETITION LAW

- Aims to protect and promote competition and anti-monopoly practices.
- Issued under Federal Law No. 4 of 2012

## DOUBLE TAXATION AGREEMENTS

- The UAE has 115 agreements in place with other nations to avoid double taxation on investments overseas.

## PROTECTION INVESTMENTS AGREEMENTS

- The UAE signed 78 agreements to protect and encourage investments, including the network of those agreements most of the state's trading partners.

## SOON TO BE ISSUED

Additional laws being fined-tuned to help augment investments from non-hydrocarbon sectors include:

- Industry regulation law
- Regulation and protection of industrial property patents and industrial designs law
- Commercial transactions law
- Arbitration law

The UAE also launched its Value Added Tax (VAT) regulation, effective January 2018. Among other provisions, all businesses in the UAE will need to record their financial transactions and ensure that their financial records are accurate and up to date. Businesses that meet the minimum annual turnover requirement (as evidenced by their financial records)

will be required to register for VAT. VAT-registered businesses generally must charge VAT on taxable goods or services they supply and may reclaim any VAT the business has paid for, on business-related goods or services. More information is available on: [Ministry of Finance: UAE VAT](#)

## OTHER LAWS AND HELPFUL LINKS

### GENERAL

- [Laws - Legislations Portal of the Ministry of Justice](#)
- [Justice system, community protection, human rights, safety, and more](#)
- [Electronic Transactions and Commerce Law](#)
- [Commercial Transactions Law](#)
- [The Federal Law No. 4 of 1979 on Combating Commercial Fraud](#)
- [Business laws in the UAE](#)
- [Business offences law](#)
- [Common Customs Law of the GCC States](#)
- [Guidelines, laws, manuals and specifications for tenders](#)
- [Protection of Intellectual Property](#)
- [Emirates Securities & Commodities Authority and Market Law](#)
- [Electronic Transactions and Commerce Law](#)

### WATER AND ELECTRICITY

- [The UAE Labour Law](#)
- [Ministerial Decree 76 4 of 2015: Standard Employment Contracts](#)
- [Minister of Labour's Decree 765 of 2015 on rules and conditions for the termination of employment relations](#)
- [Ministerial Decree 766 of 2015 on rules and conditions for granting a permit to a worker for employment by a new employer](#)

### HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND SAFETY REGULATIONS

- [Mid-day break rule](#) - Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation
- [Resolutions and circulars](#) - Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation
- [International agreements](#) - Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation
- [Laws and legislations](#) - Ministry of Climate Change and Environment
- [Rules and regulations](#) - Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation
- [Environment laws](#) - Environment Agency, Abu Dhabi

### LAWS CONCERNING PRIVATE SECURITY COMPANIES FROM THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

- [Federal Law No. 37 of 2006 concerning private security companies](#)
- [Cabinet Resolution No. 33 of 2008 concerning application licensing fees for private security companies](#)
- [Ministerial Resolution No. 557 of 2008 concerning the executive regulations of private security companies law](#)

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## LAWS FROM SECURITIES AND COMMODITIES AUTHORITY



- [Federal Law No. 4 of 2000 concerning the Emirates Securities & Commodities Authority and market](#)
- [Decision No. 13 of 2000 concerning the regulations as to the functioning of the Securities and Commodities Authority](#)

## LAWS FROM THE CENTRAL BANK OF THE UAE

- [Laws related to anti-Money laundering and suspicious cases Unit - AMLSCU](#)
- [Laws of Islamic banks](#)
- [Major selected circulars and notices issued by UAE Central Bank to all banks and financial institutions](#)

## HANDLING LEGAL ISSUES

- There are three primary sources of the UAE law:
  - Federal laws and decrees (applicable in all Emirates)
  - Local laws enacted by the individual Emirates
  - Sharia'h (Islamic law)
- Arbitration centres established by the individual Emirates' Chambers of Commerce and Industry, specialised in reconciling commercial disputes before going to the courts could also be employed.
- **Useful links:**
  - [Abu Dhabi Commercial Conciliation & Arbitration Center](#) - Abu Dhabi Chamber
  - [Dealing with legal issues](#) - Dubai government portal
  - [Dubai International Arbitration Centre \( DIAC\)](#) - Dubai Chamber
  - [Tahkeem](#) - Sharjah International Commercial Arbitration Centre
  - [Ajman Arbitration Centre](#) - Ajman Chamber
  - [RAK Reconciliation & Commercial Arbitration Centre](#) - Ras Al Khaimah Chamber



# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## RELATED FEDERAL AND LOCAL ENTITIES

Various ministries in the UAE oversee investment-related processes – from coming to the UAE, to setting up and running businesses – as per their respective mandates. For instance, the Ministry of Finance handles all tax-related matters, while the Ministry of Interior looks after issuance of permits to enter and stay in the UAE.

Complementing the efforts at the federal level, every Emirate has its own well-oiled engine to attract and support investors and businesses.

- [List of UAE Government Entities](#)
- [List of Abu Dhabi Government's departments](#)
- [List of Dubai Government's departments](#)
- [List of Sharjah Government's departments](#)
- [List of Ajman Government's departments](#)
- [List of Umm Al Quwain Government's departments](#)
- [List of Ras Al Khaimah Government's departments](#)
- [List of Fujairah Government's departments](#)

In addition to the Department of Economic Development in each Emirate and Free Zones in the UAE, the following entities also oversee investment opportunities in the UAE:

- [Invest AD](#)
- [Sharjah Investment and Development Authority \(Shurooq\)](#)
- [Invest in Sharjah](#)
- [Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone \(RAKEZ\)](#)

## ADDITIONAL USEFUL LINKS

### Abu Dhabi

- [Abu Dhabi Business Centre](#)
- [Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Higher Corporation for Specialized Economic Zones](#)
- [Building Completion Certificate](#)

### Dubai

- [Department of Economic Development](#)
- [Acquiring business support services](#)
- [Dubai Chamber](#)
- [Building Completion Certificate](#)

### Sharjah

- [Department of Economic Development](#)
- [Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Completion Certificate](#)

### Ras Al Khaimah

- [Department of Economic Development](#)
- [Ras Al Khaimah Chamber](#)

### Ajman

- [Department of Economic Development](#)
- [Ajman Chamber](#)

### Umm Al Quwain

- [Umm Al Quwain Chamber](#)
- [Department of Economic Development](#)
- [Completion Certificate](#)

### Fujairah

- [Department of Industry and Economy](#)
- [Fujairah Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Completion Certificate](#)

## PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (PPPS)

The UAE also employs the global practices in the area of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), primarily to ensure that the UAE provides the most efficient government services to the public, while also lowering costs, on both the government-side as well as to its stakeholders, the general public.

*PPPs incentivize the private sector to become more innovative, and it is also regarded as an effective vehicle in attracting national, regional and foreign investments.*

A contractual relationship between the government and the private sector, PPPs incentivize the private sector to become more innovative, and it is also regarded as an effective vehicle in attracting national, regional and foreign investments.

Some successful PPPs in the UAE are employed in:

- Tendering of UAE Government Contracts
  - The Ministry of Finance sets out rules and procedures for federal entities' projects' tendering process with the private sector.
  - At the local government levels, the Department of Finance in each Emirate handles tendering process.
- PPPs in the Education Sector, Infrastructure Projects, Waste Management Projects
- PPPs under the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation, and under the Ministry of Interior.

## UAE INCUBATORS

Already, the UAE is a well-known, important hub for international investments owing to many factors that include its strategic location, state-of-the-art infrastructure, open economy, variety of business premises, political social and economic stability, and

much more. Complementing these, several UAE incubators also provide the much-needed support, providing entrepreneurs with office space, business advice, and, in some cases, funding for their startup operations.

- The Cribb
- in5 Innovation Center
- 1776 Dubai
- Krypto labs
- Dtec

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## DUBAI FUTURE ACCELERATORS

As well as specific sectors of investment inspired by both the UAE 4th Industrial Revolution Strategy and the UAE Innovation Strategy, in 2016, the UAE launched the Dubai Future Accelerators initiative to enable rapid deployment of transformative technologies.

The accelerators are programmes and integrated systems designed to help entrepreneurs and innovators turn their ideas into successful companies.

The initiative will bring together top international companies and entrepreneurs to address seven key 21<sup>st</sup> century opportunities, which include<sup>74</sup>:



Genomics



3D Printing



Biotechnology



New business models and best practices



The application of cutting edge technologies like artificial intelligence and robotics

# INVESTOR PATHWAY

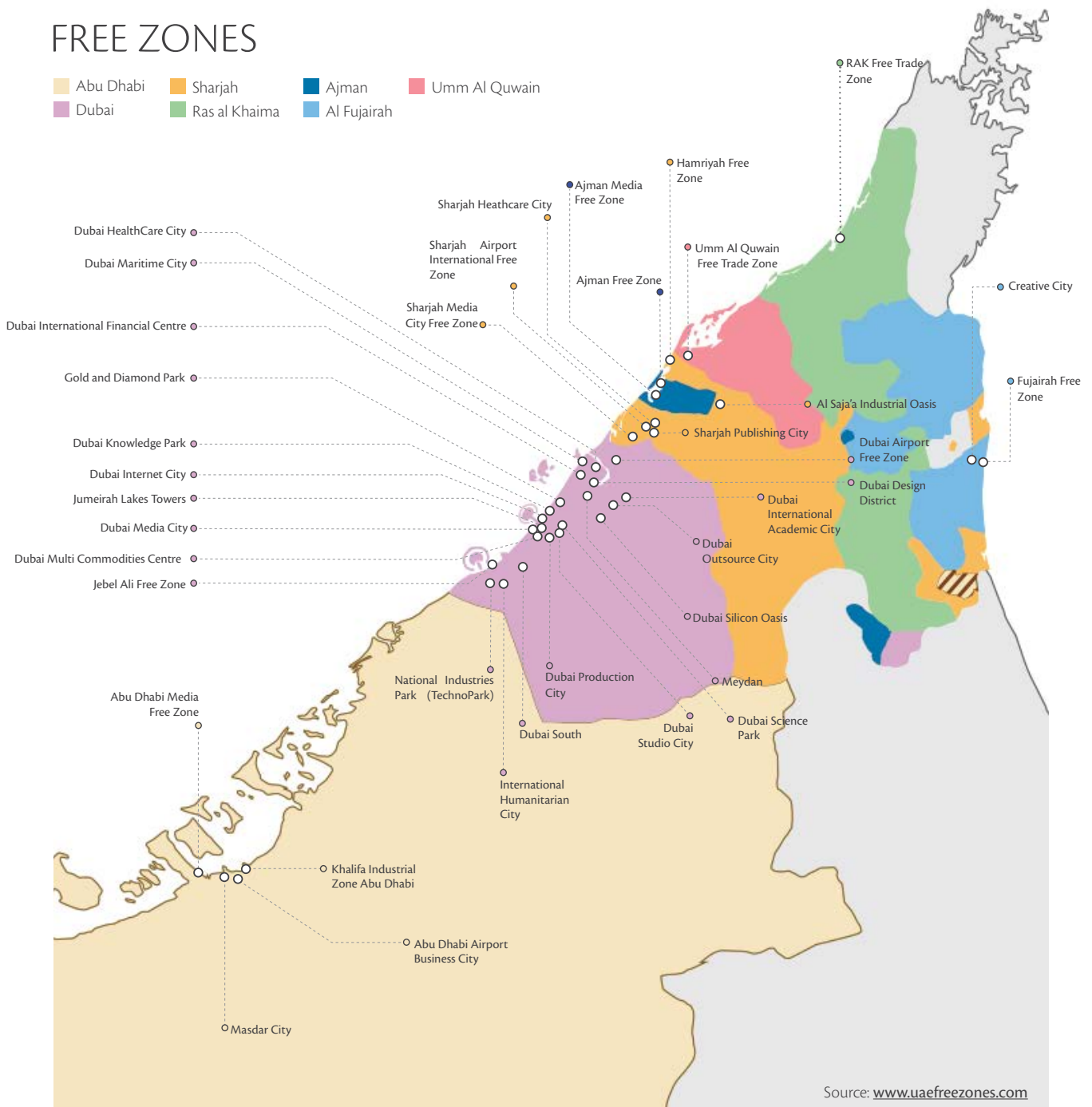
TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## PORTS AND FREE ZONES IN THE UAE

Further adding to the competitive advantage of the UAE in offering an unparalleled, globally-acclaimed investment climate, below are some of the most strategic ports – airports and marine ports – as

well Free Zones and industrial areas in the UAE, all leading the charge to making the UAE a number one investment destination.

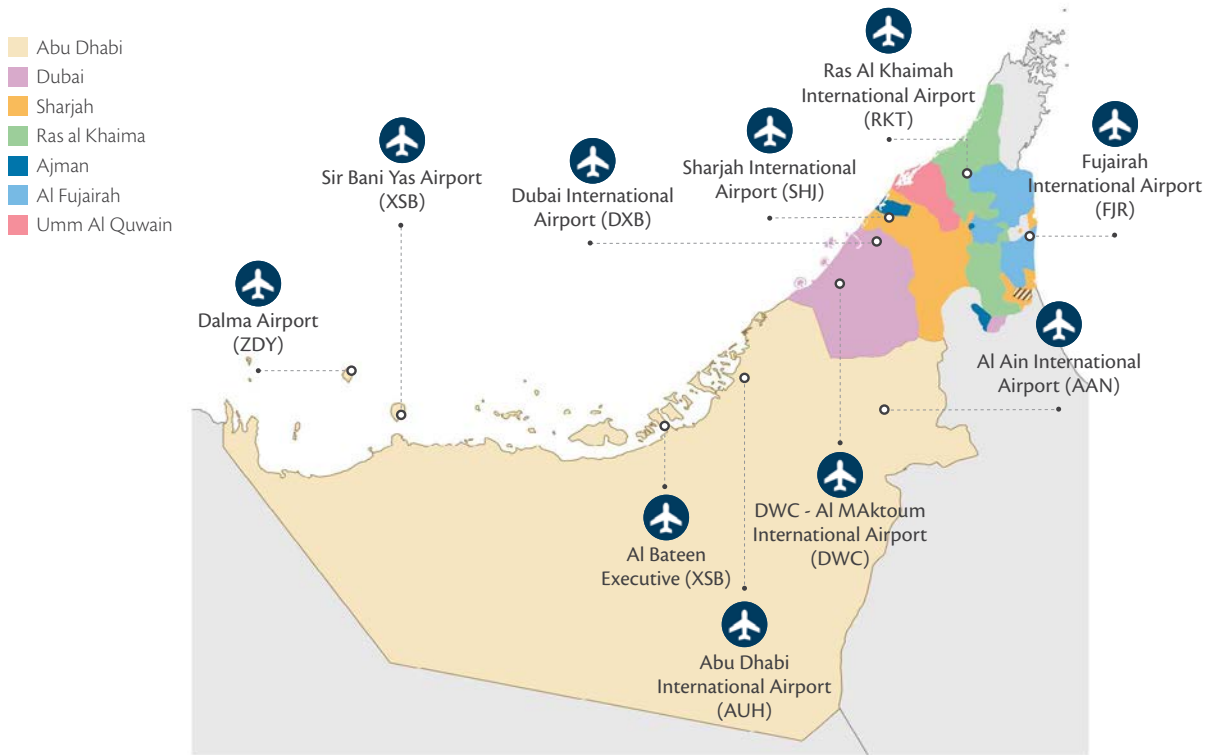
### FREE ZONES



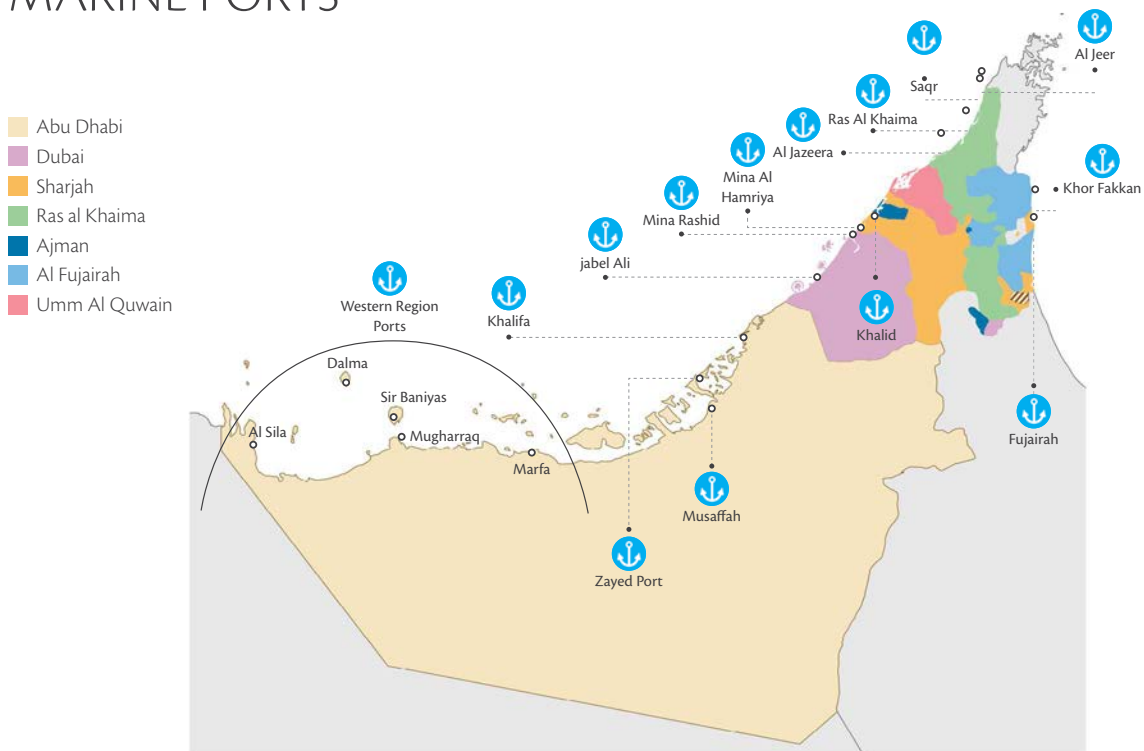
# INVESTOR PATHWAY

TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UAE

## AIRPORTS



## MARINE PORTS



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- <sup>4</sup> The list is not exhaustive, and requirements may vary, Emirate-wise, and/or as prescribed by the relevant free zone.
- <sup>5</sup> The table offers general guidelines, but requirements may vary and are subject to change.
- <sup>6</sup> Contact each Emirate's Department of Economic Department for activities that are not listed.
- <sup>7</sup> Terms and Conditions apply.
- <sup>8</sup> Terms and Conditions apply.
- <sup>9</sup> <https://www.ourabudhabi.ae/en/our-story/abu-dhabi-101.html>
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- <sup>25</sup> <https://www.dubaiplan2021.ae/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Dubai-Industrial-Strategy-2030.pdf>
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